

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 21, 2023

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

MEMBERS: Chairman Yamamoto, Vice Chairman McCann, Representatives Boyle, Clow, Mendive, Ehardt, Wisniewski, Garner, Hawkins, Hill, Lanting, Nelsen, Price, Sauter, Berch, Galaviz, Mathias

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Rep. Boyle, Hawkins, and Ehardt

GUESTS: The sign-in sheet will be retained in the committee secretary's office; following the end of session the sign-in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Library.

Chair Yamamoto called the meeting to order at 9:02 am.

MOTION: **Rep. Galaviz** made a motion to approve the minutes of March 7, 8, 9, and 13, 2023. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Chair Yamamoto introduced Idaho's 2023 Teacher of the Year, **Karen Lauritzen**. She spoke about the process and honor to receive this award.

Karen Lauritzen, Idaho's 2023 teacher of the year, spoke about her experience teaching K-4 students in different states. She shared her thoughts about ways to improve educator retention in Idaho. Ms. Lauritzen considers turnover, low pay, supplemental levy failure, stress, large classroom sizes, and student mental health needs as barriers to educator retention. She spoke about the decrease in student attendance since the pandemic. She shared concerns the professionalism and expertise of the education career are being weakened by apprenticeship. Her suggestions to retain teachers include making their salary comparable to other bachelor or master degrees, and pay for professional development. She would prefer to see funding come from the state level and to lower the class size so educators can make meaningful connections with students. Ms. Lauritzen wants to teach social emotional learning skills including self awareness, self control and interpersonal skills. She would also like to see a pathway for board certified behavior analysts created in Idaho. Currently, educators have to go out of state to become certified. She believes there needs to be increased funding for student counselors. She would also encourage consideration of community school models which families may need. She explained it is difficult for students to learn and educators to teach when attendance is low. She thinks enrollment-based funding instead of student attendance-based funding would help increase attendance. She would encourage the community to communicate with educators directly to learn their needs.

Chair Yamamoto put the committee at ease for five minutes.

Chair Yamamoto resumed the meeting.

In response to committee questions, **Ms. Lauritzen** shared it would be helpful for parents, elected officials, and school superintendents to visit a classroom to see what is actually happening and be more involved. She shared her thoughts on returning to enrollment-based funding. Ms. Lauritzen explained successful teachers need a wealth of background information and must be able to teach multiple grade levels. While teacher certification in Idaho is for K-8, she is concerned having teacher apprentices only train in a single classroom and with a single grade level would not be adequate. Ms. Lauritzen also expressed concerns about adding to the workload of the mentor-teacher in an apprenticeship program. She further recommended the legislature provide whatever it takes to keep kids from being absent. She explained teachers use their own resources in their classrooms. It is just assumed that teachers do this, despite the fact it is not expected from other professions.

Rep. Clow explained about school attendance vs. enrollment and the impact on attendance during the pandemic.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:48 am.

Representative Yamamoto
Chair

Amy Bengtzen
Secretary