# Task Force for Improving Education

September 6, 2013

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Office of the State Board of Education
650 West State St. Rm 307
Boise, ID 83702

September 5, 2013

The Honorable C.L. "Butch" Otter
Office of the Governor
State Capitol
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720

Dear Governor Otter:

On behalf of the 31 members of the Task Force for Improving Education, which you commissioned in December 2012, I am pleased to forward the attached recommendations to you. These recommendations are the result of eight months of diligent work by the Task Force members who met frequently, studied research and best practices, and engaged in thoughtful, collaborative discussions about how Idaho's education system could better prepare our children for success.

While some of the recommendations are specific and detailed, others represent broader concepts that will require additional study and development. We all recognize that there is much work to be done and that it will take time, but this is a first, important step.

I, and all the members of the Task Force, thank you for your vision and leadership in convening the group and allowing us the time and latitude to provide you with our collective ideas and recommendations. We remain ready to answer any questions you may have and to assist you in this important work.

Sincerely,

Richard Westerberg
Task Force Chair

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## Executive Summary

In December 2012, Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter announced that the State Board of Education would shepherd a discussion about how to improve Idaho's education system to better prepare students for success. A Task Force of 31 individuals, representing a broad and diverse group of stakeholders from across the state, assembled in January 2013 to begin discussion and identify areas of focus.

As an overarching goal, the group unanimously adopted the State Board's goal that 60 percent of Idahoans between the ages of 25 and 34 attain a postsecondary degree or credential by 2020. Currently, only 39 percent of Idahoans between 25 and 34 years of age have a postsecondary degree or credential. A key result of efforts to improve K-12 education is increasing high school graduation rates and ensuring that graduates go on to postsecondary education and are prepared to succeed in obtaining degrees, certificates or credentials.

Initially, the Task Force identified five areas of focus for research and discussion: Professional Development (including leadership), Teacher Effectiveness (including recruitment and retention), Fiscal Stability, Technology, and Structural Change. Those were then consolidated into three areas: Fiscal Stability, Structural Change (including technology) and Effective Teachers and Leaders (with Professional Development at all levels – school board, administrators and teachers included).

These three groups developed initial strategies and recommendations that were taken to the public in a series of seven Community Forums around the state in April 2013. Public input was also gathered via email and the Task Force website set up through the State Board of Education.

From June through August, each of the three groups met several times to research issues and further refine recommendations. They studied best practices, invited researchers and education stakeholders from other states to present findings on specific topics, and discussed how to develop recommendations that could be implemented in Idaho. The Fiscal Stability and Effective Teachers and Leaders group merged during this time to work jointly on several of the recommendations.

After eight months of study and deliberation, the Task Force for Improving Education finalized recommendations at its August 23rd meeting. After presentations from the chairs of the two subcommittees – Structural Change and Fiscal Stability/Effective Teachers and Leaders – the group voted on each of the 21 recommendations presented. All recommendations were approved by unanimous vote with the exception of the recommendation to endorse implementation of the Idaho Core Standards, which had one dissenting vote.

The following page summarizes the final 20 recommendations (note: due to overlap of the recommendations on job-embedded professional development and collaboration, two of the recommendations were combined).

## Task Force for Improving Education
## Members and Affiliation

| | |
|---|---|
| Richard Westerberg, Task Force Chair | Idaho State Board of Education |
| Laurie Boeckel, Vice President, Legislation | Idaho Parent Teacher Association |
| Roger Brown, Deputy Chief of Staff and Senior Special Assistant | Office of the Governor |
| Corinne Mantle-Bromley, Dean, College of Education | University of Idaho |
| Cheryl Charlton, Chief Executive Officer | Idaho Digital Learning Academy (IDLA) |
| Linda Clark, Superintendent, Joint Dist. No. 2 (Meridian) | Idaho Assoc. of School Administrators (IASA) |
| Penni Cyr, President | Idaho Education Association (IEA) |
| Reed DeMordaunt (R), Chairman House Education Committee | Idaho House of Representatives |
| Karen Echeverria, Executive Director | Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA) |
| Ken Edmunds | Idaho State Board of Education |
| Wayne Freedman, School Board Trustee (Council, Idaho) | ISBA, Past President |
| John Goedde (R), Chairman Senate Education Committee | Idaho State Senate |
| Steve Higgins, Principal | IASA, Grangeville High School |
| Mary Huff, School Board Trustee (Melba, Idaho) | ISBA |
| Teresa Jackman, The Academy Charter School | IEA, Pocatello School District |
| Lisa Kinnaman and Roger Quarles | Idaho Leads Project |
| Alex LaBeau, President | Idaho Association of Commerce & Industry |
| Mike Lanza, Co-founder | Idaho Parents and Teachers Together (IPATT) |
| Rod Lewis | Idaho State Board of Education |
| Bob Lokken, CEO, WhiteCloud Analytics | Idaho Business for Education |
| Tom Luna, Superintendent of Public Instruction | Idaho State Department of Education |
| Alan Millar, Principal, Forrest M. Bird Charter Academy (Sandpoint) | Idaho Charter School Network |
| Phyllis Nichols, Counselor | New Plymouth School District |
| Katie Pemberton, Canby Middle School | Coeur d'Alene School District |
| Mary Ann Ranells, Superintendent, Lakeland School District | Idaho Assoc. of School Administrators (IASA) |
| Anne Ritter, Meridian School Board | ISBA President |
| Brian Smith, Teacher, Sandpoint High School | Idaho Education Association (IEA) |
| Geoffrey Thomas, Superintendent, Madison School District | Idaho Assoc. of School Administrators (IASA) |
| Janie Ward-Engelking (D), House Education Committee | Idaho House of Representatives |
| Cindy Wilson, Teacher, Capital High School (Boise) | Idaho Education Association (IEA) |
| Rob Winslow, Executive Director | Idaho Assoc. of School Administrators (IASA) |

## Fiscal Stability/Effective Teachers and Leaders

Linda Clark, Chair
Rob Winslow, Co-Chair
Brian Smith
John Goedde
Karen Echeverria
Katie Pemberton
Rod Lewis
Penni Cyr
Steve Higgins
Janie Ward-Engelking
Mary Ann Ranells
Mary Huff
Phyllis Nichols
Alex LaBeau
Geoffrey Thomas
Wayne Freedman
Laurie Boeckel
Lisa Kinnaman / Roger Quarles
Teresa Jackman

## Structural Change

Reed DeMordaunt, Chair
Bob Lokken, Co-Chair
Mike Lanza
Anne Ritter
Ken Edmunds
Alan Millar
Tom Luna
Cheryl Charlton
Cindy Wilson
Roger Brown
Corinne Mantle-Bromley

## Summary of Recommendations

1. **Mastery Based System**
   We recommend the state shift to a system where students advance based upon content mastery, rather than seat time requirements. This may require a structural change to Idaho's funding formula and/or some financial incentive to school districts. We also recommend that mastery be measured against high academic standards.

2. **Idaho Core Standards**
   We strongly endorse the rigorous and successful implementation of the Idaho Core Standards as an essential component of high performing schools. Higher standards in all subject areas help raise student achievement among all students, including those performing below grade level.

3. **Literacy Proficiency**
   We recommend students demonstrate mastery of literacy before moving on to significant content learning. Reading proficiency is a major benchmark in a student's education. Students must learn to read before they can read to learn content in other subject areas.

