

I keep hearing that private schools/families should not receive money from the state because “only the wealthy send their kids there”. Well, we switched our children to private schools three years ago, and we are definitely NOT wealthy. We apply for financial assistance and make sacrifices in our daily lives to be able to send our kids to the school of our choice. Another reason that we hear about why private schools shouldn’t use state money is because they don’t provide special education services. One of our children struggles with academics and motor control, and while not being labeled with a disability, the school has bent over backwards to provide the services that our child needs, and because of their support and interventions, our child is now thriving and making huge gains.

Private schooling is not always about getting a ‘different’ education, but it is about the culture that we want our kids surrounded by. We value the religious aspect of their daily life. We actually send our kids to a Catholic school system, when we are not even Catholic. Why? Because it was the best setting for our three kids. We went on tours of different schools in the area and landed on this one because it ‘felt right’. Why should we, as parents, have to pay more in order to want the best for our children? Why should we, as parents, have to sacrifice many things in our lives, in order for our children to get the education and upbringing that we think they should have? As a public school employee for the past 21 years, and going through public school myself, I have nothing against public schools, but not all children learn the same, and not all children fit the same mold. Our children just happen to learn better in a smaller setting with a religious base to model their learning off of.

These bills that are going through the state are about personal choice, and allowing more options for parents to decide what is best for their particular family. I fully support school choice in North Dakota through HB 1540 and SB 2400 because in a country where we value independence and free thinking, shouldn’t we be able to choose the school that best fits our children’s needs?

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