



**SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
August 17, 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 17, 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
Andy Scoggin, Vice President
Kurt Liebich, Secretary
Dr. Linda Clark

Emma Atchley
Shawn Keough
Dr. Dave Hill
Sherri Ybarra, State Superintendent

Monday, August 17, 2020, 3:00 p.m. (MST)

BUSINESS AFFAIRS AND HUMAN RESOURCES

1. WWAMI Fee – Item Pulled

This item was pulled from the agenda prior to the meeting.

Board Member Hill, BAHHR Committee Chair, explained that the 5% holdback on statewide budgets created a deficit within the WWAMI budget that could have only been compensated for by a fee assessed to WWAMI students. However, Governor Little's office has asked that the Board postpone action regarding this temporary fee while they reassess the potential impact on students.

There were no additional questions or comments from the Board.

PLANNING, POLICY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

2. Public Education – Fall Reopening Update

This item was provided in the agenda materials as an information item.

Board Member Clark, PPGA Committee Chair, introduced the item and explained that the Board would hear reports from each of Idaho's public institutions of higher education as well as representatives from each of the regional superintendent groups regarding their fall reopening plans.

Greg Wilson, Senior Policy Advisor to Governor Little, discussed that the Governor's office has been closely monitoring schools' reopening plans. The reports would provide the Board with the necessary background information for how K-12 schools and higher education institutions plan to reopen this fall so that they are ready to address any issues that may arise as schools transition to reopening efforts. Mr. Wilson referenced the Idaho Back to School Framework that the Board approved during their July 9, 2020 Special Meeting, and discussed that because the framework supports local control, reopening plans will look different in different parts of the state. Mr. Wilson also shared that the Governor's office has worked closely with Board staff to create a spreadsheet, which is included in the meeting agenda materials, that serves as a "dashboard" for school reopening plans for districts across the state.

Board President Critchfield echoed Mr. Wilson's comments and discussed that the framework was created with the intent to support local governance and allow the Board to support districts. She also stated that the Board recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic is a continually changing situation, and emphasized that the reports from each of the higher education institutions and the regional superintendents will provide an opportunity for the Board to understand the current situation in various areas of the state.

Postsecondary Education Update

College of Southern Idaho

Dr. Dean Fisher, College of Southern Idaho President, shared that CSI will deliver 47% of courses in-person, 43% of courses online, and 10% in a hybrid method, with a combination of in-person and online instruction. President Fisher discussed that CSI is committed to providing both faculty and students with maximum flexibility this fall, and shared that faculty have been given the authority to shift the modality of their courses with communication to their students, regardless of the original modality of the course.

Face coverings are mandatory for faculty, staff, students, and visitors on CSI's campus, with signage throughout campus serving as a reminder of this mandate. Dr. Fisher discussed several other protocols that will be in place this fall, including increased cleaning efforts, required seating charts in in-person instructional situations to support contact tracing, and the disallowance of guests in on-campus residential facilities. He added that the South Central Health District has reviewed CSI's updated safety protocols and instructional plans, and no revisions were identified. Testing for students will be available through Physicians Immediate Care and Frontier Pediatrics.

Board Secretary Liebich inquired if CSI will have a code of conduct for students to sign, and President Fisher responded that CSI has communicated students' social responsibility on campus, and shared that once the updates are added to the current code of conduct, it is expected that students will comply.

College of Eastern Idaho

Dr. Rick Aman, College of Eastern Idaho President, shared that CEI will deliver 1/3 of courses in-person and 2/3 of courses online, with in-person courses being reduced to 70% of standard capacity. CEI will utilize larger spaces on campus for in-person classes where available. Face coverings are required on campus, and CEI is increasing the frequency of cleaning in campus facilities and installing hand sanitizer dispensers throughout campus. President Aman added that CEI is strictly following the protocols set by Eastern Idaho Public Health, and that, at this time, there has only been one individual with a confirmed case of COVID-19 on campus.

Board Secretary Liebich inquired under what conditions CEI would be forced to move to a fully-remote instructional model, and President Aman responded that CEI will follow any direction given by Eastern Idaho Public Health or the Governor's Office. He added that CEI held in-service for faculty that day, and cautioned faculty that they would need to be ready to transition to an online format if necessary.

