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March 16, 2025

The Honorable Karen Anderson
14334 70th St NE
Grafton, ND 58237

Subject: Opposition to House Bill 1540: Education Savings Account Program

Dear Karen Anderson,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 1540, which proposes the establishment of an Education Savings Account (ESA) program in North Dakota. While I support efforts to enhance educational opportunities for all students, this bill raises significant concerns regarding its impact on public education funding, accountability, and equitable access.

By diverting public funds to private schools and other educational service providers, this bill undermines the financial stability of our public schools, which serve the vast majority of North Dakota's students, including those with the greatest needs. Public schools are accountable to taxpayers and must adhere to state standards, whereas private institutions would not be held to the same level of transparency and oversight.

Furthermore, the bill lacks sufficient protections to ensure that all students, including those with disabilities and from low-income families, have truly equal access to these funds and the services they provide. The potential for increased disparities in educational opportunities is a serious concern that will have a large negative impact in our local community.

I urge you to oppose HB 1540 and instead focus on strengthening our public school system to ensure that all students receive a high-quality education, regardless of their economic background or geographic location. I am proud of the public school educators in our community and would welcome the opportunity to have you visit and learn more about the great work happening in our school system. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jill Olson
Elementary Principal
Grafton Public School District