

# Empowering Parents Parent Advisory Panel

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 1, 2023

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Idaho State Board of Education, Main Conference Room  
650 W. State Street, Suite 307, Boise, ID 83702

### PANEL MEMBERS

Superintendent Debbie Critchfield, Chairman | Amy Henry, Panel Member | Barbara Schriber, Panel Member | Courtney Abenroth, Panel Member | Holly Cook, Panel Member | Jason Sevy, Panel Member | Joni Shepherd, Panel Member | Laura Milton, Panel Member

Thursday, June 1, 2023 – 9:00 am (MT)

#### Board Action

**9:00 am – Meeting called to order – Superintendent Critchfield, Chair**

#### Board Action

**M/S (Sevy/Cook) I move to approve the agenda posted.**

- Motion carried 7-0

Superintendent Critchfield welcomed members to the Office of the State Board of Education and the first Empowering Parents Parent Advisory Panel meeting. The panel moved through introductions of each member with their relevant experience and reason for applying to the panel.

Superintendent Critchfield introduced the Guiding Principles of the panel and moved through each principle previously sent to the panelists.

#### Board Action

**M/S (Sevy/Henry) I move to accept the Guiding Principles document.**

- Motion carried 7-0

#### Board Action

**M/S (Cook/Henry) I move to amend the agenda to bring Danielle Woods in early to review travel and reimbursement guidelines.**

- Motion carried 7-0

#### Board Action

**M/S (Milton/Schriber) 9:20 am – I move to recess until next presenter arrives.**

- Motion carried 7-0

**Board Action**

**M/S (Milton/Cook) 9:21 am – I move to resume meeting with Danielle Wood.**

- Motion carried 7-0

Danielle Woods, a Financial Specialist at the State Department of Education, reviewed State Department of Education policy on reimbursing travel for the advisory panel, including Travel Reimbursement Forms and W-9 policy.

Superintendent Critchfield asked the panel their opinions on public comment policy for future meetings, including length of time, and the most efficient way to accommodate multiple public commentators. The working plan is to allow an hour for public comments with a three (3) to five (5) minute maximum per speaker. The panel also expressed interest in a specific Empowering Parents email address in which to receive public comment

**Board Action**

**M/S (Cook/Shepherd) 9:33 am – I move to recess until next presenter arrives.**

- Motion carried 7-0

**Board Action**

**M/S (Milton/Shepherd) 9:34 am – I move to resume meeting with Kristine Moriarty.**

- Motion carried 7-0

Kristine Moriarty, Deputy Attorney General, reviewed Open Meeting Law with the Panel. She went over state and public policy for such meetings and rule of statutory construction. She then defined terms according to Open Meeting Law, including: decision, deliberation, public agency, governing body, and meetings (special and regular). Ms. Moriarty reviewed meeting and agenda notices of regular and special meetings and executive sessions, before going over meeting conduct and the specifics of public records, minutes, and enforcement of Open Meeting Law. Questions related to Special Meetings and Executive Sessions and the difference between the two were asked and answered.

**Board Action**

**M/S (Schriber/Milton) 10:09 am – I move to recess for fifteen (15) minutes.**

- Motion carried 7-0

**Board Action**

**10:25 am – Meeting reconvened – Superintendent Critchfield**

Superintendent Critchfield introduced Heather Zeitlin, Empowering Parents Grant Program Coordinator from the Office of the State Board of Education. She reviewed the basic history of the Empowering Parents Program and the legislative action surrounding the statute. Ms. Zeitlin

then went over the grant program review document the panel received previously. She reviewed the specific Board duties regarding Empowering Parents and the work she has done to date.

