

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, March 24, 2016

TIME: 8:15 A.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Nonini, Patrick, Souza, Den Hartog, Anthon, Rohn (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 8:30 a.m.

H 630 **Representative VanOrden** presented **H 630**, Relating to Education: Provide an Additional Allocation Amount for Certain Career Technical Education Instruction Staff. She explained when the career ladder was written, teachers were recognized financially for master certificates; however those holding occupational specialist certificates were inadvertently omitted from that legislation. She said **H 630** remedies that omission. She explained the three career ladder levels for certificated personnel that was developed and noted that Professional-Technical Education is in agreement with the legislation. This legislation puts those people on the career ladder for compensation, and over the interim a subcommittee will be working to refine the rungs. **Representative VanOrden** explained the problems school districts encountered without the provision.

Senator Ward-Engelking asked how this legislation would affect agriculture teachers. **Representative VanOrden** replied that is a district discussion, but if the teacher had the occupational specialist certificate it would apply.

Senator Rohn said he likes that there is \$3,000 for instruction. He explained this helps instructors get certified without them having the financial burden. He believes that compensation will help find and keep instructors.

Senator Nonini asked if the programs that were discontinued were in rural or urban areas. **Representative VanOrden** replied the majority were in the rural school districts.

Senator Den Hartog stated she is very supportive of **H 630**. She wondered if this has been included in the State Department of Education's budget or will there be a trailer bill. **Representative VanOrden** replied it will come out of the Public Schools Stabilization Fund.

MOTION: **Senator Ward-Engelking** moved to send **H 630** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Anthon** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**. Senator Anthon will carry **H 630** to the floor.

H 629

Representative VanOrden presented **H 629**, Relating to Education: Revise Provisions Regarding the Calculation for the Educational Support Program. She said this is a fix to a distribution formulation for college and career advising. At the time, a specific formula was created to distribute the funds; however, this formula will not work for this year's appropriation. She gave the Committee handouts that showed the actual distributions by school and by district (see attachments 1 and 2). She explained how the distributions are made, with \$5,000 being the minimum amount and then pro-rated upward.

Senator Ward-Engelking said this is for grades 8 through 12 and there had been some discussion that counseling should begin in grade 7. She asked if the restriction is due to statute. **Representative VanOrden** replied in the affirmative.

MOTION:

Senator Patrick moved to send **H 629** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**. Senator Patrick will carry **H 629** to the floor.

H 627

Representative VanOrden presented **H 627**, Relating to Education: Revise Provisions Regarding Leadership Premiums. She stated that when the leadership premiums were developed, there was much discussion regarding the amount to be given. The stakeholder groups came together and decided that \$850 was a fair amount for leadership positions. She said the intent of the legislation at that time was to not give the premium to everyone, only to those who meet the qualifications as specified in statute. She explained there have been two reports provided: one from the J. A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation and the other from the State Department of Education (SDE). Each revealed that some school districts have not allocated the premiums as specified by law.

Representative VanOrden said having seen the reports and knowing what the intent of the legislation was, this body would like better accountability. The goal of **H 627** is hold school districts accountable. She said the minimum premium amount has been raised to \$900. The bill also requires more detail explaining the reason the premium was awarded.

Senator Patrick said that most schools did comply with the statutes. He asked if the changes will create an extra burden to the school districts. **Representative VanOrden** replied in the negative.

Senator Souza asked if it is possible to award districts differently for using the premium successfully. **Representative VanOrden** reported how a district had set its minimum premium at \$950 and stated there are expectations that the premiums would be at minimum amount as required by statute.

TESTIMONY:

Robin Nettinga, Executive Director, Idaho Education Association (IEA), stated on behalf of their membership that they are in opposition to **H 627** (see attachment 3). She stated the legislation states that every teacher would be eligible for the premium; however, the fiscal note does not reflect an amount large enough to cover that request. She outlined for the Committee the areas in the legislation about which the IEA has concerns. She stated that career and technical education are not the only curriculum areas in Idaho where there is a teacher shortage. **Ms. Nettinga** handed the Committee a report from the U.S. Department of Education showing where there are teacher shortages in Idaho. She explained the list of provisional authorizations issued by the SBE (see attachment 4). She pointed out that not all of the changes in the legislation are necessary. She asked that **H 627** be held in Committee and urged stakeholders to work together during the interim to ensure that the premiums are distributed in accordance with the expectations.

Senator Den Hartog asked if the IEA believes that being eligible for a premium means an educator will automatically receive the premium. **Ms. Nettinga** replied in the negative. She explained the legislation states that every teacher in the State is eligible for the premium. Yet if a teacher were to review the funding formula, they would see that there are not enough appropriations to fulfill that statement.

Senator Ward-Engelking said getting consensus from stakeholders in developing legislation makes the decisions better for all parties involved.

Representative VanOrden said the premiums were put into place prior to the career ladder legislation. She outlined the changes made to the statute with the passage of the career ladder. She explained the professional-technical education was added because districts weren't aware that teaching area could also receive premiums. She stated there needs to be confidence in the districts to administer the premiums for leadership and hard-to-fill positions.

Senator Ward-Engelking said she is concerned that the legislation singles out one group of educators over another. She said it sends the message that one group is more important than another.

MOTION: **Senator Ward-Engelking** moved to **H 627** to the 14th Order for possible amendment. **Senator Rohn** seconded the motion.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: **Senator Den Hartog** moved to send **H 627** to the floor for a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Nonini** seconded the motion.

Senator Den Hartog explained that she doesn't understand the concerns regarding professional-technical education being singled out because the legislation also references other hard-to-fill positions. She doesn't believe that one position is being elevated over another. She said she didn't support the original bill from the SDE that increased the premium on the grounds that there were not reasons given to support the increase. It is her hope that those districts that did not distribute the premiums as intended hear the message this legislation is sending.

Senator Anthon said he has reservations about the bill. Due to the lateness, he is going to support this bill in order to get something done this year, with the understanding that stakeholders will come together during the interim to craft something better.

The substitution motion passed by **voice vote**. **Senator Den Hartog** will carry **H 627** on the floor. **Senators Ward-Engelking** and **Rohn** requested that they be recorded as voting nay.

ADJOURNED: There being no more business, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 9:06 a.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary