

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, February 20, 2018

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room WW02

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: The sign-in sheet will be retained in the committee secretary's office until the end of the session. Following the end of the session, the sign-in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Library.

Chairman VanOrden called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

RS 26205: **Rep. Horman** spoke to **RS 26205**. She explained a legislative interim committee has been studying school funding formula options for two years. The committee recommends moving away from resource-allocated funding to a student-based model, and the changes the resolution calls for will be studied by the interim committee. The estimated cost is \$400,000. However, the committee only spent \$25,000 last year, so no new funds are needed.

In response to questions from the committee, **Rep. Horman** said the committee would bring forward its recommendations to the legislature during the 2019 Legislative Session. Many states have already moved to a weighting system for various populations of students who need more funding, she said. There would be a collapsing of line items to make a base amount per student and recommendations of which populations need more resources for weighted funding. Transportation, facilities and technology would not be included, said Rep. Horman. Funding will go to the schools where the students are enrolled.

In response to questions from the committee, **Rep. Horman** said the committee reviewed studies of the advantages of the model. Evidence shows that granting additional flexibility can result in decisions made at the local level having more positive outcomes for students. The committee discussed how the model can alleviate the use of supplemental levies. However, the statutes regarding supplemental levies are separate from the school funding formula, she added. There was unanimous agreement to move to a student-centered model, based on enrollment, said Rep. Horman.

MOTION: **Rep. McCrostie** made a motion to introduce **RS 26205**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

MOTION: **Rep. Amador** made a motion to accept the recommendations from the Rep. Kerby Subcommittee on administrative rules. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

MOTION: **Rep. Amador** made a motion to accept the recommendations from the Rep. Mendive Subcommittee on administrative rules. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

MOTION: **Rep. Mendive** made a motion to accept the recommendations from the Rep. Syme Subcommittee on administrative rules. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Jim Stoor, president of the Idaho School Boards Association, spoke on public school funding and accountability. He thanked the legislature for all they did during the recession to fund education, for funding the career ladder, and for additional funding for literacy intervention. He said he understood additional accountability comes with additional funding, and the schools work hard to provide it. Mr. Stoor said he is concerned about the effects RS 26205 could have on supplemental levies, and he felt the legislation is a bill to cut taxes.

In response to questions from the committee, **Mr. Stoor** said Soda Springs has passed levies since 1994. The legislation will have an immediate effect on the Soda Springs School District.

In response to questions from the committee, **Karen Echevarria**, executive director of the Idaho School Board Association, said the ISBA participated in meetings, waiting for the approval of the ESSA Plan before moving forward. The plan was just approved, she said. Now that the ESSA has been approved, the State Department of Education will send it to school districts. Ms. Echevarria said when the first goals were set, they were not achievable. The new goals are achievable, but they will be difficult, she added.

In response to questions from the committee, **Mr. Stoor** said the measurement for whether or not the leadership premiums are helping student achievement is seen in what the staff does daily in the classroom, such as partner-teaching at a grade level and giving extra help to struggling students. Another measurement is the GPA of the seniors, he added. Mr. Stoor said the Association has not sent out teacher surveys.

Nancy Gregory, Boise School District Board of Trustees, said Boise began focusing on the Idaho Core Standards a few years ago. Results are not immediate, which is frustrating, but teacher support is important, and the increase in scores are seen later. The STAR Testing System gives interim data, which shows student achievement, she added. Teachers selected to score the Direct Writing Assessment know better what and how they need to teach. The Boise School District does not give a teacher survey, said Ms. Gregory, but the 98% approval of the district master contract is a strong indication of teacher morale.

In response to questions from the committee, **Ms. Gregory** said having the resources to attract and retain teachers has a higher priority than money to provide interim assessments. Small and medium school districts have difficulty with this, she added.

Scott Tverdy, Buhl School Board, said the costs of interim assessments was a concern. As money was put back in the school budget by the legislature over the years, and as the community supported the levies, the districts has had some money for interim assessments, he said. The data helps drive decisions, and the use of technology improves the turn-around time, he added. He said he thinks the ISBA should make training about using assessments a priority. However, some teachers feel the current system is punitive. A student who is two grades behind could improve performance significantly, but not enough, he added. In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Tverdy said he would like school districts to be allowed flexibility and to demonstrate growth, in order to build trust.

Starr Olsen, Dietrich School Board, said one of the differences in training is that teachers are now talking about student growth and achievement. With additional funding, the district can now focus on teacher training and data-driving decisions, and the district is seeing changes in scores.

Mandy Simpson, Nampa School Board, said the Nampa School District is closing the gap for overall graduation rates and graduation rates of English Language Learners. The Board has done training on how to use the data, and teachers are creating benchmarks for common formative assessments. The Board takes staff comments on how to improve the process seriously, she added. In response to questions from the committee, Ms. Simpson said three schools in the Nampa School District are using mastery-based education, and the teachers and students love the model. The Board will look at increasing the number of mastery-based education schools in the district.

Jacque Cranor, Pocatello School District, spoke to three successes in the district, including the use of visible learning, a secondary school committee to address failing students each month and work on a plan with parents, and changing the practice of having paraprofessionals working with the struggling students while teachers work with the other students to having teachers work with the struggling students.

Ellen Mandeville, Blaine School Board, said 89% of the high school students are completing at least one AP or dual credit class, and the graduation rate has increased each year. **Mike Vuittonet**, West Ada School Board, said the funding for dual credit, concurrent credit and AP test funding has had a profound effect on increasing the number of post-secondary credits high school students complete. The district also saw gains in early literacy, and the counseling funding has helped get the message out to parents. Many students at Renaissance graduated with an associate's degree, he added. Families need to know the value of post-secondary education, said Mr. Vuittonet, and West Ada has been reaching out to families to convey those opportunities. The district is seeing a culture shift for students who did not plan on pursuing post-secondary education, he added.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

Representative VanOrden
Chair

Jenifer Cavaness-Williams
Secretary