

# Burnett steps down as interim UI president

**Elizabeth Rudd/Lewiston Tribune**

Don Burnett's passion for collaboration did not go unnoticed during his brief tenure as the University of Idaho's interim president.

Boise State University President Bob Kustra commended Burnett for his work leading UI and as chairman of the Idaho Universities Presidents' Council following his final report to the Idaho State Board of Education Thursday in Boise.

Burnett was appointed to serve as UI's interim president last year when former President Duane Nellis resigned to take the helm of Texas Tech University. The former College of Law dean will conclude his presidential service Saturday when President-elect Chuck Staben officially takes the reins.

Kustra said Thursday that Burnett not only filled a void at UI, but quickly assumed the role as chairman for the presidents' council. Kustra thanked him for helping to get the council through a tough year.

"He's done a spectacular job," Kustra told the board.

During that time, Kustra said he has enjoyed Burnett's "constant drumbeat" for collaboration among all of Idaho's colleges and universities and said it has been a pleasure working with him to try to achieve that ambition.

Burnett will return to a faculty position in UI's College of Law following the conclusion of his term as interim president. The state board hired Staben in November as the next UI president. The former University of South Dakota provost was in attendance during Thursday's board meeting.

State Board President Don Soltman of Twin Lakes also thanked Burnett on behalf of the state board - and as UI's board of regents - for his service during the past nine months.

"I think you've truly made the Vandal family proud," Soltman said.

---

*Rudd may be contacted at [erudd@lmtribune.com](mailto:erudd@lmtribune.com) or (208) 791-8465. Follow her on Twitter @elizabeth\_rudd.*