The panel had a number of questions for Heather to discuss and decide in later meetings, including:

- How funds can be used for households with three or more students if the maximum amount of funds have already been allocated
- Can the \$3,000 be used for more students per family if the student(s) was eligible (with eligible expenses) – in the case of three+ students?
- Should students identified with special education needs receive priority?
- Are students able to apply year after year?
- Who were the legislative sponsors?
- Is there data for percentages of receiving students/families per capita by region?
- Is there data for percentages of students that applied and were awarded per region?
- Can there be a breakdown of the data by type of schooling – homeschool, public, private, charter, etc.?
- Is there data for non-English speaking families who applied and were awarded?
- Is there data for who was awarded per wave per region?
- What was the initial communication and outreach of the program in general?
- What is the protocol for rollover dollars? Do they accrue? Who keeps track of the rollover dollars?
- What is the difference between the statutory categories?
- What is the policy for fiscal accountability for awarded families?

The next guest speaker was an Odyssey representative, Joe Connor, who reviewed a basic overview of how Odyssey manages the marketplace website and vendors. The panel asked clarifying questions related to vendors on the marketplace and their categories, how local businesses can become vendors for the marketplace, the process to review vendors, and how awarded parents can request vendors.

Superintendent Critchfield then previewed the dates for future Empowering Parents Parent Advisory Panel meetings, including July 10 at College of Southern Idaho, August 17 in the Idaho Falls area, and September 21 in Lewiston. The panel then reviewed the specific data points they would like to request from the State Board of Education before the next meeting on July 10.

**M/S (Cook/Sevy) I move to formally request four (4) information breakdowns from the State Board of Education, including: terms and conditions of the Empowering Parents Grant, data breakdown by school type and region, data breakdown of accounts that have not been spent and accounts that have a balance of less than \$100, and a breakdown of all services that have been approved in the Empowering Parents marketplace by statutory category “A”.**

- Motion carried 7-0

**M/S (Abernath/Sevy) I move to amend the prior information request to include a further data breakdown of Native American tribes and their usage of the Empowering Parents grant funds, more demographic data of the funds, and the details of the personnel support the Office of the Board of Education can provide for the program.**

- Motion carried 7-0

With no further questions or data requests, the panel moved to adjourn the meeting.

#### **Board Action**

**M/S (Critchfield/Henry) I move to adjourn the meeting at 11:49 am (MT)**

- Motion carried 7-0

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# Empowering Parents Parent Advisory Panel

## Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 10, 2023  
8:30 am – 12:00 pm  
College of Southern Idaho, Taylor 276  
315 Falls Ave, Twin Falls, ID 83301

### PANEL MEMBERS

Superintendent Debbie Critchfield, Chairman | Amy Henry, Panel Member | Barbara Schriber, Panel Member | Courtney Abenroth, Panel Member | Holly Cook, Panel Member | Jason Sevy, Panel Member | Joni Shepherd, Panel Member | Laura Milton, Panel Member

Thursday, June 1, 2023 – 9:00 am (MT)

#### Board Action

**8:30 am – Meeting called to order – Superintendent Critchfield, Chair**

Superintendent Critchfield welcomed members to College of Southern Idaho and the second Empowering Parents Parent Advisory Panel meeting. The panel reviewed the materials provided and opened the period of public comment.

#### Board Action

**8:30 am – Period of public comment opened.**

There were no public comments in this meeting.

#### Board Action

**9:00 am – Period of public comment closed.**

#### Board Action

**M/S (Sevy/Henry) I move to approve the agenda posted.**

- Motion carried 7-0

#### Board Action

**M (Cook) I move to approve the meeting minutes from the June 1 meeting.**

## **Board Action**

**M/S (Henry/Sevy) I move to amend the meeting minutes from the June 1 meeting to include the question asked to the Board of Education to provide details on the available personnel supporting the program.**

