

Joseph E. Brown, Sr.
2319 Roosevelt Street
Clinton, Iowa 52732
(507) 438-9083

I am a lifelong Democrat; a single-issue voter and I fully support Governor Reynolds's proposal to expand student choice for schools.

As a single-issue voter, I vote for candidates that support fully funding quality education. I have no preference for whether quality education is from a public school, a private school, online, or homeschooling. Our children deserve a quality education regardless of zip code.

As the former chairperson of the Iowa Senate Education Committee from 1983-1985, I wrote the original open enrollment law in Iowa. Minnesota and Iowa were the first two states to legalize open enrollment for public school students. I have never understood how quality education became a partisan issue. I always felt that schools get better when they compete with one another the same as athletic teams get better when they compete.

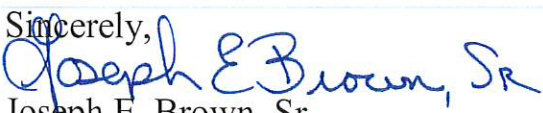
I believe in the freedom to choose where I attend church, where I purchase my groceries, where I purchase books, and where students may obtain a quality education.

Senate Study Bill 1022 is a comprehensive expansion in providing parents and students additional choices on where to attend school. Iowa is fortunate with the number of quality public and private schools that already exist. SSB 1022 provides a specific list of the appropriate uses of the revenue that is provided to schools. It also provides a specific list of restrictive uses of the revenue.

SSB 1022 provides flexibility to public schools on how they may use previously dedicated revenue for minimum teacher salaries, staff development, and gifted and talented programs. Excess revenue in these categories may now be used in the general fund. Each pupil participating in the education savings account is required to take all applicable state and federal required student assessments and the results of those assessments shall be provided to the pupil's parents and reported to the department of education.

My hope is that the legislature acts on SSB 1022 in a timely fashion and rules and regulations are written so schools may start making plans on staffing, curriculum, and special education programs.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Joseph E. Brown, Sr. in blue ink.

Joseph E. Brown, Sr.

Superintendent2022@gmail.com

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