4. **Advanced Opportunities**
   We recommend the state ensure that all students have access to advanced opportunities by expanding post-secondary offerings while a student is still in high school.

5. **Revamp the State's Accountability Structure Involving Schools**
   We recommend the state revamp the accountability structure involving schools. The existing structure that relies on compliance mandates should be replaced with a system that is based on accountability for student outcomes.

6. **Empower Autonomy by Removing Constraints**
   We recommend the Governor's Office, State Board of Education, and State Department of Education evaluate existing education laws and administrative rules and work with the Legislature to remove those which impede local autonomy, flexibility to adapt to local circumstances, and the ability of the schools to be agile, adaptive, innovative, and drive continuous improvement.

7. **Annual Strategic Planning, Assessment, and Continuous Focus on Improvement**
   We recommend each district be required to have a strategic plan (and to renew it annually) that identifies and focuses district-wide continuous improvement toward statewide goals. Both the local board and the state should provide oversight to ensure that the plan is appropriate to local circumstances and aligns to and supports the state's goals. The plan forms the basis from which accountability will be structured and the superintendent will be evaluated.

8. **Statewide Electronic Collaboration System**
   We recommend that a statewide electronic collaboration system be adopted for educators to share ideas and resources across the state.

9. **High Speed Bandwidth and Wireless Infrastructure**
   We recommend the state expand the existing high speed bandwidth infrastructure to ensure every school (high school, middle school, and elementary school) has the bandwidth and wireless infrastructure necessary for simultaneous equal access and opportunity. This will require ongoing funding for the repair and replenishment of equipment.

10. **Educator and Student Technology Devices**
    We recommend that every educator and student have adequate access to technology devices with appropriate content to support equal access and opportunity. Educator professional development is critical to the effective implementation of technology.

11. **Restoration of Operational Funding**
    We recommend restoration of operational funding to the FY 2009 level. Although traditionally called "discretionary" funding, operational funds are the normal, reasonable costs of doing business and include such items as paying for heat, lights and fuel; transporting students in a safe manner to and from school; and providing timely and relevant content materials and training for teachers. A multiple year approach could be implemented to rebuild operational funding.

12. **Career Ladder Compensation Model**
    We recommend a phased implementation of a Career Ladder of teacher compensation. The model proposed combines competitive salaries with incentives, rewards and accountability. Further, we believe it should be tied to a revised system of state licensure.

13. **Enrollment Model of Funding Schools**
    We recommend a change from Average Daily Attendance (ADA) to Average Daily Enrollment/ Membership. This will enhance fiscal stability and remove current barriers to personalized and/or mastery learning models that are required to meet the State Board's 60 percent goal.

14. **Tiered Licensure**
    We recommend a continuum of professional growth and learning that is tied to licensure. Movement through the system would be accomplished in a very specific, objective way using performance measures.

15. **Mentoring**
    We recommend that each district develop a mentoring program for the support of new teachers based on the Idaho Mentor Program Standards. These standards provide a vision and guidelines for local planners to use in the design and implementation of a high-quality mentor program for beginning teachers. We recommend the state provide funding support for a mentoring program.

16. **Ongoing Job-embedded Professional Learning**
    Teacher effectiveness is paramount to student success, and professional development is paramount to teacher effectiveness. Professional development must be regularly scheduled and ongoing. We recommend that districts provide regular professional learning opportunities, and we support ongoing funding for professional development. We recommend the use of the research-based standards of the National Staff Development Council known as Learning

Forward.  We further recommend that resources for educator learning be prioritized, monitored and coordinated at the state level.

**17. Site-based collaboration among teachers and instructional leaders**
Time to collaborate is critical to effective teaching and implementation of higher standards and technology.  We strongly encourage districts to restructure the traditional school day schedule to allow for job-embedded collaboration time. We support the creation of professional learning communities that increase educator effectiveness and results for all students. We recommend providing training models to districts for their use in training the members of the professional learning communities, and encourage models that focus on team outcomes and collective responsibility.

**18. Training and development of school administrators, superintendents and school boards**
We recommend continued training and professional development of school administrators, superintendents and school boards. The committee supports further development and implementation of the Idaho Standards for Effective Principals and the pilot work being conducted in the 2013-14 school year to further explore effective performance measures for school administrators. This includes ongoing implementation and support for administrator training in assessing classroom performance through observation.

**19. Provide enhanced pre-service teaching opportunities through the state's colleges of education**
We support the efforts of Idaho's higher education institutions to increase and enhance clinical field experiences for pre-service teachers.

**20. Participation in the CCSSO's "Our Responsibility, Our Promise" recommendations to improve teacher preparation**
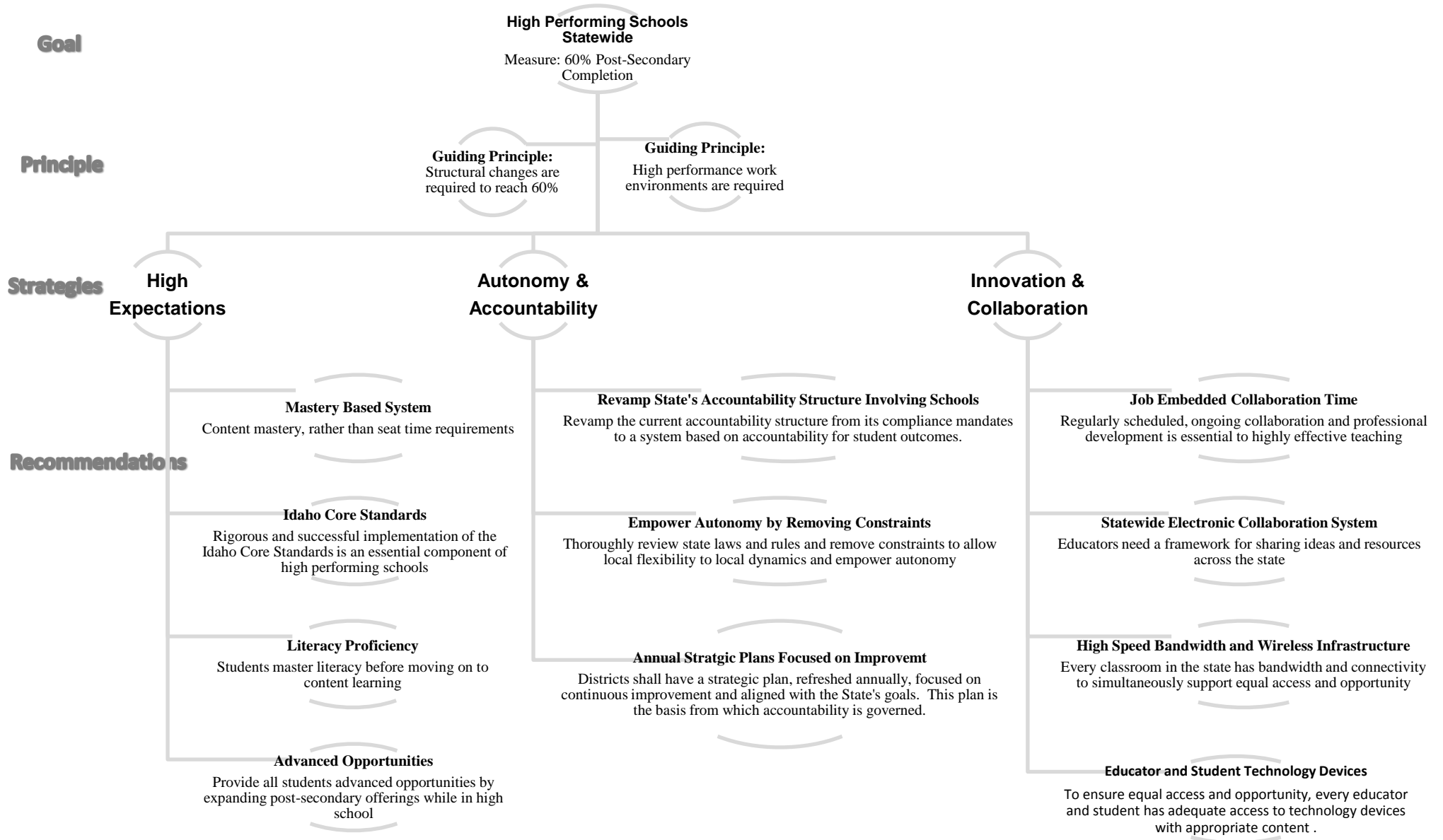We support Idaho's participation in implementing The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) "Our Responsibility, Our Promise" recommendations to help ensure that every teacher and principal is able to prepare students for college and the workforce.

