

MINUTES
JOINT MEETING
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 16, 2017

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Lincoln Auditorium WW2

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Nonini, Den Hartog, Guthrie, Crabtree, Rohn (Buckner-Webb), and Ward-Engelking
Chairman VanOrden, Vice Chairman McDonald, Representatives Shepherd, Clow, Mendive, Kerby, Cheatham, Amador, DeMordaunt, Moon, Syme, Kloc, McCrostie, and Toone

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Representative Boyle

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 3:00 p.m.

PRESENTATION: **Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). Joe Garcia**, President spoke to the Committees regarding the legislation that benefits student and the institutions of higher learning in Idaho. He compared Idahoans educational standing in comparison to other Western states. He spoke about employment trends and emphasize by 2020, 68 percent of the jobs in Idaho will require some sort of college credential. He said the job growth coming out of the recession has been for those individuals with postsecondary certification.

Mr. Garcia referred the Committee to the report "Knocking at the College Door" (see Attachment 1) and explained the statistics of educational growth. He outlined the following: 1.) overall high school graduate trends; 2.) public school trends; 3.) private school trends; 4.) academic preparation and achievement; and 5.) educational attainment. **Mr. Garcia** emphasized that Idaho is doing better than most states in preparing students for the future. He cautioned the Committees by stating the current workforce is getting older and the replacement workforce is declining. Based on WICHE's research findings, he recommended solutions for the State's educational goal and the employment gap.

Senator Guthrie asked if on-the-job skills are reflected in the statistics. **Mr. Garcia** replied that training is just as valuable as a certificate. He said on the job skills have not been captured in the research results and acknowledged there is value in that knowledge.

Senator Thayn asked how Idaho educational programs have benefited students. **Mr. Garcia** replied one program that stands out is dual enrollment. He said those students go on to college at a higher rate with little remediation. The State is good about trying innovative ideas and monitoring them. This State is also good about holding schools and the institutions of higher learning accountable for the return on investment.

Representative DeMordaunt asked if he knew the percentage of adults who have some education but no certificate or degree. **Mr. Garcia** replied it is about 28 percent of those between the ages of 25 to 34 years: approximately 62,000 individuals.

PRESENTATION: Report – Teacher Evaluations. **Blake Youde**, Chief Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer, State Board of Education (SBE)' presented to the Committees the findings of the SBE's phase one which focuses more on process and compliance. The teacher evaluation review was conducted during the academic year 2015-16. He said today they will review four major topics: 1.) why did the board do this review; 2.) what was the process; 3.) what were the findings; and 4.) recommendations for continued implementation. He said the evaluations were done because it is a State statute requirement.

Mr. Youde said the SBE, by statute, is commissioned to undertake the review process. He explained the process the SBE utilized in the evaluation review. The SBE randomly selected sample administrators and their instructional staff and pupil staff employees to be independently reviewed. The SBE worked with Idaho practitioners and the State's teacher preparation programs to conduct the reviews to determine if evaluations are being conducted with fidelity to the State's framework for teaching evaluations. He explained evaluation became necessary due to the career ladder implementation. Movement on the rungs determine a teacher's salary apportionment which comes from the State's General Fund.

Mr. Youde reported the findings. He said district administrators worked hard to accurately evaluate teachers in Idaho. Some districts appear to not be in compliance with the overall expectations, yet the opposite is true: they are earnestly trying to adhere to the process and provide meaningful feedback to their staff. He said it is evident that the evaluations need to be more clearly aligned with code and rule. The SBE made recommendations that will help administrators meet the requirements (see Attachments 2, 3, and 4).

Senator Ward-Engelking said the list of evaluators is impressive. She asked if the evaluations components are relevant for evaluating pupil services staff. **Mr. Youde** replied that concern has been addressed by legislation during this session and better aligns with the career ladder rungs. **Senator Ward-Engelking** asked why two formal observations were difficult to achieve. **Mr. Youde** replied the two documented observations in the rule are a minimum standard. There is nothing in the reporting documents for evaluators to report informal observations.

Representative McDonald asked if the evaluation structure is standardized from public school district to public school district. **Mr. Youde** replied administrators' evaluation training is required by 2018; this should accomplish uniform evaluations. He said in using the Danielson framework for evaluations there will be variation when there is alignment versus constricted adherence to a specific framework. The SBE believes in local control for school districts which allows them to enhance or augment their evaluations. **Representative McDonald** asked if the career ladder could be compromised if the evaluation standards are not uniform. **Mr. Youde** explained in detail the statewide framework for the career ladder structure. He said there are multiple factors that neutralize any inconsistencies and imbalances of evaluations in the school districts.

Representative McCrostie asked if the SBE has an acceptable level for school district's compliance to the evaluations. **Mr. Youde** replied the goal is 100 percent. SBE will be reviewing those districts to better understand why they were not in compliance.

Vice Chairman Thayn said he appreciates the work of the SBE regarding the teacher evaluations. He stated there is value in evaluations: but evaluations can overshadow student outcome. **Mr. Youde** acknowledged his concerns. He said academic achievement is the number one interest of the SBE.

Senator Guthrie said measuring teacher competency is important. The evaluations create a pathway in the event of a dismissal. He asked if the evaluations have an objectivity component. **Mr. Youde** replied in the affirmative. He explained the four domains contain different elements which can be applied to a variety of subjects. The goal of the elements is to allow for flexibility in observation. In developing the career ladder the concern was the accountability of State funds as they are used for teacher salaries. The teacher evaluation process was the solution.

Senator Den Hartog asked for details regarding the evaluation clearinghouse. **Mr. Youde** replied evaluation clearinghouse is a central location where administrators can share their best practices in conducting evaluations.

Representative Kerby said he commends the SBE for this outstanding process. He said the SBE conclusions and recommendations demonstrate the teacher evaluation process is on the right track. He said he believes within the next two years, 100 percent of the school districts will be in compliance. He said he would like to see the same intensity and interest in student reading, math, and writing. He stated it is time to put the Legislature's attention directed at student achievement. **Mr. Youde** replied the SBE would like to focus on student achievement and improving education opportunities.

Chairman VanOrden said this teacher evaluation tool was a tool the State already developed and was using. She explained the rationale for using the current teacher evaluation tool. This tool helps teachers to better craft their trade and the State to send appropriate funding allocations to districts for teacher salaries. Rather than a multitude of tools being used this is one tool that is used for a multitude of purposes.

Chairman Mortimer asked the Committee members to write to the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee (JAFAC), in one sentence, where they would like to see education spending be directed. He said it is helpful as the Chairman go before JFAC to advocate the desires of the Committees.

PRESENTATION: **Chairman Mortimer** thanked Hannah Smith for her service to the Committee. **Ms. Smith** took the podium and reported her plans for next year and expressed her appreciation for this opportunity.

ADJOURNED: There being no more business, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:27 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary