

NEWS RELEASE

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STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION APPOINTS SUBCOMMITTEE TO REVIEW ATHLETIC FUNDING

At their meeting in Moscow this week, the State Board of Education reviewed and approved operating budgets for the athletic programs at Lewis Clark State College, Boise State University, Idaho State University and the University of Idaho. In the course of the Board's deliberations, the Board discussed the policies and procedures by which the Board regulates state funding for each of the institution's athletic programs. It was noted during these discussions that it would be appropriate for the Board to review these policies and to examine whether each institution's athletic program was properly aligned with the state's funding priorities.

Board President Blake Hall appointed a Board subcommittee to review these issues. At this time, it is expected that the review will be routine in nature and will include an examination not only of costs, but also of how athletic programs positively affect student participants and the student community, scholarships and private fundraising. The committee will also review the positive economic impact of athletics on the local communities. All of the members of the committee have not yet been appointed.

State support for athletics is not a new issue for the Board. The Board reviews and approves the operating budgets for the athletic programs at the four-year public institutions annually. **The Board views this exercise as part of their responsibility in governing the college and universities, and ensuring that the educational needs of Idaho students are met.** The Board set a policy in place in 1987 that limits the amount of state general fund support that can go to athletic programs. In 2000, a policy was also added that limits the amount of institutional support that can go to athletic programs. Additionally, Board policy provides that only those student fee revenues dedicated as student activity fees for athletics can be used to fund athletic programs.

Board President Blake Hall stated, "The question before the Board is not whether we should eliminate athletic programs at our college and universities, but rather, the appropriateness of spending state money on athletic programs that could otherwise be used for education programs."