

Chairman Heinart and Education Committee Board Members,

My name is Terrille Jacobson and I am a teacher with 29 years of teaching experience from Alexander, of which 13 of those years were spent teaching for the MCPSD. I am writing to have you please consider what HB1251 would mean for our state. I believe the push for House Bill 1251 is strongly misguided. The money will not just flow into teacher pockets. This money will now be reallocated to provide the supports which will now be needed to fix the void of not having Superintendents in each individual rural school building. This change does not support teachers. It will cause more stress and duties for each building and at what expense? The promotional ad for this bill sponsored by Matthew Ruby claims that this will have no impact on building principals or business managers. That is false. What I pray is that you, as legislators, will realize it will also have an extremely large, negative effect on our staff. Our rural communities need the supports in place that our Superintendents provide.

I am the daughter of two prominent well-respected teachers, so I guess I feel teaching and the education of youth is in my blood. I realize that may not cause you to be in total support of my opinion, but I feel that I cannot sit by and not be vocal against HB1251. I truly believe this will cause our education system that we, North Dakota's past and present teachers and state government officials, have worked so hard to build, to crumble.

I feel that the school is the "heart" of each small community. School Superintendents are some of the most well-respected CEO's of the most important "business" of each small community. I am just confused as to why the push is to dismantle these thriving businesses and, in some regards, cause them to go through a "merger". While this bill claims to put dollars in salaries for staff and opportunities for students, is it not true that the school Superintendents, who are now going to be the new CEO's of an even bigger business, would need to hire assistants to accomplish the new management tasks they will be assigned to do? Would building principals not need extra dollars to now do additional duties that will inevitably be assigned? If this "merger" is intended to increase teacher pay and rectify the need to obtain quality teachers, has the research been done to determine exactly why we have a teacher shortage? I feel the #1 reason as stated nationally, is school climate and the mental health issues (stress) of staff. Do we really want to chance that this may in fact just add to that stress? I feel the answer to that is a hard no. We cannot afford to lose the educators/administrators who are committed to the youth of our state, and that includes the Superintendents.

North Dakota has consistently taken great pride in putting education as a high priority. A vote in opposition to HB1251 is critical in maintaining that philosophy. Thank you for this opportunity to be heard.

Respectfully,

Terrille Jacobson
Alexander Elementary Teacher