

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, March 16, 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; Marilyn Whitney, SDE

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

S 1325: **Sen. Ward-Engelking** introduced **S 1325**, stating it would provide a path for districts and charter schools to "grow their own teachers" by using a portion of the adult learner Opportunity Scholarship fund to assist employees teaching under provisional certification to become fully certified. This legislation came from a desire to address teacher shortages, especially in rural areas. She stated the bill has no fiscal impact as the funds already exist, the legislation would simply give school districts and charter schools more eligibility to use those funds.

In response to Committee questions, **Sen. Ward-Engelking** clarified that 20% of the Opportunity Scholarship is currently allocated to the adult completer section and this legislation would use some of that portion. This would provide scholarship money for paraprofessionals, who are likely not well paid and may not have the financial means, to attend more school. Schools could use professional development money to bring certification classes to their schools in order to help employees be certified faster. She stated the intent of this legislation was targeting paraprofessionals who do not have a degree or certificate, but who are invested in children and education

Tracie Bent, Chief Planning and Policy Officer, State Board Of Education, was recognized to address Committee questions. She stated the current percentage of the Opportunity Scholarship set aside for adult learners has never been fully used and the amount of money set aside for the program proposed in this legislation was specifically chosen so as not to disrupt funding for other programs. She also stated there is a large number of paraprofessionals who are unaware of the money available to them and this legislation would help. She further clarified that individuals would complete scholarship applications for this funding, and the use of professional development money is decided at the local level.

ORIGINAL MOTION: **Rep. Goesling** made a motion to send **S 1325** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. He spoke to his motion, stating this legislation will help underserved areas in Idaho get the teachers they need.

The Committee voiced concern with unclear language in this legislation regarding the difference between provisional certification and uncertified individuals. They also wrestled with the language regarding the carve-out for funding this program.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: **Vice Chairman Kerby** made a substitute motion to send **S 1325** to **General Orders**. He spoke to his motion, stating that the intention is good but the language needs to be amended for clarity.

Committee discussion centered on concerns over the language, but praise for the intent of this legislation. The Committee also mentioned this legislation would not actually be making any substantive changes to opportunities for professional development but would draw more attention to and allow easier access to the money already available. The Committee also stated a desire to see an amendment specifically addressing targeting funds for rural communities.

**VOTE ON
SUBSTITUTE
MOTION:**

Substitute motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Rep. Goesling will sponsor the bill on the floor.

The Committee presented a letter of appreciation to **Ms. Bent**, recognizing her for all of her hard work this session.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:14 am.

Representative Clow
Chair

Erica McGinnis
Secretary