

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Friday, January 26, 2018
TIME: Upon adjournment
PLACE: Room EW41
MEMBERS: Chairman VanOrden, Vice Chairman McDonald, Representatives Shepherd, Boyle, Clow, Mendive, Kerby, Cheatham, Amador, DeMordaunt, Moon, Syme, Ehardt, Kloc (Tway), McCrostie, Toone
**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative(s) Boyle, Clow
GUESTS: Kathryn Vincen, Tim Hill, State Department of Education; Brad Hunt, O.A.R.C.

Chairman VanOrden called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

Chairman VanOrden said she understood the committee chairs address RS legislation differently. She said she prefers the committee only address technical corrections and questions regarding the fiscal note matching the language of the bill at the print hearing, and questions about the content of the bill may be asked at the bill hearing.

Chuck Staben, University of Idaho President (UI), gave a presentation on the University of Idaho and post-secondary education. To reduce cost and provide greater accessibility to post-secondary education, the University of Idaho provides \$25 million in aid, and 37% of the students are first generation college students. The university is increasing the number of degrees it offers and works closely with the community colleges. The dual-credit and concurrent credit classes have high rigor and credibility, and high school students who take them graduate from college faster, he said. President Staben said the university has been working with an advisory board of industry leaders to create curriculum which prepares students for employment and meets the need of the high-tech industry in Coeur d'Alene. To improve retention of students, the university is using funding from the state to create a professional advising model, and it is using a data management tool to track students, said Mr. Staben. President Staben said that 80% of high school students say they want to pursue post-secondary education, but only 40% actually do. One thing the university is doing to improve this rate is the I Go Program, which embeds a university employee in high schools. The University of Idaho also funds Raise Me microscholarships which rewards high school students for collegiate behavior. The university is making progress, he said, and the retention rate rose from 77% to 82% this last year. It is the highest retention rate in Idaho, said President Staben, and above the national average.

In response to questions from the committee, **Mr. Staben** said the university cannot embed a counselor in all the high schools, because it is expensive. They are investigating the application of modern technology, such as a chatbot, to make the connections to high schools less expensive. Georgia State University serves a disadvantaged population, he said, and it uses a chat bot to answer student questions. Mr. Staben said the university is extending admission to four or five years after graduation, and the completer scholarship could facilitate re-entry to post-secondary education for students. More online courses and degrees will also facilitate re-entry to post-secondary education, he added. In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Staben said the university has had conversations with the coal industries about workforce development and have discussed re-opening the school of mines. However, there is currently not sufficient demand. The university

is also looking at models of teaching and trends to see how it can support teacher preparation, in-service and pre-service courses.

In response to questions from the committee, **Mr. Staben** said students drop out of college, particularly STEM classes, in the eighth grade. Based on a study funded by Micron, students' confidence in math declines in sixth grade. Prior to sixth through eighth grade, students are very motivated to pursue STEM careers, and this number is balanced between the genders, he said. Students begin to struggle in the middle school years, and parents lose confidence in their own ability to help their children with homework. Mr. Staben suggested creating a program to help parents with math skills, because math is often the barrier to pursuing STEM careers. There are programs which do this in Hong Kong and Australia, he added. Mr. Staben said the University of Idaho Campus has vacant housing and low enrollment during the summer, so one idea is to offer half off of tuition and housing costs during that session.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Representative VanOrden
Chair

Jenifer Cavaness-Williams
Secretary