

From: David Nyman [mailto:DNyman@restorsci.com]

Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2014 10:26 AM

Subject: SJR 9 and HJR 1 Vouchers and Quality of Public Schools and Longer Term School Budgeting Process

I would like to express my opposition to the recent movement to amend the constitution to distribute public funds to private schools. I have 4 teens in the public school system in Anchorage. They have variously attended Chugach Optional, Central Middle School of Science, Steller and West High. My step daughter attended Girdwood Elementary and now attends South High. It is a challenge to keep up with the scholastic and extracurricular activities but in doing so I have come to the opinion that Anchorage Schools offer a wide range of options and in most cases excellent educational environments. When there is a problem it is up to me the parent to work with the child and school system to identify it and resolve the issue. Thus when I hear others grouse about the public school system I think to myself that perhaps they need to be more involved with the school system.

In my opinion the initiatives identified above as SJR9 and HJR1 are flatly misguided and will detract from continuing to promote and build the best public education system possible. Thus I object to these measures and the constitutional changes they would require. Alaska's constitution has been shown time and time again to be well crafted as it is based on sound principles. What I see in the current efforts is some folks who are in a position of authority believe they should change the current system based on their perception of what is occurring versus the reality of the situation.

With that said, Alaska can always do better in managing the expenses or the quality of the school system. The year to year budgeting process, I believe, detracts from any manager's ability to plan over a longer time frame as proposed by forward funding. The herky jerky nature of our annual budget scramble affects all branches of our government, allows for easy insertion of poorly justified projects into the process. Mega projects that are sexy like the Knik Arm Crossing or the Susitna Hydro siphon capital away from basic services including our schools.

In conclusion I hope everyone has a productive session and works toward the benefit of all Alaskans!

Best Regards,

David Nyman