Board Member Clark inquired if there are provisions for hands-on Career Technical Education courses if instruction should need to transition to an online format. President Aman responded that CEI will likely not alter their current plans for CTE courses, and that physical distancing and frequent sanitizing are required for use of on-campus facilities. He added that if campus were to close, CTE courses would need to be brought back in some capacity in order to maintain hands-on instruction.

College of Western Idaho

Dr. Bert Glandon, College of Western Idaho President, shared that CWI will deliver 32% of courses in-person, 35% of courses wholly online, and the remaining courses through various hybrid formats. Capacity has been reduced for in-person courses, and temperature checks and face masks will be required upon entering campus. President Glandon added that CWI will distribute baskets to students containing face masks, hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes, and an outline of updated campus protocols.

North Idaho College

Dr. Rick MacLennan, North Idaho College President, discussed that NIC will deliver 60% of courses in-person, which will include hybrid instructional methods, and 40% wholly online. NIC has eliminated public access to campus, and is following many of the same precautionary protocols that the other community college presidents mentioned during their reports. Students have received an NIC-branded face mask and a letter from President MacLennan outlining expectations, including the requirement of face masks on campus, social distancing, and frequent hand washing.

Board Secretary Liebich inquired how NIC will approach testing for students, and President MacLennan shared that NIC will not provide on-campus testing, but is working with area health providers and the local health district.

University of Idaho

Scott Green, University of Idaho President, discussed that UI will deliver 25% of courses in-person, 30% online, and 45% via hybrid formats, and will deliver all courses fully online after the Thanksgiving break. UI will require all students to be tested for COVID-19 before stepping foot on campus before the fall semester and before returning to campus in the spring, and President Green outlined that free testing will be available for faculty and staff. Testing will be available on campus until courses start, and at Gritman Medical Center after courses start. UI will require student and employee acknowledgement of the “Healthy Vandal” pledge, which outlines the requirement of masks on campus and emphasizes physical distancing and frequent hand washing.

UI will utilize thermal imaging scanners in high-traffic areas on campus, and will utilize large campus facilities for in-person courses as available. UI has increased cleaning of campus facilities, and all students will receive a personal PPE packet which will include a face mask and hand sanitizer. President Green also shared that on-campus facilities will be available for students who test positive for COVID-19 to quarantine.

Board Secretary Liebich inquired about how UI will approach housing density to allow for appropriate physical distancing, and President Green responded that several of the residence halls will have decreased capacity as well as updated traffic patterns throughout residence facilities. President Green also commended UI’s Greek life community for their response to COVID-19, including reduced residence capacity in the fraternity and sorority houses and the requirement of masks for Greek events.

Lewis-Clark State College

Dr. Cynthia Pemberton, Lewis-Clark State College President, discussed that LCSC will deliver 70% of courses in-person or via hybrid methods and 30% of courses online. 100% of courses will have an online component, and all courses will be delivery fully online after the Thanksgiving break. LCSC will require students, faculty, and staff to take a wellness pledge that emphasizes a commitment to the campus community by means of staying home if feeling sick, physical distancing, and complying with the on-campus mask mandate.

President Pemberton also shared that LCSC does not have the capacity to accommodate on-campus testing, but is working with Idaho North-Central Public Health and local healthcare providers to provide testing for students and staff where necessary. LCSC has also adopted an operational levels matrix to aid in decision making and operations at different levels of risk in the areas of general safety guidelines, academics, student services, campus operations, campus events and activities, and employees.

Boise State University

Dr. Marlene Tromp, Boise State University President shared BSU will deliver approximately 50% of courses in-person and 50% of courses online, and added that this shift in course delivery is based on student feedback. President Tromp also discussed

BSU's "We Are Broncos, We've Got This Covered" campaign to promote the use of face masks on campus and the understanding of the effectiveness of face masks. BSU has prohibited visitors in the residence halls, and has also dedicated 100 beds for students who may need to quarantine. Physical distancing will be encouraged on campus, and BSU will utilize ballrooms and other large spaces on campus for in-person courses where available.

