

Facebook comment from Chairman Tom Hearn of Coeur d'Alene School Board – 5.19.14

It was one year ago tomorrow that Christa Hazel, Dave Eubanks and I were elected to the school board in a fairly resounding victory for the more moderate forces in this community. In the year since we have taken office I know we have all tried to do the best we can to work hard and to fulfill the trust that people had in us when we were elected. It has been a fun, sometimes very busy, and very interesting year. I have learned a lot not only about our schools and the intricacies of the school district, but also about local politics and many people's support of public education and some people and politicians lack of support for public education.

We have a great community that by and large wants our schools to be the best they can be. They know this country has historically thrived thanks in large part to universal public education. There are also some people in power who think that public education should just be one of many options available to families and if they are honest they prefer charter schools, private or church schools that people can spend public money on through vouchers, homeschooling etc. It is very important that we send people to Boise who support public education and that will adequately fund it. Let's not forget that our funding levels are well below what they were 5 years ago. This should be a cause of concern and an embarrassment to people who want our children to have the best education possible. Dave Eubanks and I visited all the schools this past year and we saw tremendous needs throughout the district that are going unmet due to lack of funding.

Some personal things I have learned this past year includes being careful about emails and that written comments can easily be taken out of context and made to look bad by people who have that agenda in mind. I have also learned that I don't have as much of a private life as I used to and that things that I say or even post on Facebook can easily end up becoming "news" whether I like it or not. But it is small price to pay for the tremendous honor of serving in public office and working every day to help our children get the education they deserve.

In the last year I have gained tremendous respect for Dave Eubanks and Christa Hazel. I could go on for paragraphs about all their fine qualities and their commitment to their elected positions. They are truly smart, dedicated and caring people. I have also nothing but praise for our superintendent Matt Handelman who is doing a great job leading the district and seems to do that without ever sleeping. I have also learned to respect and work well with Tom Hamilton and Terri Seymour both of whom I believe are committed to public education and want what is best for our children. I think they were at first shocked and disappointed that their friends didn't win the election last year, but I feel like we have come a long ways in our relationship and are now working well together. During the election I said that diversity on the school board is a strength, not a weakness, and that has proven to be true.

So thank you for the many people that worked hard last year on my/our election and for the faith and

support you have had in me/us. In the election tomorrow please vote for people who support public education. it is absolutely critical to the vitality of our community, state and democracy.