

HB 1532 Testimony
Senate Education Committee
03/13/2023

To the Members of the ND Senate Education Committee:

My name is Jennifer LaGosh, and I am a mother to three young girls. We live in South Fargo, and my two older daughters are currently enrolled in Oak Grove Lutheran School. Being able to send my daughters to Oak Grove has been a blessing for our family.

I am in support of HB 1532 because while being fortunate enough to send my children to Oak Grove, I live in a neighborhood with families who have not been able to do so. In the first years with my oldest child we struggled with some severe behavior problems brought on by an anxiety we couldn't pinpoint. After much counseling and work we realized our daughter had social anxiety problems brought on by large groups and crowds. We were faced with a decision to leave Fargo to seek a school that could offer a smaller class size, or budget to send her to a private school. This realization coupled with our strong Faith led us to Oak Grove. Our daughter has thrived in this school with the faith-based learning and smaller size. She was able to wean into the scary new world that school was to her by starting their Pre-K program with only 10 kids. She is now a 1st grader and testing above average in all categories.

That being said, we have come across other families who have had poor experiences in their given school for different reasons. Because of their financial situations or not being allowed to open enroll, they were not able to send their kids to a different school that may provide better resources for their children. It has led to many struggles in these families. Some have chosen to leave Fargo; some have chosen to leave North Dakota all together in search of a more fitting learning experience. The loss of these wonderful families is a detriment to our community. I see this becoming a trend going forward.

Each school has special teachers and gifts to offer. They do not necessarily fit each child that is placed in their district. Allowing parents to find the school that feels like home to their child provides a learning experience that will help children grow and enjoy school.

I ask you to think of what the future of our community and our children should look like. I urge you to vote in favor of HB 1532. Thank you to the committee for taking time to read my testimonial, and for your service to our great state.

Sincerely,

Jennifer LaGosh