

**CAREER LADDER AND TIERED LICENSURE**  
**September 15, 2014**  
**MEETING NOTES**

Present: Rod Lewis, Chair; Linda Clark, Co-Chair, Senator Dean Mortimer, Senator Janie Ward-Engelking, Representative Wendy Horman, Superintendent Tom Luna, Rob Winslow, Karen Echeverria, Wayne Freedman, Geoffrey Thomas, Rod Gramer, Brian Smith, and Christina Linder

Not Present: Senator John Goedde, Representative Mark Gibbs, Representative Lance Clow and Penni Cyr

Others Present: Representative Julie Van Orden (for Representative Gibbs); Robin Nettinga (for Penni Cyr); Roger Brown, Office of the Governor; Richard Westerberg, State Board of Education; Tim B. Hill, State Department of Education, Paul Headlee, Legislative Services Office; David Hahn, Division of Financial Management; Alex Feldman, Consultant, State Board of Education; Blas Telleria, Boise School District; Tracie L. Bent and Marilyn Whitney, Office of the State Board of Education

Chairman Rod Lewis reviewed the agenda which included discussion of the career ladder model and the proposed mentoring program. He reminded the committee that their charge was not to develop a new plan, but to support and develop the Career Ladder and Tiered Licensure Recommendation of the Governor's Task Force on Improving Education (Task Force) which concluded its work in August 2013.

Mr. Lewis said that Jason Hancock, State Department of Education, had developed the initial numbers, but had left the state for other employment. The Office of the State Board of Education then enlisted the services of Alex Feldman, a retired mathematics professor at Boise State University to develop a career ladder model that was mathematically sound, equitable, and in line with the tiered licensure recommendations put forth by this committee and adopted by the State Board of Education.

In developing the career ladder, Mr. Feldman was asked to follow two guiding principals:

- (1) that new teachers do not jump ahead of existing teachers; and
- (2) that an equitable differential be established between them.

Issues with out-of-state teachers coming into the system still needed discussion by the committee.

Co-Chair, Dr. Linda Clark reviewed the background which led to the original Task Force recommendation for a tiered licensure and career ladder structure. That recommendation came from the conclusion that the present system of reimbursing districts for teacher

salaries greatly contributed to fiscal instability facing Idaho schools. The Task Force interviewed both large and small districts. The existing compensation grid proved to be complex and difficult for districts to use in anticipating state funding for its teachers. Further, the grid was not competitive in attracting or retaining teachers; it also lacked both incentives and accountability. Some districts were able to supplement the grid's reimbursement schedule to pay teachers more, but that money came from operational funds which further contributed to instability; other districts were unable to do so and had difficulty recruiting and retaining good teachers.

The Task Force looked at several compensation models, including pay for performance and merit pay, and concluded that the career ladder model, together with tiered licensure, would be best for Idaho. The Task Force recognized that a more robust salary, plus additional compensation for leadership responsibilities, would help stem the tide of good teachers moving to administrative roles in order to elevate their salaries. The Task Force looked at models in Cherry Creek, CO and even Finland, but those models were either too expensive or funded so differently. The model most closely scrutinized was in New Mexico which had similar urban/rural demographics and revenues.

The Task force believed that the tiered licensure/career ladder package together would create more competitive teacher salaries, incentives, rewards, accountability and fiscal stability. The Task Force intended that districts would fund meaningful mentor programs through leadership premiums. Dr. Clark said that in the West Ada County School District, approximately 10 to 15 percent of available leadership funds are used to compensate mentors, leaving plenty to compensate other teacher options. Dr. Clark expressed appreciation that the 2014 Legislature funded \$15.8 million for leadership premiums beginning this year.

The Task Force also concluded that the career ladder should be tied to a revised system of state licensure wherein teacher evaluations and student achievement help determine movement to higher tiers and placement on the tiers, as determined at re-certification. In addition, the career ladder would offer several benefits:

- Teachers would earn significantly higher salaries than are possible for most districts under the current funding formula;
- Accountability would be enhanced significantly through teacher evaluations and student growth measures;
- Statewide Career Ladder apportionment would reduce staffing and fiscal instability
- Districts would gain access to resources to reward teachers for leadership roles;
- Idaho public school salaries would be more competitive with other states and the private sector;
- Districts could fund robust, effective and meaningful teacher mentoring programs through use of the leadership premium funds.

