

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Friday, February 23, 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:** Representative(s) Boyle, DeMordaunt, Moon

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 8:13 a.m.

**UNANIMOUS
CONSENT
REQUEST:** **Chairman VanOrden** made a unanimous consent request to introduce **RS 25814, RS 26179, RS 26196, and RS 26218**. There being no objection, the request was granted.

Chairman VanOrden turned over the gavel to **Vice Chairman McDonald**.

RS 26225: **Rep. VanOrden** spoke to **RS 26225**. She said the legislation requires local education organizations to update membership records every two years. Idaho Code requires local education organizations to show they represent 50% plus one of the district employees to engage in collective bargaining, but there is nothing in Idaho Code for how long that figure may be used without updating the information. In response to questions from the committee, Rep. VanOrden said most organizations use cards, and members must fill them out every two years, but not all districts do this.

MOTION: **Rep. Clow** made a motion to introduce **RS 26225. Motion carried by voice vote.**

Vice Chairman McDonald turned over the gavel to **Chairman VanOrden**.

RS 26229: **Rep. Troy**, District 5, spoke to **RS 26229**. She said the legislation requires a minimum level of suicide prevention training to school personnel. The Health and Welfare Suicide Prevention Program is doing many programs across the state, she added. In response to questions from the committee, Rep. Troy said there is lots of training which is free to school districts.

MOTION: **Rep. McCrostie** made a motion to introduce **RS 26229**.

In response to questions from the committee, **Rep. Troy** said the local school district will decide how to include the training. She said she thinks the State Department is planning to provide packages of training available to districts on suicide prevention and on bullying.

**VOTE ON
MOTION:** **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Janet Jessup, Legislative Services Office, gave a historical summary of the State Board of Education Appropriations. She gave a comparative summary for all of the State Board of Education Programs, including colleges and universities. She pointed out the transfer of money from the East Idaho Technical College to the College of Eastern Idaho, when EITC was dissolved with the creation of CEI. **Chairman VanOrden** encouraged the committee to look at the budgets for higher education.

H 590:

Rep. Vander Woude spoke to **H 590**. He said the bill creates a framework for overseeing scholarship granting organizations (SGO) which can give scholarships from private donations to students in private schools. The legislation targets four populations of students: low-income, at-risk, special education, and children of members of the military. He said the legislation was written to prevent leaving behind the most disadvantaged youth in the country, and to give parents choices of schools for their children.

In response to questions from the committee, **Rep. Vander Woude** said this legislation would be another tool to solve the problems being addressed by the school funding committee. Although private schools do not accept funds for free and reduced lunch or for special needs students from the federal government, parents can make the decision about whether or not the schools can provide the resources they need.

Blake Youde, Youde LLC, spoke **in support of H 590**. He said the bill addresses the needs of youth with the most need. He described what each section of H 590 does. The intent of Section 63-05, authorizing the Office of the State Board of Education (OSBE) to oversee the process and reports of the SGOs, and requiring the SGOs to have a minimum operating budget of one million dollars, is to make sure the organization is stable. The SGO pays the educational expenses on behalf of the recipient, similar to the Idaho Opportunity Scholarship, said Mr. Youde. For the vast majority of students, public school has been a good option. The scholarship is for students for whom public school is not a good option, said Mr. Youde. Fifteen million dollars in scholarships will only pay for 2,200 students, which is less than one percent of students in Idaho, he added.

In response to questions from the committee, **Mr. Youde** said there are 110 private schools registered in the state of Idaho. It is not the intention of the legislation to have a student removed from the program, said Mr. Youde, and special education students can be in the program until age twenty-one. Mr. Youde said the federal changes to the rules governing education accounts does not affect the populations targeted with **H 590**, because people who use 529 accounts have a sizeable income. Mr. Youde said there is currently a state tax credit for donations to non-profit organizations already in Code. **H 590** provides an education mechanism to give scholarships to under-served populations.

In response to questions from the committee, **Rep. Vander Woude** said the Attorney General feels **H 590** falls within the scope of the Idaho Constitution. He said he is not sure what the courts decided when different schools tried to charge charter schools for sports.

In response to questions from the committee, **Mr. Youde** said no general fund dollars will be used to fund the scholarships. He said it was not his intention to leave out religion and gender in the clause on discrimination. Mr. Youde said transportation is one of the costs which can be reimbursed by the scholarship funds. If the institution does not provide transportation, ten percent can be used for transportation.

Jenny Gallegos -Nolley spoke **in support of H 590**, citing her experience with a special needs child in private school.

Daniel Burbank spoke **in opposition** to **H 590**, saying it would have a negative impact on the charter school movement. In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Burbank said a better way to provide education for the student demographics addressed in the bill is to fund transportation to charter schools and give those demographics better access to school lotteries.

Jim Reed spoke **in support** of **H 590**, saying it will create one more education opportunity to address problems and varied learning needs.

MOTION: **Rep. McDonald** made a motion to **HOLD H 590** to time certain, February 28, 2018. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Representative VanOrden
Chair

Jenifer Cavaness-Williams
Secretary