

**Task Force Community Forum  
April 15  
Lewis-Clark State College**

Attendance #: Approx. 30

Task Force members present: Richard Westerberg, Wayne Freedman, Steve Higgins, Sen. John Goedde. Chairman Westerberg recognized Sen. Dan Johnson, Rep. John Rusche, and Rep. Thyra Stevenson.

Task Force Chair Richard Westerberg provided an introduction and brief history of the Governor’s Task Force and the make-up of its members. Mr. Westerberg gave an overview of the evening’s agenda and flow. The presentation included education achievement data, degree attainment data (including national) and explanation of the Board’s 60% postsecondary attainment goal. Also included were Department of Labor information, job market data, and other information regarding the need for improvement in our education system. Mr. Westerberg reviewed focus areas identified by Task Force as well as the groups’ initial strategies and recommendations. He also provided a list of questions the Task Force would like the public to consider and provide feedback on.

Public comment:

<p>Teacher Pay</p> <p>Funding</p> <p>Standardized Tests</p> <p>PFP</p>	<p>A. Church: He is a teacher in Lewiston with a masters from UI and has completed work for administrator certification. Talked about a student teacher from Spokane, who is finishing his education and was on the fence about applying in Lewiston or going back to Spokane. He recommended she go back to Spokane, where she will make a lot more money and have more opportunities. The Spokane district looks for teachers from LCSC and Whitworth Colleges. If he were starting over again, he would go across the river. The difference between Lewiston and Clarkston is about \$13,000. The Task Force has a strategy for recruiting and retaining teachers – pay for performance is not the answer. We need to put money into salaries if we want good teachers. Idaho is a long skinny state with lots of border. We need to pay more. Teachers have a lot of frustration with ISAT because it changes every couple of years. It is hard to have the bar keep changing. They are working hard to implement the common core and have supportive administration. But teachers can’t do it without the resources. Common and thorough education system does not happen in Idaho. Have to rely on local tax base instead of \$ from states. Have a supplemental that is 29% of the budget. Need to find a way to fund education. Feels like the legislature is just looking for ways to poke teachers in the eye. Students Come First was passed and then repealed. Then legislature just started putting the laws back into place. Seems like legislature doesn’t listen. Recommendations: increase base salary and create stable funding. This year legislature was focused on tax breaks for business. Students are getting a good education because there isn’t the support. Class size matters hugely. Common core is very rigorous, that’s what it takes to be competitive globally. Look at Finland – they pay their teachers. They don’t have as many challenges. They seem to value education more than we do. We talk about valuing education, but we don’t put our money where our mouth is. Teachers care and work hard. If you want good teachers, you won’t get it</p>
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	<p>through pay for performance. The pay for performance last year saw ½ teachers in Lewiston getting ½ share and others getting full share. One school pooled some of their money to give bonuses to instructional assistants. The ideas coming out of the legislature don't work. It seems like the message is that teachers are doing a good job.</p>
<p>Standardized Tests</p> <p>Individualized Instruction</p>	<p>J. Schmidt: School teacher in Lewiston district. Moved here from WA in 1980 and started in Sandpoint. All teaching experience has been in Idaho. Thank you for your willingness to serve on the Task Force and to listen. This year is a math resource specialist. What is causing children not to improve – looking at test scores. All kids don't come with same skill levels. Students are widgets, they don't come the same. Teachers have to figure out how best to address the individual child. Hard to assess teachers based on one test on one day - that's wrong. One student – had prepared well and teacher wants her kids to succeed. Tests don't always tell the story. Can't change the assessments once they are taken. It follows these students, even if it's not true. Teachers know if students are proficient and can achieve. If we based farmers' worth on how their crops did, there are weather issues – hail or other. Need to see where kids are coming from and celebrate their successes. More to children than a test. Pay for performance can't be based on a "silly" test. Want to be accountable for what I do, but a test is not the way to do it. Implore you to look at things in a different way. Not base it on one day in a child's life. Base it on the whole child. Started in 1980 and it's been the best profession I could invest my life in. Look back at students and see lots of successes. Daughter chose to go into profession. First year she made more \$ than 4<sup>th</sup> year. Still would encourage her to be a teacher because that is where her heart is. Don't want the best to go away. It's respect. Want to work with legislators and people. Children cannot be a square or a round peg. They are a child that deserves love and attention and not based on a one-time test. Class sizes are too large. Children don't have food in the morning. WE feed them. Some of them getting close to Xmas and spring break because they face an environment that isn't safe. Education impacts all of us. Need to think about what they need – music – helps with math. Need PE – if we don't give them something positive to express energy. It teaches social skills. We need collaboration and time to be creative. Common core talks about that. Business owners want employees to be creative and collaborate and be a healthy part of the community. Lot of that starts in the schools. Teachers can do what they can in classrooms. Legislators and task force members have power that teachers don't. Think about the children who are struggling and think about them before they make decisions.</p>
<p>Funding</p>	<p>Rep. John Rusche: Appreciate the opportunity to address the Task Force. Retired pediatrician and health plan executive and have spent last 9 years in the legislature where he has watched Idaho serially underfund education. Number of points: First incredibly important to make evidence based recommendations and ask legislature to do the same. Legislation by anecdote makes bad law. Can't pass a law because a certain school district has a problem. Use best evidence when making recommendations. Funding is a major issue. When we are below everyone else, can't expect superior results. We should aim for average funding in U.S. or western states. We can't succeed unless we are playing in the same game as everyone else. We have figured out a way to divide an inadequate pie into more pieces which doesn't</p>

