

January 31, 2023

House Education Committee Members:

Thank you for considering House Bill 1532 (School Choice - family reimbursement). My name is Annie Hancock and two of my children attend St. John's Academy in Jamestown, ND. I attended a Class B school in Edgeley, ND for my elementary and high school education, so I can appreciate the merits of both public and private education.

I am fully in support of this Bill for several reasons. First, providing reimbursement to families who choose to enroll their children in private schools will not take funding away from local public schools. Reimbursing families for choosing a private school for their children is good for the local economy. The funds that are reimbursed to families will be circulated within the community. Offering reimbursement will no doubt increase the enrollment numbers, in turn ensuring employment to the teachers and staff of private schools in the state as well.

Secondly, the benefits of private education can't be denied. Students who are enrolled in private education are prepared for life beyond school. A high percentage of private education students go on to two or four year degree programs. While my testimony is anecdotal, my children are excelling in their education and are very well-adjusted, respectful, and kind. We strive to teach them these virtues at home, but to have these qualities reiterated on a daily basis at school as well no doubt reinforces the importance of being a good person.

Finally, these dollars that are set aside for the children of the state of North Dakota should include private school children in addition to those who attend public schools. One could consider this to be discrimination against students enrolled in private education if they are not given some of the allocated funding.

We are fortunate to be able to enroll our children in private education without financial burden. It would be wonderful for all parents in our great state to be able to consider a private education for their children if they desire without having to worry about the financial aspect as well. I feel there are children in the public school system who may benefit more from the structure of a private education setting and we are doing them a disservice if that option is not feasible for them.

Thank you for your time, consideration and your commitment to our state, the education system, and our dear children, who truly are the future of North Dakota.

Sincerely,

Annie Hancock
Adrian, ND