

I strongly encourage our educational system to be revamped to allow it to be a sustainable program for the benefit of our children. The current "set-up" is completely unsustainable for municipalities, other than possibly the wealthiest ones. The way the teachers' contracts and unions operate, it does not allow for average municipalities to grow their programs each year because of the magnitude of contractual obligations, and it certainly does not bide well for performance evaluations unless a teacher is extremely new (difficult to get rid of a poorly performing teacher that is tenured). We need to offer something competitive to attract and retain good teachers, allow them to teach in a manner that they always remember why they became teachers (tenure just makes many teachers, unfortunately, lazy, and training and lesson planning pulls them out of the classroom far too often), but we also need to adjust to current trends seen in corporate America. Fully funded pensions are a thing of the past; evaluations should drive increases or bonuses for teachers and administrators, etc. If the system continues as it is, schools will continue to fall behind and the education of our children will suffer because there will be no money left for improvements to be made.

One last note – while not mentioned above...unfunded mandates have to end for the same reason...it's sucking our municipal educational budgets dry so we just operate stagnantly year after year. Pretty soon, we're going to go backwards.

Thank you for your time.  
Trisha Danka