

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Jacob Bolson and I'm coming to you from outside Hubbard in rural Hardin County. I farm, work in the agricultural equipment business, am a man of Christian faith and conservative values, have 4 children in our public school system, and volunteer on a variety of community organizations, including the last 7 years on the Hubbard-Radcliffe Board of Education. With that Christian faith and conservative values, I trust that I share common values with many of you here tonight.

I take great pride in our public schools and how our team works diligently each and every day to provide a developmental and nurturing environment for our students, regardless of their background. I emphasize that we are required by law to serve all students- no student entrance exams here.

If there is one thing I've learned through 7+ years on the school board, it is the depth of complexities that exist in public education, such as Iowa Code requiring a minimum of a 3% salary increase to certified staff, regardless of what SSA percentage is set by the legislature. And the extreme rigor that goes into ensuring tax dollars are invested in the most efficient and traceable manner possible, including annual audits. Just because an ESA recipient needs to be accredited does not mean it has equitable accountability compared to public schools.

If the majority party believes that ESAs are needed to reform education in Iowa, then let's have an ESA policy that sets a level playing field based upon facts. The magnitude of mis-information and utter lies that are present in this conversation is embarrassing. For example, Iowa public schools do not invest \$17,000-\$19,000 per pupil on direct education. This is absolutely false, but if a person does not have an understanding of Iowa school finance, especially in rural areas, it is very easy to have viewpoints manipulated by lobbyists and people with mis-guided agenda.

I'm going to close with two quotes from a recent newsletter from a member of the majority party....

1. "Iowans have come to know House Republicans as a common-sense conservative caucus."
2. "We need more common-sense accountability for Iowans' tax dollars"

These came directly from Speaker Grassley's newsletter last week, so let's put these statements to work, set aside the mis-information, set aside the lies, and truly problem solve to further advance education in Iowa.

Thank you for supporting our kids.

Jacob Bolson  
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