

MINUTES  
**HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Thursday, February 21, 2019

**TIME:** 9:00 A.M.

**PLACE:** Room EW41

**MEMBERS:** Chairman Clow, Vice Chairman Kerby, Representatives Shepherd, Boyle, Mendive, DeMordaunt, Moon, Ehardt, Goesling, Marshall, Raymond, Wisniewski, McCrostie, Abernathy, Berch

**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:** Rep. Berch

**GUESTS:** Blake Youde, Robin Gilbert and Michael Jacobsen, Teach for America; Harold Ott, IRSA/IASA; Rob Winslow, IASA; Kari Overall, IEA

**Chairman Clow** called the meeting to order at 9:01 am.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Goesling** made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2019 meeting. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**RS 26561:** **Rep. Toone** presented **RS 26561**, which establishes the Quality Educator Loan Assistance Program to provide loan repayment assistance to teachers working in rural and/or economically disadvantaged areas. She stated 75% of schools in Idaho are located in rural areas and the loan forgiveness program would be one tool to attract and retain teachers for these schools.

**Sen. Ward-Engelking** also presented on the proposed legislation. She explained an eligible teacher would be eligible for \$1,500 in loan repayment assistance their first year, \$2,500 second year, \$3,500 third year and \$4,500 fourth year, provided they remain employed by the same school or district. She noted this would be more beneficial than a signing bonus because it lasts longer and the hope is that after four years the teacher will be invested in the community and likely to stay. She stated the proposed legislation has the backing of all stakeholders, including the State Board of Education.

**MOTION:** **Rep. McCrostie** made a motion to introduce **RS 26561**.

In response to Committee questions, **Sen. Ward-Engelking** stated she is working on additional legislation to encourage kids in rural communities to become teachers and return to teach in their hometown.

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

**H 93:** **Rep. DeMordaunt** presented **H 93**, which creates one tool to address the teacher shortage. She stated 2,000 new teachers are needed each year to fill positions created by attrition and growth, and districts spend at least \$6 million per year to fill these positions. This bill would allow districts or charters to enter into agreements with State Board of Education-approved nontraditional teacher preparation programs to help recruit, select, train and retain teachers for hard to fill positions. It would make these programs eligible for state funding if they provide at least 100% in matching funds. Eligible programs must demonstrate their teachers achieve above-average academic growth from students.

**Rep. Boyle** also presented on the bill and noted the teacher shortage is particularly severe in rural Idaho. She stated this bill is not just about one organization.

**Blake Youde**, speaking on behalf of Teach for America (TFA), spoke **in support** of **H 93**. He stated twelve more districts in Idaho have contacted TFA regarding expansion and noted this bill alone is not intended to solve the shortage, but it is one piece of the puzzle.

In response to Committee questions, **Mr. Youde** stated TFA provides a 3:1 match of private to state dollars, so expanding the program is very cost effective for the state. He stated it is a recruitment program and incentives are needed to lure the best individuals to Idaho. It is not uncommon for government to partner with private organizations to meet a public purpose and he suggested this is a better solution than expanding government to meet the need. He noted the bill allows funding subject to appropriation, so the legislature has the final say on fiscal impact.

**Robin Gilbert**, Payette School District Superintendent, spoke **in support** of the bill. She noted it has achievement requirements written into it and stated TFA mentors their teachers, so the district does not have to. She stated she has to spend money to find new teachers anyway, so it would be nice to have the state invest likewise.

**Michael Jacobsen**, Swan Valley School District Superintendent, spoke **in support** of the bill and stated all of his teachers are alternatively certified. He stated educators want a bag of tools they can use, but right now TFA is not an option for him, because the program is only in the Treasure Valley.

**Kari Overall**, President, Idaho Education Association, stated retention is clearly the primary issue causing the teacher shortage. She called for a comprehensive approach to the problem and suggested the governor's proposed Education Task Force as the place to begin the conversation about a multi-step solution.

**Rep. DeMordaunt** was recognized to close testimony on **H 93**. She noted the traditional teacher preparation model will continue to provide the bulk of teachers, but this bill can have an immediate impact. She stated it is local districts asking for this and state dollars will allow TFA and other programs scalability. She also noted student outcomes are written into the bill. She stated this sets up a model for future partnerships and when the state leverages private dollars with public funds, we get bang for our buck.

**MOTION:**

**Vice Chairman Kerby** made a motion to send **H 93** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. He noted Idaho already invests heavily in teacher preparation students at its public and private universities, the bill does not require a large funding commitment, and TFA has a good track record. He stated Idaho has an acute shortage of teachers, so the legislature cannot ignore a solution as valuable as this.

**Rep. Marshall** spoke **in opposition** to the motion, noting while he supports nontraditional teacher preparation methods, he was not convinced public funding is required.

**Rep. Raymond** spoke **in support** of the motion because he believed the bill will give the state a good return on investment.

**Rep. McCrostie** spoke **in opposition** to the motion because of concerns about the funding language.

**Chairman Clow** spoke **in support** of the motion, stating he views TFA and similar programs as recruitment operations, something districts are not prepared to do.

**VOTE ON MOTION:**

**Motion carried by voice vote. Reps. Marshall, McCrostie, Moon and Wisniewski** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY**. **Reps. Boyle and DeMordaunt** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

Idaho's State FFA Officers, **Saydee Longhurst**, President; **Harrison Jansen van Beek**, Vice President; **Allyson King**, Secretary; **Melanie Searle**, Treasurer; **Savannah Stroebel**, Reporter; and **Caleb Johnston**, Sentinel, presented to the Committee. They spoke about the opportunity for students to have a supervised agriculture experience, the organization's service component and the leadership conferences available.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:52 am.

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Representative Clow  
Chair

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Erica McGinnis  
Secretary