

**2013 SENATE EDUCATION**

**SB 2229**

# 2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Education Committee  
Missouri River Room, State Capitol

SB 2229  
1-29-13  
17932

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

*Tiffany J. Grossman*

## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

An Act to provide an appropriation for early childhood education grants.

## Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

**Chairman Flakoll** opened the hearing on SB 2229

**Nicole Poolman, District 7 Senator:** I wish to introduce SB 2229. (Written Testimony #1 attached)

**Senator Heckaman:** Will the district have to document that the children are at a reduced rate for meals?

**Nicole Poolman, District 7 Senator:** That has been part of the criteria as discussed with the Department of Public Instruction.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Do you have any idea how many people may participate?

**Nicole Poolman, District 7 Senator:** Not at this time.

**Senator Phil Murphy District 20:** Many of our rural students do not have access to this in addition to the poor students. That is one of my concerns. I live with this issue daily because my wife is a kindergarten teacher. I hear constantly about children who are not ready for kindergarten. I would also like to mention that adoption comes into the picture.

**Chairman Flakoll:** What do you think is important in terms of gathering data?

**Senator Phil Murphy District 20:** It would be the same criteria that is very telling and highly encouraging.

**Representative Joe Heilman District 45:** I am not a co-sponsor but I am circulating a handout of a similar bill in the House (See Written handouts #2 and #3) Even though some laws are fuzzy, there are 47 school districts that are providing pre-k programs. If they are doing it for special education, they are not even on the map.

**Vice Chairman Schaible:** Has this been heard in the house?

**Representative Joe Heilman District 45:** It has not been scheduled yet. Our new Superintendent of DPI sees pre-k as crucial. It is a better use of our dollars. In China and other countries they start their students young and we need to catch up.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Often times those that need it the most would not participate because their parents do not value education as much. How do we encourage those?

**Representative Joe Heilman District 45:** That is the reality because they are much closer to their people and hopefully the educational leaders of the community can help.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Is there a provision that says you can't put them in and pull them out constantly?

**Representative Joe Heilman District 45:** I don't think so but I can see that as an issue. I would rather see it voluntary though.

**Chairman Flakoll:** How will we know if we are successful?

**Representative Joe Heilman District 45:** As we move through the system I think part of this is to collect data and see what is effective and trust the DPI to see what works.

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction:** I am here in favor of SB 2229 and I have a couple other testimonies for you. One is from Ashley Public School Educators that have been operating a preschool. There is also a testimony from a Linton Public School pre-school teacher who has significant data she will share with you (See written testimony #4, #5, #6, and #7 attached) (33:15)

**Chairman Flakoll:** What are the learning outcomes this bill is intended to achieve?

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction:** The outcomes are social and academic. We hope to have our students achieve the standards. We would develop a process to allow our school districts to determine what works best.

**Chairman Flakoll:** For parents how would you anticipate the schedule playing out?

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction:** The parents in the communities are willing to accommodate because they want us to teach their children and are flexible.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Might they have to be split? And how would the transportation work?

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction:** In the bill the grant is available to hire a full time teacher and an aid. The local districts need to make that available. There is no funding for transportation at this point.

**Senator Heckaman:** Have you looked at data on the readiness for boys vs. girls and ages?

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction:** I have not recently looked at data but in the past boys are less ready generally speaking. We are looking at four year olds as August 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Senator Luick:** Has the governor approved the funding for any of these?

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction:** This is not part of his budget.

**Chairman Flakoll:** How do you prove the kindergarten full day works?

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction:** They were first assessed last year so we don't have enough data yet. The NWEA tests can provide the data. It is hard to measure something that was preventative.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Would there be less tutoring occurred if we start them in pre-k?

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction:** Anecdotally the remediation and level of writ for remediation for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders has been reduced in Mandan Public School because of the full day kindergarten.

**Jack Maus, Superintendent Grafton Public Schools:** I wish to testify in support of SB 2229. (Written testimony #8 attached)

**Chairman Flakoll:** Are you seeing remediation with the full day kindergarten?

**Jack Maus, Superintendent Grafton Public Schools:** We see a significant difference and increase in reading.

**Chairman Flakoll:** How much effort should be on academics vs. social?

**Jack Maus, Superintendent Grafton Public Schools:** You can't have learning without social skills.

**Senator Luick:** What is the optimum time for pre-school?

**Jack Maus, Superintendent Grafton Public Schools:** Now we run a three hour morning program and another 3 hour afternoon program. Parents can choose morning or afternoon. We do not provide transportation. We do not charge the students. We have a waiting list. We know this is what our patents want.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Are we opening ourselves up by doing this because some schools may or may not do it and parents can claim their student isn't being treated equitably in their district?

**Jack Maus, Superintendent Grafton Public Schools:** I don't think that is an issue. If anything this gives more opportunity rather than less opportunity to the needy children.

**Vice Chairman Schaible:** What is your criteria for your program?

**Jack Maus, Superintendent Grafton Public Schools:** It is first come first serve. We want to meet the needs of everyone so we don't require a skills test to enter.

**Paul Ronningen, Children's Defense Fund, North Dakota:** I wish to testify in support of SB 2229. (Written Testimony #9 attached)

**Senator Heckaman:** Do you have data on whether there is a decrease or increase in the number of children in poverty in the state of North Dakota?

**Paul Ronningen, Children's Defense Fund, North Dakota:** There are more than 80,000 people living with low or moderate income in North Dakota, nearly 25,000 are children. I am hearing that people are coming to North Dakota looking for a job, hoping to find housing, and are in situations of low income because they are transitioning between jobs.

**Denise Soehren, Principal for Billings County School District:** I wish to testify in support of SB 2229. (Written Testimony #10 attached)

**Senator Luick:** How many schools are you talking about? And how many preschoolers?

**Denise Soehren, Principal for Billings County School District:** Our schools is one district but we have two schools. There is one in Fairfield and one in Medora. We have 13 students in Medora and 12 in Fairfield. I already have a waiting list for next year's program.

**Jenelle Ferderer, Director of Emmons County Special Education Unit:** I wish to testify in support of SB 2229. (Written testimony #11 attached)

**Chairman Flakoll:** For the data on attachment 2, when were the tests taken?

**Jenelle Ferderer, Director of Emmons County Special Education Unit:** January.

**Broc Lietz, Business Manager for Fargo Public Schools:** We would like to support SB 2229. This is a statewide concern and it is one of our top priorities as a large district. Fargo Public Schools was one of the driving forces behind pre-k last session and this continues to be one of our large priorities. Although we talked about the rural areas and ability for access, you should know this is also a Fargo concern. Fargo Public Schools supports SB 2229 and would encourage you to add permissive language to use existing resources.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Down the road the school districts could complain if we aren't paying 70% or more of the cost of this program.

**Broc Lietz, Business Manager for Fargo Public Schools:** We should cross that bridge when we come to it. It may come with complications but expanding early childhood education is the right thing to do and the right time to do it.

**Kayla Pulvermacher, North Dakota Educators Association:** I am here in support of SB 2229.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Are we going to get to a point when people aren't ready for pre-k?

**Kayla Pulvermacher, North Dakota Educators Association:** I don't have an answer.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Are we expanding what was originally taught in 12 years to 14 or are we providing more information that necessitates expanding that?

**Kayla Pulvermacher, North Dakota Educators Association:** Personally I see that it has grown the character and personality of my son in preschool.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Is some of this early childhood about learning or getting ready to learn?

**Kayla Pulvermacher, North Dakota Educators Association:** My son goes to Montessori in Mandan and he is getting ready to learn.

**Senator Luick:** Can you see pre-school going from 3-4 hours a day to full days?

**Kayla Pulvermacher, North Dakota Educators Association:** My son is in pre-school all day so it is a possibility that I would not discount.

**Senator Luick:** It depends on the districts to set up the program then?

**Kayla Pulvermacher, North Dakota Educators Association:** Yes it is a local decision.

**Hy Schlieve, Superintendent at Drayton Public Schools:** I have some statistics from a school that has been running a preschool. This is Drayton's fifth year of a preschool program. We applied for a federal grant to get it started then AARA helped us out for two years. How we have been doing title. We are one of the legal schools in the state. We had to define a screening procedure in accordance with the grant so we developed a four tier screening program. We phase our students in gradually to five days a week.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Does anyone wish to speak in opposition to SB 2229? Seeing none I will ask Superintendent Kirsten Baesler, to the podium. Do you believe they are learning more in 14 years or learning what they learned in 12? What is our justification?

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction:** We are asking for them to learn more. It is a different world. We are capturing young minds.

**Chairman Flakoll:** What are the biggest misconceptions?

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction:** It is not a daycare program. It is a learning experience. We have a curriculum and standard set of expectations we expect them to learn. Most mothers are working and don't have the time to teach their children necessary things.

**Senator Poolman:** Are we asking our kids to learn more much earlier based on the tests politicians created to have accountability? Shouldn't we be willing to grow it?

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction:** That is an accurate assessment. Our country is asking for successful students at earlier ages. That will only continue to be the case. We have heard through a reoccurring theme is that the results are there.

**Chairman Flakoll:** We will close the hearing on SB 2229

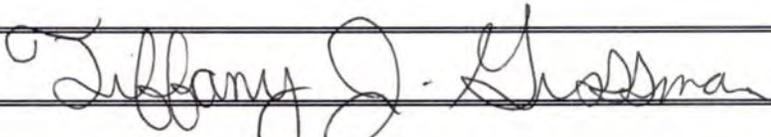
# 2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Education Committee  
Missouri River Room, State Capitol

2229  
1-29-13  
17935

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation for early childhood education grants

## Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

**Chairman Flakoll** opened the hearing on SB 2229

**Senator Luick:** Would the amendment be in place of lines 8-something on the original bill?

**Chairman Flakoll:** No, it would be in addition to. Legislative Council may find a better spot.

**Senator Poolman:** I move the Heilman amendment and to renumber accordingly.

**Senator Luick:** Second

**Chairman Flakoll:** For the record that is HB 1429 from the 63<sup>rd</sup> Legislative Session.

**Senator Luick:** The difference in the bills is the dollar amount. Did you want to increase that and how was that number established in either of these bills?

**Senator Poolman:** The number in our bill was established by estimates from the Department of Public Instruction. The number in the House bill was just rounded up.

**A roll call was taken for a Do Pass on the Amendment: 5 yeas, 1 neas, 0 absent**

**Senator Poolman:** I move a Do pass on SB 2229 as amended and re-referred to appropriations.

**Senator Luick:** Second

**A roll call was taken for a Do pass as amended and re-referred to appropriations on SB 2229: 6 yeas 0 neas 0 Absent**

**Senator Poolman** will carry

# 2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Education Committee  
Missouri River Room, State Capitol

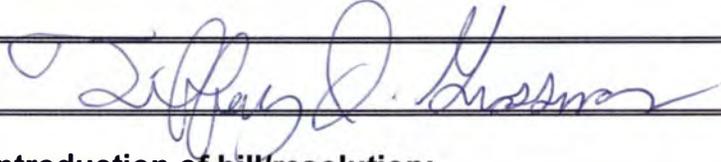
SB 2229

2-12-13

18802

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation for early childhood education grants.

## Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

**Chairman Flakoll** opened the hearing on SB 2229

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction:** I have passed out testimony from Debbe Poitra (written testimony #1) and Debra Follman, Principal at Sweetwater Elementary in Devil's Lake (written testimony #2 attached)

**Chairman Flakoll:** Is this all-day kindergarten in Devil's Lake?

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction:** Yes all day kindergarten. The last two pages are our 2010-11 group for kindergarten and first grade. We will have their data at the end of this year. Overall pretty compelling evidence.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Closed the hearing on SB

January 30, 2013

VR  
1/30/13

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 2229

Page 1, line 1, after "to" insert "amend and reenact section 15.1-09-58 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to early childhood education; and to"

Page 1, after line 2, insert:

**"SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 15.1-09-58 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**15.1-09-58. ~~Prekindergarten program~~ Early childhood education - Authorization - Support.**

The board of a school district may establish ~~a prekindergarten~~ an early childhood education program and may ~~receive and expend any state~~ support that program with:

1. Local tax revenues, other than those necessary to support the district's kindergarten program and the provision of elementary and high school educational services;
2. State moneys specifically appropriated for the program, ~~any federal;~~
3. Federal funds specifically appropriated or approved for the program, ~~and any gifts;~~ and
4. Gifts, grants, and donations specifically given for the program."

Renumber accordingly

2229

Date: 1-29-13  
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO.

Senate Education Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 13,0670,061001

Action Taken adopt amendment #1

Motion Made By Poolman Seconded By Luick

Senators	Yes	No	Senator	Yes	No
Chariman Tim Flakoll		✓	Senator Joan Heckaman	✓	
Vice Chairman Donald Schaible	✓		Senator Richard Marcellais	✓	
Senator Larry Luick	✓				
Senator Nicole Poolman	✓				

Total (Yes) 5 No 1

Absent \_\_\_\_\_

Floor Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

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

2229

Date: 1-29-13  
Roll Call Vote #: 2

2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO.

Senate Education Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 13,0070,01001

Action Taken do pass as amended & re-referred for app

Motion Made By Poolman Seconded By Luick

Senators	Yes	No	Senator	Yes	No
Chairman Tim Flakoll	✓		Senator Joan Heckaman	✓	
Vice Chairman Donald Schaible	✓		Senator Richard Marcellais	✓	
Senator Larry Luick	✓				
Senator Nicole Poolman	✓				

Total (Yes) 6 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Poolman

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

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2229: Education Committee (Sen. Flakoll, Chairman) recommends AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS and when so amended, recommends DO PASS and BE REREFERRED to the Appropriations Committee (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2229 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.**

Page 1, line 1, after "to" insert "amend and reenact section 15.1-09-58 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to early childhood education; and to"

Page 1, after line 2, insert:

**"SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 15.1-09-58 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**15.1-09-58. ~~Prekindergarten program~~ Early childhood education - Authorization - Support.**

The board of a school district may establish ~~a prekindergarten~~ an early childhood education program and may ~~receive and expend any state~~ support that program with:

1. Local tax revenues, other than those necessary to support the district's kindergarten program and the provision of elementary and high school educational services;
2. State moneys specifically appropriated for the program, any federal;
3. Federal funds specifically appropriated or approved for the program, and any gifts, and
4. Gifts, grants, and donations specifically given for the program."

Renumber accordingly

**2013 SENATE APPROPRIATIONS**

**SB 2229**

# 2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Senate Appropriations Committee Harvest Room, State Capitol

SB 2229  
02-06-2013  
Job # 18353

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact NDCC, relating to early childhood education; and to provide an appropriation for early childhood education grants

### Minutes:

See attached testimony

**Chairman Holmberg** called the committee to order in regard to SB 2229. All committee members were present. Tammy R. Dolan from OMB and Brittani Reim from Legislative Council were also present.

**Nicole Poolman, Senator from District 7**, introduced the bill and provided attached testimony # 1. (Ends at 4:25)

**Chairman Holmberg** asked where the number on the fiscal note came from.

**Ms. Poolman** said it came from the Department of Public Instruction.

**Vice Chairman Bowman:** Has there been a study done on these kids that have not had access to a program like this? How do they compare with the kids that have had the early childhood development when they enter college?

**Ms. Poolman** directed the committee members to look at page 4 of attachment #1. (Ends at 06:16) She is not sure if any study follows kids to the college level.

**Senator Warner:** I am not entirely sure how this integrates with Headstart.

**Ms. Poolman** spoke about similar bills introduced in the House. She feels this is a way to reach a group of children that don't meet the income eligibility for Headstart, and it may also be a way to reach rural kids.

There was discussion about the importance to integrated education so children of all socio-economic classes can learn from each other.

**Chairman Holmberg** pointed out to the committee members that the bill was reengrossed. The Senate Education Committee made changes to the original bill.

**Senator Gary Lee** questioned what line 11 meant by local tax revenues and so on.

**Ms. Poolman** addressed that question (09:08 to 10:10)

**Senator Gary Lee:** You talk about the private preschools and what a good job they are doing, what does this do to them if the state begins to provide pre-kindergarten?

**Ms. Poolman** felt the kids presently in the private programs would stay in those programs and it would be the children who are not presently in a pre-kindergarten program that would enroll in the state-funded program.

**Senator Gary Lee:** I might disagree. When someone else is paying for it, it makes it easier to migrate to a different location. We just started funding all-day kindergarten. Is there evidence that all-day kindergarten is benefiting students? And now we are looking to add this program, what does that do to the space issue that some of these schools already are faced with?

**Ms. Poolman** (11:45 to 14:10) cited one example of success with a pre-kindergarten program. She also feels the evidence points to the importance of pre-kindergarten programs and stated "when we know better, we can do better".

**Senator Mathern:** Your data in the chart for brain development is quite a dramatic display of the consequences. Would you believe it might be more important to invest here than in higher education?

**Ms. Poolman:** Yes, the science is telling us that the best time to invest the money is when they are very young and impressionable. Spending a dollar when they are four is more effective than spending it when they are fourteen or eighteen.

**Chairman Holmberg** recalled a former governor from Georgia who said if he had his way, he would eliminate 12<sup>th</sup> grade and put the money into preschool.

**Phil Murphy, District 20**, spoke of growing up in a world that was a lot less dysfunctional than today's world and about the evidence he has seen that children are very poorly prepared for kindergarten. Many of the kindergarten children don't know the A's and B's; they don't know how to hold a pencil; they can't take care of themselves in the bathroom. Whether we like that reality or not, it is a reality. This is the right thing to do. We have to understand that we have a big uniform called common core that is standardizing things around this country. Now kindergarten children are expected to do what 2<sup>nd</sup> graders did a few years ago. We can't tell these kids they can't come into kindergarten. It puts kindergarten teachers in a very hard place. (Ends at 20.28)

**Senator Wanzek:** I appreciate your comments the way it used to be. I struggle with these situations, I can't get past the era I grew up in; it troubles me we keep making excuses for parents rather than expecting them to do some of this. I grew up with a mother who took the time to take us places and to educate us. Also, growing up on a farm we learned

different values and had responsibilities. Are we still engaging the parents in this type of approach? Are we still expecting the parents to have a role?

**Senator Murphy:** We can expect all we want. We don't have any control over them. Whatever the case may be, that is where we live. If we want to make it a better place, we have to invest.

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent of Public Instruction,** testified in favor of SB 2229 and provided attached testimony # 2. (23:20 to 37:12) She made a correction on page 5 of attachment #2. Instead of saying \$3,390, it should say \$3,910. Ms. Baesler made a point that the algebra concepts that she was taught in high school are now being taught in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. We are asking our students to learn more and accomplish more at younger ages with essentially the exact same model and time frame that she went to school with over 25 years ago. (Ends at 38:55)

Attached to Ms. Baesler's testimony were 3 letters: (These persons did not testify in person)

- #3. Bridget Leier - in support of SB 2229.
- #4. Lisa Hendrickson - in support of SB 2229.
- #5. Nancy Aldrich - in support of SB 2229.

**Chairman Holmberg: A subcommittee will look at this measure: Senator Wanzek as Chairman, Senator Holmberg, and Senator O'Connell.**

**Brandt Dick, Superintendent of Hazelton-Moffit-Braddock School District and the Underwood School District,** spoke in favor of SB 2229. They began a preschool program 15 years ago to identify special needs students. At the time they were given a grant that allowed regular ed. students to come in. Now they charge tuition to provide funding for that program. They have seen great results from that program. In the last DPI submitted a waiver for No Child Left Behind. We were one of the top five elementary schools in the state. We are having a lot of families moving in, and we see the need for early childhood education. This would be a way that we could offer it to all students. It is important to identify the children early and intervene and also to integrate them with children of all socio-economic levels. He even has parents bringing their children in from other area schools because they recognize the value of this preschool program.

**Senator O'Connell** asked about the comment Mr. Dick had made about partial transportation and asked about the hours the preschool is held. (42.30)

**Mr. Dick** said they have a program that is 3 half days or two half days. A person on staff takes them to the daycare in the morning. The preschool students are in our building.

(44.05 to 48:35) **Tom Nitschke, Superintendent of Kulm School District,** presented attached testimony # 6 and testified in favor of SB 2229.

**Senator Wanzek:** I don't disagree. I don't think government will ever replace good parents. This is a voluntary program. How are you going to be sure their kids will get to school?

**Tom Nitschke:** In the five years there has only been one student that has opted out. It's not that they don't want their children to learn, they just don't have the ability or the desire or the time or the money to do it.

**Senator Wanzek** I understand times are changing, it is a different time.

**Denise Soehren, Principal for the Billings County School District,** testified in favor of SB 2229 and provided attached testimony # 7. (51:10 to 54:00)

**Broc Lietz, Business Manager for Fargo Public Schools,** spoke in support of SB 2229. He feels this is important for the large school districts as well as the small ones. (Ends at 55:45)

**Chairman Holmberg** asked if there are private preschools in Fargo that co-exist alongside the program that the public school offers.

**Mr. Lietz** said that is correct. We are doing some work in the pre-K area but not a lot in the area of the efforts this bill addresses. Most of that is happening in the private sector.

**Janelle Ferderer, Director of Emmons County Special Education Unit,** spoke in support of the bill. (58.15 to 1:00:17) See attached testimony # 8.

**Chairman Holmberg:** How many students are in your school district?

**Ms. Ferderer:** Linton district has 335. We also service Hazelton-Moffit-Braddock and Strasburg and Bacher School which is a rural district.

**Chairman Holmberg** closed the hearing.

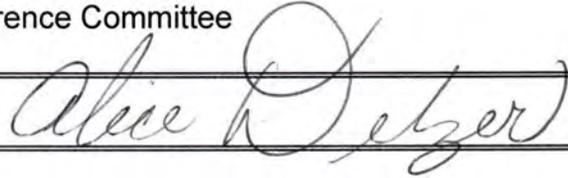
# 2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Senate Appropriations Committee Harvest Room, State Capitol

SB 2229  
02-20-2013  
Job # 19264

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A BILL RE: early childhood education grants (Do Not Pass)

### Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

Chairman Holmberg called the committee to order on Wednesday, February 20, 2013. All committee members were present.

Brady Larson -Legislative Council  
Joe Morrissette- OMB

**Chairman Holmberg** - SB 2229 is the bill regarding early childhood education grants.

**Senator Mathern moved a do pass. Seconded by Senator Robinson.**

**Senator Wanzek** - As chairman of subcommittee, I appreciate the effort of trying to help our preschool children. It's somewhat reminiscent to me as to how we started with kindergarten, and then we fully funded it. Not that I am against education for preschool children, I guess what troubles me is we just seem to be creeping closer and closer to the cradle to grave care. If this bill would redirect those funds, say, toward a voucher with parents having the ability to use those funds to direct their child to a preschool of their choice I might be more receptive to it, but again, we just continually take the parents out of the picture and that's troubling to me. I am going to resist the motion for a do pass.

**Senator Mathern** - I appreciate the comparison, but when you take that comparison with kindergarten and you balance it with early childhood development and brain development, we would be better off taking all of what we spend in higher education and putting it here. The research is now showing that these children at this age have the greatest benefit with the highest quality care.

**Vice Chairman Bowman** - I've supported the head start program before and now we are finding out that really that isn't doing anything like it was supposed to be. The kids can't even read when they get to school. Even though some of these intentions are good sometimes we find out after we've spent \$20 billion they weren't as good as the original intention. That's what I question about this, is that, from my experience with my grandkids

for example, if you sit down with a book and read to them at night, they will eventually know how to read, but you have to do it. And if we aren't going to teach reading the way it's supposed to be, we are basically becoming sort of a babysitter for these kids, I think we've got some real problems in spending money on things that we are not gaining what we expect to gain with these programs even though they sound extremely good but I need concrete data to prove to me that we are really getting the bang for our buck with these kids when it comes to learning skills and things because I heard the same thing about country schools 8-10 years ago. These country kids aren't getting the education they need. Low and behold some of our country school kids are the smartest kids we've got in the state. That is a tribute to the teacher and the personal one on one with those students and I think we gain far more by that than a program where you socialize this whole thing.

**Senator Robinson** - I am supporting the bill. The data would support the quality and the effectiveness of this type of programming. I know we need to focus on the parents but that's the problem. It's not like it was 40 years ago. There are a lot of kids that don't have parents at home. They go home alone. Mom's got 2-3 jobs and there's no dad in the house. That's why these programs are really a safety net, especially for that group of kids. The parental situation is not like it was for most of us to go home on the farm and mom and dad were there, we had milk and cookies and we went out and worked. (5:19)

**Senator Kilzer** - I raised more kids than anyone on this committee, my experience with education both with my own family and then with my teaching career and even including teaching medical students, is that there is a time in a child's life when the bonding within their family is most critical. I think the more alternatives that we offer to families that lead them away from the bonding of family life is not good. I agree with the earlier education is not the thing that we want. Sure the results show their minds are more efficient and they learn quicker for a period of time but is that really our goal for the earliest children. I would hope that we defeat the bill.

**Senator Krebsbach** - I was contacted by the child care providers in my community. At the time I thought about this and I thought one of their big competitions is going to be pre-childhood care for the schools to take the role in that area. I personally do not disagree that I think it's a worthy project but at this time I'm going to be putting my efforts in to doing something for childcare because that has been the human cry across the state.

**Senator Wanzek** - I appreciate the interest in helping educate our early age children. I am not necessarily against this, again my point is, when is the role of being the parent? And I feel that data would show in my opinion that if you show where you have strong parents, strong families, kids have a lot better chance of succeeding, and again, this might be more palatable to me if it, it seems we are always making excuses for the parents. It is true things have digressed but maybe that's because we've allowed it to happen. If we start reemphasizing the role of parents and the need for them to be responsible for their children at an early age, maybe we could turn that around. I guess I feel very strongly that as a parent it's my responsibility to make sure my children show up at that school, properly nourished, properly ready to learn. We keep eliminating the role of family and parents and that is disturbing to me.

Senate Appropriations Committee  
SB 2229  
02-20-13  
Page 3

**Chairman Holmberg** - Call the roll on do pass on 2229. A Roll Call vote was taken. Yea:6  
Nay: 7 Absent: 0. Motion failed.

**Senator Wanzek** moved a **DO NOT PASS**. **Seconded by Senator Gary Lee**.

A Roll Call vote was taken on a DO NOT PASS: Yea: 7; Nay: 6; Absent: 0. Motion carried.

**Senator Wanzek** will carry the bill.

Date: 2-20-13

Roll Call Vote # 1

2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2229

Senate Appropriations Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken Do Pass

Motion Made By Mathern Seconded By Robinson

Senators	Yes	No	Senator	Yes	No
Chariman Ray Holmberg	✓		Senator Tim Mathern	✓	
Co-Vice Chairman Bill Bowman		✓	Senator David O'Connell	✓	
Co-Vice Chair Tony Grindberg	✓		Senator Larry Robinson	✓	
Senator Ralph Kilzer		✓	Senator John Warner	✓	
Senator Karen Krebsbach .		✓			
Senator Robert Erbele		✓			
Senator Terry Wanzek		✓			
Senator Ron Carlisle		✓			
Senator Gary Lee		✓			

Total (Yes) 6 No 7

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Failed

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

Date: 2-20-13

Roll Call Vote # 2

2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2229

Senate Appropriations Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken DO NOT Pass

Motion Made By Wanzer Seconded By Lee

Senators	Yes	No	Senator	Yes	No
Chairman Ray Holmberg		✓	Senator Tim Mathern		✓
Co-Vice Chairman Bill Bowman	✓		Senator David O'Connell		✓
Co-Vice Chair Tony Grindberg		✓	Senator Larry Robinson		✓
Senator Ralph Kilzer	✓		Senator John Warner		✓
Senator Karen Krebsbach	✓				
Senator Robert Erbele	✓				
Senator Terry Wanzer	✓				
Senator Ron Carlisle	✓				
Senator Gary Lee	✓				

Total (Yes) 7 No 6

Absent \_\_\_\_\_

Floor Assignment Wanzer

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

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2229, as engrossed: Appropriations Committee (Sen. Holmberg, Chairman)**  
recommends **DO NOT PASS** (7 YEAS, 6 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING).  
Engrossed SB 2229 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

**2013 HOUSE EDUCATION**

**SB 2229**

# 2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Education Committee  
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

SB 2229  
March 20, 2013  
20251

Conference Committee

*N. Nathe*

## Minutes:

**Ch. Nathe:** We will open the hearing on SB 2229.

**Sen. Nicole Poolman:** Sponsor, support. Explained the bill regarding the appropriation put on the bill. Some of the school districts are already providing the early childhood programs and this will state it in the code that school districts are able to provide local dollars to set up a new program of preschool and for the school districts who already have a program, it will provide needed approval to keep the programs running.

**Ch. Nathe:** Thank you. Testimony in support.

**Sen. Phil Murphy:** Co-sponsor, support. I am behind this program and think that it will definitely provide much needed education in the preschool area so that the children are ready to go to kindergarten; to give them a good foundation to begin their education with.

**Ch. Nathe:** Thank you. Further testimony in support.

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, DPI:** Support (see attached #1).

**Ch. Nathe:** On line 11, you want to add, 1. Local "and state" revenues, ...

**Kirsten Baesler:** Yes.

**Rep. B. Koppelman:** We're talking about dollars that the state hasn't allocated for preschool, not any money that could come through this bill, but other dollars. The local share, even in the new formula, is 70-80 mills depending on what the district chooses to levy. I would venture to say that if a school district had some extra general fund money, it's not going to be in excess of 70-80 mills. You wouldn't have to change the language in #1, to allow them to use those 70-80 mills for preschool; it would just be anything above 70-80 mills that the state provides, as I understand it.

**Kirsten Baesler:** There is money. It is going to depend on each school district. It's going to be different, some school districts are running with the reserve and some are not. Each school district, with as many school districts that you have, you are

going to have a different set of scenarios. That local school board will be able to make the determination of where to put the dollars.

**Ch. Nathe:** If a local community and school district sees the importance for pre-K, we passed a bill that lets them use their own money, why should the state then step in with state money. If the community says this is important, we think this is great, what's wrong with letting the community decide, take to the vote of the people or assess a mill, why do we have to bring state money into it. We're talking about local control; you decide what you want to do. Then we get criticized for stepping in. Sometimes they don't want us to step in, and other times they do want us to step in. In this bill, it wants the state to step in with \$4.6 million. My point is, if locals are concerned about it, the school board wants to do it, why not do it with local money and not state.

**Kirsten Baesler:** I think that's where,"2. State moneys specifically appropriated for the program". We're asking for the \$4.6 million. I believe it is a good investment that's why. I think school districts believe it is a good investment and Rep. B. Koppelman said many of them are not allocating any general fund dollars and I don't believe it is the sentiment of the people of ND to have any local mills, local property tax mills added. I think school districts would be very hesitant to add an extra mill levy after the state has given the relief.

**Ch. Nathe:** But if it's important to come to the state for the money, why isn't it important enough to go for the vote of the people.

**Kirsten Baesler:** I understand that completely. I do understand that, because I believe it is important enough.

**Ch. Nathe:** I'm just looking at the money portion and the reason why it is that the people have a hard time with general fund money coming from the state.

**Kirsten Baesler:** I do believe that adding the words, on page 1, line 11, adding the words "and state" as an amendment will further remove the confusion for even our existing 47 school districts and I believe that is important.

**Ch. Nathe:** I think what we passed out of here on the House side; will see a lot more than 47 school districts doing pre-K now, because now they are providing the education with private money, tuition, etc. doing it on the local level.

**Rep. Schatz:** You said earlier that schools are using special education money to fund pre-K. Is that illegal or misappropriation of funds? How does that work.

**Kirsten Baesler:** That is completely acceptable. Special education dollars and federal dollars are allowable by both state and federal law.

**Rep. Meier:** Have you heard from districts that want to start up, that don't have existing program currently. Have you had inquiries and if so, how many districts.

**Kirsten Baesler:** Yes I have. The majority of them, actually all of them, have been rural districts that aren't qualified for Head Start programs; don't have a private preschool option. How many have I heard from personally, probably a dozen have reached out to me that have wanted to do this. There aren't any options. The public school option is really their only option in their rural districts.

**Rep. Heller:** But the community would have the option to rally together and start a preschool program.

**Kirsten Baesler:** Yes, you will hear from some people that have done just that. The money resources were from donations, it runs dry in a small community to keep a sustainable program.

**Rep. Heller:** Is there a North Dakota study on preschool in ND, and the effects of it just in North Dakota.

**Kirsten Baesler:** There are multiple settings, where individual school districts have done on their preschool programs which I've shared with you in my reports and others have shared as well. There is a bill, I believe HB 1356 that has proposed putting a study together after it has passed through this committee and it will be a comprehensive approach not only to preschool but all of our early childhood programs including in-home care providers, in-home care providers, head start programs, private/preschool, public education preschool. We hope the model or mirror the study in OK and a study in Iowa that was done on that.

**Rep. Heller:** So the study the Senate was referring to when they discussed this bill, was what. They referred to a ND study.

**Kirsten Baesler:** There are a number of them. The two items that we mainly discussed on the Senate side was one from Devils Lake, and the other one was from Turtle Mt. Tiny Tots preschool program on the Turtle Mtn. Reservation.

**Ch. Nathe:** In regard to the study we passed through, do you think we are putting the cart before the horse. Maybe we should see what the study results are before we look at putting \$4.6 million into preK. Nobody disputes the intention of preK and what it does. The question is should the state step in and start funding this. Before we start funding, we should maybe have some more information, and I think that the study would give us that information. Also, and allow HB 1429, which has given them the authority to use tax revenue to fund it. We'll see how it works right now, with the authority we gave them to do it with local money. Then see what the study bears, and then in two years from now, we come back and see where they're at before we have this philosophical debate about "do we put the money in or not" and then if we do, how much do we put in. It would be nice to know all the information.

**Kirsten Baesler:** That is one way where we seem to have more permission before we start. The congress may have more information to work with in the study if we have a more resistance. I'm an advocate for education.

**Rep. Rust:** When I look at this appropriation for about \$4.7 million and it's for a granting program and the grants are not going to exceed \$100,000. My guess is that a lot of schools will probably apply for that \$100,000 annually, you're looking at 47 divided by 2, 26 school districts probably wouldn't qualify for this. So maybe some won't apply for the full \$100,000, so it could be less than that. Basically, the number of school districts of this granting program, that would benefit from that is a fairly limited number compared to the total number of school districts. Have you any thoughts on that.

**Kirsten Baesler:** We believe the school districts that will be applying for this, will not be our large 16 school districts. Those school districts are already experiencing space problems. They have the private school options, but what we anticipate are applications from those that I've heard from, in the more rural school district areas that don't have an option and that don't have the population density to have a head start program in their area.

**Rep. Hunskor:** I hear one person moving towards \$0 and one moving toward \$4.7 million and in your discussion you talked about somewhere in between, yet I know you want the \$4.7 million number.

**Kirsten Baesler:** Yes, that's correct.

**Rep. Hunskor:** I heard you say somewhere in between and that puzzled me because you said \$4.7 million; you must not have much faith in this committee.

**Kirsten Baesler:** I do want the \$4.7 million, I would like to have the opportunity for as many of our children to benefit from preschool education; as much early childhood education as possible. In the spirit of cooperation and collaboration, I think we would be happy to get whatever.

**Ch. Nathe:** About your amendment in adding "and state" in there with the extra general fund money, we really wouldn't know how much that would be. It could be more or less than \$4.7 million.

**Kirsten Baesler:** That is correct. I believe it would probably be about the same. I think most school districts would run a morning and afternoon session, 1 preschool class. I would suspect that it would probably be about the same.

**Ch. Nathe:** You requested \$4.7 million; is that a low ball figure just to get the program going. In your estimation, what do you think that state would need to put in?

**Kirsten Baesler:** I think the \$100,000 would essentially pay for the materials and resources, a teacher and an instructional assistant where you would have 16 students in each class, morning and afternoon, or however they are able to do it. Once those resources and materials are purchased to set up a classroom, those would not need to be purchased again, it would be a one-time investment in that

**classroom. Essentially after that, the ongoing cost would be the salary and benefits for the teacher and instruction aide.**

**Ch. Nathe: This would be an ongoing program that we would fund going forward.**

**Kirsten Baesler: I would suspect so, unless a school district would then be able to use their state general funds. Speaking from a school administrator and school board member standpoint, you have to balance the budget. As you look at the overall package, when you have your funds from the state or your general fund, you identify and sometimes school districts run pilot programs. They may run this pilot program and see that it is successful. Then school boards will often say, okay we're going to allocate our money and put that in the budget for the 13-14 school year, and we expect the teachers to come back and say this is a good investment. If we see results in it, we would fund it again for the next school year. If we don't see results, we may decide to allocate those general fund dollars to additional teachers, smaller class size. That's what school boards do. We'd like the flexibility to use the appropriation from the state if we deem it to be important as we talked about; it really is important seeing the results and providing them to the school boards.**

**Rep. J. Kelsh: You talked about the results about the number of studies that have been done around the state. Are those studies generally positive, always positive or are there some negatives that come up in the studies about the benefits of early childhood education.**

**Kirsten Baesler: The studies that we are doing in ND, you will consistently see that the results are positive. With the data we are seeing, the first data that we collected from our first preschool four year old class are now 4<sup>th</sup> graders and we will continue to see and track those 4<sup>th</sup> graders as they move through. When you take a look at their math and reading skills versus their counterparts that weren't in preschool, significantly different. They are very positive results.**

**Rep. Wall: What is the age group that you serve by this?**

**Kirsten Baesler: Four year olds.**

**Ch. Nathe: Thank you. Further testimony in support.**

**Doug Johnson, Executive Director, North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders: Support on SB 2229. We think the appropriation, at this point, is appropriate now. We also support DPI's proposed amendment at this point in time. We realize that would not create any additional costs, because those dollars were already calculated in the foundation aid formula. It is a choice that the school districts will be making in how they wish to spend those dollars as they get them in their general funds. It should be noted that if it is not placed in there, you must have permission to do something, so if it's not set in this law, it is not permitted to be done. That is usually how the Council will interpret that when they are looking at the law.**

**Ch. Nathe: Thank you. Further testimony in support.**

**Dakota Draper, NDEA: We are in support of SB 2229. We think the concept of pre-K education, early childhood education is a good one.**

**Ch. Nathe: Thank you. Further testimony in support.**

**Darlene Musland, Early Childhood Special Education teacher for James River Special Education District: Support. I have been teaching preschoolers with special needs for 28 years. Throughout that time, I have witnessed the benefits of preschool, both short-term results and long-term results. Your support of SB 2229 will provide those same benefits for all preschoolers in our state. I realize that some of you feel that preschool child education should be in their homes, since parents are the child's first and more influential teachers of all. While that may be the case, our society has changed in the last 30 years. Many children have two working parents. Some are from single parent families and some are from socially, economically disadvantaged families. Just as our state has changed significantly, so has the family structure changed. With the requirements that lie in the future of our education system, we need to have all of our children prepared to go to school ready to learn. Early learning lays the foundation for later learning. I am going to give you five numbers to remember (see attached #2, #2A). There is a saying that it takes a village to raise a child. It takes a state of progressive minded legislators to continue our lead in education in the US to ensure that we have the necessary competent workforce to grow and sustain our economy. The best investment we can make is in our children.**

**Rep. Rohr: Have you had a chance to review the results from the studies that were evaluated by Cornell University. This is saying that the jury is still out on the value, long-term, of early childhood education.**

**Ch. Nathe: Thank you.**

**Kelly Just, Preschool Teacher, Edgeley Public School: Support. I am working with preschool students, and have for the past four years. However, this August, I will not be standing in front of my classroom door ready to greet new students with a smile. The Edgeley school board recently made the difficult decision to eliminate our Title I preschool program and my position due to lack of funding. This is devastating for our children. Our preschool program has to be able to lay the foundation of knowledge, social skills and confidence for our preschoolers (see attached #3).**

**Ch. Nathe: You said your program was discontinued because of a lack of federal funding.**

**Kelly Just: Yes.**

**Ch. Nathe: We've had several bills come through here, because of the federal government pulling back the funds and then the programs have been coming to the state looking for the money. Nobody disputes the results of what you are doing.**

**The minute the Feds pulled the money out, they come to us. If it's a great program in Edgeley, why not go to the local people and ask for their support first, before coming to the state.**

**Kelly Just: Our preschool program costs about \$20,000 to operate my program. Right now I have 10 children in the program. That's \$2,000 per family. That's a lot of money considering that many of these families are also having to pay day care, at the same time as paying for preschool. Even though your child is in preschool, you still have to pay the daycare; you pay regardless of whether your child is there or not.**

**Ch. Nathe: We know that there are 47 districts doing it privately with donations from businesses, etc. Has anything like that been discussed in Edgeley, or was the first reaction to come to the state.**

**Kelly Just: It's been discussed. My administrator, Garrett Ivey, will talk about the funding.**

**Rep. Meier: How many years has Edgeley had the preschool program.**

**Kelly Just: This is the 4<sup>th</sup> year has been able to operate a preschool program through Title I.**

**Rep. B. Koppelman: Would you say that the kids in the Title I program are low income, moderate income? Has a daycare provider ever considered offering preschool as a way to augment their daycare services?**

**Kelly Just: I don't know the exact income levels of the children attending the preschool. I would say probably average income families. We live in a farming community, but we aren't all farmers. Right now the people running the day care do not have a degree in early childhood education to be able to operate a preschool.**

**Rep. B. Koppelman: My son went to preschool. Our day care provider offered a preschool program as part of the day care. I don't know if they had a degree or not. I think there are examples of that being done.**

**Kelly Just: That's a great decision you made for your son.**

**Ch. Nathe: Thank you.**

**Garitt Irey, Elementary Principal, Edgeley Schools: Support (see attached #3A). Having the preschool programs is very important, as well as the funding for these programs.**

**Ch. Nathe: The feds pulled the money out, if we were to kill this bill, we'd be the bad guys. If the feds don't see it as important enough to fund this, why should the state.**

**Mr. Irey:** I know that it's been brought up a couple of times to try and raise the money locally. Unfortunately for Edgeley's situation, HB 1319 has had a tough impact on our district, especially if the 12 mill cap is kept in place. That would reduce our funding.

**Ch. Nathe:** HB 1319 as passed, that's going to change as the process goes along, and it's far from being a finished product. Why not look at some other options to do it on your own versus trying to kick it up to the State for the funds.

**Mr. Irey:** As I mentioned our county is in good economic times right now, but that's not everybody, we are a rural farming community with very large farmers, it is more of an average of the county, not everybody is in that good financial situation.

**Ch. Nathe:** We do have 47 other school districts doing it. You won't know unless you try to raise the funds yourself.

**Rep. J. Kelsh:** From what I understand, the county became fairly wealthy on the average, the formula for Title I is what could affect, not necessarily because the feds didn't believe in the program and decided to cut the funding.

**Mr. Irey:** The way I understand it, due to our free and reduced meals, as well as poverty levels is why our funding level is getting cut back so much. The state average would be around 9% losses, but in Edgeley it's estimated to be around 40% losses in our Title I funding.

**Ch. Nathe:** That's because the state is doing better, so then the state pulls back with the aid.

**Mr. Irey:** The feds, Title I money comes from the feds.

**Ch. Nathe:** Because the state is doing so much better then they pull back that funding. So if we were in terrible shape, it would actually kick in more money.

**Rep. J. Kelsh:** I think, as you pointed out, you still have children that are in poverty level, just because the average income went up, doesn't mean that everybody benefited.

**Mr. Irey:** Yes, we still have children in poverty.

**Rep. B. Koppelman:** How many of the children are low income in your preschool program. Of the 14 kids, how many are considered low income and if the numbers fall, how would you justify a program under this.

**Mr. Irey:** I would say that our district is sitting around that 30% free and reduced meals, which is considered the poverty level. Two years ago, we were around 40% which allowed us to go to our school-wide Title I program. As times have improved, our numbers didn't increase.

**Rep. B. Koppelman:** How many kids.

**Mr. Irey:** I would venture right around the 20-30% of the 14 kids.

**Rep. D. Johnson:** We're in the same situation in Devils Lake, the Title I went back and this program was merged with Head Start because as the Title money is pulled back, we're finding ourselves in the same situation. We're going to probably have to discontinue this program. It's the state that is doing well; not all local areas of the state are doing well. It is hard to try and find additional funds from the community.

**Ch. Nathe:** My comment is why not go to the local people first. Raise it a mill, I know that nobody wants to raise the mill, but if it is as important as we are hearing, why not go to the local people first, and ask if they would be willing to approve a raise of one or two mills to pay for this important program. Why come to the state, it is an important local issue.

**Rep. Mock:** Without the passage in 2229, or the house version of the bill, there is no statute that allows a school district to raise the mill for early childhood education programs, because that's the language that we have to add to give those school districts that authority to want to raise the mills. Up until now, they've never had that option, legally.

**Rep. J. Kelsh:** Not every area that is wealthy and doing as great as the state is. I think it's the state's responsibility to make sure that these programs that we feel are worthy of, are funded. Locals can help, but let's start where we have extra money. If we don't believe this program is worthy of it, let's just kill the bill. But I don't think that's the case. I think most of us feel that it is a worthy program and I think we need to move forward.

**Ch. Nathe:** Thank you. Further testimony in support.

**Angela Kuntz, Preschool Teacher, Reading Specialist and English Language Learner teacher for Wishek Public School:** Support (see attached #4).

**Rep. Schatz:** If a person were to own a daycare/preschool in their community and then the school started one up, and you had to shut down your business, do you think that's a fair option; doesn't that hurt the entrepreneur who wants to have their own day care.

**Ms. Kuntz:** I don't think so. I know that some of the daycares do some preschool activities, but they just don't have 4 and 5 year olds, they have from infants to 5, 6 year olds and therefore it is hard to implement a good program.

**Ch. Nathe:** You don't see that as being competitor; the school is now in competition with the private sector business.

**Ms. Kuntz:** No. They are getting paid to do their day care while the kids are in preschool.

**Ch. Nathe:** Wouldn't the family rather take their 4 year old to the school pre-K, to save the money versus going across the street to the private business.

**Ms. Kuntz:** I don't believe so.

**Rep. Hunskor:** Your testimony triggered a thought that I really hadn't thought of. We have many bills that pass through this committee that are geared to the high school and saying those kids need to do better in school. They should be getting a 3.0 GPA; they aren't prepared for college, so we come up with all kinds of programs for high school kids to make sure that they are ready. Yet, at the other end of the spectrum, is what's important and that's where you are at. So if we want to invest money at the high school level to be sure that they are all prepared for college, then we jolly well better think of these kids in their preschool. That's the answer to getting them ready for college. It's not what we put into them in high school so much as what we would do for them at that preschool age.

**Ms. Kuntz:** I agree.

**Rep. J. Kelsh:** It has been brought up about competition between day cares and early childhood. How often are these children kept in the classroom, is it an hour or two a day and they go back and forth from the daycare to the school setting. Is that the way it is.

**Ms. Kuntz:** We have two 1/2 days, Tuesday and Thursday morning, 4 hours a day.

**Rep. J. Kelsh:** So that's two 1/2 days, the rest of the time they are at the day care, and they have to pay if they are there or not.

**Ms. Kuntz:** Yes.

**Rep. Meier:** There hasn't been any discussion with your school board on shutting your preschool program down, correct.

**Ms. Kuntz:** Not directly, but they expect that our locals fundraise more to pay for the program. However, in a small community there is only so much fundraising you can do. We're a small community of a 1,000 people.

**Ch. Nathe:** What is the cost to run this program?

**Ms. Kuntz:** My salary to run a program is \$14,000; by the time you put in other expenses, it's around \$20,000. We'd be one of the schools that won't ask for \$100,000.

**Ch. Nathe:** Thank you. Further testimony in support.

**Kathryn Pinke: Support (see attached #5). My grandmother was a graduate of Minot State University with an early childhood degree and was the first woman to ever start a kindergarten on an Indian Reservation in the nation.**

**Ch. Nathe: Thank you. Further support.**

**Janelle Ferderer, Director of Emmons County Special Education Unit: Support (see attached #6).**

**Rep. Meier: What ARRA funds.**

**Ms. Ferderer: The stimulus dollars. The American Reinvestment & Recovery Act, federal dollars.**

**Rep. Rohr: In your testimony on page 2, last statement of the first paragraph, you indicated that to increase the quality of your program, you want to provide resources for parent training. Can you talk about that?**

**Ms. Ferderer: One of the issues that we have is with kids coming to preschool and the parents aren't able to work with the children at home. We like to provide opportunities for parents to come in, to come into the preschool and work with them on how to carry through with activities at home to further develop their language skills.**

**Ch. Nathe: Thank you.**

**Brandt Dick, Superintendent of Hazelton-Moffit-Braddock School District and Underwood District: Support (see attached #7).**

**Ch. Nathe: So there is community support for this program.**

**Mr. Dick: Absolutely, in fact we are going to start a program at the H-M-B district for next fall.**

**Ch. Nathe: How do you fund it?**

**Mr. Dick: We charge tuition. If there are families that have struggles meeting the tuition, we put out letters asking for support.**

**Ch. Nathe: The community has always been there.**

**Mr. Dick: Yes.**

**Rep. Rohr: I see that you have had this program for over 18 years. Have you collected any data and looked at the long-term effect of the community program and the children that have gone through.**

**Mr. Dick:** We have not dealt in depth with data. Our Elementary at Underwood is one of the districts that was identified as one of the top 5% in scoring in the state testing, so we were one of the reward schools. We have never missed taking AYP in Underwood School District as of yet. We don't know the results yet for this year.

**Ch. Nathe:** You are a perfect example of the local district taking the bull by the horns and running it yourself. I commend you for doing that.

**Mr. Dick:** We would still appreciate your support on SB 2229.

**Ch. Nathe:** Thank you. Further testimony in support of SB 2229. Testimony in opposition. We will close the hearing.

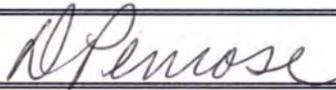
# 2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Education Committee  
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

SB 2229  
March 25, 2013  
20392

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature:



## Minutes:

**Ch. Nathe:** Let's take a look at SB 2229. This is the pre-K bill. The first part of it in section 1 is pretty much the same as HB 1429 that we passed out in the first half of the session, giving the locals the opportunity to use any local tax revenue to use towards a pre-K program. The difference between this bill and the previous bill, this bill has an appropriation of \$4.6 million in it. I have a couple of amendments prepared. The first amendment 13.0755.02001 should be SB 2229 not 1429. Council had that wrong. This basically gives the local school districts an opportunity to levy 1 mill dedicated towards a pre-K program. That would be contingent upon the approval vote of the people. The approval would have to be 50% plus 1. So if they approve it, they have 1 mill, whatever the mill generates for that district would be dedicated towards starting up a pre-K program. If 1319 should pass as we know it, if you remember there are 12 discretionary mills in there, they could also take some of the mills out of there and supplant it with this. This would be used as seed money, more or less to start a pre-K program, if they wish. Section 1 of the bill that we passed and in this bill, again, it gives them the opportunity to use the current local tax revenues to also fund the program as well if the community wishes to do so.

**Rep. J. Kelsh:** This mill levy vote in no way precludes the district from starting the program.

**Ch. Nathe:** Not at all. They could use the current local monies and start a program. This would give them the opportunity to raise more. As we've heard, 47 districts are doing it on their own. What we passed out now gives them the opportunity to use local tax money. But if some think they are short or for the districts that haven't started up a program, this would give them the opportunity to use that money to start the program.

**Rep. Mock:** In the first part of the amendment, it says, Page 1, line 1, after "to" insert "create and enact...". I just wanted to make sure that we were not omitting from the description of the bill, from the title of the bill, section 1 of the bill authorizing local tax revenues and other dollars to stay in the bill.

**Ch. Nathe:** Yes.

**Rep. Mock:** Do we have any other of the special mills, are they required to be initially approved by a vote of the district or by the voters. Can they be authorized by the school board?

**Ch. Nathe:** In 1319, the way it is written, they would have those mills. If they go above it, it is for the vote of the people. They do not need approval to use the 12 mills.

**Rep. Rust:** The only thing I worry about this amendment, we have taken great pains to combine all of the existing mills into the 12 mills. Now we're kind of starting out by adding to the number; however, it will require a vote of the people. The initial 12 mills can be utilized by the vote of the board.

**Rep. Wall:** I move amendment .02001.

**Rep. Heller:** Second the motion.

**Rep. B. Koppelman:** When we were going through 1319, I checked with Legislative Council, John Walstad and had asked him the question, we're streamlining all these mills in 1319, can a school district go to the people and say we want more mills to do "whatever". If the voters approve it, what happens? He said, first it takes a simple majority of 50% plus 1, unless it's a school building like a capital project; secondly, they can approve whatever number they want to ask the voters for, it's not unlimited, but as long as it has a dollar amount it could be 500 mills and they could have that in place for a period of 10 years, and then they would have to re-up it. This amendment reads a little more like our old technology levy, which said that once the voters had approved it, it was approved. Then the school board could decide up or down a little bit within that range and I think West Fargo, for example, approved theirs like 20 years ago, like right after the state allowed it. My concern is, if the law already allows them to go to the vote of the people for however many mills, if it's 1 or 10, they can do it. This just states what is already allowed and provides limitations, so I don't like this. If we're going to allow the local districts to have early childhood education and fund it with local dollars, I don't believe that we need to have that 1 mill limitation to do so. The general idea of hog housing the bill to allow that, I don't have a problem with that; I just don't know if that 1 mill limitation makes sense. I think we should just default to what we do on everything else, and everything else that will continue in place even if 1319 passes.

**Rep. Meier:** When you have this drafted, was there any consideration in placing it in the general election, instead of a regular or special school board election.

**Ch. Nathe:** No it was not. That is something we could work out in conference at that time.

**Rep. Meier:** With the election we just had in Bismarck, there were a lot of constituents of mine that had stated that they wished they would have had it in the general election just because there is more of a turnout and I think you get more of a voice.

**Rep. Heller:** Would this be for a primary or general or this a special school election. I didn't know this was going to be tied in with the regular elections.

**Ch. Nathe:** I think it could be either/or, because we're not specifying, so it would be at the discretion of the board.

**Rep. D. Johnson:** You have in the amendment; you've got the purpose of establishing and supporting an early childhood education program. Would that cover a program in place or should it read, establishing or supporting.

**Ch. Nathe:** I think the language covers both the established program and starting up a new program.

**Rep. Meier:** Would you be okay if we amended the bill to state general election.

**Ch. Nathe:** I am fine with that.

**Rep. Wall:** I'm fine.

**Rep. Heller:** I think we should leave it up to the school board. If they want to have a special school election, let them. Otherwise if you put general in there, they have to do it at the general election, right.

**Ch. Nathe:** The way the language is written, they can go either way. It's up to their discretion.

**Rep. D. Johnson:** I say to leave it. So they have the option, otherwise if you have to wait for the general election there is a time lapse.

**Rep. Meier:** You get a very limited amount of voters out in a special election and I think that if we're going to raise a mill, you'd want to have a populous out and I think we would only be waiting a few months perhaps. I don't think it's too long to wait until a general election.

**Rep. Rust:** I would like to see it remain as it is originally written here and my reason is the same as Rep. D. Johnson's. If you say a general election, almost three years can go by. I don't know if you want that, before you would actually get that thing in place. The general election is in November and that would mean that it can't go until the following July, and if you tack on the difference between the election we just had, and the other one, you almost have 2 years, so you could have almost 3 years go by before you could put it in place. That's why I like what's here. Besides, school boards have election every year. This would seem to be able to coincide with those school board elections, at regular school board elections.

**Rep. Meier:** That's a good point. We could restate it to pay primary or general election.

**Rep. Rust:** Primary elections are every two years. General elections would take 5 years to get it in. That's a long ways away. I don't think you want that.

**Rep. Meier:** I would be more than willing to state it to say primary or general election.

**Rep. Heller:** Then that rules out the school board's decision for a special election. I really think we should leave it up to them.

**Rep. D. Johnson:** If you've got an existing program and if the Title money is getting cut, you're out 2 years before you can reinstate the program or continue funding it.

**Ch. Nathe:** Let's vote on the existing amendment and then take a look at Rep. Meier's suggestion.

**Rep. Hunskor;** It seems like it should be at the school board election and if that is a critical issue to get people to turn out, the school board can do a lot of footwork and a lot of things in the paper to get that school district's patrons involved in the election. If they're really concerned about it, they can do a lot of work to have that happen.

**Rep. Schatz:** Do we need to amend this to get rid of the original section 2.

**Ch. Nathe:** That was another amendment. Let's take up the amendment before us. We will take a voice vote, motion carried.

**Rep. J. Kelsh:** This was not intended to take the appropriation section out.

**Ch. Nathe:** That will be our next amendment. We will take a voice vote on amendment 13.0755.02001. Motion carried.

**Rep. Schatz:** I move that we strike from page 1, lines 16-24 and page 2, lines 1-14 on the current bill. So the entire section 2 on the old bill.

**Rep. Rohr:** Second the motion.

**Rep. Rust:** I will support that amendment. One, when I look at section 2, this is a basically a program that will not benefit every school district; whereas the amendment we put on earlier could benefit every school district, so I don't want it to look like I am anti - early childhood. Whereas the amendment we did put on the bill could benefit every school district; I don't want to look like I am anti-early childhood grants but we did, would benefit more schools than the piece that is there.

**Rep. Meier:** I would like to move on your amendment, instead of "regular or special election", I would like to move to place primary or general election.

**Rep. J. Kelsh:** I am going to resist the amendment. I can see a little bit of the point that Rep. Rust was making. Not every district is going to use this because it is only

for starting up or supporting early childhood education. I certainly don't see anything wrong with the state helping that. I think it's money well spent. I think all of the things I've seen say that the money is best spent at that age, as far as education is concerned.

**Ch. Nathe:** We will take a voice vote. Motion carried.

**Rep. B. Koppelman:** I would like to move an amendment and this would be in reference to the language printed on the separate amendment sheet that we already adopted. In line 2 of the underlined section, where it says regular or special election, I would like to strike that and replace it with primary or general election, and on the following line I would like to move that we strike out the words "of one mill on each dollar of taxable valuation". The purpose here is, by replacing the language in the bill that we've already replaced and with this additional amendment, it would state that it is the intent of the legislature to allow pre-K to exist in districts whose patrons want it. So even though law may already allow them to go to a vote to do this, this specifies that the legislature says you can go to the vote of the people for this, we're not saying you can't, and whatever your people will support you on in terms of taxable authority to have that program that we're not standing in the way of that, essentially.

