

## Consideration for School Finance Bill 1388

Put forward by Midkota Public School District #7

In 1992, the communities of Binford, Glenfield, Grace City, McHenry, and Sutton came together to form Midkota Public School District #07. The communities took on this blending of school districts to provide a stronger, more effective school district intent on offering the best possible education for their students. Although there have been challenges, the communities have become unified in their support of Midkota. The love of their students and their school is unparalleled.

I have worked in many school districts over the course of my 19 years in North Dakota Public Education. I believe with my whole heart that Midkota is beyond a doubt, the best school in the state of North Dakota. The community of Midkota invests in relationships, they advocate for the hurting, they celebrate each other, and the result is unmatched. We would love to host anyone who would be interested in seeing how this community comes together to provide amazing opportunities for every student.

Inevitably, the cost to run two school plants is higher than one. Midkota works to cut down on costs, but too many cost cutting measures impede student opportunities. The community has not hesitated to support the school when needed and has raised local contributions in order to continue providing vital educational opportunities for all students.

However, the way the funding formula stands, the school district will be forced to find additional cost cutting measures that have the potential to restrict student opportunities. I would ask that the increased costs of small school districts required to operate out of two school plants be taken into consideration for HB 1388.

Elementary Building: Binford, North Dakota: current enrollment for grades PK-6 is 99  
High School Building: Glenfield, North Dakota: current enrollment for grades 7-12 is 77  
Neither building is large enough to house both the high school and the elementary.  
Distance between the two buildings= 20.4 miles

Efforts to be cost efficient include:

- 60% Superintendent
- Consolidation of athletics with neighboring school district.
- Sharing a counselor with neighboring district.
- Sharing staff when possible between buildings.
- Bus route exchange points between buildings.

In 2018 Midkota added on to the existing building in Glenfield in order to remove an older part of the structure that was becoming hazardous. With the addition of four classrooms, a media center, two itv rooms, a staff work room and the counselors office, the community invested in the future of their students. The community continues to support innovative initiatives and plan for the future. The school board invited Dr. Jeff Schatz in 2019 to lead the school and stakeholders in a strategic planning process that continues to guide district goals and progress. Midkota Public School is an innovative and progressive school district with incredible involvement and support from its community. We would humbly ask that you would consider adding a weighting factor to the formula in SB1388 that will help schools like ours who operate out of two plants out of necessity. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Sara Bilden  
Superintendent Midkota Public School