

HB 1416

Human Services Committee

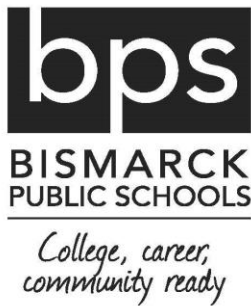
Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Senator Lee - Chairwoman

Chairwoman Lee and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee, my name is Valerie Bakken and I am the Bismarck Early Childhood Education Program's (BECEP) Coordinator. I am here on behalf of Bismarck Public Schools and Superintendent Dr. Jason Hornbacher. Bismarck Public Schools (BPS) holds a neutral position on HB 1416 contingent upon the suggested amendments brought forth by the ND Special Education Study Council.

The suggested amendment to Section 1 of HB 1416: Given that, at the Federal level, both Part C (Early Intervention) & Part B (Special Education) came from the Department of Education, via IDEA, BPS has supported all of these programs and services as *educational* services. BPS has committed approximately \$1.4 million/year, above what is received federally, for BPS to maintain these Early Childhood services, provide a seamless education transition from Pre-Kindergartner to Elementary services and continue to explore program growth opportunities to meet the families' needs in our community. Moving IDEA B Section 619 to the Department of Human Services denotes that IDEA B Section 619 is not an educational service. It is integral that IDEA B Section 619 approval remain with the Department of Public Instruction.

The suggested amendment to Section 3 of HB 1416: Currently Part C (Early Intervention) is housed with the Developmental Disabilities Division within the Department of Human Services, while Part B is housed in the Department of Public Instruction. By Federal Regulations, for both Part C and



Part B, are charged with providing smooth and effective transitions. Stakeholder input, provided by the parents enrolled in the programs, show that overall, smooth, and effective transitions are currently being provided between Part C and Part B services. Keeping Part B within the Department of Public Instruction ensures that continuity and consistency for families of children with special needs, as well as professionals, remains intact.

I thank you for your time today and I will be more than happy to take any questions that you may have.

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