**Rep. Meier:** Second the motion.

**Rep. D. Johnson:** I am going to resist this amendment, because of the factor of the timely election process, instead of having to wait for 2 years.

**Rep. Mock:** I am also going to resist the motion. I resisted the motion to insert the language for the reason that we are just now authorizing school districts to use local dollars. They've never been able to so the questions of have you gone to the voters to raise dollars for an early childhood education program, by law, they've never been allowed to. So not only are we addressing that when we passed 1429 and what was presented in section 1 of 2229, we are now authorizing the school districts to be able to use local dollars. We're also imposing the limits and definitions of when you can go to the voters to accept said levy and I feel as though we are addressing a problem that has never become a problem because they've never been able to go to the voters anyway. To use current law and authorization to request mills from their constituents, from the numbers of the school district. Simply the appropriation, we may agree or disagree on whether the state should appropriate any dollars, but I think we would be doing the greatest favor to our school districts by just having section 1 authorizing the school districts to use local tax dollars and should there be issues with the mill levy and when that can be put to a vote on the ballot, then we have that opportunity next legislative or a future legislative session. I think we need to give the school districts a little flexibility, give them a chance to go to the voters and to authorize a mill or a levy of dollars to be used for early childhood education and if any other problems exist beyond that, then we have the legislative process in the future to address it.

**Rep. Meier:** Well I think we would be doing the constituents all a favor if we would allow them to be able to vote in the general election or special election, because when you look at elections, that's really what brings the populace of voters out. I think we should give the voters an opportunity to vote.

**Ch. Nathe:** They have the opportunity to vote in any election. We're not stopping them from voting. I think you're talking about the voters not being as interested.

**Rep. Meier:** They're not as interested and they're not as in tune a lot of times on a special election as they are more in tune with the general election because they are voting on several issues and more voters turn out.

**Ch. Nathe:** The voter has to take some responsibility and have to get themselves to the polls to vote on this. It isn't our job to make sure they are there. We want to give them every opportunity to vote, but if they're not motivated enough to go to a special election, that falls at their feet. The clerk will take the roll. 3 YES 10 NO 0 ABSENT motion fails. I have one more amendment to pass out. The amendment dated March 22, 2013, is something you have seen before, on section 3, early childhood care and early childhood education study. This was a study that we put into HB 1356, which was the head start, we had hog housed this study and put that in there. It is over in the Senate right now. I do want to add this to this bill, quite frankly I'm not sure what is going to happen with that bill in the Senate, I know they are making amendments and I don't want to lose this study, so I would like to see this study attached to SB 2229. I think it's a good study, good idea and that is the reason I am proposing it today. This amendment did take care of what we just previously did as far as taking the appropriation out of SB 2229.

**Rep. Rohr:** I move the amendment of March 22, 2013 for section 3.

**Rep. Meier:** Second the motion.

**Ch. Nathe:** Voice vote, motion carried.

**Rep. Meier:** I move that we remove on the first amendment to strike the first, "of 1 mill on each dollar of taxable valuation".

**Rep. B. Koppelman:** Second the motion.

**Rep. Mock:** So the intent is to remove the language limiting it to 1 mill, to make it more in compliance with existing allowances of raising mills in support of programs by the school district.

**Rep. Meier:** Correct.

**Rep. Mock:** I will support that amendment. I think the unintended consequences of us limiting it to 1 mill and that being the only program that can be limited, it may come back to haunt us in other areas, and while I generally oppose the inclusion of

**this, because of the allowances in existing law, I will support the amendment and bill if that were to be amended.**

**Ch. Nathe: Clerk will call the roll. 6 YES 7 NO 0 ABSENT Motion failed. We now have the bill before us as amended.**

**Rep. Schatz: I move a Do Pass as amended.**

**Rep. Wall: Second the motion.**

**11 YES 2 NO 0 ABSENT**

**DO PASS AS AMENDED**

**CARRIER: Rep. Schatz**

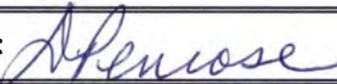
# 2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Education Committee  
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

SB 2229  
March 27, 2013  
20535

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature:



## Minutes:

**Ch. Nathe:** We need to bring SB 2229 back to the committee.

**Rep. Rust:** I move that we reconsider our actions on SB 2229.

**Rep. Schatz:** Second the motion.

**Ch. Nathe:** Voice vote, motion carried.

**Ch. Nathe:** Explained the amendment 13.0670.02003. The main reason this was brought back was because of section 3. We add the word "notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter". This will allow the locals to put up for the vote of the people for a 1 mill levy dedicated towards a pre-K program. If that vote passes, the committee deems it to be important and they pass it, then they will be assessed that mill. Rep. Meier had a good question on when to have the election. I wanted to make sure that the language was consistent with HB 1319 and it is. So regular or special school district election is consistent with HB 1319. If we to visit that, that is something that can be visited during conference committee and we can talk to the Senate about that.

**Rep. Meier:** Thank you for giving it some consideration. I still feel strongly if we're looking at allowing the districts to levy up to 1 mill for pre-K, I think I would personally like to see more of a population come out and it's been proven that in general elections and primaries that more voters come out. I will vote against the bill because of that.

**Rep. Rust:** I like the amendment, I am of the opinion that people, if it's a special or regular election, they really need to go and vote. Remaining consistent is probably a good idea.

**Rep. Meier:** With special elections, they are very expensive to the district. That's why I would like to see it during a general, as well.

**Ch. Nathe:** That would be a local decision whether they want to spend that money on the election or not. The responsibility for voting falls at the feet of the voters.

**The district has to sell this levy, if the community thinks it is important, they'll vote for it and if they don't, they will kill it.**

**Rep. B. Koppelman: I have a question; "notwithstanding any other provision" does that essentially take away the concern I had before where the language was suggesting that it limited their entire ability to levy under any authority to one mill for this purpose. Under excess mill levy allowances in 1319.**

**Ch. Nathe: I think it does. That is language that came from John Walstad, the tax expert up in Council suggested that we put that in there.**

**Rep. B. Koppelman: I was having a conversation with him regarding that. The other piece that he was a little concerned about, but said that because this language was based on the old technology levy, that it may be okay, was the language that said the board of the district may dedicate a tax levy. Other than the technology levy language, that we are essentially retiring in 1319, in every other part of code statute, it says "may levy". When you say "may dedicate it" it suggests that you are getting a vote to dedicate a portion of what you are already getting for the purpose. For example if you had 50 mills you could say that I am dedicating 1 of the mills to early childhood education. He said the practice at DPI and the tax dept. have allowed, and made this okay under the technology. But a better way to say it would be to say that they "have the permission to levy".**

**Ch. Nathe: Anita worked with Mr. Walstad on this amendment, so he has seen this. I am comfortable with this.**

**Rep. J. Kelsh: This authorizes the board to start an early childhood education program, provided it passes.**

**Ch. Nathe: Yes, provided it passes.**

**Rep. J. Kelsh: They have to have a vote to start it.**

**Ch. Nathe: What we passed in the first section, they can use local revenues to start it, this would just help them raise more money towards it, or since most of the districts don't have anything right now, maybe they will pass this to start it.**

**Rep. J. Kelsh: I like that provision that they can start it, that it gives them permission to do that. I hope that in most cases that they can use, out of the 12 mills that the board can do, by the vote of the board without having to go to the vote of the people for another mill.**

**Ch. Nathe: They could. That is what we did in 1429.**

**Rep. J. Kelsh: I just want to make sure, that by the vote of the board, they can start the program, and if they have the money, they don't have to ask for another mill. Even if this would fail, they could still continue to do it.**

**Rep. Wall:** I move the proposed amendments to engrossed SB 2229.

**Rep. D. Johnson:** Second the motion.

**Rep. Rust:** My understanding is if you look at lines 7-15 of SB 2229, they are exactly the same as HB 1429, so I think it should alleviate your concerns, Rep. J. Kelsh.

**Ch. Nathe:** Any other discussion. Voice vote, motion carried. We have SB 2229 before us as amended. What are the committee's wishes?

**Rep. Schatz:** I move a Do Pass as amended.

**Rep. Mock:** Second the motion.

**10 YES 3 NO 0 ABSENT DO PASS AS AMENDED**

**CARRIER: Rep. Schatz**

# 2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Education Committee  
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

SB 2229  
April 1, 2013  
20713

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature:



## Minutes:

Ch. Nathe: Let's take a look at SB 2229.

Rep. Schatz: I move that we reconsider our actions in SB 2229.

Rep. B. Koppelman: Second the motion.

Ch. Nathe: Voice vote, motion carried. We now have the bill before us. Let's take a look at amendment 13.0670.02004. The amendment we put on last week to give a one mill authority to the local school districts, contingent on the vote of the people to use that money raised from the mill towards pre-K. The current amendment in front of you, it takes that amendment off the bill and by doing that we would just have two sections. Section one has to do with pre-K with the local tax revenues, and we've already passed that out in HB 1429. By passing the amendment before you, we would take out the original section 2 and put in a new section 2, having to do with the Early Childhood Care and Early Childhood Education - Study by Superintendent. If you remember, that is also in another Senate bill over in the Senate. I'm not really comfortable with what they are doing; I want to make sure that we don't lose that study. That was the other reason why we put that section in here. The amendment would strike the one mill levy; insert section 2 into this bill. When we had gone through the amendments earlier, we found that the paperwork did not have the original section 3 for the study in the bill when it went to the House. That's why you see section 2 listed in the amendment.

Rep. Meier: I move the amendment.

Rep. Schatz: Second the motion.

Rep. J. Kelsh: I'm not 100% clear on the Superintendent and how they would do the study. Do they do a study, just like Legislative Management Interim study would be or is it an internal study; how do they go about the study as far as their Dept. is concerned.

Ch. Nathe: Just for your information, there is \$200,000 in the DPI budget for this study. Is that correct Superintendent Baesler.

**Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, DPI:** You are correct. We've actually had conversations with people that would help us with the study to coordinate. There are other studies that we would look at and replicate after them. There is one that has been done in Oklahoma and one done in Iowa. They have been really effective studies and really were able to put into a very comprehensive picture of what was occurring in those states. We would replicate our study with that. There are researchers within our department; it wouldn't be Legislative Council, it would be led by the Dept. of Public Instruction.

**Ch. Nathe:** Thank you. Any discussion on the amendment. The clerk will call the roll. 11 YES 0 NO 2 ABSENT Motion carried. We now have SB 2229 before us as amended.

**Rep. Meier:** I move a Do Pass as Amended.

**Rep. J. Kelsh:** Second the motion.

**Rep. D. Johnson:** If this is a department study, their recommendations, how they come forward the as a department bill. Is it a department recommendation, bill draft, or do you have to look for legislators sign on to it?

**Kirsten Baesler:** I would like it to come forward as a bill draft that is kind of how I envisioned it. That's what we are moving toward.

**Ch. Nathe:** Thank you. Clerk will call the roll.

11 YES 0 NO 2 ABSENT

DO PASS AS AMENDED

CARRIER: Rep. Schatz

VK  
3/25/13

March 25, 2013

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2229

Page 1, line 1, after "to" insert "create and enact a new section to chapter 57-15 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the authorization of a school district mill levy for an early childhood education program; to"

Page 1, line 2, remove "an appropriation for early childhood"

Page 1, line 3, replace "education grants" with "for a superintendent of public instruction study of early childhood care and early childhood education"

Page 1, remove lines 16 through 24

Page 2, replace lines 1 through 14 with:

"SECTION 2. A new section to chapter 57-15 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

**Early childhood education program - Mill levy - Voter approval.**

Upon approval by a majority of the qualified electors of the school district voting on the question at a regular or special election, the board of the district may dedicate a tax levy of one mill on each dollar of taxable valuation of real property in the district for the purpose of establishing and supporting an early childhood education program. All revenue accruing from this levy must be deposited in a separate fund known as the early childhood education program fund. If the need for the early childhood education program fund terminates, the board shall order the termination of the levy and shall transfer any balance remaining in the fund to the general fund of the school district.

**SECTION 3. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION - STUDY BY SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION - REPORT TO LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT.**

1. The superintendent of public instruction shall study the development, delivery, and administration of comprehensive early childhood care and early childhood education in this state. The study must include an examination of the availability, quality, and cost of services offered by existing public and private sector providers, the projected need for services during the coming ten to twenty years, and the ability of public and private sector providers to address the expansion of facilities or the creation of additional facilities.
2. The superintendent of public instruction may appoint a committee, work groups, task forces, and subcommittees, as necessary, to provide or obtain information required in conjunction with this study.
3. Before June 1, 2014, the superintendent of public instruction shall provide a final report, together with recommendations, to the legislative management."

Renumber accordingly

March 26, 2013

VK  
3/27/13

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2229

Page 1, line 1, after "to" insert "create and enact a new section to chapter 57-15 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the authorization of a school district mill levy for an early childhood education program; and to"

Page 1, line 2, remove "; and to provide an appropriation for early childhood"

Page 1, line 3, remove "education grants"

Page 1, line 10, after "and" insert "provided the program is approved by the superintendent of public instruction in accordance with chapter 15.1-37."

Page 1, remove lines 16 through 24

Page 2, replace lines 1 through 14 with:

"**SECTION 2.** A new section to chapter 57-15 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

**Early childhood education program - Mill levy - Voter approval.**

Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, upon approval by a majority of the qualified electors of the school district voting on the question at a regular or special school district election, the board of the district may dedicate a tax levy of one mill on each dollar of taxable valuation of real property in the district for the purpose of establishing and supporting an early childhood education program. All revenue accruing from this levy must be deposited in a separate fund known as the early childhood education program fund. If the need for the early childhood education program fund terminates, the board shall order the termination of the levy and shall transfer any balance remaining in the fund to the general fund of the school district."

Renumber accordingly

March 28, 2013

VR  
4/1/13

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2229

In lieu of the amendments as printed on pages 1089 and 1090 of the House Journal, Engrossed Senate Bill No. 2229 is amended as follows:

Page 1, line 2, remove "an appropriation for early childhood"

Page 1, line 3, replace "education grants" with "for a superintendent of public instruction study of early childhood care and early childhood education"

Page 1, remove lines 16 through 24

Page 2, replace lines 1 through 14 with:

**"SECTION 2. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION - STUDY BY SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION - REPORT TO LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT.**

1. The superintendent of public instruction shall study the development, delivery, and administration of comprehensive early childhood care and early childhood education in this state. The study must include an examination of the availability, quality, and cost of services offered by existing public and private sector providers, the projected need for services during the coming ten to twenty years, and the ability of public and private sector providers to address the expansion of facilities or the creation of additional facilities.
2. The superintendent of public instruction may appoint a committee, work groups, task forces, and subcommittees, as necessary, to provide or obtain information required in conjunction with this study.
3. Before June 1, 2014, the superintendent of public instruction shall provide a final report, together with recommendations, to the legislative management."

Renumber accordingly

Date: 3/25/13

Roll Call Vote #: \_\_\_\_\_

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2229

House \_\_\_\_\_ **EDUCATION** \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number Amendment .02001

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations

Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Wall Seconded By Rep. Heller

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe			Rep. Bob Hunsakor		
Rep. Mike Schatz			Rep. Jerry Kelsh		
Rep. Joe Heilman			Rep. Corey Mock		
Rep. Brenda Heller					
Rep. Dennis Johnson					
Rep. Ben Koppelman					
Rep. Lisa Meier					
Rep. Karen Rohr					
Rep. David Rust					
Rep. John Wall					

TOTAL (YES) \_\_\_\_\_ (NO) \_\_\_\_\_ (ABSENT) \_\_\_\_\_

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Voice vote - motion carried.*

Date: 3/25/13

Roll Call Vote #:     

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2229

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number Remove Section 2 of orig. bill

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Schatz Seconded By Rep. Rohr

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe			Rep. Bob Hunsakor		
Rep. Mike Schatz			Rep. Jerry Kelsh		
Rep. Joe Heilman			Rep. Corey Mock		
Rep. Brenda Heller					
Rep. Dennis Johnson					
Rep. Ben Koppelman					
Rep. Lisa Meier					
Rep. Karen Rohr					
Rep. David Rust					
Rep. John Wall					

TOTAL (YES)      (NO)      (ABSENT)     

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT     

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

*Voice Vote - Motion Carried.*

Date: 3/25/13

Roll Call Vote #: 1

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2229

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number Koppelman's Amend - general or primary election

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Koppelman Seconded By Rep. Meier

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe		✓	Rep. Bob Hunsakor		✓
Rep. Mike Schatz		✓	Rep. Jerry Kelsh		✓
Rep. Joe Heilman		✓	Rep. Corey Mock		✓
Rep. Brenda Heller		✓			
Rep. Dennis Johnson		✓			
Rep. Ben Koppelman	✓				
Rep. Lisa Meier	✓				
Rep. Karen Rohr	✓				
Rep. David Rust		✓			
Rep. John Wall		✓			

TOTAL (YES) 3 (NO) 10 (ABSENT) 0

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Motion failed.*

Date: 3/25/13

Roll Call Vote #: 2

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2229

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number remove limitation of 1 mill

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Meier Seconded By Rep. Koppelman

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe		✓	Rep. Bob Hunsakor	✓	
Rep. Mike Schatz		✓	Rep. Jerry Kelsh	✓	
Rep. Joe Heilman	✓		Rep. Corey Mock	✓	
Rep. Brenda Heller		✓			
Rep. Dennis Johnson		✓			
Rep. Ben Koppelman	✓				
Rep. Lisa Meier	✓				
Rep. Karen Rohr		✓			
Rep. David Rust		✓			
Rep. John Wall		✓			

TOTAL (YES) 6 (NO) 7 (ABSENT) 0

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Motion fails.*

Date: 3/25/13

Roll Call Vote #: 3

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2229

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 13.0670.62002 03000

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Schatz Seconded By Rep. Wall

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe	✓		Rep. Bob Hunsakor	✓	
Rep. Mike Schatz	✓		Rep. Jerry Kelsh	✓	
Rep. Joe Heilman	✓		Rep. Corey Mock		✓
Rep. Brenda Heller	✓				
Rep. Dennis Johnson	✓				
Rep. Ben Koppelman	✓				
Rep. Lisa Meier		✓			
Rep. Karen Rohr	✓				
Rep. David Rust	✓				
Rep. John Wall	✓				

TOTAL (YES) 11 (NO) 2 (ABSENT) 4

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT Rep. Schatz

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

Date: 3/27/13

Roll Call Vote #: —

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2229

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number Reconsider Action

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Rust Seconded By Rep. Schatz

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe			Rep. Bob Hunskor		
Rep. Mike Schatz			Rep. Jerry Kelsh		
Rep. Joe Heilman			Rep. Corey Mock		
Rep. Brenda Heller					
Rep. Dennis Johnson					
Rep. Ben Koppelman					
Rep. Lisa Meier					
Rep. Karen Rohr					
Rep. David Rust					
Rep. John Wall					

TOTAL (YES) \_\_\_\_\_ (NO) \_\_\_\_\_ (ABSENT) \_\_\_\_\_

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Voice Vote - Carried*

Date: 3/27/13

Roll Call Vote #: \_\_\_\_\_

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2229

House \_\_\_\_\_ **EDUCATION** \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 13.0670.02003 04000

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Wall Seconded By Rep. Johnson

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe			Rep. Bob Hunsakor		
Rep. Mike Schatz			Rep. Jerry Kelsh		
Rep. Joe Heilman			Rep. Corey Mock		
Rep. Brenda Heller					
Rep. Dennis Johnson					
Rep. Ben Koppelman					
Rep. Lisa Meier					
Rep. Karen Rohr					
Rep. David Rust					
Rep. John Wall					

TOTAL (YES) \_\_\_\_\_ (NO) \_\_\_\_\_ (ABSENT) \_\_\_\_\_

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Voice vote, motion carried.*

Date: 3/27/13

Roll Call Vote #: 1

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2229

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 13.0670.02003 04000

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations

Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Schatz Seconded By Rep. Mock

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe	✓		Rep. Bob Hunsakor	✓	
Rep. Mike Schatz	✓		Rep. Jerry Kelsh	✓	
Rep. Joe Heilman	✓		Rep. Corey Mock	✓	
Rep. Brenda Heller	✓				
Rep. Dennis Johnson	✓				
Rep. Ben Koppelman		✓			
Rep. Lisa Meier		✓			
Rep. Karen Rohr		✓			
Rep. David Rust	✓				
Rep. John Wall	✓				

TOTAL (YES) 10 (NO) 3 (ABSENT) 0

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT Rep. Schatz

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

Date: 4/1/13

Roll Call Vote #: —

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2229

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Schatz Seconded By Rep. Koppelman

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe			Rep. Bob Hunsakor		
Rep. Mike Schatz			Rep. Jerry Kelsh		
Rep. Joe Heilman			Rep. Corey Mock		
Rep. Brenda Heller					
Rep. Dennis Johnson					
Rep. Ben Koppelman					
Rep. Lisa Meier					
Rep. Karen Rohr					
Rep. David Rust					
Rep. John Wall					

TOTAL (YES) \_\_\_\_\_ (NO) \_\_\_\_\_ (ABSENT) \_\_\_\_\_

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Motion to Reconsider SB 2229.  
Voice vote, motion carried.*

Date: 4-1-13

Roll Call Vote #: 1

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2229

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 13.0670.02004 05000

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Meier Seconded By Rep. Schatz

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe	✓		Rep. Bob Hunsakor	✓	
Rep. Mike Schatz	✓		Rep. Jerry Kelsh	✓	
Rep. Joe Heilman	✓		Rep. Corey Mock		
Rep. Brenda Heller	✓				
Rep. Dennis Johnson	✓				
Rep. Ben Koppelman	✓				
Rep. Lisa Meier	✓				
Rep. Karen Rohr	✓				
Rep. David Rust	✓				
Rep. John Wall					

TOTAL (YES) 11 (NO) 0 (ABSENT) 2

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:  
Strike one mill levy, put section 3 back into bill as the new section 2. motion carried.

Date: 4/1/13

Roll Call Vote #: 2

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2229

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 13,0670.02004 05000

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Meier Seconded By Rep. Schatz

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe	✓		Rep. Bob Hunsakor	✓	
Rep. Mike Schatz	✓		Rep. Jerry Kelsh	✓	
Rep. Joe Heilman	✓		Rep. Corey Mock		
Rep. Brenda Heller	✓				
Rep. Dennis Johnson	✓				
Rep. Ben Koppelman	✓				
Rep. Lisa Meier	✓				
Rep. Karen Rohr	✓				
Rep. David Rust	✓				
Rep. John Wall					

TOTAL (YES) 11 (NO) 0 (ABSENT) 2

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT Rep. Schatz

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

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2229, as engrossed: Education Committee (Rep. Nathe, Chairman)** recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (11 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed SB 2229 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 1, after "to" insert "create and enact a new section to chapter 57-15 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the authorization of a school district mill levy for an early childhood education program, to"

Page 1, line 2, remove "an appropriation for early childhood"

Page 1, line 3, replace "education grants" with "for a superintendent of public instruction study of early childhood care and early childhood education"

Page 1, remove lines 16 through 24

Page 2, replace lines 1 through 14 with:

"**SECTION 2.** A new section to chapter 57-15 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

**Early childhood education program - Mill levy - Voter approval.**

Upon approval by a majority of the qualified electors of the school district voting on the question at a regular or special election, the board of the district may dedicate a tax levy of one mill on each dollar of taxable valuation of real property in the district for the purpose of establishing and supporting an early childhood education program. All revenue accruing from this levy must be deposited in a separate fund known as the early childhood education program fund. If the need for the early childhood education program fund terminates, the board shall order the termination of the levy and shall transfer any balance remaining in the fund to the general fund of the school district.

**SECTION 3. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION - STUDY BY SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION - REPORT TO LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT.**

1. The superintendent of public instruction shall study the development, delivery, and administration of comprehensive early childhood care and early childhood education in this state. The study must include an examination of the availability, quality, and cost of services offered by existing public and private sector providers, the projected need for services during the coming ten to twenty years, and the ability of public and private sector providers to address the expansion of facilities or the creation of additional facilities.
2. The superintendent of public instruction may appoint a committee, work groups, task forces, and subcommittees, as necessary, to provide or obtain information required in conjunction with this study.
3. Before June 1, 2014, the superintendent of public instruction shall provide a final report, together with recommendations, to the legislative management."

Renumber accordingly

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2229, as engrossed: Education Committee (Rep. Nathe, Chairman)** recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (10 YEAS, 3 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed SB 2229 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 1, after "to" insert "create and enact a new section to chapter 57-15 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the authorization of a school district mill levy for an early childhood education program; and to"

Page 1, line 2, remove "; and to provide an appropriation for early childhood"

Page 1, line 3, remove "education grants"

Page 1, line 10, after "and" insert "provided the program is approved by the superintendent of public instruction in accordance with chapter 15.1-37."

Page 1, remove lines 16 through 24

Page 2, replace lines 1 through 14 with:

"**SECTION 2.** A new section to chapter 57-15 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

**Early childhood education program - Mill levy - Voter approval.**

Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, upon approval by a majority of the qualified electors of the school district voting on the question at a regular or special school district election, the board of the district may dedicate a tax levy of one mill on each dollar of taxable valuation of real property in the district for the purpose of establishing and supporting an early childhood education program. All revenue accruing from this levy must be deposited in a separate fund known as the early childhood education program fund. If the need for the early childhood education program fund terminates, the board shall order the termination of the levy and shall transfer any balance remaining in the fund to the general fund of the school district."

Renumber accordingly

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2229, as engrossed: Education Committee (Rep. Nathe, Chairman)** recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (11 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed SB 2229 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

In lieu of the amendments as printed on pages 1089 and 1090 of the House Journal, Engrossed Senate Bill No. 2229 is amended as follows:

Page 1, line 2, remove "an appropriation for early childhood"

Page 1, line 3, replace "education grants" with "for a superintendent of public instruction study of early childhood care and early childhood education"

Page 1, remove lines 16 through 24

Page 2, replace lines 1 through 14 with:

**"SECTION 2. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD  
EDUCATION - STUDY BY SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION -  
REPORT TO LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT.**

1. The superintendent of public instruction shall study the development, delivery, and administration of comprehensive early childhood care and early childhood education in this state. The study must include an examination of the availability, quality, and cost of services offered by existing public and private sector providers, the projected need for services during the coming ten to twenty years, and the ability of public and private sector providers to address the expansion of facilities or the creation of additional facilities.
2. The superintendent of public instruction may appoint a committee, work groups, task forces, and subcommittees, as necessary, to provide or obtain information required in conjunction with this study.
3. Before June 1, 2014, the superintendent of public instruction shall provide a final report, together with recommendations, to the legislative management."

Renumber accordingly

**2013 TESTIMONY**

**SB 2229**

#1

**Testimony - Nicole Poolman, District 7**

**SB 2229**

Chairman Flakoll and members of the Education Committee, for the record my name is Nicole Poolman and I represent District 7 in the Senate. I come to you today to introduce Senate Bill 2229 and discuss an issue facing our youngest and poorest children: lack of access to a quality preschool education.

Early childhood education has become the norm for most of our state's preschoolers. We have learned so much about brain development and the importance of early education that many of our parents and private sector preschools have significantly stepped up the quality and depth of education for our youngest set.

So you're thinking... What's the problem? The private sector is doing a great job. And my answer is yes, they are... For those who have access to it. For those who do not, it creates an ever-widening gap in their learning abilities, behaviors, and general knowledge.

The problem arises because our middle and upper-class parents have increased the level of education provided to their young children, while the children living in poverty in our state still lack access to preschool and typically live in households who do not understand the critical nature of those first five years. As a result, **poor children start school at a disadvantage in terms of their early skills, behaviors, and health.** Fewer than half (48 percent) of poor children are ready for school at age five, compared to 75 percent of children from families with moderate and high income, **a 27 point gap.**

School readiness has effects beyond the first few months of kindergarten; children with higher levels of school readiness at age five are generally more successful in grade school, are less likely to drop out of high school, and earn more as adults, even after adjusting for differences in family background. Entering school ready to learn can improve one's chances of reaching middle-class status by age 40 by about 8 percentage points.

**The gap created by a lack of preschool education for poor children is the problem I ask you to address this session.** Senate Bill 2229 would provide grants to school districts for the purpose of creating a preschool program. The Department of Public Instruction will have a set of criteria that districts will have to meet and explain in an application. The advantage to such a program is that it can be aligned to our current K-12 standards and benchmarks to best prepare our preschoolers to succeed in school.

My hope and certainly the legislative intent of this bill would be to serve children who cannot afford to attend a private preschool, especially if we continue to underserve the children who are eligible for Head Start.

