

Hello Representatives, I am writing this to share to you all why I believe North Dakota should refund North Dakota's Governors school. NDGS was a part of the state budget for 30 years since it started in the early 90's. It was started to help the rural area students to have an education in specialized areas of study that they would not be able to get in rural ND compared to the larger city schools. The state has helped many of the North Dakotas young minds find their major they want to study in college, find life-long friends, memories that stand the test of time, start businesses, and be utterly life changing for some kids. I want to share with you my experience of NDGS when I went in 2014 & 2015. Others experiences while I was a RA in 2017,18, and 19. Then finally id like to just go over the numbers of what it costs North Dakota to fund NDGS.

First with my own experience as a student for the program. In 2014 I went for performing arts and then in 2015 for Information Technology. Growing up in a rural school district meant a lot of kids different do different things when it came to the norm small school living. I did not have the same hobbies as some of my classmates who liked fishing, driving around town 4 times a night, and playing the same old video games. I enjoyed a lot of nerdy stuff between the stats of football games, history American and world, and computers. Going in the summer of 2015 showed me what I wanted to go to school for. Governor school showed me the light that is at the end of high school and made it go by quicker and easier for me since I did not have many friends in my classmates. Without Governors school I would not have meet some of my best friends in my life. I have not seen some in years but when we randomly run into each other it is like we have still been talking for years and these connections will stand the test of time. NDGS is also the reason why I was successful in my first year of college as it helped me prepare for what college throws at us that we are not prepared for. Compared to some of my college classmates if it were not for NDGS I think I would have been like them and my grades would have suffered.

Having worked for the program for the summers of 2017,18,19 I saw kids mature over these six weeks that parents were so shocked at who was coming home after the 6 weeks. I saw introverted kids become the extroverts that they are but could not express themselves back some. Some of them found their college roommates and best friends for college. They get to experience college course work when in high school that some dual credit or ap courses do not touch on. With this exposor to the material some of the kids know that maybe I should not go for school for this and instead major another interest. Just by going for the program could save future college student in thousand in debt by getting a test drive with the major that some schools do not have you study until your 4th semester there. This program helps some students get into some of the most renowned colleges in the US. One of my roommates got accepted into each Ivy school in 2017. This program says I am one of the most gifted students in the state by attending Governors school and helps sets them about when applying to Ivy Schools. We have also seen business start from beginnings at NDGS. Founder and CEO of Aldevron Michael Chambers is from the very first class of Governors school and meet his wife there awhile they both attended.

What do the numbers look like for this program is a question you all have. All this information is from our Director Dr. Jeff Boyer. The cost of NDGS the past few years was \$500,000-\$250,000 to cover 2 summers. We got some of this funding from grants and the legislator. With the budget not coming into effect until July of this year there would not be a program this summer in 2021 since we didn't receive funding last session and this program primarily happens in June, this summer would be a time of transition Dr. Boyer recently accepted a new job at NDSU that would no longer allow him to be director but he has a person in mind and these would allow time to held to help have a transition for new

directors and prepare for the summer of 2022. I personally do not have the numbers in front of me, but I heard that the state budget from last session had about \$160 million roll over to this next July and when you see these numbers, we are not asking that much from the state to help fund this great program. I always hear from elected officials that they think that the program is great and is worth it, but these recent sessions has had me feel like people are lying with how they have voted to not fund the program. I remember when you all meet in 2017 that alumni of the program called the capitol to a point that the phone system went down. If that does not show you how much support this program has, I do not know what will. If you want actually to want to hear from a parent that send kids to Governors school, you can go down the hall and speak with Sen. Jason Heitkamp and Sen. Larry Luik has I attended Gov. School with both of their daughters. Refunding this program can show that North Dakota is committed to the great young minds of the state and that could help them come back here after they finish college.

Thank you all for your time and stay safe in these Covid times.

Mason Wede