

MINUTES  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Monday, March 12, 2018

**TIME:** 2:00 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 2:02 p.m. He opened the meeting with a reading from the book, "A Heap O'Living, Along Life's Highway", by Edgar A. Guest, *"It's a Dull Road."*

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Senator Ward-Engelking** moved to approve the Minutes of February 6, 2018. **Senator Buckner-Webb** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Senator Buckner-Webb** moved to approve the Minutes of February 13, 2018. **Senator Nonini** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Senator Den Hartog** moved to approve the Minutes of February 14, 2018. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Senator Guthrie** moved to approve the Minutes of February 15, 2018. **Vice Chairman Thayn** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**RS 26303** **Stating Findings of the Legislature and Rejecting a Certain Rule. Vice Chairman Thayn** present **RS 26303**. He stated the Concurrent Resolution is in regard to the rejection of Subsection 102.02.f **Docket No. 55-0103-1701** .

**UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST:** **Vice Chairman Thayn** asked for unanimous consent to send **RS 26303** to Senate State Affairs Committee for a print hearing. There were no objections.

**H 443** **Relating to Firearms Safety; To Authorize and Encourage a School District to Adopt an Elective Course in Firearms Safety Education and to Authorize Instructors. Representative Ron Nate**, District 34, presented **H 443**. He shared stories from across the nation concerning the deaths of children from accidental shootings. He detailed the statistics of accidental shootings; many occur in the child's/victim's home.

**DISCUSSION:** **Representative Nate** said 12 states allow for some gun safety classes in public schools. He explained **H 443** encourages school boards to approve gun safety classes for Idaho schools; it does not mandate the gun safety classes. He explained the importance of gun safety and how it can save children's lives. Nationally, over one-third of homes have guns; in Idaho, that figure is two-thirds. He said teaching children the proper dangers and cautions of guns will keep them and their friends safe. The legislation proposes to add a new section to Idaho Code.

**DISCUSSION:** **Senator Ward-Engelking** asked if the fiscal note is correct. **Representative Nate** replied the course is optional and the schools offering the class would most likely be displacing something else. He gave examples as to how schools may offer courses.

- MOTION:** **Senator Nonini** moved to send **H 443** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Guthrie** seconded the motion.
- DISCUSSION:** **Senator Nonini** said this legislation is timely and beneficial for the State. Any additional gun safety training in the schools is helpful.
- The motion passed by **voice vote**.
- H 648** **Relating to Education; Amend, Add, and Revise to Establish Provisions Regarding Computer Science Courses. Representative Gayann DeMordaunt**, District 14, presented **H 648**. She said computer science is necessary for every student in every career. She stated **H 648** seeks to expand the accessibility of computer science courses to all Idaho high school students. The proposed legislation would require Idaho school districts to offer at least one or more in-school, elective computer science course in each of their high schools. Schools have until 2020 to implement the courses through online, remote, or in-class instruction. She said the computer science course could be used to meet one of the student's math or science graduation requirements.
- MOTION:** **Senator Nonini** moved to send **H 648** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Crabtree** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.
- H 634** **Relating to Education; Amend, Add, and Revise to Establish Provisions Regarding Suicide Prevention in Schools. Representative Caroline Nilsson Troy**, District 5, presented **H 634**. She explained her connection to the Idaho Council on Suicide Prevention and the work done to help stop suicide. Idaho ranks in the top ten in the nation for suicides. She said the proposed legislation supports the efforts of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare by providing "gatekeeper training" for all school personnel: contract at will and certified staff. This training will teach about the warning signs and the available options for intervention. She listed the stakeholder groups supporting the proposed legislation.
- Shannon Decker**, Executive Director, Idaho Suicide Prevention Coalition, said **H 643** is modeled after the Jason Flatt Act, which 19 other states have implemented in some form. There are 42 states that have legislation on the books to require education in "gatekeeper training" for K-12 educators. She explained the work done with education stakeholders to keep the provisions of the bill at a low-cost and high-impact for schools.
- MOTION:** **Senator Ward-Engelking** moved to send **H 634** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Crabtree** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.
- H 632** **Relating to Education; Providing Legislative Intent; Amend, Revise, and Make Technical Corrections Regarding the Educational Support Program; and Provide an Effective Date. Duncan Robb**, Chief Policy Advisor, State Department of Education presented **H 632**. He stated the legislation proposed amends Idaho Code §§ 33-1002(2)(q) and 33-1002(2)(r) to increase the minimum distribution for the public schools' educational support program for counseling support. He detailed the minimum funding increases public school districts and public charter schools would receive. **Mr. Robb** said without this legislation, the increased appropriation in this line item would benefit only large public school districts.
- Vice Chairman Thayn** asked if the funding was being used effectively. **Mr. Robb** replied the State Board of Education (SBE) receives the reporting for this initiative. The SDE knows in all cases the funding has gone toward improved efforts in counseling and career advising.
- MOTION:** **Senator Guthrie** moved to send **H 632** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**ADJOURNED:** There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

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Senator Dean M. Mortimer  
Chair

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LeAnn Mohr  
Secretary