

Good afternoon Chairman Mortimer and members of the committee. My name is Kari Overall and I am the President of the Idaho Education Association. I am here representing educators from across the state to provide feedback on SB1196.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed legislation. We believe SB1196 is an improvement over the original funding formula draft presented in early February but it still falls short in answering fundamental questions which must be answered to ensure Idaho's schools are funded by a system which is transparent, stable, predictable, and equitable.

SB1196 does not adequately fund for veteran educators. Idaho is currently 44th in the nation in teacher salary and ranks well below neighboring states. Despite the increases of the last four years in teacher salary from the Career Ladder Legislation, when adjusted for inflation, Idaho teachers have seen a 6.4% decrease in teacher salary. SB1196 removes the indexing provided to districts for hiring more experienced educators. Under the proposed legislation a district where the majority of staff have earned credits and acquired additional experience will receive the same amount of money for those staff as a school district which hires brand new inexperienced educators. Idaho continues to struggle to retain educators beyond the five

year mark. SB1196 will not help districts solve their issues with retaining educators beyond the five year mark.

Educators and districts begin bargaining for the subsequent school year in early spring. If SB1196 is enacted as is, a year from now, educators and districts will be bargaining under a new formula without a robust budgeting tool and without all the pieces of the puzzle necessary to adequately predict how much money is available for salaries. This hinders the ability of districts to recruit and retain quality educators and exacerbates Idaho's already high attrition rate problem. We believe a more gradual roll out of any new funding formula model is imperative.

Last week stakeholders submitted questions we still had to this committee about SB1196. Many of those questions have yet to be answered. We believe there is no rush nor urgency to get the funding formula redone this legislative session. There is no mandatory time frame and it would be unwise to push a bill through without fully understanding the long term impact on students and school districts. We urge the committee to pull back this bill and continue this work collaboratively with all stakeholders in the same room.

We believe we could begin this process this year by passing legislation which switches from attendance to enrollment. This could be a first step in the process in moving toward a student-centered model. The Interim

Public School Funding Formula Committee cautioned against rushed implementation and emphasized the need to utilize a 3-5 year roll out of this process and ensure that the new policy is done deliberately and with fidelity. By heeding this counsel and utilizing a proven, collaborative method with all voices in the room, we can ensure Idaho's students and schools are funded by a model which meets the original intent of the public school funding formula interim committee.

Thank you and I will stand for questions.