

OPINION

FIRST AMENDMENT “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press or the right of people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

OUR VIEW

Change for the better

Borderland’s elementary and high schools start classes next week.

While students may not believe it, back to school time is a necessary and welcome period for our community and others.

Retailers get a boost as new clothes and school supplies are purchased and parents know their children will soon return to a structured institution of continued learning.

We urge drivers to be aware that next week there will be a wave of children going to and from the area’s schools in the mornings, afternoons and evenings.

How times have changed when it comes learning. Open enrollment, post secondary options, charter schools and other alternatives provide more ways than ever for young people to continue to learn.

Also new to learning next year is a little known law approved during the 2013 legislative session that requires Minnesota residents to stay in school until age 17. That’s a change from current law which allows a young person to quit school without their parent’s permission at age 16.

That law change makes sense in today’s world.

The age 16 rule likely harkens back to a time when many Minnesota children

were needed to work on farms to help their families pay their way. In many cases, children grew up and took over the farm as their parents aged.

Minnesota legislators have for years discussed the idea of changing the law. But some were concerned about the cost of keeping kids in school longer, and others said keeping kids in school that didn’t want to be there could disrupt students who wanted to learn.

Gone are the days when most people could get decent-paying jobs with benefits without a high school diploma. Now, studies show people with college degree earn substantially more than those who do not. We’ve learned as a society people who drop out of high school are likely to have trouble getting jobs, more likely to commit crimes and become dependent on government assistance.

Clearly, it makes sense for our community, this state and our nation’s economic health to encourage a well-educated workforce. This change in law is a step in the right direction.

So raise a glass of milk in salute each morning to each and every student we have this community. They are our opportunity to a prosperous future.



United Way supports us all

Giving is easy

From birth to end of life, United Way of Northeastern Minnesota truly serves and supports the community of Koochiching County.

By providing free books for children and their families to begin a foundation for early learning to supporting programming that cares and provides support for our elderly, United Way is there for all of our generations. UWNEMN is also that safety net to fall back on in times of crisis and need, feeding the at-risk youth and elderly through programs like Buddy Backpacks, Meals on Wheels through the Senior Center, Falls Hunger Coalition, and Salvation Army. United Way is that helping hand that is there to support our community members through all of life’s ups and downs.

All of the funds raised in our community stay in our community and benefit local agencies and United Way driven programs: 4-H, Friends Against Abuse, Salvation



Julie Ehrman

LIVE UNITED



United Way of Northeastern MN

Army, Koochiching Senior Center, Koochiching Aging Options, Falls Hunger Coalition, Fairview Range Home Care & Hospice, Girl Scouts, ODC , American Red Cross, ElderCircle North Central RSVP, School Readiness, the Learning Tree, Buddy Backpacks, Imagination Library and Smiles Across Minnesota.

Every pay period, I have money taken out of my paycheck to support United Way in my community. It’s easy, painless and I don’t even notice that the money is gone. I feel good knowing that my donation is benefiting a great cause, is being dispersed among local agencies doing amazing work in my backyard and that I have done my part to support my community.

There is not another organization in our community that has such a far reaching effect on its community

members. If you were in need, where would you go for help? Probably to one of our local agencies funded by United Way. What would you do if these places and services weren’t around? By donating to the United Way, you guarantee that places like these can operate, and you have someplace to go to get a little assistance if you ever need it.

You can help improve the lives of your neighbors, family members, co-workers, youth, and seniors by giving to United Way. Helping others and making a difference in our community is within us all. Giving back is our opportunity to say we appreciate what we have and to share what we can

I am proud and delighted to be associated with such a valuable and worthwhile organization that is vital to the well-being of so many individuals within Koochiching County. If your workplace offers payroll deduction to United Way, please consider a donation. It is a great way to give back. As the local Advisory Board Chair, I will also be collecting donations. If you would like to send in a gift, please mail your contribution to UWNEMN, c/o Julie Ehrman,1303 16th Street, International Falls, MN 56649. Thank you so much!

How to contact your lawmakers

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Mail letters to The Journal, 1602 Highway 71, International Falls 56649. Letters can also be sent by e-mail to laurel@ifallsjournal.com.

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