

February 1, 2021

Chairman Delzer and Members of the Appropriations Committee,

On behalf of Dickinson Public Schools, I am writing to you in favor of HB 1431. This bill will allow us an opportunity to do something incredible for students and employers in southwest North Dakota. We have long heard the cry for the demand of enhanced workforce training and career opportunities, and we are now in the position to fill that need.

Dickinson Public Schools has been working meticulously with our local partners, including Dickinson State University, Roughrider Area Career and Technical Education Center, Trinity Catholic Schools, as well as numerous business and community leaders to establish a regional career academy. This academy will provide career and technical education as dual and concurrent enrollment courses and programs while creating pathways to employment, certification, post-secondary degrees, and so much more.

It is our mission to prepare all learners for life-long success. We are committed to helping ALL students find their passion and helping them experience success both during their secondary educational experience as well as their desired pathway thereafter. This academy allows us to identify the skill needs lead by industry while putting more choice and opportunity in the hands of our students. This academy will put businesses at the table with our educators to guide the curriculum and programming, resulting in high-demand and high-paying career opportunities.

Because of our faith and commitment in the mission of this project, the Dickinson Public School Board purchased a property with five buildings for \$6 million in November 2020. This property will provide a jump start to the establishment of a regional career center. Passage of HB 1431 will solidify this opportunity.

Sincerely,



Dr. Shon Hocker
Superintendent of schools
Dickinson Public Schools