Finally, the Task Force recommended:

- Creating a career ladder compensation model that included three levels of pay:  
  
\$40,000 Beginning teacher  
\$50,000 Professional teacher  
\$58,000 Master teacher
- Creating a leadership pool (\$15.8 million per year)<sup>1</sup>
- Creating a 5-6 year phase-in costing approximately \$40 million per year, including the leadership premiums.

Rod Lewis next reviewed the Career Ladder Assumptions and Implementation Assumptions:

At implementation, all existing teachers will receive a professional certificate and move to career ladder cell above current salary apportionment grid.

- New teachers will receive residency certificate.
- Existing teachers will be required to meet the new performance requirements at their next renewal.
- Eligibility to move to Master designation begins in 2018.
- Approximately 4.33% attrition per year with corresponding 4.33% growth per year

Implementation Assumptions:

Year 1: Currently certificated teachers receive Professional Certificate and are moved to the career ladder cell above current salary apportionment.

- Beginning teachers placed on first tier of the ladder at salary apportionment of \$33,071

Year's 2-6: All teachers move with their current salary cohort in transition to the new salary apportionment structure over six years. New teachers' apportionments should not exceed current teachers' apportionments. Each differentiated cohort should move equitably in relation to other cohorts.

Year 7: At full implementation, there should be three salary apportionments for "residency teachers", five for "professional teachers", and five for "master teachers", as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>The 2014 Legislature enacted this provision.

\$40,000 - \$42,000 Beginning teachers  
\$47,000 - \$51,000 Professional Teachers  
\$54,000 - \$58,000 Master Teachers

The committee reviewed the proposed career ladder table in depth. Points discussed were:

### Application of Professional Teachers to Master Teacher during Transition Phase

Dr. Clark recognized that a professional teacher who has taught for *more than 8 years* and is due for certification renewal during the first five years of the implementation could achieve the requisite 3 years of “distinguished” evaluations and student growth achievement to qualify for Master Teacher. Dr. Clark felt it fair that they be allowed to apply for Master Teacher during their current renewal cycle without waiting two more years for a complete five-year cycle.

### Renewal of Professional Teachers in Transition Phase

Similarly, when a teacher’s renewal cycle falls in the first two years, and s/he would not have had time to meet the requirements of 3 out of 5 years, that teacher would not be placed on contingent certificate, but would be allowed a full professional renewal. The committee discussed at what point contingent status could be attached during the transition period. The committee decided that no teacher with a professional certificate would receive a contingent certificate in the first 3 years. [This provision was later changed to 5 years for consistency with the salary freeze provision on p. 5.]

### Assumptions of the Career Ladder

Mr. Lewis reviewed the assumptions upon which the career ladder was based:

Assumed annual average net retention rate:	95.6%
percent eligible for Master in year 4	60%
percent of those eligible that advance to Professional	90%
percent of those eligible that advance to Master	25%
percent eligible for master after year 4	20%

### Time frame of Implementation

While the original intention of the Task Force envisioned a 5-6 year phase in of the career ladder, the new implementation table reflected 7 full years and an 8<sup>th</sup> year carry-over appropriation. Dr. Clark and Mr. Lewis both felt the new table reflected the reality of where teachers were currently placed and where the career ladder would place them at full implementation. Dr. Clark noted that this is not the only request for legislative funding: Restoration of operational funding is also a top priority. She thought the 7 year plan reflected a measured approach.

Senator Ward-Engelking noted that if more money were available, the plan could be implemented more quickly. She expressed concern that Idaho would lose teachers in the interim due to the increased accountability and slower move to increased salaries.

Brian Smith pointed out discrepancies in middle level teachers. Dr. Clark confirmed the Task Force's strong commitment that districts would not receive less money than on the current system. The committee recessed briefly while Brian Smith and Alex Feldman revised the formulas to correct the discrepancy. Only one cell remained slightly underfunded, and Tim Hill of the State Department of Education assured the committee that those employees would be fully funded. Dr. Clark said that the committee would build that acknowledgement into its final recommendation. There were no objections.

Rod Gramer suggested that the impact of retiring baby boomers could positively affect the amount of appropriation needed to implement the program in fewer than 7 years. The committee discussed the impact of growth versus attrition, and reviewed PERSI retirement numbers over the last 5 years. The committee agreed that 90 percent represented reasonable retention, rather than the initial assumption of 95 percent.

