



The Nevada Policy Research Institute

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NPRI criticizes moratorium on charter schools

The Nevada Policy Research Institute today criticized the decision of the Nevada State Board of Education on Friday to put a moratorium on the approval of new charter schools. Board members claim to be concerned that the state Department of Education will be overwhelmed by an influx of charter school applications because of the decision of the Clark County School District to cease sponsorship of new charter schools.

“This is a troubling move on the part of the Board,” said NPRI Communications Director Andy Matthews. “Charter schools are an important and effective part of our education system because of the freedom and accountability they bring to a system badly lacking in both. This is a vote to deny Nevada’s children the opportunity for a better education.”

Matthews also questioned the motives behind the Board’s decision. “That Nevada’s public education establishment has long been hostile to the idea of giving parents more control over their children’s education is no secret,” Matthews said. “We must thus greet the Board’s claims that their hand was forced due to an unmanageable workload with proper skepticism. The reality is that Nevada has relatively few charter schools to administer – 22 – whereas Arizona, for example, has nearly 600. Yet we don’t see Arizona complaining about the burden of handling too many charter schools.

“Additionally, those numbers indicate there is still far too little educational freedom in Nevada as compared to other states. In light of those numbers, as well as the growing demand for charter schools, as evidenced by the spike in applications, this is a time when we need to be expanding freedom, not placing moratoria on it.”

Matthews said that the Board’s vote is consistent with its regular practice of acting to suppress efforts to improve Nevada’s education system through greater choice and freedom. “It’s unfortunate that the Board puts its political agenda ahead of Nevada’s children,” he said.

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