

HB 1532

Senate Education Committee,

I write this letter with strong **opposition** to HB 1532. I begin with making a few points.

- 1.) A free school lunch bill that would benefit many students has been altered from 89,500,00 to 6,000,000 since “there isn’t enough money.” Yet, \$24,000,000/year that can be allocated to private school parents? 24 million dollars annually applied toward school meals for students could have a huge impact on hungry students across the state of North Dakota. (HB 1491)
- 2.) Public Schools, that accept **ALL** students living within their districts. At times, those students come with a higher cost to the district. This appropriation is almost double what was asked for in that bill. (HB 1464) Upon a brief final discussion, it was brought up to be discussed on the second half of session and this factor will be considered in the funding formula discussion. Since the 24 million hasn’t yet been “claimed” and it “isn’t being taken out of the public-school funds” (yet it is public dollars?), let’s add it to the public-school formula instead!
- 3.) According to the current bill & study proposition, the money will be allocated for the 24-25 school year. Currently there are 7,700 students in private schools. During appropriation hearing on 2/15, it was clarified the \$24,000,000 is for **one** school year and the next legislative session “if the program continues” would need \$48,000,000/biennium. Why does there need to be dollars attached with the study? Cut the attached money, conduct the study, and get the answers needed.

How can we enhance the learning experience with \$24,000,000 rather than handing it out to parents of private school students with no strings attached.

$\$24,000,000/174$  school districts = \$137,931.03 per school. I can only image how programs could be implemented, expanded, and enhanced with that money!

Please represent the 115,385 students who are enrolled in public schools.

As proven in the house it takes more than just a committee recommendation of no, but also talk to your other senators to stop this bill where it is.

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Principal & Educator