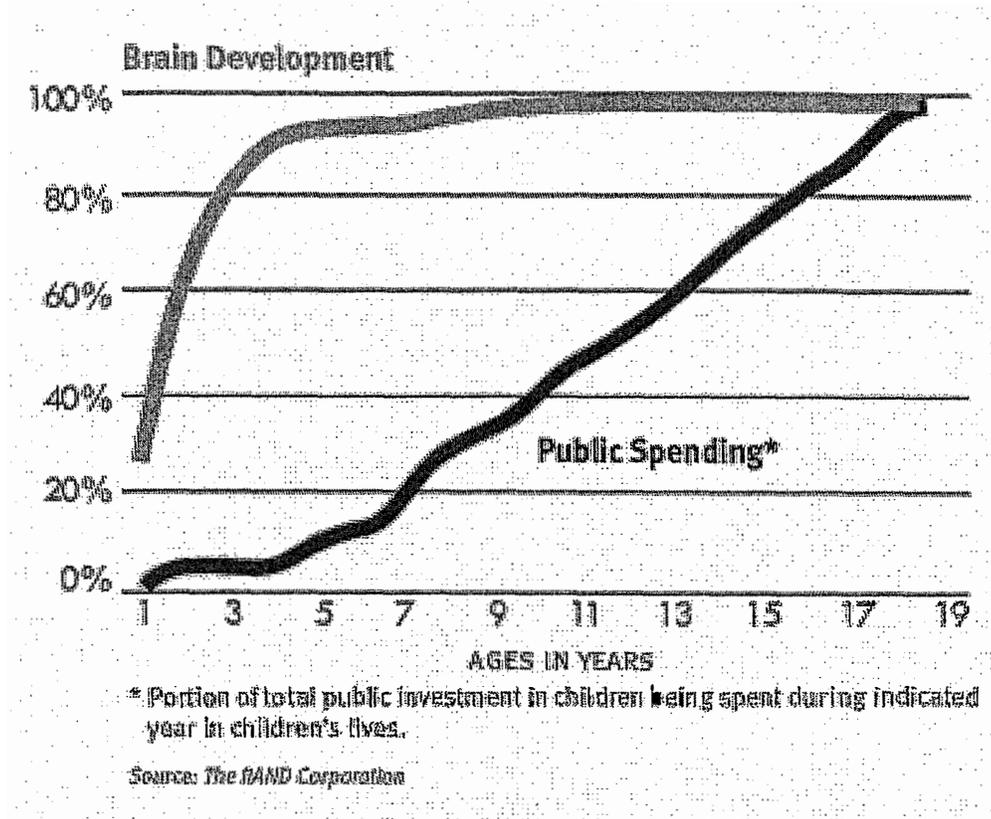
This program would be optional for districts and optional for parents. This is not an attempt to mandate prekindergarten; it is an attempt to offer it to those who need it most.

No matter what your opinion of a public option for preschool, please keep in mind the problem that we **MUST** address: **Poor children enter school two years behind their peers. When they start behind, they stay behind.** We need to find a way to close that achievement gap before they walk through the doors on their first day of kindergarten. This bill is one possible solution, and I respectfully ask you to support it.

## Did you know?

*A brain develops the most from age 0-5, but only 5% of public investment in children happens during that time.*

- Differences in language development between children exposed to high and low quality vocabularies appear as early as sixteen months. By the time they enter school, the gap only increases in the absence of early intervention.





# Ready for Kindergarten and Beyond

## Results from Pre-k Programs in Five States

- A study of five high-quality, state-funded pre-k programs in New Jersey, Oklahoma, Michigan, South Carolina and West Virginia, found children made important learning and development gains beyond those that would naturally occur in one year. The programs resulted in improvements in areas that lay a foundation for school success, including gains of 31% in vocabulary; 44% in early math skills; and 85% in print awareness.
- Research on New Jersey's Abbott preschool program, which serves 44,000 children, shows gains in oral language, reading and math skills have persisted as they have progressed into the early elementary grades. Grade retention has been cut in half.
- Oklahoma's high-quality, state-funded preschool program also showed gains in early reading and math skills. Low-income, Latino and African American children showed the greatest gains.

## Longitudinal Study: Chicago Child-Parent Centers

Children who attend high-quality preschool do significantly better in K-12 and beyond than children who do not, according to a 28-year study of more than 1,400 low-income African American children who attended Chicago Public School's large-scale preschool program.

- 
- Preschool participants
    - Scored better on reading and math achievement tests;
    - were less likely placed in special education;
    - were less likely to be held back a grade; and
    - were more likely to graduate from high school.

## A Proven Investment That Pays Off

- Early interventions for disadvantaged children are more economically efficient and produce higher returns than remedial programs to help teenagers and young adults catch up later on, according to James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economics.
  - Economists have found that high-quality early childhood education offers one of the highest returns of any public investment – more than \$7 for every dollar spent. It saves government spending on K-12 education, public assistance and the criminal justice system, and increases tax revenues as a result of higher earnings.
- 

#2

Sixty-third  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1429**

Introduced by

Representatives Heilman, Hawken, D. Johnson, N. Johnson, J. Nelson

Senators Berry, J. Lee, Murphy, Nelson, Poolman, Sorvaag

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 15.1-09-58 of the North Dakota Century Code,  
2 relating to early childhood education; and to provide an appropriation for early childhood  
3 education grants.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 15.1-09-58 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
6 amended and reenacted as follows:

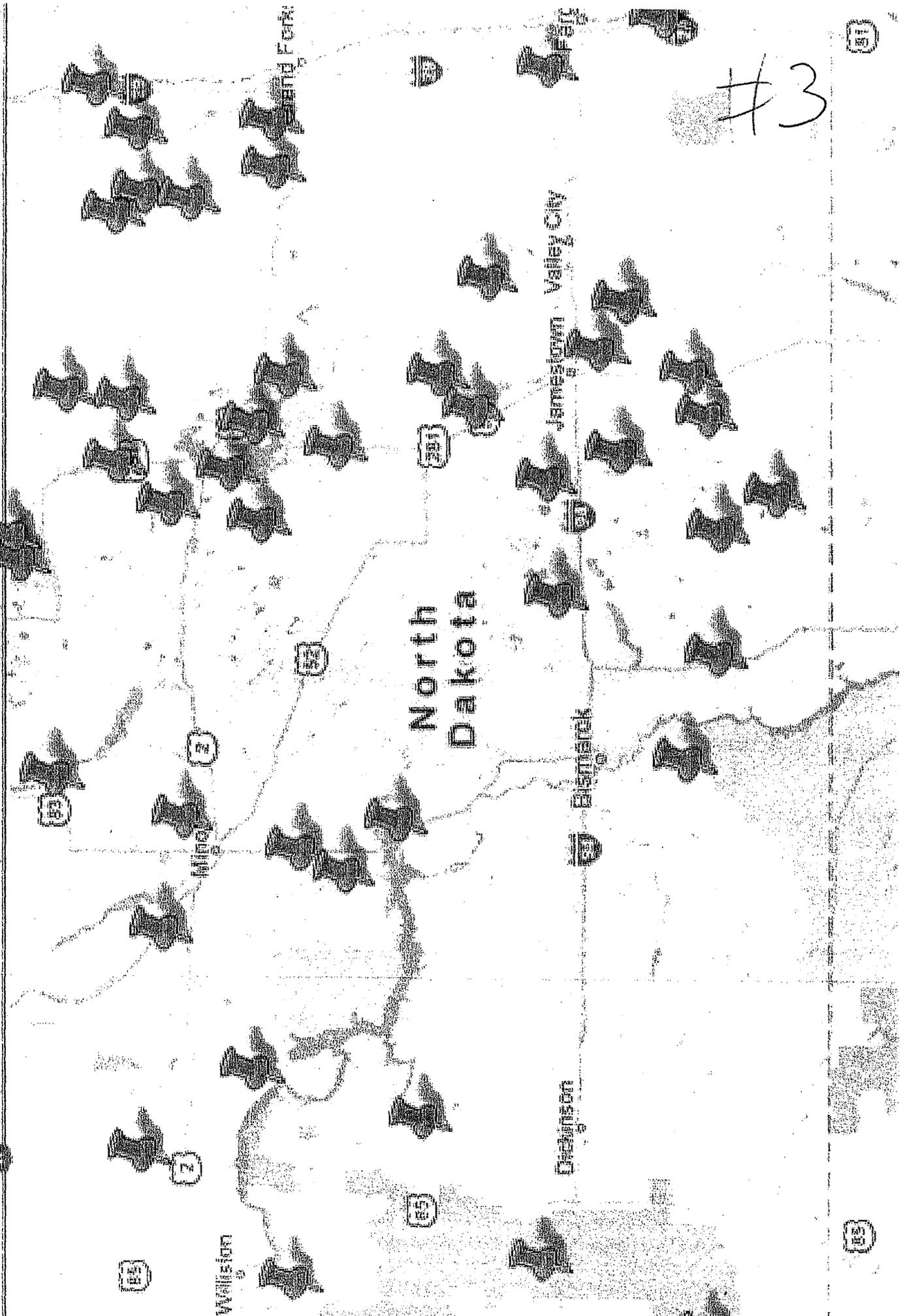
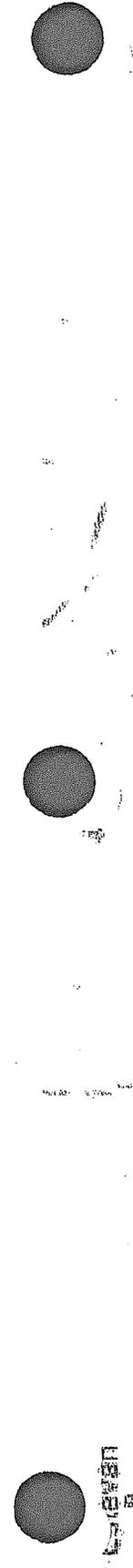
7 **15.1-09-58. ~~Prekindergarten program~~ Early childhood education - Authorization -**  
8 **Support.**

9 The board of a school district may establish ~~a prekindergarten~~ an early childhood education  
10 program and may ~~receive and expend any state~~ support that program with:

- 11 1. Local tax revenues, other than those necessary to support the district's kindergarten
- 12 program and the provision of elementary and high school educational services;
- 13 2. State moneys specifically appropriated for the program, ~~any federal;~~
- 14 3. Federal funds specifically appropriated or approved for the program, ~~and any gifts; and~~
- 15 4. Gifts, grants, and donations specifically given for the program.

16 **SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION.** There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general  
17 fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$5,000,000, or so much of the  
18 sum as may be necessary, to the superintendent of public instruction for the purpose of  
19 providing annual early childhood education grants to eligible school districts, for the biennium  
20 beginning July 1, 2013, and ending June 30, 2015.

- 21 1. Any school district offering a program of early childhood education, approved in
- 22 accordance with section 15.1-37-01, is eligible to receive a grant under this section.
- 23 2. The superintendent of public instruction shall provide for an annual application process
- 24 and shall select award recipients. The selection process must take into account the



#3

North  
Dakota

Williston

Minot

Dickinson

Bismarck

Jamestown Valley City

Grand Forks

18

2

18

85

82

28

58

85

85

## North Dakota Approved School District PK Grade Organization

Alexander	Mapleton
Ashley	Marmarth
Barns Co. North	Max
Belcourt	Medina
Billings Co.	Minnewauken
Drayton	Montpelier
Edgeley	Mt. Pleasant
Emerado	Munich
Fordville-Lankin	New Rockford-Sheyenne
Ft. Totten	New Town
Gackle-Streeter	North Star
Garrison	Park River
Grafton	Pingree-Buchanan
Kensal	Richland
Kidder Co.	Solen
Killdeer	Starkweather
Kulm	Surry
Larimore	Tioga
Leeds	Underwood
Lewis & Clark	United
Linton	Valley-Edinburg
Litchville-Marion	Warwick
Maddock	Wishek

#4

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**January 29, 2013**  
**By: Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent**  
**701-328-4570**  
**Department of Public Instruction**

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kirsten Baesler and I am the Superintendent of Public Instruction. I am here to speak in favor of Senate Bill 2229 to provide an appropriation for early childhood education grants.

I am speaking in favor of this bill today because I think we have a tremendous opportunity in North Dakota to create the best educational system in this country, possibly in the world. To begin creating that system we must make investments in programs and areas that provide the most and best results. Early childhood education does just that. I am not talking about preschool in terms of daycare alternatives or simply getting children emotionally ready for kindergarten. Early childhood education does more than that. Early childhood education takes advantage of the opportunity to teach a child when they are the most eager and ready to learn. We have the opportunity to not just prepare our students for kindergarten but to really begin the learning process for these children and begin their lifelong educational experience - preparing them for a lifetime of learning.

One argument often levied against early childhood education is that we will be taking these young children from their homes and families. The fact is that 52% of our four year olds in North Dakota are already in some sort of formal daycare setting. Some may argue that if children are already in daycare, why create new programs for early education. Why not let kids stay in daycare and then start learning in kindergarten or first grade? The answer is because quality early learning programs matter and they make a difference. Advances in brain research show that children are born learning - 85% of brain development happens before age 5. Research shows early learning experiences that are engaging and active actually thicken the cortex of an infant's brain, creating a brain with more extensive and sophisticated neuron structures that later determine intelligence and behavior. The preschool years are the time in which the brain begins to determine which connections to keep and which to eliminate. These first years of life impact the success students experience later in school and literally build the foundation of success in learning.

The first five years are also when children build the social and emotional skills they need to succeed in school. Teachers expect children to be able to follow directions, start and finish projects, and know when they need to ask for help. These are the skills I saw lacking most in my kindergarten, first and second graders. I saw these students frequently because they were removed from the classroom and sent to the principal's office. The very students that can't afford to

be out of the classroom and miss out on teacher instruction and learning are the very ones that are in the principals' offices across North Dakota for time-outs.

If a child can't follow directions, he or she will have difficulty attending to the task of learning. There are proven effective methods for teaching these skills and building attention. Such "soft" skills are just as important as cognitive or "hard" skills—like being able to count, recite the alphabet, and write their names.

While most upper-income children have vibrant early experiences, children in poverty often live in chaotic environments. Low-income parents may struggle to find a job or pay the bills, and consequently don't have the means to create a stimulating learning environment for their young children. Middle-income children most often have two working parents who consequently don't have the time to create a stimulating learning environment. In North Dakota 78% of mothers with children under the age of five work outside the home. This inequality in opportunity created between upper income and middle to low income students leads to the achievement gap that is evident as early as nine months of age and continues to inhibit students' progress throughout elementary school and beyond.

There are few proven strategies to close the achievement gap during the K-12 school years. **But high-quality early childhood education programs prevent the achievement gap from forming.** Decades of research on programs indicates that high-quality early childhood programs for vulnerable children increase

childhood literacy and high school graduation rates by as much as 80%.

Disadvantaged children who don't participate in high-quality early education programs are 50% more likely to be placed in special education and 25% more likely to drop out of school, thereby imposing significant costs on society.

Headstart programs are valuable, but they aren't operating in many areas of our state and they still reach only a small percentage of eligible children. Approval of SB 2229 would enable school districts in every part of the state to provide the same learning experiences to our young people.

Leading economists say that early childhood education is a sound public investment. Every dollar spent on early childhood education programs yields \$7 to \$9 in future savings on expenditures like special education and the criminal justice system. Early childhood education programs can also improve America's competitiveness in a global economy. Rob Grunewald - Regional Economic Analyst with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis has written:

“careful academic research demonstrates that tax dollars spent on early childhood education provide extraordinary returns compared with investments in the public, and even private, sector. The potential return from a focused, high-quality program is as high as 16 percent per year. Some of these benefits are private gains for the children involved in the form of higher wages later in life. But the broader economy also benefits because individuals who participate in high-quality programs have greater skills than they otherwise would, and they're able to contribute productively to their local economies. Thus, it's estimated, the annual *public* return to good ECD programs is 12 percent.”

Shortly after my election I visited the state penitentiary to learn more about the educational systems provided there. I learned that if during the prisoner's intake assessment it was discovered that the prisoner did not have a high school diploma or a GED they started that program immediately during their incarceration. This tells me we understand the direct correlation between education and the ability to become a productive contributing citizen in North Dakota. The state's current investment in our children's education in \$3,390 per child per year yet the state's current investment for a prisoner at the penitentiary is over 10 times that - at \$36,000 per prisoner per year.

The question elected officials and the public must confront is stark: Do we fund early childhood education now, or pay considerably more later for the costly social problems that result when children are not successful in school?

Our country's students and North Dakota's students are constantly being compared to nations around the world and we hear they are falling behind. Let's take a look at some of those countries.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has published *Education at a Glance 2012*, which is a research document that enables countries to see themselves in the light of other countries education performance.

- Across the 34 OECD studied countries in 2010, 79 percent of 4-year-olds were enrolled in preschool education. In the European Union, the percentage was 83.
- In comparison, only 69 percent of U.S. 4-year-olds were enrolled in early childhood education, ranking the U.S. 28th among 38 nations studied.
- The top 15 countries, including many of the U.S. economic competitors, all had enrollments exceeding 90 percent.
- The typical preschool starting age for U.S. children is 4, compared with a starting age of 3 or younger in 21 other OECD countries.

These findings matter because OECD data suggest that enrollment in early childhood education correlates with higher educational achievement later in a student's academic career.

As businesses and corporations look at moving to North Dakota, high quality school systems with early education options are a priority. North Dakota is one of 11 states that do not currently fund public preschool options at the school district level. This is a need for families, workforce development, communities, and business to consider as they decide to locate in North Dakota.

While I was the President of Mandan's school board the state invested in education by providing funding for all day every day kindergarten programs. We took advantage of that opportunity and since then Mandan's kindergarten scores on

the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) test that measures growth have been 8, 10 and 12, points above the national average expected. Principals from Kulm and Minnewauken report similar results. This is what investment in kindergarten programs has done. I ask you to imagine what investment in early education programs will do.

There has been significant progress made in setting the groundwork for early education programming in North Dakota. The Department of Public Instruction has an Early Childhood Education framework that will be formally reviewed against the department's protocol for developing standards. In addition, we are working with the Information Technology Department (ITD), as part of the Governor's Early Childhood Council, on a possible data system that would be connected to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). The Department of Public Instruction is striving to be prepared in the event state funding will be provided for early childhood education. We know it is becoming increasingly more important for children to come to school prepared and ready to learn. There are higher expectations today than in the past. We want our children to begin learning early and continue to learn through college and beyond. It will be imperative that our North Dakota children have a solid foundation leading to the strongest possible PK-20 educational system ever.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has a comprehensive plan for education. Our plan includes ensuring that students have the best educational experience possible -from early beginning to a successful end. North Dakota has a good educational system. In order to move from “Good” to “Great”, and get the greatest investment for our dollars for the future of North Dakota, we need to support quality early childhood education programs. I am reminded of the words of Wayne Gretzky “I skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been.” The fact is our children are ready to learn very early but by the time we begin to offer them education at age 5 or 6 we have already missed the puck.

Approving this bill will allow school districts to take the next step in creating our first class education system in North Dakota with proven academic results. Again, this isn’t about starting kids earlier, it’s about catching kids when the moment is right.

Thank you, Senators. That concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**January 29, 2013**

# 5

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, my name is Kristi Anderson, the pre-school teacher in the Ashley Public School.

The area of the teaching young children is my passion and it has been for the past 20 years. Over the years I have seen firsthand the benefits to children of being involved in a pre-school program.

Observations I have made over the years of teaching and involvement with the education of pre-school aged children include the following:

- Children learn basic academics which prepares them to go into a kindergarten program.
- Children socialize with one another, and develop friendships.
- Children build confidence in their own learning ability and building relationships by playing with others.
- They complete simple tasks with little guidance, such as dressing themselves to go outside for recess or cutting paper by following a black line.
- They develop skills in making a decision on how to use their free time appropriately.
- Children learn to follow rules and expectations within the classroom.
- A pre-school program housed within a public/private school allows the children to become familiar with all of the areas of the school and behavior expectations for all such as in the lunch room, bathrooms, playground, hallways, and library. They become familiar with classroom teachers and administrators.
- Children develop strong pre-reading skills, basic phonics skills, stronger vocabularies, stronger basic math skills, and stronger handwriting skills.
- Strong pre-school programs and well-trained teachers center their teaching on research based techniques and the changes within the academic demands placed upon young children (i.e. Common Core) to provide the student with the skills needed for the upcoming year to be confident and ready to be further challenged.

Recap of the most positive results of a pre-school program:

- ✓ Develop the love of learning new skills and sharing their knowledge with others.
- ✓ Promotes an understanding of appropriate classroom behaviors.
- ✓ Stronger self confidence, "I can" statements made by the children.
- ✓ Families becoming aware of the changes of the academic agendas. With first child/only child many parents do not understand how the school setting works currently, but reflect on how it was when they were in school.

#6

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**January 29, 2013**

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am Nancy Aldrich a former pre-school teacher at Ashley Public School and currently the kindergarten teacher in the Ashley Public School.

My comments will be short and to the point. It has been my observation and experience that preschool education helps in many ways:

- It gets pre-school aged children used to a school schedule.
- It helps pre-school aged children to know their way around the building and to get to know the staff.
- It prepares pre-school aged children in getting used to working in groups.
- It helps develop their social skills.
- It forms the basis for students to following directions.
- Pre-school attendance helps in the development of small muscle control.
- Pre-school helps to reduce separation anxiety.



## Early Childhood Education

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction recognizes and supports that high-quality early learning experiences are the foundation of academic success. The NDDPI, in collaboration with early childhood education partners, can help prepare young children so they are ready to learn and are prepared for success when entering school.

## Moving from Good to Great

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has a comprehensive plan for K-12 education.

Our plan includes ensuring that students come to school ready to learn and have the best educational experience possible to help them become college and/or career ready.

### North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

600 E. Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 201  
 Floors 9, 10, and 11  
 Bismarck, ND 58505-0440  
[www.dpi.state.nd.us](http://www.dpi.state.nd.us)  
 Phone: 701-328-2260  
 Fax: 701-328-2461

## North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

## A Comprehensive Plan for K-12 Education



Kirsten Baesler, State Superintendent  
 Robert J. Christman, Deputy Superintendent

ND Department of Public Instruction  
 600 E Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 201  
 Bismarck, ND 58505-0440  
[www.dpi.state.nd.us](http://www.dpi.state.nd.us)

# ≡ Moving North Dakota K-12 Education from Good to Great

## Rationale for Early Childhood Programming

- **Research Supports the Benefits of Early Childhood Education**
  - Early childhood intervention programs benefit academic achievement, behavior, educational progression and attainment, reduction in delinquency and crime, labor market success
  - Early learning experiences have a profound impact on brain development and cognitive, social, emotional, and physical foundations
- **Optimal Learning Ages for Children**
  - The brain develops more rapidly between birth and age five than during any other subsequent period
  - The brain begins to maximize efficiency during the preschool years
  - 75% of brain growth and 85% of intellect, personality, and social skills develop before age five
  - The earlier children participate in a learning environment that develops not only literacy and math, but also social-emotional skills, the more likely they are to succeed in all their years in school
- **School Preparedness Regarding High Standards**
  - Increasingly more important for children to come to school prepared and ready to learn
  - Common Core Standards demand children have a solid foundation in early education experiences

## NDDPI Has Set the Groundwork for Early Childhood Programming

Significant progress has been made in setting the groundwork for early childhood programming in North Dakota.

- The NDDPI has an Early Childhood Education framework that will be formally reviewed against the department's protocol for developing standards
- As part of the Governor's Early Childhood Council, the NDDPI is working with the Information Technology Department (ITD) on a possible data system that would be connected to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS)
- The NDDPI has developed a thorough system to ascertain the current status of early childhood programming statewide, as well as to document approval and ensure regulatory compliance
- Grants were appropriated by the 2011 North Dakota Legislature to provide funds to support teachers in becoming highly qualified and to enhance the physical space in preparation for public school districts to establish and implement high quality early childhood programs
- Curriculum selection guidance has been developed in collaboration with Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) to promote high quality expectations when implementing an early childhood program
- The NDDPI maintains a comprehensive early childhood education website where guidance, resources, and early childhood updates are regularly posted

## NDDPI Best Model for Early Childhood Programming

- Best Practices Framework to support teaching practices
- Comprehensive program for family, community, and school districts to support K-12 academic success
- Academic programming to support 4 and 5-year old children
- Strong collaboration with all early childhood education partners which may include, but are not limited to, the Department of Human Services, Head Start, community and faith-based programs, higher education, and school districts
- Professional development providing on-going technical assistance and training
- Highly qualified staff with North Dakota licensed preschool teachers
- Program environments that meet North Dakota health and safety regulations as well as support developmentally appropriate practices



*Significant progress has been made in setting the groundwork for early childhood programming in North Dakota*

#8

## In Support of Senate Bill 2229

Chairman Flakoll, members of the Senate Education Committee: I am Jack Maus, superintendent at Grafton Public Schools. I stand before you in support of Early Childhood education and Senate Bill 2229.

### **Starting school at a disadvantage:**

We have eight years in the life of every child to help him or her get ready for school, thrive in school and love reading by the end of the third grade. The Readiness gap for school begins at birth, continues growing until school entry and becomes an achievement gap when children enter school.

The goal at Century Elementary in Grafton is to have students reading at grade level by the end of the third grade. Up until the end of third grade, most children are learning to read. Beginning in the fourth grade, however they are reading to learn. "We know that two-thirds of fourth graders are not considered "proficient readers". Worse still, those children who are behind by the end of the third grade rarely catch up and are four more time likely to drop out of high school.

Times are changing as are the challenges to serve the young children of our community. A far greater percentage of children are unprepared to start learning in a formal environment. Our district's poverty rate has increase to 60%; our minority population has increased to 33% and the percent of student being identified with special needs at an earlier age is increasing.

Behavior has become an issue in the lower classrooms. We are starting to see angry, violent students at a very young age. Students, who swear, spit, throw things, bite and kick classmates and teachers. We believe appropriate behavior can be learned and developed with early intervention.

Early childhood education includes the socialization and the development of social skills of our young children and their preparedness to learn. Students are entering preschool withdrawn or socially inept, unable to sit at their desk, unable to respect boundaries, fellow directions or interact or hold a conversation with other children, they lack listening skills and are unaware of social expectations and began education as a negative experience. Again we believe social skills can be learned and developed with early intervention and the classroom can be a positive experience.

There is a clear distinction in academic readiness amongst our early education students. Some student can count, read and write while others have not been introduce to reading, writing or numbers. Some students can identify all the letters of the alphabet while some cannot identify any letters. Preschool today has a faster pace of

instruction, increased demand for a child's attention and allows for early intervention for accurate diagnosis, measurement of progress and determination of proficiency.

Grafton School District established an Early Education program within the elementary school setting in 2011/2012. The district's curriculum has aligned reading standards, instruction and assessment for pre – k through third grade. Our goal is, and data supports with an early education program in our school all our students can achieve proficiency at the end of third grade.

I ask you to please support early education and SB 2229. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

#9

Testimony on Behalf of  
The Children's Defense Fund – North Dakota and  
The North Dakota Economic Security & Prosperity Alliance (NDESPA)  
Senate Bill 2229 – Senate Education Committee  
Senator Tim Flakoll, Chair  
January 29, 2013

Chairman Flakoll and members of the Senate Education Committee, I am Paul Ronningen from Bismarck representing the Children's Defense Fund – North Dakota. I am also representing the North Dakota Economic Security & Prosperity Alliance. NDESPA is a coalition of citizens and organizations working to build assets for North Dakotans of low and moderate income through public policy change.

Even in these times of prosperity, people of low and moderate-income – 1 out of every 8 North Dakotans – struggle to make ends meet. More than 75 percent of these households have earned income – they are working people and families. There are more than 80,000 people living with low or moderate-income in North Dakota, nearly 25,000 of who are children.

NDESPA supports SB 2229 and the provision of early childhood education grants for North Dakota schools primarily for those children in the state who are living in poverty. We can probably all agree that North Dakota is a great place to live and raise a family. We care about our quality of life and we strive to live healthy lives. We want North Dakota to stay that way and, when our children grow up, we want this state to be the place they raise their children. For that to happen, we have to invest in the early education of young children. Well-educated children help to build happy families, strong communities and a reliable, prepared workforce.

We can make early education more reliable and accessible for more North Dakota families by investing in our public school systems in this way.



RESULTS (Early Childhood to End Poverty) report that, “in 2009, 15.5 million children under age 18 were living in poverty (20.7 percent of all children). Infants and toddlers account for 25 percent of the population, yet have the highest poverty rates of any age group in the United States. The family’s economic condition during early childhood may be far more important in shaping children’s ability, behavior, and achievement than conditions later in childhood. Poverty can hinder children’s ability to learn and be healthy and affects their social, emotional, and behavioral development.



Research has shown that participation in a quality early childhood education program provides children with the necessary social, emotional, and cognitive skills that continue to develop throughout their life. The skills they gain also contribute to reduced costs to society through decreases in services, crime rates, and higher productivity later in life. By investing in quality early childhood education, we are providing opportunities for early intervention while laying a strong foundation for a lifetime of learning and prosperity. We know that the young children of today are the workforce and parents of tomorrow.

Education, particularly early childhood education, is crucial to giving our children the opportunity to achieve. Programs that seek to help those born into poverty or help low-income families pay for child care are absolutely vital in ensuring that every American child receives the education he or she deserves.”

