

MICROFILM DIVIDER

OMB/RECORDS MANAGEMENT DIVISION
SFN 2053 (2/85) 5M



ROLL NUMBER

DESCRIPTION

22240

2007 SENATE EDUCATION

SB 2240

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2240

Senate Education Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: January 24, 2007

Recorder Job Number: 1758

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

Chairman Freborg opened the hearing on SB 2240, a bill relating to per student payments for kindergarten. All members were present.

Senator Bakke introduced the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Senator Gary Lee asked if full day kindergarten is so good, and he agrees it is, why not require it.

Senator Bakke said some schools do not have the capacity for full day kindergarten in terms of funding and space. This would be something to look at in the future.

Senator Taylor asked why there is a difference between the appropriation and the fiscal note.

Senator Bakke said the appropriation in the bill is based on every district in the state having kindergarten.

Chairman Freborg suggested maybe the fiscal note is more accurate for the first few years.

Senator Flakoll asked if the intent, if we move SB 2200, would be to follow the mechanics of that bill.

Senator Bakke said it would fit nicely with that bill. Now, SB 2200 only funds full day kindergarten for at risk students.

Senator Flakoll asked with 6600 students in half day kindergarten, it has been estimated we will need 400 new teachers if full day kindergarten is available to all of them. Is that correct?

Senator Bakke said that is a fair estimate, others that will testify will have better insight.

Representative Wolf testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Senator Flakoll said there may be an amendment this session for mandatory half day kindergarten. With full day kindergarten can a parent request their child only attend half day kindergarten?

Representative Wolf said she doesn't know, it depends on the school district.

Lynn Goodwill, Principal of Minnie H Elementary School, Devils Lake, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached) Meter 12:05

Woody Barth, North Dakota Farmers Union, testified in favor of the bill. It will be helpful to rural North Dakota.

Maari Hanson, President of the Devils Lake Education Association and teacher at Minnie H Elementary, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Senator Taylor asked if her school district has many students coming to kindergarten from a Head Start program.

Ms. Hanson said quite a few of her students go to preschool or Head Start.

Senator Taylor asked if their full day kindergarten program started before No Child Left Behind.

Ms. Hanson said it started in 2002.

Debbie Stromme, kindergarten teacher from the Devils Lake Public Schools, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Mike Nelson, Superintendent of the Hazen Public Schools, testified in favor of the bill. They are ready for full day kindergarten, they need the funding. He is more to oppose SB 2200 because of the way it will affect his school district. Hazen is in Mercer County which is first or

second in per capita income year after year which sounds great. What actually happens is they get hit hard when it comes to the funding formula, especially when it comes to federal funding. They have 15% of students on free and reduced. With the high income, they don't get any federal funding. He distributed a list of North Dakota school districts and their federal funding. Title 1 helps high risk students. Funding has been dropping across the state year after year but it really has been affecting Hazen where they only have 15% free and reduced. They are down to \$35,000 for Title 1; when he came to Hazen 4 years ago, they were at \$52,000. High risk does not just mean low income. They have a transient population, they have shift workers, and those issues cause many problems with their students. They have a high divorce rate, alcohol and drug problems. The federal system is flawed and he hopes we do not follow that formula.

Steve Swiontek, Superintendent, Devils Lake Public Schools, testified in favor of the bill.

(Written testimony attached)

Senator Flakoll asked if parents can send their children to half day kindergarten if they so choose.

Mr. Swiontek said yes.

Senator Flakoll said there is some concern that half day kindergarten is not required and paying for full day kindergarten could widen the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots". Some children have no kindergarten, some have full day kindergarten.

Mr. Swiontek said if you fund full day kindergarten you will lessen problems in the long run.

Most school district will convert to full day kindergarten because they will have the funds.

Senator Gary Lee said if they are losing their Reading First dollars, have they done any comparisons with the proposal in SB 2200 to fund full day kindergarten for at risk students, would it help?

Mr. Swiontek said about 50% of their kindergarten students are free and reduced, so SB 2200 would help.

Senator Flakoll said SB 2200 is a transitional bill that moves us towards more access. Should we some day require full day kindergarten to be offered if we fully fund it?

Mr., Swiontek said while he might support that philosophically but it might not be good for government to force such a choice. He can't answer that question very well.

Bob Toso, Superintendent of the Jamestown Schools, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

David Saxberg, Washington Elementary School Principal in Jamestown, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached) He added that the compulsory age of attendance is age 7 and kindergarten starts at age 5.

Jane Nieland, kindergarten teacher from Jamestown, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Senator Taylor asked if Jamestown is new to full day kindergarten, what is her experience with parents' preference for half day kindergarten or home school?

