

# MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF A BOARD MEETING WITH LEGISLATORS

Board Room at the Education Center  
Monday, December 1, 2014  
4:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

## BOARD MEMBERS/SUPERINTENDENT PRESENT:

Janie Gebhardt, Chair	Jim Facer, Member
Jackie Cranor, Vice Chair	Dave Mattson, Member
Paul Vitale, Clerk (Excused)	Mary M. Vagner, Superintendent

**OTHERS PRESENT:** *Legislators:* Senator Roy Lacey; Senator Jim Guthrie; Representative Elaine Smith; Representative Ken Andrus; Representative Kelley Packer; *Cabinet Members:* Lori Craney; Jan Harwood; Douglas Howell; Bart Reed; Carl Smart; Chuck Wegner; Dave Miner; Kent Hobbs; *IEA/PEA/Teacher Representatives:* Maggie Calica; Tom Vanderen; Jan Damron; Kris Wilkinson; Deb Erlandson; and Steve Erlandson. *Board Secretary:* Renae Johnson.

## Welcome, Statement of Purpose and Introductions

Chair Gebhardt called the meeting to order at 4:58 p.m. She thanked Ms. Cranor, Mr. Hobbs, Ms. Harwood and Ms. Craney for providing a light dinner for the group. She said the Board appreciated the participation of the legislators and staff. She said the purpose of the meeting was to inform the legislative delegation of the District's needs as it headed into the legislative session. Ms. Vagner said the District had been meeting with its legislative delegation for the last several years and appreciated the willingness of the legislators to participate in the meeting.

## Current Star Ratings from 2012-2013 / Implementation of the Idaho Core Standards: *Star Ratings; Unit Development; Professional Development Support; Resources: Integration of Technology; Implementation of SBAC/ISAT 2.0/Emergency Levy Funds*

Mr. Wegner said included in the packet were the Star Ratings from the 2013-14 school year. He said overall the District was performing well academically. He said New Horizon High School was rated a two star school, but the teachers and administrators were responsible for some of the most at-risk students in the district. He said Kinport Middle School moved from a one star school to a five star school and also served at-risk students. He said the ISAT 2.0 would be administered in the spring and would be the new baseline for growth moving forward. He said schools would not be assigned new star ratings until 2016. He said school districts anticipated a drop in testing scores due to the increased rigor of the new standards. He said a drop in scores did not mean that students weren't learning, only that the curriculum was more rigorous. He reviewed a six-week unit for 4<sup>th</sup> grade ELA that had been aligned to the Idaho Core Standards (ICS). He said included in the unit was a cluster of standards that would be addressed. He said the focus standards were highlighted in yellow. He said the focus standards were the most critical and were aligned to the assessment that would be given. He said the units that were developed were all aligned to the ICS and included K-12 ELA, math, social studies for grades 6 – 12, science and middle school health. He said the District had been developing the units over the past four years. He said all of the work started with the TIA process several years earlier that started the district on the path towards the common core. He said the district had received very little support or direction from the state. He said the common core would likely be a topic of discussion during the legislative session and asked the legislators to not throw the baby out with the bath water. He said making drastic changes to the common core would not be in the best interest of students or teachers. He said the legislature provided additional funding through HB638. He said the district's share was \$274,000 and was used to focus on job embedded professional development in math. He said the district used that funding to incentivize math teachers to become math coaches and provide school based math professional development for their colleagues. He said the district collaborated with Cory Bennett in the Regional Math Center at ISU to develop the training. He said training was also provided for K-algebra I teachers. He said the trainings were half-day and were designed to deepen teachers' content knowledge. He said the district was also able to use some of the funding to provide stipends for writing coaches in each of the schools. He said the district was focused on the six-trait writing to increase writing across all content areas. He said the district developed instruction camps that were designed to increase collaboration between teachers and allow them to share

lesson plans and ideas. He said teachers met periodically throughout the school year and were paid a small stipend for participating. He thanked the legislators for the additional professional development support. He said it was vital to the implementation of the ICS. He said the state provided very little resources for curricular materials. He said included in the packet was a Cycle of Renewal that showed the schedule of textbook adoptions and the lack of resources to make any adoptions. He said the document clearly communicated why the district had not been able to maintain the textbook adoption schedule. He said the district was able to purchase supplemental materials for ICS in the amount of \$165,000. He said it was helpful but when you compared it to the cost of a full textbook adoption, it did not go very far. He said he budgeted \$100,000 every year for K-3 math consumables. He said the district was also able to update its K-5 math program from the 2009 version to the 2013 version. He said it was only half the cost of a full textbook adoption. He said included in the materials was the list of texts that were utilized by the district. He said the district's elementary social studies and science texts were from 1997 and 2000. He said the most recent middle school adoption was for math in 2008, and the most recent high school adoption was for health and math in 2008 and 2009. He said it was difficult to obtain replacement materials when a copyright went out of date and was no longer on the state's approved textbook list. He said for several years the legislature had provided funding for the integration of technology in classrooms. He said the district used that funding to support the implementation of the ICS and to put schools in the position to accommodate for the level of testing that came with it. He said the district used the technology funding to purchase audio enhancement systems, iPads, mobile-labs, webcams, wireless access points, projectors and laptop carts. He said the district also received funding for classroom technology through the local Education Foundation's Festival of Trees event. He said this was the sixth year that the Foundation would host the Festival of Trees. He said the event brought in approximately \$80-\$85,000 each year that went directly to technology in the classrooms. He said funds were used to purchase Promethean Whiteboards, interactive boards, projectors and clickers. He reviewed a sample SBAC testing schedule from Alameda Middle School. He said testing was an unfunded mandate because the state provided no resources to help with the administration of the test. He said the schools had not been able to figure out how to cover classes while teachers had to be out of the classroom to help administer tests, especially with such a small testing window. He said the sample testing schedule showed the complexity involved in administering the tests. He said it took up to eight hours to test each student and had a major impact on instructional time. He said the district was also forced to increase its lab space and capacity using an Emergency Fund Levy which it was only possible due to the district's increased enrollment that year. He said the district also installed additional wireless access points in all of the high schools. He said substitute teachers were hired to be test proctors which ended up depleting the substitute pool. He said the district designated the leftover emergency levy funds to pay for test proctors in the spring but beyond the current year the district had no funding for test proctors. He said without additional funding for test proctors the middle and high schools could not test all students without stopping teaching altogether. He said districts had very little curricular funding as it was and the ICS required an even greater level of resources to implement.

**District #25 Funding / Fund Balance History:** *Balancing the Budget History; Fund Balance History; Importance of Supplemental Levies; Level of Understaffing; Use It or Lose It Flexibility; Class Size; Buying Teacher Prep Periods; State Base Salary History; State Distribution Factor History; Operational Needs and Lack of Operational (Discretionary) Funding vs. Earmarked Funding*

Mr. Reed said for the last six years, educational funding had been dismal. He reviewed the district's budget cuts from 2009-10 to the current school year. He said the first year the district had to cut \$4.1 million out of the budget. He said \$1 million of the cuts were to salary. He said the next year was worse and the district had to cut another \$1.4 million from salary and personnel. He said overall the state reduced the allocation to the district \$5.3 million that year. He said it was a very difficult time. He said the following year amounted to another \$1 million in personnel reductions. He said last year was the first year that the district had not reduced its staff in the last five years. He said trying to balance the budget from one year to the next was extremely difficult with no reserves and no increase from the state, especially in light of cost increases. He said the district's medical premiums were increased by \$650,000 this year and had to use its remaining fund balance reserves to cover the increase. He said the reserves had come from the one-time state allocation of \$2.5 million and the district had used that money to balance the budget over the past four years. He said some districts used all of that allocation the first year in order to avoid cuts and ended up having to cut extremely deep the following year. He said the district was staffed under the state allocation and had been so for many years. He said the district had to increase its Supplemental Levy from \$6 million to \$8.5 million in the last four years. He said it was a difficult struggle for the Board to determine how it could increase the levy without putting a major strain on the community. He said all school districts had fixed costs which increased by \$1.5 million every year without any support from the state. He said the district had to remove 9.5 instructional days out of the calendar and still had no

resources to restore any of those days. He said employees were still at a 4% salary reduction and had been for the last five years on top of an increase of 400 students. He reviewed the general fund balance history. He said 2011 had the highest fund balance amount and that was only because of the one-time \$2.5 million allocation from the state. He said since then the district's fund balance had steadily decreased and was now almost totally depleted. He reviewed the Supplemental Levy history. He said in 1984 the district's levy was less than 3% of the budget but had continued to grow over the last 30 years. He said districts saw a drastic increase in Supplemental Levy amounts when the state eliminated the M&O tax in 2007. He said the district's Supplemental Levy was now approximately 13% of the budget. He said if the district was unable to pass the Supplemental Levy it would mean the elimination of all programs and about 150 teachers. He said the district had strong community support but five years ago it failed to pass the Supplemental Levy the first time around. He said he believed the district had reached the limit of how much more it could ask from the community. He said the amount that the district had increased its levy directly correlated with the amount that the district's allocation had been reduced by the state. He said the Supplemental Levy had increased six times more than the district's general fund support. He said over 80% of districts across the state now had supplemental levies and was directly correlated to the elimination of the M&O tax. He said he did not want to only convey the negative but it was important for legislators to hear the difficult budget decisions that had been made over the last several years and the even more difficult decisions that would have to be made moving forward if funding from the state did not improve. He said the funding was there and districts could make it work if they had a little flexibility from the state to use the funds where they were needed. He said the state needed to work with districts to figure out a way to provide for funding flexibility while ensuring districts were still accountable. He said the district appreciated the support of the legislators and everything they did to support education. Representative Andrus said it was obvious that districts needed more money and asked how much it would help if the earmarked mandates were eliminated. Ms. Vagner said it would be extremely helpful and would be discussed later on the agenda. Mr. Smart reviewed the district's FTE history. He said the district was understaffed in every employee group. He said the district was using the money saved from understaffing to pay for operational costs. He said the administration was hearing talk about potential changes to class size requirements that could take place during the legislative session. He said that would have a dramatic impact on the district's budget and pleaded with legislators for flexibility. He said the flexibility from Use It or Lose It was critical. He said as it was the district had to buy out over 38 prep periods this year to cover classes because it did not have enough teachers. He said the district was only able to make that happen using Use It or Lose It funds. He said the state dramatically reduced the base in its funding formula in 2009 and the district was forced to cut 9.5 days from the instructional calendar which affected employee pay. He said the district implemented furlough days instead of cutting the daily rate in order to avoid having a negative impact on teacher retirement funds. He said even still, the district was losing teachers at an alarming rate. He said it was extremely difficult to recruit and maintain a qualified staff. He said that could change if the state restored districts back to the 2009 funding levels. He said it would take a major investment into education on the state's part. He said he was not sure if Tiered Licensure was the way to accomplish that. Senator Lacey asked what the district's beginning teachers were making. Mr. Smart said they were making the state minimum of \$31,750. Senator Guthrie said it was strange that the state wouldn't use that as their base for pay. Mr. Smart said the state used an extremely complicated and confusing formula to create its salary schedule. Senator Guthrie asked how many days were in the district's instructional calendar. Mr. Smart said for many years there were 190 instructional days which had been reduced to 180.5. He said the reduction in days made spring testing even more difficult. Senator Guthrie asked how close the district was to the state minimum. Ms. Vagner said the district was right at the state minimum. Mr. Smart reviewed the state distribution factor and explained it was the amount that the state allocated to districts for operational costs. He said the state distribution factor had been decreased to \$22,000 this year and had not been that low since 2002. He said since 2009 the district had seen an increase of \$1.2 million in medical costs alone. He said districts had been pleading for an increase to the distribution factor for years. He said districts had no control over cost increases like medical expenses and utilities. He said an increase to medical premiums usually ate up any operational funding that was allocated by the state and left nothing for other operating expenses. Mr. Reed said the district's utility costs had increased by \$300,000 this year, even with the district's aggressive energy conservation program. Mr. Smart said if utility costs increased again next year the district would not be able to cover the increase. He said if that happened again the district would have to look at cutting other areas. He said unfunded mandates included things like proctors for the ISAT 2.0. He said teachers were not allowed to proctor their own students so another teacher had to leave their classroom to proctor for someone else. Mr. Erlandson said it was very difficult to coordinate schedules, especially since schedules were not the same across the district. Mr. Smart said the district had to hire retired teachers and substitutes to help with proctoring. He said the district had identified \$300,000 in increased costs for the coming school year, which was more than the district would get from the state.

**Human Resource Concerns:** *Depletion of Application Pools for Teachers, Administrators and Classified Staff; 2014-15 Staffing Summary; Condition of Salaries/Wages and Advocacy for Such; Tiered Licensure; Teacher Evaluations*

Dr. Howell reviewed the staffing summary. He said he appreciated the legislature setting the budget early which allowed districts to distribute contracts in a timely manner. He said the administration asked any teachers that were planning to retire to notify the district early so the department could start recruiting candidates while they were still available. He said the longer a district waited to hire, the more difficult it became to find qualified candidates, especially in math and science. He said there were limited candidates in those areas. He said the district was fortunate to be able to recruit directly from ISU and BYU-I but many students were recruited by neighboring states like Utah and Nevada early on. He said the district took advantage of every opportunity using alternate authorizations. He said the district was already pulling from a pool of student candidates by placing them in classrooms while they were still completing their degree. He said those students came highly recommended from the Universities and were supervised by a cooperating teacher. He said the district also filled classrooms using one year provisional authorizations that allowed the district to hire someone with a degree, but not in education. He said those teachers had one year to complete their degree in education, or pass the Praxis. He said the district currently had 146 vacancies, 56 of which were filled internally which left 90 positions to fill. He said typically the district would fill anywhere from 55 to 70 new positions, so 90 was a pretty dramatic increase. He said there were 16 new administrators this year. He said three were placed using an alternative authorization but were highly capable in terms of experience. He said the authorization was an extremely lengthy application to justify maintained funding by the state. He said initially the district had three unfilled positions and had to buy out teacher prep periods to cover those classes. He said the district would try to fill those positions throughout the year in order to have a permanent qualified person in the classroom. He said he forecasted the district's turnover and there were a large number of teachers that could potentially retire in the next ten years. He said if you compared the number of potential retirees with the number of potential candidates coming from the Universities, it was easy to see the difficulty the district would have in filling positions in the future. He said there had been a significant decline in the number of candidates coming from the Universities. He said he believed that salary reductions was the main reason for the lack of candidates. He said teacher pay was back to the 2006-07 levels and districts had only seen 1% restored over the last several years. He said any potential candidates that were considering education were starting to explore other careers due to the uncertainty and lack of funding. He said another deterrent was the concern about Tiered Licensure. He said a state committee came to ISU to talk about Tiered Licensure and about 300 people came to express their concerns. He said there was a lot of uncertainty. He said it was also a concern because it was a fixed cost and districts needed more flexibility for operational costs. He said administrators were also becoming harder to find and Leadership Premiums did little to help with recruiting administrators as they were not available for all employee groups. He said a seasoned teacher taking advantage of Leadership Premiums could easily make more than a new administrator, so there was not much incentive for people to pursue an administrative certificate. He the number of students pursuing graduate programs in areas like special education, psychology, administrator and superintendent were very limited across the state. He said the district continued to struggle with hiring bus drivers, food service workers and technical trade workers like HVAC specialists, electricians, carpenters and plumbers.

**Review of Superintendent Luna's Proposed 2015-16 Public Schools Budget:** *Career Ladder Salary Schedule; Operational Funding vs. Earmarked Funding; Advocacy for School Employee Salaries and Operational Funding*

Ms. Vagner said Superintendent Luna's proposed budget was released, but not the Governor's. She said the district was short about 12.5 FTE including prep period buyouts and long-term substitutes. She said she hoped to put together a joint statement from the Region V Superintendents to address teacher shortages. She said everything had been cut over and over again for the last few years and districts had not been able to restore anything at this point. She said the district saw an increase of 400 students last year and anticipated flat enrollment this year. She said the district had reserved the one-time allocation from the state to balance over the last few years, but this year the budget was as tight as it had ever been. She said the Board would have to set a levy amount in December before it knew what the budget allocation from the state would be. She said when the legislature limited districts to a March or May election, it put districts in a very difficult position. She said the Superintendent's proposed budget called for a 6.9% increase, but had introduced new costs into the budget without doing anything to restore what it had cut over the last few years. She said \$23 million was dedicated to the Career Ladder even though no one knew what that would entail. She said the legislative session was less than a month away and there was a line item with a \$23 million price tag and no answers. She said another item with lots of unanswered questions was Leadership Premiums. She said it would take a lot of time to manage and track and was not available to all groups. She said neither line item did anything to restore salaries

or operational funding. She said another item that would take a lot of time and resources to manage and track was Advanced Opportunities. She said another unfunded mandate was the ISEE reporting system that had more problems than solutions. She said it was extremely time consuming and districts did not receive any funding from the state to support the additional workload. She said districts could bill the state for reimbursement for board training or strategic planning, but the formula for reimbursement was extremely complicated and time consuming and could be considered another unfunded mandate. She said the district had put the technology funding to good use but it would all be for nothing if the district couldn't pay its electricity bill. She said districts needed to be able to pay for essential fixed costs and would gladly forego further technology or professional development money at this point in order to pay for insurance and utilities. She said it seemed that some of the line items in the Superintendent's budget were more important to the state than a districts' ability to operate. She said earmarked money did not do anything to solve budget problems. She said the amount allocated to professional development, technology and the Career Ladder was \$61 million. She said \$61 million would more than cover school district's budget needs if the funds were not earmarked. She said some of the requirements were a result of the No Child Left Behind Act, but the state's waiver was intended provide districts with flexibility and instead all it did was call for more unfunded mandates. She said she didn't know how much more accountability the state could ask of school districts. She said the School Improvement Planning tool had 88 objectives that schools were required to go through to document the various levels of accountability. She said the levels of accountability depended on a school's Star Rating. She said the alternative schools were facing the same requirements as a traditional school. She said the alternative schools were a revolving door and should not have the same requirements as a comprehensive school. She said state was asking for greater accountability but wasn't communicating exactly what it wanted from a district or why. She said the administration was the first to advocate for better teacher pay, but not at the cost of being able to operate the district.

**State Accountability:** *SBAC/ISAT 2.0; Tiered Licensure; Teacher Evaluations/Student Achievement/Parent Input; Advanced Opportunities; ISEE (Schoolnet); Loss of Local Control; School Improvement Planning/Strategic Plan State Base Salary and School District #25 State Funded Salary History/State Distribution Factor History*

Mr. Smart said completing the ISEE upload every month took a huge chunk of his department's time to prepare and submit. He said the legislators approved Advanced Opportunities this year and the district was required to manage and track that data and upload it into ISEE. He said the district's software vendor was not prepared to manage the additional data, and staff had to manually enter the information. He said no one at the SDE could pull the data and had no solutions. He said the ISEE upload had been a challenge from the start and continued to be a challenge. He said he had to wonder if it was time well spent. He said teacher evaluations were also a part of the ISEE upload. He said parent input was a required part of teacher evaluations and the district mailed out 7,700 letters to parents requesting input into teacher evaluations and got 800 responses. He said the district then had to track that information and upload it into ISEE as part of the evaluation process. He said parents knew when a teacher was not doing a good job and usually contacted the principal or district administrator. He said having to mail out the requests and track it in ISEE seemed meaningless. He said another concern was the fact that the SDE had no idea how it would calculate average class size. Ms. Gebhardt said school boards were responsible to make decisions based on data and research and were not getting any useful data back from ISEE reporting. She said it was so much work to enter all that data and get nothing out of it. She said ISAT 2.0, parent input into teacher evaluations and ISEE reporting were all unfunded mandates. She said even when the district did get data back from the state it was not effective in evaluating teachers. She said basing the effectiveness of a teacher on student achievement was unfair when some students have no intention of applying themselves no matter what the teacher does. She said during the public comment on Tiered Licensure at ISU, one former student commented that his goal in high school was to be popular and he didn't care about his grades, and stated how unfair it would have been to rate his teacher based on his achievement levels. She said she always wondered why a community elected a school board if the state was just going to run school districts from Boise. She said a local school board was supposed to know the needs of the district in its area, but more and more control was being taken away from local school boards. Ms. Cranor said the Board just attended the ISBA Convention a couple of weeks ago and it was interesting to see the extremely varying needs of urban versus rural districts. She said it seemed ludicrous for the state to dictate that all school districts should be operated the exact same way. She said an earmarked budget item may help one district, while devastating another. She said school boards were good stewards of taxpayer dollars and did not squander funding. She said school boards knew the needs of their district best and used money wisely. She said school boards were very accountable to the public. Ms. Gebhardt said discretionary funding was not extra money that a district could use to pay for vacation days, it was operational money to pay the bills. Representative Andrus asked if it was the State Board of Education, or the State Department that had the most affect over local

control. Ms. Gebhardt said the legislature and the State Department of Education impacted local control the most. She said she really appreciated the legislators taking the time to hear their concerns.

### **ISBA Resolutions**

Ms. Vagner said the first Resolution was Class Size Average Calculation. She said districts had no idea how funding would be impacted because the state didn't know how it would calculate the class size average yet. She said the only thing that districts did know was that if their district was over the average calculation, they would lose their Use It or Lose It flexibility. She said the Resolution proposed that like size districts be grouped together so a large district would not be compared to a small district with only 2,000 students. She said the next Resolution was the Strategic Planning Timeline. She said the Resolution proposed extending the timeline for the submission of strategic plans until districts received all of the data from the state. She said the next Resolution was Salary Based Apportionment for Classified Employees which was an issue across the state. She said the next Resolution was Make Permanent the Income Tax Credit for Contributions to Idaho Public Schools. She said it was piloted last year and the Resolution proposed making the law permanent. She said the next Resolution was Support for 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Alternative School Funding. She said currently there was state funding available for 6<sup>th</sup> graders that attended an alternate school. She said the next Resolution was Reducing the Super Majority Requirement for Approval of School Facilities Bonds. She said school boards could not agree on what the passage rate should be, only that it should be less than a super majority. She said the next Resolution was Bond Relief because many districts were unable to pass a bond. She said the next Resolution was Maintaining District Fiscal Authority. She said the Resolution proposed that the collective bargaining sunset clause be eliminated. She said it also proposed that school boards should consider factors other than seniority when implementing a RIF. She said the last Resolution was Timely Completion of Negotiations which proposed a deadline of June 30 every year for the completion of negotiations. She said the Resolutions were passed at the Convention and would be brought forward by the ISBA during the legislative session.

### **Trustee/Legislators' Comments/Summarize and Take-Aways: *Depletion of Applicant Pools for Teachers; Administrators and Classified Staff; Condition of Salaries and Wages and Advocacy for Such; Operational Funding vs. Earmarked Funding; Loss of Local Control/State Accountability; Sustaining the Idaho Core Standards***

Representative Andrus asked if the distribution factor was restored to 2009 levels if that would mean another \$41 million in funding. Ms. Vagner said yes. She said the district needed another \$1.5 million to balance its budget and would not get that kind of an increase from a Supplemental Levy. She said if the legislature removed the earmarks from the Superintendent's proposed budget, the district would have enough to balance. She said there had been no contact or communication from the new Superintendent since the election. She said she heard there were about ten people on the transition committee, but there had been no communication from the committee either. She said the additional funding the legislature allocated to districts really helped, and the district did not have to make any cuts this year, which was a godsend. Senator Lacey said he knew there was a proposal for increased operational funding, but heard that the Governor planned to veto it. Ms. Vagner said it was hard for districts to continue implementing new unfunded mandates without any restoration. Ms. Cranor said she retired from teaching eight years ago and knew there were some teachers retiring this year that didn't make a penny more than when she retired eight years ago. She said medical and living costs continued to increase, so those teachers were actually retiring with less. She said that was most likely the main reason that Idaho could not attract new educators. She said any potential candidate saw no room for advancement. She said it was also difficult for districts to maintain a balanced budget when there were so many hoops to jump through just to get their funding. Ms. Vagner said this was the best district in the state because of its employees, but teachers and staff were worn out by a political climate that did not support its educators. She said it had a strong influence on why Universities were not seeing teacher or administrator candidates. She said it was very challenging for school districts. She said the district was fortunate to have such high quality employees. Ms. Cranor said she was very grateful for the legislators from this area that had done all they could to support education. She said school districts were at a critical point. She said the district needed \$1.5 million to balance the budget which would put the Supplemental Levy at \$10 million. She said she heard over and over in the community that it would never pass at that level. She said if the board ran the risk of asking for a \$1.5 million increase and failed, the district would lose the entire levy and would have to close its doors, or make fatal budget cuts. She said the other question was whether or not it was worth it to put a strain on the community by asking for an increase that still wouldn't meet the district's budget needs. She said the board and administration was asking its legislators for help during the legislative session. She said she believed that one voice or one person could make a difference for everyone. Senator Guthrie said legislators had to respect all departments. He said another challenge was the fact that some decisions were made in committee groups and he may not hear about a law being proposed, or passing, until it was too late. He said it was

very difficult for a legislator to have any impact if they were not directly involved on a particular committee. He asked if the earmarked funding had all been added over the last six years. Ms. Vagner said there were some earmarked budget items for things like technology and supplies, but district used to have a lot more operational funding that could be spent how it was needed. She said earmarked items now included Leadership Premiums, Advanced Opportunities, technology, IT staffing and professional development which were all great things, unless you were unable to pay your bills. Mr. Reed said if the earmarks were removed it would mean \$2.4 million that the district could use to pay its bills and keep people employed. He said if all of the strings stayed in place it really impacted the budget decisions that a district had to make. Ms. Vagner said she had to wonder what would happen if a district spent earmarked money the way they needed it rather than how the state allocated the funds. Mr. Smart said there was more money in next year's budget than in 2009 but the district had also seen a 6% increase in enrollment since that time. Ms. Cranor said she wouldn't mind all of the accountability requirements as long as the funding came with no strings. Mr. Facer asked why the Operational Funding Resolution was not included in the proposed resolutions. Ms. Vagner said the Resolution was proposed last year and stayed in place for two years. Senator Guthrie asked if Schoolnet was the same as ISEE. Ms. Vagner said no, Schoolnet was a system that was supposed to house student data from pre-k through post-secondary. Senator Lacey said Albertsons funded Schoolnet with then intent that the data would communicate with all other programs, but the state decided to build the program themselves and as a result the program couldn't communicate with any other data systems. He said the state had continued to push the program out of stubbornness. Mr. Smart said the district chose to go with Mileposts because it worked and did not require nightly updates like Schoolnet. Ms. Vagner said Mileposts was a repository for students that needed additional help. She said the law allowed for SIS systems reimbursement but the wording in the legislation made it so districts could not be reimbursed for Mileposts even though that was the intent. Ms. Harwood said the idea for Schoolnet was intended to be a one-stop shop that could manage assessment delivery and student data, but it never worked that way. She said the tests that were uploaded into Schoolnet were quickly pulled from other states before the implementation of the common core and were not relevant to the new standards. Senator Guthrie said the district did an incredible job of laying out the issues and wished these kinds of meetings were taking place all over the state. Ms. Vagner said the district could provide the information to the IASA, ISBA and IEA. She said one of the most critical take-aways was the depletion of applicant pools, not just new teachers, but throughout every employee group including classified. She said the condition of salary and wages and advocacy for such was an extremely critical focus. She said another critical take-away was flexible funding versus earmarked funding. She said the implementation of unfunded mandates created a loss of local of local control. She said it was also extremely important that the state stay the course with the common core. She said the district had been creating and refining units aligned to the common core for the last four years and would be detrimental to teachers and students to start over. She said the district would work on getting the information out to all legislators uniformly. Senator Lacey said that was very important because most of the time the Education Committee made the decisions and then JFAC had to figure out a way to fund it. Ms. Vagner said it was important that the legislature not make any tax changes that decreased state revenue because it had a direct impact on funding for education. Representative Packer said it was important for more legislators to know about these issues because a lot of them felt like they had done such a great job getting an increase in funding for education, not realizing that the funds couldn't be spent the way districts needed it. Representative Andrus asked if the district could get this information to Superintendent Ybarra. Ms. Vagner said she would most likely get this information from the ISBA, IASA or IEA. She said she was communicating with them. Ms. Cranor asked about the protocol for the Education Committee. Representative Packer said the meetings were scheduled and noticed, but the issues were not publicized very well. Senator Guthrie said he imagined if legislation was proposed relative to operational funding it would be a robust hearing. Senator Lacey said the Education Committees were only heard twice during the session. He said legislators knew that districts needed operational money but it was hard to stray too far from the recommended budget because the SDE was supposed to be the expert when it came to educational funding. Ms. Harwood said another issue that she had always wondered about was the implementation of the ESEA Waiver. She said she read it cover to cover when the wavier was submitted and she wondered how a group of Republicans that was so against government control could sign onto a plan that handed all the control to the federal government. She said teachers already felt devalued, which came out loud and clear at the state's Tiered Licensure hearing, and the legislature needed to look at restoring salaries without adding any more hoops for teachers to jump through. Mr. Erlandson said not enough people were talking about what was in the best interest of children. He said a happy workforce was critical to meeting the needs of students and Tiered Licensure did not do that. He said there was no research or data that showed that Tiered Licensure would do anything to improve education. He said legislators should focus on what would do the most good. Ms. Vagner said the Idaho Core Standards were independent of the federal government but funding was not, and that was what was driving all of the accountability. She said the state could decide how it would meet the accountability