Programs that are designed to provide support for the parents, children, and families with resources that enable them to succeed, are just the kind of programs needed to assure that North Dakota continues to be the great place it is to raise our children.



In addition, NCSL reports on research done by the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank: “Art Rolnick and Rob Grunewald of the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank published a

paper examining the returns on investment of early education in Minnesota. The findings have had such broad appeal that the authors have been invited around the country to discuss their findings. In *Early Childhood Development with a High Public Return*, early education investments are compared to other kinds of state investments, with the conclusion that early education investments yield a return that far exceeds the return on most public projects that are considered economic development. The report raises issues relevant to most states, including how to build and maintain a viable state economy. The authors highlight the role of state subsidies while drawing on state experiences where subsidies failed to create real economic gains. Though subsidies to education have been longstanding, the authors argue that funding should be directed to early education because of the long-term effects.

*Rate of Return:* The report considered several studies of model programs and, when considering the Perry Preschool program, found a return on investment of 16 percent, with 80 percent of the benefits going to the general public. The data about model programs—such as Perry Preschool yielding more than \$8 for every \$1 invested—is one way of describing the investment. Rolnick and Grunewald’s use of the rate of return clearly shows the benefits of the investment compared to other investments.”

We urge the committee to take advantage of this opportunity for an investment in the young children and families in North Dakota and pass SB 2229.

Attached to this testimony is a list of NDESPA partners who stand in support of this effort.

I would be happy to take questions from the Committee.



North Dakota  
Economic Security  
and Prosperity  
Alliance

North Dakota Economic Security & Prosperity Alliance  
(NDESPA) Partners  
2013

North Dakota Women's Network  
North Dakota Council on Abused Women's Services  
North Dakota Disabilities Advocacy Consortium  
North Dakota Head Start Association  
North Dakota Community Action Partnership  
Catholic Charities of North Dakota  
American Association of University Women in North Dakota  
North Dakota Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers  
Childcare Resource & Referral  
Mental Health America of North Dakota  
Children's Defense Fund in North Dakota  
North Dakota Public Employees Association  
Prevent Child Abuse of North Dakota

*NDESPA works to build and sustain a system of economic security for all North Dakotans through poverty awareness and education, grassroots and community capacity building, research and data development, and promotion of policies and practices to eliminate disparities and obstacles for achieving economic security.*

H 10

"Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Denise Soehren and I am the Principal for the Billings County School District. I'm in favor of this bill because of the educational benefits for schools when preschool programs are part of the system.

According to the National Education Association, research shows that providing a high quality education for children before they turn five yields significant long-term benefits. The Abecedarian Project states that children in quality preschool programs are less likely to repeat grades, need special education, or get into future trouble with the law.

We have had preschool in our district for the past 4 ½ years. We hire certified early childhood teachers and our curriculum is approved through the Department of Public Instruction. Preschool is the foundation for academic learning in our district. In preschool, students will listen to poetry and songs -- building blocks needed to grasp phonics and reading skills when it is developmentally appropriate. The play that takes place with water, sand, and containers form the foundation for understanding some basic math concepts. Matching, sequencing, one-to-one correspondence are all activities that are done over and over in the preschool setting and help children get ready to learn academics. Watching other children pursue a challenging task is also helpful. The presence of other children and the exposure to a wide variety of materials are two reasons why a preschool is a good thing.

In our district we have seen that the children who attend preschool are entering kindergarten with better pre-reading skills, richer vocabularies, and stronger basic math skills than those who do not. Students who received early intervention services in preschool have only needed minimal supports going into kindergarten. Teachers see



the benefits with students especially in the social skills. Students entering kindergarten feel confident and safe in the school environment because of the familiarity already established.

In closing, I would like to remind all of you that the world that our children are living in is not the same as it was even ten years ago. Most families have both parents working or are living in a single parent household. Many children live in situations that are not ideal especially now with the lack of housing that many of our towns are experiencing. Children need to be exposed to vocabulary rich environments if we want to see them have academic success. By providing preschool to children we are giving them the head start that is needed in today's rigorous academic standards.



**Testimony**  
**Senate Bill 2229**  
Tuesday, January 29th, 2013



Chairman Freborg and Members of the Committee,

My name is Janelle Ferderer, Director of the Emmons County Special Education Unit and the newly expanded Emmons County Preschool program, and I would like to provide testimony in favor of Senate Bill 2229 regarding appropriation for early childhood education grants.

I have been a teacher in an early childhood program for 23 years and in school administration for 13 years. I have seen the benefits of early childhood education firsthand in the individual children I have worked with and in the data I have collected over the years.

Emmons County has had some type of preschool program for more than 25 years, including a special education preschool program, Headstart and a private preschool program; however, many children did not have the opportunity to attend an early childhood program and parents have been frustrated by the limited opportunities.

In 2009, the Emmons County Special Education Unit used ARRA funds to expand the special needs preschool to include more students without disabilities and developed a classroom space in the Linton Senior Citizen Center. The response from parents was overwhelming. We currently have 40 children enrolled in our various educational groups, and still have several children on a waiting list in case a spot opens up. Funding, however, has become a major issue.

I am hoping the following attachments will persuade the committee to move forward in funding early childhood education programs in North Dakota.

Attachment 1: Summarizes the early reading proficiency (letter naming) among Kindergarten students in the Linton Public School District from 2007 to 2013. The data demonstrates a significant improvement in these scores after the first group of preschool students started Kindergarten in 2010.

Attachment 2: Summarizes overall reading and math data for all 3 districts in Emmons County, segregated by students who attend a preschool program and those who did not. Page 2 of the attachment depicts the actual numbers and percentages for current grades 1 through 5, on which the graph is based.

Attachments 3-5: Testimony from parents of students who have participated in the program.

Attachment 6 (p. 1-5) Facts related to the returns on investments in early childhood education in school readiness, academics, economics, and community benefits.

Attachment 7 (p. 1-2) An article about North Dakota Law Enforcement backing state Pre-K programs based on research on early childhood education programs reducing crime and welfare, increasing graduation rates, and providing economic relief to struggling families.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide testimony related to SB 2229. I sincerely believe that early childhood education is an investment that our state cannot afford to disregard.

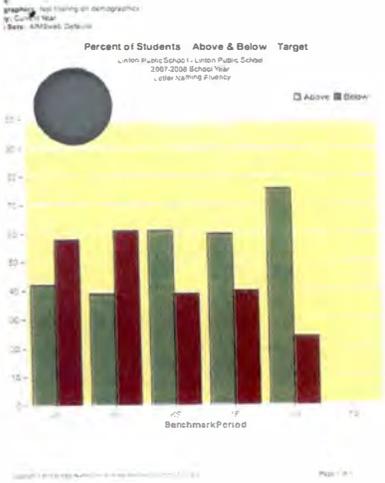
Sincerely,



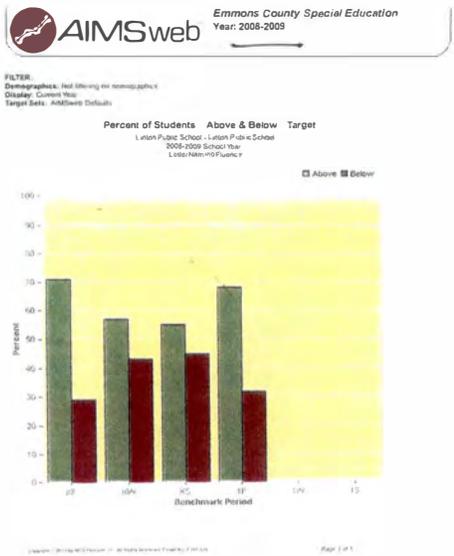
Janelle Ferderer, Director  
Emmons County Special Education  
PO Box 970  
101 NE 3rd Street  
Linton, ND 58552  
Phone: 701-254-4221 Fax: 701-254-4313  
janelle.ferderer@sendit.nodak.edu

# Emmons County Preschool Data

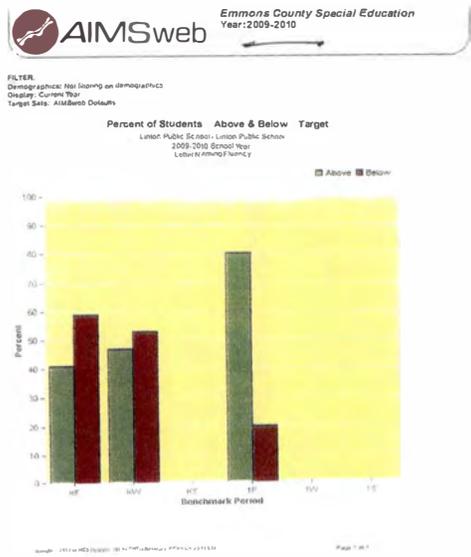
## Linton Public School Kindergarten letter naming scores from 2007-2008 to 2012-2013



Green = Above target  
Red = Below target

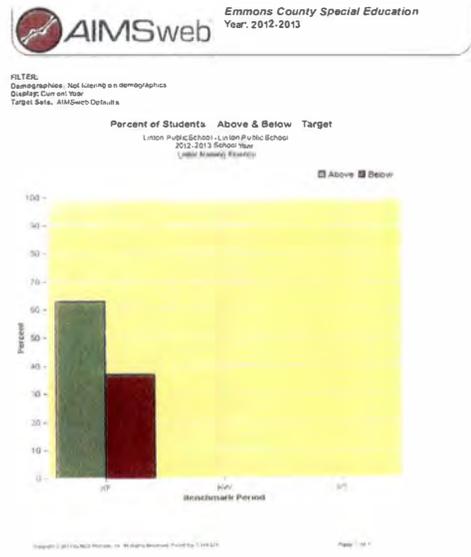
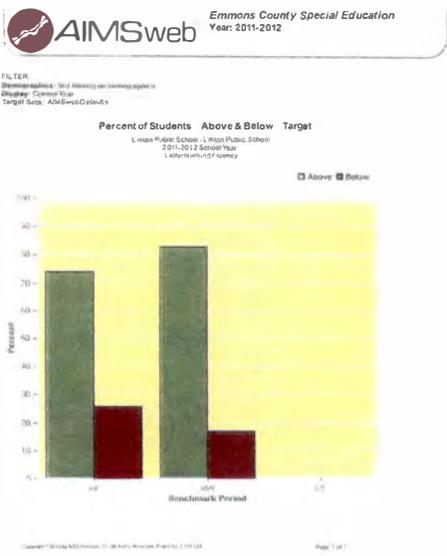
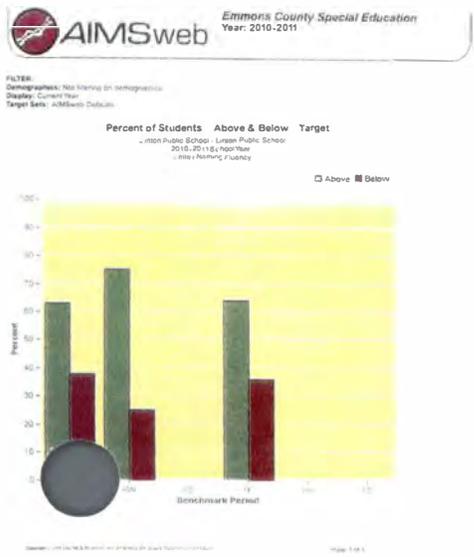


2<sup>ND</sup> year



Current year

1<sup>st</sup> year preschool students started Kindergarten. ↓

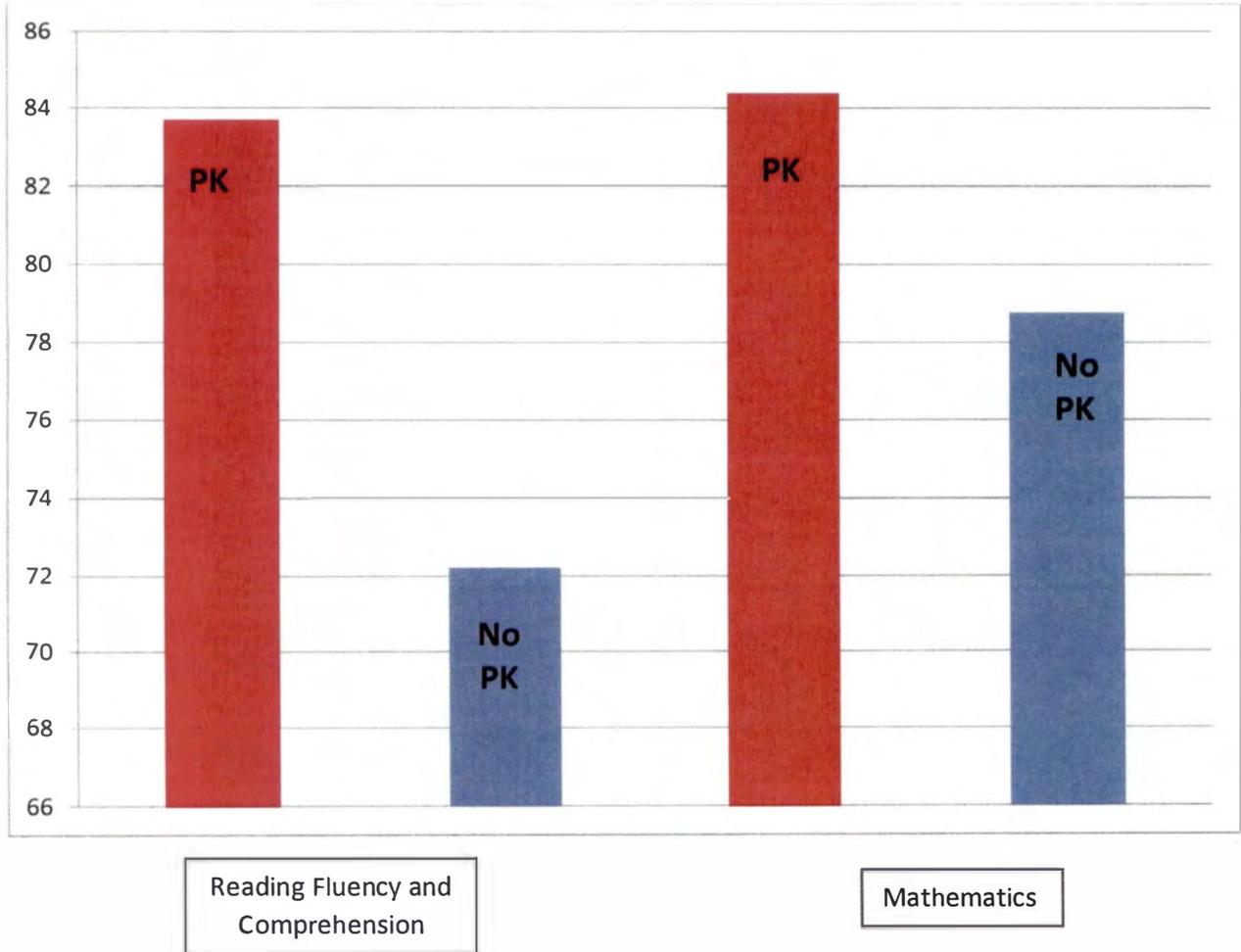


Attachment 1

**Percent of Students Above Target in Reading and Math  
Grades K-5 – Emmons County**

**Red = Children who attended the Emmons County Preschool Program  
Blue = Children who did NOT attend the Emmons County Preschool Program**

**Data Summary**



**Percent of Students Above Target in Reading and Math  
Grades K-5 – Emmons County**

**Red = Children who attended the Emmons County Preschool Program  
Blue = Children who did NOT attend the Emmons County Preschool Program**

**Data Summary**

District	Grade	Total Students	# PK	# No PK	% Reading Above Target (PK)	%Reading Above Target (No PK)	Math % Above Target (PK)	Math % Above Target (No PK)
Linton	K	19	13	6	67	56	54	83
	1	18	9	12	100	78	89	56
	2	25	13	13	100	83	96	92
	3	16	3	9	**0	85	**33	77
	4	14	5		80	100	80	78
	5							
HMB	K	8	3	7	100	80	100	80
	1	8	1	5	100	67		
	2	6	1	8	100	60	100	100
	3	8	0	4		63		
	4	5	1	10	0**	50		
	5	12	2	5	50	40		
	6	6	1		100	100		
Strasburg	K			8				
		12	4	8	75	25	75	38
	1	10	2	9	100	100	50	88
	2	10	1	8	0	67	100	100
	3	8	0	12		63		63
	4	13	1	7	100	83	100	83
	5	8	1		100	100	**0	86
	187	48	131	84	72	84	79	

**Testimony**  
**Senate Bill 2229**  
Tuesday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Chairman Freborg and Members of the Committee,

My name is Marie Schuetzle and I would like to provide testimony in favor of Senate Bill 2229 regarding appropriation for early childhood education grants. I have been able to witness the benefits of preschool programming both as a parent as a medical professional. The academic and emotionally development I have seen in my 4 year old son in the past year can, in great part, be contributed to his preschool experience. The capacity to learn and develop is so great at this stage of life; I am so appreciative that he can benefit from trained educators during his preschool years to optimize his potential. I believe he would not be at the level he is without that experience.

As a genetic counselor, I have had the opportunity to work with children and families with special needs. Not only does early education benefit children with special needs but also their siblings who may not have special needs but benefit from another setting of structured learning. I have heard feedback from many families highlighting the benefits of these programs.

The preschool setting is an accessible source of high quality education that benefits many children during those important stages of early development. Chairman Freborg and Members of the Committee, I appreciate your time and attention and ask for your support of Senate Bill 2229.

Sincerely,

*Marie Schuetzle MS CGC*

Marie Schuetzle, MS CGC

January 28, 2013

Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter not only as a parent of two children who have had access to an outstanding Preschool program, but also as an elementary special education teacher that receives children in a professional setting.

As a parent and educator the value of an adequately supported preschool program, like the one here in Emmons County is not only a benefit for the community but most importantly for the children that attend. The data has proven time and time again that children who access an early intervention program have continued success when they enter the public school system.

As a parent, moving here from another state where there was no formal preschool program, it was a huge relief to my husband and I that there was a program available for our oldest daughter to attend. Our second daughter has also benefited from her sister attending as that knowledge was shared with her at home as they "played school". Currently our second daughter is attending the same preschool as her sister; and I can only continue to see the benefits as she also experiences that great head start she is receiving before entering Kindergarten.

As a teacher, having the preschool available makes my job as the elementary special education teacher much smoother to help our special needs students make the transition from Preschool to Kindergarten. They are already exposed to a routine, social skills training, a discipline system, and academics that they would otherwise have not had the frequency had they not been enrolled in a Preschool program.

I feel that it is in the best interest of all Senators and Legislators to be supportive of the bills being presented before them regarding preschool and early childhood program support this session. This state is in a place financially that we have the ability to provide education to even the youngest of our state's residents. In turn, hopefully these youth will continue to become one day the leaders that the state of North Dakota has helped to shape.

Sincerely,

*Lisa Hendrickson*

Lisa Hendrickson

Parent

Linton Public School, Elementary Special Education Teacher

*Handwritten mark 4*

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter as testimony for what the Emmons County Preschool program has done for my kids. I have now had two children attend this program. My daughter was writing her name, signing, telling stories and knew so much more when she entered Kindergarten that she would have without this program. She also has had an easier time adjusting to her new class, following the rules, learning consequences and in general acting appropriately in class. If it would not have been for this program I do not think this would have been as smooth of a transition as it has been.

My son is currently in the program. Before he started Preschool he was very quiet and didn't talk a lot. He was only three so this was normal for a boy. Since he has started school he talks all the time, he loves going and now he loves that he knows a lot of the same things as my six year old daughter does. I think that helps with their interaction as well because they can now relate to each other more than they could before. Another thing that I think is great about the program is it gets these small children in the same class room as kids with special needs. This I believe is huge. They are at a perfect age where they learn and accept kids how they are and are more willing to help them. I truly believe that in the long run this helps with bullying and other kids being picked on because they are different. When kids see this when they are younger they accept them and that acceptance stays with them as they grow.

Please pass Senate Bill 2229 and House Bill 1429 to help ensure that our children can continue to receive this tremendous service and help them grow, learn and ultimately put them ahead of the game once they start school.

Thanks for your consideration.

Bridget Leier

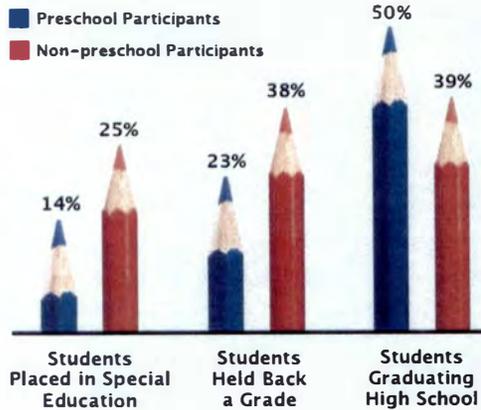
Parent

## Investing for the Future

*“From birth until about 5 years old, a child undergoes tremendous development. If this period of life includes support for growth in language, motor skills, adaptive abilities and social-emotional functioning, the child is more likely to succeed in school and to later contribute to society. Conversely, without support during these early years, a child is more likely to drop out of school, depend on welfare benefits and commit crime—thereby imposing significant cost on society. Early Child Development programs recognize this potential—and this risk—and seek to nurture healthy development from the earliest years.”*

– Economist Arthur Rolnick  
 Economist Rob Grunewald  
 Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis

### The Business Case for Preschool Chicago Child Parent Center Preschool



Source: Long-term Effects of an Early Childhood Intervention on Educational Achievement and Juvenile Arrest (2001)

National research shows that children who attend high quality preschool programs are less likely to be placed in special education, are less likely to be held back a grade, and are more likely to graduate from high school.



## School Readiness Investment

High quality preschool is a proven investment in children's foundation for learning. National research shows that high quality preschool programs:

- Provide children opportunities to build a foundation of social and emotional skills needed to succeed in school
- Provide children language rich environments which help develop important preliteracy and early mathematics skills
- Provide English learners with language development experiences
- Help close the school readiness gap before it becomes the achievement gap

*"Students who start school behind tend to stay behind. Ninety five percent of California's kindergarten teachers say their students who attended preschool are better prepared for kindergarten in both social and academic areas."*

*- Preschool California*



## Academic Investment

High quality preschool is a proven investment in children's academic success. National research shows that high quality preschool programs:

- Provide learning experiences that positively affect early brain development
- Improve performance on standardized tests in reading and math
- Decrease the likelihood of being placed in special education
- Minimize the risk of repeating a grade
- Increase the likelihood of graduating from high school and attending college

*"Big gaps in educational attainment are present at age 5. Some children are bathed in an atmosphere that promotes human capital development and, increasingly, more are not. By 5, it is possible to predict, with depressing accuracy, who will complete high school and college and who won't."*

*- James Heckman Ph.D.  
Noble Laureate and  
University of Chicago Professor of Economics*

## Economic Investment

High quality preschool is a proven investment in keeping the local community and state competitive in a global economy. National research shows that high quality preschool programs:

- Cultivate a better educated and more skilled workforce
- Decrease employee turnover and absenteeism because parents can focus on their jobs when their children are in a safe learning environment
- Provide a \$7 to \$17 return on investment by reducing government spending on education, the criminal justice system and public assistance, and increasing tax revenue
- Reduce special education costs
- Increase employment rates and individual earning potential

*“Education can be an important component of a focused economic development strategy, as well as a plan for long term national economic growth.”*

*- National Institute for Early Education Research*



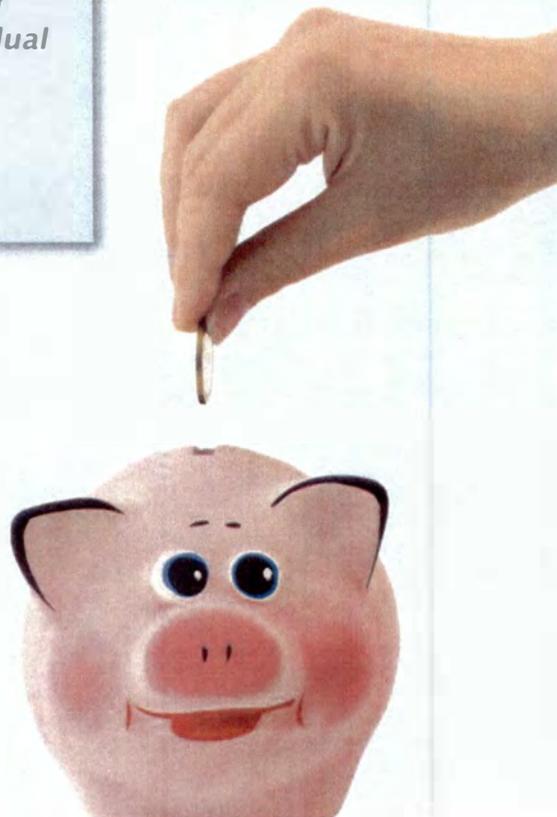
## Community Investment

High quality preschool is a proven investment in building strong, safe, and prosperous communities. National research shows that high quality preschool programs:

- Increase home ownerships
- Reduce crime and arrest rates for juveniles and adults
- Improve family and peer relationships
- Promote a healthier lifestyle

*“High quality preschool is a proven strategy for promoting both individual success and shared prosperity.”*

*– Pre-K Now*



# North Dakota Law Enforcement Back State Pre-K

January 22, 2009

MANDAN, N.D. — North Dakota Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem, Mandan Police Chief Dennis Bullinger and Burleigh County Sheriff Pat Heinert held a news conference today to rally support for the governor's proposal to create a state pre-kindergarten program. They cited research showing that early childhood education promotes school success, improves graduation rates and ultimately reduces crime.

[To read the research report, click here.](#)

The new proposal, supported by Gov. John Hoeven, would create a two-day-a-week pre-k program aimed at servicing North Dakota children. Research shows that children who benefit from high-quality early education are significantly more likely to graduate high school and avoid delinquent behavior and crime later on.

The law enforcement leaders released a report entitled "High-Quality Early Education: The Key to Crime Prevention and School Success in North Dakota." The report shows that new support for high-quality early education would lead to significant reductions in crime, drug abuse and juvenile violence in North Dakota. To read the [report](#), click here.

"Not only are the benefits of high-quality early education transformative for children who participate, it also has substantial long-term benefits through reduced crime and violence in our communities," Bullinger said. "A commitment to early childhood education will ensure that we have better performing students, a stronger workforce and safer streets."

Stenehjem, Bullinger and Heinert are all members of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS, a national anti-crime organization that supports policies proven through research to prevent crime and violence.

Over a 40-year period, researchers studied children who attended a Michigan preschool together with similar children who did not attend the high-quality program. The resulting study found that children who benefited from the early education program were 44 percent more likely to graduate from high school than those who did not participate. The at-risk children left out of the program were also five times more likely to commit a violent crime by age 40.

"The benefits of the proposed pre-kindergarten program clearly outweigh the cost," Stenehjem said. "The bottom line here is that high-quality pre-k will help kids succeed in school and cut crime in the long run."

Another long-term study of the Child-Parent Centers found that at-risk children who did not benefit from the high-quality preschool program were 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a

*Attachment 7 - p.1*

violent crime by age 18. Children who miss out on pre-kindergarten are also more likely to become unwed parents, become dependent on welfare and abuse illegal drugs.

Currently in North Dakota, the federally-funded Head Start program and early childhood special education programs serve less than 30 percent of children from low and moderate-income families.

They also called on North Dakota's Congressional delegation to include funding for early education and childcare as part of federal efforts to revamp the ailing economy. President Obama pledged \$10 billion in new funding for early childhood education during the 2008 presidential campaign.

The law enforcement leaders said that in addition to the long-term economic benefits of reduced crime and welfare and improved graduation rates, new support for early education and care would bring short-term relief to families struggling to meet the cost of daycare and boost the economy by creating jobs.

"Let's not drop the ball on America's youngest generation. If our state and national policymakers advance substantial increases in early childhood education, we can give these kids a helping hand now, not a hand out later," Heinert said.

###

**FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS** is a bipartisan, anti-crime organization led by more than 4,500 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, other law enforcement leaders and crime survivors, including 28 in North Dakota.

2-6-13

Testimony - Appropriations Committee

Nicole Poolman, District 7

SB 2229

Chairman Holmberg and members of the Appropriations Committee, for the record my name is Nicole Poolman, Senator from District 7 representing Bismarck and Lincoln. I come to you today to request the appropriation for Senate Bill 2229 and discuss an issue facing our youngest and poorest children: lack of access to a quality preschool education.

Early childhood education has become the norm for most of our state's preschoolers. We have learned so much about brain development and the importance of early education that many of our parents and private sector preschools have significantly stepped up the quality and quantity of educational experiences for our youngest set.

So you're thinking... What's the problem? The private sector is doing a great job. And my answer is yes, they are... For those who have access to it. For those who do not, it creates an ever-widening gap in their learning abilities, behaviors, and skills.

The problem arises because our middle and upper-class parents have increased the level of education provided to their young children, while the children living in poverty in our state still lack access to preschool and typically live in households who do not understand the critical nature of those first five years. As a result, **poor children start school at a disadvantage in terms of their early skills, behaviors, and health.** Fewer than half (48 percent) of poor children are ready for school at age five, compared to 75 percent of children from families with moderate and high income, **a 27 point gap.**

School readiness has effects beyond the first few months of kindergarten; children with higher levels of school readiness at age five are generally more successful in grade school, are less likely to drop out of high school, and earn more as adults, even after adjusting for differences in family background. Entering school ready to learn can improve one's chances of reaching middle-class status by age 40 by about 8 percentage points.

