

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, March 05, 2020

TIME: 8:30 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

MEMBERS: Chairman Clow, Vice Chairman Kerby, Representatives Shepherd, Boyle, Mendive, DeMordaunt, Moon, Ehardt, Goesling, Marshall, Raymond, Wisniewski, McCrostie, Abernathy, Berch

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: Tracie Bent, OSBE; Quinn Perry, ISBA; Todd Stevenson, Waterford; Kate Haas, Kestrel West; Greg Wilson, Governor's Office

Chairman Clow called the meeting to order at 8:32 am.

MOTION: **Rep. Raymond** made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2020 meeting. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Vice Chairman Kerby began discussion of a draft letter on replacing the Idaho Content Standards. He thanked Committee members for their input and said the point of the letter is to clearly state the concerns of the legislature and explain what they would like to see going forward on the content standards. The letter is addressed to the State Board of Education (SBOE), **State Superintendent Ybarra** and **Governor Little** and requests a written response from each. It will provide direction to SBOE and the State Department of Education (SDE), so they won't waste time trying to understand legislative intent, help resolve uncertainty from educators and begin the discussion. The letter contains specific requests regarding math, English language arts and science standards; these came from hundreds of comments across the state. It addresses initial teacher certification, requesting reduced paperwork and increased flexibility. It also asks the SDE to work with districts to ensure they understand curriculum is set by districts. He noted both germane committees want strong standards and the process of replacing the standards will include looking at what other states use.

Chairman Clow stated he thinks the letter is important because it addresses concerns about the standards heard throughout the Administrative Rules review process, but will preserve an orderly process. The letter is not a mandate, but provides direction and guidance, in addition to preventing a similar discussion next year. He noted the math and English language arts standards were already up for review, so this will work well with the existing timeline.

Rep. McCrostie made a distinction between math, English language arts and science standards that have been extensively discussed, and the other content standards. He stated several of the issues mentioned in the letter, particularly new testing and teacher certification standards, are already being addressed through legislation.

Rep. Moon said she feels the letter reflects the view of a majority of the Committee and helps prepare for next year.

Chairman Clow and **Vice Chairman Kerby** clarified the "Common Core Standards" listed in the letter only include math, English language arts and science. Previous legislation about testing only applied to the 10th grade ISAT and the bill regarding teacher certification standards only applied to nonpublic programs.

Reps. Raymond, Boyle, Ehardt, DeMordaunt and Goesling expressed appreciation for the letter, saying it makes clear the role and intent of the legislature, makes the policy process more straightforward and prioritizes students, parents and accountability.

Rep. McCrostie noted the majority of public testimony from teachers was in support of the existing standards. While Committee members are elected and represent their constituents, they are not professionals.

**ORIGINAL
MOTION:**

Rep. Moon made a motion to approve, sign and send the letter.

Rep. Berch spoke **in opposition** to the motion, saying he did not agree with the goal of replacing the standards.

Rep. McCrostie noted the Senate Education Committee authorized their chairman and vice chairman to sign the letter on the Committee's behalf. He said he was not comfortable personally signing the letter.

**SUBSTITUTE
MOTION:**

Rep. McCrostie made a substitute motion to authorize **Chairman Clow** and **Vice Chairman Kerby** to sign the letter on the Committee's behalf.

Reps. Goesling, Boyle, Moon and **Mendive** spoke **in support** of the original motion because they wished to personally sign the letter.

Chairman Clow and **Reps. Marshall** and **Raymond** stated they were comfortable with either motion.

Vice Chairman Kerby noted the House and Senate Education Committees had different processes on the letter. He said he had hoped to get a unanimous vote, but it is important to allow Committee members to personally sign the letter if they wish to. Because of this, he said he will **support** the original motion.

Rep. McCrostie said the substitute motion allows the Committee to speak with one voice, but was not meant to preclude Committee members from personally signing the letter if they wish to.

**AMENDED
SUBSTITUTE
MOTION:**

Rep. Raymond made an amended substitute motion to authorize **Chairman Clow** and **Vice Chairman Kerby** to sign the letter on the Committee's behalf and allow anyone else who wishes to sign the letter to do so.

