

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- DATE:** Thursday, March 07, 2019
- TIME:** 3:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room WW55
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Den Hartog, Crabtree, Woodward, Lent, 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 3:03 p.m.
- RS 27013C1** **Senator Winder** presented **RS 27013C1**, Relating to Charter Schools; Facilities. He said funding for charter schools has been an ongoing issue. He stated this proposed legislation sets up a funding program for charter schools which will lower interest rates, thereby increasing funds available for the classroom.
- Senator Ward-Engelking** asked if this will create a separate fund in the State Treasurer's Office. **Senator Winder** replied that is yet to be determined.
- Chairman Mortimer** explained that before the charter school could bond they would need to have 12 months' worth of bond payments deposited with the Treasurer. There would be no impact to the General Fund.
- MOTION:** **Senator Winder** asked for unanimous consent to send **RS 27013C1** to the State Affairs Committee for a print hearing. There were no objections.
- RS 27075** **Senator Lent** presented **RS 27075**, Relating to Education; Superintendent and Chief Administrator Evaluations. He said this is to bring some clarity and consistency to the annual evaluation for superintendents and chief administrators. The proposed legislation will provide flexibility to customize the evaluations, and with work from the State Board of Education (SBE0, will bring some consistency as those individuals work with their respective board of trustees. This is to simplify the process.
- MOTION:** **Senator Lent** asked for unanimous consent to send **RS 27075** to the State Affairs Committee for a print hearing. There were no objections.
- H 150** **Senator Lent** presented **H 150** Relating to Open Meetings; Executive Sessions. He asked Karen Echeverria, Executive Director, Idaho School Boards Association, to explain the proposed legislation.
- Ms. Echeverria** said **H 150** addresses executive sessions for school board (Board) meetings. The proposed legislation asks for an exemption from the two-thirds majority that is necessary to move into executive session when the Board has enough vacancies that they cannot meet the two-thirds requirement. She emphasized that **H 150** only addresses vacancies and not absences and defined what constituted a vacancy. She recounted the instances in which Boards, because of vacancies, were unable to address personnel matters.
- MOTION:** **Senator Lent** moved to send **H 150** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

S 1106

Suzanne Budge, SBS Associates, LLC, on behalf of Idaho Technical Career School (ITCA), presented **S 1106**, Relating to Public Charter Schools; Funding for Career Technical Education (CTE). She said the proposed legislation is to bring the language up to date with what is currently being practiced. **Ms. Budge** explained the difficulties in getting qualified instructors for the rural schools and how online CTE coursework will benefit. She stated this is a pathway for students who are not college bound, and will align education to the demands of industry.

Ms. Budge said industry required certifications are what drive the CTE curriculum. She emphasized that not all the coursework will be provided online. There would be provisions for the coursework which would require hands-on demonstrations.

Ms. Budge explained the amendments that will need to be made to the proposed legislation. She stated the amendments better define who is providing the online coursework as well as the parameters of the coursework.

DISCUSSION:

Senators Ward-Engelking and **Buckner-Webb** discussed the concerns regarding "face-to-face" learning for CTE coursework. **Ms. Budge** assured them that the industry drives the certification. If there is to be "face-to-face" demonstrations of knowledge, that will be done. That is also the reason for the amendment.

Senator Lent asked who is making the decision for how the certification is obtained. **Ms. Budge** replied the industries develop the standards for certification.

Vice Chairman Thayn clarified that it is the industry which drives the standards and that determines the type of training a student would receive. He said when State money is being spent, the Division of CTE should have some type of role.

Senator Lent expressed his concern regarding the blended model for course delivery. He stated online course delivery does not work for all CTE courses. Proficiency is the end result in the CTE coursework and there must be oversight to ensure that is met. **Ms. Budge** replied the goal for CTE online is to reach proficiency and certification.

Kerry Wysocki, Board Chairman, ITCA, and General Manager of Northwest Machining and Manufacturing, Inc, explained the history and the board make-up of ITCA. He said ITCA was solely established to help students learn and to give them some CTE opportunities for a stable career. He said all the career pathways they offer are designed and capable of being taught online. ITCA understands its limitations and only offers those courses that can be completed online.

