

HB1540, if approved, would greatly increase the value of our educational system throughout the state.

Educating our young people is one of the primary pillars of building a strong and innovative North Dakota. I do feel that per person funding should not be limited based on choice of school. If these private students were to choose to go to public education, that would actually decrease funding opportunities and infrastructure for the public school students. Setting up this other fund would truly be the best alternative to allowing all students equitable access to education where they learned best.

I just wanted to remark on my personal experience with private education. I am a graduate of Shanley High School from the year 2002. More than 15 of my 55 classmates have private businesses across the state that are thriving and positively contributing to our communities. Innovation, healthcare, meeting workforce needs, and delivering high-quality services to our citizens is paramount. A large number of my graduating class and many others of those from Shanley High School continue to live and work in North Dakota. For example, I teach at one of our universities in North Dakota. Every year, I educate over 150 pharmacy students and equip them to serve the citizens of North Dakota and meet our land grant mission. I also coordinate a statewide opioid risk and harm mitigation program that has served over 27,000 patients across our state. I contribute a large part of this to the education and values that I learned in my K through 12 formative years.

Please consider a yes, vote on both of these bills so that the state of North Dakota can continue to grow our K through 12 platforms and graduate, passionate, highly motivated, and committed citizens in North Dakota.

Heidi Eukel