

To whom it may concern:

As you move forward in your role to serve the people of North Dakota in the areas of education, I hope that you will consider the people that are in the “trenches” of our schools. My name is Karrie Bohan and I am a special education teacher in Grand Forks. I have been teaching special education students for 31 years. I went to the University of North Dakota and received a double major in Elementary and Special Education. My husband and I moved to Idaho for 9 years and worked there, but decided that it was best to return to the state of North Dakota. I have been working with middle school students with disabilities in Grand Forks ever since then.

As an educator, I have witnessed many things with our youth. They have the power to become positive contributors to our society. They can be smart, genuine, caring, funny, empathetic, strong, creative, engaging and much more. They need us, as adults, to do better. We need to model the behaviors and actions that we want to see in our youth. We need to support public education in North Dakota.

Public Educators work with diverse populations. We work with all children from varying abilities and backgrounds. This is necessary in our society and in the state of North Dakota.

I am opposed to any school choice legislation. I understand and agree that all parents have the right to school choice, and frankly, they already do have choice. I disagree with any plans that are out there that would offer public funds to families who make the choice to send their child to a private institution. Public education is underfunded every year and district personnel work diligently to find ways to give students what they need, even with the lack of funding. Teachers purchase their own supplies, snacks for students, and work extended hours in order to create positive experiences for **all** of their students.

Funding for public schools needs to be a priority in our state. With the threat of losing even more funding, due to the demolition of the Department of Education that helps to disperse Title One funds and funds for students with disabilities, the state really will need to step up the funding for public education. Our state needs to fully fund public education.

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