

Roger Quarles, executive director

J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. For the record, I am Roger Quarles, executive director of the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation. Thank you for inviting the Foundation to talk to the Senate Education Committee about where the Albertson Family Foundation has been and where we are going.

I think it is important to offer a very brief history of the Foundation.

As I am sure most of you know, the Foundation honors the legacy of Joe and Kathryn Albertson. Joe founded Albertson grocery stores in the late 1930s. By the 1960s, Albertson's had hundreds of stores throughout the west. By the 70s, sales had reached a billion dollars.

And that's when Joe and Kathryn, who met, married, started a business and raised their family in Idaho, began quietly giving away some of their hard-earned money...most often to causes that benefited kids in their beloved Idaho.

Joe thought that an education was one of the most important things that you could have and that if you had that, you could do anything. He believed that individual prosperity would lead the state to economic prosperity.

Since 1997, when Kathryn made a large endowment to the Foundation, the family has invested in several initiatives:

- Professional development for teachers
- Teacher certification
- Early childhood education
- Technology for every school in the state
- Data systems
- Reading programs like the Waterford Reading program
- College and career readiness programs including millions in scholarship opportunities
- And awareness campaigns

Unfortunately the investments did not necessarily result in improvements in student achievement in Idaho. Today we are ranked in the bottom on several key educational markers.

However, we have learned some very valuable lessons over the last 17 years.

One lesson we have learned is that the single most important element of any successful initiative is leadership.

We all know that a great leader is the difference between success and failure. Great leaders focus their resources and talent to push past the status quo. They unite disparate groups and rally around a common cause. They shape vision and set high standards. They cultivate leadership in others. Great education leaders create climates hospitable to learning, they relentlessly improve instruction; they hold people accountable and they use DATA to improve and make decisions.

I am honored to introduce today some of the great leaders with whom we have the pleasure of working in our pilot projects. We are very grateful that they are willing to come here today to share their experiences over the past couple of years.

Ken Price from Marsing will talk about the Khan Academy in Idaho pilot. Tandra Gaskins from New Plymouth High School will highlight Go On Schools. Graydon Stanley, from North Idaho College, will discuss the Continuous Enrollment initiative. And Royce Kimmons from the University of Idaho will talk about our Doceõ Centers for Innovation & Learning.

This brings me to lesson #2: We've learned that all students need intrusive advising and college and career guidance.

Our work in Go On was not limited to the awareness campaign you saw on TV or heard on the radio. The Foundation provided millions of dollars to equip colleges with scholarships and high schools with resources and support for creating a go on culture. These initiatives taught us some very important learnings.

- Intrusive (or proactive) advising is a key component to success, whether you are in high school or college.
- Students need more exposure to jobs, careers and relevant experiences while in high school.
- They need to understand their options for a 1-, 2-, or 4- year degree.
- They need to know how taking dual credits or AP courses will save time and money towards a degree.

It's my pleasure to introduce Tambra Gaskins, guidance counselor extraordinaire at New Plymouth High to talk about Go On Schools.

Tambra Gaskins, guidance counselor

New Plymouth High School

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Tambra Gaskins. I am the guidance counselor at New Plymouth High School.

New Plymouth is a rural public school serving grades 9-12. We have about 280 students. I have been at New Plymouth for ___ years and have been the guidance counselor for ____ years.

The Foundation asked if I wouldn't mind giving a brief history on Go On Schools before I describe our experiences at New Plymouth.

In the spring of 2012, any accredited public or private Idaho 6th-12th grade school was invited to participate in the Go On Schools initiative. Successful applicants would receive a one-year, renewable grant between \$10,000-\$40,000. Fifty-two schools applied and 27 were accepted into the pilot during the 2012-13 school year. During the 2013-14 school year, all six middle schools from the Boise Independent School District withdrew from the pilot. A cohort of 21 schools remains and will complete the third and final year of the pilot in the spring of 2015.

The purpose of the Go On Schools initiative was to resource and equip schools and the community to effectively support, counsel, guide and/or mentor all students so they can Go On to education and/or training beyond high school. The hoped for outcome was simple: Change the culture of a school so that going on is the expectation, not the exception.

The Go On program asked schools to track key data, work as a team and focus students on four important building blocks: Aim High, Make a Plan, Get Ready and Go On.

