

**EDUCATION FUNDING COMMITTEE****January 29, 2014****By: Chloe Rickards, Student  
Minot High School**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Chloe Rickards and I am a student at Minot High School. I am here today to share my experience with you to speak in favor of the new North Dakota Math and English standards based on the Common Core.

My educational background is unique. My father's position in the Air Force stipulated a move from Montgomery, Alabama to Minot. In Alabama, I attended an academic magnet program with very high standards and an expectation for success. When I moved to North Dakota, I found the difference in educational standards to be drastic. While I did become integrated in AP and college preparatory classes, I found the overall standards to be lower than my old school. I became a little frustrated at the standards of my teachers and fellow peers. I did not find a complete lack of high standards in the school, but rather, those standards were not as pervasive as they could be.

I endorse Common Core as a very helpful tool for uniting the nation in high standards. In order to better prepare students for success, they must be held to certain measures of education. Keeping students at low, disorganized standards will not benefit the society within North Dakota, nor the nation as a

whole. In *Utopia*, Sir Thomas More writes, “it is wrong to think that the poverty of the people is the safeguard of peace.” To expound on this, students may become dissatisfied with the outcome of their education as they attempt to meet the challenges in college and in the workforce. Therefore, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction should strive to offer student the best education possible, which I believe may be partly attained by Common Core.

The other part of a successful education lies in a joint effort between the school board, the teacher, and the student. First, the school board must offer enough specialized course to satisfy the need of the students. This includes offering AP courses to challenge advanced students, or perhaps career-oriented classes designed for student exploring occupations. Once available, those courses must be made known and promoted, a task which then falls to the teachers. If a teacher sees a student with a passion for chemistry, he or she should encourage that student’s enrollment in AP Chemistry. So, not only must specialized courses be available, but also known and encouraged. I stress this for advanced and college preparatory classes that serve to strengthen readiness for college and real life. Too often are the top 10% of students constrained by the limitations of education. Finally, the last step lies in us, the students, to maximize education. I believe that when education is presented to the students appropriately, students naturally gravitate towards bettering themselves.

I congratulate Superintendent Baesler on the implementation of Common Core into education. I believe the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has done this smoothly and effectively. My request to Superintendent Baesler and now to you is simple: keep it going, but do not be afraid to challenge us. While I hope to see the strengthening of Common Core in North Dakota, I also hope that you will continue to offer students the best possible education by implementing and stressing specialized, advanced courses. Just as I wrote to Superintendent Baesler to thank her for all of her hard work, I thank you for all of your hard work and effort you have put into the education system. I believe positive change is possible in the North Dakota education system, and I believe that change is already taking effect.