

February 4, 2025

North Dakota Senate Education Committee  
State Capitol  
Bismarck, ND 58501

RE: Endorsement of SB 2303

Esteemed Members of the Senate Education Committee:

Catholic education is an important part of who I am today, the product of a family who believed and supported that opportunity through my school years and continues today with my own four children who are now enrolled at Bishop Ryan Catholic School. You've heard from many parents who are here to advocate on behalf of their children and their families, so instead, I would like to testify on behalf of all of my "other kids"... the students I have the great fortune to work with every day as part of the administrative team at Bishop Ryan.

In my job with enrollment, I meet many families of all social and economic backgrounds, families with years of North Dakota history and families who are new to our area by way of relocation and new opportunity. When these families come to Bishop Ryan, they are attracted by the kind of education we offer and provide, one that we are certainly willing to share about with any family interested. At Bishop Ryan, our education ultimately has the higher goal of raising virtuous children who know Jesus in their lives, but our education also has to answer to the educational and learning benchmarks that garner our accreditation with the state of North Dakota. Our graduates have the benefit of encouraged spiritual well-being, but academically and socially, they are also encouraged to go forward and positively serve in our communities, a common good for our entire state. Our graduates are not turned away from fulfilling lives of service because of the additional blessings they gain with us; we often hear that they are sought after because of the things and the ways they have learned on our campus.

I work with many good people and benefactors who go above and beyond to support our school and to support the families who need additional means to provide this opportunity for their children. These are families who sacrifice and work many jobs to make this educational environment a reality for their children. Unlike the state, we work to give these parents the right to choose the best form of education for their families.

Good students and good families sustain our communities through this shared goal of education, recognizing that there is no single mode of education that has been established as the "right way" for every student and every family. If our state's goal for education is to strengthen our young people and strengthen the future of our state, it only makes sense to support SB 2303 and include the will of parents in deciding what the best environment is for the success of their children, recognizing that there are multiple ways in which that goal is accomplished.

Sincerely,

Jaimie Brunner  
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