

July 19, 2005

STATE BOARD CREATES COMMITTEE TO REVIEW MISSION OF SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND

GOODING - State Board of Education members along with legislators, educators and parents are part of a new committee tasked with reviewing the mission and organization of the Idaho School for the Deaf and the Blind (ISDB).

The Gooding facility is the statewide agency dedicated to educating students who are hearing or visually impaired. More than 80 students reside at the campus in Gooding while an additional 650 are served at outreach centers throughout the state. The State Board of Education oversees the agency. The first committee meeting will be Thursday, July 21 at the ISDB campus beginning at 9 a.m. with a tour of the campus. The committee will begin its work at 9:40 a.m. in the multi-purpose conference room at the ISDB Building.

The Committee's goals include:

- Review how ISDB delivers services to students throughout the state and review the role and responsibility of local school districts in the education of deaf or blind students,
- Make recommendations for improving the organization structure for the ISDB residential program, the central campus day program and the regional outreach programs.
- Identify the issues associated with a state agency providing both educational services to school district students both at the ISDB campus and at the local school district.

State Board members on the committee are Laird Stone, who will act as the chair of the committee, Karen McGee, and Milford Terrell. Other members include: Dr. Michael Graham, administrator of Vocational Rehabilitation; Cyndi Hippler, parent of a former ISDB student; Mike Sturmak, director of Hearing and Balance Centers for the Idaho Elks Rehabilitation Hospital; Senator Hal Bunderson, Representative Wendy Jaquet, Mert Burns, Special Education Director for Vallivue School District; and Mary Whitaker, associate professor at Idaho State University.