Ms. Nieland said some parents had concerns initially and the half day kindergarten option was open to parents, however, the kids were ready and the parents saw that. They do have rest time.

Melissa Gleason, kindergarten teacher from Jamestown, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached).

Barb Arnold-Tengesdal, Assistant Professor, University of Mary and the North Dakota

Association for the Education of Young Children, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Senator Taylor asked what her opinion is of bussing time for a 5 year old vs. a 7 year old, how do they cope with 60 minutes on a bus.

Ms. Arnold-Tangesdal said 60 minutes on a bus is no good for anyone. At least you wouldn't be transporting them for 5 half days.

Bonnie Ukestad, parent of 2 Jamestown children, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Amy Neal, North Dakota Kindergarten Association, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Chairman Freborg asked about the statistics she distributed. Is there an overlap in the districts that provide full day/everyday, traditional half day, alternating full day and three full days per week. We have 200 school districts in North Dakota and those total more than 200.

Ms. Neal said there could be some overlap.

Dave Looyen, Superintendent of the Minot Schools, testified in favor of the bill. He was a superintendent in Iowa when they went to full day kindergarten. His district bussed a great deal. The first day of full day kindergarten he took a lot of heat. By the tenth day, he was receiving hugs and thanks from parent. This is the most important bill before this committee this session.

Dr. Bob Grosz, Assistant Superintendent of the Fargo Public Schools, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Andrew Braaten, farmer and parent from Barney, North Dakota testified in opposition to the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Sandy Clark, North Dakota Farm Bureau, testified in opposition to the bill. They are not opposed to kindergarten. She read the Farm Bureau policy statement that says full day kindergarten should not be funded, this issue is not on their priority list.

Doug Johnson, Executive Director of the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders, testified in favor of the bill. They have supported the last 3 sessions they have supported this issue. They feel the funding should be in SB 2200.

Senator Flakoll asked when we go from half day kindergarten to full day kindergarten would there be a savings in transportation costs?

Mr. Johnson said he has not heard any feedback about this.

Kelli Tannahil, teacher and parent, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Ellen Handegard, Principal from Edwin Low Elementary, New Town, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Gloria Lokken, North Dakota Education Association President, testified in favor of the bill. We have heard the data, research and success stories. North Dakota must invest in the success of all students. This would be an enhancement of the funding in SB 2200.

Holly Koop, kindergarten teacher from Grand Forks, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Senator Bakke distributed testimony from Jody Thompson, (Written testimony attached)

Senator Flakoll asked if Jerry Coleman, Department of Public Instruction, could be available to discuss the fiscal note this afternoon after the floor session.

Chairman Freborg closed the hearing on SB 2240.

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2240

Senate Education Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: January 29, 2007

Recorder Job Number: 2213

Committee Clerk Signature

Minutes:

Chairman Freborg opened the discussion on SB 2240. All members were present.

Senator Bakke said that when she presented the bill, she offered an amendment for the appropriation and she has since found out that is not necessary because she had been given a wrong amount. The actual additional appropriation would be \$1.5 million for the biennium to put full day kindergarten in.

Chairman Freborg asked if she has it in writing.

Senator Bakke said no, that is what Tom Decker said.

Chairman Freborg said that is not official.

Senator Bakke said that is unofficial. She said if you look at the fiscal note, they put \$4.5 million, they are saying \$3 million is already in 2200 so an additional \$1.5 million would be needed.

Senator Flakoll said there is \$3 million in 2200 but it is not a slam dunk deal. If it takes \$3 million to serve 27% of the students, why does it take \$1.5 million to cover the remaining students? 25 – 27% of the students qualify as at risk for all day kindergarten, that translates to \$3 million in 2200, that is for the second year. This one starts in the first year, for the remaining 75% and only cost \$1.5 million?

Senator Taylor said if full day kindergarten is provided for at risk students, you have the classroom and the teacher, for a lot of schools there would not be more than one classroom, the cost could be accurate.

Senator Flakoll said that is for the second half day for providing full day kindergarten. That is based on the average per student cost so it does not account for any extraneous items like building costs. Teacher salary would be covered.

Chairman Freborg confirmed that is for the 2nd year of the biennium.

Senator Flakoll said that is correct.

Senator Taylor said the average class size has been running about 6000 students.

Senator Flakoll said he was told by Jerry Coleman the current crop is at 6600 students, 14% attend all day. Generally the fiscal note would be $.75 \times 6600 \times 7400$ as the total cost and we would pay part of it.

