

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- DATE:** Monday, February 26, 2018
- TIME:** 3:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room WW55
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Den Hartog, Guthrie, Crabtree, and Buckner-Webb
- ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Senators Nonini and Ward-Engelking
- 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 3:00 p.m. He opened the meeting with a reading from the book, *A Heap O'Living, Along Life's Highway*, by Edgar A. Guest, "*Happiness*."
- PRESENTATION: West Ada School District. Dr. Mary Ann Ranells**, Superintendent, West Ada School District (WASD), stated WASD embraces accountability and results. She said data tells the story of what is occurring in classrooms; it helps to determine student achievement. She introduced Joe Kelly, Assessment and Accountability Administrator, WASD, to present on how WASD captures broad data and converts it into something useful for the classroom.
- Mr. Kelly** said the key fact about data is how to use the data reports. He said in order to change instructional systems using data, data must be timely, meaningful, and actionable. His presentation answered the following questions: 1.) "What data do we have?"; 2.) "How do we use our data?"; and 3.) "What data do we need?" He explained each of the points at length. He provided examples of the testing results the WASD uses to help student achievement (Attachment 1).
- Mr. Kelly** said WASD is comfortable with the amount of data they currently collect. The new data received easily populates into the models. He reiterated the goal is to have timely, meaningful, and actionable data available to teachers to help student achievement.
- DISCUSSION: Senator Den Hartog** asked if some required data collection has no value for the end user. **Mr. Kelly** replied in the negative. He said the required collected data is owned by WASD and is used to discern student achievement.
- Vice Chairman Thayn** asked if the data teachers use to improve student achievement is helpful. He wondered if the results in student achievement growth are observed the following year. **Mr. Kelly** replied it is extremely helpful. He explained the identification process for achievement trends. He said the results are reported to educators to help them interpret student growth.
- Vice Chairman Thayn** asked if the third grade Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) assessment correlates with the third grade Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT). **Mr. Kelly** replied, based on the data, there is not a strong correlation.

PRESENTATION: Snake River School District (SRSD). David Kerns, Superintendent, Snake River School District, detailed his district's demographics: just under 7,500 students, 200 staff members, and a four-day week. He said he is the assessment coordinator for the SRSD. He detailed at length the different assessments SRSD uses to gather student achievement data. Administrators and educators meet weekly to assess the collected data reports. They use the data to identify students in need of some type of educational intervention. He spoke positively about the educational strides students and educators are making in SRSD. **Mr. Kerns** requested the elimination of duplicate data reports (Attachment 2).

DISCUSSION: Senator Den Hartog asked how the pre-K program is funded and how they use the literacy funds. **Mr. Kerns** replied the pre-K program is a special needs program. He said the early literacy funds have been used to purchase the Imagine Learning program and the summertime extended reading program.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked how much the Star Assessment program costs. He inquired about the elementary school's physical activity program and its impact to learning. **Mr. Kerns** replied the Star Assessment costs approximately \$35,000 a year. He said the physical activity program calms students and helps prepare them for instruction.

PRESENTATION: GEM Innovation Schools (GEM). Laurie Wolfe, Idaho Distance Education Academy, presented the GEM school performance measurements. She described the three charter schools that comprise GEM. **Ms. Wolfe** said when school performance is measured, student demographics, school satisfaction, academic success, graduation rate/advanced opportunities, employee satisfaction, and school financial health are taken into consideration. She explained how the collected data is used to identify student performance.

Ms. Wolfe showed the Committee a list of assessments used to collect the required data and reported to the State. She explained the additional assessments GEM uses to determine student achievement and student growth. She explained the goal is to show student growth, not necessarily student proficiency. She detailed the professional development work that GEM performs and the expectation that teachers are to use data to guide the daily classroom instruction. She detailed at length the GEM academic assessments; they are one of the factors used to measure school performance (Attachment 3).

DISCUSSION: Chairman Mortimer asked if the required reports to Idaho Charter School Commission are the same as those submitted to the State Board of Education (SBE). **Ms. Wolfe** replied the reports required by the Commission are different than those required by the SBE. She stated public charter schools often submit two different sets of data reports.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked if teachers are teaching to the assessment tests. **Ms. Wolfe** replied teachers are focused on teaching the State standards. It is important to ensure students are mastering the grade-level standards at each equivalent grade.

PRESENTATION: BrightBytes. Sarah Skinner, Vice President of Partnerships West, said BrightBytes is impressed with the Statewide dialogue regarding how to measure student performance and school quality. She explained the work BrightBytes is doing across the State to help with Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) compliance. She said BrightBytes is an end-to-end and data management analytics company focused on K-12 education. She said the predominant goal is to help clients answer how the data will improve the way students learn (Attachment 4).

Ms. Skinner said a challenge for BrightBytes is to mobilize data combinations to drive action. She said the program manages data to normalize the reports. She explained how school districts' fragmented data is captured and integrated to generate a cohesive data report to drive change in schools. She explained how data is compiled from various school district assessments to create a comprehensive Statewide report. **Ms. Skinner** said, embedded in the platform, is an actionability component with suggested recommendations.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Winder** asked whether "weighting" for educational funding impacts student proficiency. **Ms. Skinner** replied BrightBytes data science and research team has participated in conversations with a variety of states regarding that issue. She explained the results indicate that when spending is allocated to meet the needs of students, learning improves.

Senator Winder asked if the information States use to decide the "weighting" values is available. **Ms. Skinner** replied in the affirmative.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:32 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary