

MINUTES  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Monday, February 27, 2017  
**TIME:** 3:00 P.M.  
**PLACE:** Room WW55  
**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Nonini, Den Hartog, Guthrie, Buckner-Webb, and Ward-Engelking  
**ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Senator Crabtree

**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. Chairman Mortimer welcomed the guests and read from "A Heap O'Living Along Life's Highway," by Eager A. Guest the poem, *Be a Friend*.

**PRESENTATION: Imagine Learning.** **Louis Piconi**, Executive Vice President, Think Through Math (TTM) said he started this program in 2002 with the simple idea that a computer system could be developed to help make math tutoring massively affordable. The program began with 23 students and has now grown to 3.5 million students. In 2016 they had the opportunity to partner with another company, Imagine Learning, and is now known as Imagine Math.

**Mr. Piconi** said the system works on student motivation. He explained how by solving and completing certain math programs students have the ability to be rewarded and donate those rewards to charities. He said this program creates adaptive learning pathways for students and creates reports for teachers so they know how their students are achieving relative to their grade level. He emphasized that program uses rigorous math problems. **Mr. Piconi** discussed how a student moves through problem-solving. He said if the student is unable to solve a problem, live teachers connect and work with them to address those learning issues. Student instruction is targeted to their needs. A student's progress is reported to their teachers, school administrators, and parents.

**Mr. Piconi** reported the progress and statistics of TTM in Utah and Texas. He stated TTM students had higher Student Assessment for Growth and Excellence (SAGE) results than those who had not used TTM. He said in Idaho, they are in 86 school districts, 300 schools, and impacting 48,430 students with over 288,000 lessons and 20 million problems completed. He said the program is targeted to those students in the third through eighth grade. He explained the different reports that are generated for the state. He concluded his presentation by highlighting the variety of student motivational programs.

**Senator Guthrie** asked if students focusing their time on one subject area will cause the knowledge in another subject area to deteriorate. **Mr. Piconi** replied that is a possibility. He said a well rounded education is important. When student spend extra time learning mathematics, rather than playing video games, it puts those children ahead in their classroom. He said research shows that children during the summer, who accomplish two hours a week of mathematics, are ahead of their grade level when they return to school.

**Vice Chairman Thayn** asked how students are able to access TTM. **Mr. Piconi** asked Marisa Allen, Imagine Learning, to answer that question. **Ms. Allen** said her team works with districts, school leaders, parents, and students to bring about product awareness and explain the services TTM offers. She said the push to get into schools is coming from Imagine Learning.

**Senator Den Hartog** asked if Imagine Math has a statewide contract. If so what are the specifics of the contract. **Mr. Piconi** replied there is a statewide contract. He said they served 32,000 students and in 2016 they opened up to a statewide site license and that is renewed every year. TTM is funded through the State Department of Education (SDE) at \$1.3 million and every student in grades third through eighth has the ability to access the program.

**Chairman Mortimer** asked if they would report the work in Utah. **Eric Hayfin**, Imagine Learning, replied TTM is pleased with the results they are seeing regarding the Utah students who are using TTM. TTM is often compared to competitors, it is showing that TTM students are achieving at a greater rate.

**Senator Nonini** asked if they have worked or reached out to Idaho's STEM Action Center. **Ms. Allen** replied in the affirmative. A partnership has not yet been established due to their newness.

**PRESENTATION: Idaho State University (ISU) – Poly Tech. Dr. Laura Woodworth-Nye**, Executive Vice President and Provost, ISU provided an overview of the Polytechnic Institute (PI) proposal for the Idaho Falls, Idaho market. She explained PI would administer comprehensive undergraduate degrees with a component in energy and environment and a component for research. She explained the educational structure that ISU offered for general education degrees which allowed faculty to commute to Idaho Falls, deliver the content, and return to Pocatello. They discovered this arrangement did not accomplish the four-year graduate degree goals.

**Dr. Woodworth-Nye** said the PI will work with the proposed community college to provide clear pathways for the community college students to opt into the four-year degree and support the community college in offering the remedial and first and second-year programs. She stated ISU is excited about the opportunity to provide the advanced pathway for students which has not existed. This will augment the high quality technical program offered by Eastern Idaho Technical College (EITC) and ISU's two-year component at the four-year tuition rate.

**Dr. Lyle Castle**, Dean, College of Science and Engineering, ISU, said this proposal comes from the deficiencies he recognized in his previous position as Dean of ISU's Idaho Falls campus from 2007 until 2016. Idaho Falls hosts a national laboratory and has a strong technology based industry. He explained that ISU had a small presence in Idaho Falls which was offering a limited number of courses. Faculty commuted between Pocatello and Idaho Falls to teach these courses and there was a great disconnect. He explained building space became available when INL moved their library and ISU, with legislative funding, was able to convert this space into classrooms and faculty offices. This space allows ISU the opportunity to locate resident faculty in Idaho Falls.

