



West Ada

SCHOOL DISTRICT

March 14, 2016

Lori Gash

Curriculum Coordinator - Social Studies

gash.lori@westada.org

RE: House Concurrent Resolution No. 50

Points Needing Clarification: CR 50 and Idaho Statute 33-1602 (7) say very different things

- CR 50 - Line 4 specifically reads, "...given to high school seniors". While Idaho Statute 33-1602 section (7) reads, "A pupil may take the civics test, in whole or in part, at any time after enrolling in grade 7..."
 - In our district we are testing in grade 11. We do not believe it is a good idea to place an additional high-stakes graduation requirement in a student's senior year.
- CR 50, line 11 reads, "...or a test of their own design..." While ID Statute 33-1602 (7) reads, "'Civics' test means the one (100) questions used by officers of the United States citizenship and immigration services as a basis for selecting questions posed to applications for naturalization..."
 - I emailed Senator Patrick for clarification on this issue. He did confirm that the questions on the test are supposed to be from the U.S. Citizenship Test. Representative Bateman's testimony to the House Education Committee said otherwise.

Concerns and Existing Systems:

- Lines 22-25 of CR 50 go against state standards that have already been created by the State Department of Education and approved by the State Board of Education and the Legislature of the State of Idaho. According to Idaho Content Standards, **Idaho History is taught at the 4th grade level.** This Concurrent Resolution would have students tested over Fourth Grade material (taken many years prior) and some Twelfth Grade material (that is presented during the second half of second semester of the senior year). This severely limits students' opportunities to take the test, "in whole or in part," as many times as necessary to achieve success as stated in the current statute.
- IDAPA 08.02.03 – Rules Governing Thoroughness **103. 01. Instruction** – Instruction is inclusive of subject matter, content and course offerings. **Patterns of instructional organization are a local school district option.**
- IDAPA 08.02.03 - Rules Governing Thoroughness **105. 02. Content Standards** – Each student shall meet **locally established subject area standards** (using state content standards as minimum requirements). Idaho History does not exist in high school Social Studies Content Standards.

Dr. Linda Clark, *Superintendent*



West Ada

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Concerns and Existing Systems (cont.)

- IDAPA 08.02.03 - Rules Governing Thoroughness **105. 01. Credit Requirements f. Social Studies**
Five (5) credits are required, including government (2 credits), United States history (2 credits), and economics (1 credit).
 - West Ada School district requires 3 additional Social Studies credits to graduate. They include Global Perspectives (1 credit), U.S. History (2 additional credits).
- End of Course Exams are a critical component of these courses
 - The difference between our EOCs and the Citizenship test is that our EOCs contain questions that go beyond the fact-based, lower-cognitive domain level questions of who, what and when and include questions that get students to the understandings of how and why.
 - We currently administer 7 district tests to all students as a requirement of the above courses. These are administered at the schools and scored at the district office.
 - US History 10 Semester 1 – 75 item test, US History 10 Semester 2 – 75 item test
 - US History 11 Semester 1 – 79 item test, US History 11 Semester 2 – 80 item test
 - American Government Semester 1 – 74 item test, American Government Semester 2 – 70 item test
 - We also include a section on *state and local government* that the civics test does not include.
 - Economics (1 semester) – 60 item test
- We have many students who transfer in and out of our school district annually. In fact we have students who transfer into our district their senior year. Potentially these students will be tested on information they never learned.
- Financial Impact – According to the Fiscal Note, “This legislation has no fiscal impact to the general fund”. Which we all know means no additional funding will be provided to schools to caring out this change. However, this could potentially cost a significant amount of money to implement at the district level. We are talking about a huge instructional shift. People who currently teach Idaho History are elementary Certified not Secondary certified.

Requests for Consideration

- Please do not ask the State Board of Education to add questions to the Civics Test that address Idaho History. This would not be fair to students. Any educator knows that there needs to be a direct connection to what is taught and what is tested. This requirement would be putting an unfair requirement on our students, teachers, staff and schools.

Dr. Linda Clark, *Superintendent*

1303 E. Central Drive · Meridian, ID 83642 · P: (208) 855-4500 · F: (208) 350-5962