**MOTION
WITHDRAWN:**

After discussion on the difference between the original and amended substitute motions, **Rep. Raymond** withdrew his amended substitute motion.

**ROLL CALL
VOTE ON
SUBSTITUTE
MOTION:**

Roll call vote was requested. **Motion failed by a vote of 5 AYE and 10 NAY. Voting in favor** of the motion: **Chairman Clow, Reps. Marshall, McCrostie, Abernathy** and **Berch. Voting in opposition** to the motion: **Vice Chairman Kerby, Reps. Shepherd, Boyle, Mendive, DeMordaunt, Moon, Ehardt, Goesling, Raymond** and **Wisniewski**.

**ROLL CALL
VOTE ON
ORIGINAL
MOTION:**

Roll call vote was requested. **Motion carried by a vote of 12 AYE and 3 NAY. Voting in favor** of the motion: **Chairman Clow, Vice Chairman Kerby, Reps. Shepherd, Boyle, Mendive, DeMordaunt, Moon, Ehardt, Goesling, Marshall, Raymond** and **Wisniewski. Voting in opposition** to the motion: **Reps. McCrostie, Abernathy** and **Berch**.

H 576: **Rep. Raymond** presented **H 576**, which changes the distribution process of the "Content and Curriculum" education line item from formula-based to application-based. It places SDE in a ministerial role to disperse money as requested, rather than having to judge grants. One or more local education agencies may apply to receive a maximum of \$50,000 in funding. He said the goal is to make this funding meaningful; most districts are not currently getting enough money to buy digital curricula. The bill does not address technology infrastructure, which is a prerequisite of the funding. He noted the curriculum is chosen by districts and may include character education, which the United States Department of Education defines as "promoting strong character and citizenship."

Kate Haas, Kestrel West, provided the background of **H 576**. She stated the line item for digital content and curriculum is not working as well as SDE hoped. The key goal is to do away with the grant-based program distribution and make it simpler for all involved. She stated renewal of funding to the districts would now be contingent on if the digital curriculum is working and improving student results; if not, the state will not pay for it.

In answer to Committee questions, **Ms. Haas** noted the bill does not require parent participation, but many districts seek out curriculum with a parental component. The application requires the district to have the necessary infrastructure, request a certain amount and specify the type of curriculum they would like to purchase and how it fits with the district's goals. She noted there is currently no way to ensure the current money is being spent on digital content and curriculum.

MOTION: **Rep. McCrostie** made a motion to send **H 576** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Rep. Berch spoke in opposition to the motion, stating the bill takes money away from larger districts, there is no provision for ongoing funding and he had concerns about accountability.

VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by voice vote. Reps. Boyle and Berch** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY. Rep. Raymond** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 555: **Rep. DeMordaunt** presented **H 555**, Efficacy of Literacy Intervention Tools. She stated the bill has accountability, efficacy and parental involvement baked in.

Todd Stevenson, Director of School Relations, Waterford.org, provided insights on early intervention software, whose purpose is to provide teachers with additional literacy tools, using adaptive learning software. He gave an overview of Utah's program, which the bill is patterned on. He stated adaptive learning programs place each student on their own individual learning path.

Rep. DeMordaunt continued her presentation, saying efficacy and accountability are critical when using taxpayer money for educations. The bill sets a policy to see the effectiveness of literacy intervention tools, using a third party, unbiased evaluation. It sets in policy a requirement that vendors provide an opportunity for parental involvement, with a dynamic interface between home and school. She noted choosing an adaptive learning program is optional for schools. If they choose to participate in a request for proposals, they can use existing literacy dollars to pay for a program.

Debbie Critchfield, President, State Board of Education, stated the bill does not seem to affect the governor's overall literacy initiative and she was encouraged by the inclusion of parental involvement.

MOTION: **Rep. Ehardt** made a motion to send **H 555** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Rep. DeMordaunt** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:11 am.

Representative Clow
Chair

Erica McGinnis
Secretary