	<p>improve anything. We push state charters without requiring them to demonstrate improved performance and share any best practices they have. Feels it is detrimental to state schools – charters shouldn't take away from public schools without showing they are achieving. If charters are innovative and bring value, it should be replicated – which is why he voted for charter schools in the first place.</p> <p>He asked why teachers and administrators are not trained in quality improvement skills. Why do boards not insist on that – they are the management and governance. Why don't we use standard business tools – most places use a balanced score card approach. Why can't we use a balanced scorecard instead of focusing on one measurement. Past due is the 360 degree evaluation, so those that are leaders and managers understand how they are affecting or not affecting their employees. Feedback needs to be safe, and we just took away some of the safety precautions that would have ensured an honest evaluation. A general theme in most service industries is employee empowerment rather than top down management. These are highly educated people and given guidance in the right direction and tools, they would find the way if given the resources.</p> <p>How much does physical plant dictate the process of education? Most schools have one teacher to 25-30 kids or more in a room w/door closed. Putting a teacher in an isolated setting does not seem to be conducive to teaching. Management is down the hall behind 2 more doors. Administrators, boards and schools of education need to think systemically. Focus a lot on the skills of the individual teacher, and need to think about system as a whole. Can't focus on the single bad teacher. Have to change that. May require mandatory training of school boards.</p> <p>Couple other considerations from life as a pediatrician – there is a need for robust early education especially for at risk and low income kids. This is vitally important. Can't teach advanced math if they can't read by 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Only 35% go on to college but only 38% of 6-8<sup>th</sup> graders are at grade level in math. Same percent all the way through. Focusing on the end does not work. Must focus on front end. Place counselors and social workers in the schools. They can identify problems and bring closer relationship with schools, teachers, and other staff. If teachers aren't having to do social work, they would have more time to teach. Again, it's resources.</p> <p>Finally, technology is a tool. Go back to evidence based. Don't listen to legislators – they don't know the data or the science. Just as likely to have you put a laptop on every student's desk as we are to give them a fountain pen to write cursive. Ask that legislative actions be scientifically evidence based and focus on known best practices of the profession.</p>
<p>Early Childhood Education</p> <p>Funding</p> <p>PFP</p>	<p>M. Genaway: Teach in Lewiston dist. Teaches kindergarten. Want to shine a little light on earliest learners. Kindergarten require so much more now than ever before. With common core, teachers are implementing and doing the best they can right now. Kindergarteners are expected to be fully reading, writing stories – there is no time for naps and socialization. A glimpse into her day includes coming to school with 23 kids in AM and 22 in PM. She has 2 ½ hours with them each day. About 12.5 hours each week. But they are required to</p>