Rod Lewis asked the committee to consider the assumption that 25 percent of teachers will advance to master teacher. Dr. Clark acknowledged that no hard data exists due to differing reporting requirements in the districts. Mr. Lewis agreed that 25 percent might be high but felt it was better than assuming too low. The committee voiced no objection.

#### Salary Consequences of Teachers with Contingent Certificate

Mr. Lewis asked the committee to discuss this issue. Senator Ward-Engelking suggested that if the salary were not frozen, the next increase could be used to offset the costs of increased mentoring. Karen Echeverria thought a contingent certificated teacher's salary should be frozen; Geoffrey Thomas said that his probationary teacher's are not frozen because the assumption is that they will succeed or leave. Three years is too long to have someone on probation. Neither Karen Echeverria nor Dr. Clark thought that salary based apportionment could be used for other purposes. Mr. Lewis asked the committee to look long term at policy and fairness. Tracie Bent noted that the contingency is removed once a teacher meets renewal qualifications, not on the next five year cycle. This provision was written in the Pending Administrative Rule and approved by the State Board of Education. Brian Smith suggested that a freeze be instituted only at Professional Year 5, and not at all in the transition period. The committee voiced no objection. The committee reaffirmed its commitment that no teacher would lose his/her teaching certificate as a result of the tiered licensure program.

#### Definition of Student Growth

Mr. Lewis stated he had received comments that the student growth definition was creating misunderstandings among teachers and the public, and asked the committee to consider changing the language for clarity. After discussion, the statement was revised to read:

*At least three assessments* must be used in demonstration of a teacher's student achievement. Of those three, *the Idaho Reading Indicator [IRI] and Smarter Balanced Assessment* (or equivalent statewide test) must be included, as applicable, **for teachers teaching language arts and math. [new language in bold]**

## Tiered Licensure and Career Ladder Tied Together

Mr. Lewis suggested that the committee entertain a resolution stating the committee's desire that the tiered licensure and career ladder be approved together and not divided. Dr. Clark said that teachers fear that licensure would go into place, with higher accountability, and then the career ladder would not be funded, or that it would be funded for a few years and then stopped. Dr. Clark made a motion to approve a resolution that the tiered licensure and career ladder be joined. Rod Gramer seconded the motion. Senator Mortimer pointed out that tiered licensure is an administrative rule, and career ladder is an appropriation. A resolution would not tie them together, only a statute would bind the legislature. He said that the two pieces are already split by the way they are written; the recommendation should be that they be tied together in statute.

Geoffrey Thomas said that his concern was always fiscal stability; he made the original Task Force proposal for the 40,000, 50,000 and 60,000 for teacher salaries. "Yes, I have concerns, but ... unless we have something in place, the legislature is not going to approve it...whatever we have to do to raise those salaries, it is worthy of consideration. This is not perfect, but it is significantly better than what we have, and the teachers will be the beneficiaries."

Robin Nettinga expressed concern with the resolution, noting that many unfunded mandates occur. Funds may start but never continue.

Mr. Lewis said he wanted to communicate to the legislature that they should be tied. "We want to increase pay to attract and retain [quality teachers], and accountability will have to be part of it. These are reasonable measures and processes; we want to encourage the maintenance of proficiency; we want to communicate that they are part and parcel. The Board has taken the view that they are together."

Senator Mortimer said he favored tying them in the best way possible. Senator Ward-Engelking said that she would not support tiered licensure without the career ladder. She expressed concern about how quickly it could be implemented. Rod Gramer said, "We must be fully implemented."

Mr. Lewis called for a vote on the resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that it is the intent of this committee that the Tiered Licensure program and the Career Ladder program be approved and fully implemented together.

All voting members approved the resolution. Brian Smith and Senator Ward-Engelking abstained.

### Mentoring

Dr. Clark explained she did not serve on the original subcommittee of the Task Force, Great Teachers and Leaders, however, part way through the process that subcommittee merged with Fiscal Stability of which she was Co-Chair. The Great Teachers and Leaders had done considerable work and Paul Headlee had provided data at its June 21, 2013 meeting on what Idaho had done in the past. Marilyn Whitney explained that the Task Force had concluded that in order for a mentoring program to function, it needed (1) funding support; (2) systemic guidelines or framework; and (3) a method to implement mentoring into teacher's schedules and provide professional development.

