

CAPITOL



By Karen Echeverria, Executive Director

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

-Nelson Mandela

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Issue 1

HELLO AGAIN

Welcome back to Capitol Notes. For those of you who are new to this publication, this is a weekly publication that Quinn Perry, Policy and Governmental Affairs Director, will write for you each week. It is a recap of what happened last week and what will be coming up this week.

In addition to our weekly Capitol Notes, Quinn and/or I will be doing a weekly Facebook Live. We will do that at 2:15 every Friday afternoon. It will be a quick and abbreviated version of Capitol Notes. So, if you don't have time to read all of this, please tune in live on Fridays. If you can't make it to the live version, you can always go back and listen to it later. This week's version is less than ten minutes. Here is a link:

<https://www.facebook.com/StandUp4IdahoPublicSchools/>

STATE OF THE STATE **FOCUS ON EDUCATION**

The first thing that happened this week was Governor Little's first State of the State Address last Monday. It was clear that his focus is going to be on education! That is good news for us. His budget proposal includes a 5.9% increase in funding – a little over \$100 million. As part of Governor Little's focus on education, he has started a new initiative entitled, "Our Kids, Idaho's Future", which we're lovingly calling "OK, IF". Of course the Joint Finance Appropriations Committee (JFAC) will be the first to take a stab at the budget request. They will determine what the actual budget bill looks like, and then the legislature will vote on that. It is still wonderful news that he has made such a significant request.

In addition to his budget request, Governor Little said that he would be working with stakeholders in two significant ways. First of all, the five-year recommendations of Governor Otter's K12 Education Task Force will wind down this year. Governor Little has indicated that he will be appointing another committee to continue that work. It sounds like this committee will encompass more than just K12 education but will also work on career technical and higher education as well. In addition to the new Task Force, Governor Little will also appoint a Cabinet Committee that he intends to consult throughout his term. ISBA will be represented on both the task force and the cabinet committee.

NEW COMMITTEES

In addition to working with the Governor, we also have several new members on the House and Senate Education Committees.

Senate

Senator Mortimer will remain the Chair of Senate Education. However, he will no longer sit on JFAC. The new members to Senate Education are Jim Woodward from Sagle, who ran for Shawn Keough's position when she retired, and Dave Lent from Idaho Falls, who was a school Board member for many years there. In a late change to the Committee, Senator Carl Crabtree was placed back on the committee in place of Senator Cheatham. We believe that this is one of the best Senate Education Committees that we have had in a long time.

House

We have a new Chair and Vice Chair on the Education Committee. Chair Clow from Twin Falls, who has been on the Education Committee since he was elected, and Vice Chair Kerby, who is a former superintendent from New Plymouth. New members on this committee include Representative Bill Goesling, who chaired the Public Charter School Commission for many years, Representative Gary Marshall from Idaho Falls, Representative Jerald Raymond from Menan, Representative Tony Wisniewski from Post Falls, Representative Chris Abernathy from Pocatello, and Representative Steve Berch from Boise. Because this is a much bigger committee, Quinn and I have not yet had time to meet all of these members, but we are working it.

JFAC

In addition to the House and Senate Education Committees, we also work with the JFAC. I won't go into detail on all the new members, but it is important to note that, for the first time in over a decade, we have new House and Senate Chairs and Vice Chairs on this Committee. They are Senate Chair Steve Bair, Senate Vice Chair Dan Johnson, House Chair Rick Youngblood, House Vice Chair Wendy Horman.

Other

In addition to the legislature, we also work with other State agencies as well. Of course, the Governor has a new Education Policy Advisor, Greg Wilson. Greg worked for Governor Little when he was Lt. Governor, so we know Greg and have worked with him before. We believe that he is a good addition to the Governor's staff.

Marilyn Whitney, who was Governor Otter's Education Policy Advisor, has taken a similar position with the State Department of Education (SDE) working for Superintendent Ybarra. Marilyn is well-respected and well-liked by education stakeholders and legislators. She also has a wealth of knowledge which will be helpful to all of us. She will be a great addition to the SDE staff.

PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA

As we all know, the elephant in the room this year is the Public School Funding Formula. After working for three years and spending a considerable amount of money, the Public School Funding Formula Interim Committee finished their work in November. At that time, we believed the work of the Committee was to be completed and they would turn over their recommendations to the House and Senate Education Committees for work on drafting the actual legislation. However the Interim Committee appointed a sub-committee to work on the actual language of the bill. As of today, we have yet to see a draft proposal of the legislation. We are hoping to see it soon. When we do, we plan to have our attorneys review the bill and give us feedback.

In the meantime, there will be a presentation for both the House and Senate Education Committees on Thursday afternoon at 3:30. There is a link at the bottom of this document, should you wish to watch that presentation. The presentation will be done by Michael Griffiths from Education Commission of the States. He is the same gentleman who drafted the first spreadsheet with the funding formula recommendations and changes.

As I'm sure you are all aware, we have grave concerns with the new formula. While the legislature is currently talking about a three-year "hold harmless" timeframe, there are still lots of winners and losers under the new formula. One of our many questions is *what happens to those losing districts after three years?*

We understand that most of us wanted a simpler funding formula than the one we currently have. However, I would argue that this formula is not easier to understand. When the formula was being developed, the Interim Committee continued to add "multipliers" to the formula in an attempt to make it more equitable. There are currently five multipliers. There are also issues that were never addressed, like at-risk kids.

In any case, once we see the actual legislation, we will have a better idea of what is actually being proposed. We will most definitely be asking you to contact your legislators once the bills start making it through the Legislature so please stayed tuned for "call to action" emails from either Quinn or me.

WHAT ELSE?

Rules

Rules are always the first thing the legislature works on every year. There are far fewer rules this year than we have seen in past years. In addition, we worked with the State Board of Education (SBOE) and SDE on all of the rules, so we have no concerns at this point. Once the rules review is done, the Legislature will begin their work on legislation.

School Turn Around Act

One piece of legislation that we have seen so far is from Senate Chair Mortimer. He attempted to run this bill last year, but by the time we had come to agreement on it it was too late in the session. This bill would allow a school district or charter school the ability to access some funds for low-performing schools. Of course, it sets out specific requirements for what needs to occur if those funds are accessed. While our State Plan under ESSA sets out an approach to working with low-performing schools, only Title 1 schools can receive federal funds to do so. It is Senator Mortimer's hope that he can also have access to some funds for low-performing

non-Title 1 schools. The language in the bill is permissible – meaning that no school district or charter school would be required to do it. Because this is a local governance issues, the ISBA Governmental Affairs Committee (GAC) decided to take no position on the bill.

Immunizations

This past week, the Department of Health and Welfare (IDHW) presented two rules to the House Education Committee. One relates to the requirement that parents notify the school if their child is not immunized, and the second related to high school seniors needing to have a meningococcal booster. As you can imagine, both rules were hotly contested and debated. The meningococcal rule barely passed on a 7-6 vote. After consulting with the School Nurses Association, we worked with IDHW on both of the rules and are supportive of their passage.

After the hearing, IDHW staff asked if they could indicate that ISBA was supportive of the rule and would be in attendance when it is presented on the Senate side. We presented that request to the GAC this past Friday, and they voted unanimously to support IDHW.

As a reminder, it takes both the House and Senate Committee to reject a rule. Because the House has already approved it, it is unlikely that it will not go into effect.

ISBA LEGISLATION BASED ON RESOLUTIONS

Below is our progress on each of the ISBA Resolutions.

Revision of Idaho Code on Excision (2018) – Legislation Needed

Status: We have drafted legislation, and the sponsoring district is working with their local legislator in hopes of finding a sponsor.

Education Allocation for Out of State Teachers (2018) – Legislation Needed

Status: We are hoping to include language amendments in the Funding Formula bill if and when that surfaces.

Card Check for Negotiations (2018) – HB647

Status: This legislation passed last year and is now law.

CTE Teachers Experience Factor (2018) – Legislation Needed

Status: We are hoping to include language amendments in the Funding Formula bill if and when that surfaces.

