

Knighit Allen

cc: Mr. GWT 16885  
Fax 733-7250

6524 Bourbon Way  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89107  
(702) 870-3089

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To: Members of the Governor's Task Force on Tax Policy  
Subject: K-12 Education Funding

Some questions need to be asked right at the start. Do all of you know and understand that the dog and pony show you have sat thru the last two meetings is really just a small part of a national campaign by the National Education Association (NEA) to rachet up the cost of public education? That the same scenario is being played out in front of commissions like yours and legislative committees in states all around the country? That you are, in reality, just pawns in a national game of divide and conquer pitting one state against another in a never ending upward spiral of revenue flows into the public education establishment?

The tactic is historically incredibly powerful. It worked for Caesar, why not the NEA? The mechanics of it are pretty easy to understand.

In states that are below the national average in per pupil spending, like Nevada, the "shame game" is the weapon of choice. "Don't you understand the children are our most precious resource? They are the future. The leaders of tomorrow. Can't you see that? Can't you at least bring education funding up to the national average? Is that so terribly much to ask? For the children?"

In states that are at the average it tends to be the same hustle but with a slightly different twist. "Average? Is that really all you want to be? Aren't our children worth more than an average commitment? Can't you come up with at least some extra revenue to us above just average? Is that too much to ask? For the children?"

In the top spending states it goes something like, "All the other states are increasing funding for education. You don't want to fall out of the top ten, do you? Our children still deserve the best we can give them and that means increasing the dollars we receive."

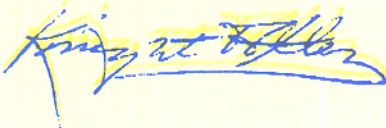
Bottom line? As this ongoing program is successfully executed around the country the cost of education keeps going up while results stagnate at best. Give the Nevada education establishment what it wants, which is \$375 million at minimum, and you'll still be below the national average and the NEA's corporate subsidiary, the NSEA will be right back with its "shame game" routine all over again.

No country in the world spends more per capita on public education and no country gets less for its money. For half a century and more the education establishment has been whining poverty and saying the answer is more money. They have been getting away with their "Show us the money!" and then we'll perform routine for far too long.

The SAT results released in August of 2001 show Nevada's kids were +0.005% on the verbal and +0.002% on the math test scores (those decimal points are correct). Everyone in the Nevada education establishment is doing far better economically than our children are doing academically. Giving the establishment \$375 million (or multiple times more) is not going to change that.

You, as members of the Task Force, and the people of Nevada do not exist to be mice in the NEA/NSEA's maze. It's time to reverse the order of things. First comes the performance, then comes the money. Yes, even if it means higher taxes. But, only after the kids are doing better than those who would use them for their own gain.

Respectfully submitted,



Government partnership not privilege.