

MINUTES  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

- DATE:** Tuesday, February 27, 2018
- TIME:** 3:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room WW55
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Nonini, Den Hartog, Guthrie, Crabtree, Buckner-Webb, and Ward-Engelking
- ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** None
- 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 3:04 p.m.
- PRESENTATION: IDeal-Idaho College Savings Program (IDeal).** **Christie Stoll**, Executive Director, IDeal reiterated IDeal's mission statement: To help individuals and families save for education in a tax-advantaged way. She reminded the Committee that IDeal is a self-sustaining program. In the past year, the program has grown in total assets by 16 percent. Individuals can use those funds for tax-free education withdrawals for tuition, fees, certain room and board, books, and required supplies in public and private colleges/universities, two- and four-year programs, vocational, and foreign schools (Attachment 1).
- Ms. Stoll** said the program has reduced the fees and there has been an increase in the Idaho income tax deduction. She detailed the positive changes to the estate planning options through the federal gift exemption.
- Ms. Stoll** told the Committee about **H 463** and **H 515** and the impact they will have on conforming with the federal 529 program and protecting withdrawals from double taxation.
- Senator Ward-Engelking** asked if it is possible to make automatic gifts to specific accounts. **Ms. Stoll** replied in the affirmative. She said the automatic set-up is a new feature for 529 accounts.
- PRESENTATION: Imagine Learning Math & Literacy (Imagine).** **Emily Bybee**, Area Partnership Manager and **Eric Hafen**, National Programs Manager, Imagine, updated the Committee regarding the four different programs in the State: 1.) Language & Literacy; 2.) Math; 3.) Math Facts; and 4.) Espanol (Attachment 2).
- Mr. Hafen** played a video of Imagine Math being used in the classroom. The video emphasized the students using the program helps them learn the concepts they missed. The program helps students get to the necessary learning level. He briefed the Committee on the partnerships Imagine has with the State. He detailed the Math program and described student success with Idaho Math Cup. **Mr. Hafen** said because the program is fun, students are engaged and excited to solve math problems. He reported about the quantile framework which measures learning growth. From the charts and graphs, he detailed the grade level growth of those Idaho students who are using Imagine Math. He stated students made math improvements in two-thirds of the school year's timeline.

**Ms. Bybee** detailed the Imagine Language and Literacy measurements. She explained the benchmark test gains for fourth grade students in English as a Second Language (ESL) program. She stated the assessment feature is imbedded in the program. The overview is the Idaho students who use this program, have greater language skills gain than those students who are not using the program.

**Chairman Mortimer** asked if the majority of ESL student are not up to their grade level in reading. **Ms. Bybee** replied in the affirmative. She said that is typical for ESL students.

Each Senator received a handout highlighting how their legislative district's school districts were performing with Imagine Language and Literacy program. **Ms. Bybee** discussed the data results.

**Chairman Mortimer** asked how Imagine helps ESL students. **Ms. Bybee** replied Imagine has first language support available for students. She explained as a student becomes more proficient in English, the less the first language support in needed. Teaching English this way builds confidence which leads to success.

**Ms. Bybee** concluded the presentation with a video highlighting an Idaho school's progress and satisfaction with Imagine.

**ADJOURNED:** There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 3:44 p.m.

---

Senator Dean M. Mortimer  
Chair

---

LeAnn Mohr  
Secretary