	<p>meet the same skills requirements as everyone else across the nation who have also adopted the common core but they have less time. ½ and K not even required. Big focus needs to be (as studies and research has shown) focus on earliest learners the better and more successful they will be. Can't do that without adequate funding. Pay for performance is a divisive technique and it really showed when it was distributed this year. The people who got bonuses it was a weird feeling, those who got them didn't feel right taking the \$. Can't do our jobs without custodians, instructional assistants who are . School focuses on collaborating and it was tough and it did cause division. Encourage you to look at that and realize importance of treating all staff as professionals.</p>
<p>Early Childhood Education</p> <p>Funding</p> <p>Class Sizes</p>	<p>K. Krahn: Retired educator after 35 years, 4<sup>th</sup> generation Idahoan. Masters from C of I. Administrator. Appreciate the opportunity to speak. Rank close to the bottom in 50 states. We are hiring teachers to be babysitters instead of teachers. Old coach. Start with a foundation and work up. In ID we start at the top and give \$ at higher education. Need to build the base at preschool and early childhood. Basic learning – starts when they are born. Should make preschool mandatory. Requiring kids to learn a foreign language. A jr/sr in high school doesn't want to do it. But at preschool, they pick it up very quickly. Funding and where kids learn. Starts in preschool and we need class sizes at around 12. Funding depends on class size. Give teachers a chance to teach. Can't do that with 23 kindergarteners. When you look at test scores have to realize all kids are different and learn differently. Have different backgrounds. Evaluation is we need to increase funding gin ID from the bottom up and quit looking at corporate ID and giving them all the money. If the legislature wants education to be successful give teachers a chance. Remembers the petition to implement a sales tax. Dad asked where the \$ is going – education – he signed it. Would like to see a piece of that pie and what has gone to education. Getting cheated out of that and the lotto money. Need to take pressure off the property taxpayer. Wants to know where \$60M surplus is going to go. On graph, kids who went to post HS – one reason they don't go is the cost. Would almost discourage grandkids not to go to college – doesn't want them to be in debt for the rest of their life. Want to see the state step up and provide more money and give teachers a chance to teach.</p>
<p>Professional Development</p>	<p>J. Schmidt: Do have common core coming and it's required and we need funding for professional development. Very excited about common core. Kids have to apply and show what they are learning. Teachers need to learn about it and it will be very difficult without adequate funding.</p>
<p>Funding</p> <p>Charter Schools</p>	<p>C. Miller: from Greer. Came with some questions. Should be able to have questions and not just testimony from teachers. Everyone has said we need more money for teachers and smaller class sizes. No one has said where we get the \$. How about more property tax. How about teachers being state employees with mobility. Teachers who have spoken and have great ideas. Seems no one is listening. Can IEA be a resource about how teachers can produce more effectively and happily. All that people hear is more money and smaller classes. What are teachers able to give to get that. We will help. Need to be more concrete about what we will see. It's embarrassing to say you are from ID. People think we are stupid. Don't want to be perceived that way. There is no reason teachers shouldn't be able to teacher. Question on charter school laws: Why do we need charter schools? If we need experimental</p>

	<p>education can't we work with teachers union to see how that can be done? Use the resources we already have? The charter schools will get state funding. But charters can't be sectarian. Can be Christian, but can't be a specific denomination. That is opening the door. Know a lot of home schooled Christians who will not get funding. Shame on legislators. Bad law. Virtual education – time to really look into that. One of the biggest school districts in ID is K12 virtual school. K12 is basically is pulling the strings thru ALEC. Charter school law has lot of ALEC in it. They are going to get a lot more \$ through chartering schools. Bad reputation. Seems we are late. The barn door has closed after the animals are out. A little late coming to it. We all have to help. Teachers let us know what is going one. We need more ears and eyes on the legislature. It's time for change.</p>
<p>More time</p>	<p>J. Rapp: Lewiston superintendent. There is one thing that hasn't been talked about – time. We are competing with 15% fewer days for teaching, and less time for professional development. She encouraged the Task Force to look at time.</p>

Mr. Westerberg closed thanking those who attended and shared how committed Task Force members are to education and thanked everyone for their participation.