



For Immediate Release

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BOARD APPROVES APPLIED BACHELOR'S DEGREES AT TWO IDAHO COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The Idaho State Board of Education today approved requests by the College of Eastern Idaho (CEI) and the College of Western Idaho (CWI) to begin offering specific Bachelor of Applied Science (B.A.S.) degrees.

Two will be offered at CEI and one at CWI.

The degrees at CEI are:

- Bachelor of Applied Science, Digital Forensics and Analytics
- Bachelor of Applied Science, Operations Management

The degree CWI will offer is:

- Bachelor of Applied Science in Business Administration

The Board also required both institutions to submit annual reports on the cost of program delivery and enrollment for the next five years.

Administrators from CEI and CWI brought the proposals to the Board saying degrees will expand access, help meet local industry demand, and target students who already hold associate of applied science degrees. The community colleges also said they will offer the degrees at reduced cost compared to four-year institutions.

Administrators from Idaho's four-year schools opposed CWI's B.A.S. in Business Administration proposal, saying it caused unnecessary duplication within the higher education system.

Idaho State University opposed CEI's B.A.S. in Operations Management proposal saying ISU already offers the program and can offer it at its Idaho Falls campus.

None of the four-year institutions opposed CEI's B.A.S. in Digital Forensics and Analytics proposal because the degree isn't offered in other places.

The Board thoroughly debated all three proposals. The vote on the CEI's B.A.S in Digital Forensics and Analytics was unanimous. CEI's B.A.S. in Operations Management and CWI's B.A.S. in Business Administration were both approved 5-3 votes.

Board Member Kurt Liebich said it is imperative that the new offerings result in more graduates, otherwise the result will create unneeded redundancy within the system.

Other actions during today's regular Board meeting include:

- Approved Fidelity as the sole provider of the State Board of Education's Optional Retirement Plan's Defined Contribution Record Keeping Services effective December 2, 2024.
- Approved Boise State University's request to begin the planning and design phase for a new science building on campus. The planning and design is not to exceed \$13 million. The building, if constructed, is expected to cost from \$120 to \$130 million.
- Approved standards for the Board's new Registered Teacher Apprenticeship program. The standards will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor for consideration. The program is designed to enable superintendents to enroll experienced paraprofessionals into the program. Once they complete the requirements, candidates would become certified teachers in Idaho.

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