

December 1, 2005

BOARD APPROVES RESEARCH CENTER IN IDAHO FALLS

POCATELLO - The Idaho State Board of Education unanimously agreed to allow Boise State University to move forward on several campus construction projects in addition to a statewide energy research facility involving Idaho 's universities.

With Board approval, Boise State University will hire architects to design a new parking garage and skyboxes at Bronco Stadium. After the design work is completed, the university must bring the projects to the Board for final approval. BSU also received the Board's support for a \$575,000 classroom-remodeling project.

The Board also gave its initial approval to construct a building for the Center for Advanced Energy Studies at University Place in Idaho Falls . The Center will hire an architect to design a 50,000 square foot facility to conduct research on advanced energy, science and technology. The facility, to open in 2008, will also be used for classroom instruction and training in a joint venture between Battelle Energy Alliance and Idaho universities. The building still requires final Board approval. The Center intends to house 100 faculty members, researchers and staff, as well as graduate and undergraduate students.

The Board received a report containing 10 recommendations to enhance deaf and blind education in Idaho . A committee of State Board members, medical professionals, legislators, K-12 and higher education educators and parents crafted the report, which calls for a working group to decide how to meet the recommendations. The general recommendations include:

- Separating state educational programs for deaf/hard of hearing students from educational programs for the blind/visually impaired students;
- Creating regional programs located in metropolitan areas within host districts.
- Evaluating and reorganizing Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind (ISDB) administrative structure;
- Examining teacher certification requirements and salary structures for teachers working with special populations; and
- Proposing legislation to clarify current law to allow the Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind to provide educational outreach. The school provides this service but Idaho code does not specify the school's ability to do so.

The Board will consider approving or rejecting the recommendations at its next meeting.