

02/04/2025

North Dakota House Education Committee
North Dakota Legislative Assembly
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505

Subject: Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 2400

Dear Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 2400, which proposes the allocation of public funds to private education. As a North Dakota resident and advocate for equitable education, I urge you to consider the significant consequences this bill would have on our public school system and rural communities.

Public schools are the backbone of our education system, serving all students regardless of socioeconomic status, academic ability, diagnoses, or geographic location. Diverting public funds to private institutions undermines the very purpose of public education by redirecting critical resources away from schools that are already underfunded and facing challenges in staffing, programming, and infrastructure.

Additionally, the majority of North Dakota's rural communities do not have access to private schools. If public funds are directed toward private education, families in these areas will receive no benefit while still contributing tax dollars to a system they cannot access. This creates a clear inequity, favoring urban and more affluent populations at the expense of rural students. Public funds should serve the public good, ensuring that every child, regardless of where they live, receives a high-quality education.

Furthermore, private schools are not subject to the same accountability measures as public schools. They are not required to accept all students, including those with disabilities, behavioral challenges, or English language learners. Public dollars should not support institutions that have the ability to exclude students based on their own selective criteria.

I urge you to uphold the integrity of North Dakota's public education system by opposing House Bill 2400. Our state's priority should be strengthening public schools so that every child, in every community, has access to a well-funded, high-quality education.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jessica Nolz
Special Education Teacher