

Education Minnesota

Sending taxpayer money to unaccountable private schools is not the answer

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ST. PAUL, Minn. (Oct. 31, 2017) – Republican candidate for governor Keith Downey promised on Tuesday to transfer taxpayer money to unaccountable private and religious schools if he's elected next year. Education Minnesota President Denise Specht released the following statement in response.

"If Mr. Downey really wanted to benefit the children of Minnesota he would join us in preparing all students for successful lives by giving each of them access to well-equipped classrooms, highly trained teachers and lessons that inspire a love of learning," Specht said. "Instead he's promising to transfer millions of dollars of the taxpayer's money to unaccountable private and parochial schools which can, and do, discriminate against students on the margins."

"There have always been some Minnesota families who want their children to receive a religious education, whether it is in the Christian, Jewish, Muslim or another other faith," Specht said. "However, it is puzzling that Mr. Downey doesn't know the state constitution explicitly prohibits politicians from appropriating public money for 'schools wherein the distinctive doctrines, creeds or tenets of any particular Christian or other religious sect are promulgated or taught.' His plan is not only bad for public schools; it also violates our state constitution."

Minnesota Constitution. Art. XIII, section 2: *"In no case shall any public money or property be appropriated or used for the support of schools wherein the distinctive doctrines, creeds or tenets of any particular Christian or other religious sect are promulgated or taught."*

About Education Minnesota

Education Minnesota is the voice for professional educators and students. Education Minnesota's members include teachers and education support professionals in Minnesota's public school districts, faculty members at Minnesota's community and technical colleges and University of Minnesota campuses in Duluth and Crookston, retired educators and student teachers. Education Minnesota is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association and AFL-CIO.

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