

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
October 23, 2007

Contact:
Camden Hubbard, Communications Director
(801) 557-5271

PUBLIC SCHOOL ADVOCATES GATHER TO SUPPORT REF 1

SALT LAKE – On Thursday, public school teachers, parents and students gathered at the Salt Lake City Public Library to speak in favor of Referendum 1. They were joined by State Education Board Members Mark Cluff, Richard Moss, and Bill Colbert. Below are some of their comments. Photos of the event, and the opportunity to be put in touch with additional Referendum 1 advocates are available upon request.

This is the link to video of the event.

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=1686412286991312507>

Britney Mendel, Teacher

Now in her second year of teaching first grade at Draper Elementary, Britney Mendel became a teacher because she loves children and has a knack for dealing with them. Britney values parental involvement and it is clear to her that parents make the best decisions on behalf of their children.

I support Referendum 1 because it's a win/win situation. For me as a teacher, it reduces my class size. It also gives extra funding to those students who stay in public school. . . It's nerve wracking to come here as a public school teacher, [though] we need change, and I'm not going to let the unions silence me," said Mendel.

Andrea Johnson, Parent

To escape a teacher in a public school who she believed was harmful to her son, Andrea Johnson campaigned vigorously to have her son moved from that teacher's class. When her requests were denied, she enrolled him in a private school and covered the tuition herself, with great personal sacrifice. She has since moved and her son now attends a public school that she likes. Andrea believes that most public school educators are excellent. She is a passionate supporter of Referendum 1 because she also believes that parents need alternatives if their child is put into a class with a teacher that doesn't fit the child's needs.

"I wish vouchers were available to me then," Johnson said of her experience. I think [Referendum 1] will reduce class sizes and benefit all Utah's students."

Adam Stewart, Student

Currently a senior at Viewmont High School in Bountiful, Adam Stewart serves as a student body officer, acting as a liaison between his peers and parents and administrators. He was educated entirely in the public school system and plans to finish out his high school career at Viewmont.

"I love my high school," said Stewart. I want what is best for my high school and that is why I'm for vouchers."

Mark Cluff, State Education Board Member

Having worked for education reform in Utah for decades, State Education Board Member Mark Cluff feels that Referendum 1 will help reduce class size and increase funding. He is joined today by his fellow state education board members, Richard Moss and Bill Colbert.

"The voucher plan is going to infuse more money into public education," said Cluff. "It's time for the state to step up to the plate and fund education through vouchers. Referendum 1 is about empowering parents to make choices and meeting the needs of their children. Parents are the ones that need to be responsible for the upbringing and care of their children."

#