- ✓ Aim High: Set high expectations (academically and otherwise), and get/give support and extra help when challenges arise.
- ✓ Make a Plan: With support and guidance from schools, the community, and parents, students develop, track, and update a plan for how they will prepare for education after high school.
- ✓ Get Ready: Students take rigorous courses, tech-prep, Advanced Placement, and dual-credit classes.
- ✓ Go On: Students take college assessments such as the ACT and SAT, fill out FAFSA, college application and scholarship forms, visit campuses, and get exposure to college and career experiences.

As for New Plymouth's experience with the Go On Schools program, the building blocks were accomplished due to leadership within our school and community.

Teachers, administration and the school board believed that changing the culture should be a focus for our students' educational futures.

We start counseling students about taking college classes in the 5th grade. This also includes parent meetings.

Students start taking the difficult course work early in their elementary and middle school years.

We challenge the students to promote their thinking past today, and look toward their high school career and beyond.

The Dual Credit program is built into the core classes that all NPHS students are required to take for graduation. It is a personal choice to take the dual credit; students are allowed to opt in for the credit with additional course work.

The High School mirrors the General Education Courses at colleges within the state.

All High School Teachers are Advisors helping students with questions about college and dual credit coursework.

How has the Go On Campaign Impacted our school?

When our students are asked "What are your future plans?" we quickly get an answer of "I am going to college to study (fill in the blank)." This is what the Go On Schools initiative has done for our students, school and community. These students have not only a goal, but a prepared blueprint of how to help themselves meet their educational objectives.

Go On has been a catalyst in sponsoring innovative ideas and programs. It has been a huge sponsorship for concepts and viewpoints for students and school staff. The funds have allowed students to visit colleges outside our local area and opened a floodgate of opportunities and technical hardware and software to make dreams a reality.

What are the outcomes?

In 2011, the percentage of seniors who went to some form of education or training after graduating was 43%. In 2012, it was 53%. In 2013, it was 57%.

For the class of 2014:

- ✓ 69 seniors in the Class of 2014 graduated with 927 college credits
- ✓ The class earned about \$320,000 in scholarships
- ✓ 94% are enrolled in higher education or a trade school.

We started Go On with the thought of propelling our students' knowledge about opportunities past high school, which is now our reality.

We have seen a huge increase in our students taking advantage of dual credit and looking at college as "It is possible for me to get a degree and start college now, I don't have to wait." They have saved valuable time and money and they are very proud of their accomplishments. The playing field of the haves and have not's are now equal since it is now affordable to all the students.

How can you not be proud of the students' accomplishments and hard work? Go On is a success in our school, because we have changed the culture to believe, "I can do anything; I am the commander of my own destiny."

ROGER

We've learned that adult students need help with intrusive or proactive advising too -- especially those older, non-traditional students who face many barriers to success.

And now I'd like to introduce Graydon Stanley, from North Idaho College to talk about the Continuous Enrollment project.

INSERT GRAYDON'S COMMENTS HERE

North Idaho College

Village Project

While the Village Project is in its inaugural year, it came from three prior years of research and development funded by the J.A. & Kathryn Albertson Foundation. The program is rooted in proven best practices that include placing students in cohorts, an intrusive advising model, an early alert system and a robust college success class. Our initial research and development was conducted with students currently deficit of a GED who were working towards a certificate in trades and industry. Students were challenged to complete their GED and complete college credits towards a certificate. Student in this phase of the project were able to persist and complete at higher rate than other like populations. While given less than a 5% chance of persistence, the students participating in the project persisted at a rate of 86%. They accrued more credits and achieved higher GPAs than their counterparts.

The Village Project is now applying the best practices from the first phase of the project to the general population of admitted students. Our student population is still considered remedial in nature, but do carry with them a completion of a high school diploma or GED at the time of participation. Students are grouped (cohorted) for a year at a time in core classes that are necessary for completion. It is the beginning of a guided pathway. It is a practice we hope to grow over time into a solid pathway culture for all NIC students.

Our intrusive advisors are volunteers from our campus who step up in addition to their assigned duties to engage with our students on a regular, more “intrusive” manner. They form a relationship with the student very early in the orientation process so no time is lost when the student matriculates. When students miss a class, fail a test, etc. the early alert system is activated and the intrusive advisor intervenes to assist the student get back on track. They sit in on classes at times, provide midterm feedback beyond the grades provided by faculty and assist students with any issues that may prevent optimal academic outcomes.

