

Support for HB 2303

HB 2303 is long over-due for the children and parents of North Dakota. The vision of North Dakota education “is that all students will graduate choice ready with the knowledge, skills, and disposition to be successful”. nd.gov/dpi/ This vision applies to all students, **regardless of where** they receive their education. Unfortunately, North Dakota parents may be limited in their decision in determining which school will most appropriately educate their children due to the misuse of educational funding for North Dakota students.

The state of North Dakota only supports the education of **some** children in our state. There are **thousands of children whom the state does not support**. If the primary educators of children, the parents, determine a school other than their local public school is best-suited to educate their children, the parents are then completely responsible for ensuring their child has access to that education. The state, while holding the same graduation standards for all students receiving a ND high school diploma, essentially washes their hands of any responsibility of educating these **other** children, even though these children will become future contributors in our state.

One of the major hurdles in parents accessing education other than at the local public school, is the financial burden placed upon parents. For parents whom the financial burden is too much, they are forced to enroll their children in a school in opposition to what is best for their children. This decision could negatively affect “the knowledge, skills, and disposition to be successful” as future North Dakota adult citizens. nd.gov/dpi/

In addition to parents having hurdles, non-public schools also have hurdles in trying to make education at their schools accessible to all families and their children. When trying to keep the financial burden on parents at a minimum, it means non-public schools are trying to educate their students with less financial resources than their public school counterparts. This obstacle leads to less student and teacher resources. Students most affected by this are those for whom learning may not come as easily, learn differently, or maybe even have a disability. These students may only have access to education at a public school because the non-public school is lacking financial support to provide the additional needed learning resources. At times, this may tear families apart because one child in their family requires additional learning resources and the state will only support this child’s education if the parent chooses to have their child educated in the building marked “public school” rather than educated at the building across the street, marked “non-public” school.

For whom is the state accountable for educating? Does the state of North Dakota find it okay to educate only some of the children within our state, but leave thousands of others to fend for themselves? It seems that everyone would agree that **ALL CHILDREN DESERVE TO BE EDUCATED AND ALL CHILDREN ARE DIFFERENT**. There is not one single classroom, school, or district who can meet the needs of ALL CHILDREN. Therefore, there must be a variety of schools to meet the variety of needs of all North Dakota children. The building within which children are educated, should not determine whether or not North Dakota finds their education important and of value. Does it seem okay to force the decision of parents in choosing the best-suited school for their children based upon that which the state of North Dakota supports? **ALL NORTH DAKOTA CHILDREN OUGHT TO BE SUPPORTED REGARDLESS OF THE BUILDING**

THEY ATTEND EACH DAY. THE FUTURE OF OUR STATE IS DEPENDENT UPON THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF TODAY'S STUDENTS. ACT NOW TO SUPPORT THE EDUCATION OF ALL.