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Superintendent Ybarra statement on special session proposal

(BOISE) – I am happy to support the legislative proposal being considered in the 2022 special session of the Idaho Legislature, which convenes tomorrow, Sept. 1.

In addition to new funding for education, the proposal includes much-needed tax relief of \$500 million in tax rebates, coupled with a reduction and simplification of tax rates. Government should not take from its citizens even a penny more than is needed to fully fund its operations. I applaud the Governor and Legislature for taking this step during this time of national economic distress, historic inflation and a potential recession.

As for the \$410 million of new support for education, I strongly encourage the Idaho Legislature to pass this historic bill, and I encourage voters to join me in supporting the related ballot question in the November election.

The proposal targets \$80 million at training for in-demand careers, which include the teaching, nursing and STEM professions, among others. It also adds \$330 million annually to the existing public school income fund, which is much-needed to address pressing needs such as maintenance and improvements to our school buildings and infrastructure. And, to ensure continued support for public schools, the proposal would lock in a 3 percent annual increase to this funding stream. As Superintendent for nearly eight years, it has always been my goal to take Idaho to the top 10 for student achievement, and passage of this legislation is the right step at the right time. It will send a loud and clear message to Idahoans that education is a top priority. The nay-sayers will no longer be able to allege a lack of legislative effort or the absence of widespread support for our public education system.

This measure carries my strongest endorsement as the state's top advocate for K-12 education.

Sherri Ybarra
Superintendent of Public Instruction

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