

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, January 13, 2016
TIME: 3:00 P.M.
PLACE: Room WW55
MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Nonini, Souza, Den Hartog, Anthon, Buckner-Webb and Ward-Engelking
ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senator Patrick

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** convened the meeting at 3:00 p.m. and welcomed the new Senator Anthon to the Senate Education Committee (Committee).

INTRODUCTION: **Senator Anthon** introduced himself. He stated he was appointed by Governor Otter to replace Senator Cameron. Senator Anthon is from Rupert, Idaho, and resides in Declo. He works as Rupert City Manager for the City Administrator. He has five small children, and together they live on the family farm.

Chairman Mortimer also asked Page Mallory DeFord to introduce herself. **Page Mallory DeFord** introduced herself. She is the Senior class president at Skyview High School in Nampa and plays on the golf team. She hopes to attend Brigham Young University and study law.

PRESENTATION: **Penni Cyr** introduced herself as the President of the Idaho Education Association (IEA). She explained the membership and makeup of the association. She introduced IEA Executive Director Robin Nettinga and Director of Public Policy Matt Compton.

Robin Nettinga introduced Karen Echeverria, Executive Director of the Idaho School Board Association (ISBA) and Rob Winslow, the Executive Director of the Idaho Association of School Administrators (IASA). **Karen Echeverria** introduced Jess Harrison, Communication and Government Affairs Director, and staff Missy Swanson and Aaron Baldwin.

Rob Winslow introduced Phil Homer of IASA and Harold Ott, representative for the Idaho Rural Schools Association. He also introduced members of his staff, Helen Price and Tim Rosendick. **Mr. Winslow** emphasized the goal of the ISBA, IASA and IEA to work together on common interests. He also stated that he provided the committee with a handout of IASA's legislative priorities for 2016 (see attachment 1). **Robin Nettinga** noted the two priority issues: operational funding and fully funding the second year of the career ladder. She stated that the IEA identified mentoring as the third priority. She said all parties were pleased with Governor Otter's funding recommendation. **Ms. Echeverria** added that they were concerned about the rising cost of health care. The ISBA, IASA and IEA met over the interim to better work together to promote education in the state. They are prepared to address the issues that will be discussed this legislative session.

Ms. Echeverria elaborated on the main issues that the ISBA intends pursue this legislative session (see attachment 1 for full testimony). **Mr. Winslow** noted that the IASA only disagreed with the ISBA on the issue of the extra day contract. He agreed that the retention of teachers and school administrative staff is a priority (see attachment 2).

Matt Freeman, the Executive Director of the State Board of Education (SBE), explained the wide role of the SBE. He stated the SBE voted to accept the Governor's funding recommendation. He indicated that the most important recent action taken by the SBE was the Direct Admissions initiative. The initiative offered admittance to all Idaho high school seniors above a certain GPA to college or university in Idaho. He was excited about the opportunity this presented for students and looked forward to sharing the results in the coming weeks.

Idaho Superintendent of Public Instruction **Sherry Ybarra**, introduced Tim Corder, Special Assistant to the Superintendent; Pete Koehler, Deputy Superintendent; Matt McCarter, Director of Secondary Education, Career and Technical Readiness; Lisa Colón, Director of Teacher Certification and Professional Standards; Tim McMurtrey, Chief Performance Officer; Dr. Colleen Fillmore, Director of Child Nutrition Programs; Dr. Charlie Silva, Director of Special Education; Kelly Brady, Director of Mastery Education; Jeff Church, Chief Communications Officer; and Tina Polishchuk Coordinator, Advanced Opportunities.

Tim Corder said he is pleased with the increasingly positive attitude about education in Idaho. He stipulated that local authority and local control are necessary to allow districts to do their jobs successfully. He noted that there will be 18 pieces of legislation brought forward from the SBE. The legislation concerns simple fixes that should have been addressed in the past. He said the SBE had just begun to understand the implications of the new wave of federal legislation. He emphasized that the focus remains on the children of Idaho.

Marilyn Whitney, Senior Special Assistant for Education and Government Services, Governor's Office, explained the process of developing the task force recommendation for funding kindergarten through career development. The task force will be implemented through the recommendation. She said they are pleased to be ahead of the five-year time line. She told the Committee to expect initiatives for higher education as well as bridge initiatives.

Dwight Johnson, State Administrator, Professional-Technical Education (PTE), spoke about the importance and relevance of technical education. He said it connects students with real jobs and high wages. He stated that the PTE is focused on improving the image of technical education. Part of this strategy involves a name change from Professional-Technical Education to Career and Technical Education. He added that the PTE is focused on implementing legislation that was passed last year.

Terry Ryan, CEO, Idaho Charter School Network, summarized his program and introduced Angel Gonzalez and Emily McClure as part of his team. He noted that areas for continued improvement are diversity within the schools, rate of enrollment and support for growing Hispanic populations. He concluded by highlighting the successes of the state's charter schools (see attachment 3).

Briana LeClaire, Executive Director of Idaho Federation of Independent Schools, explained that the group represents a large number of schools throughout Idaho. She emphasized that there is a high demand for private schools in Idaho. However, many families cannot afford the price of private schooling and therefore do not enroll their children. She linked school choice with student achievement. **Ms. LeClaire** argued that the State of Idaho should focus on funding students as opposed to systems. She mentioned that this practice is common and accepted in higher education (see attachment 4).

Jane Wittmeyer Manager of the Coalition of Idaho Charter School Families explained the group formed in 2006. She emphasized that charter schools are publicly funded and affirmed that the group supports school choice. She indicated that the coalition will pursue legislation that concerns enrollment timing; increased funding and facilities for charter schools; creation of a revolving fund; and the right to participate in school bond elections (see attachment 5).

Chairman Mortimer thanked all of the presenters and stated that there will be many more groups that will participate in the legislative conversation about education.

He noted that the Committee would begin discussing rules when they next met.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:07 p.m.

Senator Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary

Anna Roser
Assistant