

HB 1491

Honorable Senate Education Committee Members,

I write this letter today in support of HB 1491. This bill comes with great intentions of ensuring our students have the ability to have a guaranteed well balanced meal in their day. As an educator and Principal, I am thankful that more families would have the opportunity to benefit from this.

What I would like this committee to deeply consider is the following: From my understanding there is \$24,000,000 of "unallocated" money in the state that has not yet been appropriated. I would suggest the committee would utilize the \$24 million dollars that is trying to be claimed by private schools and put it towards students in North Dakota and their meals.

The additional allocation would allow the committee to increase the funding school meal programs.

For example, if the committee would utilize the \$24 million + \$6 million = \$30,000,000

\$30,000,000/115,000 (Approximate # of public-school students of North Dakota)

= Approximately \$260/student annually

Each student could be allocated nearly \$260 per school year to be applied to their meal accounts. This would ensure they have access to a healthy, filling food source for their day. Right now, students are dependent on their parents filling out the paperwork. As a school we encourage this and send reminders to do so, however students are still missed. Allocating state public dollars to school meals makes sense for our students and families.

Please consider these thoughts and continue working towards making school meals free for all students,

Cassidy Lyngaas

Mrs. Lyngaas

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