MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 10, 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, McCrodstie, Abernathy, Berch
ABSENT/EXCUSED: None
GUESTS: Tracie Bent, OSBE; Harold Ott, Rural Schools; Quinn Perry, ISBA; Senators Dean M. Mortimer and Steven Thayn; Sue Stud, Senate intern

Chairman Clow called the meeting to order at 8:31 am.

SCR 132: Sen. Mortimer presented SCR 132, which would establish an interim committee to consider and recommend a process for adopting new content standards for Idaho schools. The interim committee should consider the time necessary for the review and implementation of new standards and testing, and the preparation of supportive instructional materials. The legislature has struggled to find common ground and new content standards provide an opportunity to start fresh with challenging standards that also encourage parental participation. He stated the resolution is brought in the spirit of compromise to improve education.

In response to Committee questions, Sen. Mortimer said he expected the interim committee to have representation from the State Board and State Department of Education. He said developing new content standards will allow all stakeholders to get on board and do something better than past standards.

MOTION: Rep. DeMordaunt made a motion to send SCR 132 to the floor with a DO PASS recommendation. She expressed confidence in the legislature's ability to lead on the issue of content standards.

Reps. Raymond, Marshall and McCrodstie and Chairman Clow spoke in support of the motion. They expressed appreciation for the emphasis on cooperation and said it is important that all parties come to the table, including practitioners.

VOTE ON MOTION: Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Chairman Clow will sponsor the bill on the floor.

S 1293: Sen. Thayn presented S 1293, which creates a structure where parents and teachers partner to individualize and maximize the education of each child, recognizing learning also takes place outside of school. Elementary students who are a year ahead will have the ability to negotiate a flexible attendance schedule. They have to maintain at least 65% attendance and the flexible schedule must be agreed upon by the parents, teacher and principal. K-3 students have different eligibility requirements than grades 4-6; the student must also be rated advanced by their teacher. He said his motivation is what is good for children; this will address boredom in school and help prevent burnout.

In response to Committee questions, Sen. Thayn said the student requirements will create an opportunity for parents and teachers to communicate and work together on areas of weakness. If a student drops below 65% attendance the school will not receive full funding. He noted it is optional for districts to offer flexible schedules and middle schools can decide whether to offer it to 6th graders.
MOTION: Rep. Mendive made a motion to send S 1293 to the floor with a DO PASS recommendation.

Reps. Ehardt, DeMordaunt and Marshall and Vice Chairman Kerby spoke in support of the motion, saying this will allow for experimentation and help parents provide educational opportunities for their children.

Reps. McCrostie, Goesling, Berch and Boyle spoke in opposition to the motion, arguing parents are able to take their children on trips or to other activities now, without needing a flexible schedule. They stated they did not have enough information and not enough input was gathered from stakeholders.


ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:35 am.

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Representative Clow  Erica McGinnis
Chair  Secretary