# Structural Change Recommendations

The Structural Change Subcommittee analyzed the need for structural change and technology in education.  The subcommittee's focus was on improving how we educate Idaho students and how we pursue the goal of 60% of Idahoans age 24-35 having at least a one-year postsecondary degree or certificate.  The following is our overall goal, the guiding principles, strategies, and recommendations for reaching this goal.

The chart on the following page summarizes the goal, guiding principles, strategies and recommendations for structural change in Idaho's education system.

# Structural Change Subcommittee Report

**Goal**

**High Performing Schools Statewide**

Measure: 60% Post-Secondary Completion

**Principle**

**Guiding Principle:**
Structural changes are required to reach 60%

**Guiding Principle:**
High performance work environments are required

**Strategies**

**High Expectations**

**Autonomy & Accountability**

**Innovation & Collaboration**

**Recommendations**

**Mastery Based System**
Content mastery, rather than seat time requirements

**Revamp State's Accountability Structure Involving Schools**
Revamp the current accountability structure from its compliance mandates to a system based on accountability for student outcomes.

**Job Embedded Collaboration Time**
Regularly scheduled, ongoing collaboration and professional development is essential to highly effective teaching

**Idaho Core Standards**
Rigorous and successful implementation of the Idaho Core Standards is an essential component of high performing schools

**Empower Autonomy by Removing Constraints**
Thoroughly review state laws and rules and remove constraints to allow local flexibility to local dynamics and empower autonomy

**Statewide Electronic Collaboration System**
Educators need a framework for sharing ideas and resources across the state

**Literacy Proficiency**
Students master literacy before moving on to content learning

**Annual Stratgic Plans Focused on Improvemt**
Districts shall have a strategic plan, refreshed annually, focused on continuous improvement and aligned with the State's goals. This plan is the basis from which accountability is governed.

**High Speed Bandwidth and Wireless Infrastructure**
Every classroom in the state has bandwidth and connectivity to simultaneously support equal access and opportunity

**Advanced Opportunities**
Provide all students advanced opportunities by expanding post-secondary offerings while in high school

**Educator and Student Technology Devices**
To ensure equal access and opportunity, every educator and student has adequate access to technology devices with appropriate content .

## The Goal

The goal of these structural change strategies is for Idaho to have a uniform and high-performing public K-12 education system, as measured by the State Board of Education (SBOE) goal of 60% of people entering the workforce having some post-secondary degree or certificate. This is required to prepare our students for the future.

## Guiding Principles

In pursuit of strategies that would transform Idaho education to ultimately achieve the 60% goal, we settled on two guiding principles. As these shaped our thinking and helped focus the many ideas we explored, these principles are worth communicating.

### Guiding Principle 1: Significant structural change is absolutely necessary if the state is to achieve the 60% goal.

There is an axiom that goes "the current [education] system is perfectly designed to produce the results we are currently getting." Today, Idaho's education system is perfectly designed to produce 39% of Idahoans (25-34 years of age) with at least a one-year degree or certificate.[1] Thus to achieve the 60% goal, we must make significant structural changes. Tactical and program-level changes might be necessary, but alone they will not be enough. For example, raising budgets by 15% across the board, if we could afford to do so, would certainly help restore the system to the pre-2009 state. Perhaps it would also allow us to add some new programs and/or grant staff a 5% raise. However, those measures, regardless of their individual merits, would hardly raise achievement from 35% to 60%.

Structural change requires changing the way people work today. It changes how decisions are made, resources such as time and budget are allocated, priorities are set, and people in the system view and approach their jobs.

### Strategy #1: High Expectations

Research shows that achieving new levels of performance begins with setting high expectations. Perhaps the best illustration of this in education is a quote from former Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, who in referring to some experiences during her time as the Provost of Stanford University said, "If you have low expectations of even the best students, they will live down to them."[2]

Expectations identify the gap that drives mastery and continuous improvement. So our first strategy is to set high expectations across the state, as a cornerstone of high-performance system.

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[1] Idaho State Board of Education (Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey).
[2] Education and National Security, Condoleezza Rice, 5th Annual Excellence in Action National Summit on Education Reform, November 27, 2012.

**Recommendation #1.1: Mastery Based System**

We recommend the state shift to a system where students advance based upon content mastery, rather than seat time requirements. This may require a structural change to Idaho's funding formula and/or some financial incentive to school districts. We also recommend that mastery be measured against high academic standards.

Currently, Idaho's education system focuses on how many instructional hours, also referred to as seat time, a student receives. Students can be promoted from grade level to grade level based on age, regardless of whether they have mastered the content knowledge or standards at each grade level, which is often not in the best interest of the child.

However, simply eliminating instructional time requirements is not enough. There must be benchmarks students must meet throughout their K-12 education, rather than one competency test at the end of their schooling. In the report *It's Not a Matter of Time*, the authors suggest a time-based system must be replaced with a competency-based system with the following components:
- Students advance upon mastery.
- Competencies include explicit, measurable, transferable learning objectives that empower students.
- Assessment is meaningful and a positive learning experience for students.
- Students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs.
- Learning outcomes emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge, along with the development of important skills and dispositions."[3]

As a Task Force, we strongly believe the classroom of the future will include more technology and more personalized/differentiated learning. The classroom of the future precipitates a mastery-based model where the focus is on outcomes, rather than inputs. Therefore, the Task Force recommends the state shift to a system where students advance based upon content mastery that is measured against high academic standards, which may require revising the public schools funding formula in Idaho Code and/or creating a financial incentive in addition to the public schools funding formula.


**Recommendation #1.2: Idaho Core Standards**

We strongly endorse the rigorous and successful implementation of the Idaho Core Standards as an essential component of high performing schools. Higher standards in all subject areas help raise student achievement among all students, including those performing below grade level.

The Idaho Core Standards are a higher standard—or expectation—of what a student should be able to know and do at each grade level.[4,5] Standards build upon each other to

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[3] It's Not a Matter of Time: Highlights from the 2011 Competency-Based Learning Summit, Chris Sturgis, Susan Patrick, and Linda Pittenger, iNACOL and CCSSO, July 2011.
[4] A Comparison of the Idaho English Language Arts Standards to the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects, Achieve, July 2010

ensure a student has the knowledge and skills required to succeed after high school in post-secondary education or the workforce.

