



**SHERRI YBARRA**  
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## **SERVICE, SUPPORT AND OUTREACH PRIORITIES FOR DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION** *Changes address "Educating the Whole Child" to Provide Individualized Learning*

(BOISE) - Incoming Idaho Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra announced today the new vision and mission for her administration at the Idaho State Department of Education. The vision is **"Supporting schools and students to achieve,"** and will serve as the department's foundation and guiding principal. At the state level, the Department will ***provide common-sense leadership, support and resources to educators across the state, to help reinforce higher standards for academic excellence for our students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.***

"Educating the whole child means the focus is supporting the districts and teachers' efforts in the classroom to provide individualized learning for our students," Ybarra said. "Our focus will be on helping schools districts move education forward to positively affect student achievement."

During the past several months, Ybarra has been engaged in a "listening tour" and solicited the input from stakeholders across the state to include educators, superintendents, legislators, parents and members of her transition team. Ybarra thanked the 17-member transition team headed by former Superintendent Jerry Evans for their valuable input. She stated suggestions by the transition team matched much of what she has heard from other stakeholders. "They all have provided valuable input and I am grateful for their time and commitment to education and Idaho's students. As a result of this input, we are reorganizing the department to provide the level of service and support needed to assist the districts in their daily objectives," said Ybarra. "The changes I am announcing today support those goals," Ybarra added.

To demonstrate her emphasis on the Department's strategic plan for increased service and support, Ybarra announced Dr. Chuck Zimmerly will assume the new position of Community Relations Officer. This new position will focus on working with Idaho school districts to build, foster and support communications and relationships with the school districts, as well as other state and local stakeholders. The new outreach effort will provide a new means of communication for school districts to address their particular issues and provide guidance for school districts on policies.

Mr. Will Goodman will become the new Chief Technology Officer at the Department. Goodman is the current President of the IETA (Idaho Education Technology Association.) As a former teacher, principal, interim superintendent and technology director himself, his background is uniquely suited to schools and their unique needs. He will be able to assist with concerns local districts may have over critical infrastructure, technical and broadband questions.

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Ybarra recently announced Pete Koehler will serve as Interim Deputy Superintendent. Koehler came out of retirement to be of service under Ybarra's leadership. He previously served the Nampa School District as Superintendent. Ybarra also named Tim Corder as Special Assistant to the Superintendent. He will be the political liaison for the department and previously served in the Idaho Legislature for eight years. Dr. Charlotte (Charlie) Silva has been named the new Special Education Director and previously worked as Special Education Supervisor for the Boise School District.

"As you can see, this reorganization of the executive staff positions at the Department is aimed at service, support and outreach," Ybarra said. "The vision will be at the heart of everything we do to move education forward and improve student achievement. This reorganization reflects the "ground up" approach we will use to ensure our work contributes to student outcomes."

Ybarra also set forth priorities for the new plan to include the importance of retaining and recruiting quality educators, providing common-sense leadership and transparency, investing in innovation and technology that makes sense, and remaining committed to higher standards. Ybarra's team is also evaluating the current assessment system to be sure student growth is reflected properly and appropriately.

Ybarra is also in the process of reviewing the final budget recommendations to be made to the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee on January 29<sup>th</sup>. "We are looking at ways to provide more operational funding for school districts," said Ybarra. "We are working with the Governor's office and members of the House and Senate Education committees, but will be ready for the budget presentation on January 29.

Ybarra said more changes could be forthcoming as she begins service as Superintendent but noted she wants to meet with school officials and work with the Idaho Legislature and Governor's office first.

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