

MINUTES
TECHNOLOGY TASK FORCE
Online Learning Implementation Subcommittee

DATE: September 12, 2011
TIME: 11:12 AM
PLACE: EW42

MEMBERS: Chairman Andy Grover, Vice-Chair Aaron McKinnon, Spencer Barzee, Alan Dunn, Brad Patzer, Sen. John Goedde, Cliff Green

Absent: Mike Caldwell

Chairman Grover called the meeting to order at 11:12 am.

Tim Hill, State Department of Education (SDE), discussed fractional ADA and informed the Committee of items the SDE felt are still needed by districts in order to create the final ADA formula. These items were: whether a district was on a semester or trimester system, the start and end dates of the school year, timing of vendor payments, vendor cost for regular and overload courses and student withdrawals/penalties.

The Committee discussed the issue of semester/trimester and its affect on vendor payments. Depending on vendor preference, payment may be required upfront, mid-semester, or could even be contracted to receive a percentage of payment upon course completion.

The Committee discussed the definition and parameters of overload classes. Although a student might choose to take an additional math class, or other course that is not needed to graduate, if it is taken during the allowed school periods in a day, it would not be considered an overload course, according to Idaho Code. An overload course is one that is taken (in any subject matter) in addition to the maximum number of credits allowed by the district. Idaho Code also states that if more than one overload course is being taken, the State will pay for the more expensive overload course and the district and/or parent will pay the remainder.

In response to Committee questions, Jason Hancock, SDE, explained that students can take more than the two online courses required for graduation. After fractional ADA is paid, or the district pays as part of its vendor contract, parents are responsible for additional costs. The district may choose to pay for these costs if their budget allows; otherwise, it will be the parent's financial responsibility.

The Committee discussed concern over districts having to double pay for students. For example, if only two students wish to take a certain course with a

teacher, who is already being paid by the district, the district will also have to pay for however many students decide to take the same course online. It was noted by Mr. Hancock that the two required online courses would be decided by the district, giving them flexibility to only offer this course online or make necessary adjustments to their teaching staff. However, parents have the right to enroll their students in any online course they choose, and the district must pay fractional ADA or use a statewide contract.

The Committee adjourned for lunch at 12:00 p.m.

The Committee reconvened at 1:35 p.m.

Mr. Hancock presented a proposed timeline for the Committee regarding the RFIs (Requests for Information) and the RFPs (Requests for Proposal). There are three options for enrolling in online courses: districts may negotiate contracts on their own, the district may use the fractional ADA model set by the SDE or the district may use a statewide negotiated contract.

Mr. Hancock clarified that vendors must be certified by the same agency that certifies teachers Idaho, or by an agency whose accreditation is recognized by the agency that certifies Idaho. Course work would be approved by SDE personnel or IDLA to ensure that state standards are met and that all teachers are highly qualified. It was noted that vendors can also use third parties to evaluate coursework to meet state standards.

Mr. Green discussed a list he had compiled regarding various issues that need to be addressed in the RFP, including the need to create an evaluation of vendors by allowing parents and students to rate the vendor.

Mr. Hancock discussed dual credit. For the fall semester, or until a system is created between the SDE and Idaho universities, districts will pay for dual credit classes and submit reimbursement paperwork to the SDE. Although districts are not required to inform students about dual credit opportunities, the SDE hopes that counselors and other school staff inform students they feel are eligible to enroll in dual credit. Dual credit courses may be online or on campus.

The Committee discussed issues districts are having with dual credit, such as out of state schools not accepting dual credits.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:17 p.m.