

MINUTES
(Subject to Approval by the Committee)
Idaho Content Standards Committee
Wednesday, September 09, 2020
9:00 A.M.
Room WW02
Boise, Idaho

Cochair Thayn called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.; a silent roll call was requested.

Members in attendance: Cochair Senator Steven Thayn and Senators Lori Den Hartog, Jim Woodward, Dave Lent, and Janie Ward-Engelking (via video conference); Cochair Representative Gary Marshall and Representatives Dorothy Moon (via VC), Ryan Kerby, Paul Amador, and John McCrostie (via VC); and LSO staff Elizabeth Bowen and Jennifer Kish.

Attendance of audience members was not recorded.

NOTE: Presentations and materials distributed to members are posted to the Idaho Legislature's website: <https://legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2020/interim>; and copies of those items are on file with the Legislative Services Office located in the State Capitol.

Cochair Thayn requested a motion to approve the minutes from the August 6th meeting. **Rep. Amador moved to approve the minutes of August 6, 2020, and the motion was seconded by Sen. Den Hartog; the minutes, as presented, were approved unanimously by the attending members.**

After opening remarks, Cochair Thayn called upon Sen. Den Hartog for a comment on supporting materials within the standards. Sen. Den Hartog noted that, per an earlier request, the State Board of Education had removed the lists of supporting materials from the standards; but, after further discussion as to how the materials were helpful for instruction, the board had reinstated the lists. Sen. Den Hartog remarked that it was important for the committee to define standards from curriculum from supporting material.

Cochair Thayn summarized that the overall recommendation from industry expert testimony at the previous meeting was not to start from "scratch" in rewriting Idaho's standards. The options would be to start with Idaho's current standards and rewrite them or to start with another state's standards and rewrite them to meet Idaho's needs. Rep. Kerby shared how the math review committee was attacking the rewrite by using Massachusetts' curriculum. In a [draft document](#) provided by Rep. Kerby, the committee highlighted desirable items and language and edited or removed other items, which was just a portion of the work. He noted that after reviewing many states' standards, the overall problematic issue was the same: clarity. Rep. Kerby reported that the explanations were clear and concise and that examples were included in the same location as the standard. Cochair Marshall agreed that it was best not to start from "scratch," but noted that it may be best for the committees to consider different states per subject matter. Sen. Lent cautioned to ensure consistency across the standards in the completed work when using different states' standards upon which to build.

At 9:33 a.m., Cochair Thayn focused the committee's discussion on math concerns. Cochair Marshall presented his documents ([Problems with Idaho Common Core Standards](#), [Idaho Standards Concerns](#)) to the committee and directed his comments to the math items.

Dr. Kelli Rich, elementary math specialist for the Nampa School District, was called upon to share her handout [K-5 Mathematics Standards Review](#) with the committee. Dr. Rich noted that her draft document was based on standards from Massachusetts, a document from North Carolina referred to as the *Tool Kit*, and various K-6 standards from Florida.

- Cochair Marshall wondered about the requirement of teaching multiple methods for solving math problems. Dr. Rich explained that students choose the most efficient method due to their

learning; those with stronger learning of conception and procedure quickly evaluate and use the best method. She noted that sometimes the goal of multiple methods was lost in the standards' explanation. Dr. Rich noted that the multiple methods taught conceptual and procedural method so that the student understands the properties of the operation. Cochair Thayn referred to the McGuffey Reader, which instructs educators to teach numbers, an abstract idea, by linking them to an actual object. Dr. Rich noted that number sense was a basic building block and understanding that abstract concept was essential to understanding process. Cochair Thayn inquired whether multiple strategies were required on the SBAC test. Dr. Rich responded that multiple strategies were hidden within the questions.

