

Idaho Legislature
Public School Funding Formula – HCR 33
Interim Committee Meeting

September 27, 2016

Public Testimony

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CFO, Bluum
Business Manager – Connor Academy, Pocatello
Business Manager – Heritage Community Charter School, Caldwell
Business Manager – Alturas International Academy, Idaho Falls
Parent, 3 sons – Idaho City High School

Testimony:

We would like to see funds follow the child – weighed for special needs, EL and other needs

We would like to see the availability of alternatives to seat time and average daily attendance

Public schools (Idaho City as an example) and charter schools suffer from the lack of flexibility caused by the current funding system that provides funding in at least 23 “silos” – requiring careful accounting and management, with little flexibility to shift funds to programs that the school believes would provide the most benefits to students (for example, Idaho City has a well-developed, effective early education program).

We believe that the committee should consider the total taxpayer burden for education, not just the funding provided through the Idaho State Department of Education. The taxpayer burden includes:

- Funding through the Idaho State Department of Education
- Supplemental Levies
- Emergency levies
- Local bonds
- Federal funds

Taxpayers are on the hook for much more than the SDE funds.

We have learned, in the charter world, that when your funds are limited, you are forced to make careful decisions about money. One area where there is a stark difference is in building facilities. Our latest charter facilities (Connor Academy, Alturas International Academy) are costing approximately \$12,500 to \$13,000 per seat to construct or purchase and renovate. Recent district plans in the news show that districts spend from \$20,000 - \$48,000 per seat for school facilities.