- Motion carried 7-0

In accordance with the approved agenda, the Panel continued to Agenda Item 4 – a program update from the Office of the State Board of Education. Board personnel, Jenn Thompson, Heather Zeitlin, and Matt Freeman, introduced themselves and gave an update on the transaction review the Board had conducted previously. The review was completed the week before, totaling 42,000 transactions. Of those, 36,000 transactions were approved. The panel asked for clarity on the transactions that were not approved and/or considered ineligible, to which the Board responded that they were working with Odyssey to get more documentation from those ineligible purchases. The Board was asked to investigate how many families accessed the program and how many total grants were awarded. Panelist Laura Milton asked for clarification on differentiating between the items that could be incidentally eligible, but could also be ineligible for other applicants. It was discussed that, for the moment, those transactions would likely need to be reviewed on a case by case basis. The Board then said that reviewing the transactions will be more efficient now that they are completely caught up on the review – they estimated that they have the ability to review every transaction within 72 hours and can pause the transaction if there is any question of eligibility.

The panel asked the Board for more information regarding the timeline of the grant application to receiving the approved funds. The Board stated that they would aim to open the grant to new applications in the fall. They would like to wait until they have clarity on the categories from the panel. Chair Critchfield suggested that they consider adjusting the timeline of the grant to coincide with when families would be purchasing items with these funds (i.e. start of school year). When asked what the approval timeline was, the Board stated that there are two (2) to four (4) weeks between the first and second wave, and that they aim to have the third wave distributed by December. It was suggested that the panel consider recommending the application timeline be changed for future years, as well as possibly reorienting the timeline of the Empowering Parents Parent Advisory Panel meetings to coincide with those waves. There was discussion on possibly shortening the time between application submission and notification to accommodate those timeline suggestions, if it would be reasonable to expect a shorter timeframe would work logistically for Board personnel. Heather Zeitlin confirmed that it could be doable now that a year of the program has been completed.

The panel then turned to discussing the categories of eligible purchases. The Board was asked for clarification surrounding purchases made by families with students in Special Education programs in and out of non-public schools. Ms. Zeitlin stated that parents can upload additional documentation for purchases to determine that eligibility. The Board gave an overview of the vendor/marketplace process. The panel stated concerns for the more rural areas that would not have the same access to marketplace items that urban areas would, limiting eligible purchases. There was discussion on a reimbursement process instead of approved vendor process. Chair Critchfield asked if there was a way to reconcile that there may be good

educational opportunities that aren't on the marketplace but that would generally be considered eligible. It was suggested that the panel invite Odyssey personnel into the next meeting to answer questions about the marketplace. Chair Critchfield then asked if it would be appropriate to have a guiding document on suitable marketplace consumer habits for applicants moving forward.

At 10:10 am, the panel agreed to a quick break and returned at 10:25 am.

After returning to the meeting at 10:25 am, the panel discussed how they would like to move forward in discussing and suggesting recommendations for the categories. They discussed the specifics of eligible and ineligible categories including: camps/classes, costumes/athletic gear/uniforms, and what the specific definition of educational equipment would entail.

The panel decided they wanted to have the following completed or researched before the next meeting in August:

- Definition of “educational”
- Hear the legislative intent behind the Empowering Parents Grant bill from the original sponsors of the bill (Senator Lori Den Hartog and Representative Wendy Horman) and decide if that will have an impact on how they priority the categories based on the legislation
- Definition of “at risk”
- What recommendations the panel can make per Idaho statute

At 11:35 am, the panel moved on to Agenda Item 5 – Panel Discussion of the program. During this informational item, they discussed the logistical steps of the meetings moving forward, and how to organize requests for review. It was suggested that, in order to maximize time, the panel would meet again before the August meeting for a work session. They would conduct personal research at home to discuss at the work session. It was decided that the meeting date and time would be decided and posted at a later date to accommodate everyone's schedule.

