

To Whom it May Concern:

HB1532 is a bill that allows parents the opportunity to explore, discuss, analyze, and interpret which educational institution is best for their child(ren). As we all know, both public and private schools together play a key role in fostering an educational system for Minot that meets the needs of all our children. This bill would allow a parent to choose between the two, without taking resources away from the public school system. At the end of the day, it is usually resources that determine where a child will attend school. Financial resources and feasibility are subjective to the household and can be a limiting factor to which school their child attends. There are times when a public school is the best fit, but there are also many times where a private school better meets the needs of the child. When families must pay tuition on top of tax dollars being allocated to the public school in the zone in which they reside, it may place a financial burden on the family, in turn making it harder to pursue a private education. North Dakota already uses tax dollars to obtain services from non-public and religious institutions.

As a private school parent, I am in full support of HB1532. We believe that literacy is critical to democracy; therefore, we chose to investigate the various curriculums within the school systems used to embrace critical pedagogy before deciding that Bishop Ryan was best for our family. Our mission is to educate our children in virtue, instilling in them a character of service, leadership, faith, and scholarship. With smaller class sizes, a classical curriculum, and a foundation grounded in faith, our children are thriving academically, spiritually, socially, mentally, and emotionally. We understand that an education grounded in faith is not for every family, but for many of us, it is the number one reason we choose a private school education.

School is an ethical endeavor, and families in a democratic society have the right to choose a school that is guided by moral principles, such as justice, fairness, liberty, honesty, equity in the distribution of resources, and respect for differences. As an educator myself, I make decisions every day with tremendous moral implications for the students in my care. I am conscious of how I divide my time and attention among the students, and value that with smaller class sizes, I have the ability to foster the moral standards upheld at Bishop Ryan Catholic School. These moral principles and standards look different across school systems; that does not imply that one is better than the other, but it does imply that there is not a one size fits all approach that is effective across the Minot area schools. The epistemology of teaching and learning encompasses a pedagogy that enculturates transformative change differentiated by the natural and social construction of knowledge.

