



# 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

### Closing a School is Not Necessarily a Bad Thing!

How should the State Board of Education deal with the Nampa Classical Academy's appeal for continued operation? Perhaps that decision is not as tough as many perceive it to be. Further, does NCA's troubles really harm the charter school movement in Idaho? I don't think so. One of the main selling points for offering charter schools in Idaho was the fact that if a charter school failed to perform satisfactorily academically or fiscally, the school could have its charter revoked. I didn't consider that a bad thing in 1998 when the charter school legislation first passed, and I don't consider it a bad thing today.

The hope and goal of charter school proponents was that charters would be truly accountable to taxpayers. So, when we lose one of 36 operating charter schools in Idaho due to its failure to perform, it is actually in keeping with the philosophy of the original framers of the Idaho charter school law. It's too bad that all of our traditional schools aren't put through the same type of scrutiny that Nampa Classical Academy has faced. Simply put, when any school or school district fails its students academically or its taxpayers fiscally there ought to be consequences. Sadly, today the only schools that are truly accountable to students, parents and taxpayers are our charter schools. Traditional schools are free to go to over-burdened property taxpayers via supplemental levies, plant facility levies, emergency levies, etc., etc. to continue "business as usual" with their abundance of administrators and non-teaching personnel. Charter schools do NOT have that luxury as they do NOT have any taxing authority. In other words, charter schools have no bail-outs.

Earlier this year I suggested in a guest opinion in this newspaper that the Nampa Classical Academy Board and founders get their "ducks in a row." I said they should drop their lawsuit, concentrating first on getting their school up and running successfully, and that they should provide the Charter School Commission with everything asked of them. I went on to say NCA must be totally open and transparent with their finances and their use of taxpayer money. Finally, I said they can't be an additional burden on Idaho taxpayers. Apparently, they didn't follow this advice, nor the advice of others in positions to provide wise counsel, and there were consequences as a result.

While the Commission's revocation of NCA's charter came after months of its attempts to help NCA realize their shortcomings, it did truly come as a last resort, as it should. The decision places a lot of kids, parents, and educators in a real dilemma while waiting for the State Board's final decision on the matter. However, it's a sobering reminder that public education can no longer do "business as usual" and that this ultimate form of accountability is the right thing to do.

#### 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!

Darrel Deide,  
Chairman

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"Expanding Educational Choices for Idaho Families"

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