#### **Board Action**

**M/S (Milton/Schriber) I move to adjourn the meeting at 11:53 am (MT)**

- Motion carried 7-0

# Empowering Parents Parent Advisory Panel

## Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 8, 2023

12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

State Department of Education, Lewis & Clark Conference Room  
650 W. State St., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Len B. Jordan Building  
Boise, ID 83702

### PANEL MEMBERS

Superintendent Debbie Critchfield, Chairman | Amy Henry, Panel Member | Barbara Schriber, Panel Member | Courtney Abenroth, Panel Member | Holly Cook, Panel Member | Jason Sevy, Panel Member | Joni Shepherd, Panel Member | Laura Milton, Panel Member

Tuesday, August 8, 2023 – 12:00 pm (MT)

Superintendent Critchfield called the work session to order and invited Senator Lori Den Hartog, District 22 to address the Panel. Senator Den Hartog, an original sponsor of the Empowering Parents legislation, joined the work session to give the Empowering Parents Parent Advisory (EPPA) Panel an overview of the original intent behind Empowering Parents, to support families during the COVID-19 pandemic with accessing the technology and tools needed by students to learn and adapt to the unprecedented changes in education.

The program has since shifted towards addressing student learning loss because of the pandemic and empowering parents to access educational opportunities for their children outside of those offered during the typical school year.

Senator Den Hartog went on to address questions about eligible expenses and the intent of the law from panel members. Questions asked of the Senator included extra opportunities for teachers to provide tutoring services through their district to students outside of the school day, using Empowering Parents funds to cover the cost of school fees, uniforms and pay-to-play fees, fees associated with non-public school educational services, educational camps and classes offered for a fee by independent vendors, public and private school tuition and fees, establishing local education agencies (LEA's) and Idaho colleges and universities as vendors in the marketplace, and allowing direct reimbursements for eligible items purchased outside of the marketplace.

Senator Den Hartog also shared with the EPPA Panel it was not the expectation for the Panel to vet issues with the vendor or to have to review previous purchases. Parents should feel confident to purchase items listed on the marketplace platform, and the EPAP Panel should serve as a support to parents and filter any concerns or issues to the State Board of Education.



After the Senator’s overview, the EPPA Panel discussed the current categories of expenditures and eligible and ineligible expenses and the need to enhance vendors offering more direct learning options, especially in small and rural communities.

Finally, the panel then heard from Matt Freeman, Executive Director for the State Board of Education on the appeals process as it is currently established in statute. The panel will continue discussing the appeals process at the August 17 meeting in Rexburg.

The work session concluded at 1:30pm MST.

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# Empowering Parents Parent Advisory Panel

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 17, 2023  
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm  
Madison School District Office, Board Room  
60 W Main, Rexburg, ID 83440

### Panel Members

Superintendent Debbie Critchfield, Chairman | Amy Henry, Panel Member | Barbara Schriber, Panel Member | Cortney Abenroth, Panel Member | Holly Cook, Panel Member | Jason Sevy, Panel Member | Joni Shepherd, Panel Member | Laura Milton, Panel Member

Thursday, August 17, 2023 – 1:00 pm (MT)

### Board Action

1:05 pm – Meeting called to order – Superintendent Critchfield, Chair  
Superintendent Critchfield welcomed members to the Madison School District office and the third Empowering Parents Parent Advisory Panel meeting. The panel first addressed Item 1 – to review the posted agenda and approve or amend it.

### Board Action

**M/S (Henry/Cook) I move to amend the agenda posted to include more information on Empowering Parents program feedback, and what it looks like from the parents, vendors, and contract point of view.**

- Motion carried 7-0

### Board Action

**M/S (Cook/Sevy) I move to approve the amended agenda.**

- Motion carried 7-0

The panel moved to Item 2 of the posted agenda, addressing the approval of the draft minutes from the June 1 regular meeting, the July 10 regular meeting, and August 8 work session minutes.

### Board Action

**M/S (Henry/Cook) I move to postpone approving the minutes from the previous minutes to gain extra time to review them.**

- Motion carried 7-0

## **Board Action**

### **1:15 pm – Period of public comment opened.**

The panel had one request for public comment. Idaho resident Brendon Hill explained his experience with the Empowering Parents program as a vendor and parent. He expressed his feelings on the grant and the process as both a parent and vendor in the system, and concerns with vendor process. The panel asked if he could send them what the process looks like from the side of a vendor in his point of view.

