



## Writer agrees that school councils are effective tools

Posted: Wednesday, December 14, 2016

Kudos to the Daily News for last Sunday's editorial, "School councils working, leave them alone," which was in response to State Senator John Schickel's ongoing crusade to give superintendents even more control over the management of our public schools.

"Schickel has introduced legislation that would shift some decision-making powers from school councils to superintendents," the editorial noted. "He makes the argument that superintendents aren't given the tools they need and as a result we have a dysfunctional system that is not accountable to the public."

So let me get this straight: Taking decision-making power out of the hands of school councils, which are made up primarily of parents and teachers, will somehow make the process more accountable? After all, what could parents and teachers possibly know about educating students?

The main rationale for creating school-based councils was to ensure adequate input from key stakeholders when decisions are made that affect the education and welfare of our children. As such, school councils represent the tangible embodiment of local control.

According to Schickel, however, most of us lack the common sense needed to oversee the education of our own offspring and, as such, that responsibility needs to be turned over to those who possess insights into reality obviously spared the rest of us.

This kind of "power grab" is really nothing new. In Ancient Greece, Plato suggested that we be ruled by philosopher kings. It was a bad idea then, and I don't see how superintendent kings constitutes much of an improvement.

Superintendents in Kentucky have all the authority they need to run their districts in an effective and efficient manner. Moreover, I would argue that any "dysfunction" we see in our schools is more the result of egotistical dictators trying to push their own agendas than any "interference" by school councils.

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