

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 22, 2018
TIME: 8:00 A.M.
PLACE: Room EW41
MEMBERS: Chairman VanOrden, Vice Chairman McDonald, Representatives Shepherd, Boyle, Clow, Mendive, Kerby, Cheatham, Amador, DeMordaunt, Moon, Syme, Ehardt, McCrostie, Toone, Gannon(5)
**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None
GUESTS: Dennis Chesnut, Horseshoe Bend School District; Bill Ruseel, North Star Charter School; Teresa Harper, Association of Charter School Leaders; Harold Ott, Rural Schools and Idaho Association of School Administrators; Kari Overall, Idaho Education Association; Emily McClure, Idaho Charter School Network

Chairman VanOrden called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Matthew Weyer, National Conference of State Legislatures, spoke on the research about K-3 Literacy and parental involvement. He said parental involvement contributes to school readiness, social and emotional growth, reduced behavioral problems, academic success and positive attitudes towards school. He gave examples of community school model legislation in several states, as well as legislation regarding English Language Learner Programs.

Mr. Weyer said some states are using two-generation strategies to combat inter-generational poverty. He addressed the ESSA state plan requirements for report cards and school climate, and gave examples of legislation from other states which increase parental involvement. Mr. Weyer addressed K-3 literacy research and IRI results by demographics. NCSL recommends literacy strategies which include preventive approaches such as early screening and intervention, targeted professional development and teacher coaches, communication with the family, and after-school support. He cited several legislative examples from other states.

In response to questions from the committee, **Mr. Weyer** said native language proficiency aids literacy education for every language learned afterwards. The \$10,700 cost of retention estimate is for a one-time retention, said Mr. Weyer. Mr. Weyer said some pediatricians include literacy questions as part of a normal well-child checkup. Regarding the research which showed students who fail a grade are less likely to graduate, Mr. Weyer said the social stigma and other issues involved in retention may affect a student's likelihood to graduate. Most states only hold back a small percentage of students, he added. If a student is struggling in more than one school subject, then retention is best. Mr. Weyer said Idaho's K-3 literacy assessment screening diagnostic, the IRI, is a step ahead of many states.

Dennis Chesnut, Horseshoe Bend School District Superintendent, introduced **Cora Larson**, Elementary School Principal. Ms. Larson explained what the school did to go from being rated a two-star school four years ago to winning the Blue Ribbon School Award. The school received support from the State Department of Education, said Ms. Larson, and it made several changes. The school started to use data to drive decisions, had high expectations for all students, implemented bell-to-bell teaching, provided daily interventions in reading and math, made action plans with parents as partners, and set goals. She said if the community buys in to the school programs, change can happen quickly.

Mr. Chesnut said that the district learned assessments are valuable, but only if the data is used effectively. The district also learned the school can be a hub of resources, and it is exploring this with after-school programs. The challenges the district is experiencing is declining enrollment, teacher shortages, and an increase in poverty and lack of resources to help struggling families. Mr. Chesnut said the district received a lot of congratulations from other districts, but nobody asked what the school district did to effect the changes. He said communication between school districts, and sharing best practices, needs to be improved.

H 566:

Rep. Boyle spoke to **H 566**. She said the bill creates an optional alternative method of certification for charter school administrators. Charter schools are designed to be innovators and incubators of new ideas, she said, and the legislation allows charter schools to hire people with the skills needed for their specific needs.

Harold Ott, Idaho Rural School Administrators, spoke **in opposition** to **H 566**. He said Idaho already has an alternate route available to obtain an administrator certificate, and he felt the requirements for certification in the legislation are not rigorous enough. In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Ott said an administrator needs many types of skills. The input he has received from a few charter school administrators in the IASA was that they did not support **H 566**. Although there are many ways to obtain the knowledge needed to be an administrator, said Mr. Ott, those are not addressed in **H 566**. Skills such as finance and team building are not addressed in the bill, said Mr. Ott.

Kari Overall, Idaho Education Association, spoke **in opposition** to **H 566**. She said Idaho students deserve full-qualified administrators trained and qualified to lead a school, and the climate of a school is determined by the administrators. In response to questions from the committee, Ms. Overall said the Idaho Education Association has charter school members, and the administrators had gone through the process for an Idaho administrator certificate. In response to questions from the committee, Ms. Overall said the bill is unnecessary, because Idaho already has a method for administrators from out of state to be certified, and charter schools should not have a different certification system than traditional public schools.

Bill Russell, North Star Charter School Board Chairman, spoke **in support** of **H 566**. He said charter schools have unique financial concerns, and most university-trained administrators do not have the training to deal with them. He cited examples from the history of North Star Charter School and said the school would have had more options if the bill had been in place. In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Russell said if a school does not have the necessary academic support, the Idaho Charter School Commission will enforce corrections. Charter schools have different needs than traditional schools, such as financial challenges and reviews by the Commission, he added. The charter school boards will choose the best person from the applicants, and when more criteria is added to the bill, it limits the flexibility, said Mr. Russell. Each school has different needs, he added.

MOTION:

Rep. Moon made a motion to send **H 566** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Rep. DeMordaunt spoke **in support** of **H 566**. She said the bill is about parental choice, and parents can choose another school if they are not happy with the school.

Rep. Syme spoke **in opposition** to **H 566**. He said the standards for an administrator certificate should be the same for charter and traditional public schools.

Rep. Amador spoke **in opposition** to **H 566**. He said there are administrators in traditional public schools currently going through the alternate route for administrator certification, and perhaps it would be better to fix the current alternate path to certification.

Rep. Toone spoke in opposition to **H 566**. She said changing the process for charter schools and not for traditional schools affects people's perceptions, because both are struggling. The state's use of money has to be uniform, she added.

Rep. McCrostie spoke in opposition to **H 566**. He said he thinks there is a better answer.

Chairman VanOrden spoke in support of **H 566**. She said she is familiar with the reviews charter schools go through, and there are already checks and balances in charter school legislation, such as the performance certificates.

**VOTE ON
MOTION:**

Rep. McDonald called the question. **Rep. McCrostie** requested a roll call vote on **H 566**. **Motion carried by a vote of 9 AYE and 6 NAY. Voting in favor** of the motion: **Reps. VanOrden, McDonald, Shepherd, Boyle, Mendive, Cheatham, DeMordaunt, Moon, Ehardt. Voting in opposition to the motion: Reps. Kerby, Amador, Syme, Tway, McCrostie, Toone. Rep. Clow** was absent/excused. **Rep. Boyle** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

Representative VanOrden
Chair

Jenifer Cavaness-Williams
Secretary