

March 24, 2023

Dear Members of the North Dakota Senate Appropriations Education and Environment Division,

My name is Amber Ertelt, I live in Fargo (District 46) and my kids attend Sacred Heart Middle School and Nativity Elementary school. Both are part of Fargo's JP2 Catholic School System.

I'm asking you to please vote yes on this HB 1532. We love our school for so many reasons. The biggest being the small class sizes even in our growing community. I feel this is so important so students can get more one on one times with teachers and its noticed if a child is falling behind. This benefits of this have been very evident with our family. My daughter has had difficulty reading, when this was first brought to our attention it was the end of her first grade year. We were told she was falling behind and that she should have a summer tutor. I had asked about enrolling her in summer school through Fargo Public schools and was told she wasn't behind by the district standards she was behind by our schools standards. This was very eye opening to me that our school holds kids to a higher standard and just cemented the decision we made to send her there.

On the flip side of this my son is now a teenager and is starting to act like it! We have had three different teachers from the middle school reach out about his behavior in class with him talking back and not listening. The teachers wanted to help form a plan together with us for how we can combat this since Liam didn't act like this before. My husband went to a large school and pointed out that meetings like that with parents never happened unless the behavior was extreme. As much as I didn't enjoy having to have meetings about my son's bad behavior the fact that more than one teacher was on top of it and wanting to get us involved was extremely refreshing.

I also absolutely love that my children are learning about God every day. They both have daily prayer time and are learning how to make God the center of everything they do. In this day and age where everything feels so divided I love that they are learning these important lessons. It has also been a great refresher for me to hear some of the bible stories and stories of saints that I had forgotten from my youth or in some cases never learned.

As much as we love our school the reality is that it is getting harder to pay for it. The money we pay in taxes has greatly increased in the last few years. So much so that our mortgage is going up \$200 per month just to cover taxes and insurance. The largest percentage of this is going to public schools. It would be so nice if this bill were to pass to get a break somewhere to help relieve this with the higher taxes on top of private school tuition.

We love our schools and don't want to make the hard choice to send our kids somewhere else because of financial reasons. Sadly, it's getting to that point. This bill could really help us, a hard-working family who wants to send their kids to a school that puts God and family values first. This bill does not hurt public schools but helps families like ours. I'm asking you to Please vote YES on HB 1532.

Thank you for your service to our state and for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amber Ertelt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

Amber Ertelt

JP2 Catholic School Parent

Fargo, ND District 46