

MINUTES  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

- DATE:** Thursday, February 15, 2018
- TIME:** 3:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room WW55
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Nonini, Den Hartog, Guthrie, Crabtree, and Ward-Engelking
- ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Senator Buckner-Webb
- 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 3:02 p.m.
- PRESENTATION: Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho (WWAMI) Medical Program.** **Dr. Mary Barinaga**, Assistant Dean, Regional Affairs, University of Washington, School of Medicine, explained the steps involved in educating and training physicians and referred the Committee to the handout . She detailed the WWAMI practicum sites located around WWAMI's service region (Attachment 1).
- Dr. Barinaga** spoke about programs WWAMI is beginning in 2018. She detailed the following: 1.) new clerkship sites in development; 2.) faculty development expansion; 3.) TRUST (Targeted Rural Underserved Track) Expansion; and 4.) students entering clerkships earlier in their training. **Dr. Barinaga** said future growth opportunities for the WWAMI program include the expansions of clinical opportunities, learning facilities at the University of Idaho, and residencies in Graduate Medical Education (GME) in Idaho. She said there is a physician shortage in Idaho and the State needs more residency programs; more residency programs in Idaho encourage more doctors to remain in Idaho.
- PRESENTATION: Idaho Public Charter School Commission (Commission).** **Alan Reed**, President, Commission, explained the structure of the Commission and reported public charter schools (Charters) have a higher graduation rate than traditional public schools in the State. He thanked the Committee for the additional funding which has enabled the Commission to provide better support to the schools.
- Tamara Baysinger**, Director, Commission, said the Commission was formed in 2004 to help oversee the Charters. Charters oversee innovation, choice, and improved opportunities for students and educators. She stated the role of the Commission is to ensure school accountability. She detailed the implementation of the statutory accountability structure. She said in order to support student learning, the Commission looks to fill resource gaps and provide better data (Attachment 2).
- Ms. Baysinger** explained the charts which revealed proficiency rates, academic growth, postsecondary readiness, and operational and financial information. She said by examining the data, the Commission can customize oversight for unique schools. She addressed how Charters work to increase diversity in their schools. An important concern for Charters is how they can be granted autonomy to balance their accountability. **Ms. Baysinger** detailed roadblocks in Charters experience. They would like a reduction of reporting requirements, increase in funding flexibility, expansion of startup funding options, and an increase in faculty funding possibilities.

**Senator Nonini** asked what is the process for Charters to add another grade level. **Ms. Baysinger** replied the procedures are outlined in statute. She said Charters must supply relevant budgets and curriculum to the Commission in order to expand.

**Chairman Mortimer** asked how many new Charters were opened in the last two years. **Ms. Baysinger** replied none. However, there will be four new Charters opening in the fall of 2018.

**Chairman Mortimer** asked what webinar series topics are made available for the charter school stakeholders. **Ms. Baysinger** replied they cover topics relevant for board members, such as: financial training and risk management. The topics offered are based on the feedback the Commission receives from Charters' boards.

**Chairman Mortimer** asked what the Commission is doing better now, than it was a year ago. **Ms. Baysinger** replied the Commission serves in an oversight role, which is not popular. Many things were learned through the renewal process. The Commission is working to increase communication and having an attitude of service.

**Senator Guthrie** asked if there still is the perception that Charters selectively choose the best students. **Ms. Baysinger** replied in the affirmative. She said parents who select the school their child attends, tend to be more engaged in education. She stated it is important the public be more informed about the Charter options.

**Commissioner Reed** said the work of the Commission is to serve the Charters and to help with any challenges. He stated they are working to develop better relationships with the Charters' members and school administrators. He explained the role the Commission played in the opening of a new Charter. He emphasized they work to protect the taxpayer investment.

**S 1292**

**Relating to the Advanced Opportunities Scholarship (Adv Ops); Amend, Revise, and Clarification.** **Senator Thayn**, District 8, presented **S 1292** and explained the proposed changes clarify the eligibility criteria for overload courses and streamline existing criteria for dual credit coursework and eligible examinations. The changes also clarify which Career Technical Education (CTE) assessments qualify.

**Senator Thayn** said there is new language in the proposed legislation. It is for career advisors to counsel students to identify the postsecondary goals and ascertain whether the postsecondary institution the student is interested in attending will accept the transfer of dual credits. He detailed the other changes and updates to the language.

**Chairman Mortimer** asked if military and missionary students limitations were discussed when deciding the two-year time frame to apply for the scholarship. **Senator Thayn** replied in the negative.

**Matt McCarter**, Director, Student Engagement Career and Technical Readiness, State Department of Education (SDE), replied many students who apply for the scholarship do so before they graduate from high school. They must apply for the money within the two years after graduation. The students have 28 months to redeem the scholarship.

**Senator Winder** asked how the program was able to spend more than the budget allocation. **Senator Thayn** replied the overage is derived from the Public Education Stabilization Fund (PESF).

**Senator Winder** asked what the projected overrun will be for fiscal year 2017. **Senator Thayn** replied approximately \$8 million.

**Mr. McCarter** explained the overspending during 2017 and why the Superintendent's budget request reflects more than the actual spent amount.

**Senator Winder** asked how the Adv Ops funds are allocated. **Senator Thayn** replied most of the funding is to the dual credits program. He reported the number of students who participated in the program; the scholarship program is a very small subsection of the total Adv Ops program. **Senator Thayn** stated it was anticipated the actual amount spent would be higher than what was budgeted.

**Senator Winder** asked if the current budgeted allocation is correct. **Tina Polishchuck**, Statewide Coordinator, Adv Ops, SDE, replied the program currently has paid out a little over half of the allocated funds. She stated at the end of February, there will more information available regarding how the funds are spent.

**Senator Thayn** said the changes in the proposed legislation do not impact the trajectory of the budget. The most impactful change is for counselors to advise students in their post-secondary journey. It also allows more options for summer classes.

**Chairman Mortimer** said it is important to discuss the fiscal note of the legislation. He stated this program is more successful than anticipated. There are great opportunities for students and tremendous savings for families. He explained to the Committee the Governor's recommendation for growing the PESF account.

**Senator Winder** said this is a great program and he supports it. He said it is important to have transparency in the fiscal note to reflect the actual expenditure. He stated this program is a landmark example of helping students and families.

**Senator Winder** moved to send **S 1292** to the 14th Order. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**PRESENTATION:** **Chairman Mortimer** thanked Ara Omotowa, Senate Page, for her service to the Committee. **Ms. Omotowa** reported her plans for next year. She expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to serve.

**ADJOURNED:** There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:09 p.m.

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Senator Dean M. Mortimer  
Chair

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LeAnn Mohr  
Secretary