The panel discussed the parent-led Empowering Parent social media page. They expressed concern over the number of comments in the social media page compared to what has been received in the official Empowering Parents email. Members shared examples of specific cases, voiced by parents in the social media page. There was concern that the parents/recipients of the grant funds had been misinformed on who they should contact with grant/marketplace issues and questions. Members of the panel reminded everyone that the purpose of the panel was to help make it work moving forward and guide the future processes.

The topic of satisfaction surveys was brought forward by a panel member. Some panelists supported the idea, while others expressed their concern that the negative commentary would be disproportionate to the total number of grantees and that it would be difficult to verify the authenticity of the responses. Chair Critchfield suggested that any communication be sent through the official channels and email.

Survey questions include:

- What are the strengths of the program?
- What are the strengths of the weaknesses
- What improvements would you suggest moving forward?

The panel welcomed Meaghan Barber from Odyssey to discuss points of the program. Ms. Barber reviewed how Odyssey has worked with the Office of the State Board of Education for the duration of the Empowering Parents program. The panel had a series of questions for Ms. Barber and Odyssey.

- Are there real time changes happening in the marketplace that change eligible/ineligible items? Why?
- Have there been changes made mid-stream to the program and has there been guidance along the way? (Ex.: Vendor that was allowed at one point, but then taken off)
- Can we obtain a copy of the draft email from Odyssey to parents on ineligible items/purchases?
- The platform was originally designed with pre-approved items/vendors. How are there so many ineligible or invalid purchases if the vendors/items were pre-approved?
- How is Odyssey determining ineligible/eligible items?
- Do you have a list of those items from the first run and a current list?
- What is the vendor process to get onto the platform?
- How are items getting on the platform that are not eligible?
- What is deterring a vendor from raising their prices in the system?

- Who is making sure the vendors are from Idaho?

Ms. Barber agreed to reconvene with her team to provide the answers via written documentation after the meeting.

The panel continued their discussion of the program and how they plan to move forward with recommendations. They expressed concern with feedback they have seen on social media platforms regarding the program and expectations of the panel. The panel stated that they believe the appeals process as it currently stands is very clear, and that they would not change it moving forward.

The panel then discussed ineligible and eligible items and who had the responsibility of approving the list of items available on the marketplace. One panelist suggested that in the case of reimbursement, it could be recommended that not everything would need to be reimbursed, but that it could be on a case-by-case basis.

At 2:35 pm, the panel agreed to a quick break and returned at 2:45 pm.

Chair Critchfield asked panelists to discuss possible recommendations to the Board of Education. The panel moved through the recommendation rubric provided at the start of the meeting.

#### **Board Action**

**M/S (Sevy/Schriber) – I move that the panel recommend adding Category (G) - educational programs or extracurricular activities offered for a fee or pursuant to contract by a school district, public charter school, or career technical education program to any students, provided that such students may not be counted for purposes of calculating public school enrollment.**

- Discussion: Proponents of the motion state that the goal was to help teachers and students with student achievement.

#### **Board Action**

**M/S (Sevy/Schriber) - I move to amend the previous motion, recommending my suggestion to be an added subsection of Category F, instead of G.**

- Discussion: Panelists questioned the validity of the language under Idaho Code before determining any recommendations to the Board.
- Motion carried 7-0.

#### **Board Action**

**M/S (Cook/Henry) - I move that we substitute Panelist Sevy's recommendation with this: the panel recommend that the State Board of Education work with the legislature to expand this to all students.**

- Discussion: Panelists debated how their recommendations would be pushed through to the Board of Education and the language that would be used. It was ultimately decided that for the purposes of the actions of the day is how the panel thinks the program should be administered moving forward, not retroactively.

- Panelist Sevy stated that this motion should fail so that the previous motion with the amendment would pass since it's in direct conflict with that previous motion.
- Panelist Cook withdrew this motion.

