

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, January 25, 2017

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Nonini, Den Hartog, Guthrie, Crabtree, 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) meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

PRESENTATION: University of Idaho (UI). Dr. Chuck Staben, President, introduced his staff and updated the Committee about the work of the UI. He highlighted the land grant status, a new strategic plan to lead them through 2025, and how UI is ready to take on challenges to serve the state.

Dr. Staben outlined the economic impact the UI has on the State's economy. He detailed the great investment UI is for the State and the students who attend. He highlighted the various degrees offered at UI and spoke highly of the law school and the medical school partnership through the WWAMI program (Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho). His focus to change the college-going culture begins with high school graduates and he detailed the programs that encourage enrollment. He also spoke about the variety of tuition options for students to help them save money.

Dr. Staben explained the results of the UI's McClure Center study. "Life After High School Study" found the UI should work hard to maintain affordability and make an extra effort to reach out to minorities, veterans, and first generation college students. **Dr. Staben** highlighted the national merit scholars, honors program, service projects, and the ROTC programs that are available to incoming students. He spoke about the UI computer programs with North Idaho College (NIC), the WWAMI program, and the involvement with a variety of research programs and industry partnership growth. He explained the critical need for the Governor's recommendation of a \$10 million dollar investment in the Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment (see Attachment 1).

DISCUSSION: Senator Den Hartog asked what is the primary source of research funding. **Dr. Staben** replied the funding comes from various federal agencies.

Senator Thayn asked how the Adult Completers proposal impacts UI and what the purposed enrollment trends will be in 2025. **Dr. Staben** replied the expectation is that enrollment will grow by 50 percent. He said currently the Carnegie Institution ranks UI as an R2 school. He believes by 2015 they will be moved up to a R1 ranking which will also encourage enrollment increases. In regards to the Adult Completers scholarship proposal, he said UI tends to be a destination school and the older students don't tend to live in Moscow. He explained they are working and settle in their communities but UI can serve them with distance education programs from the UI centers across the State.

Chairman Moritmer asked for the top three items for the 2025 strategic plan. **Dr. Staben** explained there are four areas in the plan: to innovate; to engage; to transform; and to cultivate. Each with its own matrix.

PRESENTATION: Idaho Parent Teacher Association (PTA). **Maria Lorcher**, Vice President of Advocacy, explained her role is to educate the Committee about the PTA. The PTA board members are volunteers and represent the nine regions across the State. **Ms. Lorcher** highlighted the different PTA activities, programs, parental participation in committees, the work with the State Board of Education (SBE), and the advisory boards members sit on. She explained the PTA is in support of the "Keep Idaho Kids Safe Act." She said the elimination of curricular fees at the district level is a problem for programs within the schools. Ms. Lorcher explained the PTA helps raise extra money but it is not enough to cover all the costs in the various programs. She encouraged the Committee to make discretionary funds available to the districts in order to fund school programs.

DISCUSSION: **Chairman Mortimer** asked if the PTA offers programs to engage parents in a child's education. **Ms. Lorcher** answered they make tools available for schools and local PTA's for better communications statewide, as well as leadership training.

Chairman Mortimer asked if there are any direct training courses online for parent training. **Ms. Lorcher** explained the national PTA website's webinar series and said training resources are available. She said the PTA is currently exploring ways to reach the parents with the technology currently used by today's parents.

S 1014 **Relating to School Technology; Requires each school district and public charter school to submit a technology plan to the State Department of Education (SDE) and to provide requirements for the plan.** **Blake Youde**, Chief Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer, SBE presented **S 1014**. He said the legislation is based on lessons learned from the former technology grant program. He said that while the districts had good ideas when requesting technology funds, it did not appear they had a sustainability grant for that technology. The legislation amends Idaho Code § 33-4804 to require that public school districts and public charter schools submit to the SDE a plan for improving student academic achievement and career technical achievement, using technology in the classroom.

The four-year plan is to be based on a needs assessment, identified goals and objectives, a schedule for implementation, and a schedule for replacement and upgrades. The plan also addresses professional development for staff and will be reviewed by the district annually and, if updated, resubmitted. The Board will work with the SDE and the Idaho Education Technology Association (IETA) to develop a plan template to ensure there is a consistent definition on technology across the state.

DISCUSSION: **Vice Chairman Thayn** stated this legislation replaces a grant program in which school districts are to prove they need the fund, with a line item amount based upon support units. He asked how the funds will be distributed. **Mr. Youde** For the last two years, the legislature has distributed classroom technology funds on a formulated basis, distributed to every school district. Instead of applying for funds with an idea of how to use it, now the legislature proactively distributes the funds and we're looking for a plan that shows how the funds will be used and how they will be sustained

Vice Chairman Thayn said the legislation does not specify that school districts submit a plan or even the quality of the plan. He asked if the school districts do not submit the plan will they still receive the funds. **Mr. Youde** stated It is important for the SBE to have plans from districts that show how the funds are to be used as well as have a plan for continued effective use in the classroom. The plans are similar to the literacy intervention plan, and the college and career advising plan. It is not so much about receiving approval for the plan but rather to show the intent of effective use of public funds.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked who at the SBE will review the plans. **Mr. Youde** replied the SDE will be reviewing the plan, which is consistent with the former technology grant requests.

Chairman Mortimer asked if reporting of the plans would be helpful for the technology council for future needs. **Mr. Youde** answered in the affirmative. He said the technology is not entirely based on the hardware and software, but at looking at the building's infrastructure.

