

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, March 23, 2015

TIME: 8:30 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

MEMBERS: Chairman DeMordaunt, Vice Chairman VanOrden, Representatives Shepherd, Wills, Boyle, Clow, Gestrin, Harris, Mendive, McDonald, Dixon, Kerby, Pence, Kloc, Rubel

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: Penni Cyr, IEA; Jonathan Parker, Holland & Hart; Dale Kleinert, Northwest Accreditation; Clark Corbin, Idaho Ed News; Tracie Bent, OSBE, Sara Scudder, Department of Labor; Harold Ott, Rural Schools & IASA; Rob Winslow, IASA; Jess Harrison, ISBA; Tim Corder, SDE; Brenda Miller, NWPE; Marilyn Whitney, Governor's Office; Beth Oppenheimer, Idaho AEYC; Rod Gramer, IBE; Phil McGrane, Ada County Clerk's Office

Chairman DeMordaunt called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

RS 23901: **Tim Corder**, Special Assistant to the Superintendent, State Department of Education (SDE), presented **RS 23901**. He explained Idaho's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Document (Waiver) expires June 30, 2015. He said Idaho must renew the document and submit the request for renewal by March 31, 2015 or be penalized. However, the state has until the end of the year for additional changes to the waiver. Mr. Corder stated the changes are necessary and are expected by the people of Idaho and the Idaho Legislature. Some of those changes will be to the testing schedules, the test duration and the educational standards. He indicated the legislation provides justification for systematic review and amendments to the waiver.

In response to questions from the committee, **Mr. Corder** said opting out of the SBAC and Common Core is not possible. He said an opt out automatically gets a rejection from the federal government. He said states are finding as parents and students familiarize themselves with the standards and the testing, fewer people want to opt out. He stated that staying in compliance keeps Idaho from losing millions of dollars. He said the 95% proficiency standard imposed by the federal government is calculated state wide; every school incurs the punishment if the state does not reach the goal. He said there is an alternate way to prove proficiency, but SDE is not the enforcer, the federal government becomes the enforcer.

MOTION: **Rep. Boyle** made a motion to introduce **RS 23901**. A discussion was held regarding **RS 23901**, and the committee decided an amendment was necessary. **Mr. Corder** was asked to create the wording for the amendment, then return to present it to the committee later in the meeting.

RS 23571: **Rep. McDonald** introduced **RS 23571**, proposing legislation for a voluntary and limited kindergarten preparedness program which will be aligned with Common Core standards. He said **RS 23571** will establish a three-year pilot program with the criteria being set by SDE and parents making application for student enrollment. He indicated gathering data on 4-year old children will be beneficial in setting the criteria for any state administered early childhood learning program. He also said it will cost \$4,800 per student and the curriculum will be developed in local school districts. The parents will play an integral part and the program is open to everyone regardless of income.

Rep. Perry, Co-sponsor, said the proposed legislation is innovative; it is a proactive side of policy instead of reactive. She said if the state invests in early childhood the dividends will be less remediation at higher levels of education and a more successful "go on" rate. She indicated the parental involvement model, currently present in private schools, is duplicated in the pre-K pilot program. She stated changing 3rd Grade reading scores starts by strengthening those students below 2nd Grade.

MOTION: **Rep. Kloc** made a motion to introduce **RS 23571**.

A discussion was held regarding the cost for implementation of pre-K pilot programs to the state, full-time kindergarten as a better option, the current pre-K data sufficient to support implementation without a pilot program and how children are chosen to attend pre-K pilot programs.

VOTE ON MOTION: **Chairman Demordaunt** called for a vote on the motion to introduce **RS 23571**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

RS 23901: **Mr. Corder** was called upon to clarify the amendment to **RS 23901**. He said the amendment is to strike the word "minimum" on Page 30, and to insert...state adopted core standards that are college and career ready...

MOTION: **Rep. Boyle** revised her motion to introduce **RS 23901** and included the amendment to strike the word "minimum" on Page 30, and to insert...state adopted core standards that are college and career ready... **Motion carried by voice vote.**

S 1071aa: **Senator Patrick** introduced **S 1071aa** and said the legislation is to encourage better citizens. He stated Oklahoma and Arizona have similar statutes in place. He said the students can miss 40 questions on the test and still be qualified to graduate high school.

Penni Cyr, President, Idaho Education Association (IEA), testified **in opposition** to **S 1071aa** stating the purposed civics test is a "high stakes" test. She said IEA members know the importance of preparing students for college and the workplace, equally valuing well-educated citizens. However, the exponential growth of high-stakes tests in Idaho's schools, is having a detrimental impact on the quantity, as well as the quality, of instruction. She said additional pressure is being put on teachers, which in turn compels teachers to "teach to the test."

Jonathan Parker, Holland & Hart, representing the Joe Foss Foundation, spoke **in support** of **S 1071aa**. He said the foundation was established with the purpose of educating youth on the importance of America's unique freedoms and to inspire them to public service. He showed a video clip of college students failing to answer simple citizenship queries. He quoted Thomas Jefferson who said "if a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."

MOTION: **Rep. Rubel**, Co-sponsor, stated American college students knowledge base in civics, as opposed to pop culture, is almost nonexistent. She made a motion to send **S 1071aa** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Jess Harrison, Policy and Government Affairs Director, Idaho School Boards Association, spoke **in opposition to S 1071aa**. She said ISBA believes all students should understand the basics of United States democracy, however, the Office of the State Board of Education has the duty to prescribe the courses and an assessment in statute stands in opposition to Idaho Code, Section 33-118.

Brenda Miller, Regional Director for Northwest Professional Educators in Idaho, and **Phil McGrane**, Chief Deputy Clerk, Ada County spoke **in support of S 1071aa**. Ms. Miller stated 71% of teachers polled on education issues stood in favor of requiring high school students to pass a test on 100 basic facts of United States history and civics from the United States Citizen Civics Test as a condition for graduation. Mr. McGrane gave the committee graphs showing the historical voter participation in Idaho and the age distribution compared to voting status. (See attachments #1 & #2.) He said younger voters are less likely to be involved in citizen-related roles.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Chairman DeMordaunt called for a vote on the motion to send **S 1071aa** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Gestrin** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN:

Chairman DeMordaunt announced that **H 278** will be added to the Tuesday, March 24, 2015 Agenda. There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

Representative DeMordaunt
Chair

Jean Vance
Secretary