

### Humanities Testimony Outline

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for the opportunity to testify – my name is Chris Taylor and I am the supervisor of History, social sciences, and the natural sciences for the Boise School District. I am here to testify against the rule change (08-0203-1509) dealing with the change in graduation requirement for the humanities.

- My biggest concern is that the definition of humanities has been changed to exclude literature, history, and philosophy. The national endowment for the humanities (founded in 1965 and is the largest funding organization in the humanities for the U.S) defines the humanities as \_\_\_\_\_(Quote)
- Notice that in the new rule change many of these foundations in the humanities are taken out and included in the new rule change is fine arts and performing arts.
- The question I have is what is the true goal of this rule change – is it to include an art requirement for graduation (is this the reason why Fine Arts is distinguished from the humanities in the rule change) or to change what is considered to be a humanities class.
- I was present at a few of the meetings discussing this rule change and I vocally disagreed against this rule change because I felt that changing the definition of humanities is not something the SDE has the power to do.
- One of the reasons mentioned for changing this rule was that many districts in the state are abusing this grad requirement by using classes like welding, mythology, etc as humanities. I argued that instead of changing the rule maybe it would be better to communicate more effectively the guidelines of what courses actually meet the humanities grad requirement. However, I felt the decision was already made that literature, history, and philosophy were not going to be counted as humanities credit and that fine arts would be added to the grad requirement.
- In the Boise School District we promote a Liberal education that offer over 30 courses in music and the arts. I am not sure how many small districts can create new classes with highly qualified teachers in the Arts and/or World Language to meet the needs of this graduation requirement for their students. Local Control in our district for using our interdisciplinary history course has been given to us for many years and we would like that to continue.

Thanks Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for taking my testimony into consideration when deciding on this rule change. I am happy to stand for questions:

which include  
Art, philosophy, history etc