

New Salem-Almont School District #49

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Brian Christopherson, Superintendent
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“To ensure that each child achieves his/her full potential through student-centered practices.”

Members of the Senate Education Committee:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 2400, which redirects public funds into private schools with significantly less accountability and transparency compared to public institutions. As the Superintendent of New Salem-Almont School District, I am deeply concerned about the long-term consequences of diverting public tax dollars away from the majority of students who rely on public education.

Public schools in North Dakota serve approximately 90% of our student population and are funded primarily through property taxes. Redirecting these resources will only weaken our public school system, diminishing the quality of education for students of all backgrounds, abilities, and financial statuses. Unlike private schools, public schools are legally required to educate all students, ensuring equal access to learning opportunities.

Proponents argue that SB2400 bill promotes fairness. However, when students in public schools receive only \$1,000 while nonpublic school students can receive up to \$4,000, the funding structure is inequitable. Our state constitution is clear on this matter—Article VIII, Section 5 states: “No money raised for the support of public schools shall be appropriated or used for the support of any sectarian school.” SB 2400 contradicts the constitution by channeling public funds into private institutions, potentially undermining the our public education system.

I urge you to oppose SB 2400 and to prioritize policies that strengthen, rather than weaken, public education in North Dakota. Ensuring that all students receive a quality education, regardless of their financial means or background, should remain our highest priority.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Brian Christopherson

Superintendent

New Salem-Almont School District