**The gap created by a lack of preschool education for poor children is the problem I ask you to address with this appropriation.** Senate Bill 2229 would provide grants to school districts for the purpose of creating preschool programs. The Department of Public Instruction will have a set of criteria that districts will have to meet and explain in an application. The advantage to such a program is that it can be aligned to our current K-12 standards and benchmarks to best prepare our preschoolers to succeed in our schools.

My hope with this appropriation would be to serve children who cannot afford to attend a private preschool, especially if we continue to underserve the children who are eligible for Head Start.

This program would be optional for districts and optional for parents. This is not an attempt to mandate prekindergarten; it is an attempt to offer it to those who need it most.

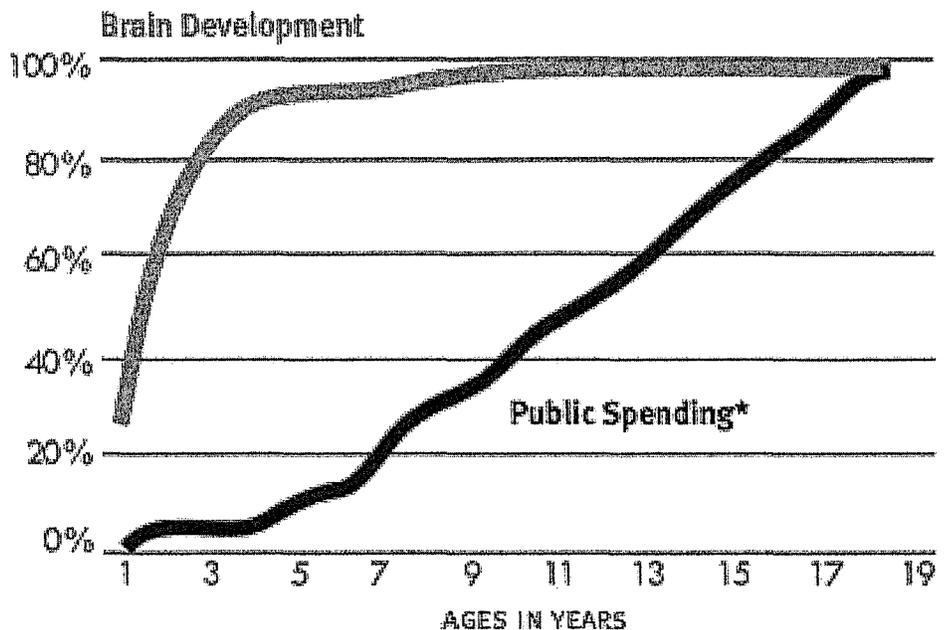
No matter what your opinion of a public option for preschool, please keep in mind the problem that we must eventually address: **Poor children enter school two years behind their peers.**

**When they start behind, they stay behind.** We need to find a way to close that achievement gap before they walk through the doors on their first day of kindergarten. You will hear today from a number of people here in North Dakota who have implemented early childhood programs and have seen excellent results. This appropriation would give more districts the opportunity to offer preschool, and I respectfully ask you to support it.

## Did you know?

*A brain develops the most from age 0-5, but only 5% of public investment in children happens during that time.*

- Differences in language development between children exposed to high and low quality vocabularies appear as early as sixteen months. By the time they enter school, the gap only increases in the absence of early intervention.



\* Portion of total public investment in children being spent during indicated year in children's lives.

Source: The RAND Corporation

## Ready for Kindergarten and Beyond

### Results from Pre-k Programs in Five States

- A study of five high-quality, state-funded pre-k programs in New Jersey, Oklahoma, Michigan, South Carolina and West Virginia, found children made important learning and development gains beyond those that would naturally occur in one year. The programs resulted in improvements in areas that lay a foundation for school success, including gains of 31% in vocabulary; 44% in early math skills; and 85% in print awareness.
- Research on New Jersey's Abbott preschool program, which serves 44,000 children, shows gains in oral language, reading and math skills have persisted as they have progressed into the early elementary grades. Grade retention has been cut in half.
- Oklahoma's high-quality, state-funded preschool program also showed gains in early reading and math skills. Low-income, Latino and African American children showed the greatest gains.

### **Longitudinal Study: Chicago Child-Parent Centers**

Children who attend high-quality preschool do significantly better in K-12 and beyond than children who do not, according to a 28-year study of more than 1,400 low-income African American children who attended Chicago Public School's large-scale preschool program.

- Preschool participants
  - Scored better on reading and math achievement tests;
  - were less likely placed in special education;
  - were less likely to be held back a grade; and
  - were more likely to graduate from high school.

### **A Proven Investment That Pays Off**

- Early interventions for disadvantaged children are more economically efficient and produce higher returns than remedial programs to help teenagers and young adults catch up later on, according to James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economics.
- Economists have found that high-quality early childhood education offers one of the highest returns of any public investment – more than \$7 for every dollar spent. It saves government spending on K-12 education, public assistance and the criminal justice system, and increases tax revenues as a result of higher earnings.

\*\* All information in this testimony comes from the Education Commission of the States.

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**February 6, 2013**  
**By: Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent**  
**701-328-4570**  
**Department of Public Instruction**

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kirsten Baesler and I am the Superintendent of Public Instruction. I am here to speak in favor of Senate Bill 2229 to provide an appropriation for early childhood education grants.

I am speaking in favor of this bill today because I think we have a tremendous opportunity in North Dakota to create the best educational system in this country, possibly in the world. To begin creating that system we must make investments in programs and areas that provide the most and best results. Early childhood education does just that. I am not talking about preschool in terms of daycare alternatives or simply getting children emotionally ready for kindergarten. Early childhood education does more than that. Early childhood education takes advantage of the opportunity to teach a child when they are the most eager and ready to learn. We have the opportunity to not just prepare our students for kindergarten but to really begin the learning process for these children and begin their lifelong educational experience - preparing them for a lifetime of learning.



One argument often levied against early childhood education is that we will be taking these young children from their homes and families. The fact is that 52% of our four year olds in North Dakota are already in some sort of formal daycare setting. Some may argue that if children are already in daycare, why create new programs for early education. Why not let kids stay in daycare and then start learning in kindergarten or first grade? The answer is because quality early learning programs matter and they make a difference. Advances in brain research show that children are born learning - 85% of brain development happens before age 5. Research shows early learning experiences that are engaging and active actually thicken the cortex of an infant's brain, creating a brain with more extensive and sophisticated neuron structures that later determine intelligence and behavior. The preschool years are the time in which the brain begins to determine which connections to keep and which to eliminate. These first years of life impact the success students experience later in school and literally build the foundation of success in learning.

The first five years are also when children build the social and emotional skills they need to succeed in school. Teachers expect children to be able to follow directions, start and finish projects, and know when they need to ask for help. These are the skills I saw lacking most in my kindergarten, first and second graders. I saw these students frequently because they were removed from the classroom and sent to the principal's office. The very students that can't afford to

be out of the classroom and miss out on teacher instruction and learning are the very ones that are in the principals' offices across North Dakota for time-outs.

If a child can't follow directions, he or she will have difficulty attending to the task of learning. There are proven effective methods for teaching these skills and building attention. Such "soft" skills are just as important as cognitive or "hard" skills—like being able to count, recite the alphabet, and write their names.

While most upper-income children have vibrant early experiences, children in poverty often live in chaotic environments. Low-income parents may struggle to find a job or pay the bills, and consequently don't have the means to create a stimulating learning environment for their young children. Middle-income children most often have two working parents who consequently don't have the time to create a stimulating learning environment. In North Dakota 78% of mothers with children under the age of five work outside the home. This inequality in opportunity created between upper income and middle to low income students leads to the achievement gap that is evident as early as nine months of age and continues to inhibit students' progress throughout elementary school and beyond.

There are few proven strategies to close the achievement gap during the K-12 school years. **But high-quality early childhood education programs prevent the achievement gap from forming.** Decades of research on programs indicates that high-quality early childhood programs for vulnerable children increase

childhood literacy and high school graduation rates by as much as 80%.

Disadvantaged children who don't participate in high-quality early education programs are 50% more likely to be placed in special education and 25% more likely to drop out of school, thereby imposing significant costs on society.

Headstart programs are valuable, but they aren't operating in many areas of our state and they still reach only a small percentage of eligible children. Approval of SB 2229 would enable school districts in every part of the state to provide the same learning experiences to our young people.

Leading economists say that early childhood education is a sound public investment. Every dollar spent on early childhood education programs yields \$7 to \$9 in future savings on expenditures like special education and the criminal justice system. Early childhood education programs can also improve America's competitiveness in a global economy. Rob Grunewald - Regional Economic Analyst with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis has written:

“careful academic research demonstrates that tax dollars spent on early childhood education provide extraordinary returns compared with investments in the public, and even private, sector. The potential return from a focused, high-quality program is as high as 16 percent per year. Some of these benefits are private gains for the children involved in the form of higher wages later in life. But the broader economy also benefits because individuals who participate in high-quality programs have greater skills than they otherwise would, and they're able to contribute productively to their local economies. Thus, it's estimated, the annual *public* return to good ECD programs is 12 percent.”

Shortly after my election I visited the state penitentiary to learn more about the educational systems provided there. I learned that if during the prisoner's intake assessment it was discovered that the prisoner did not have a high school diploma or a GED they started that program immediately during their incarceration. This tells me we understand the direct correlation between education and the ability to become a productive contributing citizen in North Dakota. The state's current investment in our children's education in <sup>\$3,910</sup> \$3,390 per child per year yet the state's current investment for a prisoner at the penitentiary is over 10 times that - at \$36,000 per prisoner per year.

The question elected officials and the public must confront is stark: Do we fund early childhood education now, or pay considerably more later for the costly social problems that result when children are not successful in school?

Our country's students and North Dakota's students are constantly being compared to nations around the world and we hear they are falling behind. Let's take a look at some of those countries.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has published *Education at a Glance 2012*, which is a research document that enables countries to see themselves in the light of other countries education performance.

- Across the 34 OECD studied countries in 2010, 79 percent of 4-year-olds were enrolled in preschool education. In the European Union, the percentage was 83.
- In comparison, only 69 percent of U.S. 4-year-olds were enrolled in early childhood education, ranking the U.S. 28th among 38 nations studied.
- The top 15 countries, including many of the U.S. economic competitors, all had enrollments exceeding 90 percent.
- The typical preschool starting age for U.S. children is 4, compared with a starting age of 3 or younger in 21 other OECD countries.

These findings matter because OECD data suggest that enrollment in early childhood education correlates with higher educational achievement later in a student's academic career.

As businesses and corporations look at moving to North Dakota, high quality school systems with early education options are a priority. North Dakota is one of 11 states that do not currently fund public preschool options at the school district level. This is a need for families, workforce development, communities, and business to consider as they decide to locate in North Dakota.

While I was the President of Mandan's school board the state invested in education by providing funding for all day every day kindergarten programs. We took advantage of that opportunity and since then Mandan's kindergarten scores on

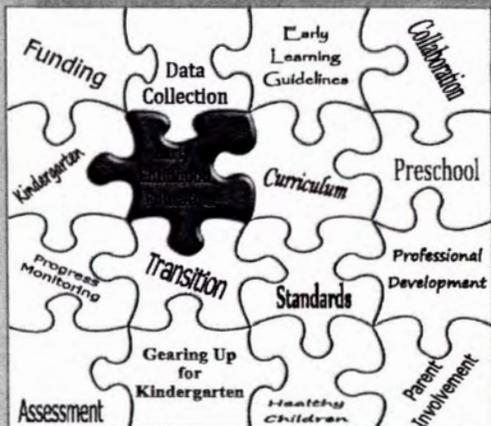
the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) test that measures growth have been 8, 10 and 12, points above the national average expected. Principals from Kulm and Minnewauken report similar results. This is what investment in kindergarten programs has done. I ask you to imagine what investment in early education programs will do.

There has been significant progress made in setting the groundwork for early education programming in North Dakota. The Department of Public Instruction has an Early Childhood Education framework that will be formally reviewed against the department's protocol for developing standards. In addition, we are working with the Information Technology Department (ITD), as part of the Governor's Early Childhood Council, on a possible data system that would be connected to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). The Department of Public Instruction is striving to be prepared in the event state funding will be provided for early childhood education. We know it is becoming increasingly more important for children to come to school prepared and ready to learn. There are higher expectations today than in the past. We want our children to begin learning early and continue to learn through college and beyond. It will be imperative that our North Dakota children have a solid foundation leading to the strongest possible PK-20 educational system ever.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has a comprehensive plan for education. Our plan includes ensuring that students have the best educational experience possible -from early beginning to a successful end. North Dakota has a good educational system. In order to move from “Good” to “Great”, and get the greatest investment for our dollars for the future of North Dakota, we need to support quality early childhood education programs. I am reminded of the words of Wayne Gretzky “I skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been.” The fact is our children are ready to learn very early but by the time we begin to offer them education at age 5 or 6 we have already missed the puck.

Approving this bill will allow school districts to take the next step in creating our first class education system in North Dakota with proven academic results. Again, this isn’t about starting kids earlier, it’s about catching kids when the moment is right.

Thank you, Senators. That concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.



## Early Childhood Education

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction recognizes and supports that high-quality early learning experiences are the foundation of academic success. The NDDPI, in collaboration with early childhood education partners, can help prepare young children so they are ready to learn and are prepared for success when entering school.

## Moving from Good to Great

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has a comprehensive plan for K-12 education.

Our plan includes ensuring that students come to school ready to learn and have the best educational experience possible to help them become college and/or career ready.

### North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

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 Floors 9, 10, and 11  
 Bismarck, ND 58505-0440  
[www.dpi.state.nd.us](http://www.dpi.state.nd.us)  
 Phone: 701-328-2260  
 Fax: 701-328-2461

## North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

## A Comprehensive Plan for K-12 Education



Kirsten Baesler, State Superintendent  
 Robert J. Christman, Deputy Superintendent

ND Department of Public Instruction  
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# Moving North Dakota K-12 Education from Good to Great

## Rationale for Early Childhood Programming

- **Research Supports the Benefits of Early Childhood Education**
  - Early childhood intervention programs benefit academic achievement, behavior, educational progression and attainment, reduction in delinquency and crime, labor market success
  - Early learning experiences have a profound impact on brain development and cognitive, social, emotional, and physical foundations
- **Optimal Learning Ages for Children**
  - The brain develops more rapidly between birth and age five than during any other subsequent period
  - The brain begins to maximize efficiency during the preschool years
  - 75% of brain growth and 85% of intellect, personality, and social skills develop before age five
  - The earlier children participate in a learning environment that develops not only literacy and math, but also social-emotional skills, the more likely they are to succeed in all their years in school
- **School Preparedness Regarding High Standards**
  - Increasingly more important for children to come to school prepared and ready to learn
  - Common Core Standards demand children have a solid foundation in early education experiences

## NDDPI Has Set the Groundwork for Early Childhood Programming

Significant progress has been made in setting the groundwork for early childhood programming in North Dakota.

- The NDDPI has an Early Childhood Education framework that will be formally reviewed against the department's protocol for developing standards
- As part of the Governor's Early Childhood Council, the NDDPI is working with the Information Technology Department (ITD) on a possible data system that would be connected to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS)
- The NDDPI has developed a thorough system to ascertain the current status of early childhood programming statewide, as well as to document approval and ensure regulatory compliance
- Grants were appropriated by the 2011 North Dakota Legislature to provide funds to support teachers in becoming highly qualified and to enhance the physical space in preparation for public school districts to establish and implement high quality early childhood programs
- Curriculum selection guidance has been developed in collaboration with Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) to promote high quality expectations when implementing an early childhood program
- The NDDPI maintains a comprehensive early childhood education website where guidance, resources, and early childhood updates are regularly posted

## NDDPI Best Model for Early Childhood Programming

- Best Practices Framework to support teaching practices
- Comprehensive program for family, community, and school districts to support K-12 academic success
- Academic programming to support 4 and 5-year old children
- Strong collaboration with all early childhood education partners which may include, but are not limited to, the Department of Human Services, Head Start, community and faith-based programs, higher education, and school districts
- Professional development providing on-going technical assistance and training
- Highly qualified staff with North Dakota licensed preschool teachers
- Program environments that meet North Dakota health and safety regulations as well as support developmentally appropriate practices



*Significant progress has been made in setting the groundwork for early childhood programming in North Dakota*

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**February 6, 2013**

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bridget Leier and I am providing testimony for what the Emmons County Preschool program has done for my kids. I have now had two children attend this program. My daughter was writing her name, signing, telling stories and knew so much more when she entered Kindergarten that she would have without this program. She also has had an easier time adjusting to her new class, following the rules, learning consequences and in general acting appropriately in class. If it would not have been for this program I do not think this would have been as smooth of a transition as it has been.

My son is currently in the program. Before he started Preschool he was very quiet and didn't talk a lot. He was only three so this was normal for a boy. Since he has started school he talks all the time, he loves going and now he loves that he knows a lot of the same things as my six year old daughter does. I think that helps with their interaction as well because they can now relate to each other more than they could before. Another thing that I think is great about the program is it gets these small children in the same class room as kids with special needs. This I believe is huge. They are at a perfect age where they learn and accept kids how

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they are and are more willing to help them. I truly believe that in the long run this helps with bullying and other kids being picked on because they are different. When kids see this when they are younger they accept them and that acceptance stays with them as they grow.

Please pass Senate Bill 2229 and House Bill 1429 to help ensure that our children can continue to receive this tremendous service and help them grow, learn and ultimately put them ahead of the game once they start school.

Thank you for your consideration.



**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**February 6, 2013**

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lisa Hendrickson and I am providing this testimony not only as a parent of two children who have had access to an outstanding Preschool program, but also as an elementary special education teacher that receives children in a professional setting.

As a parent and educator the value of an adequately supported preschool program, like the one here in Emmons County is not only a benefit for the community but most importantly for the children that attend. The data has proven time and time again that children who access an early intervention program have continued success when they enter the public school system.

As a parent, moving here from another state where there was no formal preschool program, it was a huge relief to my husband and I that there was a program available for our oldest daughter to attend. Our second daughter has also benefited from her sister attending as that knowledge was shared with her at home as they "played school". Currently our second daughter is attending the same preschool as her sister; and I can only continue to see the benefits as she also experiences that great head start she is receiving before entering Kindergarten.

As a teacher, having the preschool available makes my job as the elementary special education teacher much smoother to help our special needs students make the transition from Preschool to Kindergarten. They are already exposed to a routine, social skills training, a discipline system, and academics that they would otherwise have not had the frequency of; had they not been enrolled in a Preschool program.

I feel that it is in the best interest of all Senators and Legislators to be supportive of the bills being presented before them regarding preschool and early childhood program support this session. This state is in a place financially that we have the ability to provide education to even the youngest of our state's residents. In turn, hopefully these youth will continue to become one day the leaders that the state of North Dakota has helped to shape.

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**February 6, 2013**

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am Nancy Aldrich a former pre-school teacher at Ashley Public School and currently the kindergarten teacher in the Ashley Public School.

My comments will be short and to the point. It has been my observation and experience that preschool education helps in many ways:

- It gets pre-school aged children used to a school schedule.
- It helps pre-school aged children to know their way around the building and to get to know the staff.
- It prepares pre-school aged children in getting used to working in groups.
- It helps develop their social skills.
- It forms the basis for students to following directions.
- Pre-school attendance helps in the development of small muscle control.
- Pre-school helps to reduce separation anxiety.

Chairman Holmberg, members of the Senate Appropriations committee; my name is Tom Nitschke and I am the superintendent of Kulm School District.

**I am here to show my strong support SB 2229:**

Kulm Elementary School has been doing pre-school for 7 years.

Our kindergartner's test 7 points higher on NWEA than the national average in both reading and math. This appears to be carrying over since a majority of our upper elementary students that are not proficient in reading or math, have not been through our pre-school. Please understand there are many other factors so this is not scientific at this point but interesting none the less.

We have a 60% free and reduced.

I don't like the changes in our society but they are here. Kids, especially those living in poverty, simply are not coming to school at the level they were even 10 years ago.

I have heard Superintendent Baesler talk about the ability of young children to learn. Those of us with young children understand this well. Unfortunately many parents do not take advantage of this fact (again especially those in poverty.)

Our pre-school isn't just just social...yes that is an important part, but we use an approved curriculum since we use Title I money.

Title I money is decreasing so our program in in Jeopardy.

According to NAEP, last year ND led the nation in Reading and Math. We have the ability to stay ahead of the Nation; we should jump at this chance.

Thank you,  
Tom Nitschke  
Kulm School District Superintendent

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"Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Denise Soehren and I am the Principal for the Billings County School District. I'm in favor of this bill because of the educational benefits for schools when preschool programs are part of the system.

According to the National Education Association, research shows that providing a high quality education for children before they turn five yields significant long-term benefits. The Abecedarian Project states that children in quality preschool programs are less likely to repeat grades, need special education, or get into future trouble with the law.

We have had preschool in our district for the past 4 ½ years. We hire certified early childhood teachers and our curriculum is approved through the Department of Public Instruction. Preschool is the foundation for academic learning in our district. In preschool, students will listen to poetry and songs -- building blocks needed to grasp phonics and reading skills when it is developmentally appropriate. The play that takes place with water, sand, and containers form the foundation for understanding some basic math concepts. Matching, sequencing, one-to-one correspondence are all activities that are done over and over in the preschool setting and help children get ready to learn academics. Watching other children pursue a challenging task is also helpful. The presence of other children and the exposure to a wide variety of materials are two reasons why a preschool is a good thing.

In our district we have seen that the children who attend preschool are entering kindergarten with better pre-reading skills, richer vocabularies, and stronger basic math skills than those who do not. Students who received early intervention services in preschool have only needed minimal supports going into kindergarten. Teachers see

the benefits with students especially in the social skills. Students entering kindergarten feel confident and safe in the school environment because of the familiarity already established.

In closing, I would like to remind all of you that the world that our children are living in is not the same as it was even ten years ago. Most families have both parents working or are living in a single parent household. Many children live in situations that are not ideal especially now with the lack of housing that many of our towns are experiencing. Children need to be exposed to vocabulary rich environments if we want to see them have academic success. By providing preschool to children we are giving them the head start that is needed in today's rigorous academic standards.

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS**  
**COMMITTEE**  
FEBRUARY 6, 2013

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Janelle Ferderer, Director of the Emmons County Special Education Unit and the newly expanded Emmons County Preschool program, and I would like to provide testimony in favor of Senate Bill 2229 regarding appropriation for early childhood education grants.

I have been a teacher in an early childhood program for 23 years and in school administration for 13 years. I have seen the benefits of early childhood education firsthand in the individual children I have worked with and in the data I have collected over the years.

Emmons County has had some type of preschool program for more than 25 years, including a special education preschool program, Headstart and a private preschool program; however, many children have not had the opportunity to attend an early childhood program and parents have been frustrated by the limited opportunities.

In 2009, the Emmons County Special Education Unit used ARRA funds to expand the special needs preschool to include more students without disabilities and partnered with the Linton Senior Citizens group and developed a classroom space in the Linton Senior Citizens' Center. The response from parents was overwhelming. Instead of having 8 to 10 students, we currently have 40 children enrolled in our various educational groups, and still have several children on a waiting list. As of today, 30 children are already seeking enrollment in the 2013-2014 program. I believe this is because parents realize the positive impacts of early childhood education. I have attached 4 letters of testimony from parents who currently have students enrolled in our program.

I am hoping the following attachments will persuade the committee to move forward in funding early childhood education programs in North Dakota, since funding our biggest challenge.

Attachment 1: Summarizes the early reading proficiency (letter naming) among Kindergarten students in the Linton Public School District from 2007 to 2013. The data demonstrates significant improvements in these scores after the first group of preschool students started Kindergarten in 2010, and have remained higher each consecutive year.

Attachment 2: Summarizes overall reading and math data for all 3 districts in Emmons County, segregated by students who attend a preschool program and

those who did not. Page 2 of the attachment depicts the actual numbers and percentages for current grades 1 through 5, on which the graph is based.

Facts related to the returns on investments in early childhood education in school readiness, academics, economics, and community benefits are based on national statistics. Proven benefits include less special education placements, less grade retention, higher graduation rates, decreased dependence on welfare, and decreased rate of crime. Economists estimate that every dollar spent on early childhood programs provide a return of \$7 to \$17 in reduction of government spending in these areas. (Attachment 3)

The early childhood years are a critical learning phase where attitudes towards learning, social constructs, and language skills are hardwired. By age 5 it is possible to predict with depressing accuracy who will complete high school and college and who won't. There are many compelling qualitative studies (Heath, Basso, Scollon & Scollon) that examine specific literacy events that teach young children to become learners. Exposure to printed material and language routines of labeling, categorizing, questioning and responding are imperative to developing the skills required for academic success. The games, stories, play times and group activities experienced in preschool are powerful tools used to teach these basic pre-requisite skills. I would be willing to bet that everyone here today who has been successful in the academic system can identify someone in their formative years

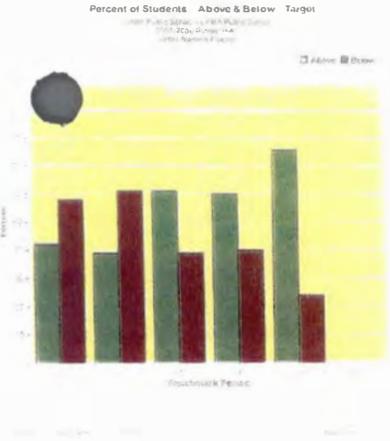
that read books to them and encouraged the exploration of language and printed materials.

Attachment 4 is a 2009 article about North Dakota Law Enforcement backing state Pre-K programs based on research on early childhood education programs reducing crime and welfare, increasing graduation rates, and providing economic relief to struggling families. Children who attend quality early childhood programs are significantly less likely to commit a violent crime in their lifetime.

Attachments 5-9 are testimonies from parents who have children enrolled in our program.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide testimony related to HB 1429. I sincerely believe that early childhood education is an investment that our state cannot afford to disregard.

