

October 17, 2005

**Interim Executive Director for Idaho State Board of Education Named
*Assistant Deputy Director of Idaho Commerce & Labor Accepts Position***

BOISE - The Idaho State Board of Education has named Dwight Johnson, currently the assistant deputy director for Idaho Commerce & Labor, its interim executive director.

Johnson has spent nearly 11 years with Commerce & Labor. As deputy director he oversaw the tourism, international business and communications and research divisions. He also served as the department's legislative and congressional liaison. He will begin his new assignment on Monday, October 24, 2005.

In announcing this appointment, Rod Lewis, President of the State Board, stated, "We are very pleased that Dwight has accepted this assignment. He is a strong administrator who will provide excellent management for the State Board over the next several months as we choose a permanent Executive Director."

"I'm looking forward to this new responsibility and working with the board members to ensure that Idaho has an education system that is second to none," Johnson said. "Providing strong and vibrant educational opportunities is not only important to the families and children of Idaho, but it is critical to ensure Idaho's economy will remain healthy and growing."

"Dwight is a strong and passionate leader with a tremendous devotion to public service," said Idaho Commerce & Labor Director Roger B. Madsen. "His efforts at Commerce & Labor have ensured that Idaho remains a great place to work and do business. Although his contributions will be missed, I can think of no one better suited to help guarantee a bright future for Idaho's educational system."

During Johnson's tenure at Commerce & Labor, he was actively involved in critical work force training issues. Johnson helped ensure the passage of Idaho's Workforce Development Training Fund, which reimburses companies for workforce training costs and has proved to be a popular incentive for companies relocating or expanding in Idaho. He also helped pass the Farm Worker Minimum Wage law, played a key role in the rewrite of Idaho's wage and hour law and in the rewrite of the state's employment security law.

Johnson was instrumental in the passage of the unemployment insurance taxes and benefit legislation during the 2005 Legislature, which avoided a large increase in taxes for employers while still maintaining the financial health of the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund.

In addition to his duties at Commerce & Labor, Johnson has served twice as the Interim Executive Director for the Idaho Rural Partnership and was a key staff member to Governor Kempthorne's 2000 Blue Ribbon Task Force. During Governor Phil Batt's administration, Johnson was a member of the Governor's Welfare Reform Advisory Council that led to the welfare reform initiative. He also served as lead staff to Governor Batt's Workforce Development Cabinet group that created the consolidated Workforce Development Council.

Johnson has a master's degree in public administration from Boise State University and a bachelor's degree in political science from Brigham Young University.