

March 17, 2025

North Dakota House Education Committee
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58501

RE: Endorsement of SB 2400

Esteemed Members of the House Education Committee:

The North Dakota Constitution establishes a commitment to education to encourage all students across our state to grow in “the vital importance of truthfulness, temperance, purity, public spirit, and respect for honest labor of every kind.” Our founders understood the importance of an educated constituency and its role in our state.

In conversations with teachers from different schools, public and private, the one comment that I hear most often is frustration with the thinking that there is one singular style of education that will impact all students. Their recognition of the dignity of students is a tribute to the effort they make in getting to know each individual learner and trying to figure out how to best teach each one. We encourage teachers to branch out and learn more about different approaches to teaching that make them more fluent in speaking the many languages of student education.

With those opportunities and investments in mind, it would seem short-sighted to then argue that there is one kind of school that best meets the needs of all students. We know there is no one-size-fits-all approach to education or educational settings. We can’t have both sides of the coin; either different students thrive in different educational settings, or there is no need to encourage and support our teachers in learning other approaches because our Department of Public Instruction has figured out the one and only best way, and our students are thriving because of it.

(I would offer that our state assessment scores don’t necessarily support that theory.)

This is why SB 2400 is important legislation. It allows parents to choose the school that best addresses the needs of the individual student. That opportunity is also attractive to families considering raising families in or relocating to North Dakota because they see our state recognizes their children are not one-size-fits-all cogs to set into a machine.

Good students and good families sustain our communities through a vision of education that truthfully recognizes there is no one-size-fits-all setting and that our entire state benefits from helping all children learn, no matter the classroom. If our state’s goal for education is to strengthen our young people and strengthen the future of our state, it only makes sense to support SB 2400, recognizing that there are multiple ways in which that goal is accomplished.

Sincerely,

Jaimie Brunner
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