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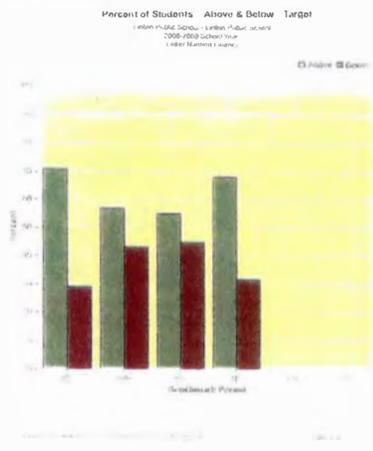
# Emmons County Preschool Data

## Linton Public School Kindergarten

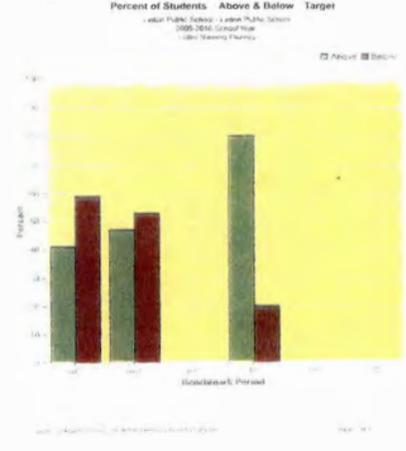
### letter naming scores from 2007-2008 to 2012-2013

Green = Above target  
 Red = Below target

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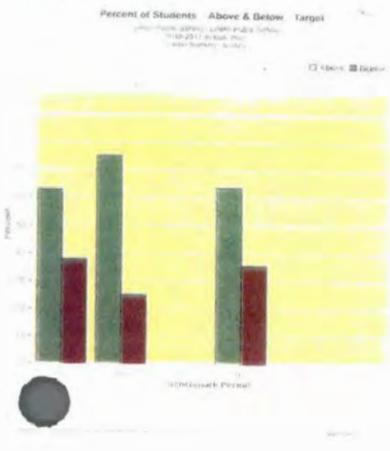


1<sup>st</sup> year preschool students started Kindergarten. ↓

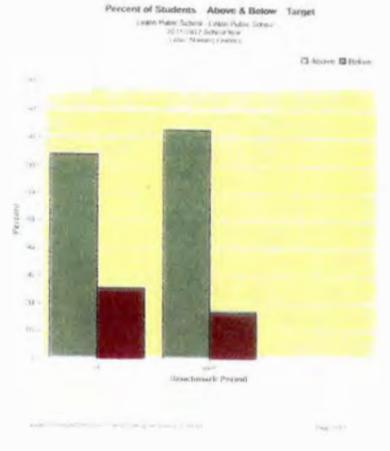
2<sup>ND</sup> year

Current year

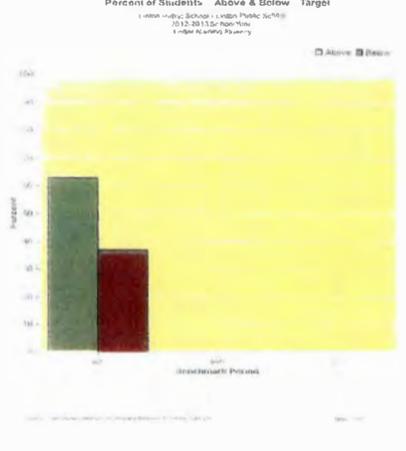
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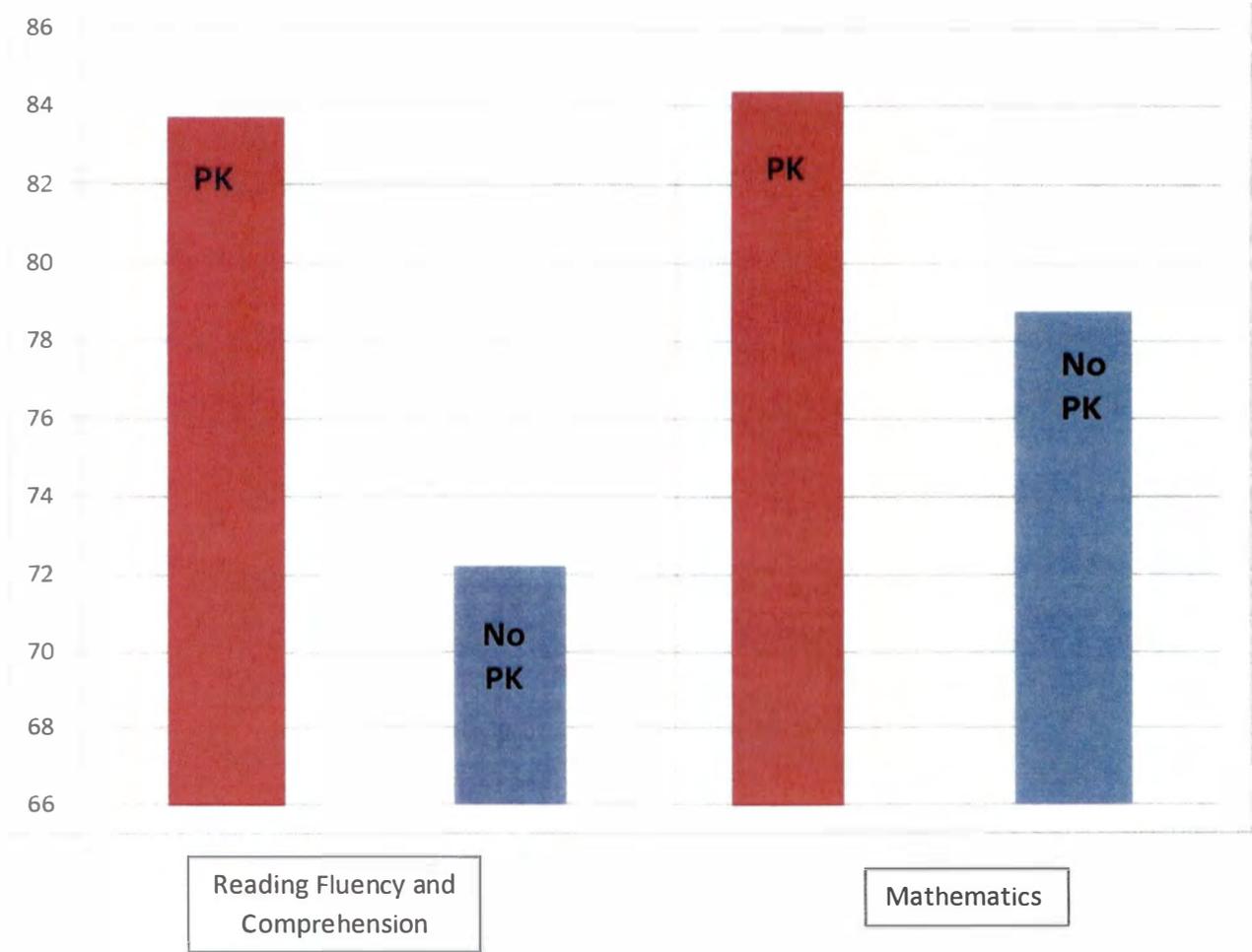


Attachment 1

Percent of Students Above Target in Reading and Math  
Grades K-5 – Emmons County

Red = Children who attended the Emmons County Preschool Program  
Blue = Children who did NOT attend the Emmons County Preschool Program

Data Summary



**Percent of Students Above Target in Reading and Math  
Grades K-5 – Emmons County**

**Red = Children who attended the Emmons County Preschool Program  
Blue = Children who did NOT attend the Emmons County Preschool Program**

**Data Summary**

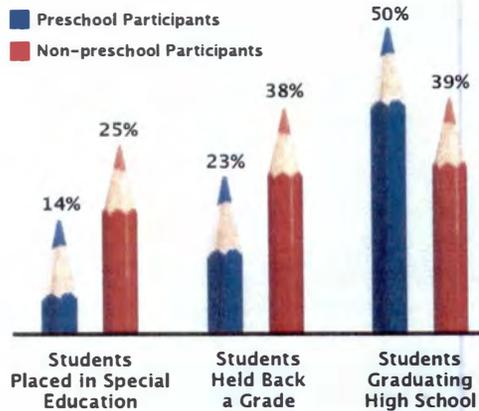
District	Grade	Total Students	# PK	# No PK	% Reading Above Target (PK)	%Reading Above Target (No PK)	Math % Above Target (PK)	Math % Above Target (No PK)
Linton	K	19	13	6	67	56	54	83
	1	18	9	12	100	78	89	56
	2	25	13	13	100	83	96	92
	3	16	3	9	**0	85	**33	77
	4	14	5		80	100	80	78
	5							
HMB	K	8	3	7	100	80	100	80
	1	8	1	5	100	67		
	2	6	1	8	100	60	100	100
	3	8	0	4		63		
	4	5	1	10	0**	50		
	5	12	2	5	50	40		
Strasburg	K			8				
		12	4	8	75	25	75	38
	1	10	2	9	100	100	50	88
	2	10	1	8	0	67	100	100
	3	8	0	12		63		63
	4	13	1	7	100	83	100	83
	5	8	1		100	100	**0	86
		187	48	131	84	72	84	79

## Investing for the Future

*“From birth until about 5 years old, a child undergoes tremendous development. If this period of life includes support for growth in language, motor skills, adaptive abilities and social-emotional functioning, the child is more likely to succeed in school and to later contribute to society. Conversely, without support during these early years, a child is more likely to drop out of school, depend on welfare benefits and commit crime—thereby imposing significant cost on society. Early Child Development programs recognize this potential—and this risk—and seek to nurture healthy development from the earliest years.”*

*– Economist Arthur Rolnick  
Economist Rob Grunewald  
Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis*

### The Business Case for Preschool Chicago Child Parent Center Preschool



Source: Long-term Effects of an Early Childhood Intervention on Educational Achievement and Juvenile Arrest (2001)

National research shows that children who attend high quality preschool programs are less likely to be placed in special education, are less likely to be held back a grade, and are more likely to graduate from high school.



## School Readiness Investment

High quality preschool is a proven investment in children's foundation for learning. National research shows that high quality preschool programs:

- Provide children opportunities to build a foundation of social and emotional skills needed to succeed in school
- Provide children language rich environments which help develop important preliteracy and early mathematics skills
- Provide English learners with language development experiences
- Help close the school readiness gap before it becomes the achievement gap

*“Students who start school behind tend to stay behind. Ninety five percent of California’s kindergarten teachers say their students who attended preschool are better prepared for kindergarten in both social and academic areas.”*

*- Preschool California*



## Academic Investment

High quality preschool is a proven investment in children's academic success. National research shows that high quality preschool programs:

- Provide learning experiences that positively affect early brain development
- Improve performance on standardized tests in reading and math
- Decrease the likelihood of being placed in special education
- Minimize the risk of repeating a grade
- Increase the likelihood of graduating from high school and attending college

*"Big gaps in educational attainment are present at age 5. Some children are bathed in an atmosphere that promotes human capital development and, increasingly, more are not. By 5, it is possible to predict, with depressing accuracy, who will complete high school and college and who won't."*

*- James Heckman Ph.D.  
Noble Laureate and  
University of Chicago Professor of Economics*

## Economic Investment

High quality preschool is a proven investment in keeping the local community and state competitive in a global economy. National research shows that high quality preschool programs:

- Cultivate a better educated and more skilled workforce
- Decrease employee turnover and absenteeism because parents can focus on their jobs when their children are in a safe learning environment
- Provide a \$7 to \$17 return on investment by reducing government spending on education, the criminal justice system and public assistance, and increasing tax revenue
- Reduce special education costs
- Increase employment rates and individual earning potential

*“Education can be an important component of a focused economic development strategy, as well as a plan for long term national economic growth.”*

*- National Institute for Early Education Research*



## Community Investment

High quality preschool is a proven investment in building strong, safe, and prosperous communities. National research shows that high quality preschool programs:

- Increase home ownerships
- Reduce crime and arrest rates for juveniles and adults
- Improve family and peer relationships
- Promote a healthier lifestyle

*"High quality preschool is a proven strategy for promoting both individual success and shared prosperity."*

*- Pre-K Now*



# North Dakota Law Enforcement Back State Pre-K

**January 22, 2009**

MANDAN, N.D. — North Dakota Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem, Mandan Police Chief Dennis Bullinger and Burleigh County Sheriff Pat Heinert held a news conference today to rally support for the governor's proposal to create a state pre-kindergarten program. They cited research showing that early childhood education promotes school success, improves graduation rates and ultimately reduces crime.

[To read the research report, click here.](#)

The new proposal, supported by Gov. John Hoeven, would create a two-day-a-week pre-k program aimed at servicing North Dakota children. Research shows that children who benefit from high-quality early education are significantly more likely to graduate high school and avoid delinquent behavior and crime later on.

The law enforcement leaders released a report entitled "High-Quality Early Education: The Key to Crime Prevention and School Success in North Dakota." The report shows that new support for high-quality early education would lead to significant reductions in crime, drug abuse and juvenile violence in North Dakota. To read the [report](#), click here.

"Not only are the benefits of high-quality early education transformative for children who participate, it also has substantial long-term benefits through reduced crime and violence in our communities," Bullinger said. "A commitment to early childhood education will ensure that we have better performing students, a stronger workforce and safer streets."

Stenehjem, Bullinger and Heinert are all members of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS, a national anti-crime organization that supports policies proven through research to prevent crime and violence.

Over a 40-year period, researchers studied children who attended a Michigan preschool together with similar children who did not attend the high-quality program. The resulting study found that children who benefited from the early education program were 44 percent more likely to graduate from high school than those who did not participate. The at-risk children left out of the program were also five times more likely to commit a violent crime by age 40.

"The benefits of the proposed pre-kindergarten program clearly outweigh the cost," Stenehjem said. "The bottom line here is that high-quality pre-k will help kids succeed in school and cut crime in the long run."

Another long-term study of the Child-Parent Centers found that at-risk children who did not benefit from the high-quality preschool program were 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a

violent crime by age 18. Children who miss out on pre-kindergarten are also more likely to become unwed parents, become dependent on welfare and abuse illegal drugs.

Currently in North Dakota, the federally-funded Head Start program and early childhood special education programs serve less than 30 percent of children from low and moderate-income families.

They also called on North Dakota's Congressional delegation to include funding for early education and childcare as part of federal efforts to revamp the ailing economy. President Obama pledged \$10 billion in new funding for early childhood education during the 2008 presidential campaign.

The law enforcement leaders said that in addition to the long-term economic benefits of reduced crime and welfare and improved graduation rates, new support for early education and care would bring short-term relief to families struggling to meet the cost of daycare and boost the economy by creating jobs.

"Let's not drop the ball on America's youngest generation. If our state and national policymakers advance substantial increases in early childhood education, we can give these kids a helping hand now, not a hand out later," Heinert said.

###

**FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS** is a bipartisan, anti-crime organization led by more than 4,500 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, other law enforcement leaders and crime survivors, including 28 in North Dakota.

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS**  
**COMMITTEE**  
FEBRUARY 6, 2013

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Michelle Bosch and I am providing testimony in support of SB 2229. I feel early childhood education is very important. My son is 4 and he is in preschool. Preschool has given him interest in wanting to learn. He says it is fun and he gets to learn things. He knows his alphabet and can write his name and all sorts of other words. He never wanted to learn how to hold a pencil when we, his parents, wanted to help him, but now he is crazy about learning.

I absolutely feel that early childhood education is important in preparing a child for school. I wish I would have had that opportunity as a child. I believe that early childhood education should receive funding from the state. Please consider passing SB 2229.

Thank you for your time.

#2

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2239**  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**February 12, 2013**

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Debbe Poitra and I am in favor of SB 2239 regarding Early Childhood Education.

I have gone to our Turtle Mountain Community Elementary School Asst. Principal and requested data on our Tiny Turtles Preschool students who are now enrolled in the TMCES Kindergarten program.

Using NWEA data for winter 2013:

A total of 143 Kindergarten students were tested. We have 17 kindergarten students who graduated from Tiny Turtles in May of 2012 who are enrolled at TMCES.

The Median RIT in Reading for all K students was 147, the Tiny Turtles students averaged 150 points; 3 points above the median.

The median RIT score in Math for all K students was 146, the Tiny Turtles students averaged 148; 2 points above the median.

Using DIBELS scores for winter 2013.

147 K students tested 78 meaning that 53% met the winter benchmark. 17 Tiny Turtles tested and 89% met winter benchmark.

There have been zero disciplinary issues with the Tiny Turtles students.

Numerous comments have been made regarding their positive social behavior and ability to follow rules and recognize and adapt to routines within the school system. We still have an issue with 41% of students and their attendance but the cold, frigid weather has played a part in this issue.

In closing, I would like to say that academic success is a reliable factor in the graduation rate for any school. If the above academic success is any indication of graduation, our Tiny Turtles students will contribute to the overall graduation rate of our school and in turn contribute to the overall academic success of our District. Because of our Tiny Turtles preschool program, these students have been given the academic tools to succeed in school and continue their academic career to graduation and beyond.

I strongly support the passage of the Early Childhood bills along with sufficient appropriations to ensure that our schools can implement a strong, supportive early childhood program.

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**TESTIMONY ON SB 2239**  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**February 12, 2013**  
**By Dr. Debra Follman, Principal**

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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee:

My name is Dr. Debra Follman, and I am the Principal at Sweetwater Elementary School in Devils Lake, North Dakota. I am providing written testimony in the form of data documentation in support of SB 2239.

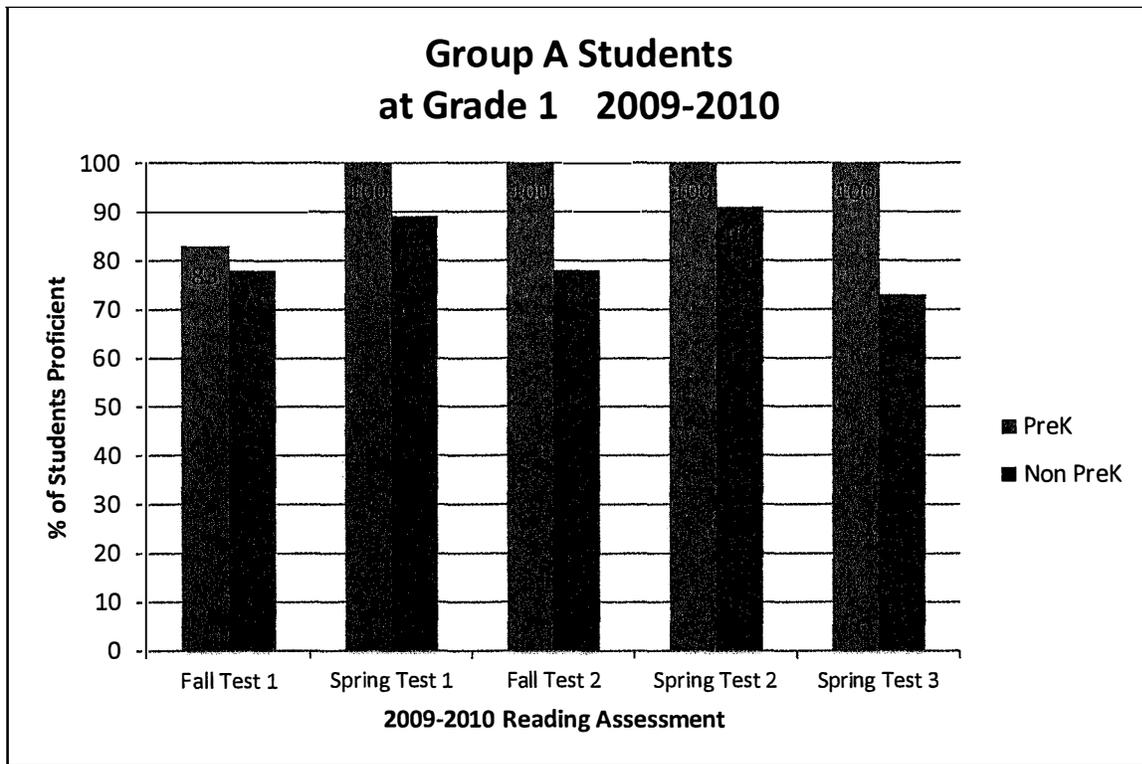
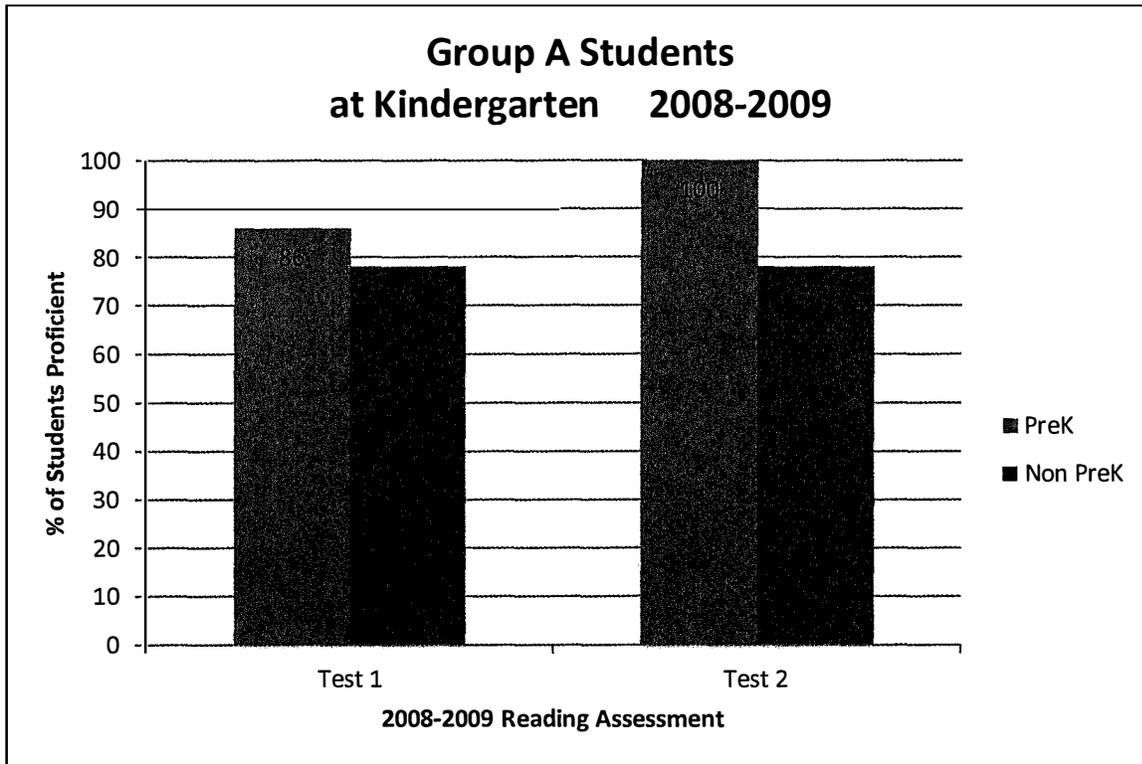
This is data from Sweetwater Elementary students living in poverty based on free and reduced lunch eligibility. Our preschool has existed since the 2008-2009 school year. Our first group of preschool students are now fourth graders. You will see attached the scores for our students who attended Pre-K compared to those students who did not attend Pre-K.

As you can see, the results of early childhood education are very beneficial. Please join me in your strong support of SB 2239.

Sweetwater Elementary - Devils Lake, North Dakota

Dr. Deb Follman, Principal

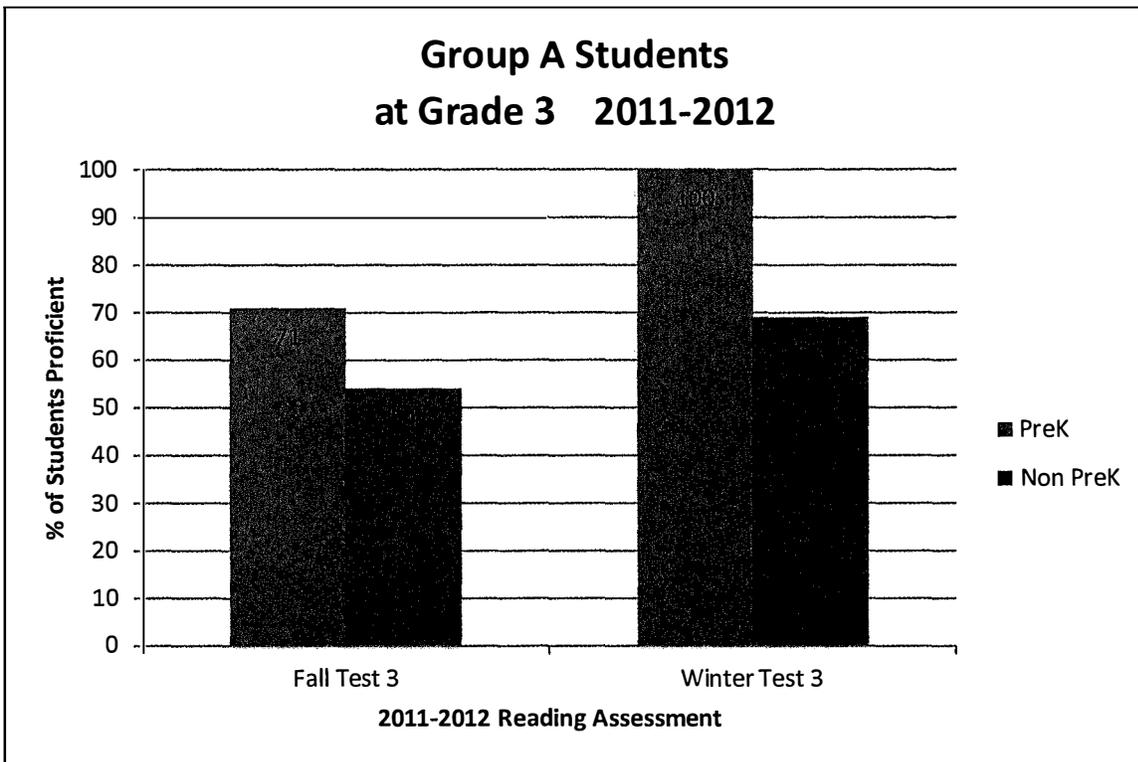
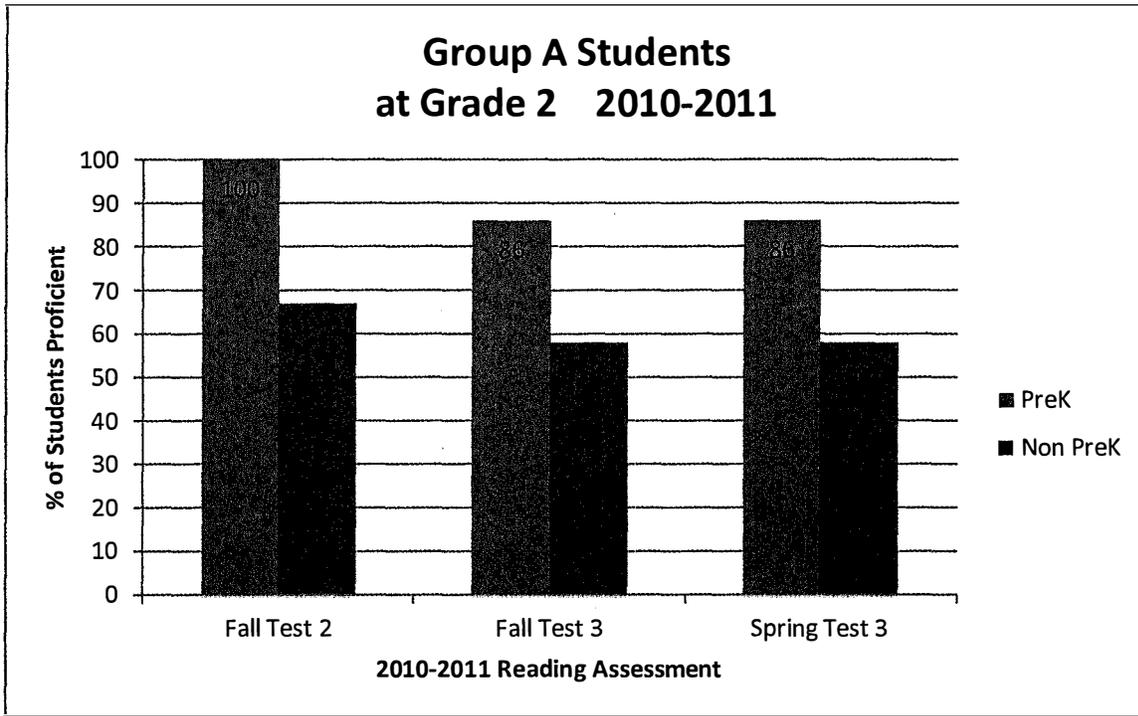
Data from assessment results of students receiving free/reduced lunches



Sweetwater Elementary - Devils Lake, North Dakota

Dr. Deb Follman, Principal

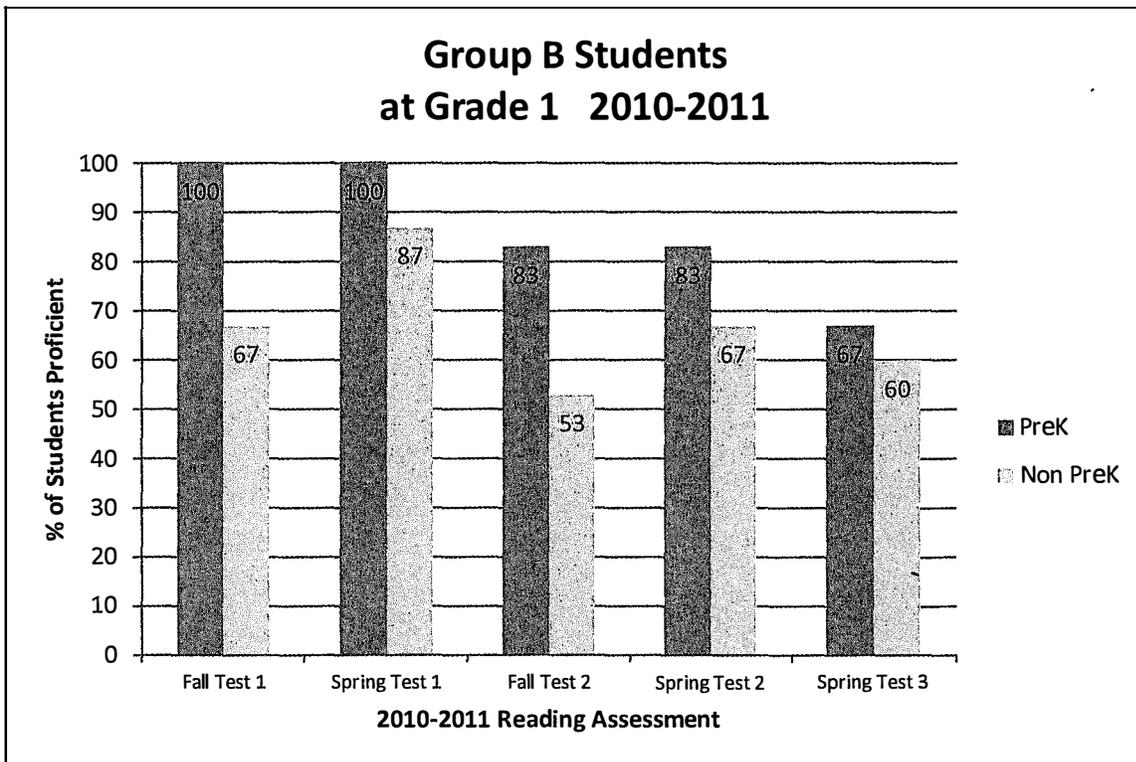
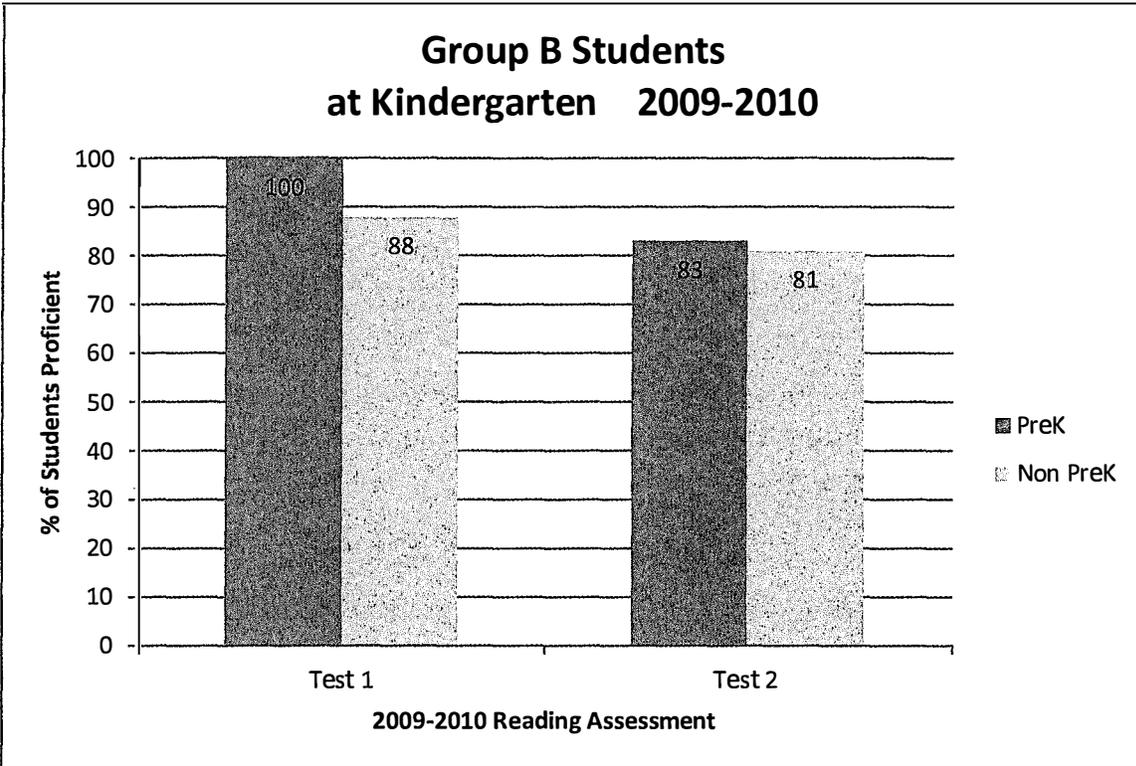
Data from assessment results of students receiving free/reduced lunches