The college success class integrates curriculum around non-cognitive variables, particularly grit skills. Students are taught the true meaning and power of a cohort and a heightened understanding of community. Just as we take institutional responsibility for them, they take responsibility for themselves and each other. They develop an education and career plan in their class and are educated about the steps necessary to complete their goals in these areas.

Because we are applying our best practices to a new demographic, our data collection process is in early stages for our current population. The data from the research and development phase was overwhelmingly successful. It taught us important lessons that we have turned into legacy work for our institution. It is our goal to meet students where they are and assist them to completion instead of meeting them with assumptions of what we think they should know. We understand the human condition, but believe in the human spirit.

North Idaho College Village Project

BUILDING A VILLAGE,
engaged in
**student
success.**



Background

- Funded by JKAF
- Initial three year grant (I-BEST) was used as research and development to denote retention best practices.
- Village Project is no longer called I-BEST and has required best practices integration of the best practices to a broader campus audience.
- 500 students served by 1/17

Cohort:

- Students are registered in groups of 15. They move through their curriculum in a group (or village) for the first year. Students are registered in course based on their COMPASS scores and individual needs.
- Structure provides a learning community, an opportunity for students to work in consistent teams and support each other.
- No deviation from instruction already inherent in classes.
- Non-cohorted students will also be registered in courses; they are not cohort exclusive.

Early Alert:

- Early intervention is a key component.
- We ask that faculty, staff and fellow students alert when appropriate at the first signs of concern. This can include attendance, classroom behavior or attitude issues, missing work, or disclosure of personal issues that may impact academic performance.
- When an alert is received, a coordinated intervention occurs so the student can get back on course.

Intrusive Advising:

- Intrusive Advising: Programs utilizing proactive advising build structures that incorporate intervention strategies mandating advising contacts for students who otherwise might not seek advising or know how to properly use it.
- Each cohort is matched with an “intrusive advisor”. Intrusive advisors volunteer from all over campus to assist students retain and persist. This year, we have employees from E-Learning, Institutional Research, the bookstore, and Outdoor Pursuits.
- Intrusive advisors are there to assist faculty and intervene with students to provide additional support, resources and advising whenever needed. Their job is to proactively engage with students.

College Success Class:

- A College Success class is a part of the cohort classes.
- The course is cohort exclusive so students can explore the idea of cohort, community and needs they experience in their academic and programmatic experience.
- A focus on non-cognitive variables and learner centered curriculum is being developed and applied.

ROGER

This brings us to lesson #3. Technology will not replace teachers, but our work with Khan Academy in Idaho has taught us that technology, coupled with a new mindset, can transform and deepen the student/teacher relationship. Students who are allowed to learn at their own pace through technology take more ownership of their education and -- our early data suggests -- achieve greater results -- in some cases, 400% growth. Kids who thought they couldn't do math are doing math and it is giving them confidence in other subjects.

Here today to talk to you about one aspect of the KA in Idaho initiative is Ken Price.

Ken Price, managing director
21st Century Community Learning Center, Marsing, ID

Mr. Chairman, for the record, my name is Ken Price. I am the managing director of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers in Marsing, Idaho.

I'd like to expand on a point Roger Quarles made, and briefly illustrate just one of the many ways student achievement and engagement has increased within the Khan Academy in Idaho initiative.

I'd like to tell you about [NAME], a tenth grader from Coeur d'Alene. [STUDENT NAME] is an alternative student at [SCHOOL] who absolutely hated school.

He was defiant and resistant to any learning. Instead of completing assignments, [NAME] wrote the words, "I hate school" atop every assignment. Not only was the assignment tattooed with, "I hate school," [NAME] would tear it to pieces before burying his head on his desk, forgoing the rest of the lesson.

[NAME'S] teacher was at a loss for a way to engage him. [NAME] was quickly falling behind his peers.

Not any more.

When introduced to a Khan Academy, [NAME] quickly became interested. In one afternoon he learned how to write enough to code to create an intricately detailed and patterned ice cream cone that twirled.