President Tromp discussed that BSU is striving to become a more flexible institution to better meet student needs, and shared that BSU has spent \$1.9M on technology to support these efforts. COVID-19 testing will be available through local health providers, and the on-campus student health center will provide testing for symptomatic students and staff. President Tromp also added the BSU's reintegration group has been meeting frequently in preparation for the fall semester, and emphasized BSU's robust communication strategy.

Idaho State University

Kevin Satterlee, Idaho State University President, shared that ISU's fall semester started that day with 53% of courses being delivered in-person, 23% delivered online, and 24% being delivered via hybrid formats. ISU individually reviewed each course section and moved courses to large spaces on campus where necessary, and increased the number of online and hybrid courses in order to provide distance-based options for vulnerable students and faculty. President Satterlee discussed that faculty and staff attended mandatory training for safety protocols, and that, so far, there has been good compliance with mandated face coverings. ISU will have completed all instructional hours by Thanksgiving, and final exams will be delivered via online methods after the Thanksgiving break.

Board Member Clark commented that each of the higher education institutions has put a great deal of effort into creating plans that are student-focused and health-centered in order to continue to deliver quality instruction. She also added that it is evident that the institutions have worked together to create their plans for reopening.

Board Secretary Liebich inquired whether there has been pushback from surrounding communities and patrons of the higher education institutions regarding on-campus mask requirements. President Green discussed that masks are required for the city of Moscow, so students are already used to the requirement; he added that there is a process for students to go through if they feel they are eligible for a reasonable accommodation to not wear a mask. President Satterlee stated that, so far, there has been compliance on campus, and that ISU will appoint "mask ambassadors" for each building during the first week of classes in order to enforce the on-campus mask requirement. President Pemberton anticipated good compliance on the LCSC campus.

K-12 Education Regional Update

Region I

Dr. Becky Meyer, Lakeland Joint School District Superintendent and Region I President, discussed that about half of the districts in Region I have established a 3-phase reopening plan while the remaining districts will follow a 4-stage, color-coded plan (green, yellow, orange, and red, from lowest to highest levels of community spread). Dr. Meyer shared that the majority of districts will follow a blended A/B schedule, with 50% of instruction being delivered in-person and 50% being delivered online. She added that most districts are expecting or requiring masks in school buildings, although there are several districts that will only require masks when physical distancing is not possible. Dr. Meyer shared that the major concerns are the polarity of opinions regarding COVID-19, as well as the financial impact of the transition to homeschooling and blended learning.

Region II

Wendy Moore, Genesee School District Superintendent and Region II President, shared that all districts in Region II, with the exception of schools within the Moscow area, are planning to open for in-person instruction, and that most districts will follow a 4-stage, color-coded plan. Excluding Moscow and Lewiston, most districts in Region II have a smaller student population of 500 or less. Ms. Moore shared that the major concerns for Region II are consistency among districts, a potential shortage of substitute teachers, and a lack of capacity for students to participate in remote learning opportunities.

Region III

Rob Sauer, Homedale School District Superintendent and Region III President, discussed that the majority of districts within Region III are planning to delay the start of the fall semester. 46% of the districts in Region III are planning to offer some form of blended learning with only a portion of their student body on campus at one time, 36% are planning to open normally with mitigation strategies in place, and 18% are planning to open wholly online. Mr. Sauer shared that funding, the procurement of devices and supplies, and a potential shortage of bus drivers are the main concerns for Region III.

Region IV

Dr. Brady Dickinson, Twin Falls School District Superintendent and Region IV President, echoed concerns from other regions and discussed that several counties within the region are in the yellow category (minimal to moderate community spread) and several are in the orange category (moderate community spread). The majority of the districts within Region IV will open with an option for remote instruction, and about half of the districts will require face coverings. Dr. Dickinson shared that a lack of mandate for face coverings and a possible staffing shortage for both regular teachers and substitute teachers.