Research shows that when statewide systems adopt high standards, all students rise to the expectation, including students who struggled under the previously lower standards.[6] The Idaho Core Standards are a major step in helping Idaho students achieve the goal of 60% of Idaho's population having some form of post-secondary degree or certificate by 2020.

Along with adoption, rigorous and successful implementation of the standards is critical. Without the necessary funding, professional development, time and resources required, teachers and principals will not be prepared to teach to the higher and more rigorous standards.

After an analysis of the adoption and methodology behind the Idaho Core Standards and ensuring the state has maintained its independence in its ability to create and adopt standards, curriculum, and assessment, the Task Force strongly endorses Idaho's decision to raise academic standards for all students by implementing Idaho's Core Standards in mathematics and English language arts. Rigorous and successful implementation of the Idaho Core Standards is an essential component to preparing Idaho's students to meet the Task Force goal.

### Recommendation #1.3: Literacy Proficiency

We recommend students demonstrate mastery of literacy before moving on to significant content learning. Reading proficiency is a major benchmark in a student's education. Students must learn to read before they can read to learn content in other subject areas.

Another expectation we hold for students is reading proficiency. According to research from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, "Reading proficiently by the end of third grade is a crucial marker in a child's educational development. Failure to read proficiently is linked to higher rates of school dropout, which suppresses individual earning potential as well as the nation's competitiveness and general productivity."[7]

Knowing how to read proficiently enables a student to read and learn content in other subject areas. The Task Force recommends students demonstrate mastery of literacy before moving on to significant content learning.

In the research, third grade is currently used as a reference; however, with a mastery-based system, grades will become irrelevant. What remains relevant is that reading proficiency is a prerequisite to moving on to mastery of other subject areas.

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[5] A Comparison of the Idaho's Mathematics Standards to the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics, Achieve, July 2010
[6] High Standards Help Struggling Students: New Evidence, Constance Clark and Peter W. Cookson Jr., Education Sector, November 2012
[7] Early Warning! Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters, Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010.

**Recommendation #1.4: Advanced Opportunities**

We recommend the state ensures that all students have access to advanced opportunities by expanding post-secondary offerings while a student is still in high school.

> As we shift toward a mastery-based system of education, it necessitates that we provide opportunities for our advanced students who progress and master content more quickly.

> Beyond necessity, advanced opportunities have also proven to be an effective strategy for raising college readiness rates among students. A study of dual enrollment in Texas found that "high school students who had completed a college course before graduation were nearly 50 percent more likely to earn a college degree from a Texas college within six years than students who had not participated in dual enrollment."[8]

> Currently, there are a number of advanced opportunities programs in Idaho. The 8-in-6 program helps Idaho students complete 8 years of schoolwork (2 years of middle school, 4 years of high school, and 2 years of postsecondary or trade school) in just 6 years. Students accomplish this by taking online courses over the summer and by taking online overload courses during the school year.

> The Dual Credit for Early Completers program allows students who have completed all their state-required high school graduation requirements early (with the exception of the senior project and the senior math requirement) to take up to 36 college or professional technical credits of dual credit courses, 12 Advanced Placement exams, or 12 College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams paid for by the state.

> The Mastery Advancement Program gives students the opportunity to earn a scholarship for completing high school early.

> In order to engage and retain our advanced students, the Task Force recommends the state expand upon current advanced opportunities and post-secondary offerings for all students while in high school.

**Guiding Principle 2: A foundation of high-performance schools is a high-performance work environment.**

> Before we embark on selecting strategies, we must have a vision of the future education system that we desire and the type of system that would achieve the 60% goal. That vision assisted us in sorting through strategies and selecting focus areas.

> The vision of a uniform, high-performing school system, across Idaho, must be rooted in creating a high-performance work environment in our schools. Scientific research shows

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[8] Taking College Courses in High School: A Strategy for College Readiness, Ben Struhl and Joel Vargas, Jobs for the Future, October 2012.

that in complex work, such as educating students, there are three vital components to a high-performance environment: higher purpose, mastery, and autonomy.[9,10]

The higher purpose inherent in education is obvious.

In mastery, we are not speaking to a state of being, but rather to the continual pursuit of improvement and forward progress. Mastery in this form is addressed both in the area of professional development (the work of the Effective Teachers and Leaders Subcommittee) and in the structural changes to support continuous improvement, innovation, and a supporting governance structure.

Autonomy is perhaps the most challenging in light of our historic approach to public education. Simply put, autonomy is people's need to be empowered to take ownership for results and to have the flexibility to address challenges and local dynamics they face in pursuit of results for our students.

Our vision is a system that pushes decision making as close to the student and parents as possible and adapts to the needs of the student. Autonomy is vital to both teachers and administrators fulfilling their potential as educators. However, pure autonomy, without accountability for results, would be *laissez-faire* and certainly fail both the state's constitutional mandate, as well as the state's fiduciary responsibility with taxpayers' monies. Thus, the concept of autonomy must be wed to accountability for outcomes.

## Strategy 2: Autonomy and Accountability

Autonomy is critical for two reasons. First, autonomy ignites empowerment, engagement, and ownership for results. Second, local circumstances vary greatly and change frequently, thus optimal decisions can only be derived from local knowledge of factors material to the decision. A pointed illustration of this was the Task Force's survey of best practices in some of Idaho's schools today. Without exception, these efforts were initiated not because of, but in spite of, state rules. State laws and rules are made in a slow and deliberate manner – this is simply the nature of the instruments in play. This and other outside factors diminish local accountability and detract from an agile, innovative, and continuously improving education system.

Historically, the state has exercised its authority and accountability for our education system via laws and rules that dictate and micro-manage how things are done and how money is spent. Certainly the Constitution and taxpayers' monies allow the state this authority. The answer to this dilemma lies in <u>outcomes-based</u> accountability. Plainly put, the state should set goals for the public education system, allocate monies, and then hold local leadership accountable for progress against those goals. This meets the financial

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[9] [The Puzzle of Motivation](), Dan Pink, TED Talk, 2009.
[10] [Policy Implications of Finland's Model for Teacher Preparation, Support, and Autonomy](), Alison Henken, George Washington University.

stewardship obligation, the constitutional mandate, and the moral obligation of educating our children to the best of our ability.

**Recommendation #2.1: Revamp the State's Accountability Structure Involving Schools**

We recommend the state revamp the accountability structure involving schools. The existing structure that relies on compliance mandates should be replaced with a system that is based on accountability for student outcomes. The state has constitutional and financial authority and mandates to ensure a quality and uniform education.

Historically this has been executed primarily through laws and rules that dictate how things are done locally, while seemingly little effort has been invested in setting goals, establishing expected outcomes, adapting to local factors, and/or effectively responding should a district continually struggle. This situation must be revamped.

The Task Force recommends the state revamp the accountability structure involving schools. The existing structure that relies on compliance mandates should be replaced with a system that is based on accountability for student outcomes.

The revamped accountability structure should exhibit the following characteristics:
1. An annual rhythm, in support of the continuous improvement aim.
2. The accountability model centers on the district strategic plan, as outlined in Recommendation #2.3.
3. The annual cycle should begin with the state publishing an "Annual Planning Memo" that outlines key themes, templates, and items of interest for the districts in their planning process. This will set expectations and provide a common template to streamline the planning process for everyone.
4. Each district builds their own strategic plan, founded on improvements in student outcomes, and identifying the key focus areas for that district (as is outlined in #2.3).
5. At year end, each district produces their Annual Status Report. The report outlines progress toward their strategic plan in student outcomes, achievements, struggles, and key lessons learned from the prior year.
6. Should districts be underperforming and continually struggling to make forward progress, the local board and state board should collaborate, and if necessary, make leadership changes. This is a dual accountability structure – as is mandated by the constitution, taxpayers' monies, and the children who are being underserved by the district leadership.

