

‘100 percent solution’

Letter to the Editor

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By John LaPlante

Thanks to Joe Robertson for pointing out some of the challenges faced in education today (9/11, A-1, “Schools still struggle with effects of poverty: ACT scores show that the gap between rich and poor families remains a factor in student achievement”).

While “a strong and challenging classroom with an excellent teacher” is essential, strong, entrepreneurial leadership at the school level is important as well.

For too long, school funding, management and policy have focused on central administration, not students. Three former secretaries of education now endorse the “100 percent solution” (www.100percentsolution.org). This proposal would put public funds spent on education into a “backpack” that students could take to any public school, including charter schools. It also calls for school leaders to have more authority over how the funds within a school are spent.

Backers of the plan say that the current approach puts poor students and neighborhoods at a disadvantage. Lawmakers would do well to consider a mechanism that funds students, not organizations.

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