Contracts for Teachers Holding an Interim Certification under an Alternate Route (2018) – Legislation Needed,

Status: Although it passed the Senate unanimously, this legislation failed to pass the House Education committee last year. We are working to see if the House Committee would be willing to hear it again this year.

Move School Board Trustee Elections to November of Odd Years – (2018), SB1280

Status: This legislation passed and is now law.

Transportation Reimbursement (2018) – Legislation Needed

Status: This legislation needs a sponsor. However, there would be winners and losers under this legislation. We are asking to see if there would be any chance to refund the \$7.5 million that was removed during the recession. This is the only recession era cut that has not been restored. We are not hopeful that the funding will be available.

K-12 Funding Principles (2018)

Status: This resolution addresses the work of the Funding Formula Committee. Now that the Committee has finished their work, we will work closely with the House and Senate Education Chairs.

Discussion of the Sale of Public Property in Executive Session (2018) – Legislation Needed

Status: We were unable to come to terms with the Press Club on this language last year. We will try again this year but are not hopeful.

Permissible Education Activities in School Bond and Levy Elections (2018) – HB620

Status: This legislation passed and is now law.

Salary Based Apportionment for Classified Salaries (2019) – Legislation Needed

Status: We have drafted legislation. The sponsoring districts are working to find a legislative sponsor. Because this legislation carries a very large fiscal note and because some legislators are working on the funding formula legislation, we are not sure if the legislature will be willing to address this issue this year.

Reduce Super Majority on Facility Bonds (2019) – Legislation Needed

Status: We have drafted legislation. As usual, we don't expect to see any movement on this legislation this year. We are hoping to convince some legislatures to put a group of people together to discuss this issue. We are hopeful that we make some headway with a task force discussion.

Executive Session on Simple Majority (2019) – Legislation Needed

Status: We have drafted legislation and secured a sponsor for this legislation. We are hopeful that this legislation will be printed in the next couple of weeks.

Funding for Full Day Kindergarten (2019) – Legislation Needed

Status: We have drafted legislation. We may have a legislator that would be willing to print this bill as a personal bill. A personal bill means that it will likely never get a hearing but does make a statement that we need to discuss this issue.

Opposition to Public Funds Diverted to Private Schools (2019)

Status: This resolution does not require any legislation. We are hearing that a Representative will be bringing a full blown tax credit legislation. We are hopeful that we can keep it from moving forward again this year. We will be reaching out to you to contact your legislators on this issue when it comes forward.

Amending School Age Statute for Flexibility (2019) – Legislation Needed

Status: We have drafted legislation and secured sponsors for this legislation. However, after Quinn and I spoke with both of the Education Chairs, we are doubtful that this will move forward this year. We are hoping that we can get some support from the Governor’s Office next year to move this forward.

Recourse for Charter School Renewals (2019)

Status: After speaking with a representative from the State Board of Education, we believe that we can accomplish the tenets of this resolution through Administrative Rule. The SBOE will work on a rule after the legislation session and, if passed, it will go into effect in 2020.

Strategic Plans and Reporting Requirements (2019) – Legislation Needed

Status: We have drafted legislation. However, it is our understanding that the State Department of Education has language for another bill that they plan to run. While we have not seen the actual language of the bill, the SDE did share with us what they are planning. While it is not exactly what we would like, we may need to compromise on this one.

Threats on School Grounds (2019) – Legislation Needed

Status: This legislation has been drafted, we have secured a sponsor, and the bill already has a Routing Slip (RS). The legislature works on rules for the first week or two of the session, so we likely won’t see this bill for a couple of weeks.

HOW TO CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR

Here is a link to the Idaho State Legislature page. It can help you find out who your legislators are and how to contact them: <https://legislature.idaho.gov/legislators/>

STAY TUNED

You can view any bills that are moving through the Legislature at the following link:

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/>

If you want to listen to committee meetings or watch debate in JFAC or on the floor of either chamber, the links to do so can be found at:

<http://idahoptv.org/insession/leg.cfm>

ISBA Bill Tracker 2019

Bills highlighted in purple are based on ISBA Resolutions
Bills highlighted in red are dead
Bills highlighted in green have become law

Bill #	TITLE	STATUS	POSITION
	No Bills Affecting Education		