Senator Bakke said we should go off the fiscal note they gave us, it is closer to the truth. Her intent is to supplement the dollars in 2200 to cover full day kindergarten.

Chairman Freborg asked why it would cost \$9 million the second year?

Senator Flakoll said there would be increasing numbers of participating students.

Chairman Freborg said they doubled the amount of students.

Senator Gary Lee asked when it starts.

Senator Bakke said they have the option of starting this fall, most school district would not be ready, more would be expected to start the following year.

Chairman Freborg said the fiscal note could be short, they are only figuring 3000 students?

He sees no reason not to use the fiscal note, that is what Jerry Coleman sent down and it is what he believes.

Senator Bakke moved a Do Pass and Rerefer to Appropriations on SB 2240, seconded by Senator Taylor.

Senator Gary Lee said he will vote against this but he is a kindergarten proponent. The Governor's Commission has done some reasonable work in pursuing and advancing some opportunities for kindergarten and to add \$4.5 million to the pot...the steps that the Governor's Commission took were reasonable ones considering what the schools may have to do to prepare themselves for this. Although he has a hard time voting against it, we have stepped in the right direction.

Chairman Freborg said Senator Bakke knows he is a proponent of mandatory half day kindergarten.

Senator Flakoll asked what happens if or when the dollars are short, is this designed to pro rate it out.

Chairman Freborg said he assumes it would, the money is coming from 2013, there is no appropriation in the bill.

Senator Flakoll said through the process we have defined a finite amount of dollars. What happens when its 1200 students, not 1000?

Chairman Freborg said it's a total estimate for the biennium, they will never be short of money, its coming out of foundation aid.

Senator Flakoll asked if we are adding \$4.5 million to 2013?

Chairman Freborg said we are, we have to believe the fiscal note.

Senator Flakoll said they have the line item, the hardest numbers to generate are kindergarten numbers.

Chairman Freborg said we don't have to, it states the money will come from foundation aid and it will pay whatever is required to fund kindergarten if we pass this bill. He knows what Senator

Flakoll is saying but he does not have that concern because if more student participate in full day kindergarten it will reduce the foundation aid payment to elementary and secondary.

The motion passed 3 – 2. Senator Bakke will carry the bill.

FISCAL NOTE

Requested by Legislative Council
01/16/2007

Bill/Resolution No.: SB 2240

1A. State fiscal effect: *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2005-2007 Biennium		2007-2009 Biennium		2009-2011 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$4,500,000	\$0	\$9,000,000	\$0
Appropriations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

1B. County, city, and school district fiscal effect: *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

2005-2007 Biennium			2007-2009 Biennium			2009-2011 Biennium		
Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

2A. Bill and fiscal impact summary: *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

SB 2240 amends NDCC 15.1-27-07 to allow state funding for full time kindergarten. The current statute limits state funding for kindergarten programs to half days.

B. Fiscal impact sections: *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

In 2006-07, 41 schools reported 952 students in full day kindergarten. This would increase students for state aid purposes by 500 the first year, expected to double the second year to 1,000. If 50% take advantage of full day kindergarten, an additional 3,000 students would be eligible for payment.

3. State fiscal effect detail: *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

A. Revenues: *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*

B. Expenditures: *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*

The bill does not provide an appropriation so expenditures will reduce the amount otherwise available for state aid to schools in SB 2013.

At a per student payment rate of \$3,000, \$4.5 million for 2007-09 and \$9.0 million for 2009-11 would be attributed to full day kindergarten.

C. Appropriations: *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation is also included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

Name:	Jerry Coleman	Agency:	Public Instruction
--------------	---------------	----------------	--------------------

Phone Number: 328-4051

Date Prepared: 01/18/2007

Date: 1/29/07
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2240

Senate Education Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken Do Pass and Rerefer to Appropriations

Motion Made By Sen. Bakke Seconded By Sen. Taylor

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Senator Freborg		✓	Senator Taylor	✓	
Senator Flakoll	✓		Senator Bakke	✓	
Senator Gary Lee		✓			

Total Yes 3 No 2

Absent 0

Floor Assignment _____

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2240: Education Committee (Sen. Freborg, Chairman) recommends DO PASS and BE REREFERRED to the Appropriations Committee (3 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2240 was rereferred to the Appropriations Committee.

2007 SENATE APPROPRIATIONS

SB 2240

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2240

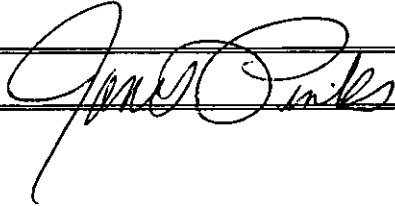
Senate Appropriations Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: 02/07/07

Recorder Job Number: 3066

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

Chairman Holmberg opened the hearing on SB 2240.

