

# South Dakota Democracy in Action-Rapid City

## 2007-2008 Education Position Statement

South Dakota Democracy in Action- Rapid City supports improving public education in South Dakota utilizing our three-part plan of education, outreach, and action.

SDDIA-RC believes in providing equal access to educational opportunities to all South Dakota students regardless of race, economic status or location in order to provide students with the skills necessary to participate in a democracy and to compete in the 21st century economy. SDDIA-RC believes educational staff must be compensated at a level commensurate with their peers in the surrounding states reflecting the value of their contribution to society.

SDDIA-RC will work to influence change in the following areas by:

- Increasing the K-12 per student allocation of state dollars through the school aid funding formula to school districts by increasing the Index factor to 4% or the annual percentage change in the consumer price index, whichever is greater, thus providing an ongoing increase in real dollars to SD school districts.
- Supporting programs to improve retention of students at all education levels and increase high school graduation rates, with particular emphasis on at-risk and Native American youth.
- Encouraging efforts to improve the research capabilities of SD universities.
- Improving management of SD technical schools.
- Providing funding for full-day Kindergarten programs statewide.
- Supporting comprehensive, age-appropriate, medically accurate sexual health education.
- Discouraging competition for state funding of education that pits K-12 vs. higher education, technical schools vs. universities, rural vs. urban.

SDDIA-RC will not support legislated education proposals such as school vouchers, merit pay, 65% funding formulas, or ideology-based curricula that does not consider the unique circumstances of public education in our state or reflect our progressive values.

SDDIA-RC hopes to outreach cooperatively with other interested groups, including: SD State Association of School Boards, School Administrators of South Dakota, Rapid City School District Board of Education, SD Education Association, Rapid City Education Association, Rapid City Retired Teachers, SD Retired Teachers, EPIC (the PAC of the SDEA), and parent groups.

The action of the SDDIA-RC Education Committee will be to monitor all education bills in the SD State Legislature, send appropriate Action Alerts to SDDIA members, communicate with individual legislators and, at the end of the session, produce and distribute voting records and legislative results.

