

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill No. 2303 – Education Savings Accounts (ESAs)

Submitted by Christopher Hansen
District 16 Resident & Parent
JPII Catholic Schools

Hello Senate Education Committee,

My name is Christopher Hansen, and I live in District 16. I am a parent who has chosen to enroll my children in JPII Catholic Schools because I believe that a values-based, structured education is essential for their academic and personal growth.

I am here today to express my strong support for Senate Bill No. 2303, but I also support all school choice legislation that empowers parents to make the best decisions for their children's education. I support SB 2303 because it would create an Education Savings Account (ESA) program, allowing 80% of the state's per-student funding to be used for tuition, books, tutoring, and other approved educational expenses.

Choosing a Catholic education for my children was a deliberate decision based on my experience with the public school system. My son attended and graduated from a public school, and throughout his time there, I witnessed firsthand the lack of discipline, repeated school lockdowns due to fights, and legal issues involving educators. Instead of focusing on academic excellence, many teachers seemed more concerned with socializing with students rather than mentoring them. This was not the environment I wanted for my daughters.

However, private school tuition is a significant financial burden on families like mine. We have had to sacrifice in every way possible to afford a quality education, and SB 2303 would directly help by providing financial flexibility and fairness to families who choose alternative schooling options.

With an ESA program, parents would be empowered to allocate state funding in a way that best fits their child's educational needs, ensuring that the funding truly benefits students rather than being locked into a single system. All families—regardless of income—deserve real choices when it comes to their child's education.

I urge you to vote in favor of SB 2303 to ensure that North Dakota families have the financial flexibility and support they need to choose the best education for their children.

Thank you for your service to the state of North Dakota and your time on Senate Bill 2303.

Sincerely,
Christopher Hansen