



Mission Statement
Grand Forks Public Schools will provide an environment of educational excellence that engages all learners to develop their maximum potential for community and global success.

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To Respected Members of the North Dakota Legislature:

I would humbly asked for your reconsideration of HB 1281, an income tax credit for taxpayers whose children receive non-public school or home education. For centuries, there has always been a bright line between church and state and for centuries, public schools have been the cornerstone of American society. This bill, as written, is designed to divert approximately \$6 million of North Dakota public funds into private, non-public schools or home schools. For Grand Forks Public Schools, that would be a \$367,000 direct revenue loss.

As the legislature has already tipped its hat to a frozen per pupil payment (Foundation Aid) over the next biennium which equates to an approximate 4-6% loss in revenue, the prospective diversion of an additional \$367,000 is beginning to tell a story about how public schools are perceived by elected leaders. Given the pandemic environment we have been operating under for the past twelve months, this is not the time to convey to educators that they are not valued from a monetary perspective. Moreover, and during COVID-19, Grand Forks Public School District saw an increase in 82 students opting for home schooling, an unanticipated revenue loss of well over \$800,000. Public education has stood the test of time as it related to accountability while requirements for educational environments like home-schooling have loosened substantially.

During the 2017-19 biennia, Grand Forks Public Schools experienced a flat per pupil payment. Should the legislature repeat that formula for the 2021-23 school years, and approve HB 1281, our district will be left with no choice other than to increase class size, reduce the number of teaching and support staff and course offerings, and delay every expenditure “non-instructional” related during the foreseeable future.

Please reconsider and oppose HB 1281 as it portrays an “anti-public education” message.

Respectfully,

Terry Brenner, Ed.D, Superintendent