



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, March 07, 2017

[www.sde.idaho.gov](http://www.sde.idaho.gov)

**Media Contacts:**

Jeff Church

(208) 332-6934

[jchurch@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:jchurch@sde.idaho.gov)

**SHERRI YBARRA**  
SUPERINTENDENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

650 W. STATE STREET  
P.O. BOX 83720  
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

OFFICE: 208-332-6800  
FAX: 208-334-2228  
SPEECH/HEARING  
IMPAIRED: 1-800-377-3529  
WWW.SDE.IDAHO.GOV

## **NEW EARLY READING TEST FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH THIRD GRADE STUDENTS MOVING FORWARD**

(BOISE) – A new tool to measure the early reading skills of kindergarten through third grade students cleared a funding hurdle today.

The Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee today approved funding in the Superintendent of Public Instruction’s budget for a new test to replace the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI).

In December after an extensive review process, a panel of state and local educators supported by the State Department of Education identified the computer-based assessment from IStation as a replacement for the old test.

“We are excited move forward with providing teachers and parents a better tool to measure early reading skills including comprehension as well as help diagnose specific struggles,” said Sherri Ybarra, Superintendent of Public Instruction.

After the budget is finalized, the department will identify school districts interested in piloting the new test in 2017-18. About 10,500 students in these pilot districts will take both the old IRI and the new IRI. Once the pilot is successfully completed, the new test will be given to all kindergarten through grade three students. The pilot will cost an estimated \$100,000 and the next four years would be about \$450,000 annually.

In addition to the new assessment, districts will have access to optional progress monitoring tools at no additional costs.

The need to replace the IRI was identified by the Idaho Literacy Task Force in November 2014. The literacy group was a subset of the Governor’s Task Force on Education and its recommendations resulted in an expansion of the state’s investment in early reading intervention to about \$11.4 million.

###