

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, February 27, 2019

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Crabtree, Woodward, Lent, Buckner-Webb, and Ward-Engelking

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senator Den Hartog

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 meeting of the Senate Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:04 p.m. **Chairman Mortimer** stated Vice Chairman Thayn was going to gather additional information regarding **S 1061**, therefore, the presentation would be moved to the top of the agenda.

PRESENTATION: **Sherri Ybarra**, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Department of Education (SDE), provided a brief overview of the updates to the State's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) comprehensive plan. She reported the work the SDE has done with the following partnerships: the Accountability and Oversight Committee (AOC), educators, parents, stakeholders, and legislators, to create a new State accountability system for grades K-12. She praised the collaboration which led to the successful approval of ESSA.

Superintendent Ybarra noted last fall, staff gathered feedback and analyzed the functionality of the new accountability system. The analysis identified areas of the plan where additional information and updates would improve the system to better serve schools and students. She reported a comprehensive list of recommendations were presented to the State Board of Education's Board in January, along with the AOC's annual report. **Ms. Ybarra** introduced Karlynn Laraway, Director, Assessment and Accountability, SDE, to continue the presentation.

Karlynn Laraway went over some of the changes addressed in the ESSA comprehensive plan. She reported in March 2018, after extensive stakeholder engagement, the U.S. Department of Education approved Idaho's plan and in August 2018, the SDE implemented the plan. She said schools were identified using multiple measures of key performance indicators and noted the system was designed to identify schools in the most need of support which included those schools with achievement gaps in the "at risk" population. Additionally, schools with top performance, those in the 90th percentile, and those that meet or exceed annual achievement goals, were also recognized. She reported the number of schools that were identified with achievement gaps of 35 percentage points or greater in student group performance and said the system also identifies or recognizes schools for top performance.

Ms. Laraway reported on the progress of English Language Learners (ELLs). She disclosed during data analysis, areas of the plan were identified where clarification and improvement of the system would better meet the needs of the schools and students (Attachment 1).

DISCUSSION:

Chairman Mortimer mentioned the ESSA is a governing document. During the summer there was a special committee that met regarding education and the U. S. plan. He praised this committee. He noted there were some changes made and the plan was submitted and approved. The first amendment to this plan is now being done.

Senator Buckner-Webb and **Ms. Laraway** discussed the number of students who were included in the calculations. **Ms. Laraway** explained the relationship to the ELL's language proficiency assessment and whether a student can speak and communicate in English.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked if the data which stands out relates to the areas of low income students. **Ms. Laraway** replied in the affirmative. She said in reviewing the achievement gaps, students in the ELL groups, students with disabilities, and some of the racial subgroup populations, have a far greater achievement gap than those students who are considered economically disadvantaged.

Vice Chairman Thayn and **Ms. Laraway** discussed how informing school districts, in particular special educators and ELL support staff, might identify strategies to meet student needs.

Ms. Laraway mentioned there are conversations occurring around understanding data literacy, what the data says, and what the next actionable steps are that need to be taken.

Superintendent Ybarra thanked the ISDE team for their hard work and the Committee for the opportunity to share the information.

S 1061

Vice Chairman Thayn presented **S 1061**, Relating to Education; School Levies. He explained the purpose of the proposed legislation is to make it easier for school districts that have passed a levy for at least seven consecutive years, to place the levy on the ballot to allow voters to extend the levy length from three to ten years without going back to the voters every year. There is no fiscal impact to the General Fund, but there may be some minimal local impact.

Vice Chairman Thayn detailed the changes and explained there are some amendments to the current proposed legislation that will need to be added.

Vice Chairman Thayn explained the two amendments to Committee.

DISCUSSION:

Senator Lent and **Vice Chairman Thayn** discussed the legislation and stated it was not a permanent solution. They acknowledged the way the amendment as written will make those levies which have been in place for a period of time become permanent.

Senator Woodward stated currently in code, if a levy extends for seven consecutive years, voters can be asked to place and pay for a levy for an indefinite period of time. He stated the proposed legislation extends the levy time from three to ten years, but the amendment will potentially change the time from three to five years. He stated he did not see any reason to reduce the time to five years.

Vice Chairman Thayn reported he had received several emails about reducing the time. One good thing about the amendment is the voters, working through the trustees, would have the option of reducing the time and omitting the cost of extra elections. **Vice Chairman Thayn** indicated Idaho Code § 34-106 outlines the role of school board trustees regarding levies. He stated the amendment in the proposed legislation is a trade-off.

Senator Woodward asked if this would affect the new funding formula. **Vice Chairman Thayn** replied in the negative. **Vice Chairman Thayn** reported there are a total of 68 school districts with supplemental levies.

TESTIMONY:

Quinn Perry, Policy and Government Affairs Director, Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA), spoke in support of **S 1061**. She remarked the vast majority of school districts have supplemental levies. She said most of the supplemental levies are used for day-to-day operating expenses. She stated the amount and percent of levies vary from district to district; if one were to fail, it would be devastating to the district.

Harold Ott, Art Director, Idaho Rural Schools (IRS) and the Idaho Association of School Administrators (IASA), spoke in support of **S 1061**. He said the bill provides more security and dependability for the local district in developing budgets. He stated it was essential the districts with permanent levies are grandfathered.

DISCUSSION:

Vice Chairman Thayn asked the Committee to send the **S 1061** to the 14th Order of Business for a possible amendment.

MOTION:

Senator Lent moved to send **S 1061** to the 14th Order of Business for possible amendment. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION:

The Committee discussed the two separate amendments. **Senator Crabtree** remarked the grandfather clause is important and was in support of that amendment. He stated he would not support the other amendment. **Senator Woodward** indicated ten years is a very appropriate time frame and would like to see that remain in the proposed legislation. **Senator Ward-Engelking** stated she is agreement with the proposed legislation.

VOICE VOTE:

The motion to send to the 14th Order of Business carried by **voice vote**.

**MINUTES
APPROVAL:**

Senator Woodward moved to approve the Minutes of January 24, 2019. **Vice Chairman Thayn** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

Senator Winder moved to approve the Minutes of January 28, 2019. **Vice Chairman Thayn** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

Vice Chairman Thayn moved to approve the Minutes of January 29, 2019. **Senator Winder** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

Senator Crabtree moved to approve the Minutes of January 30, 2019. **Senator Winder** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

ADJOURNED:

There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 3:59 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary

Linda Kambeitz
Assistant Secretary