



Idahoans for Choice in Education

Creating a Brighter Future for Idaho Families

LEGISLATIVE BRIEF

Home School

Harbor School

Traditional School

Charter School

Virtual School



Choices



Darrell Deide,
Chairman



Holland Johnson,
Treasurer

What Do They Really Want? What Do They Really Mean?

Darrel Deide, Idahoans for Choice in Education

Soon after Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna presented his school reform plan, the leaders of the teachers union started crying foul, and voicing all the usual apocalyptic concerns about why Idaho's education system must remain solidly ensconced in the 20th century.

They decried the use of modern innovation, made unsubstantiated remarks about class sizes and staunchly defended teacher tenure as if it was a precious commodity. All of their criticisms are just a cover-up to mask their real objective. Technology can and does teach kids, rather successfully, I might add, and at less cost. The teachers' union is threatened by this. Fewer teachers means less revenue via union dues, and that impacts the union's bottom line. No wonder the union leaders are so bothered by the proposal to use technology. Not convinced about technology in the classroom? Check out "Computers teaching kids without teachers" on our website. Kids in many other states are getting computers even at an earlier grade than the 9th. Aren't Idaho kids just as responsible as those in Maine? And they're very tech savvy. Why not unleash our kids' full potential by unleashing the full potential of modern technology?

What about class size? Research indicates that an increase of 1 or 2 students per class, as Superintendent Luna's plan proposes, is a non-factor in the quality of a child's education. There will be no loss in student achievement. Conversely, using the cost savings to increase the technology available to the teacher and student will increase student achievement; the most important result of our educational efforts. Again, the union bosses are only worried about one thing: the union revenues.

And finally, it has been suggested that tenure is imperative to the ability to hire teachers. The fact is, most prospective teachers do not enter the profession because of tenure. If some do, they are obviously doing so for the wrong reason. Eliminating tenure, coupled with pay for performance, will enhance the profession, drive salaries upward and attract better qualified people into the profession. During my time in education, I have worked with many teachers, some of whom were frustrated by the fact that they work extremely hard, generate better results but get paid the same or less than their tenured peers who are not nearly as invested in their profession. Great teachers deserve financial recognition for their hard work. Performance pay and an end to tenure will highlight and reward the best and brightest Idaho teachers, while making it easier to remove underperformers.

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 Rydaldch
- Ralph Smeed
- Jack Barraclough

Past Directors

- Jack Wenders,
- Gayle O'Donahue

"Expanding Educational Choices for Idaho Families"

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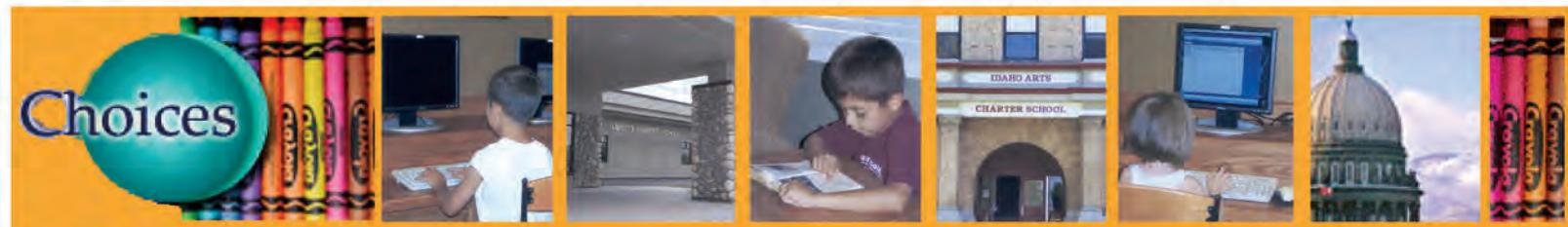
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So, what do the union's leaders really mean and what do they really want? The answer is simple and very obvious. They want business as usual. They view schools as being all about the adults. They view kids as secondary, and those union bosses are willing to sacrifice any and all for their purposes. So, are schools for adults or are they for students? I am hopeful that legislators will really recognize what the union leaders are really after when they criticize school reform, and that our lawmakers will finally put our kids first!

"There are risks and costs to a program of action. But they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction." JFK

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