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**BOARD BRIEFED ON OPTIONS TO EXPAND ONLINE
LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

The Idaho State Board of Education today heard an update on potential models for delivering online education that would enable Idaho college students to earn a certificate or a degree no matter where they live.

Board members discussed both the creation of a standalone “digital campus” versus expanding current online courses offered by Idaho’s higher education institutions.

Last week, Governor Brad Little’s Coronavirus Financial Advisory Committee (CFAC) awarded \$4 million in federal CARES Act funding for the Board to use to improve higher education online learning in Idaho. Federal guidelines require the funds be utilized by the end of the year.

Staff will develop proposals for the Board to consider next month.

Today’s Board actions included:

- Approval of a temporary partial waiver of the Board’s policy relating to the approval and discontinuation of academic and career technical programs at

Idaho's higher education institutions. The one-year partial waiver streamlines the process enabling institutions to prioritize programs more efficiently and allows Board staff time to review the policy and to suggest revisions.

- Appointed Heather Messenger and Eileen Barber to the Higher Education Research Council (HERC) and reappointed Robin Woods. All three will serve as non-institution representatives through June 30, 2023. The Board also appointed Dr. Marianne Walck to serve as the HERC representative from the Idaho National Laboratory. HERC provides research guidance to Idaho's four-year public institutions and oversees use of research funding provided to the Board by the Idaho Legislature.

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