**Jana Jones, Democratic candidate, superintendent of public instruction, March 25, 2014**

**1. What letter grade would you assign to the 2014 session?**

Regarding public education I would assign the 2014 Legislature a C.

**2. What do you think the Legislature did right this session, regarding K-12?**

I appreciate the 5.1 percent funding increase for our public schools. It’s a long way from the Governor’s Task Force for Improving Education’s recommendation of returning funding to 2009 levels, but it is a step in the right direction.

**3. What do you think the Legislature did wrong this session, regarding K-12?**

First, the Legislature did nothing to prioritize and address the governor’s task force recommendations in any meaningful way.

Second, I would have liked to see the Legislature pass Rep. Hy Kloc’s early childhood pilot bill. Excellent preschool programs have been shown to boost academic achievement, reduce dropout rates, and provide economic benefits are high as $8 for every dollar spent. My business background tells me this is a good investment for Idaho, and my background in early childhood education tells me this is the right thing to do for our children.

Third, the Legislature should have listened to students, parents, the university presidents, and law enforcement and not have passed the guns on campus bill. I fear this is a precursor to “arming school personnel” on our K-12 campuses (as the School Safety and Security Stakeholder Group recommends). School safety needs to be one of our top priorities — for our children, for their families, and for the teachers and staff in each building, and I am a strong proponent of our Second Amendment rights, but I side with school safety experts and oppose allowing guns in schools.

**4. Based on what you saw this session, what do you consider to be the top priority facing Idaho's next superintendent of public instruction, in the 2015 session? How would you approach that priority?**

There’s a lot of work to do for the next superintendent of public instruction. Budgets and vital programs have been cut, classrooms are overcrowded, local control has been diminished, and trust has been lost.

As the superintendent-elect, I would work with the Governor’s Task Force for Improving Education to prioritize and develop implementation plans, budgets, and timelines for their recommendations. After assuming office and going into the 2015 session I would present the Legislature with a budget that reflected the prioritized recommendations, including restoring funding to the 2009 level.