- Cochair Marshall observed that it was important to solve the frustration associated with learning math to eliminate the political divisiveness of math standards. Dr. Rich observed that writing the standards to be clear and to show progression was the key to eliminating the frustration for teachers, parents, and students. Rep. Kerby inquired whether clear standards would assist with better homework assignments, i.e., not frustrating parents and kids. Dr. Rich hoped that better communication with parents to find more clearly written standards and/or supplemental material would assist parents and students in understanding the purpose of the homework assignments.
- Sen. Lent cautioned that the standards should not be "watered down" so that students were successful, but rather the standards should be challenging and effective at creating a student who can compete with students across the world.

At 10:35 a.m., the committee took a 15-minute break. Upon its return, Cochair Thayn directed the discussion as to what advisement should go to the math rewrite committee.

- Cochair Thayn asked how the committee felt about the inclusion of teaching multiple strategies. Most members were in favor of retaining the item as a standard.
- Cochair Thayn inquired why students have difficulty with math skills; whether it was an inability to do math or a lack of number sense and basic skills. Dr. Rich remarked that it came down to a student's experience with math outside of the educational instruction (i.e., playing board games or card games, discussions about money, measurements while cooking). She also noted that students need to master a skill at grade level before they receive instruction for the next skill (i.e., mastering 2-digit addition/subtraction before being instructed in multiplication/division).
- Cochair Thayn summarized that the committee was giving instruction to the math review committee to include multiple strategies of instruction but more carefully implemented; to make standards parent- and teacher-friendly; and to emphasize the importance of fluency. Cochair Marshall commented that he liked the mastery standards as they were formatted in Dr. Rich's draft document. Sen. Woodward commented that the language needed to be more simplistic, noting the example 3.OA.C.7.a., which was requiring students to perform single-digit multiplication. Cochair Thayn commented that possibly having the mastery skill at the beginning of the format would be more effective and suggested adding those examples of how parents can assist students (playing board games, discussing money, etc.) in an appendix.
- Rep. Kerby noted that many school districts were still in the traditional Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Geometry 1, and College Algebra rather than the Integrated 1, 2, and 3. He noted that Massachusetts provided conceptual standards for both methods and broke them out by grade. He supported that the format be implemented for Idaho. Cochair Marshall expressed concern about there being different standards at schools due to the different methods still being employed, especially for students who transfer. Sen. Ward-Engelking agreed with that concern, noting that students would be expected to be competent on different standards within the same grade. Rep. Kerby noted that the review committees were working on the standards and it was up to others to organize the standards into the class curriculum.

At 11:35 a.m., Cochair Thayn moved the discussion to English language arts.

- Cochair Marshall directed the committee to his previous handouts and his comments regarding the ELA items.
- Cochair Thayn reviewed the items listed for ELA per the letter to the SBOE.
- Sen. Ward-Engelking commented that, per her teaching experience, it was difficult for everyone to see literature in the same perspective. She cautioned that the standards not be too restrictive so as to allow options for those who may oppose an assignment.
- Rep. Kerby wondered whether the suggested reading items were part of the discussion for rewriting the standards. Cochair Thayn commented that supporting materials or reading lists were most often at the center of the discussion. Sen. Lent noted that it was the school board's responsibility to define the curriculum from those lists. Cochair Marshall noted that the reading lists previously were included in the standards.
- Rep. Kerby inquired whether anyone from the ELA committee was in attendance to answer the committee's questions. Marilyn Whitney, Dep. Superintendent for the Idaho Dept. of Education, commented that the ELA committees were considering the current standards and the letter's direction to simplify and streamline standards, which included reviewing the supportive materials and appendices such as suggested reading lists. She reported that the SBOE had given instruction during its June board meeting for the committees NOT to include such supporting materials in the standards but rather to provide those supportive materials as resources to educators.
- Rep. Moon commented that it was clear that some of the items on the reading list were not of unanimous approval by parents and it needed to be recognized and revised.
- Cochair Marshall inquired whether comments from his documents should be considered in addition to the items in the letter issued to the SBOE. Sen. Lent stated that the documents provided good feedback from citizens and possibly should be provided to the rewrite committees, but it was not necessary to add those items to the original letter. Rep. McCrostie was not in favor of adding those items to the original letter and, in fact, did not agree with some of the comments made in those documents. Rep. Kerby cautioned distracting the ELA committee from its original purpose, especially at this late hour. He surmised that, if these documents were to be sent, EVERYTHING should be sent in order to expose all facets of the issue. Cochair Marshall submitted that it was this committee's charge to give direction to the SBOE rewrite committees in lieu of the standing education committees' direction; however, he was at the will of the committee. Cochair Thayn remarked that there was overlap on the issues from these documents and those delineated in the letter. He surmised that those volunteering their time to assist on the rewrite committees did not sign up to be in the midst of a political fight and that, if they needed more direction on certain topics, the rewrite committees were welcome to make inquiry to this committee. Sen. Ward-Engelking agreed that this committee should trust the review committees and the direction given by the SBOE or the legislative members assigned to the review committees.

