

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 19, 2026

TIME: 8:30 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

MEMBERS: Chairman Hawkins, Vice Chairman Handy, Representatives Mendive, Ehardt, Wisniewski, Garner, Nelsen, Sauter, Marmon, Pickett, Hostetler, Veile, Mathias, Galaviz

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

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.

Chairman Hawkins called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

MOTION: **Rep. Sauter** made a motion to approve the minutes of February 12, and 13, 2026. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Ethan Cowell, House Page, was recognized for his service to the committee and answered questions about his time at the capitol.

Chairman Hawkins put the committee at ease for one minute.

H 599: **Rep. Raymond**, presented **H 599**, legislation regarding digital content and curriculum fund. This bill was held in committee for time certain, February 19, 2026. He explained this legislation provides funding based on need instead of first come, first serve.

MOTION: **Rep. Handy** made a motion to send **H 599** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Raymond** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

RS 33436: **Rep. Vander Woude** presented **RS 33436**, proposed legislation regarding reserve funds distribution, school endowment.

MOTION: **Rep. Ehardt** made a motion to introduce **RS 33436.** **Motion carried by voice vote.**

H 710: **Rep. Vander Woude** presented **H 710**, legislation regarding public schools start date. This bill would change the school start date to Tuesday, after Labor Day, for uniformity and consistency. He spoke about school schedules, attendance based enrollment, and holiday breaks.

Randy Lords, Superintendent, Madison School District #321, **Alexis Morgan**, Idaho PTA, **Jason Moss**, Superintendent, Grace School District, **Jennifer Johnson**, Boise Business Owner, **Scott Woolstenhulme**, Superintendent, Bonneville School District 93, and **Misty Swanson**, Executive Director, Idaho School Boards Association, testified **in opposition** to **H 710.**

Pam Eaton, Lodging and Restaurant Industry, testified **in support** of **H 710.**

Committee mentioned time off to work during harvest season.

Rep. Vander Woude discussed flexibility and schedule adjustments.

MOTION: **Rep. Ehardt** made a motion to send **H 710** to the floor with **DO PASS** recommendation.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Rep. Garner made a substitute motion to **HOLD H 710** in committee.

Committee members discussed culture changes, family travel time, local control, hours in the classroom and fitting the needs of students and parents. They spoke about further debate on the floor with all representatives.

AMENDED SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Rep. Mendive made an amended substitute motion to send **H 710** to the floor **WITHOUT** recommendation.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON AMENDED SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Roll call vote was requested. **Amended substitute motion failed by a vote of 6 AYE and 8 NAY. Voting in favor** of the amended substitute motion: **Reps. Hawkins, Mendive, Ehardt, Wisniewski, Marmon, and Hostetler. Voting in opposition** to the amended substitute motion: **Reps. Handy, Garner, Nelsen, Sauter, Pickett, Veile, Mathias, and Galaviz.**

ROLL CALL VOTE ON SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Roll call vote was requested. **Substitute motion carried by a vote of 9 AYE and 5 NAY. Voting in favor** of the substitute motion: **Reps. Handy, Garner, Nelsen, Sauter, Pickett, Hostetler, Veile, Mathias, and Galaviz. Voting in opposition** to the substitute motion: **Reps. Hawkins, Mendive, Ehardt, Wisniewski, and Marmon.**

RS 33230C1:

Rep. Pickett presented **RS 33230C1**, proposed legislation regarding public charter schools increased autonomy.

MOTION:

Rep. Mendive made a motion to introduce **RS 33230C1**.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Rep. Veile made a substitute motion to introduce **RS 33230C1** with the following changes: add "and public school districts" anywhere "public charter schools" is mentioned.

Chairman Hawkins put the committee at ease for 3 minutes.

Rep. Pickett requested permission for an expert agency witness to explain why the substitute motion would not work for this legislation. **Chairman Hawkins** granted the request. **Emily McClure**, Idaho Charter School Network, explained criteria and authorization differences for public charter schools and traditional public schools.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Roll call vote was requested. **Substitute motion failed by a vote of 6 AYE and 8 NAY. Voting in favor** of the substitute motion: **Reps. Garner, Nelsen, Sauter, Veile, Mathias, and Galaviz. Voting in opposition** to the substitute motion: **Reps. Hawkins, Handy, Mendive, Ehardt, Wisniewski, Marmon, Pickett, and Hostetler.**

ROLL CALL VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION:

Roll call vote was requested. **Motion carried by a vote of 9 AYE and 5 NAY. Voting in favor** of the original motion: **Reps. Hawkins, Mendive, Ehardt, Wisniewski, Marmon, Pickett, Hostetler, Mathias, and Galaviz. Voting in opposition** to the original motion: **Reps. Handy, Garner, Nelsen, Sauter, and Veile.**

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:04 am.

Representative Hawkins
Chair

Amy Bengtzen
Secretary