TESTIMONY: **Kate Haas**, Idaho Education Technical Association (IETA) testified on the importance of infrastructure, which has been a priority for IETA. She stressed the classroom can only function if everything else in place, such as code, intent language, and rules to keep pace with changing needs.

DISCUSSION: There was further discussion from stakeholders and Committee member regarding the complexities of reporting requirements and the possibility of centralizing and bundling reporting for expediency.

Chairman Mortimer explained that this issue is large and complex. An ad hoc committee has been put together to study the data the SBE collects. Debbie Crichfield, Board Member, SBE, is spearheading the committee which will identify the specific reports being received from the districts and which reports should go back to the districts. Significant progress has already been made with just two meetings. Chairman Mortimer welcomed anyone interested to join any of the meetings. The next meeting is February 9, 2017.

Senator Winder asked if it would be appropriate at some time during the current session to have the group bring an update to its findings to the Committee. Chairman Mortimer replied that this would be done.

Senator Crabtree asked if the IASA is measuring the product or the process or learning. **Mr. Winslow** said the districts are looking for outcomes. He stated the technology information is just about the infrastructure.

Comments and questions centered on measuring process versus product (student achievement). **Mr. Winslow**, Executive Director of IASA said the committee is looking at efficiencies, accountabilities, flexibility and local control. **Ms. Karen Echeverria**, Executive Director, ISBA clarified that if school districts receive funds, they are required to do the plans in any case. If they are to be submitted to the SDE that will ensure there is one location where all plans are located, which provides easy access to compare and emulate successes.

MOTION: **Senator Nonini** moved to hold **S 1014** until the call of the chair. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

S 1015 **Relating to Education; Revise the Definitions and Make Technical Corrections.** **Mr. Youde** said this legislation clarifies specific definitions in reporting requirements of the career ladder. It clarifies that instructional staff also includes teachers who serve in a mentor or teacher leader position, expands the way measurable achievement is determined, and each element of performance criteria is reported so as to determine movement on the career ladder. **Mr. Youde** said these changes are consistent with Idaho Code, § 33-1004b, aligning the definition of performance requirement with the section in code that already exists.

Senator Ward-Engelking commented this was a great bill for the career ladder.

MOTION: **Senator Ward Engelking** moved to send **S 1015** to the floor with a do pass recommendation. **Senator Thayn** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

PASSED THE GAVEL: Chairman Mortimer passed the gavel to Vice Chairman Thayn.

DOCKET NO. 08.0203.1604 **Rules Governing Thoroughness: Incorporated by Reference - Special Education Revisions.** **Tim McMurtrey**, Deputy Superintendent of Operation, State Department of Education (SDE) said the proposed rule in regards to the Idaho Special Education Department manual. He introduced Dr. Charlie Silva, Director, Special Education, SDE, and asked her to speak to the rule.

Dr. Silva said the rule would incorporate, from the manual, the pending rule as outlined by the federal references, removing outdated references and would to align the rules with the current practices in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). It will also fix technical errors and show compliance with federal requirements.

MOTION: **Senator Ward-Engelking** moved to accept **Docket No 08.0203.1604**. **Senator Guthrie** seconded the motion. Motion passed by **voice vote**.

DOCKET NO. 08.0203.1612 **Rules Governing Thoroughness: Alternative Assessment.** **Dr. Silva** said this is a temporary rule. She explained that in 2011 Idaho joined the alternative recommended two state standards to be adopted through the temporary rule: 1.) test administration, allowing consistency in the assessment of the tests taken by students; 2.) students to take an alternative test, being in compliance with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

DISCUSSION: **Chairman Mortimer** said the performance level descriptors are interesting and asked how they were developed and what input came from the State for the alternative assessments. **Dr. Silva** answered it was created by a collaborative group of stakeholders from various states across the U.S.; to include teachers from all over the state of Idaho. The feedback from most of the teachers validated the process was meaningful. **Chairman Mortimer** asked if the temporary rule would be seen again in the following years. **Dr. Silva** answered in the affirmative.

MOTION: **Senator Nonini** moved to accept **Docket No 08.0203.1612**. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. Motion passed by **voice vote**.

PASSED THE GAVEL: Vice Chairman Thayn passed the gavel to Chairman Mortimer.

**DOCKET NO.
08.0202.1605**

Rules Governing Uniformity: Incorporated by Reference-Standards for Idaho School Buses and Operations. Mr. McMurtrey explained the proposed rule, which reflects changes from the national level. Additional language clarifies and reflects manufacturing or operational procedures and added to the standards for Idaho school buses and operations. Mr. McMurtrey said the language directly reflects that in Idaho code in regard to reimbursable mileage. He described the language in detail and introduced Steve Pieper, Region III Transportation Specialist, SDE, who was available for additional questions.

A question-and-answer period brought up concerns by Senator Guthrie on reimbursable mileage constraints and possible hardship for districts that incorporate the use of travel coaches and other vehicles that are used for non-reimbursable miles.

Mr. Steve Pieper directed Senator Guthrie's question to Dr. Alexandra McCann, Financial Specialist, SDE, who gave details about non-conforming vehicles, proration of mileage and the overall funding formula. Dr. McCann offered to meet with Senator Guthrie and others to discuss the issue in more detail.

MOTION: Chairman Mortimer moved to hold **Docket No 08.0202.1605** to the discretion of the Chairman.

ADJOURNED: There being no more business, Chairman Mortimer adjourned the meeting at 4:49 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary

Jeanne Clayton
Assistant Secretary