

In support of House Bill #1376

We support the passing of House Bill #1376, which relates to virtual instruction of students and open enrollment. There is one main point, School Choice, which this bill fosters around. Within this topic there fosters two distinct, yet related, components to make as to why the passing of this bill positively impacts not just our family, but other families in the district with similar yet not exact circumstances.

The first component is access to flexible forms of education with regards to scheduling. We are a military household of 11. We are blessed with the responsibility of the education of our 9 children, and home education has been the best choice for our family. The flexibility of having our children at home allows them to thrive regardless of the sacrifices our family is called for in service to our nation. This flexibility is beyond what a brick-and-mortar school would allow due to temporary duty orders, short term assignments away from the area, and moving every few years as well as deployments. Allowing our family and other families this added flexibility in their schedules removes unnecessary/conflicting schedules and allows the family unit more autonomy of when key elements of their child's education can be applied.

The second component is access to quality alternative forms of curriculum. Tech Trep Academy (TTA) curriculum options differ vastly from the virtual option currently available in our district (district 43). District 43 uses the Center of Distance Education (CDE). The CDE has selected the curriculum for the grade and subject; moreover, it is structured as brick-and-mortar school but administered at home. It doesn't afford the students the ability to slow down when needed to grasp concepts or an option to excel when clearly ready to move into more advanced material. TTA, through the Yellowstone school district, has found a solution for families needing more than what other districts provide currently. They allow for an education focused on student success with the support of a North Dakota certified teachers, guided by parents.

A vote no on this bill would allow for the residing school district to control our student's education over both components outlined above. It would force families into a curriculum which does not meet their needs, or it leaves homeschooling families without support which tacitly would lower students' success. The support we receive from TTA has been phenomenal. We are in weekly contact with our teacher, and through our frequent conversations she has offered endless resources and supplemental material to strengthen and expand our lessons, thus our children's education, and our abilities as home educators. Our home room teacher is available to answer any question we may have; furthermore, she provides accountability to North Dakota guidelines for education ensuring a standard is being upheld with each individual student. All this is being accomplished while still allowing for our family to choose the curriculum that works best for each of our children and their specific needs.

In closing, Tech Trep Academy, through the Yellowstone School district, allows for personalized choice and success for each child regardless of family income and dynamics. Through their program, TAA offers families legitimate resources, support, and choices for all. This enables families to have successful educational development of their children.

Please vote yes on House Bill #1376 which will allow families to provide a specialized, tailored education for their students and give students and their home educators the resources and opportunity to flourish.

