

FROM THE OFFICE OF
BARTLETT FOR ND SENATE

May 22, 2008

Dear Members of the North Dakota Education Association,

As a candidate for the ND Senate in District 6 (Bottineau, Renville, Ward Counties) I have been asked by the NDEA to respond to issues important to children, public education and NDEA members.

Regarding my personal experience in education, I attended public schools, attended and taught engineering in public colleges, published papers and articles on education, received grants and awards for educational innovation and now direct two educational organizations while teaching two online courses for a Christian school and educating four boys at home with the help of my wife Lynn.

I am not opposed to public education when it is under the control of parents and not influenced by liberal, multicultural, or globalist agendas. My position on education encourages local control in every way, which will attract more teachers to the profession while increasing teacher pay by having less overhead, and give teachers genuine academic freedom. They could even teach the Ten Commandments with such freedom.

It was never intended for Christianity to be separated from public schools or governing bodies. The Marxist social liberals use the legal threat of "separation of church and state" as a clever tool to eliminate Christianity from the public square. In fact, an ACLU lawyer invented the term in 1947 (Everson v. Board of Education of Ewing Township). Religious freedom is foundational to a free and prosperous nation and state. The First Amendment protects people (including teachers) of every faith from the federal government.

My full position which points toward locally parent controlled (v. federal & state controlled) public education is stated at: <http://www.bartlettndsenate.us/loaled.htm>.

1. Would you support legislation increasing the state's responsibility of the total operating cost to equal 70%? No, because that is not required by the ND constitution and it has been proven that more money does not result in better education. A strong economic future for the state requires that taxpayers keep their own money because they can invest it into productive pursuits better than bureaucracies can. Home educators and private schools are examples of spending far less on education with better results. Funding requested by the public schools tends to promote indoctrination versus developing a student's ability to think independently and improve academic learning. In the current public school system, the student becomes schooled in socialism and humanism toward being dependent on the state.

"...the real purpose of American Education [is] ...to use the schools to change America from a free, individual nation to a socialist, global "state," just one of many socialist states which will be subservient to the United Nations Charter, not the United States Constitution..." Charlotte Iserbyt, Senior Policy Advisor in the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, US Department of Education.

2. Do you oppose the initiated measure circulating to cut corporate and income taxes, and lock away oil extraction taxes? No. Less government intrusion into personal, business, and educational life is better and would result in fewer taxes. The ND Constitution places value on morality in education which the North Dakota Youth Health Risk Surveys show is failing. There is a point where education investment works against the state's interests. It does not save the tax payers money, but produces more people dependent on the government and the philosophy of socialism, which increases government spending and taxes. Smaller government would mean more freedom for North Dakotans and fewer taxes. That would be desirable.

3. Would you support legislation to continue to dedicate 70% of new funding for teacher compensation? No. I think some creativity and freedom should be used to better compensate teachers. An example would be to have parents locally hire some of the teachers they want to teach their children and pay for it without state funds. Like all other products, the free market would then judge and reward quality and performance better than bureaucracy. The current system is promoting mediocrity in teaching. It is the incentives beyond money that count most, as well as being accountable to parents.

4. Would you support dedicated state funding to provide a mentoring/instructional coaching program for teachers? No. Teachers are grown up professionals who can network as they see the need. They don't need babysitting, and should be actively engaged with the subject they are teaching. Coaching programs have failed for college faculty. Local professionals could arrange teacher internships which cost nothing, since the employer is also benefited by the teacher working for them. The frustration and disillusionment in teachers is not due to funding or lack of knowledge or ability, it is due to lack of freedom and local control. Teachers would be retained if they had constitutional freedom to teach without globalist or anti-Christian agendas.

5. Mandatory professional development is wasting time and taxpayer money. Teachers as well as Education Support Professionals (ESP) can learn what they want and need when they are motivated for the best results, versus top down mandating of development.

a) Would you support legislation that provides dedicated funding for ESP professional development? No. State money would be wasted in this way. It's better to have local school boards find local resources to fund development, and then there would be local accountability for effective development.

b) Do you support the idea of teacher or ESP driven professional development? Not completely, but partially. I understand that individuals in a particular job may have a good idea of what would be helpful to learn, but others with more experience may have more wisdom to suggest direction or scope of such learning. There needs to be agreement on what is genuinely helpful to both teachers/ESPs, and school functions.

C) Would you oppose legislation to restore the NDEA Instructional Conference days as paid days for educators' professional development. Yes, because this is indoctrinating teachers to centralized state, federal and international agendas. Teachers and local school boards need to have freedom from these philosophies to be effective and efficient.

6. Would you support the effort to keep public dollars for public schools and oppose tuition tax credits, vouchers, or other similar proposals that erode public school funding?