**Board Action**

**M/S (Henry/Milton) - I move to recommend that students must reside in Idaho to access Empowering Parents Grant funds.**

- Motion carried 7-0

**Board Action**

**M/S (Milton/Henry) - I move that we recommend adjusting the program timeline to line up with the academic school year.**

- Discussion: Panelist Cook stated that she was concerned this motion would tamper with the program timeline for parents who are currently grantees of the program.

**Board Action**

**M/S (Milton/Henry) - I move to amend the previous motion to include that the adjustment to the program timeline have no negative impact to current participants.**

- Motion carried 7-0

**Board Action**

**M/S (Henry/Shepherd) - I move to recommend that the program grant money from the first three (3) years roll over to an extra year.**

- Discussion: Panelist Milton stated that it might be more succinct to amend the motion to award only the current grantees an extra year.

**Board Action**

**M/S (Henry/Shepherd) - I move to amend the previous motion to say the panel now recommends that current grantees get an additional year to spend their funds.**

- Motion carried 7-0

**Board Action**

**M/S (Cook/Sevy) – I move that the panel recommend that the State Board of Education create and post publicly a clear policy for two-household families which includes verification that the Empowering Parents award is granted to the parent with authority to make educational decisions for the respective child.**

- Motion carried 7.0

The panel stated they would prefer to not make recommendations on what is eligible/ineligible to purchase on the Odyssey platform to avoid creating impact on grantees that may have to pay back their funds used. Ms. Thompson from the Office of the State Board of Education stated that the grantees will not be asked to repay any funds that were used to purchase a now-ineligible item.

The panel continued through a series of motions on recommendations that they plan to present to the State Board of Education at their October meeting.

**Board Action**

**M/S (Cook/Sevy) I move that the panel recommend musical instruments and tutoring as eligible expenses.**

**AND**

**Board Action**

**M/S (Henry/Schriber) I move that the panel recommend the reimbursement of internet services using program funds**

**AND**

**Board Action**

**M/S (Henry/Sevy) I move that the panel recommend that the grantees that were approved and later purchased ineligible items be allowed back into the program**

- Motion carried 6-0
- One (1) abstention

**AND**

**Board Action**

**M/S (Cook/Henry) I move that the panel recommend that Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and Idaho colleges and universities become vendors in the marketplace**

- Discussion: Panelist Sevy stated that with this guidance, it would take control out of the local districts' hands and move it into the hands of the Office of the State Board of Education.
- Panelist Cook withdrew this motion.

**Board Action**

**M (Henry) I move that the panel recommend a streamlined process for districts and universities to become vendors on the marketplace platform**

- Discussion: it was stated that the panel needs to learn how a vendor is approved to be on the marketplace before the panel recommends anything regarding that process.
- Panelist Henry withdrew this motion.

**Board Action**

**M (Henry) - I move that the panel reject Recommendation 2.4 from the recommendation rubric: to expand vendor services to out-of-state vendors providing education services.**

- Discussion: Panelist Schriber disagreed in rejecting Recommendation 2.4. She stated that such a rejection would negatively impact the northern part of the state and border students. She expressed that there are many opportunities rural and border students wouldn't have access to if the panel rejected that option and that such a blanket objection would be a disservice to the students in the north.
- Due to Recommendation 2.4 not being a formal recommendation, there was no need to vote on this motion.

It was suggested that, in order to maximize the time of the last meeting on September 21, the panel would meet again for a work session. It was decided that the work session date and time would be determined and posted at a later date to accommodate everyone's schedule. Chair Critchfield asked the panel to accomplish the following before the work session:

- Review and edit the recommendation document
- Be prepared to discuss and vote on the recommendations in the document

The panel had a few questions for the Board of Education to answer before the next meeting:

- How many students/recipients of the award fall into the specific AGI brackets?
- What was the time frame of the waves from application to receiving the funds?