**Dr. Castle** said the PI is designed to bring in faculty from four ISU colleges: science and engineering, education, business, and arts and letters. The plan is to hire faculty in a central theme which is energy, environment, and science and technology. He explained the type of faculty which would be hired and how it connects the theme and college specialties. He said when the faculty have a common interest there is less likelihood of isolation because they are able to do interdisciplinary teaching and research. **Dr. Castle** emphasized Leadership in Nuclear Energy (LINE) Commission recommended a PI in Idaho Falls.

**Dr. Rick Aman**, President, Eastern Idaho Technical College (EITC), said the PI is a K-Career continuum that does not exist in the nine county region. He said if the community college in Idaho Falls is approved, it will augment ISU's programs and students would be less likely to leave the area for other postsecondary educational opportunities thereby keeping the talent pipeline in the State. He stated after students graduate from the community college it is important that they have a variety of options to further their education. He explained the different opportunities students would have to further their education in a shorter amount of time.

**Dr. Aman** said INL's presence in Idaho Falls dictates that more educational opportunities are essential to fill INL's staffing needs. He said the PI creates a synergy for the two-year community college student to easily move into a university education.

**Vice Chairman Thayn** asked if the presentation was informational or for funding.

**Dr. Woodworth-Nye** replied both. There is a line item request attached to the Polytechnic Institute proposal for \$1.8 million; for faculty and support staff. **Vice Chairman Thayn** asked if the Polytechnic Institute is contingent on the success of the community college vote. **Dr. Woodworth-Nye** replied in the negative. She said ISU is hoping that it will pass because it will allow students in the Idaho Falls area to have a complete postsecondary opportunity.

**Senator Guthrie** asked if there is more information from INL. **Amy Lientz**, Director for Partnerships, Engagement, and Technologist Deployment Organization, INL, explained her department oversees INL's universities partnerships. INL has a talent pipeline challenge for two reasons: growth and retirement. She said in the past two years INL hired over 1,000 employees. It is their desire to hire more Idaho students from all of the Idaho institutions. There is connectivity between all Idaho universities and INL and the State is responding by expanding and offering more degrees to fill those workforce needs.

**Dr. Woodworth-Nye** said ISU is very excited to have had the opportunity to speak about PI and the ability to locate in the Idaho Falls market. It is an exciting time to think that we will be able to deliver an entire package of educational opportunities. This region is the largest metropolitan area in the U.S. that does not have its own comprehensive four-year university or college affiliation.

**PASS THE  
GAVEL:**

Chairman Mortimer passed the gavel to Vice Chairman Thayn.

**DOCKET NO.  
08.0203.1601**

**Rules Governing Thoroughness; Incorporated by Reference – Idaho Content Standards.** **Sherri Ybarra**, Superintendent of Public Instruction, SDE, said the SDE has heard the concerns about the content standards and have put in to place a very transparent review process. She stated that the rules process was very transparent and involved public input. She reported the number of people and hours incurred to develop the new standards. She introduced Scott Cook, Academic Services Support and Professional Development Director, SDE, to present the docket.

**Mr. Cook** said the docket contains seven sets of content standards which were reviewed this year; it is more than normal. He explained the content reviewing process and procedures and changes are only made if warranted. If changes are made it is through the deliberate consensus of the working groups. She detailed the makeup of the working groups. **Mr. Cook** explained in 2015 the Legislature (H 314) directed the SDE to perform the Idaho Challenge, which mandated the SDE to begin reviewing the Idaho's content standards for learning of math and English language arts. The goal is to be in sync with what is being taught in the institutions of higher learning. He explained the process the SDE undertook to evaluate and comment on every content standard, which included negotiated rulemaking.

**Vice Chairman Thayn** asked if there any changes in the high school graduation requirement standards. **Mr. Cook** replied in the negative. He said the changes that are made there are to clarify the language in regards to requirements associated with arts and humanities. There have been two ways for students to be able to meet the two credit requirement; 1.) enroll in a course in visual arts, music, theater, dance, media arts or world language; and 2.) enroll in a course in humanities that meets the interdisciplinary humanities standard. He pointed out to the Committee the requirement hasn't changed now there are two ways to achieve that graduation requirement.

The following people spoke in opposition to the proposed humanity standards changes;

**TESTIMONY:** **Dani Backer**, K-12 Social Studies Consultant Teacher, Boise School District (see Attachment 1);

**Russ Heller**, Retired Teacher, Boise School District (see Attachment 2);

**Chris Taylor**, Supervisor of History, Social Sciences, and the Natural Sciences, Boise School District (see Attachment 3).

Their testimony discussed issues regarding the following: the exclusion of literature, history, philosophy, and architecture; the Idaho Humanities Council defines humanities to include history, literature, philosophy, jurisprudence, cultural anthropology, comparative religion, art history and criticism, music history, and other interpretive disciplines that through study yield wisdom; changes to humanity disciplines that are inherently integrative; humanities are included in the fine arts and performing arts; changing the definition of humanities is not something the SDE has the power to do; and staffing difficulties in smaller districts for qualified arts or world language instructors.

**DISCUSSION:** **Senator Den Hartog** said she was reading the definition of interdisciplinary humanities. She asked if it is the balanced and integrated portion of the change that is causing the concern. **Mr. Taylor** replied in the affirmative. He said the words history, philosophy, and architecture have been stricken out of the graduation requirement and those need to be included into the humanities portion of the rule. **Senator Den Hartog** asked if his concerns are shared in other school districts in the State. **Mr. Taylor** replied the West Ada School District's curriculum director has the same concerns. They do offer an interdisciplinary humanities course so that is why they are not as vocal about this change.