In revamping the accountability structure, several concepts should be avoided as they are counterproductive to the local district and the students in that district. First, accountability from the state level should focus on and stop at the superintendent level. The state is not in a position to "reach around" and meddle in manners lower than that; these should be the domain of local leadership. Second, accountability reinforced by withholding resources from the district is counterproductive and must be avoided.

**Recommendation #2.2: Empower Autonomy by Removing Constraints**

We recommend the Governor's Office, State Board of Education, and State Department of Education evaluate existing education laws and administrative rules and work with the Legislature to remove those which impede local autonomy, flexibility to adapt to local circumstances, and the ability of the schools to be agile, adaptive, innovative, and drive continuous improvement.

> This recommendation is one of "addition by subtraction." The state should meticulously comb through the existing administrative rule and prune any rules that dictate how the schools are run, with a focus on things that limit the flexibility, decision making, and agility of schools to continually adapt and improve.

> Additionally, it may be necessary to put rules in place that prevent other outside influences from limiting the autonomy in the schools. Who places those restrictions is irrelevant, they have the same corrosive effect. As long as the schools are operating within the laws, and in pursuit of the state's higher goals and purposes, administrators and teachers should be allowed to "figure it out" at a local level.

**Recommendation #2.3: Annual Strategic Planning, Assessment, and Continuous Focus on Improvement**

We recommend each district be required to have a strategic plan (and to renew it annually) that identifies and focuses district-wide continuous improvement toward statewide goals. Both the local board and the state should provide oversight to ensure that the plan is appropriate to local circumstances and aligns to and supports the state's goals. The plan forms the basis from which accountability will be structured and the superintendent will be evaluated.

> The plan must address key strategic areas:
> a. The plan must be data driven, specifically in student outcomes, and outline current strengths and key areas for improvement.
> b. The plan must set clear, measureable targets, based on student outcomes – both long term and short term.
> c. The plan must define focus areas for improvement.
> d. The plan must address specific local plans for technology, innovation, and collaboration.
> e. The plan must specify plans for professional development of staff.
> f. The plan must encourage community and parent engagement.
> g. The plan must describe high-level budget priorities.

The completed strategic plan is submitted to the state for review. Target assessment and best practices are reviewed. The targets should be aggressive, but achievable. Any requested changes by the state are negotiated between the local leadership and the state.

**Strategy #3: Innovation and Collaboration**

Core to how our schools continually transform themselves in pursuit of the 60% goal are the two strategies of innovation and collaboration. It should be the norm that schools are embracing new ideas, new technologies, sharing best practices, and continually improving.

> These strategies, by their nature, cannot be initiated from the statehouse down. These must be initiated and driven locally, as the strategies require agility, engagement, and continual small changes that are tested, proven out, and shared. The cumulative effects, over time and across the state, will add up to big breakthroughs. Additionally, collaboration is critical as it provides the support, the diversity of perspective, and the ability for good ideas to spread virally and be further enhanced. Technology is obviously a vital infrastructure that underlies these strategies, especially in our geographically scattered and rural state.

> The state plays a vital role in these strategies in providing the infrastructure, ecosystem, and incentives in support of local schools in the pursuit of these strategies. Additionally, the state's role in supporting the innovation and collaboration strategies also coalesces with Strategy #2 and the need for removing barriers and providing accountability structure that secures commitment to continual improvement.

**Recommendation #3.1: Job-Embedded Collaboration/Professional Development Time**

See Recommendations #2.3 and #2.4 of the Fiscal Stability / Effective Teachers and Leaders Subcommittee (Pages 17-18).

**Recommendation #3.2: Statewide Electronic Collaboration System**

We recommend that a statewide electronic collaboration system be adopted for educators to share ideas and resources across the state.

> The same technology innovations and tools that will open learning opportunities to students will also open collaborative opportunities for teachers. Educator collaboration must not be limited within the school or district. Through the use of technology, teachers will be able to connect virtually, create learning communities, and share resources no matter their geographic location. The Task Force recommends that a statewide electronic collaboration system be adopted for educators to share best practices and resources across the state.

**Recommendation #3.3: High Speed Bandwidth and Wireless Infrastructure**

We recommend the state expand the existing high speed bandwidth infrastructure to ensure every school (high school, middle school, and elementary school) has the bandwidth and wireless

infrastructure necessary for simultaneous equal access and opportunity. This will require ongoing funding for the repair and replenishment of equipment.

> The benefits of technology in education are abounding; however, classroom technology is not innovative in and of itself. What is innovative is the teacher's ability to harness the technology as a tool or resource. In order to promote the use of technology in the classroom, the state must provide an infrastructure that enables schools to effectively implement technology and best practices associated with technology.

> Currently, the Idaho Education Network (IEN) connects every public high school with high speed bandwidth. In future phases, the IEN plans to expand the bandwidth infrastructure to cover schools serving students below grade 9. The bandwidth is managed so that when a school district approaches its threshold, the bandwidth is increased.

> During 2013, the Idaho Legislature restored funding for a wireless environment in each public school serving high school grades.[11] The State Department of Education (SDE) awarded a contract for a wireless managed service. This wireless infrastructure will be an extension of the IEN broadband system. School districts that have chosen to opt in will receive the wireless service during the 2013-2014 school year.

> The Task Force recommends the state expand the existing high-speed bandwidth infrastructure to ensure every school (high school, middle school, and elementary school) has the bandwidth and wireless infrastructure necessary to create equal access and opportunity for all students. This will require ongoing funding for the repair and replenishment of equipment.

**Recommendation #3.4: Educator and Student Technology Devices**

We recommend that every educator and student have adequate access to technology devices with appropriate content to support equal access and opportunity. Educator professional development is critical to the effective implementation of technology.

> Technology infrastructure does not stop at bandwidth and high-speed infrastructure. In order to create a uniform system of education as the Idaho Constitution requires[12], connectivity must exist for the individual student. Equal access and opportunity for all students, no matter where they live in Idaho, require bandwidth, wireless technology, and a device.

> One of the major findings in Project RED[13], a study of impact of educational technology in nearly 1,000 schools, was that lower student-computer ratios improve outcomes.

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[11] Senate Bill 1200
[12] Constitution of the State of Idaho, Article IX Education and School Lands, Section 1.
[13] Project RED, The Technology Factor: Nine Keys to Student Achievement and Cost-Effectiveness, The Greaves Group, The Hayes Connection, One-to-One Institute, 2010.

Another finding in Project RED was that teacher professional learning and collaboration (at least monthly) is one of the strongest predictors of implementation success. According to the report, "Teachers must continually hone their ability to create and improve the 21st century computer-enhanced learning environment. Professional learning is essential for their growth in effectively integrating education technology."

Furthermore, educational technology is not at its apex. We expect technology to continue to develop and expand. This will require the education system to embrace new and changing technology over time in a number of ways. One of the main obstacles school districts face in implementing technology is dedicated funding. There is a level of annual funding required to maintain and replace equipment, as well as provide professional development around effective integration of technology.

The Task Force recommends that every educator and student have adequate access to technology devices with appropriate content to support equal access and opportunity. Educator professional development is critical to the effective implementation of technology.

