



Idahoans for Choice in Education

Creating a Brighter Future for Idaho Families

LEGISLATIVE BRIEF

Home School

Harbor School

Traditional School

Charter School

Virtual School



Darrell Deide,
Chairman



Holland Johnson,
Treasurer

Business As Usual, Not Good Enough!

Darrel Deide, *Idahoans for Choice in Education*

A few years ago, I introduced legislation in the state Senate to add more accountability in our K-12 education system. My proposal would have revamped teacher contract law and created a teacher evaluation process in statute. In the end, the Legislature agreed to make minor changes in contract law, but the teacher evaluation process was untouched due to the aggressive lobbying efforts of the Idaho teacher's union.

Had all of my proposed changes been incorporated into Idaho law, we would now be far ahead of the game in our quest to secure federal funding under President Obama's "Race To The Top" program.

That program requires states to prove that they are strong in certain areas of education, including performance pay for teachers, linking student achievement data to teachers and principals as well as providing a friendly environment for charter schools (meaning the elimination of caps on the number of charter schools that can open in Idaho).

However, Idaho is still like most states, lagging far behind in efforts to make our schools, our teachers and principals more accountable. Our teachers are not evaluated based upon the achievement growth of their students. Teachers acquire tenured status almost automatically and are nearly impossible to remove from the classroom, even if their performances warrant replacement or reassignment. Teachers are paid based on their experience and education levels, meaning teachers who perform very well are often paid the same as teachers who perform very poorly. Most people agree that matching outcomes and ability with pay are imperative for accountability, yet nothing much has changed in the past 50 years. It is still "business as usual." While there have been some efforts to bring about change, most recently by Superintendent Luna, to create a pay for performance plan all accountability measures have been fought successfully, primarily by the teacher's union.

Today, with the new emphasis on accountability from the federal level, we will see some changes made. We need to pay teachers based upon how well their students learn and get rid of the single salary schedule where only years of experience and how many college credits earned determine salary.

With the new technology available to schools today we need to create a system where the technology of The Idaho Education Network (IEN) is used to collect data on all facets of schooling, including data on students and teachers to establish a vast storehouse of information so that decision makers can know how much kids are learning and how well teachers are teaching. Specifically, establish a teacher identifier that matches student records with the appropriate teacher.

SCHOOL CHOICE:

Freedom to choose a school that provides the environment that you desire...not someone else's!

Freedom to choose a school that meets your student's needs... not someone else's!

Freedom to choose a school that meets your expectations... not someone else's!

Freedom to choose a school based upon its performance... not where you live!

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Directors

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Julie Yamamoto,
Leslie Mauldin,
Ann Rydalch
Ralph Smeed
Jack Barraclough

Past Directors

Jack Wenders,
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Please visit our website at: www.ice-pac.net



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We must substantially change “tenure” as it is harmful to kids and is really not beneficial to teachers either. Good teachers are doing their job well and are in high demand. The “tenure” law provides no additional benefit for them. From my experience, this law only protects marginal or poor teachers who want a “job for life” without real accountability. The teacher’s union president has stated, “that the union would never give up continuing contract.” (I didn’t know the unions were in charge). However, change is inevitable because the future of our state, our country is at stake. We simply can’t continue to do the same thing and get the same result. It is not good enough!

This “Legislative Brief” is sent via e-mail to over 1,500 recipients and also sent via regular mail to friends of education choice throughout Idaho. These “Briefs” and other articles on local, state and national education issues can also be accessed on my education blog at : idahopress.com

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