Needless to say, his teacher was floored. She now has the perfect venue to keep this young man engaged in class.

With the support and individualized learning from his exceptional teacher, [NAME] is recharged — he, and his peers, are learning again.

Last May the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation funded my proposal to take Khan Academy (KA) to six 21st Century Community Learning Center sites to replicate Marsing's in-school success and help hundreds of additional students realize their potential just like [NAME].

These Community Learning Centers, or CCLCs, are federally funded competitive grant programs administered by each state's department of education. There are 37

grantees in Idaho providing academic, social and emotional learning activities for students outside school time, typically afterschool and during the summer.

I have been Marsing's director for ten years.

The motive is to help students build mastery and confidence in their math and technology skills by supporting programs that are willing to use Khan Academy and additional effective methods that are substantiated through real-time data.

Why Chromebooks and Khan Academy?

- Khan Academy and Google Apps for Education are free.
- Technology and Khan Academy allow for Personalized Learning at their own pace
- Teachers can target small groups, while Khan Academy engages and educates others
- Technology facilitates peer tutoring. Kids love to show others how to work a device
- Traditional boundaries and limitations of learning are diminished

How does Marsing and our Community Learning Center find success?

- Marsing was willing to take calculated risks with Khan Academy and Chromebooks
- Community Learning Center programs provided time, funds and flexibility to experiment with Khan Academy
- Chromebooks and Google Docs allow students to be 'Producers, not Consumers'
- Marsing was not depending on just JKAF for future funding to expand limitless learning opportunities for students
- An experienced guide counseled Marsing- the NNU Doceo Center

What does it look like to be ready to benefit from programs like this?

- Decision-makers need latitude, flexibility and support from administrators
- Business managers and Tech staff need to give priority to these types of implementation
- Multiple funding sources are needed to dedicate toward innovation
- Teachers should have reliable and consistent access to technology
- Initial implementation ideally happens during summer school or Community Learning Center time

- There absolutely must be a culture of Selflessness, Teamwork and Service to others
- And, **Teachers must trust and believe in disruptive change**

What are the Expected Results and Measurements of the Project?

We know from observations that students like using the Chromebooks and Khan Academy. We know that the use of Khan Academy has spread into the regular school day. In that regard, the program has definitely expanded students' learning horizons and engagement.

Engaging and educating students after a long day at school in after-school programs is challenging. Khan Academy lessens the **burden** on teachers by providing activities that meet kids at their learning levels, making the transition to mastery-based learning sensible.

Coding interest has increased among students and staff. Khan Academy has a great component that enables students to write code with embedded tutoring on its website.

What is the impact of Khan Academy and Technology with grantees?

Khan Academy and Chromebooks are here to stay in 14 schools with more schools wanting to make the transition. Principals want to expand Khan Academy to additional classrooms in their schools. Staff and students like doing math and coding with the Chromebooks. Hard data from MAP assessment tests will be available in May to measure about 700 students' growth in math.

I would like to thank the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation for taking the leap of faith with funding the 21st CCLC KA program.

ROGER

Lesson #4. We have learned that we need to elevate and enhance the teaching profession in Idaho.

We know that a highly effective teacher is the single most important ingredient in a student's life. Idaho can lead the way in teacher preparation especially as it relates to the emerging area of blended learning. We hope that the Doceõ Centers for Innovation + Learning at Northwest Nazarene University and University of Idaho will mark a new era for Colleges of Education in Idaho and across the nation. By researching and practicing national best practices in blended learning, the Doceõ faculty and staff will transform how future educators teach and Idaho's students learn.

Here to give us a testimonial is Royce Kimmons, Executive Director of the Doceõ center at the University of Idaho.

Royce Kimmons, PhD
University of Idaho Doceo Center for Innovation + Learning

At the University of Idaho's Doceo Center for Innovation + Learning, our mission is to improve P-12 teaching and learning in the state through effective technology integration. We achieve this by focusing on three main areas:

1. Effectively training **teacher candidates**;
2. Supporting **in-service teachers**;
3. And building an **evidence base** for others to follow.

Each of these areas has a different scope and focus. With teacher candidates, we focus on local development at the University of Idaho; with in-service teachers, we focus on improving teaching across the state; and with evidence development, we focus on improving global knowledge on how to improve teaching through effective technology integration.

