



**SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
March 13, 2020
Office of the State Board of Education
Len B. Jordan Building
650 W State Street, 3rd Floor
Boise, Idaho**

A special meeting of the Idaho State Board of Education was held via teleconference on Friday, March 13, 2020, with the call originating from the large conference room in the Office of the State Board of Education, Len B. Jordan Building, in Boise, Idaho. Board President Debbie Critchfield presided and called the meeting to order at 4:00pm (MST). A roll call of members was taken.

Present

Debbie Critchfield, President
Dr. David Hill, Vice President
Andrew Scoggin*, Secretary
Emma Atchley*

Dr. Linda Clark
Shawn Keough
Kurt Liebich
Sherri Ybarra, State Superintendent

*Except where noted

Friday, March 13, 2020, 4:00pm (MST)

PLANNING, POLICY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

1. Public Postsecondary Institutions – Coronavirus – COVID-19 Response
This item was provided in the agenda materials as an information item.

Board Vice President Dave Hill asked for unanimous consent to allow the Board to make a motion to take action if necessary, pursuant to Idaho Code There were no objections.

BOARD ACTION

M/S (Hill/Clark): I move that this governing body, pursuant to Idaho Code, Section 74-204(2), amend the agenda for this meeting to allow for item number 1 which was originally noticed as an information item and discussion with the public postsecondary institutions of the Coronavirus – COVID-19 Response to be an “action item” if required given the rapidly changing circumstances involving public health and security. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

Board President Critchfield shared that purpose for this Special Board Meeting is to discuss the rapidly-changing situation surrounding the Coronavirus. She shared that it is important to remember that there are specific guidelines set for K-12 and the higher education institutions, and each entity will approach the situation differently.

Dave Jeppesen, Director of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (DHW) and Chair of Governor Little's Coronavirus work-group, shared that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and state guidance is different for K-12 than higher education institutions. He shared that, for K-12, school closures do not necessarily stop the spread of the virus, because when children are not in school they are likely left in the care of the high-risk population while parents are at work. Additionally, school closures can put pressure on the workforce, including healthcare workers, when there is not available childcare. He added that the DHW's preference is that K-12 districts and schools remain open unless there is an outbreak, in which case the decision to close would be up to local control. Mr. Jeppesen also added that, in terms of higher education where the student population is typically comprised of adults, it is unclear of whether closure will aid in slowing the spread of the virus, but it is recommended that courses be moved to an online format.

Board Member Liebich inquired whether there is a national recommendation and whether Idaho should follow Oregon and Washington's example to close K-12 schools and districts. Mr. Jeppesen responded that, while there may be a point in time where the right decision would be to close schools, DHW's recommendation is for schools to remain open unless a rapid acceleration of spread is affecting a district or school. These decisions are contingent on the rate of community spread.

Sara Stover, Senior Policy Advisor to Governor Little and member of the Coronavirus work-group, echoed Mr. Jeppesen's comments.

Superintendent Sherri Ybarra is also serving on the Coronavirus work-group, and echoed Mr. Jeppesen's comments. She shared that the State Department of Education (SDE) has given the CDC and DHW's guidance to district superintendents, and advised them to remain open until the outbreak is directly affecting a district or school. However, because Idaho is a local control state, districts superintendents are able to make that decision if they feel that is the best plan of action for their district and are encouraged to stay in contact with the SDE as the situation changes. She elaborated that schools are preparing for the possible transition to online courses and that the SDE is working to create solutions for rural students who may not have access to technology or for younger children who may not benefit from technology, in the event that curriculum and instruction will need to be moved to an online format.

Supt. Ybarra stated that there is concern around standardized testing, which would require large groups of students to gather, and shared that the Federal Department of Education plans to grant waivers to individual schools should they be affected by the virus. She shared that districts are also providing guidance in terms of the course of

action for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Guidance is also being provided for continued food service for students who are in need.

Board President Critchfield asked each of the four-year institution presidents to give a brief update on how their institution is planning to approach the Coronavirus.

