

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, February 21, 2017

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Nonini, Den Hartog, Guthrie, Crabtree, Buckner-Webb, and Ward-Engelking

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:**

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 3:07 p.m.

PRESENTATION: "No Time to Lose" How to Build a World-Class Education System. Julie Davis Bell, Group Director, Education Program, National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) said she is the State's liaison from NCSL. She is the point of first contact and can help fulfill any informational needs or issues Idaho Legislative members requests.

Ms. Bell reported on the findings from the report "No Time to Lose." She explained the makeup of NCSL International Education Study Group (Group) whose findings commissioned the report. She explained the 18 months of work in which 22 legislators and six legislative staff members studied the 10 top performing countries or provinces educational practices. They were looking for what lessons the states might learn from the world's top performing countries (see Attachment 1). **Ms. Bell** said at the end of the study the group came together to present a synopsis of what they learned. She said there are two concerns: 1.) the bad news is the U.S. is falling behind; and 2.) the good news is they studied systems that are high-performing and could be easily implemented by states.

Ms. Bell detailed the common elements of high-performing countries: 1.) children come to school ready to learn, and extra support is given to struggling students so that all have the opportunity to learn; 2.) a world-class teaching profession supports a world-class instructional system, where every student has access to highly-effective teacher and is expected to succeed; 3.) a highly effective, intellectually rigorous system of career and technical education is available to those preferring an applied education; and 4.) individual reforms are connected and aligned as parts of a clearly planned and careful designed comprehensive system.

Ms. Bell said the next concern the Group had was how to disseminate the information that had been gathered. She detailed the steps states might take to improve educational development which are as follows: 1.) build teams and set priorities; 2.) study and learn from top performers; 3.) create a shared statewide vision; 4.) benchmark policies; 5.) get started on one lesson learned; 6.) work through messiness; and 7.) invest the time. For each recommendation, she detailed the variety of ways states are working to advance the conversation.

Ms. Bell reported phase 2 is ready to be launched. The Group is interested in learning more about specific implementation strategies in the top performing countries, and support state-based activities to study and learn about what works. She said there is an urgent call to action. She said the Group feels there is need to communicate that there is an urgency to act. Their comments included "We cannot let another generation settle for anything less," and "if they can do it so can we."

Vice Chairman Thayne asked what propelled those countries to improve their education. **Ms. Bell** replied some of the countries were in economic dire straits and needed to make changes. They understood that education helps improve the economic standing of the country. She said the Asian countries have designed their education system to be strong.

Senator Guthrie asked if there is data to support that the U.S. is lagging in education, and if so, is it the delivery or funding issue. **Ms. Bell** replied the data, from Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which is a worldwide study done every three years on a sample group of 15-year-olds, shows the U.S. is behind. She explained many students are doing very well in school, but overall student achievement is lagging.

Senator Nonini said it's been two and half decades where education reform has been the top subject and nothing seems to have changed. He asked Ms. Bell to define funding reform. **Ms. Bell** replied the Group also shares his frustration. She said the Group will study funding in phase 2. She stated that the majority of the top performing countries spend far less per student than does the U.S. She said in all of these countries teachers' salaries were higher than in the U.S. She commented that teachers in the top performing nations are treated more professionally.

Senator Nonini asked if the lack of discipline in the classroom has helped to perpetuate the decline in education or are there other barriers. **Ms. Bell** replied there are so many different issues that contribute to overall education quality. The Group said that highly qualified, highly trained, and highly effective teachers with effective professional development lead to better education.

Senator Nonini asked if there were accountability measurements for student performance were reported. **Ms. Bell** replied the top performing countries don't think about accountability the same way as the U.S. None of the top countries have a school-based accountability system. The accountability is much more independent and rests on the student and on the teacher to bring that student up to the learning level. She reported these countries test a lot but the tests are different. They are high stake tests which determine a student's future educational path.

Senator Ward-Engelking remarked the report stated high performing countries regard teaching as an honorable profession and prioritize teaching over testing. She asked if Ms. Bell would comment on those values. **Ms. Bell** replied in the top performing countries, teaching is a profession that people would aspire to with high salaries, quality professional development.