Our efforts in these areas are manifold, and some examples of our successes over the past two years include the following:

- We have reconceptualized how teacher candidates are taught at the University of Idaho and have developed a cutting-edge innovation lab on-campus for this purpose.

- We have conducted over one hundred (100) focused professional development sessions with partner schools that have included over 2,000 participants and are responsive to the needs, goals, and capacities of those schools.
- We have provided a number of statewide training opportunities for teachers that have been rated very highly by participants (e.g., 98/100).
- We have presented our work broadly in the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. and have had our work published in over a dozen academic journals and books.

Through these efforts, we have become a valuable resource to partner schools in the state and have established ourselves as a productive and competitive hub of educational technology research.

As we have progressed, we have learned three major lessons that may be of interest to the committee.

First, technology access is varied across the state and is unpredictable. Pockets of innovation exist across the state, and disparities exist both between and within schools without consideration for region, population, or location. This makes it very difficult to accurately prioritize the needs of schools and districts for educational technology interventions without personnel on the ground to conduct needs analyses.

Second, vendor-driven (rather than evidence-driven) technology decision making is rampant across the state as school expenditures regularly reflect effective vendor

marketing strategies rather than realities of what will and will not help schools. In our efforts, we seek to help schools avoid hyped expectations and flawed “silver-bullet” thinking about technology purchasing, thereby making better use of their limited resources.

And third, innovation with technology requires a general reprofessionalization of teaching, wherein teachers are treated as competent professionals that understand the needs of their own students and how to best serve them. We have found that teachers are willing and capable of effecting truly innovative practice if they are given the tools to do so within a climate that is supportive, flexible, and respectful.

These and other lessons learned lead us to make three recommendations for the committee’s consideration.

First, there are a set of minimum technology requirements necessary for innovative practice with technology to occur within any classroom, and these needs are not met across Idaho. It makes little sense for universities to prepare teachers to teach with technology if they will enter classrooms without basic requirements, and research suggests that availability of technology resources can be a major factor in teacher attrition. At a very basic level, each classroom needs: 1) internet access, 2) an internet-capable teacher device (e.g., laptop, Chromebook), 3) a projector and screen, and 4) a

document camera. The next extremely important milestone would then be a statewide 5:1 student-device ratio.

Second, quality professional development is crucial to supporting innovative practice. Research studies have repeatedly and conclusively shown that technology alone has no impact on student outcomes but must be coupled with innovative pedagogy to have any educational benefit. Along with the Governor's Task Force, we suggest that such training should be job embedded, should continue over time, and should be provided by educators.

And third, teachers need allocated time to innovate with technology. From our perspective, it is impossible to empower teachers to change their practices and to become "limitless learners" themselves if they are not given sufficient time to plan and collaborate with one another. Thus, any guidance that the state can provide to local districts in ensuring that teachers have ample time for planning and collaboration would be helpful for sustaining these efforts.

We have appreciated this opportunity to briefly share our work with the Senate Education Committee, and we look forward to answering any questions or providing any clarifications.

ROGER

Thank you Ken, Tambra, Graydon and Royce for your presentation and all of the hard work you do to help Idaho students succeed.

And now, with your permission Mr. Chairman, we would like to use the remainder of our presentation to focus on future work of the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation. Our mission is to discover, develop and expand environments of limitless learning for all Idahoans. We are focused on three key areas: Learning Innovation, Awareness and Community Investments.

We are going to narrow the focus for the rest of this hour on the work we are doing in Learning Innovations. As you well know, Idaho has a lot of challenges when it comes to preparing our children to succeed in school, college, career and life. And while the challenges are relatively clear, the solutions for how we get better are not. We invest in innovative, high performing learning models such as the Idaho PTECH Network, Bluum and Teach For America because they show what is possible. We make decisions about what programs and practices we will support and resource based on research and best practices and we are focused on what is best for kids, not adults.

One challenge facing Idaho is the difficult pathway our students face when

transitioning from high school to college and career. As you know, by whatever measure you use, Idaho is at or near the bottom for the percentage of students who will go on to and successfully complete a 1-, 2-, or 4-year degree.

Here to talk about a new learning innovation that we developed to help smooth that pathway is the Idaho PTECH Network president is Alan Millar.

