



**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
January 13, 2022
Idaho State Board of Education
OSBE Conference Room
650 West State Street, Suite 307
Boise, ID 83720**

A special meeting of the Idaho State Board of Education was held via Zoom teleconference January 13, 2022, with the call originating from the Office of the State Board of Education in Boise. Board President Kurt Liebich called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. (MT).

Present

Kurt Liebich, President
Dr. Dave Hill, Vice-President
Dr. Linda Clark, Secretary
Shawn Keough

Bill Gilbert
Cally J. Roach
Superintendent Sherri Ybarra
Cindy Siddoway

Absent

None

Thursday, January 13, 2022, 4:00 p.m. (Mountain Time)

PLANNING, POLICY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

School District Trustee Zone Boundaries – Action Item

Dr. Clark explained pursuant to Section 33-313, Idaho Code, any proposal to define the boundaries of the trustee zones in a school district must include the determination of the number of trustee zones and the date of expiration of the term of office for each trustee. Any proposal must also include a legal description of each trustee zone, a map of the district showing how each trustee zone would then appear, and the approximate population each trustee zone would have should the proposal become effective. The Board has sixty (60) days after it has received a proposal to approve or disapprove the proposal. Should the Board disapprove a proposal, a board of trustees has forty-five (45) days to submit a revised proposal to the Board for consideration. Following approval of any amended trustee zones, the approved legal description of each trustee zone and map of the district showing how each trustee zone will appear must be filed by

the school district board of trustees with the applicable county clerk. The Idaho 2020 Census Data was released on August 12, 2021, so the 120-day deadline was December 10, 2021. The Board received the proposals from the State Department of Education on January 5, 2022. The Board has 60 days after receiving the proposals to take action.

Of the six (6) districts requesting exceptions to the requirements:

- Three (3) of these districts are chartered districts. Chartered school districts have charters that predate statehood and are subject to the terms of their charter. Charter districts' charters may state that the district is treated as one zone and the trustees are elected at-large. These districts' trustee zone boundaries should be approved based on the requirements of their charter. These same exceptions were granted ten (10) years ago. The chartered districts are Boise, Emmett, and Lewiston.
- Two (2) districts split census blocks. However, all the split census blocks contain zero population. The split of the blocks made it easier to write the legal descriptions and does not impact the 10% variance requirement. Those districts are Arbon and Avery.
- One (1) district has asked to exclude the prison population in their district. The people in the prison are not taxpayers in the district, do not vote in the district, and while the number of people in the prison remains constant, the actual people are not the same people from day to day. Furthermore, they will not remain in the district once they are released from the prison. The prison has provided written verification of the population. This same exception was granted ten (10) years ago. That district is Cottonwood.

Two (2) districts are not recommended for approval, North Gem School District and West Jefferson School District. North Gem School District submitted a map without the required legal descriptions of the proposed trustee zones. Based on the map submitted, census blocks are split. They have not provided to date an explanation of how they will determine in which zone trustees resides. West Jefferson School District has submitted a map with several split census blocks. The school district is working on providing additional information regarding the split blocks but were not able to update their proposal in time for this Board meeting. Rejection of the North Gem and West Jefferson School District proposals will give each district an additional 45 days to resubmit their proposals.

Five school districts have evaluated their populations and found that they are still equalized based on the 10 percent variance set by the Board at the April 5, 2021 Special Board meeting. These school districts are Blackfoot, Gooding, Jerome, Lake Pend Oreille, and Wallace. They have no changes to their school district trustee zone boundaries and do not require additional approval.

BOARD ACTION

M/S (Clark / Hill) I move to approve the Idaho school districts’ trustee boundary rezoning proposals legal descriptions for those school districts submitted in Attachment 1. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried 8-0.

AND

M/S (Clark / Hill) I move to approve the Idaho school districts’ trustee zone boundary proposals legal descriptions for those school districts with exceptions as submitted in Attachment 2. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried 8-0.

AND

M/S (Clark / Hill) I move to reject the school district trustee boundary rezoning proposals for North Gem School District and West Jefferson School District. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried 8-0.

Board President Liebich asked for clarification on the three districts which are chartered districts; Boise, Emmett, and Lewiston. Karen Echeverria, Special Consultant, Idaho School Boards Association (IDSBA), said they were chartered because they were districts before Idaho became a state and they have no zones.

Board President Liebich asked that the following information be part of the minutes for use when discussing school district trustee zones in the future.

Ms. Echeverria imparted the following guidelines for hopefully streamlining this process in 10 years times. She began by giving a short history. She said 10 years ago was the first time that IDSBA helped to assist with this project. Prior to that this work was all done using paper maps.

Several issues that complicated this process were:

1. The census bureau consolidated census blocks by creating 40 percent fewer blocks.
2. Allow for census blocks to be split if they contain zero population which allows for a cleaner map and easier legal descriptions.
3. Require that zones be contiguous. Ms. Echevarria and her team were forced to use ‘odd shaped’ zones, but it would be easier if it were just a requirement.

Further, Ms. Echeverria said these simple added measures should help with this process in 10 years’ time.

1. Be sure to budget for this project when your budgets are submitted on September 1, 2029. Statutorily, this is the responsibility of the State Board of Education. However if they are going to ask another agency to take on this project one of them needs to budget for it.

2. Continue to contract with one entity even if districts and charters choose to do the work on their own. She sighted the complication that arose between the Avery and

St. Marie school districts, where the districts decided for themselves where the border was, and further review by the IDSBA realigned that boundary.

3. Assure the information (maps, legal descriptions, etc.) are retained. To be clear it is recommended to save both the maps and the legal descriptions, not one or the other. And the data needs to be kept in an easily accessible location for the next team who works on this project.

Ms. Echeverria further suggested working to amend HB136. That legislation was intended to allow small, rural, elementary districts to do away with zones and vote districtwide. This bill was not amended and so zones are still required.

There were no further comments or questions from the Board.

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

M/S (Hill / Keough) I move to adjourn the meeting at 4:15 p.m. (MT). A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried 8-0.