

February 18, 2004

STATE BOARD STATEMENT ON PUBLIC SCHOOLS BUDGET

BOISE - State Board of Education President Blake Hall issued the following statement following the Joint Finance Appropriation Committee approval of the public school budget, which included 'intent language' for the Board to create a computer-based ISAT intervention program.

"The budget committee has offered a budget that provides an overall increase in funding for public schools, including the areas of technology and first year teacher salaries. The State Board has heard from teachers, parents and legislators about the need for ISAT remediation. The State Board of Education appreciates the confidence shown by JFAC for the Board's efforts with respect to ISAT remediation. School children will benefit from the computer-based ISAT intervention program being developed this year, as directed by the Legislature," said Hall.

"The State Board is fully supportive of offering ISAT remediation tool also and believes it is getting a "two for one" with the Third Academic Indicator, which will serve as an ISAT intervention program. JFAC included language in the appropriation to the State Board of Education to utilize federal funds to create a computer based ISAT intervention program and this is already in the works," said Hall. "To offer school districts a choice, the State Board of Education approved three options for the third academic indicator, which is required by federal law. The first two indicators measure growth for students that are proficient and those who are below basic. The third academic indicator is for all students. It will not only help those who are struggling, but for those students who need to be challenged - it will help them reach the next level of achievement. The State Board is in the process of crafting a request for proposal for the computer-aided instruction that will then go to bid. It is expected that this program would be ready for districts by the end of the 2004-2005 school year."