

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 15, 2018

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

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:** None

GUESTS: Ann Joslin, Idaho Commission for Libraries, Donna Eggers, Stephanie Bailey-White, David Harnell; Misty Swanson, Idaho School Boards Association; Angela Hemingway, Dee Mooney, Idaho STEM Academy; Marilyn Whitney, Governor's Office; Joel Williams, Fruitland Education; Tom Wittmeyer; Gideon Tolman, Division of Financial Management

Chairman VanOrden called the committee to order at 9:00 a.m.

S 1233: **Marilyn Whitney** spoke to **S 1233**. She said it clarifies the rules and responsibilities of the Idaho STEM Action Board. The legislation codifies what the Board has found to be the best practices and is currently using. Ms. Whitney explained the sections of the legislation.

MOTION: **Rep. Syme** made a motion to send **S 1233** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

In response to questions from the committee, **Ms. Whitney** said Subsection 3 only applies to industry representatives. STEM Action Board members are appointed by the governor for four years, and this legislation changes that appointment to three years. If **S 1233** becomes law, the governor will make one appointment for one year, one appointment for two years, and one appointment for three years.

VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Syme** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

Ann Joslin, Idaho State Librarian, explained the history of the Idaho Commission for Libraries. She introduced **Stephanie Bailey-White**, Deputy State Librarian. Ms. Bailey-White gave a presentation on the work of the Idaho Commission for Libraries. In response to questions from the committee, Ms. Bailey-White said the Commission partners with the Head Start Program and teen parent centers to model practices which reinforce early literacy practices. They have noticed that participants are continuing early literacy practices six to nine months after the program ends. Ms. Bailey-White said nearly every elementary school in the state lacks funds for books. One in four elementary schools has a budget from zero to one-hundred dollars for books, and many do not have any budget. Many school library collections are aging, she added, and the average age of the books in the Boise School District is eighteen-years-old, she added.

In response to questions from the committee, **Ms. Bailey-White** said the State Department of Education and the Office of the State Board of Education are forming a committee to evaluate the Smarty Ants Program, and the Commission is looking forward to forming a partnership with them. Ms. Bailey-White said the Commission has worked the last ten years to increase the participation in summer programs, but getting librarians out of the library, such as camps and summer nutrition programs. For kids who do not have access to transportation, the Commission provides the books, so local libraries do not have to.

Alan Reed, Chairman, gave the annual report of the Idaho Public Charter School Commission. He said the Commission is in the second year of charter renewals. He said the Commission has been able to increase support for schools, because of the additional funding received by the state. He introduced **Tamara Baysinger**, Director.

Tamara Baysinger gave a history of public charter schools. She said the Commission is looking for ways to fill resource gaps without duplication. She said the Commission is excited about the pre-opening support program designed to guide new schools through the pre-opening year, as well as the new school leader orientation program. The Commission is making better data available to schools, she added. Ms. Baysinger said that 75% of charter school students exceeded the performance of students in surrounding districts in math, and 80% exceeded performance of students in surrounding districts in language arts. Alternative school charters were excluded from the comparison, but they trend better than the national average, she added. The Commission is asking how it can continue to customize oversight for unique schools, how it can increase diversity in enrollment, and where it can offer additional autonomy to balance the accountability already in place, said Ms. Baysinger. Needs the schools have identified are reducing the reporting burden, increasing funding flexibility, and expanding the start up funding options.

In response to questions from the committee, **Ms. Baysinger** said the performance of charter school students as compared to students from surrounding districts is also true across demographics, to some extent. Some schools are so small that the numbers are not statistically significant, she added. Although legislation passed in the 2017 Legislative Session helps to streamline the process of starting a charter school, Ms. Baysinger said she did not anticipate a huge increase in charter school applications. She said the Commission continues to work on ways to reach out to diverse groups without the fear of the accountability element. She said the renewal process can include information about the demographics served. The renewal process includes signing a certificate which outlines the schools rights and responsibilities and the metrics used for measurement. In the Spring, prior to renewal, the school director has a one-on-one meeting with the Commission staff. An auxiliary data option is available, which gives schools the option to share data which is not standard. Also, site visits help the Commission understand the school and see more context, she said. In December, the renewal recommendation is received from the school, and three options are provided. Those options are to renew the charter, renew the charter conditionally (to correct a weakness), or to not renew a charter. Ms. Baysinger said the limit for a renewal application is twenty-five pages, but schools usually submit ten to fifteen pages.

In response to questions from the committee, **Ms. Baysinger** said the Commission looks at both proficiency measurements, in comparison to the state and local community, and at growth measurements. Schools with large populations of students who are struggling see low proficiency measurements but high growth measurements, she added. The weakest areas are sometimes growth and sometimes the graduation rate, because the charter school demographics may be behind the cohort already. The Commission looked at many options besides growth and performance data, but schools asked they not be required to do more tests than are already required. Schools are not required to submit their whole scope and sequence, she said, but some schools want the Commission to know they have it. Ms. Baysinger said the Commission has cut the reporting requirements as much as possible, but many are not under the Commission's control. They are required for other agencies. The challenge is to identify what is needed and what they might be exempted from. For example, the proof of a continuous improvement plan can be seen in the data at the end of five years.

In response to questions from the committee, **Ms. Baysinger** said virtual schools are compared to other virtual schools, and the focus is more on growth than performance. Also, there is an opportunity for schools to submit other data. Although traditional schools could also be allowed more autonomy in exchange for more accountability, the customized accountability for each school is difficult to replicate to the broader public school sector, she added.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:11 a.m.

Representative VanOrden
Chair

Jenifer Cavaness-Williams
Secretary