



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER  
GOVERNOR

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

March 6, 2015

15:013

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### **IDAHO'S PLAN FOR INCREASING TEACHER PAY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

**By Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter**

Idaho students deserve a world-class education. It's so essential to their success and our state's prosperity that the Idaho Constitution clearly identified public schools as a proper role of government.

Of course, a world-class education system requires top-quality teachers. That means offering a competitive salary to attract and retain these teachers in our schools, as well as an accountability framework that ensures teacher effectiveness and student progress.

The current salary grid for teachers cannot support the education system this state needs, and I will not add more taxpayer dollars to a structure that doesn't move Idaho forward.

This week the Legislature introduced House Bill 222 to fundamentally change how we pay teachers by establishing a "career ladder" for teacher compensation. Under the plan, teachers no longer would be paid solely based on years of experience and education. The new model includes a sizeable infusion of money for significantly higher salaries based on teaching proficiency and student outcomes.

The proposed career ladder is based on key recommendations from the broad-based, bipartisan Task Force for Improving Education that I established in 2013 to explore how we can move Idaho's public schools forward to better serve our children. The recommendations to develop a career ladder and tiered teacher certification were unanimously supported by the 31 members of the Task Force. House Bill 222 represents two years of research, discussion and work by education stakeholders across the state, as well as a great deal of feedback and input from teachers, parents and the public. The legislation not only creates a new compensation model but maps out a five-year implementation plan to shift funding from the existing salary grid to the new career ladder.

The proposal now before the Legislature calls for significant increases in funding for teachers far beyond the historical cost-of-living adjustments and sporadic increases in minimum teacher pay. On the career ladder, it would take only three years for a teacher to reach a salary of more than \$40,000. School districts also would see significant increases in salary allocations for existing teachers.

Beyond these base pay increases, the career ladder includes additional compensation for teachers who earn extra academic area endorsements or advanced degrees, and it offers leadership premiums for teachers taking on extra responsibilities or serving in hard-to-fill positions. The career ladder would benefit teachers individually, but it also

would help reduce the salary gap between urban and rural districts and make Idaho more competitive with neighboring states.

We cannot wait any longer to make these types of fundamental changes to improve our education system. Idaho's future prosperity and global competitiveness demands that we change how we recruit teachers, improve teacher retention, and provide fiscal stability for our school districts so they can afford to keep their best teachers in the classroom.

The status quo, or worse a one-time increase for teachers, will not create the opportunities for our children that we all desire. We have studied this issue closely. We have vetted this issue thoroughly. We have built consensus on this issue carefully. Now please join me in encouraging the Legislature to take the next step toward the kind of world-class education system our children, grandchildren and generations to come deserve and need.

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