

SB 2235
Shawn Oban
Shawn_oban@bismarckschools.org
701-3223-4200

Good morning, my name is Shawn Oban from Bismarck, North Dakota. I am here in my role as school principal of Jeanette Myhre Elementary of the Bismarck Public Schools. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 2235.

In previous experience as an elementary principal, I was allocated about 4 hours per week of nursing time. This proved to be insignificant when dealing with daily injuries and illness, but even worse when considering our diabetic students and students with severe allergies. It caused a great deal of anxiety of teaching staff wondering if we would be needed to make health decisions for students. Even with the training, we felt it was not in our lane of expertise. Would you have anyone other than a medical professional making your medical decisions?

In my current location at Myhre we use title 1 federal dollars to increase our district allocated nurse time. I have seen first-hand the impact it can have on attendance, health, and confidence of our students and staff. Under the circumstances of the last year our Nurse Jenny has been a star assisting our administrative and office staff in managing COVID cases in students and staff. If it were not for Nurse Jenny most of my time would have been taken away from my area of expertise, which is leading teachers and focusing on the academic growth of our students.

In closing, the reasons for supporting this bill are quite clear to me, an individual who works in the school environment every day, working with a vulnerable population, and understanding the significant impact having our kids in school means to our state. By using these funds our district will increase nursing time for buildings.

Having a regularly scheduled school nurse affects student attendance, academics, time for our office staff and administration to focus on student needs, and the accountability asked for by the state. School nurses can decrease absences, manage chronic conditions, treat injuries, and keep kids in school.

Thank you for your time.