



BRAD LITTLE
GOVERNOR

April 10, 2026

The Honorable Phil McGrane
Secretary of State
Idaho Statehouse
Hand Delivery

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I hereby advise you that I have signed on April 10, 2026, and transmitted to the Office of the Secretary of State, with my approval, the following House bill, to wit:

HOUSE BILL 516a

within the time prescribed by law, the same having arrived in the Office of the Governor at the hour of 5:44 p.m. on April 2, 2026.

From day one as Idaho's 33rd Governor, I made education my top priority. I have deep respect for our public school teachers, whose impact is fundamental to a child's education and lasting success in life. I also strongly support teachers' ability to advocate for their profession.

However, while local and state teachers' associations do important work, they remain private organizations that currently receive taxpayer-funded support not extended to other private entities. House Bill 516a addresses that imbalance.

That said, House Bill 516a contains language I hope the Legislature works to address moving forward. Some of the new definitions in the bill are overly broad and ambiguous and will lead to increased scrutiny of a teacher's actions purely based on their affiliation with their local association. Additionally, the bill may have chilling effect on school districts' ability to collaborate with their local association on professional development and charitable work in the community. These are real and valuable activities that exist to improve the competency of our educators and, in turn, student outcomes.

I am proud that supporting our teachers has been at the forefront of our priorities year after year. During my first year as Governor, we increased starting teacher pay to \$40,000 per year. Over the next several sessions, we continued to increase salaries and build out the career ladder. Today, that minimum starting salary is over \$50,000, and the average teacher salary in Idaho is more than \$66,000.

Overall, we have increased state support for education by \$3 billion – nearly 70 percent. In this year's tight budget environment, my top priority was preserving these investments in our teachers and their classrooms.

The transformative investments we have made – and preserved – in Idaho's K-12 public school system include:

2019: \$92 million

- Increased starting teacher pay to \$40,000 per year
- Doubled funding for literacy

2020: \$36 million

- Increased career ladder funding and literacy funding

2021: \$87 million

- Fully funded the build-out of the advanced professional rung on the career ladder
- New investments in Career Technical Education

2022: \$696 million

- Allowed school districts to join the state insurance plan
- Additional salary increases
- \$1,000 bonuses for teachers
- Special Session - H1 alone accounted for \$410 million for public education

2023: \$653 million

- Raised starting teacher pay to \$47,477
- Additional discretionary funding
- Created the Idaho LAUNCH scholarship program

2024: \$1.3 billion

- H521 – largest ever state investment in school facilities

2025: \$119 million

- Increased funding for rural school facilities
- Increased teacher pay
- \$5 million in additional literacy investments

I will continue to work with educators to make sure we are championing policy outcomes that support Idaho's public school students.

Sincerely,



Brad Little
Governor of Idaho