**Chairman Mortimer** said in reviewing the specific items under section g it excludes that requirement in the graduation requirement. He asked if that will also affect the standards by reference in arts and humanities category. There is interdisciplinary humanities, media arts, humanities, and all of those specific content standards. By taking out section g it will also affect all of the standards in section .01. **Mr. Cook** replied if section g is rejected, the remainder stay the same and will not affect the standard.

**Chairman Mortimer** asked if section g is rejected, which deals with the graduation requirement, would the humanities standards be affected. **Mr. Cook** replied in the negative. He said if the change is rejected it only changes the requirement for graduation. The content standards referenced will not change. He specified there are no changes to the humanities content standards. Section g of the docket only indicates how a student meets the requirement.

**Mr. Cook** said originally the requirement talked about arts and humanities and the humanities portion of fulfilling that was specifically related to interdisciplinary humanities. The idea was to clarify for districts if the student did not fulfill requirements; fulfillment could be done through visual arts courses that are interdisciplinary in nature.

**MOTION:**

**Senator Ward-Engelking** moved to accept **Docket No. 08.0203.1601 except section 105.01.g**. **Senator Winder** seconded the motion.

**Senator Den Hartog** asked if it is the changes in section g that are to be rejected. **Senator Ward-Engelking** replied in the affirmative.

**Senator Winder** asked if only the changes are being deleted then is that section being amended. He said it is his understanding that the intention is to keep the rule in its original form.

**Dennis Stevenson**, Administrative Rules Coordinator, Department of Administration said the motion as stated is correct. He clarified for the Committee that when pending rule is rejected only the amendments are rejected.

**Vice Chairman Thayn** asked if section g is rejected, would the original section remain as the rule. **Mr. Stevenson** replied in the affirmative.

The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**DOCKET NO.  
08.0203.1701**

**Rules Governing Thoroughness – Temporary Rule Idaho Content Standards – Vice Chairman Thayn** said there will be no testimony on this docket as that was taken on February 23, 2017. He stated today the Committee is to make a decision on **Docket No. 08.0203.1701**.

**Chairman Mortimer** said public testimony was taken on the science standards and the Committee listened to very good testimony. The day of the testimony, the Chairman made the decision to visit with members of the House Education Committee to better understand what decisions could be made. **Chairman Mortimer** said he believes those section rejections made by the House are standing with no likelihood of being reversed. He said based on those conclusions, it is important that 370 of the 375 science standards move forward.

**MOTION:**

Senator Mortimer moved to accept **Docket No. 08.0203.1701** excluding subsections **ESS3-MS ESS3-MS-5, ESS3-MS ESS3.C, LS2-HS LSD.4, LS4-HS LS4.D, and ESS3-HS ESS2.D** of the incorporated document. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion.

**Senator Ward-Engelking** said this is the dilemma because if the motion is not supported all sections of the standards would likely be rejected and returned to two-decade old science standards. She stated in good conscience she cannot reject sections that deal with biodiversity, human impact, and climate change. She said she will be voting no.

**Vice Chairman Thayn** said some of the committee members visited with the House Committee members and leadership and he believes that it is not the intention to reject the topics, climate change and CO2 levels need to be studied. This is saying to SDE that the standards should be rewritten so as not to be conclusions but rather lead to open scientific inquiry. He said there is the desire to adopt those standards next year with changes in the five sections that are rejected. He stated these are temporary standards and will be back next year as pending rules. It is the hope that these topics will have been vetted and in place to be accepted.

**Senator Winder** said he understands the concerns of the House members. He said he went over and talked to House members and leadership regarding these rules. He stated they are not rejecting the idea of climate change. There was a lengthy discussion regarding "climate change" or "changing climate" it is a recognition on their part that they do want it taught but they would like a balanced approach to the topics especially if there are some positives that are happening in those areas. Concurrence from both bodies is needed in order for the rule to pass and be in effect. He said he is going to support the motion and hopes the SDE will come back with some rewrites to the standards. He does not want to run the risk of losing all 375 standards.

**Senator Buckner-Webb** said she has a lot of correspondence about this issue. She said she cannot vote in support of this motion.

**Senator Guthrie** said leadership reached out and revisited this docket with the body across the rotunda and determined there would be no change in their decision. He said one needs to take the best of the situation that is placed before them. In this case it is to concur with the decision of the House Education Committee otherwise there is the incredible risk of losing all the science standards. He said he will support the motion.

The motion passed by **voice vote**. **Senators Buckner-Webb** and **Ward-Engelking** are recorded as voting **nay**.

**PASSED THE  
GAVEL:**

Vice Chairman Thayn passed the gavel to Chairman Mortimer.

**ADJOURNED:**

There being no more business, Chairman Mortimer adjourned the meeting at 4:20 p.m.

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Senator Dean M. Mortimer  
Chair

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LeAnn Mohr  
Secretary