Region V

Marc Gee, Preston School District Superintendent and Region V President, shared that all counties in Region V are in the green category (with minimal community spread), and all districts are planning to open with some form of face to face instruction. The majority of schools in Region V are opening with a regular schedule, with virtual options available and mitigation protocols in place. Mr. Gee shared that Region V is utilizing their alert system, as well as social media, to communicate with families. He also stated that Region V shares many of the areas of concern that have already been mentioned in the other regional reports.

Region VI

Brian Kress, Blackfoot School District Superintendent and Region VI President, shared that several districts within Region VI have postponed reopening while several districts will implement a 4-day in-person schedule with one day of remote instruction. Districts will also offer a remote learning option available. Two counties within Region VI have mask mandates in place, and the remainder of the counties are strongly encouraged to wearing face coverings. Mr. Kress discussed that Region VI shares many of the areas of concern that were previously mentioned in the other regional reports.

Board Member Clark stated that the Idaho Public Charter School Commission will be asked to present a similar report on fall reopening plans during a future Special Board Meeting.

Board President Critchfield shared the Board's appreciation for the updates from each of the higher education institutions and the six regions, as well as all of the work that has been done throughout the summer to prepare for fall reopening.

There were no additional questions or comments from the Board.

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

3. Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund Update

This item was provided in the agenda materials as an information item.

Superintendent Ybarra introduced the item and reminded the Board that the \$3.8M Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds were approved to assist districts and charters with procuring components to support blended learning, with priority for the implementation of a learning management system (LMS).

Supt. Ybarra introduced Karen Seay, Director of Federal Programs for the State Department of Education, who provided an update on the ESSER State Education Agency 10% reserve funds. Ms. Seay shared that SDE staff has reviewed RFP proposals for learning management systems, and announced last week that they have selected 5 providers: PowerSchool-Schoology, D2L (Desire2Learn), ItsLearning, Instructure-Canvas, and Otus. A list of the providers is available under the

“Connectivity” tab on the SDE “Fall 2020 Public Schools Reopening” website, which includes contact information, and license and implementation costs.

Ms. Seay also discussed the \$30M that was approved by the Governor’s Coronavirus Financial Advisory Committee (CFAC) to assist with bridging the “digital divide”. A review committee was formed, which included co-chairs Representative Melissa Wintrow and Will Goodman, Director of District Programs for the Idaho Digital Learning Academy, as well as Board Member Hill, Rod Gramer (Idaho Business for Education), Terry Ryan (Bluum), Sherawn Reberry (West Ada School District), Peter McPherson (SDE Chief Deputy Superintendent), and Ms. Seay. The committee will continue to review applications for these funds as they are submitted.

Board Member Clark inquired about the intended uses for the \$3.8M ESSER reserve funds, and Ms. Seay clarified that the priority for the funds is the implementation of an LMS, but that the funds can be used for other components to support blended learning. She added that there is no application for these funds, and reminded the Board that the allocation methodology for these funds was discussed at a previous meeting.

Board Secretary Liebich inquired about the deadline to submit an application for the \$30M in CFAC funds, and Ms. Seay stated that there is not a firm deadline, and that it is anticipated that the review committee will receive the outstanding applications by the end of this week. Board Member Hill inquired about the December 30, 2020 deadline to spend the \$30M in CFAC funds, and the barrier of devices being on backorder. Ms. Seay explained that as long as the funds are obligated by December 30, 2020, the LEA will still receive the funds.

Supt. Ybarra added that the SDE will provide an update on the social emotional learning component that was included in the allocation of the ESSER reserve funds during the regular August Board Meeting, which is scheduled for August 26, 2020.

Board Secretary Liebich encouraged district leaders to communicate with business leaders, who have remained open during the summer and may have already learned how to manage spread within their facilities. He added that districts should be disciplined about cleaning protocols, social distancing, and face coverings in order to minimize spread.

Board President Critchfield voiced her appreciation for the reports. Earlier in the meeting, Board President Critchfield stated that, “it feels like we are not ready to start [school]”, and clarified that what she meant by that was that the summer has gone by very quickly. She reiterated the Board’s confidence that the districts’ and institutions’ are absolutely ready for reopening.

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 (Clark/Hill): I move to adjourn the meeting at 4:57pm (MST). The motion carried 8-0.

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.