## Fiscal Stability
## Effective Teachers and Leaders Recommendations

The Fiscal Stability and the Effective Teachers and Leaders subcommittees both worked to develop an initial set of recommendations based on separate fact finding and brainstorming sessions. They then combined efforts when they discovered many of their ideas overlapped. The recommendations that follow reflect the work of that combined group.
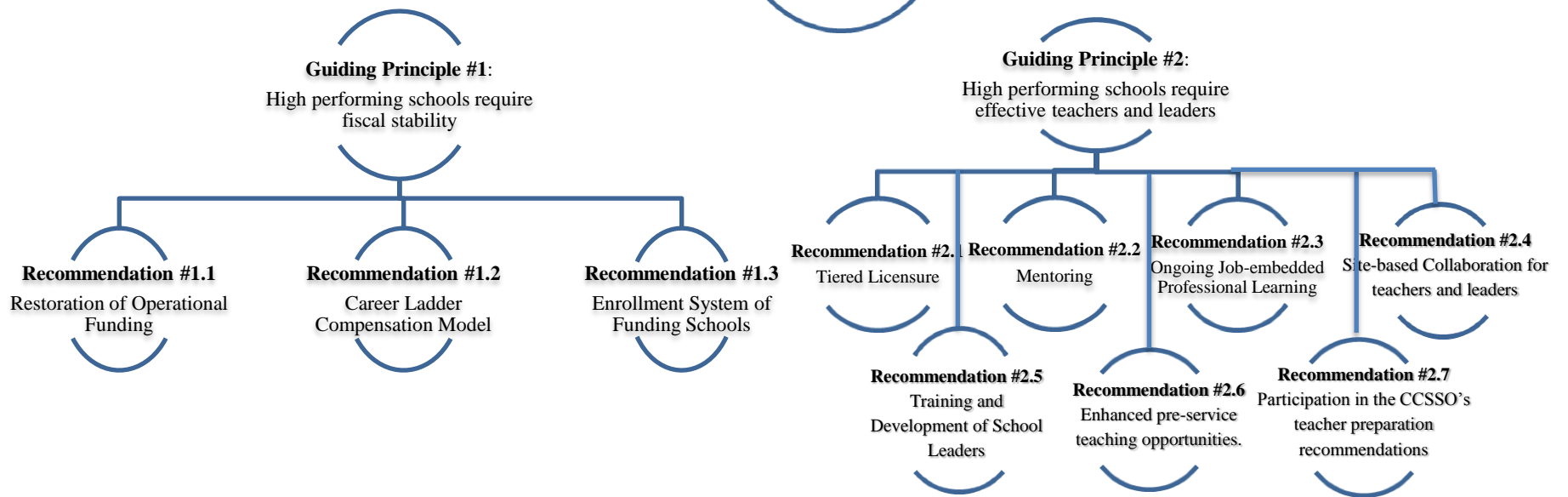
The subcommittee believes that the following recommendations are critical in pursuit of the state's goal of 60% of Idaho's citizens ages 25-34 having at least one-year of postsecondary credential by 2020.

The chart on the following page summarizes the guiding principles and recommendations for achieving fiscal stability and ensuring there are effective teachers and leaders in Idaho's education system.

Fiscal Stability/ Effective Teachers and Leaders Subcommittee



## High Performing Schools Statewide

Measure: 60% Postsecondary Completion

**Guiding Principle #1**:
High performing schools require fiscal stability

**Guiding Principle #2**:
High performing schools require effective teachers and leaders

**Recommendation #1.1**
Restoration of Operational Funding

**Recommendation #1.2**
Career Ladder Compensation Model

**Recommendation #1.3**
Enrollment System of Funding Schools

**Recommendation #2.1**
Tiered Licensure

**Recommendation #2.2**
Mentoring

**Recommendation #2.3**
Ongoing Job-embedded Professional Learning

**Recommendation #2.4**
Site-based Collaboration for teachers and leaders

**Recommendation #2.5**
Training and Development of School Leaders

**Recommendation #2.6**
Enhanced pre-service teaching opportunities.

**Recommendation #2.7**
Participation in the CCSSO's teacher preparation recommendations

**The Goal**

The goal of these recommendations regarding fiscal matters and teacher and leader effectiveness is for Idaho to have a uniform and high-performing public K-12 education system, as measured by the State Board of Education (SBOE) goal of 60% of people entering the workforce having some post-secondary degree or certificate. This is required to prepare our students for the future.

**Guiding Principle 1:  High performing schools require fiscal stability**

In order for schools to achieve the student performance required of a world-class education system, the state needs a more equitable and adequate funding system. The committee identified several factors leading to the current instability including over reliance on supplemental levies, the teacher compensation model, and the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) funding model.

**Recommendation #1.1:  Restoration of Operational Funding**

In 2008-2009, the Idaho Legislature funded school district operations with a Distribution Factor at $25,696.00 per unit. School districts saw a steady decline in the operational funding between that time and the 2011-2012 year when the factor reached a low of $19,626.00 per unit. In 2012-2013, there was minimal increase to $19,706.00 per unit and for the upcoming 2013-2014 school year it was increased to $20,000 per unit (still 22% below the 2008-2009 school year). The majority of the additional funding appropriated for 2013-2014 was distributed for technology, differentiated pay, restoring the experience "steps" on the salary grid, and teacher training.

Idaho's school districts have been hard hit with the reduction in operational (sometimes called "discretionary") funding.  Costs for insurance premiums, utilities, fuel, and other operating expenses have significantly increased during the time in which operational funding was decreasing.  Since these operational costs are not "discretionary" in nature, districts began the cuts with elimination of funds for professional development, content materials (previously called textbooks), elimination of bus routes and stops to name a few.   As the recession worsened and operational funding was cut further, districts reduced mid-day kindergarten busing or went to alternate day kindergarten, cut calendar days (furloughing staff), moved to 4 day weeks, and ultimately cut staff to balance their budgets.

This situation has caused significant fiscal instability in Idaho's districts – instability that is further magnified by the increased reliance of districts on supplemental levies and the variation throughout the state in districts' ability to pass these levies.

Although traditionally called "discretionary" funding, the Distribution Funding provides operational funds that are the normal, reasonable costs of doing business. These costs include such items as paying for heat, lights and fuel; transporting students in a  safe manner to and from school; providing timely and relevant content materials and training for teachers.

Restoration of operational funding is not growth in government.  It is restoration necessary for the operation of schools and districts.  Idaho's districts are in dire need of this restoration. Fund balances are depleted, supplemental levies (where passed) are at levels that would be difficult to increase in most communities, and many districts have exhausted their ability to use "one time" funds to balance their budgets.  Without restoration of these funds, many will face future years with no options other than cutting the school year (again), reducing staff, or asking taxpayers for (another) tax increase to maintain operations. This creates fiscal instability.

From 2003-2004 to 2008-09, operational funding was stable or increased slightly, evidence of the Idaho legislature's recognition of the need to provide adequate, stable operational funding.  These were not years of excess, and a return to this level of funding is restoration rather than growth.

Total restoration of operational funding to the 2009 level would cost $82.5 million. However, a multiple year approach to restoration could be implemented. A 5-Year restoration approach to rebuild operational funding would cost $16.5 million per year.

