



**SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
August 3, 2020
Office of the State Board of Education**

A special meeting of the Idaho State Board of Education was held via Zoom teleconference on Monday, August 3, 2020. Board President Debbie Critchfield presided and called the meeting to order at 3:00pm (MST). A roll call of members was taken.

Present

Debbie Critchfield, President
Kurt Liebich, Secretary
Linda Clark

Emma Atchley
Dave Hill
Sherri Ybarra, State Superintendent

Absent

Andy Scoggin, Vice President
Shawn Keough

Monday, August 3, 2020, 3:00 p.m. (MST)

INSTRUCTION, RESEARCH AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

1. Board Policy III.Q. Admission Standards – Partial Waiver – College Entrance Exam Admission Requirement

BOARD ACTION

M/S (Liebich/Clark): I move to extend the waiver of Board Policy III.Q.4.a, requiring a college entrance exam score as an Idaho public postsecondary minimum admissions requirement for students seeking admission for the 2021-2022 academic year. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried 6-0. Ms. Keough and Mr. Scoggin were absent from voting.

AND

M/S (Liebich/Ybarra): I move to approve the establishment of the Direct Admissions formula based exclusively on students' 5th-semester grade point average, with a minimum GPA set at 2.80, effective for admissions to the 2021-2022 academic year. *This motion was amended, as outlined below.*

M/S (Atchley/Ybarra) I move to approve the establishment of the Direct Admissions formula based exclusively on students' 5th-semester grade point average, with a minimum GPA set at 2.80, effective only for admissions for the 2021-2022 academic year. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried 6-0. Ms. Keough and Mr. Scoggin were absent from voting.

Board Secretary Liebich introduced the item and asked Dr. TJ Bliss, Chief Academic Officer, to provide background information. Dr. Bliss stated that, because the annual "SAT School Day" was cancelled last spring due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a small number of high school seniors and the majority of high school juniors were unable to take or retake the SAT. Dr. Bliss explained that in March, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board waived the college entrance exam as a graduation requirement for students graduating in 2020. In June, the Board waived the college entrance exam score as an Idaho public postsecondary minimum admissions requirement for students seeking admission for the 2020-2021 academic year. Due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, the first motion for this item extends the partial waiver of Board Policy III.Q.4.a., which temporarily removes the requirement of a college entrance exam score for Idaho public postsecondary minimum admissions for students seeking admission for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Dr. Bliss also discussed Idaho's Direct Admissions program, which relies on college entrance exam scores when making admissions determinations. These determinations are usually made early in the fall semester, but, in light of the fact that standardized testing dates may be cancelled or postponed, the institutions indicated that they are comfortable with the Board utilizing a Direct Admissions formula that relies exclusively on students' 5th-semester grade point average instead. The second motion for this item establishes a Direct Admissions formula based exclusively on students' 5th-semester grade point average, with the minimum grade point average being 2.80, effective only for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Board Member Hill stated that the verbiage of the motion was unclear, discussing that the motion implies that the revision to the policy is in perpetuity rather than only for the 2021-2022 academic year. Board Member Atchley agreed, and discussed that the verbiage should clearly state that the policy revision is not ongoing, but rather only applicable to the 2021-2022 academic year. The motion was then amended by Board Member Clark, Board Member Atchley, and Superintendent Ybarra as noted above.

Board President Critchfield shared her interest in seeing how this cohort of students will move through the education system with this policy change in mind. Board Secretary Liebich echoed Board President Critchfield's comments, and added that perhaps the Board should have a more in-depth discussion in the future regarding standardized testing as a requirement of Idaho's education system.

Matt Freeman, Executive Director, discussed that the 2.80 grade point average figure was established through research in conjunction with data provided by the institutions. He added that analysis found no difference in the persistence of students with a 2.80 grade point average as opposed to students with a 3.0 grade point average.

Dr. Marlene Tromp, Boise State University President, stated that this Board action is a meaningful and positive gesture, and added that she is supportive because she does not want students to be unable to access higher education due to no fault of their own. Scott Green, University of Idaho President, Kevin Satterlee, Idaho State University President, and Dr. Cynthia Pemberton, Lewis-Clark State College President, echoed President Tromp's comments. Board Member Clark discussed that the Board will be interested in the Presidents' perspectives during future discussions regarding standardized testing versus grade point average as a measure of academic success.

There were no additional questions or comments from the Board.

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

BOARD ACTION

M/S (Hill/Ybarra): I move to adjourn the meeting at 3:18pm (MST). The motion carried 6-0. Ms. Keough and Mr. Scoggin were absent from voting.

The State Board of Education tentatively plans to convene weekly for a virtual Special Board Meeting during the COVID-19 pandemic to receive updates on the status of public education in Idaho and to take action as necessary.