#### **Board Action**

M/S (Sevy/Schriber) I move to adjourn the meeting at 4:15 pm (MT)

- Motion carried 7-0



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### **Empowering Parents Parent Advisory Panel September 11, 2023**

The State Board of Education (OSBE) requests that the Empowering Parents Parent Advisory Panel (EPPAP) consider whether to recommend the following categories as “eligible education expenses” pursuant to Idaho Code § 33-1030(3)(f):

- Camps and classes\* – educational camps and classes offered for a fee by independent vendors (i.e. dance classes, martial arts classes, or STEM camps);
- Educational equipment – non-technological education equipment that may be necessary to facilitate a student’s participation in educational activities (i.e. backpacks, computer cases, and tools for science labs);
- Physical education equipment – athletic gear, pay-to-play fees, or other items required for participation in physical education activities (i.e. soccer cleats, basketballs, or competition fees).
- Costumes and uniforms – clothing necessary to facilitate participation in an educational camp, class, or event (i.e. dance uniforms, karate uniforms, or camp t-shirts).

*\*Note - Since July 2023 no NEW vendors that applied to offer classes have been approved to participate in the marketplace. They have been notified if the EPPAP chooses to make such a recommendation, and if the Board subsequently approves it, they can reapply at that time.*

If the EPPAP makes no recommendation on one or more of these categories, we will assume these do not qualify as eligible education expenses under the program and administer the program accordingly.

A punch-out purchase system has been implemented for all purchases as of August. All items intended for purchase are now reviewed and approved or denied by Odyssey staff prior to the purchase being completed. State Board of Education staff subsequently reviews each purchase to verify eligibility. All educational equipment, physical education equipment, and costumes/uniforms are denied unless parents provide documentation that the item supports a student’s current class or curriculum or is identified through a student’s individual education plan (IEP) as necessary to facilitate their learning.



Parents who made ineligible purchases between November 2022 and July 2023 have been contacted to submit additional reasoning to support their purchase. These reasonings are reviewed and the items are either approved or denied by the State Board of Education. If the item is confirmed to be an ineligible use of grant funds the State Board of Education has determined that parents using the online Marketplace between November 2022 and July 2023, will not be permanently removed from the program or required to repay the cost of ineligible funds. If they still have funds remaining, they are available for use. They are eligible for future grant applications. However, ineligible purchases made in the future will be cause for removal from the program. A reminder of eligible items defined in Idaho Code § 33-1030 and the accompanying list of commonly approved and not approved expenses is provided.



# Empowering Parents Parent Advisory Panel

## Recommendations Rubric

### TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1	APPEALS PROCESS	YES	NO
1.1	<p><b>Idaho Code § 33-1031(3) – Barred Household Appeal to the Board:</b> Households should NOT be barred from applying for future grants.</p>		
	<p><i>Grantees that were approved and later purchased ineligible items shall be allowed back into the program.</i></p>	08/17/2023	
1.2	<p><b>Idaho Code § 33-1032(5) - Ineligible Education Expense Appeal to EPAP:</b> An item purchased is found to not have been an “eligible education expense”.</p>		
	<p>1. The parent is notified that the item was not an eligible expense and given the opportunity to repay the cost of the ineligible item(s) and the household is allowed to apply for future grants.</p>		
	<p>2. A parent can appeal the finding to the Empowering Parents Advisory Panel (EPAP). Based on the EPAP determination of non-eligibility, the parent must repay the cost of the ineligible item and is allowed to apply for future grants.</p>		
	<p>3. A parent can appeal against the finding of the Empowering Parents Advisory Panel to the Board. Based on the determination of the Board or its designee, the parent does not have to repay the cost of the ineligible item(s) and is allowed to apply for future grants.</p>		

