

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, January 25, 2021

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Thayn, Vice Chairman Crabtree, Senators Den Hartog, Woodward, Lent, Cook, Ward-Engelking, and Nelson

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senator Johnson

NOTE: The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

CONVENED: **Chairman Thayn** called the meeting of the Senate Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:06 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Den Hartog** moved to approve the minutes of January 14, 2021. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

PASSED THE GAVEL: Chairman Thayn passed the gavel to Vice Chairman Crabtree.

RS 28296 **Relating to Education; Creates a Workforce Readiness high school diploma.** **Chairman Thayn** outlined his proposed bill on creating a workforce readiness diploma.

MOTION: **Senator Den Hartog** moved to send **RS 28296** to print. **Senator Lent** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

PASSED THE GAVEL: Vice Chairman Crabtree passed the gavel to Chairman Thayn.

PRESENTATION: **Jared Tatro**, Principal Budget and Policy Analyst, Idaho Legislature and **Janet Jessup**, Budget and Policy Analyst, Idaho Legislature, gave a presentation on supplemental appropriations for education. **Mr. Tatro** discussed his handout, "FY 2021 Supplemental Appropriations" (see Attachment 1).

DISCUSSION: **Senator Ward-Engelking** asked about a line item on Mr. Tatro's presentation which stated that the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) funds were only being used to support K-3 and ISAT is used for fourth grade. **Mr. Tatro** said that was correct. **Senator Lent** asked about funding for programs above K-4. **Mr. Tatro** said he was not aware of any other avenues for funding. **Senator Den Hartog** asked if it was true that the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) funds were not directly distributed to the districts. **Mr. Tatro** confirmed that was the case. **Senator Den Hartog** asked if the districts were having a cash-flow problem because of this. **Mr. Tatro** said he was not aware of any issues at this time. **Senator Den Hartog** referenced CARES Act II and asked if the money could go directly to the school districts. **Mr. Tatro** said most districts do not have the ability to handle the accounting in accepting the money directly. **Senator Den Hartog** asked how much of the CARES Act I money has been distributed. **Mr. Tatro** believes the number is between 18-20 percent. **Senator Nelson** asked about the figure allocated to salaries. **Mr. Tatro** said the state needed to honor the salary contracts in place prior to the COVID 19 pandemic. **Senator Lent** asked about plans for spending interventions for junior and high school students affected by the pandemic. **Mr. Tatro** said there was nothing currently in place to address

this issue. **Marilyn Whitney**, Deputy Superintendent, Communications and Policy, Idaho State Department of Education (ISDE), took the podium and said all middle and high schools can run summer programs. **Chairman Thayn** asked if Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds could be used for these programs. **Ms. Whitney** said it was possible using the "but for COVID rule" for funding. **Senator Den Hartog** asked if districts can use ESSER funds now instead of waiting for summer. **Ms. Whitney** said they can and that information about such funding has gone to the districts.

PRESENTATION: **Ms. Jessup** then took the podium and discussed her handouts, "Supplementals, Governors Revised Recommendation" and "State Board of Education Comparative Summary" (see Attachments 2, 3). There being no questions from the Committee, the next presenter was invited to the podium.

PRESENTATION: **Julie Oberle**, Chief Financial Officer, ISDE, reviewed her slide presentation, "Public School Finance 101, 102" (see Attachments 4, 5).

DISCUSSION: **Senator Nelson** asked Ms. Oberle about a line item on her presentation that stated that it costs less to teach a younger child than a middle or high school student, was that correct. **Ms. Oberle** said yes it was. **Senator Den Hartog** asked how much money was being sent to the districts on February 15. **Ms. Oberle** said 20 percent of the CARES ACT payment was going out that day as the majority of the money has already been sent to the districts based on the previous year's enrollment and staffing information.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Thayn** adjourned the meeting at 4:41 p.m.

Senator Thayn
Chair

Florence Lince
Secretary