And I would respectfully ask the committee to hold on any questions you may have for our panelist until all three are finished.

Alan Millar, executive director
Idaho PTECH Network

Senator Mortimer and members of the Committee:

My name is Alan Millar and I am the Executive Director of the Idaho PTECH Network. PTECH stands for Pathways in Technology Early College High School. Our organization creates bridges from High School to Community College to an entry-level job in three high growth, high value Idaho industries technology, health care and aerospace/high tech manufacturing.

We exist to positively change the lives of Idaho student's by shortening the economic arc between an 11th grade student and the training and skills they need to support themselves, start a career and get to the first rung of the middle class ladder. We do this by focusing on the quality of student experience and providing support along the way, including technology, access to online coursework, tuition and coaching.

PTECH students are not from the upper quartile of Idaho students – the 25 percent of students who are going on no matter what. Nor are they from the lower quartile – the 25% of students who will not go on. They represent the “forgotten 50” – the remaining kids who encounter the complexities of college enrollment and registration, the costs of student loans or the lack of parental

support. They may begin to go on but they do not complete a degree or certificate. Life intervenes and the data suggest that the longer it takes, the less likely students are to achieve a degree or certificate.

Our PTECH services stay with students through high school graduation and program completion to on the job training and a link to an Idaho company that could offer them a job. Companies will not guarantee hiring, but they are willing to interview and provide mentoring, site visits and on the job training. Our mission is to provide them with employees that have the training, education and soft skills ready to go to work today.

So how is it going so far? We launched our beta year with 6 schools and 50 students and have since grown to 95 students in 8 rural high schools. We have 47 students in Technology fields, 30 in health care and 18 in Aerospace/High Tech Manufacturing. Those students have earned 278 college credits and have a cumulative GPA of 2.75. We have 24 companies working with us, including HP, Eidnetics, Empire Airlines and St. Alphonsus. We have three colleges and a strong partnership with Director Sayer at Idaho Commerce, Idaho Department of Labor and Idaho DPTE. We are onboarding 8 new high schools and 150 to 200 students.

One thing we have learned is that employers don't really care that much about GPA or test scores or the other assessments that schools spend their time on, but they do care about teamwork, persistence, collaboration and leadership. Our PTECH students receive remote coaching in those soft skills as well as guidance and support from our partner Inside Track, who are bringing their national model into high school for the first time. *Probably the greatest thing about my coach was she stayed positive even if I was weeks behind on a course. Instead of lecturing me, she would help me find ways to catch up. I would strongly recommend any student to have a learning coach.* This coaching model has been shown to increase academic performance, but we are also working to create assessments of student engagement hope and well-being. While these concepts may seem soft in comparison to SAT scores, it turns out that single biggest predictor of college success is hope. It is safe to say that hope is the biggest predictor of a quality employee and a meaningful life as well.

Other things we have learned: what we are trying to build- an aggregated engineered talent pipeline from multiple high schools to the workplace- doesn't really exist. There are structures and institutions that look like they cross this divide but our middle 50 students are not making it through in large numbers. We have learned that business and education speak different languages even if

they seem to be using the same words. We have learned that students do not know that these businesses exist in their towns, even if they are right down the street.

Essentially, we have been learning how to hack the American Dream for our rural Idaho students. A hack is a work around to make something work differently or better than it was designed for. The educational systems currently require tying and splicing and hacking to get our students enrolled and successful. Some of the high schools require a workaround to get our students the online access they need and sometimes a cultural work around as well. Our goal with the next cohort is that the hacking gets easier and that we start to fix some of these choke points.

I want to credit senior members of this committee, other branches of government and community colleges for listening to our concerns about these choke points and beginning to make substantive and necessary changes. I also want to thank our partner companies whose voice and input on what they need and what they are willing to provide has been a critical part of this unique "education-industry" partnership.

Where do we go from here? Speaking for my team, we are in this first and foremost for the students, but we also want to change the economic arc of our

state. We cannot settle for being the state with the highest proportion of minimum wage jobs.

