

**December 10, 2009**

**BOARD APPROVES PARMA AGREEMENT, HEARS AUDIT REPORTS, REVIEWS POLICY CHANGES & RACE TO THE TOP**

(Twin Falls). Calling it a strong and forward thinking collaboration between higher education and industry, members of the Idaho State Board of Education unanimously approved an agreement that will keep the University of Idaho Agricultural Research & Extension Center in Parma open and operational.

*"I want to thank all of you who have worked so diligently on this,"* said Board President Paul Agidius. *"This is a strong contractual agreement that is truly a win-win for all the parties involved."*

The Board also heard an extensive report from auditing firm Moss Adams, who detailed the financial progress and health on each of the universities and colleges who directly report to the Board.

By a 5-1 count, the Board voted to approve a one-year waiver of its own policy prohibiting colleges/universities bringing fee/tuition increases in excess of 10%. *"We want you to have as much flexibility as we can possibly give you,"* said Board Vice-President and Finance Committee Chairman Richard Westerberg. *"However, please do not misconstrue this action as an advance indication that we'll automatically approve any proposed increase over 10%,"* added Westerberg. *"Idaho students and the families who support them do not have bottomless pockets and cannot bear the total brunt of this recession on campus."*

The Board also heard an extensive review from Superintendent Tom Luna on Idaho's proposed application for the Race to the Top grant. Race to the Top, or RT3 is part of the Federal Government's American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (aka Stimulus package). Superintendent Luna is currently touring the state holding public forums aimed at further informing people on Race to the Top. Please visit [www.sde.idaho.gov/site/race](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/race).