At 12:20 p.m., Cochair Thayn moved the discussion onto science.

- Cochair Marshall made reference to his documents and the comments related to science. He expressed frustration that the supporting content was often the content standard and the performance standard was often the curriculum. Cochair Marshall endorsed including science topics that were "unsettled" for the sake of discussion to provide balance.
- Cochair Thayn commented that science standards should be depoliticized and that science standards should have actual measurement.
- Rep. Kerby referred to a discussion during session hearings where Rep. Moon and Rep. Wisniewski shared examples of politicized science and explained that science which was not "settled" should not be in the standards. He endorsed the concept of science being fun and interesting and active rather than the memorization of charts and facts.

- Sen. Ward-Engelking remarked that scientific knowledge has always been controversial and noted that the scientific method allowed for hypotheses and new ideas. She supported the inclusion of controversial ideas for the discussion of perspective and theory. After all, science was about testing and experimenting.
- Rep. Moon was not in favor of the depressing theme of climate change and global warming being interjected at every age level or of the continual theme of man's negative effect on the environment. She felt it important to express fairly the positive aspect of mining, logging, and other state-supported activities.
- Rep. Kerby asked whether the science rewrite committee was "on track." Rep. Moon responded that she was somewhat in a quandary as to how the committee should proceed. She had hoped that the committee would have reviewed other states' standards before going forward with the rewrite, but it had not. Cochair Thayn asked whether Rep. Moon preferred a state whose standards would be best for Idaho to mimic. Rep. Moon responded that Florida's BEST standards were very appealing.
- Cochair Marshall moved that the record reflect the standing education committees' error in requesting that supportive content be taken out of Idaho's science content standards and that the review committee should consider that content in the process of their rewrite efforts. There was no second to the motion. Sen. Den Hartog noted that the science rewrite committee was considering the performance standards and was still able to compare items from the supportive material. Rep. Kerby noted that the supportive material was still in play and could be reviewed. Rep. Kerby requested that a representative from the science rewrite committee be available to address the committee.

At 12:55 p.m., Cochair Thayn directed the discussion to the process of identifying the standards.

- Sen. Lent inquired whether there was a guide as to how standards are written. Cochair Thayn submitted that there were "expert writers" who could polish off the wording once the standards were created. Sen. Lent suggested that a style guide be created/provided so that the standards were similar in format and sentence structure. Ms. Whitney reported that review committees were considering format and structure as they reviewed other states' standards.
- Cochair Marshall suggested that smaller groups of credible educators/individuals be identified, and possibly paid, to polish off the language of the standards for the final draft. Rep. Kerby agreed with this idea.
- Rep. Moon reminded the committee that textbooks would need to be reviewed and determined appropriate to the new standards.
- Sen. Lent noted that the rewrite was about student achievement and not just about changing the standards; this was an opportunity to raise the standards and be a leader in education.

With instruction from Cochair Thayn to review the science standards and consider whether the supportive material should be kept, the meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.