



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

The Hoffman Challenge

Recently, this newspaper published a letter from Patti Moylan, a middle school teacher from Caldwell in which she challenged Wayne Hoffman, the head of the Idaho Freedom Foundation and author of frequent articles that appear in this and other papers around the state. Moylan said Hoffman should teach her class for a day. In her letter she provides a warning to Hoffman in that he will face 125-130 students for 7 periods, teaching them composition and literature and that many of them come to the classroom each day with assorted issues ranging from hunger to abuse.

The point of the letter had little to do with the difficulty of teaching 7th and 8th graders, and the fact that a lot of them do come to the classroom with assorted issues. Rather the point was to publically challenge Hoffman to walk in her shoes for a day and perhaps he might better appreciate the work of the classroom teacher. Patti wants Wayne to stop his allegedly, "venomous attacks on Idaho education and Idaho teachers."

Perhaps Moylan should also be challenged to find specific references where Hoffman has attacked Idaho teachers. As I recall, Hoffman has been rather supportive of teachers, saying we could improve the quality of education by paying our really good teachers a lot more. Of course, it's hard to reward great teachers for their hard work when Idaho's schools pay all teachers exactly the same, regardless of educational outcomes.

An attack on a poor performing school system is not the same thing as attacking the people who work in that system. Some great teachers teach in failing schools; some great teachers teach in failing school districts.

I believe, and I think Mr. Hoffman does too, that while there are a few teachers that should find a new line of work, the vast majority of teachers come to school each day dedicated to do the best job that they can for the students that they are assigned to teach. The problems with our schools today have little to do with people! We have a system problem, not a personnel one. It is this system that fails our students, our parents, our taxpayers and yes, it is also failing most of our teachers.

We have a k-12 system that allows 25-30 percent of our kids to dropout, one that does not properly prepare most students for higher education and one that does not even rank in the top 10 percent of the most developed nations. Yes, we DO have a problem!

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

Becky Stallcop
Julie Yamamoto,
Leslie Mauldin,
Ann Rydalph
Ralph Smeed
Jack Barracough

Past Directors

Jack Wenders,
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We can do better. We must do better. We have the facilities, the resources, the technology, and the personnel to do so. But in order to make headway on this issue, those who work in education have to stop treating our critique of a failed system as an attack on individual educators. Once that's done, we'll really be able to remove the barriers to improved public education in Idaho.

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