

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, March 01, 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: Ryan Gravette, Idaho Digital Learning; Cindy Sisson, Michelle Sanders, West Ada School District; Brian Darcy, Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind; Mark Browning, College of Western Idaho; Rob Winslow, Idaho Association of School Administrators; Kari Overall, Idaho Education Association; Karen Echeverria, Idaho School Boards Association; Kathy Griesmeyer, American Civil Liberties Union - Idaho; Rod Gramer, Idaho Business for Education; Jay Larson, Idaho Technology Council

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

S 1266: **Senator Thayn** spoke to **S 1266**. He said the bill removes the graduation requirement to take a math class during the senior year, which is still in administrative rule. The reasons for the bill is that many students do not take a math class their junior year, and the attrition of skills between the junior and senior year means the rule may keep some students from graduating.

Rep. Kerby commented the change works well with the mastery-based education model, and the graduation requirement of six credits of math is not being changed.

MOTION: **Rep. Kerby** made a motion to send **S 1266** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Cindy Sisson, West Ada School District Curriculum Director, spoke **in opposition** to **S 1266**. She said skipping math during the junior year is not recommended, because that's when college placement tests are taken. Before the rule was in place, only one-half of seniors took a math class, she said. She feels the bill is a step backwards. In response to questions from the committee, Ms. Sisson said six credits of math are required, but two credits need to be taken the senior year. If students have taken AP Calculus, the district does not care if they take a math class their senior year, said Ms. Sisson, but the district wants other students to take a math class their senior year.

Rep. Moon spoke **in support** of **S 1266**. She said rural districts do not have as many math class offerings as urban districts.

VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Amador** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY. Rep. Moon** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

HCR 49: **Rep. Horman** spoke to **HCR 49**. She said the resolution states the findings of the school funding formula committee and calls for an additional committee year to determine how to implement the recommended changes.

MOTION: **Rep. McCrostie** made a motion to send **HCR 49** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

In response to questions from the committee, **Rep. Horman** said it is a two billion dollar shift to change course in student funding formula, but she hopes one more year will be enough to study the implementation of the recommendations and to bring statutory changes to the legislature during the 2019 Session.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Horman will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 622:

Rep. Scott spoke in support of **H 622**. She said the current trend is to limit and discourage unpopular opinions, and **H 622** protects freedom of speech on Idaho's higher education campuses. A study found approximately ninety percent of colleges have policies which infringe on free speech rights, she added.

Rep. McCrostie spoke in support of **H 622**. He said BSU was accused by Attorney General Jeff Sessions of violating free speech rights, and BSU has worked with ACLU-Idaho and the Idaho Freedom Foundation to change its policy. No negative feedback was received from colleges and universities on **H 622**, he added.

Mark Browning, College of Western Idaho, spoke in support of **H 622**. In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Browning said anything the college can do to re-affirm rights is positive.

Kathy Grismeyer, ACLU Idaho, spoke in support of **H 622**, saying protection to free speech is essential to the training in democratic values, and it encourages campuses to observe and uphold free speech rights.

In response to questions from the committee, **Rep. McCrostie** said the reason for mentioning the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution, but not mentioning the Idaho Constitution, is that most people think of the U.S. Constitution when they think of free speech rights. Also, most of the case law available references the U.S. Constitution, he added.

MOTION:

Rep. Mendive made a motion to send **H 622** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

In response to questions from the committee regarding the fiscal note, **Matthew Wilde**, general counsel for Boise State University, said BSU has revised its free speech policy, and, if **H 622** passes, BSU will consult with the ACLU and the Freedom Foundation. If protests are anticipated, BSU has a security response, said Mr. Wilde, but it is difficult to estimate how much security will cost. Some speakers will specifically ask for a security response from the police. BSU has absorbed the costs in the past, he added.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. McCrostie and **Rep. Scott** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

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

H 647:

Rep. VanOrden spoke to **H 647**. She said it establishes the representative status of a local education organization for the purposes of negotiations. The bill requires proof of representation status to be established every two years. Currently, the organization only has to establish representation status of fifty percent plus one member for one time.

Karen Echeverria, Idaho School Boards Association, spoke in support of **H 647**. She said the bill makes one correction the ISBA feels is needed. The school board can not review the list of signatures, and **H 647** does not change this, she added. In response to questions from the committee, Ms. Echeverria said the reason the list of names is not checked every year is because it is difficult to collect the signatures, especially in larger districts.

MOTION: **Rep. Amador** made a motion to send **H 647** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. VanOrden** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

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

S 1263: **Senator Ward-Engelking** spoke to **S 1263**. She said teachers do not receive a cash out of unused sick leave when they retire, but they can use the value of the unused sick leave to pay health insurance costs. Some teachers may retire from their certified positions and move to classified positions, and current statute discourages this. **S 1263** allows sick leave to be calculated at the highest monthly salary. It was banked at the certified salary level, so it will not change the fiscal impact, she added. In response to questions from the committee, she said she is not sure how many teachers the bill will affect, but she knows personally of four.

Rep. Moon spoke in support of **S 1263**, saying it would be helpful in rural districts.