Kevin Satterlee, Idaho State University President, shared that students and employees who are feeling ill are being asked to practice social distancing. ISU sent a team to Boise State University to observe their practice run of wholly online instruction, and are working to implement this on their campus. President Satterlee stated that ISU will begin their spring break early, beginning Wednesday, March 18. He stated that should there be a confirmed case at any of the ISU locations, all programs will be moved to online instruction either the first day following spring break or as soon as a confirmed case is announced. ISU's goal is to complete the students' courses through the remainder of the term, and that employees will transition to telecommuting where applicable. Employees and students remaining on campus will be asked to practice social distancing. President Satterlee shared that students will not be forced out of campus housing but will be encouraged to leave campus, and that all large campus events have been restricted. ISU has not made any decisions regarding the spring commencement ceremony at this time.

Board Secretary Scoggin inquired about students who have paid through the end of the term for housing and meal plans, and whether a closure would result in financial loss. President Satterlee responded that the cancellation of large campus events will result in a direct revenue loss, and that prorated refunds will be offered for students who choose to move out of the residence halls.

Board Member Liebich inquired about programs involving lab work that may not be able to be delivered online, and about the plans for student employees on campus as well as international students. President Satterlee stated that ISU has materials available for lab activities to be completed remotely if necessary. ISU will assist students with a sick leave compensation if necessary. It would be a higher risk to have international students to leave and return than it would be for them to remain where they are; President Satterlee stated that there will be quarantine protocol in place for those who are leaving and returning.

Dr. Marlene Tromp, Boise State University President, shared that her main concern is for those who are part of the vulnerable population. BSU is the largest "footprint" in the state and in Boise, which could be a location for spreading the virus. She shared that BSU's test run of a wholly online campus, which took place on the day of the Special Board Meeting, went well, and that she believes that BSU should transition to a wholly online campus beginning Monday to due to the risk of BSU being a "vector" for virus spread.

Board Secretary Scoggin inquired about students remaining in the residence halls, and Dr. Tromp responded that BSU will not force students to leave, but will adopt new

measures to prevent the spread of the virus. BSU will issue prorated refunds for housing and dining, and operate on a case-by-case basis for students who would prefer a different living arrangement. She also shared that a final decision regarding the spring commencement ceremony has not been made at this time.

Board Member Atchley acknowledged that this is a “fluid” situation, and emphasized that it is important to monitor the situation and support schools to do what is best for them. Board Secretary Scoggin echoed Board Member Atchley’s comment and shared that he was impressed with the lengthy planning that has already occurred in such a short amount of time. He also shared his concern for students who have never taken an online course, as well as the need to address the financial impact that the Coronavirus will have on the higher education system.

Dr. Cynthia Pemberton, Lewis-Clark State College President, shared that LCSC is following a plan similar to the other institution, engaging in remote opportunities where possible and continuing with preparations until there is a confirmed case of the virus on campus. LCSC’s goal is to assist students to complete the semester, and they are working to create plans for essential employees to work remotely. LCSC will test remote course delivery on March 16 and March 17. There has not been a decision regarding the spring commencement ceremony at this time, although most on-campus events have been cancelled through the end of March and all non-essential travel has been suspended.

Board Member Clark stated that it is important to give as much notice as possible regarding the cancellation of commencement ceremonies to allow family and friends to adjust or cancel their travel plans if necessary.

At this time, the Board recessed for 23 minutes to listen to a press conference hosted by Governor Little, where the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Idaho was announced. The meeting resumed at 5:17pm (MST), and the institution presidents continued to share their contingency plans for their respective campuses.

Board Member Atchley and Board Member Scoggin left the meeting at 5:00pm (MST).

Scott Green, University of Idaho President, shared that spring break began today (March 13), and that the UI plans to transition to remote course delivery beginning on March 24. The UI will remain open at this time to provide services for students who have no other options, and are working to develop solutions for students who do not have the technology to continue courses online. The UI will provide laptops for those who may not have them to allow for social distancing. President Green shared that he will not approve public events on campus that are anticipated to have more than 100 people in attendance, and that the UI is making arrangements for employees to work remotely if the need presents itself. High-travel areas of campus are being deep-cleaned, and all international and non-essential travel has been suspended without

Dean's approval. There has not been a decision made at this time regarding the spring commencement ceremony, and this will be addressed in the coming weeks.

