

March 8, 2023

Dear Chairman and Appropriations Committee Members:

I am writing to urge you to continue funding the Red River Valley Writing Project, which is supported by a Department of Public Instruction pass-through grant. As a retired teacher and member of the Red River Valley Writing Project (RRVWP) community, I can attest to the positive impact this program has on teachers and their students.

The Red River Valley Writing Project is a professional development program that provides teachers with the training and support they need to improve their writing instruction. By participating in this program, teachers learn research-based strategies and best practices and work with fellow teachers dedicated to the teaching of writing. This, in turn, benefits our students by better preparing them for academic success and future careers.

Additionally, the Red River Valley Writing Project is a program that focuses on training teachers to increase North Dakota's written and spoken voice by ensuring that all students have access to high-quality writing instruction, especially important for students from rural and low-income communities.

My participation in the Red River Valley Writing Project Summer Institutes was the most impactful professional experience of my career. The energy and excitement of my fellow Summer Institute participants inspired me to introduce strategies and practices that benefited my students not only by better preparing them for college and their future careers, but by making them strong voices for their communities as well. My continued involvement with RRVWP and my teaching colleagues provides an opportunity to promote programs and workshops that benefit writers of all ages in our state. This is a professional development program of tremendous value to North Dakota.

Continued funding would enable RRVWP to fulfill its aims and service to North Dakota's teachers, students, and citizens. Without funding from the DPI grant, this program may be forced to curtail its services or end them entirely. This would be a great loss coming at a time when strong writing skills and clear communication are increasingly important.

Therefore, I urge you to support continued funding for the Red River Valley

Writing Project. Please consider the immense benefits to our state this program provides.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Nancy Gourde
RRVWP Teacher Consultant
Fargo, North Dakota