Dr. Clark said that the leadership premiums play a key role in funding the mentoring program, both in the cost of training and to pay the teacher-mentors. Still lacking is funding for release time in order for teacher-mentors to conduct observations. Professional development funds are primarily used for Idaho Core Standards training. While the Task Force recommended development of a mentoring program, Dr. Clark did not believe this committee was charged to create one, although she would like the State to have general guidelines.

Robin Nettinga offered that when the law changed in 1999, the State had mentoring guidelines and each district was required to submit their program to the State Department of Education for approval. Many were reviewed and sent back for revision. The State had guidelines. Dr. Clark suggested that the former guidelines be reviewed and updated.

Superintendent Luna explained that his budget had included \$8 million to fund 2 days of professional development and to pay for "PD 360", a tool aligned to the Danielson framework.<sup>2</sup> Tim Hill added that the Superintendent's budget this year adds \$9 million, for a total of \$17 million to "buy days." Marilyn Whitney noted that the Innovation and Collaboration subcommittee is recommending that 3 days be added the school year for site-based collaboration.

Dr. Clark suggested that the \$8 million be modified to include mentoring. She also suggested that the State Department of Education develop the mentoring guidelines. The committee voiced no objection.

Rod Lewis summarized that the committee will make a recommendation that asks the State Department of Education to review and promulgate general guidelines, giving adequate local flexibility; to use funds in the budget toward mentoring; and to strongly encourage that leadership premiums be used to compensate teacher-mentors.

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<sup>2</sup> [PD 360](#)

Vote on Career Ladder

Senator Mortimer questioned the implementation timetable in the current proposal which reflects 7 full years with an 8th carryover year. He expressed concern that 7 years is a long time, especially when the 8<sup>th</sup> year appropriation is only \$7 million. Rod Lewis explained that in order to get the numbers to work mathematically, cohort groups were created at \$500 increments instead of \$1000 increments, with the intent that in year 8 and beyond, the increments would be at \$1000. Senator Mortimer replied that, in his opinion, the committee should try to implement in fewer years, and asked if the spreadsheet could be manipulated to show a 6 year and a 5 year implementation. The numbers were presented and reviewed.

With a five-year implementation, the annual costs in Year 1 through 5 would be<sup>3</sup>:

Year 1	\$23 million
Year 2	\$28 million
Year 3	\$44 million
Year 4	\$35 million
Year 5	\$31 million

Senator Mortimer said that the committee should recommend a 5-year implementation. “The Task Force said 5 years, the Governor said 5 years – you have to start there. The difference in Year 1 between \$15 million (7 years), \$18 million (6 years) and \$23 million is not a significant gap.” If the legislature needs to find cost savings, it is their prerogative to make adjustments.

Mr. Lewis suggested that the complex spreadsheet which the committee had considered all day was not in a familiar format, and suggested that the committee communicate its recommendation in a simplified, clear format.

Mr. Lewis asked if the committee was ready to vote on the career ladder. Senator Mortimer said that some changes had been made, and it would be unwise to rush this part. He asked if committee members wanted more time. Brian Smith noted that the question of out-of-state teacher placement had not yet been resolved, and Robin Nettinga agreed that the out-of-state question was significant and needed to be fair to Idaho teachers. Representative Horman suggested that additional time would be useful. Rod Gramer agreed that having a clear statement was important.

Mr. Lewis agreed to delay the vote for two weeks. A final meeting was set for September 29 from 2:30 – 4:00 p.m. (MDT) for final comments and a vote.

Out-of-State Teacher Placement on Career Ladder

The committee discussed the pros and cons of several options to assign out-of-state to an appropriate cohort group on the career ladder. Robin Nettinga suggested that the

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<sup>3</sup> These figures are separate from the \$15.8 million in on-going annual leadership premiums which were approved by the 2014 Legislature.

committee use the current steps and lanes table to designate the appropriate cohort group for out-of- state teachers (based on education and experience), and place them in the career ladder with that corresponding cohort group. Everyone present agreed that the solution was fair and equitable. Mr. Lewis called for a vote on out-of-state teacher placement. The proposal passed unanimously.

Mr. Lewis adjourned the meeting at 3:45 p.m.

NEXT MEETING:                   September 29, 2014  
  2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. (MDT)  
FORMAT:                         PHONE CONFERENCE  
AGENDA:                         Final comments and vote on Career Ladder Package