

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, January 25, 2016

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

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

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

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 Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:00 p.m.

PRESENTATION: **Chairman Mortimer** welcomed Idaho's three community college presidents to the Committee to present the endeavors of each community college. Present to give the report were the following: Dr. Jeff Fox, President, College of Southern Idaho (CSI), Dr. Joe Dunlap, President, North Idaho College (NIC) and Dr. Bert Glandon, President, College of Western Idaho (CWI). Each president introduced their staff members in attendance. **Dr. Fox** announced that Dr. Dunlap will be retiring in June of 2016.

Dr. Fox presented the joint report. He stated the shared focus of the community colleges is to cooperate in promoting, representing, supporting and serving the region to ensure the highest quality education and training for students. He emphasized the valued education students receive and how the colleges are a positive economic impact for the communities they serve. **Dr. Fox** explained how the credits earned in community colleges transfer to Idaho's institutions of higher learning. He outlined the challenges the community colleges encounter and noted employee compensation strategies as a priority. He concluded by stating each college is more alike than different.

Chairman Mortimer thanked Dr. Fox for the presentation and then opened for questions to all the presidents.

Senator Patrick asked how the career and guidance pathway is helping students select a career route. **Dr. Fox** said the guided pathway to success is an enhanced advising opportunity. He explained how they work with students to reduce debt and provide a foundation for coursework. He reminded the Committee that the colleges are educating students for jobs that often do not yet exist. **Dr. Glandon** added they are working with students to reduce student loan debt with better advising. They work diligently to keep students on their learning track. **Dr. Dunlap** explained there are now steps in place to keep students from taking out loans and not using them for education.

Senator Nonini asked Dr. Dunlap to explain the costs of the Career Technical Center at NIC and how it is being funded. **Dr. Dunlap** explained the history and problems of the program and the desire to get it updated to be more effective. He outlined the current building project and the programs it will house. He stated that classes will begin fall of 2016. **Dr. Dunlap** said the costs are for occupancy, and that is addressed in the Governor's proposed budget.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked what is the colleges' "Transitional Coordinator" job description. Each president explained that the specifics of the position are the same at each college. The goal for the coordinator is to go to the high schools and work with the students who should be going to college but are not. Each explained that the majority of the caseload is with first-generation college students. The objective is to get these students to go to college, not a particular college.

Senator Souza asked Dr. Fox to explain remediation reform. **Dr. Fox** described what the community colleges had been doing to help the remedial student and how it was not working to the level they had envisioned. He said remediation reform is taking the research on how students learn and putting into practice. He explained the courses the students are taking to advance to the necessary level and emphasized that work experience now counts towards their degree. **Dr. Glandon** and **Dr. Dunlap** reported they have the same process in place at their colleges. **Senator Souza** congratulated them all for their great work.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked if there are advantages or disadvantages of the matched scholarships between industry and the state. **Dr. Dunlap** said that these industry relationships augment the scholarships considerably. He described the NIC scholarship program and the funds generated from private industry. He said it is a much needed benefit and reduces the amount students borrow. **Dr. Glandon** explained the partnerships CWI has developed with local businesses to augment the curriculum, materials and additional funds needed to develop specific educational and technical programs. **Dr. Fox** said as industry has changed, so have the programs schools teach to stay relevant.

Senator Den Hartog asked if the college partners with a specific business, how do they keep the coursework relevant for the industry? **Dr. Glandon** stated the training is similar to an apprentice program. He gave examples how they are accomplishing that training. He stated the schools teach the basic skills and not to a corporate niche. **Dr. Dunlap** explained there are industry standards; with certifications and national exams and accrediting agencies to help set the curricula. **Dr. Fox** stated the apprentice model does allow for some flexibility.

Chairman Mortimer asked them to address the following: 1.) how they are handling declining enrollment and 2.) how they are managing the concurrent and dual enrollment in regard to Profession-Technical Education. Each president addressed declining enrollment. They echoed that enrollment in community colleges is directly inversely proportional to the economy: currently, there is a decline in enrollment in the colleges. Dual credit enrollment is growing in all of the schools and each explained how they are implementing programs to meet the demand. They are all seeing an increase in the Hispanic population and are implement programs to meet the needs of that community.

Chairman Mortimer thanked the college presidents for their presentations. He acknowledged that his wife, Judy Mortimer, was in the audience.

ADJOURNED: There being no more business, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:09 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary