

**2021 SENATE EDUCATION**

**SB 2176**

# 2021 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Education Committee**  
Room JW216, State Capitol

SB 2176  
1/20/2021

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| <b>A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation for a distance learning family reimbursement program; to provide an expiration date; and to declare an emergency.</b> |
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**Chair Schaible** opened the hearing at 9:00 a.m.

**Discussion Topics:**

- Family reimbursement program

| Senator           | Attendance |
|-------------------|------------|
| Chairman Schaible | P          |
| Senator Elkin     | P          |
| Senator Conley    | P          |
| Senator Lemm      | P          |
| Senator Oban      | P          |
| Senator Wobbema   | P          |

**Sen. Mike Dwyer, Dist 47, Bismarck-** introduced the bill

**Mark Jorritsma, ND Family Policy Alliance-** testified in support. #1841.

**Additional written testimony:** none

Adjourned at 9:19 a.m.

*Lynn Wolf, Committee Clerk*



## Testimony in Favor of Senate Bill 2176

Mark Jorritsma, Executive Director  
Family Policy Alliance of North Dakota  
January 20, 2021

Good morning Chairman Schaible and distinguished members of the Senate Education Committee. My name is Mark Jorritsma and I am the Executive Director of Family Policy Alliance of North Dakota. I am testifying in favor of Senate Bill 2176 and respectfully request that you render a “DO PASS” on this bill.

COVID has been a trying experience for us all, but perhaps in a unique way for parents of K-12 students. Parents have had to instantly become teachers at home, taking an enormous amount of time to help their children study, as well as buy computers and printers, provide supplies, upgrade internet service, supply lunches, arrange childcare, and sometimes provide special education and employ tutors.

Despite these very real costs, nearly all federal COVID funding earmarked for education that North Dakota has received so far has gone to schools, not to parents incurring these costs. Senate Bill 2176 would fix this inequity.

Senate Bill 2176 has a number of features that would apply to any ND student who previously received in-person instruction, but who now is receiving supplementary instruction by parents because of COVID. It would provide \$1,500 in funds to the family for the first child, and \$500 for each child thereafter, with a cap of \$2,500 per family.

The bill would be targeted at average and below-average income families, would be retroactive (reimburse expenses already incurred), and would reimburse for childcare – an expensive component for many families. SB 2176 could tap any remaining federal COVID funding, as well as future federal COVID funding, so it would not create a drain on the state budget. We have estimated the costs of this bill and refer you to Attachment A for these estimates.

Parents have needed financial help for instructing their children during COVID for a long time and this bill seeks to remedy that situation. This is a bill that is long overdue and we ask you to please render a “DO PASS” on SB 2176. Thank you for upholding family values of parents in our state and compensating them for the dedicated and costly work they have undertaken to educate their children during this COVID pandemic. I will now stand for any questions.

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## Attachment A: Fiscal Impact Calculations for Senate Bill 2176

| Parameter   | Data    |                    |                  |                  |
|---|---------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Number of Students Schooled at Home Due to COVID <sup>1</sup> |         |                    |                  |                  |
| Public  | 114,825 |                    |                  |                  |
| Private & BIE   | 8,998   |                    |                  |                  |
| Total   | 123,823 |                    |                  |                  |
| Number of Families with Students Schooled at Home             |         |                    |                  |                  |
| Students  | 123,823 |                    |                  |                  |
| Children per Family <sup>2</sup>                              | 1.90    |                    |                  |                  |
| Number of Families  | 65,170  |                    |                  |                  |
| Number of Families Below Income Thresholds                    |         |                    |                  |                  |
| Percentage of ND families below \$68k/yr <sup>3</sup>         | 52.4%   |                    |                  |                  |
| Number of Families  | 65,170  |                    |                  |                  |
| Number of Families Qualifying for \$                          | 34,181  |                    |                  |                  |
| <b>Fiscal Estimate</b>  |         |                    |                  |                  |
|   |         | <b>High</b>        | <b>Med</b>       | <b>Low</b>       |
| Participation Rate Scenarios <sup>4</sup>                     |         | 4.0%               | 1.5%             | 0.2%             |
| Number of Participating Families                              |         | 1,367              | 513              | 68               |
| Average Number of Students Per Participating Family           | 1.9     |                    |                  |                  |
| Max Eligible Reimbursement (1*\$1,500 + .9*500)               | \$1,950 |                    |                  |                  |
| <b>Actual Reimbursement</b>                                   |         | <b>\$2,666,082</b> | <b>\$999,781</b> | <b>\$133,304</b> |

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/data>  
<https://www.nd.gov/dpi/policyguidelines/executive-orders/executive-orders-education>
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/families/states.html>
- <sup>3</sup> <https://www.niche.com/places-to-live/s/north-dakota/residents/>
- <sup>4</sup> Based on average and range of ESA participation rates in active states  
[https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ruraled/TablesHTML/4metrostatus\\_students.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ruraled/TablesHTML/4metrostatus_students.asp)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_states\\_and\\_territories\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_States\\_by\\_population](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_states_and_territories_of_the_United_States_by_population)  
<https://www.edchoice.org/school-choice/school-choice-in-america/>

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# 2021 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Education Committee**  
Room JW216, State Capitol

SB 2176  
1/27/2021

|   |
|---|
| A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation for a distance learning family reimbursement program; to provide an expiration date; and to declare an emergency. |
|---|

**Chair Schaible** called to order at 2:17 p.m.

**Discussion Topics:**

- Family reimbursement program

**Sen Oban:** I move a Do Not Pass.

**Sen Conley:** I second.

**Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 Motion Passed**

**Chair Schaible** will carry the bill.

Adjourned at 2:26 p.m.

*Lynn Wolf, Committee Clerk*

| Senator           | Attendance |
|-------------------|------------|
| Chairman Schaible | P          |
| Senator Elkin     | P          |
| Senator Conley    | P          |
| Senator Lemm      | P          |
| Senator Oban      | P          |
| Senator Wobbema   | P          |

| Senator           | Vote |
|-------------------|------|
| Chairman Schaible | Y    |
| Senator Elkin     | Y    |
| Senator Conley    | Y    |
| Senator Lemm      | Y    |
| Senator Oban      | Y    |
| Senator Wobbema   | Y    |

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2176: Education Committee (Sen. Schaible, Chairman)** recommends **DO NOT PASS** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2176 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.