



SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL
1840 15th Avenue South
Fargo, ND 58103
701.446.2000 • FAX: 701.446.2399
www.fargo.k12.nd.us/south

Ms. Kristi Brandt, *Principal*
Ms. Greta Evenson, *Assistant Principal*
Dr. Shannon Mortrud, *Assistant Principal*
Mr. Mike Beaton, *Assistant Principal/Activities Coordinator*
Ms. Judy Erickson, *Administrative Assistant*

TO: House Education Committee

FR: Mike Beaton

RE: Opposition to HB 1491

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 1491, which proposes to remove the regulatory authority of the North Dakota High School Activities Association (NDHSAA) over activities-driven student transfers between member schools. This bill threatens to shift the focus away from education-based activities and place undue emphasis on athletic/activity success, to the detriment of our students and schools.

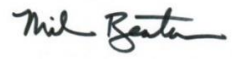
High school activities should be an extension of the educational experience, promoting values such as teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. The current transfer rules managed by the NDHSAA ensure a level playing field, fostering a healthy competitive environment that benefits all students. By altering these rules, HB 1491 risks creating an atmosphere where recruiting and the formation of "super teams" become the norm, undermining the educational mission of high school activities.

In North Dakota, the NDHSAA's transfer guidelines have been effective in managing student transfers fairly and equitably. A recent survey indicated that over 90% of responding member schools support the current regulations. These guidelines ensure that high school activities remain a positive and inclusive part of the educational experience for all students. High school sports in North Dakota are thriving under the current system.

HB 1491 would place an immense burden on high school coaches, forcing them to constantly engage in recruiting efforts to stay competitive, rather than focusing on developing and mentoring their current student-athletes. This shift in priorities could drive many exceptional coaches out of high school coaching, as they may find the new demands unsustainable and contrary to their passion for fostering student growth and education. Similar changes at the NCAA level have already led to a significant exodus of dedicated coaches who are disillusioned by the increasing emphasis on recruitment over athlete and personal development.

I urge you to consider the potential negative impacts of HB 1491 and to preserve the integrity of education-based activities in North Dakota. Please vote against HB 1491 to maintain the focus on the educational and developmental benefits of high school activities.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Beaton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent loop at the end of the name.

Mike Beaton
Assistant Principal/Activities Coordinator
Fargo South High School