

Dear Chairman Sorvaag and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to urge you to support HB1013—A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation for defraying the expenses of the department of public instruction. I am writing to support DPI passthrough grant funding for North Dakota's writing project sites. This would allow continue funding for the Red River Valley Writing Project, which is supported by a Department of Public Instruction pass-through grant. As an English teacher and member of the Red River Valley Writing Project (RRVWP) community, I have seen firsthand the positive impact this program has on our teachers and students.

Purpose

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 gain new skills and strategies that enable them to better engage their students and help them develop stronger writing skills. This, in turn, benefits our students by preparing them for academic success and future careers.

Furthermore, the Red River Valley Writing Project is a program that focuses on training teachers to increase North Dakota's voice in both written and spoken mediums, ensuring that all students have access to innovative and high-quality writing instruction. This is especially important for students from rural and low-income communities who may face barriers to academic success.

Impact

Personally, from my experience in the Red River Valley Writing Project, I have taken away worthwhile skills that I have applied to my classroom. I have participated in the Summer Institute funded by the writing project two times and both times they were some of the best professional development I have ever received. I was not only able to receive professional development credit to help me learn new teaching practices as a teacher, but I was also able to receive credit to help renew my teaching license. I was able to work with multiple teachers from around the state in the institute. From working with so many different teachers from K-12, I was able to learn how to better teach writing lessons and know how to make more inspiring connections for my students in the classroom. This funding should be continued and is absolutely necessary to help provide teachers from around the state of North Dakota some of the best writing instruction professional development around. I urge the North Dakota Senate to pass this bill to help continue the funding for the Red River Valley Writing Project. This has helped me benefit as a teacher to help me better teach writing to my students.

Request for Funding

Continued funding would allow the writing project to fulfill its aims and service to North Dakota's teachers, students, and citizens. Without funding from the DPI grant, this valuable program may be forced to cut back its services or even shut down entirely. This would be a tremendous loss for North Dakota and the students and teachers who rely on this program (at a time when our schools need **more and better writing, not less**).

Therefore, I urge you to support continued funding for the Red River Valley Writing Project. Please consider the impact that this program has on our community and the importance of providing our teachers and students with the resources they need to succeed.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Nathan Kurtti

English teacher