

SB 2260

Chairman Heinart and House Education Committee Members,

My name is Leslie Bieber and I am the Superintendent of Alexander Public School in Alexander, ND. I am here in opposition of SB2260.

I have struggled in finding words to articulate my passionate opposition of this bill.

Teaching is a science but it is also an art. Teachers go into education because they have a calling. Every teacher in my building could tell you when he or she knew they wanted to teach. Those who cannot identify that moment, usually don't make it past their first few years in education! SB 2260 will take the art out of teaching and this is just one of many things that SB2260 will damage in education.

Section 1, #3. subsection k, allows the parent to opt out of any personal analysis, evaluation, survey, or data collection by a school district which would capture data except what is necessary to establish a student's educational record. Yet, to be an accredited school, via Cognia, we survey the student's engagement annually. We give out the anonymous Youth Risk Behavioral Survey, which collects data concerning at risk behaviors such as mental health, sexual activity, drug, and alcohol usage, drunk driving, etc. Alexander School is currently preparing our student survey's to allow student voice in our strategy map and 3-5 year strategy planning, and to provide us a snapshot of any bullying issues, or other concerns. None of the above establishes a student's educational record but it provides very important information for school improvement by knowing our clients and their needs.

The information allows teachers and admin to be prepared for what students bring in the door.

Section 2, #2, subsection b #1 will now force every teacher to create a syllabus that includes a written description of all topics and subjects taught in a class or course. It goes on to include any curriculum, presentations, field trips, etc. This will take hours of preparation for every teacher. There is a teacher shortage in the United States including ND and SB2260 will only add to it.

All of this will need to be communicated to parents seven days before it is taught. So, in the 2nd grade, during math class when a seven-year child looks out the window and sees a bird flying and asks, “Teacher, why do birds fly and cows do not?” The teacher cannot answer, she cannot immediately go into the great science lesson that just popped into her head about feathers and bone structures because it is not on the syllabus. So before she can teach at this great teachable moment, she will have to add it to her syllabus in detail, wait 7 days, and then answer the student. This story was taken directly from my 2nd grade teacher. In her “aha” moment, the lesson popped into her head, the art project that utilized math, the science, etc. The students put away their math sheet and drew a bird using geometry. She told me all about it and was super excited. The class now has a feather collection that they have started. Teaching is an art! Teachers are artists!

Last year, an older gentleman was visiting an friend in Alexander and called the school to see if we would like to have him present a book that was written about him and his dog. Major, his dog, was taken from him when he was five years old and Major served as a soldier for the USA in WWII. Our students were in awe and had a great little lesson presented

by a man who grew up in the Wahpeton, ND area. It lead into individual projects created and presented by the students about WWII. This is now an annual event for the 5th grade. With SB2260, I would have had to turn him down and say, sorry but we have to give the parents three days' notice before you present.

Section 3, #2, subsection d allows a parent to object to a specific presentation or instruction on the basis the presentation or instruction is harmful and to withdraw that parent's child from the presentation or instruction. A parent may object to a specific presentation or instruction that questions beliefs or practices regarding sex, morality, or religion based on harmfulness. A parent already has the right to opt a student out of lessons based on religious beliefs. With SB2260, parents using drugs will opt of the DARE program. Any pedophile parent will opt out of the good touch/bad touch lesson taught annually by my school nurse and counselor. The interpretation of morality could be used for a plethora of topics. I have had a parent who believed that her child should not have any discipline in any class because it was against their moral beliefs in their home.

Section 3, #5, I will just summarize but it states that a parent may bring suit for a violation of this section against a private person, a teacher, and collect compensatory damages. Would you want to be a teacher in ND with SB2260?

There is not one lawsuit in ND known by ND United between a parent and a teacher for teaching a topic that a parent did not approve so where did this come from? Is this a problem in ND or is this a trend in other states? ND has a great education system and a super majority of our parents are pleased with their school districts.

Please give a DO NOT PASS on SB2260, please do not add to the teacher shortage with this bill, and please just let our teachers teach!

I will stand for any questions.

Respectfully,

Leslie Bieber