

READERS' FORUM

Why not civil unions?

The Supreme Court is hearing cases concerning laws relating to same sex wedlock. If laws were passed allowing same-sex couples to be united in a civil union and given rights opposite sex couples enjoy, both sides should be happy.

Those wanting the rights other citizens enjoy will be happy and those not wanting marriage to be changed from its opposite sex relationship status should be happy. Rights are wanted by the former group and continuity is wanted by the latter.

Wood McGraw
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Holliday misleading

Kentucky Commissioner of Education Dr. Terry Holliday recently attended a forum on improving our public schools held in West Louisville. At the forum, Dr. Holliday pointedly criticized the Jefferson County Teachers Association (JCTA) for not approving a contract deviation vote at one of our JCPS high schools. A contract deviation is a vote by the faculty of a school to modify our labor agreement specifically for the given school.

After hearing Dr. Holliday's harsh criticism, I asked our staff to determine how many contract deviations JCTA has received this year and how many have been declined. So far this year, JCTA has received about 140 contract deviations and only two have been declined. So, rather than recognizing JCTA for agreeing to 138 deviation votes to change our labor agreement in buildings across the district, Dr. Holliday chose to point to one of only two that were not accepted in order to create the false impression the union is somehow being obstructionist.

Dr. Holliday also criticized the shared School Board-Teachers Association contract, suggesting it was a barrier to success in Priority Schools. However, state law says, "*Professionally negotiated contracts by a local board of education shall not take precedence over the requirements of...*" the Priority Schools law. Again, Dr. Holliday's remarks were misleading and divisive.

Contracts between local school districts and their employees are owned and supported by both groups because they are mutually beneficial. Labor agreements are a normal, legal, desirable, and stabilizing way to constructively facilitate labor-management relations, particularly in large school districts like JCPS.

At JCTA, we are absolutely committed to helping every student in every Jefferson County school succeed. Rather than bashing the school district, and now the union, Dr. Holliday should be sitting down with us constructively, so we can all work together to improve our schools. That is the sort of leadership and support we need from the Kentucky Commissioner of Education.

BRENT MCKIM
President, Jefferson County Teachers Association
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It's Congress' fault

I believe the person who wrote the "Blame Obama" letter needs to get his facts straight on the so called "Sequester" and why it actually happened.

The short of it is that it's due to the Budget Control Act which is too long to explain in a small letter. But 174 Republicans voted for it 66 against, and 95 Democrats voted for it and 95 against. The "sequester" laid out where and how much differ-

The Courier-Journal

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