

Senate Bill 2303
Senate Education Committee - Sen. Todd Beard, Chair
February 4, 2025
Testimony in Opposition to SB 2303 - Vicki Voldal Rosenau

Chairman Beard and Members of the Senate Education Committee, I am Vicki Voldal Rosenau, a parent and lifelong resident of Valley City, ND. Thank you for this opportunity to offer my testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 2303.

I would like to focus my testimony on why SB 2203 not only is unconstitutional, but is opposed by at least 68 percent of North Dakota voters.

Chairman Beard and Members of the Committee, the public as a whole has covenanted to provide public schools as a public service for everyone, by collectively paying taxes for that express purpose. Obviously, we have covenanted to provide other important public services, as well. Public roads, public libraries, public parks and public water systems come to mind. In each case, no person or family has the right to demand that we all help to pay for some private "alternative facility," just because they prefer it.

Indeed, if a person dislikes the public school (or public park) that is available to him, he does not have to use it, but he has no right to demand that everyone else contribute to his purchasing the privilege of using a "private school" (or private park) that he has identified--and may even be the owner of.

Furthermore, in the event that an individual deems a public school (or other public service) to be of unacceptably-low quality, it is his civic duty to roll-up-his-sleeves and help the community as a whole to upgrade that service in accordance with the will of the majority. That's local democracy in action, and that's what our wonderful nation was founded upon.

Finally, by destabilizing our public-schools system, SB 2303 would substantively undermine the solid foundation that this legislative body has already established for meeting the specific challenges outlined yesterday by Superintendent Kirsten Baesler. Thanks to the forward-looking legislation enacted by the past two Legislatures, the State of North Dakota has already made great strides (and investments) to provide an array of innovational, even cutting-edge, educational opportunities—all within our dynamic network of public schools. These exciting initiatives are already in place and should be fully supported and funded in order to provide all the required educational-choice options within the proven "schools within the public schools" model.

Given the urgency of Supt. Baesler's call to action, now is no time to toss out those publicly-funded educational accomplishments in precisely the area she targeted. I urge you to recommend "Do Not Pass" on SB 2303.

Thank you very much for your consideration,
Vicki Voldal Rosenau, Valley City