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Opponents of the “Luna Laws” launch Vote No campaign

More than 100 parents, teachers and other supporters of public education in Idaho gathered today outside the library at Boise High School to launch the campaign to Vote No on Propositions 1, 2, and 3 on the November ballot. They believe these laws will hurt, and not help, the state’s schools.

“We urge Idahoans to vote ‘No’ on all 3 propositions,” said Mike Lanza, a Boise parent and chair of the campaign committee. “These laws take us backward, not forward. They make it harder for teachers to do their jobs effectively. They are bad for children, bad for teachers and bad for Idaho.”

One of the speakers at today’s event, Sonia Galaviz, has taught in the elementary public schools for 8 years, mostly in the Nampa School District. She said Proposition 1, which went into effect as soon as it became law last year, has made it impossible for her and other teachers to speak out for their students on issues such as class size.

“My classroom size jumped from 27 to 35 students. I had no aides or other assistance. We lost a 5th grade teacher’s position due to budget cuts and had to do more with less,” said Galaviz. “Large classroom sizes have an enormous impact on a teacher’s efficacy. They adversely impact students who receive less attention from a teacher – either in small groups or individually.”

She described the last year as the most difficult of her professional career and that many teachers are demoralized. “These misguided laws were badly written and poorly executed and teachers took the brunt of that hardship.”

Josi Christensen, the mother of 4 children is active with the local Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) in the city of Paul where she lives. She is particularly dismissive of one of the laws – Proposition 2 – authored by the state’s Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna that will require students to take more standardized tests as a means of determining teacher performances.

“Luna and his faction think of our schools as factories, the teachers as laborers, and our children as the products,” said Christensen. “The state wants our children to be taught how to take a test rather than taught how to think.”

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“We don’t want our children to look and act the same. We want our children’s talents to be recognized and magnified,” she said to the assembled gathering. “The state can’t treat our schools like factories AND pretend to care about the development of our children at the same time.”

Maria Greeley, the mother of 4 children in the Boise public schools, spoke of the bad experience two of her sons had in taking a class online. She is critical of the way in which Proposition 3 forces local school districts to make greater use of online courses.

“Mandating online courses for all students regardless of their learning style, language proficiency, educational needs and motivation level is irresponsible,” said Greeley. “This one-size-fits-all mandate hurts our students and diminishes the quality of education.”

More than 75,000 valid signatures were collected on petitions last spring to put the so-called “Luna Laws” on the November, 2012 ballot as Propositions 1, 2 and 3. The campaign to Vote No on Propositions 1, 2, and 3 has mobilized supporters across the state and will wage a well-coordinated effort in the coming months to persuade a majority of Idahoans to do the right thing in November and vote “No” on Propositions 1, 2, and 3.

For more information, go to [www.votenoprop123.com](http://www.votenoprop123.com)

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