### Recommendation #1.2:  Career Ladder Compensation Model

The current method of teacher compensation in Idaho is a second factor in the fiscal instability of the state's school districts.  One of the primary drivers of the current teacher compensation model is the base salary.  When the current model was implemented during the 1994-1995 school year, the Legislature set the base salary at $19,328.  The Legislature set the base salary for the 2013-2014 school year at $23,123, which over time, is approximately a 1% increase per year.  The result has been non-competitive salaries that make it difficult to hire and retain teachers.  Potential movement on a complex pay grid is difficult to anticipate and budget.  Districts that must pay above the state schedule to be competitive, have the added instability of funding their salary schedules.  In addition, the current system lacks incentives and accountability.

The committee has researched pay systems throughout the United States and has considered merit pay systems, differentiated pay systems, and many of their variations.[1]  The committee believes that the best system for Idaho is a simple Career Ladder that combines competitive salaries with incentives, rewards, and accountability.  Further, we believe it should be tied to a revised system of state licensure. The proposed system is comprised of three tiers – each tied to a state license/certificate.  Criteria for movement between the tiers include experience, additional credentialing, and accountability based on performance. Further, tiers two and three would include additional salary that can be earned for fulfillment of leadership responsibilities, including such things as curriculum development work, chairing collaboration teams, mentoring, and other responsibilities that the districts may determine. Funds would flow to the districts based upon the number of individuals in each of the top two tiers, and these funds would be paid out to the teachers for the work, as cited. This approach

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[1]Task Force for Improving Education, June 21, 2013 meeting and July 12, 2013 meeting presentations and materials.

allows districts to determine the leadership responsibilities that are needed and allows teachers to select the roles they wish to fulfill and to be compensated for them. This approach would fund a major portion of the Mentor Program (Recommendation #2.2).

The Career Ladder is performance based. Specifically, each teacher moves up the ladder based upon credentialing and performance. Successful teacher evaluations are necessary for an individual to move to higher tiers and to remain placed on the tiers, as determined at the time of re-certification.

Funding of the Career Ladder will require additional (new) funds for public education in Idaho. It could, however, be phased in as necessary. Note: In year one, the current allocations for "differentiated pay" could be repurposed to fund the Career Ladder model. The Career Ladder will help to reduce the disparity in salary among Idaho's districts. While districts may continue to fund their salary schedules at rates higher than the state mechanism, the salary model will reduce the gap for districts and ultimately provide more stability for all districts.

The committee recommends a phased implementation of the Career Ladder – moving all teachers to the new salary schedule initially, and increasing the compensation tied to each tier over time to reach the recommended pay levels of a 40/50/60,000 salary schedule. Such a model will entice individuals to enter the teaching profession and provide incentives for them to improve their craft and to remain in Idaho. The committee also believes that the Career Ladder approach provides enhanced accountability based upon performance.

The total cost of a move to this salary schedule would be approximately $200-$250 million. Again, a multiple year approach could be implemented. A 5-6 year phase-in to include moving existing teachers to the new career ladder would cost approximately $40 million per year.

Supporting Recommendations:
The accountability model is predicated on a strong evaluation system.
- The committee endorses the ongoing implementation of the State Department of Education's new evaluation framework.[2]
- The committee recommends the continued training of principals as evaluators and encourages the incorporation of research-based evaluation techniques such as those identified in the recent MET study. [3]

The tables on the following page show the first year steps for the three rungs of the Career Ladder, the incremental fiscal impact, and the steps of the ladder in year 6 of implementation.

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[2] Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching, Idaho State Department of Education.
[3] Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Policy and Practice Brief, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, January 2013.

## Career Ladder Year 1

Salary Reimbursement
Table

| Career Ladder Rung | Step 1 | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 | Step 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Standard Teacher | $33,000 | $34,000 | $35,000 | | |
| Professional Teacher | $40,000 | $41,000 | $42,000 | $43,000 | $44,000 |
| Master Teacher | $47,000 | $48,000 | $49,000 | $50,000 | $51,000 |

Note:  In the early years, there would be up to 3 transition steps where those currently earning above the amount on the Professional Step 5 are rounded up to the nearest 1,000.

## Incremental Fiscal Impact

| Year | Rung 1, Step 1 | Career Ladder | Leadership Awards | Total | Annual Incremental Cost |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | $33,000 | $25.6 million | $15.9 million | $42.4 million | $42.4 million |
| 2 | $34,250 | $68.8 million | $15.9 million | $84.7 million | $42.3 million |
| 3 | $36,000 | $109.4 million | $15.9 million | $125.3 million | $40.6 million |
| 4 | $36,250 | $152.3 million | $15.9 million | $168.2 million | $42.9 million |
| 5 | $38,000 | $193.7 million | $15.9 million | $209.6 million | $41.4 million |
| 6 | $40,000 | $236 million | $15.9 million | $251.9 million | $42.3 million |

## Career Ladder Year 6

Salary Reimbursement
Table

| Career Ladder Rung | Step 1 | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 | Step 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Standard Teacher | $40,000 | $41,000 | $42,000 | | |
| Professional Teacher | $47,000 | $48,000 | $49,000 | $50,000 | $51,000 |
| Master Teacher | $54,000 | $55,000 | $56,000 | $57,000 | $58,000 |

**Recommendation #1.3: Enrollment Model of Funding Schools**
The Task Force believes that the present system of funding schools on Average Daily Attendance (ADA) is a factor of fiscal instability. The dual issues of unknown enrollment and unknown attendance present a double-edged sword for fiscal planning. Further, the ADA reporting requirements of the Idaho System for Educational Excellence (ISEE) system have added to fiscal stress on districts due to the additional staff required to ensure accuracy and reliability of the data. It is our belief that a move to an enrollment (or membership) model would lessen the unknowns and diminish ISEE staffing requirements. It is also noted that ADA and Carnegie Unit-based funding are an impediment for districts to the move to personalized learning and the mastery learning provisions that are necessary to make a system truly personalized. A funding model based on "seat time" impedes the progress of a student toward mastery.

There are two financial methods of making the change from ADA to enrollment/membership-based funding. One plan requires no additional state funding and is based upon reallocation of the current funds in a different manner. In this model, divisors and minimums are adjusted to account for the fact that enrollment is higher than attendance (in order to keep the statewide unit-driven funding level). Districts with an attendance rate above 95.2% will tend to come out behind while districts with attendance rates below 95.2% will tend to come out ahead. In the second model, divisors and minimums for calculating support units are not adjusted and enrollment is fully funded. The cost of model 2 is approximately $60 million.

The committee recommends the change from Average Daily Attendance (ADA) to Average Daily Enrollment /Membership even if additional funding is not available. This will enhance stability and remove current barriers to personalized and/or mastery learning models that are required to meet the 60% goal.

**Guiding Principle 2: High performing schools require effective teachers and leaders**
The classroom teacher is the most important school-related determinant of student achievement. Effective teachers increase student success, close achievement gaps and foster a student's ability to learn. This results in lower dropout rates, higher numbers of students going on to postsecondary experiences and increased employment and earnings opportunities. Strong administrators and leaders enable teachers to develop, grow and succeed in their profession.

**Recommendation #2.1: Tiered Licensure**
The committee recommends a continuum of professional growth and learning that is tied to licensure. Movement through the system would be accomplished in a very specific, objective way using performance measures. Evaluations based upon the Framework for Teaching (FfT) will begin in pre-service and continue throughout a teacher's career. This performance assessment would be supported by multiple artifacts and evidence of the candidate's practice.[4]

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[4] Tiered Licensure, Christina Linder, Idaho State Department of Education, July 12, 2013.

