



IDAHO
VIRTUAL
ACADEMY

Attachment 2

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee – I appreciate the opportunity to present to you today. My name is Kelly Edginton, and I am Head of School for Idaho Virtual Academy. I have been an educator throughout my career. I was a first grade teacher in Idaho Falls School District 91 before taking time off to raise my 3 boys. I started with IDVA as a teacher in 2002 as our school opened its doors.

- IDVA is governed by an independent 5 member Board of Directors and is the largest charter school in Idaho.
- IDVA employs 64 Highly Qualified teachers and a number of additional staff.
- Students from 44 out of 44 Idaho counties enrolled
- FRL percentage ranges between 55-65% / state average is about 40% currently we are at 55%
- 14.4% Special Education / state average is about 10%
- 32.5% of our high school students are currently enrolled in our Alternative HS program.

Many of IDVA's statistics are similar to Karen's school, so I won't go into depth with ours, but I would like you to know that

- IDVA had 146 graduates in our 7th graduating class in Spring 2015
 - 90 percent of the students who enrolled in 2011-12 school year and remained enrolled until 2014-15 graduated on time.
 - 42 students in the 2015 cohort were enrolled all four years.
 - 38 graduated from IDVA on time spring 2015.
 - Of the students in the 2015 graduation cohort, between 2011 and 2015:
 - Over 51 percent of new 12th grade students
 - Over 47 percent of new 11th grade students
 - Over 34 percent of new 10th grade students
 - Came to our school behind in credits

IDVA serves a wide variety of students. We have students earning college credit and earning honorary awards. We also have students who struggle. Some have dropped out of school and then come to us. Some have children of their own. Some have physical issues. I'd like to read a letter that a student wrote at the request of his IDVA counselor.

We have many students with many stories about why they came to IDVA. In January, our high school students took a survey. One of the questions was "why did you come to IDVA". 400 students answered that question and many commented. I made copies of these comments and am providing these to you. Please read through them when you have a moment, and you will start to get an idea of why students come to our school and to other virtual schools.

You may not realize it, but, with the exception of our kindergarteners, all of our students are transfer students. Research shows that student mobility is an at-risk factor for any student. We hired a School Social Worker a year and a half ago. Alex leads our Family Academic Support Team, which is comprised of 10 family support liaisons. Each student has a homeroom teacher, and if the student struggles, his teacher works more closely with him and his family to help. If these interventions aren't solving the issue, the student is referred to our FAST team where he will receive additional support. Our FAST team has been a wonderful addition to our school. It is also an added cost above and beyond what a traditional school has. Our school is one of the lowest funded schools in the state.

We hope, someday, to have a state accountability system that reflects mobility and at-risk issues (as Karen discussed – or talk about persistence factor and grad rate) and an equitable funding formula in order to better serve our students.

Thank you for your time today.