

PAID FOR BY MELALEUCA

The Community Page

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The Best Teachers in the Nation

Based on my personal experience, I am convinced that Idaho has some of the best teachers in the nation. We love Idaho teachers! Our children love them! They put in extra hours. They care deeply about the growth and development of our children. They have a strong desire to help kids succeed and take pride in them even after they graduate and move on with their lives. We all have had teachers when we were young who literally changed our lives. They should be held up as heroes. They have a tremendous impact on every child. Teachers deserve job security and need to be paid extremely well in order to attract and reward the best of them.

Our teachers have not failed us. In fact, our teachers deserve the absolute best recognition possible, both from parents and the state. But the system designed by the Idaho Education Association (the Union) has failed us and our children. It is important to separate the work and objectives of the Union bosses and the work and goals of the teachers themselves.

Frank Z. Vandenberg

CEO, Melaleuca Inc.

Keeping the Best Teachers in Idaho

Governor Otter and Superintendent Luna's plan, *Students Come First*, will transform a system that has been broken for decades. If our collective goal is to put our children first, then what is to fear when you understand the three pillars of the plan? These pillars are: 21st Century Classrooms, Great (well-compensated) Teachers and Leaders and Transparent Accountability.

We suspect that the *Students Come First* plan will need to be tweaked in future years as we find ways to make it better, but clearly it has the elements to fix the broken system that has been in place for decades, which is causing our children to get further and further behind.

We need to act now to ensure that Idaho attracts and keeps the best and brightest teachers. And the legislature needs to figure out what to do with teachers who don't meet our standards. Contrary to the propaganda, good teachers do not have anything to be frightened of under a "pay for performance" system. We know that there are those who say teachers will not be attracted to a system where they cannot be assured that they will always have a job regardless of how poorly they perform. We suggest that the best teachers will be attracted to a system where excellence is rewarded. Only those who have good reason to believe they cannot perform would choose to stay away from a "pay for performance" system. We think that's also a good advantage to this program. Of course, change is always scary. Fear of the unknown will keep us from moving ahead. But knowing that we share the objective of creating schools where both students and teachers prosper can assure teachers that lawmakers will create a system where that can happen.

It's Time to Hold the IEA Accountable

We invite teachers to disregard the propaganda being pitched to them by the Idaho Education Association, and to look at the facts. We would ask: are the union bosses at the IEA really the experts on education? Clearly, they have created a system that has failed our children. Their lucrative salaries depend on teacher support of their misdirected agenda. We suggest that teachers endeavor to discover what the IEA is all about. Be courageous in your investigation. Get an accounting of how the IEA spends its money. Discover what the salaries of the union bosses are. And determine what political party the IEA supports with your union dues. Many already know what the answers to those questions are. But most teachers do not. It's your union! You deserve to know what it's doing with your union dues! We suggest you demand an accounting.



Melaleuca: The Wellness Company® knows Idaho's schools. 96% of our 1,678 Idaho employees' families are educated in Idaho.

Good Teachers Thrive When Good Performance Is Rewarded

The National Education Association (NEA) has tried to boost its membership and increase its hold on the system by scaring teachers into believing that the Union protects their jobs through establishing the concept of "tenure"—where even the poorest-performing teacher is safe within the system. The Union has also forwarded the propaganda suggesting that "pay for performance" would be unfair. They tell teachers they need to fear for their jobs under such a system. They create slogans like "you can't run the schools like a business." Rather than fall for this propaganda, we suggest the teachers, parents and lawmakers alike look at the real facts and study the real data. The current system of protecting poor performers is failing our children. Our children deserve better! There is no reason to suggest that good teachers would be in jeopardy if we changed the system so that it worked for the children.

A Well-Proven System

This week, a local teacher approached a Melaleuca employee. He questioned the employee about Melaleuca's recent Community Page suggesting that Idaho do away with tenure. He said, "You are taking away my job security! Without tenure, how will I ever even know that I have a job from year to year?" The Melaleuca employee responded, "The same way I know I have a job next year. I know if I do a good job I will have a job." This Melaleuca employee made an excellent point. 90% of all workers in Idaho work under the concept that if they do a good job they will keep their job. It's a healthy concept. Every employee knows that there is much that happens regarding their job that's not in their control. But they know their employer needs good people. No employer can afford to create an environment where good employees are let go on a whim. Hundreds of thousands of other employees across Idaho feel secure working under that system. Great employees have nothing to fear. Only those with extremely low performance should be worried about such a system. Of course, the standards need to be fair. Of course, the measurements need to be fair. Of course, the reward system needs to be fair. Of course, good teachers need to feel secure. But none of those things exist in today's system. We invite teachers throughout Idaho to not buy into the propaganda being administered to them by the IEA. It is not as scary as they are leading you to believe. We invite you to look forward to a new system, where your skills will be recognized, where excellence will be rewarded, and where our children will learn and grow and be able to compete in this new global marketplace. In that system, everyone wins—especially the children!