



IDAHO LEGISLATURE

JOINT FINANCE-APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

State Capitol
Room 305
Boise, ID 83720
(208) 334 - 4735

SENATE FINANCE
.....

*Dean Cameron
Chairman*

*Shawn Keough
Vice Chairman*

Joyce Broadsword

Steven Bair

Bert Brackett

Dean Mortimer

Lee Heider

Mitch Toryanski

Diane Bilyeu

Nicole LeFavour

**HOUSE
APPROPRIATIONS**
.....

*Maxine Bell
Chairman*

*Darrell Bolz
Vice Chairman*

George Eskridge

Fred Wood

Jim Patrick

Marv Hagedorn

Jeff Thompson

J. Vander Woude

Shirley Ringo

Wendy Jaquet

DATE: February 3, 2011

TO: Senator John W. Goedde, Chairman, Senate Education Committee
Representative Bob Nonini, Chairman, House Education Committee

FROM: Senator Dean L. Cameron, Chairman, Senate Finance Committee
Representative Maxine T. Bell, Chairman House Appropriations
Committee

SUBJECT: Recommendations for FY 2012 Appropriation for Public Schools

Please extend our heartfelt thanks to your committee members for making the commitment to join the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee for the budget hearings last week. Your willingness to work together on budgetary priorities during these challenging economic times will provide support to JFAC, and hopefully together we will provide the best possible educational opportunities for all of Idaho's schoolchildren.

Although the Governor's initial General Fund recommendation for Public Schools did not include additional cuts – it was too optimistic considering the recent news that we have received about revenues. We are sure you understand that once the Legislature takes into consideration the reduction of projected General Fund revenues due to federal tax conformity, unanticipated sales tax credits for alternative energy, and the erosion of last year's surplus; it is necessary to ask our germane committees to consider policy and programmatic changes that support a lower spending level for FY 2012.

The Co-Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of JFAC have identified a range of between \$50 million to \$81 million *below* what the Governor recommended at \$1,235,893,600 for Public Schools in FY 2012. It would be most helpful if your committee could prioritize your recommended cuts in order of importance.

In addition, intent language was included in the FY 2011 appropriation bill for Public Schools that temporarily put aside programs and redirected these dollars to discretionary funding. Several of these temporary changes were included in the Superintendent's budget submission and also in the Governor's recommendation for FY 2012.

As of today, we have not seen any legislation to maintain these changes for FY 2012. We need your guidance on how you want JFAC to proceed – do you want to handle this as legislation in your committee, or do you want JFAC to address this? Attached is the list of changes that we feel are necessary.

Once again, thank you for your willingness to change those policies you feel are necessary to support the new financial reality of our state. Please let us know if we can provide any additional information concerning any agencies or budgets under your purview.

Cc: Senate and House Majority Leadership
Senate and House Minority Leadership
Senate Education Committee Members
House Education Committee Members
JFAC Members
Paul Headlee, Principal Budget & Policy Analyst

Attachment: List of Legislative Actions