

Dear House Education Committee,

My name is Beau Snyder. I'm a principal in Lakota, ND. I'm reaching out to urge a "no" vote for SB 2400.

Voucher bills are not what is right for North Dakota. Subsidizing private schools with public dollars does not solve or address the teacher shortage crisis we are currently experiencing. The estimated 2% and 2% per pupil increase in funding already creates an extremely difficult position for schools to negotiate with teachers and support staff.

These bills harm rural North Dakota schools much more than they help. If our legislators are concerned about the quality of education, what has been done to incentivize the profession of education? Instead of promoting the field, these legislative actions are turning individuals away from it. Schools are turning to foreign countries to find educators because they are unable to fill positions. The stigma of public education in North Dakota has to change. North Dakota education, especially rural North Dakota is not the same as what is portrayed in our national media outlets. We are doing great things in our public schools, and we are trying to do more. This requires a commitment and investment in North Dakota public education from our legislators.

The current legislative movement in North Dakota towards investing in and promoting voucher bills along with charter and private school options for students will create enormous burdens and obstacles for public schools. Where is the workforce for new charter and private schools going to come from? If I am a high school student thinking about my career options and opportunities, what is the incentive to become an educator in North Dakota? Why are we so against public education in North Dakota, under promoting the profession to our North Dakota students and under investing in it? If we want great educators, we need to make this a great field to enter, which includes **financial incentives and opportunities**.

If we continue down this path, we will see a decline in the field of education. Our rural schools will get hit first because of a lack of high quality teacher candidates and inability to fill positions. This will spread to larger schools quickly. Compared to the rest of the nation, the quality of education in North Dakota remains high. To continue to build on this, we need to focus on strengthening the profession. If we do not, we could see an unintended decline in the quality of our education and nothing done to address the teacher shortage crisis we are experiencing.

I urge you to vote "no" on SB 2400 and to think about how we can strengthen the profession of education, support our public schools, and continue to lead the nation in the field of education.

Sincerely,

Beau Snyder

Lakota, ND