Monti Pittman, Head of School, ITCA, said he worked in CTE for several years prior to moving into virtual education. He stated the technical skill assessment that ITCA created is based on Idaho's CTE standards from business, industry, and educational collaboration. He said he would like ITCA to meet those same standards. He explained the desire to receive equal State funding for ITCA.

Senator Lent asked if he knew the cost ITCA incurred when the school was implemented. **Mr. Pittman** replied it would be the same as a brick and mortar school. He explained the curriculum and educator costs. The ITCA students are required to learn from Idaho certified teachers.

Senator Lent asked if any of the ITCA courses are blended. **Mr. Pittman** replied in the negative. He said the current curriculum matches the industry requirements. He explained the industry's desire for employees who can learn by a remote method, which is the way online schools deliver.

TESTIMONY:

Wayne Hammon, CEO, Idaho Associated General Contractors (IAGC), spoke in favor of **S 1106**. He said many elements in CTE training can be delivered virtually and detailed those elements. He stated there will never be a point where every skill that workers need will be delivered virtually, nor does the IAGC want that type of practicum.

- DISCUSSION:** **Senator Ward-Engelking** inquired about Idaho Digital Learning Academy's (IDLA) blended learning.
- Dr. Sherawn Reberry**, Director of Education Programs, IDLA, said IDLA offers blended programs, however, not in CTE.
- TESTIMONY:** **Anthony Jefferies**, Senior High School Student, Nampa, Idaho and Future Farmers of America (FFA) member, spoke against **S 1106**. He explained the importance of his hands-on learning and reported the various opportunities he has had with the organization.
- John Eaton**, Vice President, Idaho Association of Commerce and Industry (IACI), spoke in favor of **S 1106**. He stated IACI has a very strong interest in workforce development in Idaho and believes that removing silos will lead to more career opportunities for Idaho students. He said many businesses and industries engage in online training for their employees, so it is important that students learn how to navigate online training through online learning. He spoke about the merits of a Texas university's online model and how Idaho can be in the forefront on this type of education. He did caution that online learning is not for every industry.
- Daelas Zieber**, Student, Nampa High School, spoke against **S 1106**. She explained her successes in her hands-on agriculture classes. She said in elementary school, it was difficult for her to be in front of the class, but with coaching and practice, she is now able to speak in public. She cautioned that online learning would remove opportunities for the hands on experience.
- Benjamin Kelly**, Food Producers of Idaho, spoke in favor of **S 1106**. He said agriculture provides many job opportunities, in fact one out of three people work in some type of industry related to agriculture. He emphasized the need for many types of learning; blended, online, and hands-on.
- Dwight Johnson**, State Administrator, Division of CTE (Division), said SBE Board has not been able to meet to review this legislation and does not have an official stance on the legislation. Therefore, as a sector of the SBE, the Division does not have an official position. He said he has been given permission to talk about significant concerns regarding the proposed legislation.
- Mr. Johnson** explained the critical components of CTE coursework and emphasized it is more than hands-on, it is about learning to work, interact, and display professionalism in the workplace. He said the intent of the current language in **S 1106** is confusing. He explained how CTE standards are driven by input from industry and the facility of secondary and postsecondary education levels, often without an online component. He stated the current language does not allow a blended model. If this were to go to the amending order, **Mr. Johnson** hoped CTE could work with the authors to ensure that the language would meet standards.
- DISCUSSION:** **Senator Den Hartog** stated there are many ways in which people can receive their education and CTE can diversify and expand into a non-traditional education program. She asked if the Division believes there are CTE online pathways. **Mr. Johnson** replied in the affirmative. He stated the Division would like to ensure quality control in the implementation of online education.
- Senator Lent** stated he has spent the past 20 years as a technical manager and managed over 200 online training courses. He said he is 100 percent in favor of making **S 1106** work; it is the right thing to do.
- MOTION:** **Senator Lent** moved to send **S 1106** to the 14th Order of Business for possible amendment. **Vice Chairman Thayne** seconded the motion.

Vice Chairman Thayn indicated he would like to work with Mr. Johnson to resolve the concerns. This is an important policy decision as to how online learning should expand.

The motion passed by **voice vote**.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:14 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary