

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- DATE:** Thursday, March 26, 2026
- TIME:** 12:00 P.M. or Upon Adjournment
- PLACE:** Room WW54
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Lent, Vice Chairman Cook, Senators Woodward, Nichols, Carlson, Burtenshaw, Zito, Ward-Engelking, and Semmelroth
- ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** None
- 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 Lent** called the meeting of the Senate Education Committee (Committee) to order at 12:07 p.m
- NOTE:** **Chairman Lent** explained that the Committee would change the order of business as they waited for members to show up.
- S 1439** **Education - Amends existing law to revise provisions regarding the Model School Facility Council.** **Vice Chairman Cook** presented the bill which would change the report date from 2026 to 2027 for the study on Model School Facilities.
- MOTION:** **Senator Burtenshaw** moved to send **S 1439** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Nichols** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.
- H 940** **Education - Amends existing law to revise provisions regarding the Idaho Digital Learning Academy.** **Chairman Lent** asked for the bill to be sent to the 14th Order of Business.
- MOTION:** **Senator Nichols** moved to send **H 940** to the 14th Order of Business. **Vice Chairman Cook** seconded the motion.
- DISCUSSION:** **Senator Ward-Engelking** commented that she would support sending the bill to the amending order but had concerns over the cuts to Idaho Digital Learning Academy (IDLA). **Senator Woodward** asked about the intentions of the bill and the amendments. **Senator Carlson** answered that this version of the bill was the best one proposed during the session. She continued that they wanted to have the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee (JFAC) set the appropriations for IDLA and the amendments would make the bill better. **Senator Woodward** asked if IDLA was a standalone budget. **Senator Carlson** responded that JFAC already had an IDLA budget bill and that **H 940** would support the policy. **Senator Woodward** stated that he was still not understanding the reasoning for the changes and asked if anyone else could explain them. **Chairman Lent** asked Senator Galloway to speak on the changes. **Senator Galloway** explained that the amendment changed the definition of "custom section" to allow small schools to fully use IDLA and limited large districts to 50% of the class before needing to pay more. **Senator Carlson** clarified the amendment would change the meaning of "custom section". **Senator Galloway** asked the Committee to send the bill to the 14th Order of Business so there was more time to fix the amendment and the bill.
- Senator Ward-Engelking** asked why student participation would be capped and why Public Education Stabilization Fund access was limited. **Senator Galloway** answered that it would be responsible budgeting during a year the budget was

tight. **Senator Ward-Engelking** commented that she believed they were changing how the budgeting process was done. **Senator Galloway** answered that it was something done in the previous year and was already in the appropriated budget. **Senator Ward-Engelking** commented that the appropriated amount was not in a maintenance budget but one that was coming later.

Vice Chairman Cook asked about the emergency clause and what would happen if schools could not afford it. **Senator Galloway** answered that the intent was to allow flexibility for emergencies and stated it could be an additional amendment. **Vice Chairman Cook** asked about the fairness between giving small school districts one thing but give large districts another. **Senator Galloway** answered that the bill did not include large districts. **Chairman Lent** reminded the Committee about the current motion.

Senator Woodward asked about the larger implications of making IDLA subject to appropriations. **Chairman Lent** asked Representative Douglas Pickett to respond to Senator Woodward's question. **Representative Pickett** asked Senator Woodward to restate the question. **Senator Woodward** asked who was proposing the amendments. **Representative Pickett** answered that it was coming from JFAC after their March 20 meeting and decision to cap the overall budget. **Vice Chairman Cook** and **Senator Ward-Engelking** detailed the action JFAC took during that meeting. **Senator Woodward** asked the Representative if he had seen the proposed amendments. **Representative Pickett** answered that he had briefly looked at them. Senator Woodward asked if **Senator Galloway** could clarify what the amendment language included. **Senator Galloway** asked if the Committee could go at ease and added that the amendment reflected the "subject to appropriations" language. **Senator Woodward, Senator Galloway, and Representative Pickett** continued to discuss what the proposed amendments would actually do.

- DISCUSSION:** **Vice Chairman Cook** asked to remove his second on the motion.
- MOTION:** **Senator Zito** seconded the motion to send the bill to the 14th Order of Business for possible amendment.
- SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** **Vice Chairman Cook** moved to hold **H 940** in Committee subject to the call of the Chair. **Senator Semmelroth** seconded the motion.
- DISCUSSION:** **Senator Ward-Engelking** commented that the Committee needed more time with the bill to discuss with stakeholders and to hear public testimony. **Senator Carlson** added that if the Committee wanted to hold the bill, the JFAC appropriations would go into effect, but if it was sent to the 14th Order of Business, the bill could be fixed. **Senator Woodward** stated that as much as he wanted to go home, he wanted the bill to be heard the right way with public comment. **Senator Burtenshaw** asked if the bill was held subject to the Chair, if the Committee could hear the bill the following day. **Chairman Lent** answered that it could be a possibility. **Senator Nichols** asked how long it would take to get a copy of the amendments to the Committee and how long they would need to review the bill. **Chairman Lent** asked the Committee how much time they would need. **Senator Zito** asked to wait until the following day. **Senator Burtenshaw** stated later in the afternoon. **Senator Woodward** responded either later in the day or the following day. **Chairman Lent** stated the Committee would go at ease.
- AT EASE:** The Committee went at ease until 12:53 p.m.
- DISCUSSION:** **Chairman Lent** discussed holding a Committee meeting at 8:45 a.m. on March 27. **Senator Ward-Engelking** asked if the Committee would take public testimony. **Chairman Lent** answered yes.

VOICE VOTE: The motion to hold **H 940** in Committee subject to the call of the Chair passed by **voice vote**.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Lent** adjourned the meeting at 12:55 p.m.

Senator Lent
Chair

Lauren Young
Secretary