

Microschools - House Bill 1472

Good morning Chairman Heinert and members of the Education Committee.

For the record, my name is Representative Desiree Morton. I serve District 46 in south Fargo.

Today I bring before you House Bill 1472 which deals with the authorization of Microschools. A microschool is another option for parents who choose to educate their children in a non-traditional way.

Section 1 of the bill provides definitions for Collegiate model school; Microschool; Parent; Primary Education; and Teacher.

Microschools will provide primary education to a student or students. They will have the ability to operate in a variety of places listed in the bill. They will be operated by one or more teachers, parents, or entrepreneurs. They may use the collegiate model school. They are permitted use in all zoning districts. They will ensure that a teacher has obtained a high school diploma or equivalent.

Parents who choose to microschool will notify their local superintendent and will provide the superintendent with the information listed on lines 23-28 of page 2. Parents will assure that their child will satisfy the compulsory attendance requirements under section 15.1-20-01.

Microschools will assure that students will take nationally normed standardized tests while in grades four, six, eight, and ten in the subjects of reading, language, mathematics, science, and social studies. A parent shall maintain an annual record of courses and progress of the student, and a child participating in a microschool may obtain a high school diploma under section 15.1-23-17.

Microschools are exempt from any law or rule related to

Elementary and secondary education; teacher certification; criminal history record checks, and child care facilities, including building codes, fire codes, health codes, and food service regulations.

A school district or institution of higher education under the administration of the state board of higher education may not discriminate against a child participating in a microschool in admissions or other circumstance.

I think that all of us in this room want the best for children. We want them to excel in school, we want them to build great relationships during their formidable years, and we want them to succeed when they either go on to further schooling, go out in to the work force, or if they decide to enter the military. We may not all be in agreement as to how to make this happen, but when it comes down to the desire to see successful, well-rounded, mature young adults leaving behind their high school years and heading in to the real world, we will all applaud the achievements acquired from their K-12 experiences.

Giving parents the freedom to educate their children in a way that best meets the needs of those children and the desires and goals of the parents is a good thing. Different does not mean bad, and not understanding something does not mean it can't be understood. Let's continue to work together to give each of our children the opportunity to learn and grow in an environment that is the best fit for them. Please join with me and give Microschools a chance. Please vote for a DO PASS on House Bill 1472.

Thank you, and I will stand for questions.