	CONTRACTOR	YES	NO
2.1	<p><b>Streamline the vendor approval process:</b></p> <p>Streamline the vendor approval process and allow parents to suggest vendors or apply for vendors on their behalf.</p>		
2.2	<p><b>Enhance vendor offerings to address learning loss:</b></p> <p>Incentivize and prioritize vendors offering services specific to addressing student learning loss because of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>		
2.3	<p><b>Expand vendor services available to rural and remote communities:</b></p> <p>Expand vendor services available to rural and remote communities beyond physical education classes and enhanced broadband service.</p>		
2.4	<p><b>Expand vendor services to out-of-state vendors providing educational services:</b></p>		
	<p>1. Allow parents to select out of state vendors offering <b>in-person</b> educational enrichment opportunities.</p>		
	<p>2. Allow parents to select out of state vendors offering educational enrichment opportunities through a <b>virtual</b> platform.</p>		
2.5	<p><b>LEA's and Idaho Colleges and Universities:</b></p> <p>Add LEA's and Idaho Colleges and Universities as vendors in the marketplace.</p>		

3.0	PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION	YES	NO
3.1	<p><b>Accessing Services:</b></p> <p>Allow for all students (public and non-public) to access services offered through LEA's (i.e. tutoring, extracurricular activities, athletics, etc.).</p>		
3.2	<p><b>Residency:</b></p> <p><del>Allow for students residing in out-of-state border communities and attending an Idaho public or private school to access Empowering Parents Funds. Students must reside in Idaho to access Empowering Parents grant funds.</del></p>	08/17/2023	
3.3	<p><b>Annual Timeline:</b></p> <p>Adjust program timeline to align with the start of the school year to allow parents to access funds earlier in the school year, <i>with no negative impact to current participants.</i></p>	08/17/2023	
3.4	<p><b>Awards:</b></p> <p>Move faster through the awards process and shorten the duration between waves.</p>		
3.5	<p><b>Program Caps:</b></p> <p>Increase the per-student allocation for program funds, and/or, increase the number of eligible students per household to account for all eligible students (K-12) within the household.</p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the eligible student (K-12) allocation and cap the awards at three (3) per household.</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow <u>all</u> eligible students (K-12) within a household to receive an Empowering Parents Grant up to \$1,000 per eligible student.</li> </ul>		
3.6	<p><b>Program Support:</b></p> <p>Increase the number of FTE supporting the Empowering Parents Program</p>		

3.7	<p><b>Expenditure of Funds:</b>  <i>Current grant recipients shall have one (1) additional year to spend grant awards.</i></p>	08/17/2023	
3.8	<p><b>Two-Household Families:</b>  <i>The State Board of Education shall create and post publicly a clear policy for two-household families which includes verification that the Empowering Parents award is granted to the parent with authority to make educational decisions for the respective child.</i></p>	08/17/2023	

4.0	ELIGIBLE EXPENSES	YES	NO
4.1	<b>Idaho Code § 33-1030(f) – Other education expenses and services as approved by the Board, upon recommendation of the Parent Advisory Panel</b>		
	a. Educational camps and classes offered for a fee by independent vendors.		
	b. Non-technological education equipment that may be necessary to facilitate a student’s participation in educational activities (i.e. backpacks, computer cases, and tools for science labs).		
	c. Fees associated with non-public school educational services (i.e. Homeschool Co-Ops).		
	d. Public and private school tuition and fees.		
	e. Transportation Costs associated with travel to support open enrollment for enhanced educational opportunities (“Learn Everywhere” bill) and therapy service providers.		
	f. Physical education equipment, gear, uniforms, or pay-to-play fees required for participation in physical education activities.		
	g. <i>Educational programs or extracurricular activities offered for a fee or pursuant to contract by a school district, public charter school, or career technical education program to any students, provided that such students may not be counted for purposes of calculating public school enrollment.</i>	08/17/2023	
	h. <i>Musical instruments and tutoring services.</i>	08/17/2023	
4.2	<b>Reimbursements:</b> Allow direct reimbursements for eligible items purchased outside of the marketplace.		
	Allow direct reimbursement for internet services.	08/17/2023	