Senator Ward-Engelking said there is a tremendous amount of time spent testing and not enough time educating the students. She asked if the top performing schools mainstream their students. **Ms. Bell** replied she did not know. She said regarding testing, the Group was stunned to learn these top-performing countries did not administer accountability and assessment tests. **Senator Ward-Engelking** commended her and the Group on their work. She said it's very difficult to recruit into the teaching profession. She believes that teachers are bearing the brunt of the educational demise rather than society in general. **Ms. Bell** replied the comments are reflection of what was observed by the Group. She said the public's attitude needs to change in order to elevate the profession so better qualified people are recruited.

Chairman Mortimer asked Ms. Bell to expand on the importance of applied education in the top performing countries. **Ms. Bell** said there is a new appreciation and value on career technical education (CTE) in postsecondary education. These countries made CTE a career option for their students to pursue. That option fits and serves students better.

H 0073

Relating to Community Colleges; Amend, Technical Corrections, Revise and Clarify. Representative Lance Clow, District 24, explained **H 0073** affects community colleges and their ability to offer upper division classes and upper division degrees. He pointed out to the Committee that there are two community colleges in the State that can do that with permission from the State Board of Education; however the College of Southern Idaho (CSI) does not afford that option.

Representative Clow explained the population criteria necessary for the Community Colleges to offer upper division courses and degrees. He said the county in which CSI resides, does not meet that criteria. This would change the population criteria from county to Community College taxing district. He explained the change in legislation was prompted by discussions regarding teacher shortages and the ability to remedy it through offering education degrees. **Representative Clow** said the technical changes in the legislation bring wording into current language.

Senator Guthrie asked why the large difference in tuition between the two year and four year institutions. **Representative Clow** replied in the community college level courses the instructors' salaries are lower because they are usually not PhD's or tenured. He said the property taxes help keep the school operating. If the community colleges were to offer upper degree courses the accounting process would be separate. **Senator Guthrie** asked if building usage costs would be allocated accordingly. **Representative Clow** replied that has not been determined because none of the community colleges have offered upper division level courses. He said he expects that the SBE would develop rules and guidelines to determine those concerns. He said he doesn't believe CSI will be offering four year degrees in the near future.

TESTIMONY:

Senator Jim Patrick, District 25, said his district is part of the taxing district for CSI. He said the community would benefit if there is the ability to offer four year degrees. Currently, the residence must move from their community to complete their degree: this is a hardship. He believes with the teacher shortages in the rural communities, CSI could someday offer education degrees. This legislation is in anticipation should the need for upper division classes arise they would be ready. He asked that the Committee support this legislation.

Blake Youde, Chief Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer, State Board of Education (SBE) said the SBE is in full support of this legislation and it is part of the legislative agenda. He said in regards to building usage the legislation does address Senator Guthrie's concerns. The ability to add upper division classes has been in statute for community colleges. The oversight is in the population parameters which exclude CSI. Before upper division classes would be offered at the community college level, the SBE would do a thorough feasibility investigation.

Chairman Mortimer asked that the fiscal note be updated before it goes to the Senate floor.

MOTION:

Senator Thayne moved to send **H 0073** to the floor with a do pass recommendation. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion.

Senator Guthrie said he will not support the bill. He said the building usage for upper division classes are in code but comes from the taxpayers. The community colleges have the ability to go out and construct or lease buildings. The expansion from county to district adds more taxpayers into the burden of building costs. Higher education has issues with lower enrollment and loss of revenue; this bill could add to that burden. He indicated he would be voting against it today.

Senator Crabtree asked for clarification regarding the fiscal impact. **Chairman Mortimer** replied the Committee can act on this legislation today because the fiscal impact in the current year does not impact the General Fund.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Senator Crabtree moved to hold **H 0073** until the **Call of the Chair** pursuant to the fiscal impact information. **Senator Guthrie** second the motion.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Senator Nonini moved to not hold **H 0073**. **Senator Winder** second motion.

Senator Nonini said the SBE is quick in getting the fiscal notes corrected and he is confident that the correction will be made before the Bill is in the third reading.

The motion passed by **voice vote**. **Senators Guthrie** and **Crabtree** are recorded as voting nay.

The motion to **hold H 0073** in Committee failed by **voice vote**.

The motion to send **H 0073** to the floor with a **do pass recommendation** passed by **voice vote**. **Senator Guthrie** is recorded as voting nay.

Senator Patrick will carry the bill on the floor.

ADJOURNED: There being no more business, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary