

High Expectations Subcommittee Report and Recommendations

Members:

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Subcommittee Charge: to further refine the following recommendations of the Governor’s Task Force¹:

- #1: **Shift to a Mastery Based System where students advance based upon content mastery, rather than seat time requirements.**
- #4: **Ensure that all students have access to advanced opportunities by expanding offerings.**
- #13: **Shift from Average Daily Attendance (ADA) Funding Model to Average Daily Enrollment/ Membership to enhance fiscal stability and remove current barriers to personalized and/or mastery learning.**

Subcommittee Deliverables:

- **Implementation strategies and timelines for moving Idaho’s education system to a mastery or proficiency based model.**
- **Recommendations on modifying the public schools funding formula to support student mastery and outcomes and timelines for implementation.**

¹ [Task Force for Improving Education, Final Report, September 2013](#)

#1 Mastery-based System

The 2013 Task Force recommended that the State shift to a system where students advance based upon content mastery rather than seat time requirements and that mastery be measured against high academic standards. Replacing the current time-based system with a competency-based system would include the following features:

- Students advance upon mastery
- Competencies include explicit, measurable, transferable learning objectives that empower students.
- Assessment is a meaningful and positive learning experience for students.
- Students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs.
- Learning outcomes emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge, along with the development of important skills and dispositions

The subcommittee's research from Maine and other states has shown no wide scale adoption of a mastery-based model. Rather, states are using pilots programs, professional development and training to create these models.² Both Maine and South Carolina have utilized Reinventing Schools Coalition (RISC), a Division of Marzano Research Laboratory, to implement their mastery based systems.³ RISC aligns with Idaho's statewide education standards.

The ideal of the mastery-based classroom is one where students progress at their own rate toward performance goals. Students use their own data to set their own goals, and once they master a skill or lesson, they move on to the next level. This changes the classroom model, and teachers typically work with smaller groups or individual students to provide targeted interventions or enriched tasks/projects, etc. A mastery-based classroom typically delivers less large group lecturing and may include an electronic element to more closely monitor student progress. Students are more involved in setting their own learning targets and monitoring progress towards them. This model has been shown to be effective in increasing student achievement.

Recommendations:

The committee recommends a two-pronged approach to implementing a mastery based education model. The first approach applies to grades K-6. A separate approach applies to grades 7-12 and is based on the Advanced Opportunities Programs (Recommendation #4) and is discussed more fully in that section.

² [Innovation Lab Network](#), [Council of Chief State School Officers \(CCSSO\)](#), [Great Schools Partnership](#), [Educate Maine](#)

³ [Reinventing Schools Coalition \(RISC\)](#), [A division of Marzano Research Laboratory](#)

1. **We recommend that Idaho create an “incubator” model designed to identify and support those districts\charters that are willing and ready to start moving toward a competency based education system in grades K-6.**
 - a. That assessment would be used to create the initial cohort of districts/charters, and should include a demographically representative group of districts/charters. That cohort would be provided support for staff professional development, stakeholder education, and ongoing assessment and coaching.
 - b. These “Incubator” districts\charters would collect relevant data to allow for meaningful analysis of the process. This data would be used to identify future improvements and modifications.

2. **We recommend that the State Board adopt the competency based education model developed by the RISC⁴.**
 - a. RISC provides a research-based, data-driven model that has proven successful across the country, including in Maine and South Carolina. We view the statewide adoption of the Danielson evaluation system as a good example of how this can work.⁵

3. **We recommend that the State Board, State Superintendent, Legislature, and Governor support a statewide awareness effort concerning “Competency Based Education.”**

This could be accomplished in partnership with RISC, if recommendation #2 is adopted. There is a clear need for better understanding of competency based education by legislators, business leaders, education administrators, teachers, parents, and students. If this is done correctly, the demand for becoming an “incubator” would start to increase.

4. **We recommend that a follow-up committee comprised of superintendents, principals, teachers, and members of this committee meet in Fall 2014 to further explore specific RISC’s options; identify roadblocks and possible solutions; develop recommendations for the incubator process; and discuss the data that should be captured throughout the process.**

5. **We recommend that the State Department of Education prioritize federal or other grants to support districts who are implementing mastery programs.**

⁴ [Reinventing Schools Coalition \(RISC\). A division of Marzano Research Laboratory](#)

- 6. We recommend that over the next five years all districts\charters adopt a mastery based assessment report card which is aligned to Idaho’s statewide standards.**

Fiscal Impact:

- Statewide awareness plan: \$80,000-100,000
- Site visitation and readiness assessment for 20% of districts and charters: \$300,000.

FY 16 impact: \$400,000

Implementation Cost:

- It is estimated to cost \$44.60 per student per year for a three year fully supported district implementation. Districts\Charters would be chosen for implementation based on readiness assessments, demographics, and available funding.

FY17 impact: \$1,500,000

Fiscal impact in future years would depend on desire and readiness as more districts are assessed.

#4 Advanced Opportunities

Recommendations

- 1. We recommend that the relevant sections of Idaho Code, Title 33, Chapter 16⁶ pertaining to advanced opportunities be consolidated into a single chapter which will provide better clarity to districts, institutions and school boards.**

The focus on enhancing advanced opportunities has resulted in several new sections of code to delineate specific programs such as 8 in 6⁷, Early Completers⁸, and the new Fast Forward⁹. Consolidating the information in one chapter and reorganizing the information will help students, parents and schools navigate the various offerings more easily and effectively.

⁶ [Idaho Advanced Opportunities Programs](#)

⁷ [8 in 6 Program](#)

⁸ [Advanced Opportunities for Early Completers](#)

⁹ [Fast Forward, Senate Bill 1233](#)

2. **We recommend that the following changes be made to current advanced opportunities programs:**
 - a. Eliminate the 10 percent participation cap in the 8 in 6 program;
 - b. Remove restriction to online courses in the 8 in 6 program to allow for courses taken in traditional schools.
 - c. Remove the requirement that students pay 25 percent of fees in the Fast Forward (\$200/\$400) program in order to eliminate barriers to those who need it most and to simplify reimbursement to districts.
3. **We recommend follow-on work in 2-3 years to simplify and consolidate the Advanced Opportunities programs after review of data on the implementation of the Fast Forward program.** We envision that within 2-3 years, the State would fund 100% of all successfully completed dual credit courses, advanced placement exams, and transferable professional-technical courses or industry certification exams while in high school to encourage students to apply for scholarships.
4. **We support the State Board in working with legislators to create scholarships to provide assistance to students who earn college credit in high school and go on to a postsecondary institution in Idaho.**
 - a. For 9 college credits earned in high school, the student would receive \$1,000 per year for 2 years;
 - b. For 18 college credits earned in high school, the student would receive \$2,000 per year for two years.
 - c. For 30 college credits earned in high school, the student would receive \$3,000 per year for two years.

Fiscal Impact: If advanced opportunities programs were maximized and 60% of Idaho’s high school seniors (approximately 21,000 students) completed an average of 9 credits by the time they graduated @ \$65 per credit the total would be approximately \$7 million. The Committee estimates that it will take several years to reach this level. Programs such as “8 in 6” and Early Completers, while growing steadily are not experiencing large year-over-year increases in participation.
5. **The committee believes that college/career advising is key to reaching Idaho’s 60 percent goal. We recommend the legislature appropriate funds specifically for districts to implement college/career advising using a model that best fits their**

needs. Suggested models include, but are not limited to: AVID¹⁰, Near-Peer¹¹ mentoring, stipends, shared staff, and remote counseling.

- a. The committee has explored several career counseling models, including AVID, Near-Peer and other leadership roles, and implementation of a remote career-counseling model. These models could be funded as block grants. The AVID program has proven results in Idaho and elsewhere and is designed to reach the “middle” group of students, rather than the top quartile.
- b. During the budget cuts of the recent recession, counseling services in many schools were eliminated and the role of counselors further shifted to more administrative tasks and social services. The result has been that many schools have little, or no, staff able to work with students on course counseling, career exploration and college application and preparation.
- c. The committee plans to survey school counselors, superintendents and administrators in order to gain insight into how career counseling can best be integrated into every middle and high school. Survey results will be added to this report when available.¹²

Fiscal Impact: The state could begin by using the approach used for IT staffing as a model at \$2.5 million per year.

6. We recommend that Idaho Administrative Rule be revised to require annual review of the 8th Grade Education Plan in grades 9-12.¹³

- a. Advanced opportunities, such as 8 in 6 and Fast Forward have created incentives that did not previously exist, but parent/student awareness and planning needs to begin earlier in order to take advantage of these programs. Simplifying and consolidating the Advanced Opportunities programs will help.
- b. Encouraging parents and students to think about career options earlier than 8th grade is key to reaching the State’s 60% goal.¹⁴ Currently, schools often work with only the upper quartile of students on a traditional 4-year college path. The 60% goal mandates that schools reach more students who may choose a professional-technical certificate. Reinforcing options with students and parents early will help to ensure they are aware of opportunities and decisions down the line.

¹⁰ [Avid Program](#)

¹¹ [Near Peer Mentor Program](#)

¹² [See](#), Appendix, Counselor Survey

¹³ [Eighth Grade Plan](#), Section 104.02.a.

¹⁴ 60 percent of Idahoans aged 24-35 to have a certificate or degree by year 2020.

#13 Shift from Average Daily Attendance (ADA) Funding Model to Average Daily Enrollment/ Membership to enhance fiscal stability and remove current barriers to personalized and/or mastery learning.

This subcommittee researched funding models in Montana, Alaska, Wyoming, Colorado, Washington, and Utah¹⁵ and studied the 2007 report on ADA funding done by the Legislature’s Office of Performance Evaluations.¹⁶ In addition, the committee met with State Department of Education staff regarding challenges with current funding model and talked to superintendents across the state to get their perspectives.

The perception as the subcommittee began its work was that the mastery-based model would need a different funding mechanism. However, research into what other states are doing has led to the conclusion that implementation of master-based models do not require changing from ADA to enrollment funding. There may be no need to completely change the funding formula for schools, but rather make the current formula work better.

The original Task Force had hoped that funding on enrollment would release some requirements in the Idaho System for Educational Excellence (ISEE)¹⁷ data points, provide fiscal stability, and encourage mastery based education models. Based on the committee’s research, we find only small gains in reporting requirements, minimal improvement in fiscal stability, and no need to change to enable moving to a mastery based system.

Other challenges in the funding formula exist, however, such as multiple enrollment; more than one FTE limit; a 2.5 hour half day and 4.0 hour full day requirement; and unique virtual school timing issues for which the committee recommends further study.

Recommendations:

- 1. We recommend that the state continue with Average Daily Attendance as the basis for public school funding. However, we believe that the current formula needs to be updated and improved in a number of areas. The goal of any changes should be to improve fiscal stability, and to make the formula fairer and easier to report in ISEE. (See recommendation #5 below.)**

¹⁵ See, Appendix, Sources Consulted, High Expectations

¹⁶ [Public Education Funding in Idaho. Office of Performance Evaluation, January 2009](#)

¹⁷ [Idaho System for Educational Excellence \(ISEE\)](#)

2. We recommend that the current attendance minimum requirements of 2.5 hours for a half day, and, possibly, the 4.0 hours for a full day of attendance, be removed, or modified, and a different attendance reporting model developed in its place.
3. We recommend that the current restriction on funding more than one FTE be removed in those cases where it would better serve students.
4. We recommend that the current attendance formula be amended to remove the “Best 28 weeks” as a factor in determining funding. If this change is made, solutions regarding unique situations that may negatively impact districts or charters need to be implemented. These could include alternative high schools, online charter schools, and possibly other circumstances.

Fiscal Impact: Removing the best 28 weeks as a factor would cost \$1-\$1.5 million if the unit factor was unchanged or revenue neutral if the unit was lowered slightly.

5. We recommend that a committee be formed comprised of representatives from large and small districts, charter and traditional schools, online schools, SDE staff, and the IDLA to explore possible solutions, both short and long term, to the current funding formula.¹⁸

¹⁸ See, Appendix, Report of Funding Committee