



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

CHOICES, CHOICES AND MORE CHOICES!

Darrel Deide, Idahoans for Choice in Education

Recently, Cathy Holland-Smith, the Legislative budget chief, told our legislators that they could have about \$130 million surplus to work with and thus a host of choices. More choices suggest a more contentious 2012 session, as every legislator will have their own "remedy" to deal with the excess cash. The choice that the legislature will eventually make will fall somewhere between a \$130 million tax cut and spending the entire amount restoring higher education and k-12 appropriations.

What choice should legislators make? What choice will best accelerate our State's economy? The case can certainly be made to return the full amount to the people who provided it and to scale back the personal and corporate income tax. However, as good an idea as it is, it won't happen. It won't because in order to reach agreement, a compromise will result in some combination of tax reduction and restoring some education funding.

Should that solution become reality and some k-12 education funding is restored then again, how best to do the most good with the excess cash? One thing is certain. It won't do any good if the money is simply returned to the school districts, no strings attached! Another certainty is that our traditional schools, primarily due to reduced funding, are finding assorted ways to shorten the school year, such as furlough days for teachers and the 4-day school week. Neither of which enhances what schools are all about, student learning.

There was a time in the not too distant past when schools were in session 180 days, with prescribed hours. There was some uniformity across the State. Now, with the latitude provided in law, no school has 180 days of instruction. The school year, while technically adhering to some time requirements, is significantly shorter than the 180 days due to furlough days, 4-day school weeks, parent teacher conference days, in-service days, athletic events, etc. etc. etc. If we are serious about "putting students first, rather than the adults, then we need to have those students in school, with a teacher and not "on vacation." If a student's time with a teacher is important, and it is, then that is what the money should buy.

Note: Becky Stallcop, principal/superintendent of Liberty Charter School in Nampa and the founder of the Harbor School Method, was recently interviewed by Darrel Deide, Chairman of Idahoans for Choice in Education concerning current education issues. That question/answer session is posted on the blog "Choice in Education" at : idahopress.com

*"My reading of history convinces me that most bad government results from too much government."
Thomas Jefferson*

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

Holland Johnson,
Treasurer

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"Expanding Educational Choices for Idaho Families"

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