Many of you have seen the Shifting Sands Demographic survey. To oversimplify the findings of that study, the forecast projects that Idaho households will be more ethnically diverse, more clustered urban areas, and poorer than we are today. For myself I would welcome a little more ethnic diversity around the place and we probably can't do much about the pull of the urban centers. But I would argue that demographics does not have to be our destiny and we can do a whole lot better in matching up the education of our students with the fastest growing sectors of our economy. As Brandon Busteed of the Gallup organization said at the last Ed Sessions- it's the *Educonomy*. (He did not add the word *stupid*)

That's what inspires our team every day and I hope it inspires this committee as well.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and I will stand for questions **at the end of our presentation.**

ROGER

Although our traditional schools serve some students well, it is clear that too many students lack high quality learning options that prepare them to succeed in post secondary education and productive careers. The Foundation has a long history of support for school choice in Idaho. We believe that students deserve learning models that make them love learning.

In the past, the Foundation provided \$250,000 to every charter school start-up. Today, we will invest in and accelerate only high performing charters that excel in delivering blended learning. Which is why we have launched our “20-in10” strategy -- to place 20,000 high performing learning seats for Idaho kids by 2024.

Here to discuss the progress we're making on this strategy is Terry Ryan, president of Bluum.



Presentation to the Idaho Senate Education Committee

March 5, 2015

Terry Ryan, President



Idaho Charter School Network

- Collection of charter school leaders started in late 1990s
- Focused exclusively on charter school issues as a membership organization
- Primarily engaged in encouraging conversations between charter schools, sharing practices, and advocating for charter issues



BLUUM and Idaho Charter School Network, Inc.

- BLUUM is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization
- Idaho Charter School Network, Inc. will become a 501(c)4 membership support organization
- Organizations will share same board, staff, and values
- But, the Idaho Charter School Network, Inc. will focus exclusively on charter school advocacy and policy issues
- While BLUUM will focus on expanding high-quality public school seats across Idaho



BLUUM's MISSION:

- Improving student achievement and expanding quality learning opportunities for children and families in Idaho and beyond.
- Working with local, regional and national partners to grow the number of students attending high performing public schools (especially charters) and learning programs.
- Advocating for the right of every family to attend a high-performing school of their choice.
- Sharing widely all lessons learned from this effort so as to help others.
- Making Idaho a national model for how to create and nurture excellent learning opportunities for all children.



Charter School Network (Membership based)	Shared Services (Market-driven)	New School Development ("20 in 10" Growth Support)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy and protecting space for current and new schools • Advocating for public resources • Communications • Technical assistance • Trainings • Events/Conferences • Sharing best practices • Strategic planning support • Brokering efforts with other with other stakeholders and partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bookkeeping - Basic accounting - Financial reporting - Financial planning - Financial modeling - School CFO/Treasurer • Grant Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grant Writing - Grant reporting • Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal - Academic - Technology - Special education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and recruiting models (in-state and out) for growth • Identifying, recruiting, developing new school talent • Assisting applicants for new school development • Raising support dollars (philanthropic) • Making case for new school support • Working with reform-minded district(s) in new school growth • Storytelling: awareness building • Coordinating with partners



Thank You

*"Success is not counted by how high you have climbed
but by how many people you brought with you." - Dr. Wilbert Rose*

ROGER

Idaho is in the grips of a teacher shortage. As a result, no one suffers more than Idaho children. Last year, the U.S. Department of Education listed 44 disciplines where a teacher shortage was documented in the state of Idaho. And the number is growing, especially in hard-to-fill categories such as agricultural science and technology, basic mathematics, chemistry, early childhood/early childhood special education, economics, geography, physics and health. As former superintendent of Caldwell School District I know how difficult it is to attract and retain high-quality teachers, especially when neighboring school districts can promise \$5,000-\$15,000 salary increases.

One solution to this ever-widening problem is Teach for America. Here today to talk about TFA is Tony Ashton.

Tony Ashton, executive director,
Teach For America

Thank you Mr. Chairman and Committee members for the opportunity to be here today, my name is Tony Ashton and I am the Executive Director of Teach For America Idaho. I am a native of Utah but spent much of my life growing up in Idaho. Many of my most cherished memories -- learning to ride a bike, learning to fish, my wedding -- all occurred in this incredible state. For these reasons, and many more, our family's recent decision to move to Idaho and lead TFA's work here has been an amazing opportunity. I feel as if I've come home.

Tony – do you want to do a brief summary of your TFA history?

