

Dear Members of the House Agriculture Committee,

My name is Thomas Catalano, and I'm eighteen years old. I'm writing to ask you to allow schools to serve whole milk and 2% milk again.

I strongly believe that bringing back 2% and whole milk to K-12 schools would be a great decision for several reasons. Firstly, both 2% and whole milk are rich in essential nutrients that are crucial for the growth and development of children. Whole milk, for instance, is an excellent source of vitamins A and D, which are vital for maintaining healthy bones and a strong immune system. These vitamins play a significant role in preventing illnesses and ensuring that students can attend school regularly and participate actively in their education.

Moreover, the higher fat content in 2% and whole milk can help keep students feeling fuller for longer periods. This can be particularly beneficial in maintaining concentration and energy levels throughout the school day. When students are not distracted by hunger, they are more likely to focus better on their studies and perform well academically. For example, a study conducted by the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found that children who consumed higher-fat milk had better cognitive performance and were more attentive in class compared to those who consumed low-fat or skim milk.

In addition to the nutritional benefits, offering 2% and whole milk can also cater to the diverse dietary needs and preferences of students. Some children may have higher energy requirements due to their participation in sports and other physical activities. For these students, the additional calories and fats in 2% and whole milk can provide the necessary fuel to support their active lifestyles. Furthermore, having a variety of milk options can encourage students to consume milk more regularly, ensuring they receive the calcium and other nutrients needed for healthy development.

Lastly, it's important to consider the taste and satisfaction that comes with drinking 2% and whole milk. Many students find these milk options more palatable compared to low-fat or skim milk, which can sometimes be less satisfying. By providing milk options that students enjoy, schools can promote better dietary habits and encourage a lifelong appreciation for nutritious foods.

In conclusion, reintroducing 2% and whole milk in K-12 schools would not only enhance the nutritional intake of students but also support their overall well-being, academic performance, and satisfaction with school meals. It is a step towards fostering a healthier and more productive learning environment for all students.

Sincerely, Thomas Catalano Senior/Mandan High