

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Friday, February 10, 2017

TIME: 8:30 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

MEMBERS: Chairman VanOrden, Vice Chairman McDonald, Representatives Shepherd, Boyle, Clow, Mendive (Mendive), Kerby, Cheatham, Amador, DeMordaunt, Moon, Syme, Kloc (Tway), McCrostie, Toone

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative Shepherd

GUESTS: Finia Dinh, Angel Hemingway, The STEM Action Center; Dani Backer, Shannon Erickson, Kelli Rich, Meg Rowe, and Dr. Teri Thaemert, Boise School District; Dennis Stevenson, Administrative Rules Coordinator; Debra Smith and Kristen Childs, West Ada School District; Harold Ott, Idaho Rural School Administrators; Clark Corbin, Idaho Educational News; Rhonda Heggen, Idaho State Department of Education; Danielle Desjarlais, Katie Bösch-Wilson, Annette Malone, Anthony Butler, and Kaitlyn Butler, Nampa School District; Michele Carney, Boise State University.

Chairman VanOrden called the meeting to order at 8:32 A.M.

MOTION: **Rep. McCrostie** made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2, 3, and 6, 2017 meetings. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Superintendent Sherri Ybarra, Idaho State Department of Education (SDE), stated thoughtful steps had been taken to refine standards so as to meet educational needs. They were constructed with the mindset of fulfilling what the legislature had asked them to do in **H 314** during the 2015 Legislative Session.

DOCKET NO. 08-0203-1601: **Scott Cook**, Director of Academic Services, SDE, presented on **Docket No. 08-0203-1601**, which adopts the Idaho Content Standards. Mr. Cook summarized the process of the working committees and commented on the critical role of the working committees in putting together the recommended changes. Through these content standards, Idaho can have high expectations for all students. These standards also allow for the local control, right, and responsibility of the districts. The SDE's goals during the review were to provide opportunities for public comment, which was achieved by getting the word out through several outlets, as well as having complete transparency. There was support for the higher expectations, and negotiated rule making took place in April 2016. The most substantial changes are in the Arts & Humanities, as well as new standards for Computer Science.

Dani Backer, Boise School District, testified in **opposition** to **Docket No. 08-0203-1601, Section 105.01.g**, which clarifies Interdisciplinary Humanities language. She urged the committee to question what the rule change is trying to do. She asked what failure exists in the current system. The rule change removes literature, history, philosophy, and architecture; this exclusion goes against university and career standards. In response to questions, Ms. Backer clarified that her issue was not with the credit standards, but with the changing of the definition of "humanities," and the removal of "history, literature, and philosophy" from that definition.

Rep. McCrostie stated that in striking out the language, the rule change does add interdisciplinary requirements. He asked if this would abate her concerns by the inclusion. **Ms. Backer** said that she was concerned about the removal of local control.

Shannon Erickson, Kelli Rich, Meg Rowe, and Dr. Teri Thaemert, Boise School District; **Dennis Stevenson**, Administrative Rules Coordinator; **Debra Smith** and **Kristen Childs**, West Ada School District; **Harold Ott**, Idaho Rural School Administrators; **Clark Corbin**, Idaho Educational News; **Danielle Desjarlais, Katie Bösch-Wilson, Annette Malone, and Anthony Butler**, Nampa School District; **Michele Carney**, Boise State University testified in support of **Docket No. 08-0203-1601**.

The Idaho Content Standards put students at the center of attention; learning and teaching are now very student-focused and the students are in charge of their own learning. This opinion is very widespread. Classes are more rigorous now and higher standards are placed on the students. The teachers have studied and discussed these standards. These standards also provide a good "manual" for new teachers coming in. They create a continuum of learning, as students build upon learning and standards as they move up through the grades. As a result, lifelong learners are created. The class environment is more independent, students discuss their learning with peers, and they are more likely to take risks. Also, the class environment is more positive for the teachers, which has a trickle-down effect to the students.

In response to a question on what parent interaction was like, **Ms. Malone** stated parents seem to think the Idaho Content Standards are curriculum; but the Standards are a guiding document for teaching concepts.

The Content Standards allow students to learn methods and procedures; it has been a big improvement from past years. The Idaho Content Standards create critical thinkers, as well as prepares students for citizenship and college.

Ms. Rich said preliminary results show student understanding of conceptual ideas in math; the emphasis is now no longer on concepts that did not work with students. The standard change has altered her pedagogical perception; the result in her students is that they are outperforming peers in fact fluency. Furthermore, special needs students are addressed: many special needs students are visual thinkers, and the standards greatly allow for those uses. **Ms. Rowe** said from her perspective, students are now not just calculators: they are rational thinkers, who are prepared when they reach higher grades. There is also a high level of collaboration between her students.

Teachers now teach through more of a leading and guiding approach. Students feel confident in their math skills, and they pick up concepts quickly and keep them long term. The testifiers applauded the use of visuals in learning and the positive effect it has had on students.

Math standards are now taught with an end goal: all topics and methods are taught, but now with the lean toward using them together and toward problems in many areas.

In response to a question, **Ms. Carney** said very few teachers want to go back to old standards; instead, they want to know how to teach the standards.

Across the board, there is an emphasis on "Idahoizing" standards and making curriculum specific to each classroom.

In closing, **Mr. Cook** wished to clarify **Section 105.01.g** of **Docket No. 08-0203-1601**, in response to earlier testimony. He said this section change intends to clarify "interdisciplinary." It is a clarification of language, not a change of language. The sections addresses how a breadth of experiences are needed to make sure an entire class satisfies the requirement.

In response to a question, **Mr. Cook** said US History I or II count toward graduation if they meet the "Interdisciplinary Humanities" requirement. Piloting has not been done, because the requirements have not been changed.

The concern is with why the rule change is happening if there are no issues with how it currently stands. While the rule change might not effect a large district, it may effect a smaller one.

MOTION: **Rep. Kerby** made a motion to approve **Docket No. 08-0203-1601** with the exception of **Section 105.01.g**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:37 A.M.

Representative VanOrden
Chair

Shelby Winkel
Secretary