All kids deserve the chance to reach their full potential, and at Teach For America we believe an excellent education is the most effective way to give them that chance. However, millions of children growing up in low-income or remote communities lack access to high-quality educational opportunities. As a result, just 6 percent of kids in the bottom tenth of income levels will graduate from college, compared with 61 percent from the top tenth. This inequity can be seen on several metrics in Idaho, but one of the most striking for me is that the state ranks 48th in the country when comparing the performance of low income and non low-

income students on 8th grade reading on the National Assessment of Education Progress. This not only limits students' life opportunities, but Families, communities, and Idaho as a whole suffer when vast numbers of children fall behind.

Teach For America is playing a role in eliminating this injustice by recruiting, developing and bringing a diverse group of our nation's emerging leaders into the field of education. These individuals, called corps members, begin their path with a two-year commitment to teach in low-income urban and rural public schools. Deeply affected by their experience in the classroom, they join our alumni network and continue to advocate for students from many different roles in education and other fields. Since our founding in 1989, more than 47,000 exceptional leaders have joined our corps and reached more than 4 million children.

Teach For America recruits top college graduates and professionals of all academic majors, career interests and backgrounds who demonstrate achievement, leadership and a commitment to expanding opportunity for children in low-income areas. In 2014, 50,000 individuals from over 1,000 institutions applied to the program including more than 90 individuals from Idaho' schools. We look for individuals who show leadership potential and have other traits that are found in our most successful teachers. On average we select between 10-15% of individuals that apply to our program. Our corps members come from diverse backgrounds. Among the 2014 corps, fifty percent identify as people of color, forty-

seven percent received Pell Grants, and one-third are the first in their families to graduate from college.

I am excited to say that the 2015 school year will be our first year with corps members teaching in Idaho. We have established partnerships with three school districts in the Treasure Valley: Caldwell, Homedale, and Nampa to have at least 15 corps members working in Idaho schools next fall. Over the next three years we plan to provide approximately 50 corps member who will reach approximately 3,200 students. These corps members go through an intensive training institute and coaching to ensure they're prepared for immediate classroom impact.

Once in the classroom, our corps members participate in a two-year professional development program. They are routinely observed one-on-one by a full-time Teach For America instructional coach who helps them improve their practice and accelerate student progress and participate. In addition corps members have access to a range of professional development support outside the classroom including participation in professional learning communities, Saturday professional development sessions, and graduate level coursework.

In Idaho, our corps members participate in an open hiring process – competing directly with other teacher candidates. TFA members must also meet the same licensure requirements as

other teachers. Our corps members are also effective. Teach For America is fortunate to be among the most studied teacher-preparation organizations in the country. The body of research shows that corps members have a positive impact on student achievement across subjects and grade levels. Statewide Studies in Louisiana, North Carolina, and Tennessee have consistently placed TFA among each state's top teacher-preparation programs.

More than 90% of our corps members return to teach a second year, and more than 90% complete their two-year teaching commitment. This is higher than the national average of all new teachers who stay in teaching a second year (86%) according to the last report released by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. Researchers at the University of Connecticut and Harvard found that more than 60% of our alumni continue teaching beyond two years.

Although next year will be our first with corps members in Idaho, nearly 100 Teach For America corps members and alumni identify Idaho as their home state. Individuals such as Michael Jacobsen, an Idahoan who after working in business for several years started his career in education as a high school math teacher in South Dakota and is now the superintendent of the South Lemhi School District in Eastern Idaho. Another native Idahoan, Cara Jenkins, began her career as a corps member in New York City and has taught for the past 10 years in Idaho. She currently serves as a middle school math teacher and department

chair at the Lowell Middle School in Meridian. For the past two years she has helped lead her department to have the highest growth in mathematics of any school in the district.

Over the last twenty-five years, Teach For America has played a critical role in expanding the pool of transformational educational leaders in communities across the country. As we look to deepen our partnership with communities in Idaho, we will seek to be an important source for teachers, leaders, and advocates for the state's most under resourced students and communities. We recognize that the goal of providing all students with a high-quality education requires leadership, partnership, and collaboration from a range of individuals and organizations that are focused on developing the innovations, solutions, and doing the hard work needed.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak with you today. I look forward to answering your questions and telling you more about our work in the state.

ROGER: And now Mr. Chairman we'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.