

Talking Points – Joint House/Senate Education Committee Interim Meeting 7/21/20

Legislative Ideas

In June, the State Board of Education approved nine legislative ideas for the upcoming session and submitted them to The Governor's Office/Division of Financial Management, through the Executive Agency Legislation (EAL) process, for review. The Executive Review Process is still underway so we don't yet know how many of the legislative ideas will be returned to the Board for consideration and approval at the August Board meeting. The Board also delegated the authority for the Executive Director to submit additional legislative ideas that may be identified prior to the deadline to submit legislative ideas. One additional legislative idea was submitted pertaining to community colleges was submitted.

Here's a brief overview of the ideas, and I want to note that more than half of them – six total are related to the work in 2019 of the Governor's "Our Kids, Idaho's Future Task Force."

- 1. Definitions** - The first idea would clear up confusion about the definition of "Salary Schedule" and the reference to a minimum amount on a local district salary schedule. It would amend the definition under Section 33-1001, Idaho Code to align with the minimum compensation language in Section 33-1004E, which outlines the minimum salaries that must be for full-time equivalent positions. **There would be no fiscal impact.**
- 2. Career Ladder Endorsements** – Section 33-1201A, Idaho Code, was amended to provide a streamlined process for instructional staff coming from out-of-state to be placed on the Career Ladder. The process used existing language regarding individuals coming from compact member states. This change would provide clarification that the individual would be coming from a compact member state other than Idaho. **There would be no fiscal impact.**
- 3. Administrator Evaluations** – This legislation pertains to annual school administrator evaluations, which are required under Idaho Code, and would provide specificity around minimum student performance data that should be included as part of administrator evaluations. The three minimums that would be added include: Grade 3 literacy, Grade 8

mathematics, and the high school graduation rate. **There would be no fiscal impact.**

4. **Board of Trustee Training** – This proposal would add a new section of code requiring school board members to receive initial and biennial professional development/training. New Board members would receive training on the duties of serving on a school board. Biennial training would focus on fundamentals of board governance, public education issues and leading innovation and change in public education. **There would be no fiscal impact.** Section 33-320, Idaho Code, provides existing funding for school board training but these funds are currently underutilized.
5. **Literacy Intervention** – This proposal would consolidate current statutory requirements for literacy intervention into a single chapter. It would also update provisions to align it with the Task Force recommendation to focus more on the importance that every student be able to read at grade level by the end of the third grade. **There would be no fiscal impact.** Funding is already appropriated for the purpose of increasing literacy intervention for students in kindergarten through third grade.
6. **Public School Funding** – This proposal would reorganize public school funding around uniformity, thoroughness and operations. The result would be to maintain salary-based apportionment, state policy priorities and operations, while providing flexibility by consolidating some line item funding. **Any fiscal impact would be at the discretion of the legislature.** The proposed changes would maintain current funding methodologies for the career ladder and other state priorities while consolidating existing funding in other areas.
7. **School Age – Local/District Flexibility** – “School Age” for the Idaho public school system is defined in code that a student must be five years old by the September 1st to enroll in kindergarten and six years old on September 1st to enroll in first grade. The definition of school age allows exceptions for resident children with disabilities but does not provide flexibility for other students who fall just outside the age requirement. This proposal would

amend Section 33-201, Idaho Code to grant flexibility at the local level to determine if a student whose birthday falls just outside the September 1st date, is ready for kindergarten or the first grade. **There would be no fiscal impact.**

- 8. Renewable Contracts – Professional Endorsement** – This proposal would remove the requirement under Section 33-515, Idaho Code that requires individuals to have a Professional Endorsement to be eligible for renewable contract. Existing language regarding years of services would remain in place. **There would be no fiscal impact.**

- 9. Transportation Funding** – This proposal is in response to what occurred this past spring as a result of the pandemic and it is intended to address issues around significant decreases or increases in a single year to reimbursable transportation costs. The current multi-year methodology for funding student transportation costs caused significant challenges at the local level when buildings closed due to the pandemic. This proposal would add a mechanism for dealing with significant changes in transportation miles due emergency situations. **The fiscal impact would be subject to legislative appropriation.**

- 10. Community College Tuition Cap** – This proposal would remove the maximum tuition cap allowed to be charged by Community Colleges by amending Section 33-2110, Idaho Code. Removing the cap would enable locally elected Board of Trustees for each Community College to set tuition. Without this amendment, Community Colleges will need to rely more on state funding and local taxing districts support to fund operations. Currently, code limits Community Colleges to a maximum tuition of \$2,500 per annum, which equates to \$104 per credit hour, about a third of what a credit hour costs at one of our universities.

While the public school funding legislative idea was originally a recommendation of the Our Kids, Idaho’s Future Task Force, any amendments could also incorporate flexibility in areas that have been identified as a result of the pandemic and accompanying economic downturn that would allow school local

school Boards to make quickly respond to changes in the budget due to future crisis.

The legislative idea regarding renewable contracts and the professional endorsement is in direct response to an issue identified due to the proposed holdbacks in the public schools budget and potential “freezing” of movement on the career ladder.

The legislative idea regarding transportation funding is in direct response to the challenges the school districts faced due to the pandemic and how the change in reimbursable mileage during the 2019-2020 school year will impact their transportation budget for the 2020-2021 school year.