An additional recommended measure of candidate effectiveness should be the candidate's ability to develop student learning objectives in order to assess student growth over the period of the candidate's clinical practice. These performance-based measures shall result in the development of an ongoing Individualized Professional Learning Plan (IPLP) created in partnership with the candidate's cooperating teacher and university supervisor. This plan (IPLP) will be submitted to the State Department of Education, along with the candidate's scores in the 22 components of the FfT, to inform required professional development and would also be collected as part of the state's longitudinal database on teacher performance and IHE performance. These documents will be required in order to apply for initial, novice licensure.

Upon being recommended for initial licensure, a NOVICE LICENSE (three-year license, non-renewable after 6 years) would be issued. Novice teachers could apply for a PROFESSIONAL LICENSE (five-year license, renewable dependent upon performance) after 3 years from the time of initial licensure. This part of professional licensure performance assessment would be supported by multiple artifacts and evidence of the teacher's practice. An additional measure of effectiveness proposed would be the teacher's ability to develop student learning objectives in order to assess student growth over the period of the candidate's clinical practice. Standardized state tests would also be considered as part of teacher performance.

After 5 years with a PROFESSIONAL LICENSE, a teacher may apply to be considered for a MASTER TEACHER LICENSE (five-year license, renewable dependent upon performance. This part of the professional licensure performance assessment will be supported by multiple artifacts and evidence of the teacher's practice. An additional measure of effectiveness proposed would be the candidate's ability to develop student learning objectives in order to show student growth. Standardized state tests would also be considered as part of teacher performance.

A teacher's ability to renew his or her current level of teacher certification would be dependent on performance measures throughout the validity period.

Supporting Recommendations:
- The committee recommends the State Department of Education work with stakeholders to clearly determine expectations and authentic measures to earn each tier of the licensure model.
- Performance-based measures should result in the development of an ongoing Individualized Professional Learning Plan (IPLP) throughout a teacher's career, created in partnership with the teacher's administrator and a peer. This IPLP should be revised according to the teacher's performance evaluations and personal reflections throughout the period of professional licensure.

**Recommendation #2.2: Mentoring**

The committee focused time on researching and discussing best practices and models for developing high quality teachers.[5] According to the New Teacher Center, "New teacher support is a critical component of a comprehensive solution to achieving excellence in teaching quality. High-quality support programs for new teachers—often referred to as induction programs—not only increase the retention of beginning teachers, but also their impact on student learning."

The committee recommends the following:

Each district should develop a mentoring program for the support of new teachers that follows the guidelines of the Idaho Mentor Program Standards.[6] These standards were developed in 2009 as a joint project of the Professional Standards Commission, the State Board of Education, and the State Department of Education in order to provide a vision and guidelines for local planners to use in the design and implementation of a high-quality mentor program for beginning teachers. These Program Standards require that representatives from across the educational community come together for initial planning and continue together to monitor and evaluate for program improvement.

The state should provide funding support for a mentoring program. It is noted that the cost of providing master teachers to act as mentors for novice teachers is integrated into the Career Ladder model; however, costs for substitutes, training of mentors, etc. would be needed. The best practice model which provides for a "release time" mentor, in which a trained mentor supports novice and struggling teachers, would require additional funding of approximately $7,000 per novice/struggling teacher.[7]

**Recommendation #2.3: Ongoing Job-embedded Professional Learning**
Teacher effectiveness is paramount to student success, and professional development is paramount to teacher effectiveness. Professional learning is critical to educators' ability to develop the new knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to better meet students' learning needs and enhance student learning results. These development opportunities must be regularly scheduled and ongoing.

The committee recommends the following:
- Adhere to the research based standards of the National Staff Development Council now known as Learning Forward.
- Prioritize, monitor and coordinate resources for educator learning at the state level. Implementation of the Idaho Core Standards, Smarter Balanced assessment and

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[5] Task Force for Improving Education, June 21, 2013 meeting presentations and materials.
[6] Idaho Mentor Program Standards, January 2009.
[7] Is Mentoring Worth the Money? A Benefit-Cost Analysis and Five-year Rate of Return of a Comprehensive Mentoring Program for Beginning Teachers, Anthony Villar and Michael Strong, Nov. 2007.

technology will require ongoing funding and resources that should be built into the funding system.

- Provide ongoing funding for professional development and require that districts provide regular professional learning opportunities.

The committee supports the state's definition of Professional Development as:

A comprehensive, sustained, timely, and intensive process to improve effectiveness of teachers and administrators in raising student achievement, which:

a. Aligns with rigorous state academic achievement standards, local educational agency goals, school improvement goals, effective technology integration, and Idaho Core Standards.

b. Utilizes data driven instruction using a thorough review and continual evaluation of data on teacher and student performance to define clear goals and distinct outcomes.

c. Provides opportunities that are individualized enough to meet distinct and diverse levels of need for teachers and administrators.

d. Is facilitated by well-prepared school administrators, coaches, mentors, master teachers, lead teachers, or third-party providers under contract with the State Department of Education, school district, or charter school, and supported by external research, expertise, or resources.

e. Fosters a collective responsibility by educators within the school for improved student performance and develops a professional learning community.[8]


**Recommendation #2.4: Site-based collaboration among teachers and instructional leaders**

Time to collaborate is critical to effective teaching and implementation of higher standards and technology. However, time is a major obstacle in teachers being able to collaborate. State instructional time requirements are also an obstacle to incorporating collaboration time. However, a shift to a mastery-based model, as recommended by the Structural Change subcommittee, would render minimum instructional hours irrelevant. Instead, the focus would be on results, and collaboration time would be structured toward attaining those results.

The committee studied best practices both in Idaho and around the country and recommends the following: [9]

- Strongly encourage districts to restructure the traditional school day schedule to allow for job-embedded collaboration time.
- Create professional learning communities that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students.
- Provide training models to districts for their use in training the members of the professional learning communities.
- Encourage models that focus on team outcomes and collective responsibility.

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[8] IDAPA 08.02.03.013 Idaho Definition of Professional Development.
[9] Schools As Collaborative Learning Communities, Carole Cooper and Julie Boyd.

**Recommendation #2.5: Training and development of school administrators, superintendents, and school boards.**

Effective leadership is a cornerstone of effective schools. Continued focus should be given to the training and development of school administrators, superintendents, and school boards.

The committee supports further development and implementation of the Idaho Standards for Effective Principals and the pilot work being conducted in the 2013-14 school year to further explore effective performance measures for school administrators. This includes ongoing implementation and support for administrator training in assessing classroom performance through observation.[10]

**Recommendation #2.6: Provide enhanced pre-service teaching opportunities through the state's colleges of education.**
The committee supports the efforts of Idaho's higher education institutions to increase and enhance clinical field experiences for pre-service teachers.

**Recommendation #2.7: Participation in the CCSSO's "Our Responsibility, Our Promise" recommendations to improve teacher preparation.**
The committee supports Idaho's participation in implementing The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) "Our Responsibility, Our Promise" recommendations to help ensure that every teacher and principal is able to prepare students for college and the workforce. The CCSSO recommendations focus on licensure; program approval; and data collection, analysis, and reporting to improve the way we prepare our educator workforce. These recommendations are supported by the Colleges of Education at Idaho's public higher education institutions.[11]

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[10] Idaho Standards for Effective Principals, July 2013.
[11] CCSSO Teacher Preparation Grant Overview, 2013.

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