

MINUTES  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Tuesday, March 03, 2015

**TIME:** 3:00 P.M.

**PLACE:** Room WW55

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Nonini, Patrick, Souza, Den Hartog, Buckner-Webb and Ward-Engelking

**ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Senator Keough arrived to the meeting during the presentation of the career ladder information.

**NOTE:** The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

**CONVENED:** **Chairman Mortimer** called the meeting of the Senate Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:05 p.m.

**PRESENTATION:** **Dee Mooney**, Executive Director, Micron Foundation (Foundation) outlined the Foundation's goals, which focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education (see attachment 1). She said the Foundation was established 16 years ago, in large part because students were not going into engineering and Micron's hiring managers could not find talent.

**Ms. Mooney** said national trends indicated the fastest growing occupations in the next decade will require some STEM background. According to an Idaho Board of Education (IBE) study of 466 employers from around the state, the top three emerging degree areas for Idaho employers are (1) computer science and technology, (2) business and economics, and (3) engineering. **Ms. Mooney** said more work needs to be done to ensure Idaho can fill those jobs with local talent.

**Ms. Mooney** described ways in which the Foundation is working to build students' excitement and passion, including the new Micron Technology bus. She said Micron has established two main programs: (1) Engineering the Future which provides student-gearred activities for hands-on experiences to illustrate how STEM plays a role in everyday life, and (2) Sparking a Passion which supports teachers and faculty in their quest to bring passion to STEM topics.

Committee members expressed appreciation for the Foundation's ongoing philanthropy and efforts to promote STEM education.

**PRESENTATION:** **Marilyn Whitney**, Senior Special Assistant for Education and Government Services in the Governor's Office, presented the pending structure for the career ladder legislation (see attachment 2). She began by thanking the Committee members who served on the Governor's Task Force.

**Ms. Whitney** said the Task Force's guiding principles were based on achieving required student performance levels through more equitable and adequate funding, especially for teachers' salaries. She reviewed the high points of draft legislation and described the proposed career ladder, which has a five-year implementation schedule to reach the new salary apportionment model.

**Ms. Whitney** reviewed the salary models for beginning teachers and the progression to the professional level. She said the legislation will also provide an additional premium for teachers who reach master teacher criteria.

In answer to questions concerning teacher certification requirements, **Ms. Whitney** said there are no changes in requirements for either the renewal of a teaching certificate or ongoing education. Regarding the criteria to achieve the master premium of \$4,000, **Ms. Whitney** said there is no cap on the number of teachers that could achieve master level, but the bar is set high.

**Senator Keough** asked how Idaho's teachers' salaries compare with neighboring states. **Ms. Whitney** said the new salary structure will place Idaho in a more competitive position. She will provide the Committee with data on average teacher salaries, including starting salaries, for the surrounding states.

**H 122:**

**Ms. Whitney** presented **H 122**, which updates and clarifies the intent of the strategic planning and training statute implemented in 2014. The intention of the legislation was to require each school to implement a strategic plan, to be renewed annually, that would identify and focus district-wide continuous improvement toward statewide goals.

**Ms. Whitney** emphasized the intent of the legislation is not to impose a new requirement but rather to establish a cycle of continuous improvement with measurable goals each year. She said the changes in the wording clarify that intent.

**Ms. Whitney** called attention to an increase in the fiscal note from \$2,000 to \$6,600. She said the ongoing appropriation would support training for new administrators. Any unused dollars would go into the Public Education Stabilization Fund (PESF). She also noted changes to the test reporting schedule, from August to October.

**TESTIMONY:**

**Bob Lokken**, CEO, White Cloud Analytics, testified in support of **H 122**. He was co-chair of the Governor's work team on modifications to the 2014 legislation and said the Task Force supported these recommendations unanimously. He underscored his hope that the bill will be passed during the current legislative session.

**Dale Kleinert**, State Director of Northwest School Accreditation in Idaho, testified in support of **H 122**. He said the wording and intent of this bill mirrors the programs used in Idaho's accredited charter and private schools, and the legislation will provide consistency throughout the State.

**Karen Echeverria**, Executive Director, Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA), testified in support of **H 122**. She said the ISBA is especially pleased with the change in reporting requirements which will allow more time for the incorporation of current test results. She explained the legislation allows for training in five areas: (1) governance, (2) ethics, (3) superintendent evaluation, (4) school finance and (5) strategic planning. She said the ISBA is the only entity that currently qualifies to train in all five areas.

**Chairman Mortimer** asked for examples of ways in which the districts have used the \$2,000 and the rationale for tripling that amount. **Ms. Echeverria** said the packages put together by the ISBA are valued at \$2,000, and it was found that districts would come back for additional training. She said a recent demographic survey found that more than 50 percent of school board members have less than 4 years of experience, which accentuates the need for continued training and enhanced retention.

**Chairman Mortimer** asked about the number of qualified trainers. **Ms. Echeverria** said the ISBA has ten part-time contract trainers located around the State to lessen travel time and expense. She did not have information on other trainers.

**Ms. Whitney** said SBE's website lists eight qualified trainers and noted as the program continues more will likely be added. **Ms. Whitney** wrapped up by asking the Committee to send **H 122** to the floor with a do pass recommendation.

**MOTION:** **Senator Keough** moved to send **H 122** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**. Senator Ward-Engelking will carry the bill on the floor.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Senator Den Hartog** moved to approve the Minutes from February 11, 2015. **Vice Chairman Thayn** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Senator Nonini** moved to approve the Minutes from February 12, 2015. **Senator Keough** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Senator Buckner-Webb** moved to approve the Minutes from February 16, 2015. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**ADJOURNED:** There being no further business, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:35 p.m.

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Senator Mortimer  
Chair

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LeAnn South  
Secretary

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Jeanne' Clayton  
Assistant Secretary