Senator Jonell Bakke, District 43, Grand Forks, provided written testimony and as a sponsor, introduced SB 2240 indicating the intent of the bill is to provide full funding foundation aid reimbursement for those districts wishing to provide full day kindergarten with their communities. She indicated that within her written testimony is a summary of her research. Senator Bowman questioned how this fund fits into the education fund and how does this effect the districts that implement this on their own. The response was that bill covers for at risk students.

Jerry Coleman, Department of Public Instruction, indicated he prepared the fiscal note on this bill. What he looked at identifying the schools that are currently operating full time kindergarten. He based this on an additional 500 students this year and doubled that for the second year of the biennium.

Chairman Holmberg indicated that if this bill is passed, how much additional money would be needed to fully fund this program for this years biennium. Is there money in 2200 or 2013.

The response was there is money in the 2013 for at risk program.

There were additional questions and concerns regarding the school districts that may be double dipping, how the students in the at risk category would be paid for and whether it would

come through this bill or the other one or do they get reimbursed twice, whether this is for all kindergarteners in the state, the possibility of meshing the two bills, several thoughts were raised on the disbursement of funds, there is a need to resolve policy issues.

Dan Hoffman, Assistant Superintendent, Fargo Public Schools, distributed written testimony (2) from Bob Grosz, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Fargo Public Schools, and testified in support of SB 2240 indicating the implementation of the appropriation in this bill has the potential to have a very significant impact on educational achievement.

Mark Sanford, Superintendent of Schools, Grand Forks, presented written testimony (3) testifying in support of SB 2240, indicated during 2004-05 school year, Grand Forks made the decision to go to an all day kindergarten. The data that has been collected on all day kindergartens and the results demonstrate how the early success translates into higher scores in reading. He then reviewed additional data demonstrating an early start means improved abilities.

Several questions were raised about the early education, whether there has been a study done in rural schools as to how students are doing that don't have kindergarten, whether any federal funding is involved in the kindergarten education, how many students are on Ritalin.

Paul Johnson, Superintendent of Schools, Bismarck, testified in support of SB 2240 indicating that in Bismarck, there are not enough classrooms and he felt is important that all day kindergarten not be mandated.

Steve Swiontek, Superintendent, Devils Lake Public Schools, presented written testimony (4) and testified in support of SB 2240 indicating he is totally in favor of all day kindergarten and foundation payments.

Bev Nelson, School Board Association, indicated that they have an amendment on record that kindergarten be handled as a .5 for half time and a 1.0 formula for full-time. We would support the money going into 2200 and going out on the formula.

Chairman Holmberg closed the hearing on SB 2240.

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2240

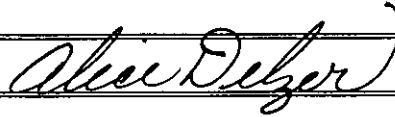
Senate Appropriations Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: 02-08-07

Recorder Job Number: 3228

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

Chairman Holmberg opened the hearing on SB 2240 on February 8, 2007 relating to Per Student Payments for Kindergarten Students. He stated the committee will recommend a DO NOT PASS but the clerks should not do the Standing Committee Report until 02-12-07 after the other bill in relation to this matter has been passed out of committee.

Senator Christmann moved a DO NOT PASS, Senator Wardner seconded. A roll call vote was taken resulting in 9 yeas, 4 nays, 1 absent. The motion carried. Senator Holmberg will carry the bill.

The hearing on SB 2240 was closed.

Date: 2/8/07
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2240

Senate Appropriations Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken do not pass.

Motion Made By Christman Seconded By Wardner

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Senator Ray Holmberg, Chrm	✓		Senator Aaron Krauter		✓
Senator Bill Bowman, V Chrm	✓		Senator Elroy N. Lindaas		✓
Senator Tony Grindberg, V Chrm	✓		Senator Tim Mathern		✓
Senator Randel Christmann	✓		Senator Larry J. Robinson	✓	
Senator Tom Fischer	✓		Senator Tom Seymour		✓
Senator Ralph L. Kilzer	✓		Senator Harvey Tallackson		
Senator Karen K. Krebsbach	✓				
Senator Rich Wardner	✓				

Total (Yes) 9 No 4

Absent 1

Floor Assignment Sen. Holmberg

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

*they voted no 2/8/07 but wanted to wait to do
standers com report to other bill passed - said to do
report no 2-12-07.*

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE (410)
February 12, 2007 9:05 a.m.

Module No: SR-29-2833
Carrier: Holmberg
Insert LC: . Title: .

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2240: Appropriations Committee (Sen. Holmberg, Chairman) recommends DO NOT PASS (9 YEAS, 4 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2240 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

2007 TESTIMONY

SB 2240

Chairman Freborg and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name for the record is JoNell Bakke. I am a senator from District 43 in Grand Forks and sponsor of SB2240. The intent of this bill is to provide full Foundation Aid reimbursement for school districts which wish to provide full day kindergarten services within their communities.

Research continues to show us that early intervention makes a big difference in the progress of our youngest students.

- In 1992, *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* found that full-day kindergarten students are more likely to show adequate school progress throughout their elementary school careers. They exhibited more independent learning, classroom involvement, productivity in work with peers, and reflectiveness in their work than their half-day peers.
- In 1995, a report issued from the Springfield Missouri Public Schools System found that full day students significantly outperformed half day students on 5 out of 9 reading development criteria; 4 of 11 Language Arts criteria, 2 of 13 mathematics criteria, 2 of 9 Personal Development criteria; and on every criterion measured by the Early School Assessment norm reference achievement tests.
- In 1997, the *Child Study Journal* found that students who attended full-day kindergarten demonstrated significantly greater academic achievement than their half-day counterparts.
- Finally, researchers concluded in a report issued by the Kansas State Department of Education in 2001, that most full-day kindergarten students demonstrated somewhat higher academic and social achievement than half-day kindergarten students.

Overall, full-day kindergarten programs have been found to provide cognitive, social, physical, and emotional benefits for children.

The details of the bill before you are as follows:

- Section 1 - 5a and 5b – redefines funding issues as they relate to half day programs.
- Section 1 – 5c – Adds language that would allow those districts who choose to do so, the funding necessary for full foundation aid payments for students enrolled in a full day kindergarten program.

Senator Freborg, I do have an amendment with me today because the appropriation was inadvertently omitted from the bill. This amendment calls for an appropriation each year of the biennium of \$14,000,000.

At this time, I will address any questions that you might have concerning this bill.

Thank you.

Proposed amendment to Senate Bill 2240

Page 2, after line 7, insert:

"SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION. There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$14,000,000, or so much as may be necessary, to the superintendent of public instruction, for the purpose of providing per student payments for kindergarten students, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2007, and ending June 30, 2009."

Renumber accordingly

Testimony In Support of SB2240

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Education Committee, for the record my name is Representative Lisa Wolf from District 3, in and around the Minot area. I am a co-sponsor of this bill and am here today to testify in favor of SB2240. Some of you may not know, but I am a high school business education and computer teacher in Minot. I can not stress enough the importance of education for our kids and North Dakota needs to do what is in the best interest of our children

Governor Hoeven has made a start in his wanting to fund all day kindergarten for the at-risk kids, however, I don't feel that this is enough. I feel all day kindergarten should be available for all North Dakota children, including the at risk kids.

Some people may say that kids need to be kids, that a full day is too much for a 5 year old. Please understand that kindergarten is not the same kindergarten that you remember, either as a student, or as a parent, it is not a "warm fuzzy" place, it is curriculum centered, and because this curriculum is crammed into a very short day (2 hours and 45 minutes in Minot), it makes kindergarten very structured and a stressful place to be. If it was extended to a full day, curriculum can be slowed down to a developmentally appropriate pace. Kids could then be kids, in kindergarten, and there would be time for those "warm fuzzy" experiences.

Kindergarten, although not currently mandatory by state law, is enjoyed by most children. In a recent survey of 15 Minot first-grade teachers with a combined 240 years

of teaching 1st grade experience, teaching approximately 4,320 students, only approximately 18 kids did not attend kindergarten. This is the first school experience most will have. Kindergarten, in addition to its structured curriculum, teaches these children life skills, social skills, skills that they will take with them for the rest of their educational career.

Let's ask the kindergarten teachers how they feel- when surveyed with this question—"Do you feel all day kindergarten would be beneficial?" 93% of surveyed said yes, 3% no, and 4% were undecided. This statistic should speak for itself.

We assume that because we either take the time, or have taken the time, to prepare our own children or helped with our grandchildren, for school, that all parents do this as well. This is simply not the case in today's society. With some parents either being unable (because of work or other things) or being unwilling, or lacking the know how, our kids are not getting what they used to receive at home. We can not assume that because a child is not an "at-risk" child, that he or she will come to school adequately prepared. We assume too much with our kids, let's stop assuming and take action, for ALL of North Dakota's children.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee-I ask for a Do Pass on this important bill, for all North Dakota kids.