In response to questions from the committee, **Senator Ward-Engelking** said **S 1263** will not change the way sick leave is valued. It allows teachers to receive the highest monthly salary, calculated based on the highest forty-two months, to be used for health insurance costs. The legislation was brought to her by certified teachers, who want to still be involved in education at the classified level.

MOTION: **Rep. McCrostie** made a motion to send **S 1263** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

In response to questions from the committee, **Senator Ward-Engelking** said the proposed change would occur at retirement, and the highest consecutive monthly salary would be used for calculation. Teachers do not receive cash for unused sick leave and vacation, she added, but they may use the money to pay for health care.

VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. McCrostie** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 648: **Rep. DeMordaunt** spoke to **H 648**. She said computer science has become a foundational subject. It provides the backbone necessary for any future career. Thirty percent of the job posts in Idaho last year were STEM-related jobs, she added. The bill would require school districts to offer at least one or more computer science classes, and districts have until 2020 to implement the requirement. Computer science classes can be used for science or math credit graduation requirements, and the bill provides a method of teacher certification in computer science, said Rep. DeMordaunt. The feedback from the stakeholders is the 2020 implementation date is critical, she added. **H 648** supports districts wanting teachers to receive computer science endorsements, she said. Due to the changes in the State Board of Education rules, it will be simple for teachers to be accredited, so there is no fiscal impact, said Rep. DeMordaunt.

Rob Winslow, Idaho Association of School Administrators, spoke in support of **H 648**, saying the implementation date is important to give districts time to implement it and provide professional development opportunities. In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Winslow said the association asked superintendents of rural districts, and they are not opposed to the bill. Many already offer CTE classes, but they wanted to know how they would implement the requirement, which is why the implementation date is 2020. Having a room for students to complete IDLA classes would be compliant, he added. Some members expressed the concern of the language in **H 648** using "require," because it takes away local district control, said Mr. Winslow. All are supportive of offering computer science, said Mr. Winslow, but he added he could not say all are supportive of offering it by 2020.

Rob Gramer, Idaho Business for Education, spoke **in support** of **H 648**. He said computer literacy is just as important today as math, reading and writing, and the bill will help students attain a good job and will help students in rural areas.

Jay Larson, Idaho Technical Council, spoke **in support** of **H 648**, saying Idaho is one of the leading states in legislative support for computer science and building a knowledge-based society. This is a pivotal opportunity for Idaho to build a knowledge-based economy, he added. In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Larson said computer science education should start in kindergarten. Four or five years ago, BSU graduated twenty graduates in computer science, but it currently graduates 200 computer science students, said Mr. Larson. Ninety-seven percent of BSU computer science graduates stay in Idaho, and the average salary for STEM jobs in Idaho is \$90,000, he added. The number one issue for Idaho is providing a skilled workforce for companies, said Mr. Larson. Cradlepoint received \$80 million in venture capital, and it is spending \$40 million in investing in expanding the workforce, such as college scholarships, he added.

Rep. DeMordaunt said the only requirement to participate in AP computer science courses is to take Algebra I, and many eighth-grade students take Algebra I. This means students can take an AP class, usually reserved for juniors and seniors, during their ninth-grade year. She said she wants kids to be able to stay in Idaho and have opportunities in the technology sector.

In response to questions from the committee, **Tracie Bent**, State Board of Education, said the Board has a new computer science endorsement for teachers which was created last year. The Board is working on an alternate route to endorsement which includes four different pathways, and it is working on a state-approved assessment for endorsement. **H 648** ties the certification courses to the content standards for computer science, she added.

In response to questions from the committee, **Rep. DeMordaunt** said **H 648** provides a continuing education requirement opportunity. The amount of time it will take a teacher to obtain certification depends on the district needs and the aptitude of the teacher, she said.

MOTION:

Rep. Amador made a motion to send **H 648** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Rep. Moon spoke **in support** of **H 648**, saying many rural schools are already doing this.

In response to questions from the committee, **Rep. DeMordaunt** said **H 648** requires some type of action from school districts, but flexibility is built into the bill for students, teachers and superintendents. She said she wanted maximum flexibility as well as accountability.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. DeMordaunt will sponsor the bill on the floor.

S 1294:

Duncan Robb, State Department of Education, spoke to **S 1294**. He said the bill adds the Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind to the Safe and Drug-free Schools Program. It currently does not receive benefits from the program, and it serves one-hundred students. The distribution of funds starts with a \$2,000 base, and then it is pro-rated based on the number of students in the district. There is no fiscal impact, because there will be approximately \$3,000 less for the other school districts, said Mr. Robb. **S 1294** also makes a technical correction based on the Office of Performance Evaluation Review. A review in 2016 revealed an inconsistency in how data is displayed, he added.

Brian Darcy, Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind, spoke **in support** of **S 1294**. In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Darcy said the Idaho Bureau for Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind oversees the school in Gooding.

In response to questions from the committee, **Mr. Robb** said **S 1294** only addresses distribution to the Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind, and there is no intention to bring forth more education entities to add to the program.

MOTION: **Rep. Amador** made a motion to send **S 1294** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Toone** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Representative VanOrden
Chair

Jenifer Cavaness-Williams
Secretary