



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 Four-Day School Week Education Innovation Or Race To The Bottom

Darrel Deide, Idahoans for Choice in Education

A number of Idaho school districts have decided that due to declining resources, reducing the number of school days in a week and a much shorter school year is the answer to their revenue problems. Recently in the Nampa, Idaho Press Tribune there appeared an article where the Notus School District was touting the benefits of the shorter week. The district's superintendent cited many benefits including: saving money, more time for staff collaboration, fewer students failing, more academic advising for students, and more time for tutoring of students. Additionally, the new 4-day a week schedule will reduce transportation costs, energy costs and allow a reduction in hours of support staff from 40 to 32 hours per week. To the school superintendent's credit he stated, "We will continue if its best for kids. But it's not set in stone."

There's little doubt that cutting the school week to 4 days will save a little money. The amount of savings is not as much as you might expect in that all teachers and administrators are not getting paid less and their salaries account for a major part of the school district's expenditures. Cutting it even further would save even a little bit more. However, is that what schools are supposed to be doing? Schools, just like every other business and public agency in these tough times, need to be figuring out how to do more with less. Schools should be to educate kids and try to make our students competitive not only with students around the nation but around the world as well. We are way behind most of the industrialized nations now and with this shorter school year we will fall further behind.

What's troubling about the 4-day week is the number of schools considering it and the proponents claiming there is no adverse academic impact. Proponents claim students will still go to school the same number of hours, but they'll just cram more hours into a school day. That may be true, but suggesting that all the hours a student spends in the classroom are productively equal is just wrong. There truly is a point of diminishing returns, whether it is in the work place or in the schoolroom.

Another consideration is the impact on parents. With the 4-day week families will now have to pay for an extra day at the daycare when those kids should be in the classroom learning.

Is the 4-day school week going to become a standard practice? There are a number of districts considering it, and some actually doing it. Why? Other than saving a little money, perhaps there is another, more compelling motive. Many of our school districts, especially in the rural areas, are losing population. School enrollments are declining and with declining enrollments come reduc-

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

Directors

Becky Stallcop
Julie Yamamoto,
Leslie Mauldin,
Ann Rydalch
Ralph Smeed
Jack Barraclough

Past Directors

Jack Wenders,
Gayle O'Donahue

"Expanding Educational Choices for Idaho Families"

ICE • P.O. Box 933 • Boise • Idaho • 83701

Please visit our website at: www.ice-pac.net



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

tions in revenue. In an effort to cut their losses, the 4-day week is used to “market” their school district in order to attract students. I am sure a lot of students would view 3-day weekends favorably and many teachers would like a three-day weekend every week as well. Hopefully, this “race to the bottom” is not a sign of things to come.

“The democracy will cease to exist when you take away from those who are willing to work and give to those who would not.” -- 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

Directors

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

Past Directors

Jack Wenders,
Gayle O'Donahue

“Expanding Educational Choices for Idaho Families”

ICE • P.O. Box 933 • Boise • Idaho • 83701

Please visit our website at: www.ice-pac.net