

## Testimony in Favor of Senate Bill 2176

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Good morning Chairman Schaible and distinguished members of the Senate Education Committee. My name is Mark Jorritsma and I am the Executive Director of Family Policy Alliance of North Dakota. I am testifying in favor of Senate Bill 2176 and respectfully request that you render a “DO PASS” on this bill.

COVID has been a trying experience for us all, but perhaps in a unique way for parents of K-12 students. Parents have had to instantly become teachers at home, taking an enormous amount of time to help their children study, as well as buy computers and printers, provide supplies, upgrade internet service, supply lunches, arrange childcare, and sometimes provide special education and employ tutors.

Despite these very real costs, nearly all federal COVID funding earmarked for education that North Dakota has received so far has gone to schools, not to parents incurring these costs. Senate Bill 2176 would fix this inequity.

Senate Bill 2176 has a number of features that would apply to any ND student who previously received in-person instruction, but who now is receiving supplementary instruction by parents because of COVID. It would provide \$1,500 in funds to the family for the first child, and \$500 for each child thereafter, with a cap of \$2,500 per family.

The bill would be targeted at average and below-average income families, would be retroactive (reimburse expenses already incurred), and would reimburse for childcare – an expensive component for many families. SB 2176 could tap any remaining federal COVID funding, as well as future federal COVID funding, so it would not create a drain on the state budget. We have estimated the costs of this bill and refer you to Attachment A for these estimates.

Parents have needed financial help for instructing their children during COVID for a long time and this bill seeks to remedy that situation. This is a bill that is long overdue and we ask you to please render a “DO PASS” on SB 2176. Thank you for upholding family values of parents in our state and compensating them for the dedicated and costly work they have undertaken to educate their children during this COVID pandemic. I will now stand for any questions.

## Attachment A: Fiscal Impact Calculations for Senate Bill 2176

Parameter	Data			
Number of Students Schooled at Home Due to COVID <sup>1</sup>				
Public	114,825			
Private & BIE	8,998			
Total	123,823			
Number of Families with Students Schooled at Home				
Students	123,823			
Children per Family <sup>2</sup>	1.90			
Number of Families	65,170			
Number of Families Below Income Thresholds				
Percentage of ND families below \$68k/yr <sup>3</sup>	52.4%			
Number of Families	65,170			
Number of Families Qualifying for \$	34,181			
<b>Fiscal Estimate</b>				
		<b>High</b>	<b>Med</b>	<b>Low</b>
Participation Rate Scenarios <sup>4</sup>		4.0%	1.5%	0.2%
Number of Participating Families		1,367	513	68
Average Number of Students Per Participating Family	1.9			
Max Eligible Reimbursement (1*\$1,500 + .9*500)	\$1,950			
<b>Actual Reimbursement</b>		<b>\$2,666,082</b>	<b>\$999,781</b>	<b>\$133,304</b>

### Notes

- <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/data>  
<https://www.nd.gov/dpi/policyguidelines/executive-orders/executive-orders-education>
- <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/families/states.html>
- <https://www.niche.com/places-to-live/s/north-dakota/residents/>
- Based on average and range of ESA participation rates in active states  
[https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ruraled/TablesHTML/4metrostatus\\_students.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ruraled/TablesHTML/4metrostatus_students.asp)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_states\\_and\\_territories\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_States\\_by\\_population](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_states_and_territories_of_the_United_States_by_population)  
<https://www.edchoice.org/school-choice/school-choice-in-america/>

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