



FULL CIRCLE ACADEMY  
P: 701-478-0221  
F: 701-478-0222

4725 AMBER VALLEY PARKWAY, SUITE B,  
FARGO, ND 58104

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Chairman Elkin and Committee Members,

My name is Britney Bachmeier and I live in Fargo where my sisters and I are the co-founders of Full Circle Pediatric Solutions and more recently, Full Circle Academy. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in favor of House Bill 1532. I am trained as a School Psychologist and Board-Certified Behavior Analyst and my sisters are both Speech Language Pathologists. Our clinic provides applied behavior analysis (ABA), speech-language, and occupational therapies to children, and also behavior consultation to many surrounding public schools.

I am originally from rural ND, attended public elementary and high school, and previously worked in the public-school setting for several years serving some of the most intense and behaviorally complex students in the state. I continue to be a large supporter of the public school system and have nothing but respect for all public-school administrators, teachers, counselors, and related service providers, especially those who work in special education. I am writing to advocate for continued collaboration and partnership between the public and private sectors; House Bill 1532 can be a step to make this more realistic for students with special needs.

As I am sure you are aware, behavioral health needs are at an all-time high and all schools are directly impacted. Since opening our clinic, we have been overwhelmed with the number of requests for contacted behavior support services from surrounding districts. We often push into the public school and support kids in their general education and/or special education classrooms. However, there are times when students engage in extremely unsafe behaviors towards themselves or others, and another option is required. Thus, we created Full Circle Academy (FCA) and we received our 501c3 approval last summer.

Full Circle Academy is a private elementary school for kids with special needs and is approved by the Department of Public Instruction. FCA works in partnership with our clinic to provide therapeutic and individualized programming for students with autism, intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbances, learning disabilities, ADHD, down syndrome, etc. We are in the initial stages of fundraising to make the services more available to the community and again, have received an overwhelming number of requests for district placements and from parents. There is no doubt we are working to fulfill a much-needed gap in services. We are passionate about ensuring students with disabilities receive the highest quality education and **it should be highlighted that there is a nonpublic option designed specifically for students with special needs.**

We currently have a great relationship with many of the surrounding school districts, including those in rural areas. Districts can privately place students in our Academy whose needs exceed what can be met in the typical self-contained classroom, often with the intentional of transitioning them back to their home school after teaching new skills and decreasing maladaptive behavior. Public schools can benefit by having an option for district placements, but if additional funding was available, it would be more feasible for parents to choose to enroll their child in a therapeutic school, just like others choose a faith-based school. This would take additional pressure off public schools. We are proud of the work we

have done in partnership with the local school districts and look forward to continuing to work together to ensure all students receive the educational services they deserve.

I encourage you to vote in favor of House Bill 1532 and take a step toward making private school options available to all students, including those with unique learning needs.

**Britney Bachmeier, Psy.S., NCSP, BCBA, LBA**

Full Circle Academy

Co-Founder/Director

Email: [bbachmeier@fcacademy.org](mailto:bbachmeier@fcacademy.org)

Phone: 701-478-0221

Fax: 701-478-0222