requirements but it was federally driven. Representative Andrus asked if a bill could be submitted to the Education Committee discussing all of these issues. Ms. Vagner asked if he knew anybody that would carry a bill like that. Representative Andrus said he would be willing to work with all of the legislators here to carry that kind of a bill. Representative Packer agreed. Ms. Vagner said the best way to accomplish it would be to collaborate with the ISBA, IASA and IEA to draft a bill that this group of legislators could carry. Senator Lacey said he would really like the group to work together to make it happen. Ms. Vagner said she would work with Karen Echeverria from the ISBA to start drafting a bill that addressed operational funding. Senator Guthrie said Ms. Echeverria would have a good idea on how to present the legislation. Ms. Calica said she would contact Robin Nettinga at the IEA. She said another thing to remember was that Washington just passed a class size initiative that called for the state to hire an additional 8,000 educators. She said it could be devastating for neighboring states like Idaho when teachers could go to Washington and negotiate for a higher wage and smaller class sizes. Ms. Vagner said Washington refused to comply with the federal government relative to student achievement accountability. She said the federal government had started implementing punitive measures and it would be interesting to see the outcome. Ms. Cranor said it was wonderful to see all of our legislators come together. She said it was clear that everyone in the room cared deeply about children and education. Ms. Vagner said Representative Nye came to the District Office a couple of weeks ago and was up to date on the issues. She said the administration would stay in frequent contact with the legislators through email and phone calls. She said she and the Board would be in Boise for ISBA's Day on the Hill. She thanked the legislators for their time, assertiveness and willingness to work together to carry legislation in support of education.

**Adjourn**

Chair Gebhardt adjourned the Special Meeting/Work Session with Legislators at 7:31p.m.

**APPROVED ON:**

October 20, 2015

**BY:**

Jenie Gebhardt  
Chair

**MINUTES PREPARED BY:**

[Signature]  
Secretary, Board of Trustees

**ATTESTED BY:**

[Signature]  
Clerk