

## Federal Relations Report October, 2014

Lynn Wolf  
NDAESP Federal Relations  
[lynn\\_wolf@bismarckschools.org](mailto:lynn_wolf@bismarckschools.org)

The election season is upon us – just over two weeks until election day. We will be bombarded with tv, radio, telephone (how did they get my number?!?) internet, and yes, even door to door solicitations for our votes. The issues are many – in fact, I don't remember having as many measures brought to the people in a single election before this year.

There are of course many issues we need to be aware of and consider carefully before we vote. The election of North Dakota's single US House seat is important to all of us. If you haven't heard the candidates speak, at least go their website to read the short description of their beliefs on education.

Mr. Sinner's website says, *"Eighty-three percent of North Dakota college students graduate with student debt. This is the highest percentage in the nation and is an issue that must be addressed immediately. Our students should have an equal opportunity for a quality education. This starts with funding programs for early childhood development and continues through to an affordable college education. We have to improve access to career and technical programs and ensure student loan debt is not crippling our youth and hindering the entrepreneurial and innovative vision of future generations. Cutting Pell Grants hurts North Dakota students and only creates a bigger burden on our students. Everyone likes to talk about supporting education – now is the time we actually do it."*

Mr. Cramer's website says, *"I believe providing our nation's children with an exceptional education is one of the most basic and important functions of government. We also face a sixteen trillion dollar debt along with changing technologies, which means our education system is in need of reforms at the federal level to better serve our students. Targeted reforms to funding allocation formulas and accountability requirements must be a part of this process, allowing school boards the flexibility they need to make decisions with active participation from teachers and parents."*

This week I read in a Forum Communications Poll that Cramer leads Sinner by 19 percentage points. I don't believe he is leading by that margin, although, I wouldn't be surprised to see him win the election barring a "November surprise."

The measures are interesting as well. Measure 8 is the most interesting – mandating school classes begin after Labor Day. The Forum came out today in favor of the measure. Interesting. Most educators believe it is a local decision and should be left up to the local school board to determine the start and end dates of school.

Measure 5 continues to draw interest. The way the TV ads make it sound, if your against the measure, you are against conservation, apple pie and the American way.

Measure 7 – the pharmacy measure will determine if a pharmacist must own 51% of a pharmacy. Sounds like the "big boxes" have put a lot of money into this campaign. I wouldn't be surprised to see this measure pass – although, I don't expect the price of prescriptions to decrease.

The measure that disturbs me the most is measure 6. I'm not sure how this measure will affect the children attending my school. This could create a number of issues for kids. It seems to me, in situations like this, the kids are always the ones to lose out.

The most important thing is to vote, but, I always look forward to the end of the campaign ad season!