No, such efforts keep the education monopoly in place, which increases costs and lowers quality. The free market should be encouraged. The NDEA's fear of competition is evidence that its methods are not at the highest quality for the lowest price, otherwise it could compete on the free market and would not fear competition. Public school funding formulas need to be localized and made more flexible in order to allow for competition. After all, aren't students taught that completion is good!

The ND Constitution requires that a public education system be in place, and it does not limit the means to accomplish this. Does the NDEA oppose this freedom of the ND Constitution?

7. a. Would you support efforts to protect and improve the fund to provide retirement benefits for present and future retirees, including providing for a cost-of-living adjustment for retirees?

The state first needs to keep its promises. Secondly, teachers need to learn that a cost of living adjustment does not keep up with the cost of living. The M3 money supply is the measure of inflation where the cost-of-living calculations leave out goods which are increasing in price more rapidly than others, such as food and fuel. I support freedom for the teachers to invest their income wherever they desire and, over the long run, remove the overhead financial and administrative burdens from the teacher retirement systems.

b. If the actuary doesn't support a cost-of-living adjustment, would you support a cost of living adjustment from the general fund for retirees? The problem is deeper than this. With the cost of living increase reported at 3 %, and real M3 inflation at 12 %, neither the retirement fund or the general fund have the money to support teachers. This would not be fair to those who are not public school retirees. The solution is to move toward a free market model, where teachers are paid what they are worth and given the responsibility to take care of their own retirement without being dependent on the government for a retirement system.

8. a. Would you support the collective bargaining rights for K-12 Educational Support Professionals? No. local control would not require collective bargaining or the costly expense to taxpayers it represents. Individuals have the right to bargain for what they want individually.

b. Would you support collective bargaining rights for higher education employees? No. Mature individuals are able to negotiate for their own salary and benefits. Treating adults like children leave them acting like children.

c. Would you support efforts to strengthen the current teacher collective bargaining laws? No. Unions undermine efficiency and effectiveness of organizations. I would encourage local bargaining as would occur naturally when a need or discrepancy arises. No need for bureaucracy here, either.

9. Do you oppose a high stakes test as a single measure of student growth and achievement? Yes, but informal assessment leaves teachers less accountable for performance and a larger opening for globalist agendas to infect children. I think each local school board should have their own standards within the limits of the ND constitution, and create their own tests for their students, which would promote creativity and uniqueness to specific schools.

10. Would you support legislation requiring REAs to meet the standard stated above? No. Teachers and schools need freedom to do what they think is best, not top down management.

The move to urban from rural is a desired end of globalism. People are more easily controlled in the urban setting and more dependent on the government. I suggest skipping the Regional Education Associations

and go direct to the local level using only the ND Constitution as a test for their request for finances. There are too many bureaucrats in ND education which is costing the taxpayers and hurting children via false indoctrinations.

More Politically Incorrect Thoughts

More quality teachers would be available if teacher certification was dropped and people who knew their subjects through education and experience were hired to mentor students.

If the state was serious about its constitutional mission in education and lessening the tax burden upon North Dakotans, then schools should teach students to home educate their own children and phase out most of the need for the public school system within one generation.

Two Challenges to the NDEA

I understand that these ideas sound innovative today, but the Founding Fathers of the United States of America would think that they are simply common ideas. The idea of local educational control can be re-proven today. Here are two challenges toward that end:

1. I sincerely challenge the NDEA to help me find a school where I can spend one full school day with the entire school body in a gymnasium. During that one day, I could show the students and the teachers how one teacher can teach all grade levels of academics in a much more efficient manner than currently done. They would need to bring their books, pencils and paper. For screening purposes, I could do this with a group of teachers alone first.
2. Secondly, I challenge the NDEA to point me to a school board that is ready to terminate the negative moral effects of the liberal, multicultural and global agendas upon their school. I would be happy to help them through the transition toward becoming a truly locally controlled public school instead of a globally controlled indoctrination center. It would perhaps be helpful to first train school board officers, or a subcommittee, on the details of the respective philosophies to prove their influence on education, morality, drugs and alcohol abuse, and even suicide in North Dakota schools. References like “*Understanding the Times*” by David Noebel would be used.

My full position which points toward locally parent controlled (v. federal & state controlled) public education is stated at: <http://www.bartlettndsenate.us/loaled.htm>.

Thanks very much for the opportunity to respond to this survey. Please feel free to call, email or schedule a visit to discuss more detail on any or all aspects of the ideas presented above.

Sincerely and respectfully submitted,

Dr. James, P. Bartlett, PhD

1854 107TH STREET NORTHEAST
BOTTINEAU, NORTH DAKOTA 58318
(701) 263-4574

james@bartlettNDsenate.us, BartlettNDsenate.us