President Satterlee clarified that ISU's intention is to start spring break early for students, and faculty will use this time as an in-service to prepare for transition to remote course delivery. Students will officially return from spring break on March 30, and remote delivery will be fully implemented at this time.

Dr. Pemberton shared that the LCSC President's Cabinet will meet next week and may determine that remote delivery will continue past next Monday and Tuesday's test of remote delivery since spring break does not coincide with the timing of the test. She also shared that LCSC will implement "clean zones" throughout campus to allow students to have safer access to technology and work spaces.

At this time, Board President Critchfield opened the floor for Board discussion.

Board Member Keough inquired about test proctoring, and how final exams will be delivered. Dr. Pemberton stated that LCSC is ensuring that faculty are using a Learning Management System (LMS) for all aspects of instruction, including testing. She anticipates that many students will stay on campus, and LCSC has not investigated off-campus proctoring arrangements at this time.

Dr. Tromp shared that Boise State University plans to transition to wholly online course delivery beginning Monday, March 16, considering the campus population density and location.

Board Member Clark shared that she felt the need for the Board to make a motion to approve the transition to online instruction with the circumstances that have been presented by the institutions. Board President Critchfield shared that the Board has already delegated this responsibility to the Presidents in their positions; Jenifer Marcus, Deputy Attorney General, confirmed that, under Board Policy I.E, Presidents or Agency Heads have full authority and responsibility within the framework of the policies for the organization management, direction, and supervision of the institution or organization. Ms. Marcus shared that the Board may still take action in support of the institutions.

Board Member Scoggin rejoined the meeting at 5:35pm (MST).

Board Member Liebich shared that it is important to encourage students to leave campus and take courses remotely if at all possible.

Board Member Clark shared that she felt the Board should go on record in support of the work that the Presidents and campuses are doing to address the situation.

BOARD ACTION

M/S (Clark/): I move to approve the move to online instruction on the schedule and under the circumstances that have been laid out by the individual institutions with the understanding that if something changes those timelines would be moved up as appropriate to the circumstances. Motion withdrawn

M/S (Clark/Keough): I move the Board go on record in support of the institution president's decision to move to on-line instruction in light of the coronavirus pandemic and acknowledge the work that has been done on our campuses to address the many issues that are associated with this change. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried 7-0. Mrs. Atchley was absent from voting.

Board President Critchfield asked that Presidents continue to communicate with the Board, who are supportive of the work that has been done, and that status updates should be sent to Matt Freeman, Executive Director. Board Members were advised to direct questions to Mr. Freeman as well.

Board President Critchfield reminded the Board that the April Board Meeting, which was scheduled to be hosted by the University of Idaho has been moved to a remote format via teleconference.

Supt. Ybarra stated that the issue of waivers for testing will be discussed at the April Board Meeting, and that all SDE events and conferences have been cancelled through May 1, including the Suicide Prevention Conference and the Legislative Roadshow. The Legislative Roadshow will be recorded by section and posted online, and questions can be asked and answered for each region.

Board Vice President Hill shared that it is important to apply an abundance of caution around spring commencement ceremonies and asked that necessary decisions are made as early as possible to allow family and friends to adjust their travel plans accordingly. Board President Critchfield agreed and requested that the Presidents keep the Board apprised of any decisions made regarding commencement ceremonies.

Board Member Liebich stated that the institutions should be working together, since, as one institution implements a plan, other institutions will receive questions. President Satterlee stated that a daily meeting is being held in regard to the Coronavirus with representatives from each institution as well as Board staff, and that there are shared documents to compile information and collaboration efforts.

Board Member Clark shared that all 8 institutions are involved in the daily meeting, although the two-year institutions are governed by different board authorities. Dr. Rick Aman, College of Eastern Idaho President, added that CEI is hoping to have faculty ready to deliver online coursework no later than March 30.

Board President Critchfield stated that this meeting will not be the only discussion regarding the Coronavirus, and that there will be continued communication as the situation evolves.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was entertained.

BOARD ACTION

M/S (Critchfield/Ybarra): I move to adjourn the meeting at 5:51pm (MST). The motion carried 7-0. Mrs. Atchley was absent from voting.