Sweetwater Elementary - Devils Lake, North Dakota

Dr. Deb Follman, Principal

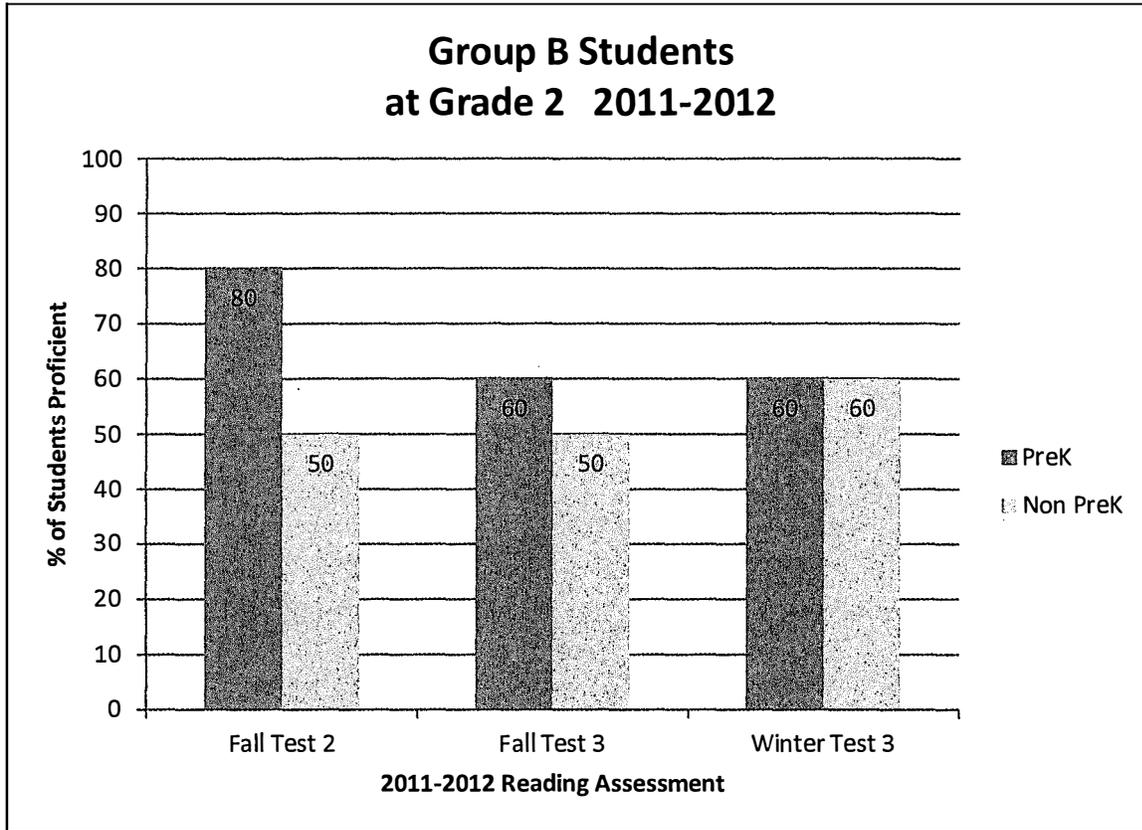
Data from assessment results of students receiving free/reduced lunches



Sweetwater Elementary - Devils Lake, North Dakota

Dr. Deb Follman, Principal

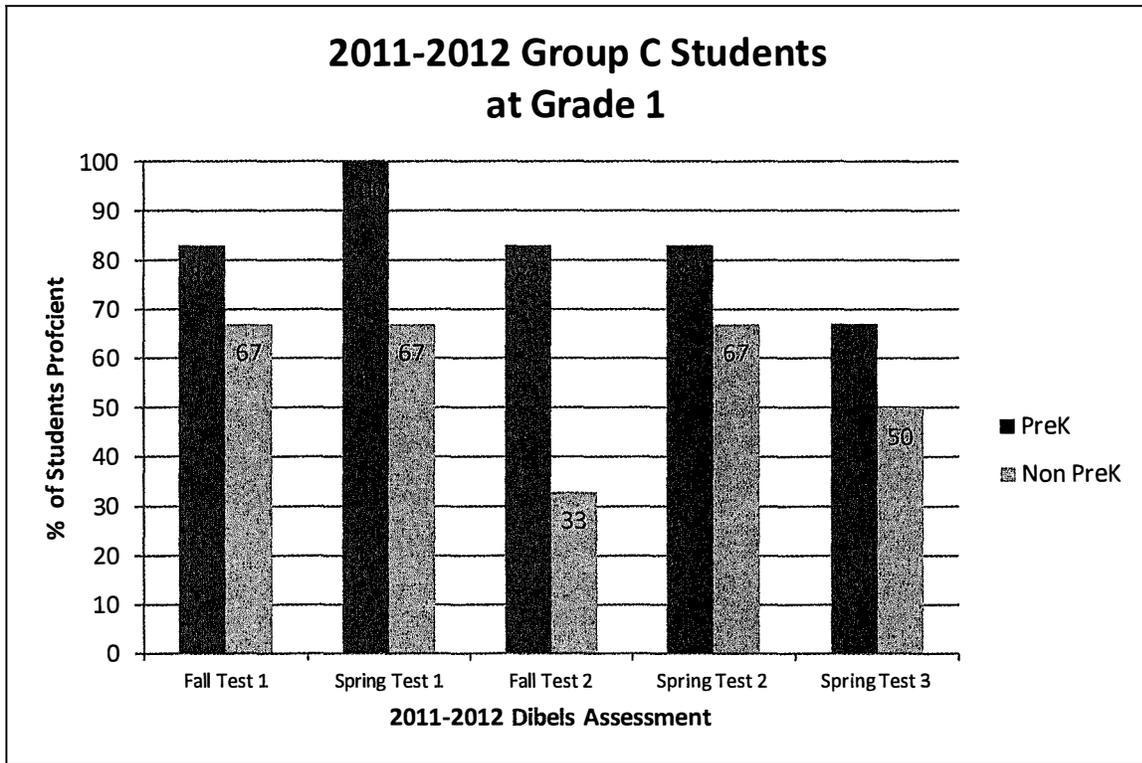
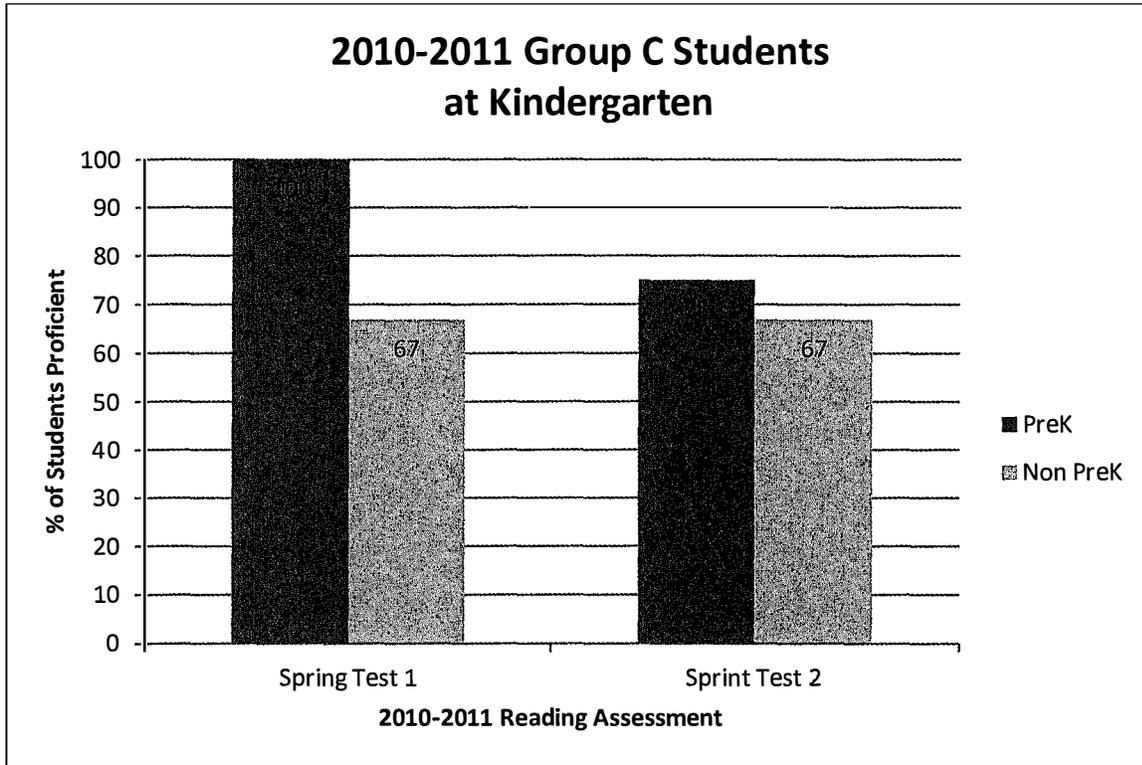
Data from assessment results of students receiving free/reduced lunches



Sweetwater Elementary - Devils Lake, North Dakota

Dr. Deb Follman, Principal

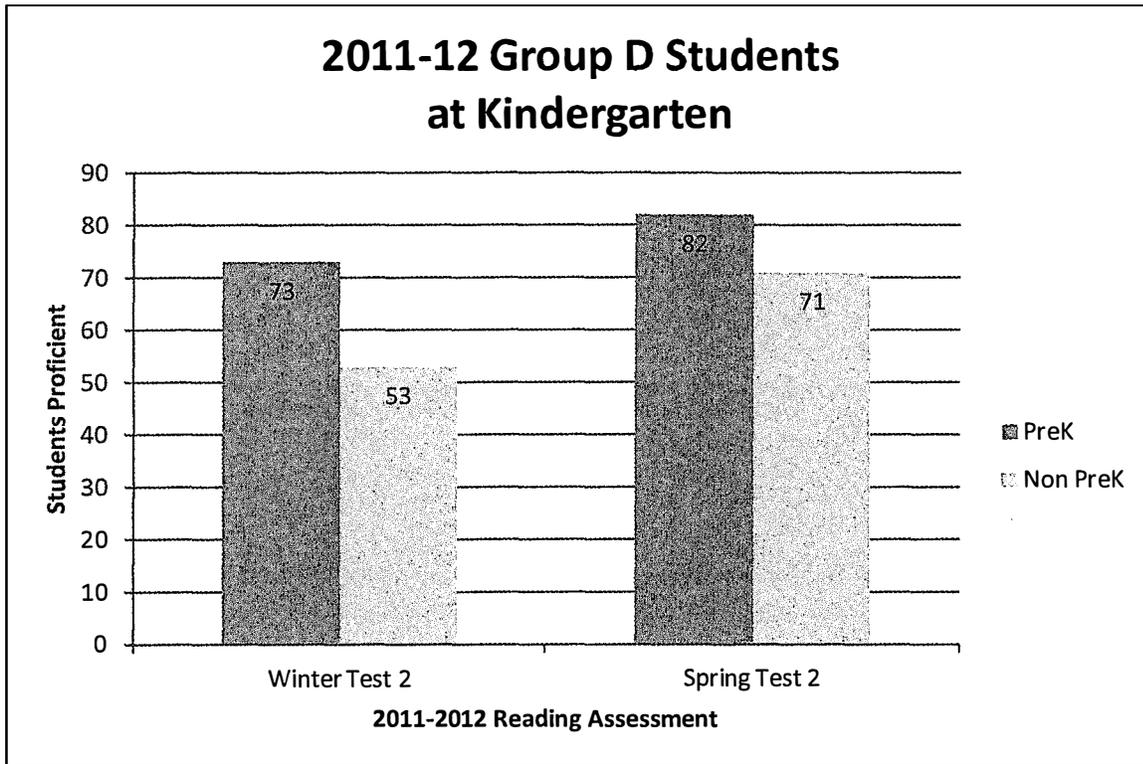
Data from assessment results of students receiving free/reduced lunches



**Sweetwater Elementary - Devils Lake, North Dakota**

**Dr. Deb Follman, Principal**

*Data from assessment results of students receiving free/reduced lunches*



**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229  
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
MARCH 20, 2013  
By: Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent  
701-328-4570  
Department of Public Instruction**

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kirsten Baesler and I am the Superintendent of Public Instruction. I am here to speak in favor of Senate Bill 2229 to provide an appropriation for early childhood education grants.

I am speaking in favor of this bill today because I think we have a tremendous opportunity in North Dakota to create the best educational system in this country, possibly in the world. To begin creating that system we must make investments in programs and areas that provide the most and best results. Early childhood education does just that. I am not talking about preschool in terms of daycare alternatives or simply getting children emotionally ready for kindergarten. Early childhood education does more than that. Early childhood education takes advantage of the opportunity to teach a child when they are the most eager and ready to learn. We have the opportunity to not just prepare our students for kindergarten but to really begin the learning process for these children and begin their lifelong educational experience - preparing them for a lifetime of learning.

One argument often levied against early childhood education is that we will be taking these young children from their homes and families. The fact is that 52% of our four year olds in North Dakota are already in some sort of formal daycare setting. Some may argue that if children are already in daycare, why create new programs for early education. Why not let kids stay in daycare and then start learning in kindergarten or first grade? The answer is because quality early learning programs matter and they make a difference. Advances in brain research show that children are born learning - 85% of brain development happens before age 5. Research shows early learning experiences that are engaging and active actually thicken the cortex of an infant's brain, creating a brain with more extensive and sophisticated neuron structures that later determine intelligence and behavior. The preschool years are the time in which the brain begins to determine which connections to keep and which to eliminate. These first years of life impact the success students experience later in school and literally build the foundation of success in learning.

The first five years are also when children build the social and emotional skills they need to succeed in school. Teachers expect children to be able to follow directions, start and finish projects, and know when they need to ask for help. These are the skills I saw lacking most in my kindergarten, first and second graders. I saw these students frequently because they were removed from the classroom and sent to the principal's office. The very students that can't afford to

be out of the classroom and miss out on teacher instruction and learning are the very ones that are in the principals' offices across North Dakota for time-outs.

If a child can't follow directions, he or she will have difficulty attending to the task of learning. There are proven effective methods for teaching these skills and building attention. Such "soft" skills are just as important as cognitive or "hard" skills—like being able to count, recite the alphabet, and write their names.

While most upper-income children have vibrant early experiences, children in poverty often live in chaotic environments. Low-income parents may struggle to find a job or pay the bills, and consequently don't have the means to create a stimulating learning environment for their young children. Middle-income children most often have two working parents who consequently don't have the time to create a stimulating learning environment. In North Dakota 78% of mothers with children under the age of five work outside the home. This inequality in opportunity created between upper income and middle to low income students leads to the achievement gap that is evident as early as nine months of age and continues to inhibit students' progress throughout elementary school and beyond.

There are few proven strategies to close the achievement gap during the K-12 school years. **But high-quality early childhood education programs prevent the achievement gap from forming.** Decades of research on programs indicates that high-quality early childhood programs for vulnerable children increase

childhood literacy and high school graduation rates by as much as 80%.

Disadvantaged children who don't participate in high-quality early education programs are 50% more likely to be placed in special education and 25% more likely to drop out of school, thereby imposing significant costs on society.

Headstart programs are valuable, but they aren't operating in many areas of our state and they still reach only a small percentage of eligible children. Approval of SB 2229 would enable school districts in every part of the state to provide the same learning experiences to our young people.

Leading economists say that early childhood education is a sound public investment. Every dollar spent on early childhood education programs yields \$7 to \$9 in future savings on expenditures like special education and the criminal justice system. Early childhood education programs can also improve America's competitiveness in a global economy. Rob Grunewald - Regional Economic

Analyst with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis has written:

“careful academic research demonstrates that tax dollars spent on early childhood education provide extraordinary returns compared with investments in the public, and even private, sector. The potential return from a focused, high-quality program is as high as 16 percent per year. Some of these benefits are private gains for the children involved in the form of higher wages later in life. But the broader economy also benefits because individuals who participate in high-quality programs have greater skills than they otherwise would, and they're able to contribute productively to their local economies. Thus, it's estimated, the annual *public* return to good ECD programs is 12 percent.”

Shortly after my election I visited the state penitentiary to learn more about the educational systems provided there. I learned that if during the prisoner's intake assessment it was discovered that the prisoner did not have a high school diploma or a GED they started that program immediately during their incarceration. This tells me we understand the direct correlation between education and the ability to become a productive contributing citizen in North Dakota. The state's current investment in our children's education in \$3,390 per child per year yet the state's current investment for a prisoner at the penitentiary is over 10 times that - at \$36,000 per prisoner per year.

The question elected officials and the public must confront is stark: Do we fund early childhood education now, or pay considerably more later for the costly social problems that result when children are not successful in school?

Our country's students and North Dakota's students are constantly being compared to nations around the world and we hear they are falling behind. Let's take a look at some of those countries.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has published *Education at a Glance 2012*, which is a research document that enables countries to see themselves in the light of other countries education performance.

- Across the 34 OECD studied countries in 2010, 79 percent of 4-year-olds were enrolled in preschool education. In the European Union, the percentage was 83.
- In comparison, only 69 percent of U.S. 4-year-olds were enrolled in early childhood education, ranking the U.S. 28th among 38 nations studied.
- The top 15 countries, including many of the U.S. economic competitors, all had enrollments exceeding 90 percent.
- The typical preschool starting age for U.S. children is 4, compared with a starting age of 3 or younger in 21 other OECD countries.

These findings matter because OECD data suggest that enrollment in early childhood education correlates with higher educational achievement later in a student's academic career.

As businesses and corporations look at moving to North Dakota, high quality school systems with early education options are a priority. North Dakota is one of 11 states that do not currently fund public preschool options at the school district level. This is a need for families, workforce development, communities, and business to consider as they decide to locate in North Dakota.

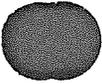
While I was the President of Mandan's school board the state invested in education by providing funding for all day every day kindergarten programs. We took advantage of that opportunity and since then Mandan's kindergarten scores on

the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) test that measures growth have been 8, 10 and 12, points above the national average expected. Principals from Kulm, Edgeley, and Minnewauken report similar results. This is what investment in kindergarten programs has done. I ask you to imagine what investment in early education programs will do.

There has been significant progress made in setting the groundwork for early education programming in North Dakota. The Department of Public Instruction has an Early Childhood Education framework that will be formally reviewed against the department's protocol for developing standards. In addition, we are working with the Information Technology Department (ITD), as part of the Governor's Early Childhood Council, on a possible data system that would be connected to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). The Department of Public Instruction is striving to be prepared in the event state funding will be provided for early childhood education. We know it is becoming increasingly more important for children to come to school prepared and ready to learn. There are higher expectations today than in the past. We want our children to begin learning early and continue to learn through college and beyond. It will be imperative that our North Dakota children have a solid foundation leading to the strongest possible PK-20 educational system ever.



The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has a comprehensive plan for education. Our plan includes ensuring that students have the best educational experience possible -from early beginning to a successful end. North Dakota has a good educational system. In order to move from “Good” to “Great”, and get the greatest investment for our dollars for the future of North Dakota, we need to support quality early childhood education programs. I am reminded of the words of Wayne Gretzky “I skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been.” The fact is our children are ready to learn very early but by the time we begin to offer them education at age 5 or 6 we have already missed the puck.



Approving this bill will allow school districts to take the next step in creating our first class education system in North Dakota with proven academic results. Again, this isn’t about starting kids earlier, it’s about catching kids when the moment is right.

Thank you, Representatives. That concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Chairman Nathe and members of the education committee. My name is Darlene Musland and I am an early childhood special education teacher for the James River Special Education District. I have had the privilege of teaching preschoolers with special needs for 28 years. Throughout that time, I have witnessed the benefits of preschool, both short term results and long term results. Your support for Senate Bill 2229 will provide those same benefits for all preschoolers in our state.

I realize that some of you feel that a preschool child's education should be in their home, since parents are the child's first and most influential teachers of all. While that may be the case; our society has changed much in the last 30 years. Many children have 2 working parents, some are from single parent families, and some are from socially and economically disadvantaged families. Just as our state has changed significantly, so has the family structure changed.

With the requirements that lie in the future of our education system, we need to have our children prepared to go to school, ready to learn. Early learning lays the foundation for later learning. With that introduction, I am going to give you five sets of numbers to remember that are important in the development of young children and how that relates to their education.

**700**—In the first years of a child's life, 700 new neural connections are formed every second. These connections build brain architecture which form the foundation for learning, behavior, and health. This growth will continue and experiences create greater connections.

**18**—Eighteen months is the age at which disparities in vocabulary begin to appear. The differences appear between children based on whether they were born into a family with high education and income or low education and income. Children who come from families with a higher economic status often have the opportunities to attend a preschool and have many more experiences offered to them. When children from a lower status start school, they are already behind their peers unless they are engaged in a language rich environment early in life. Everything we do requires knowledge and language is a key factor in becoming a successful reader. The windows of opportunity for learning are greater at a young age; therefore, we need to provide those opportunities for all children.

90-100%--There is a 90-100% likelihood of a child exhibiting delays in cognitive, language, or emotional development if they experience 6-7 adverse situations in the early years of their life.

3:1—The odds are 3 to 1 that a child who has experienced 7-8 adverse events will develop adult cardiovascular disease.

\$4-\$9—All of society benefits from investments in early childhood programs. Research has show a return of \$4.00-9.00 for every dollar invested in early learning programs for low-income children. These returns are gained in the form of reduced welfare, reduced crime rate, reduced special education costs, and an increase in tax revenue.

In summary,these numbers tell us that:

- Getting things right the first time is easier and more effective than trying to fix them later.
- Early childhood experiences early in life will have a lasting impact on later learning, behavior, and health.
- Highly specialized programs are necessary as early as possible for children experiencing adversity.
- Early childhood experiences will have lifelong effects on adult physical and mental health.
- All of society benefits from investments in early childhood education program.

In my years of teaching, I have had the opportunity to work closely with administrators and kindergarten teachers in several rural schools. They have all stated that the children who have attended preschool are more prepared and ready to learn than their peers who did not have this opportunity. In many of our rural communities, there isn't a private preschool available for children to attend. Providing funding for preschool in the public education system will give all children an opportunity to achieve success in their life.

There is an African proverb that says, "It takes a village to raise a child." It takes a state of progressive minded legislators to continue our lead in education in the United States and ensure that we have the necessary, competent workforce to grow and sustain our economy. The best investment we can make is in our children.

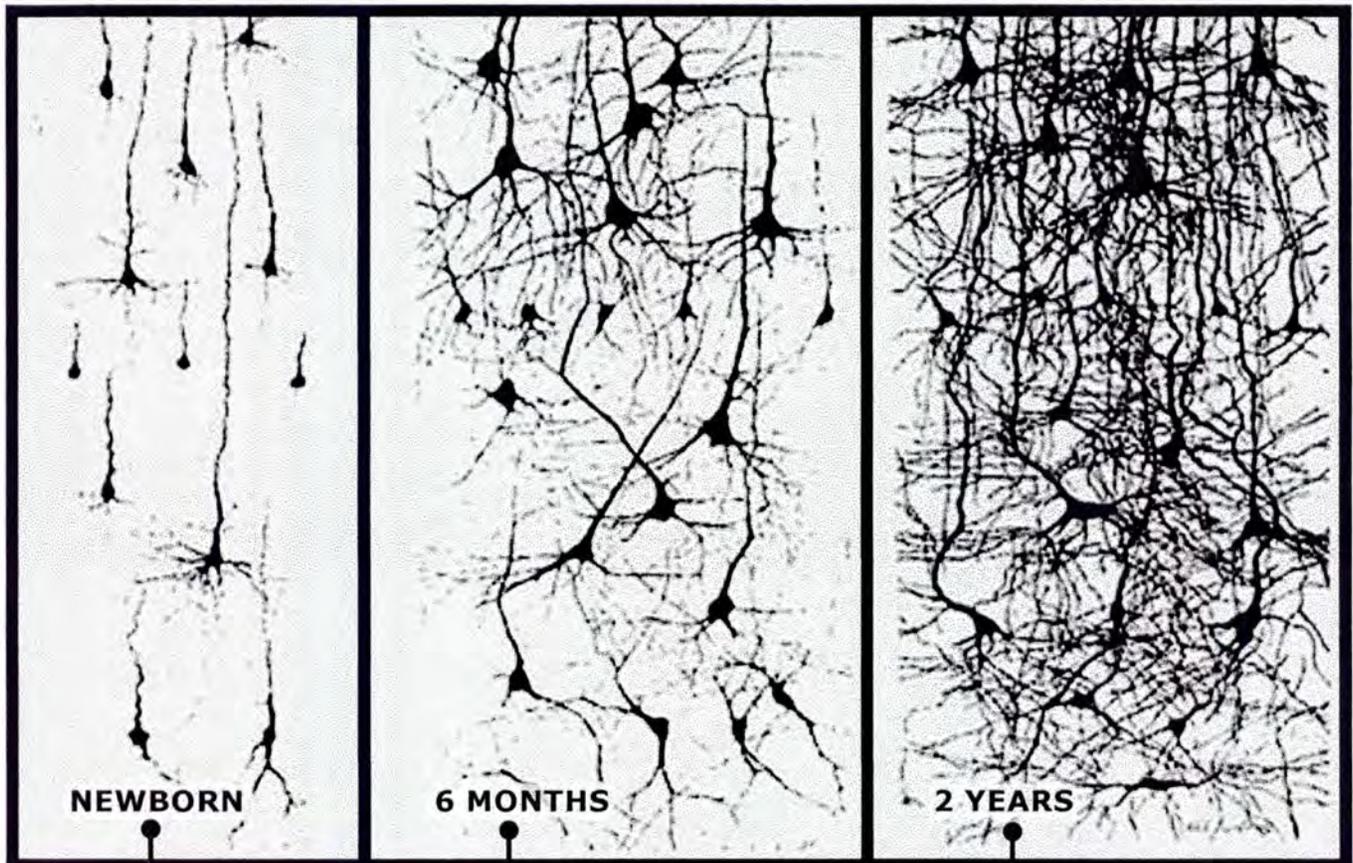
**FIVE NUMBERS TO REMEMBER ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT**700  
700 PER SECOND18  
18 MONTHS90-100  
90-100%3:1  
3:1 ODDS4-9  
4-9 DOLLARS

This feature highlights five numbers to remember about the development of young children. Learn how the numbers illustrate such concepts as the importance of early childhood to the learning, behavior, and health of later life and why getting things right the first time is easier and more effective than trying to fix them later. This feature is also available in a web-based slideshow format at [http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/multimedia/interactive\\_features/five-numbers/](http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/multimedia/interactive_features/five-numbers/)

For more resources from the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University visit <http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/>

# FIVE NUMBERS TO REMEMBER ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

**700** 700 NEW NEURAL CONNECTIONS  
PER SECOND



1

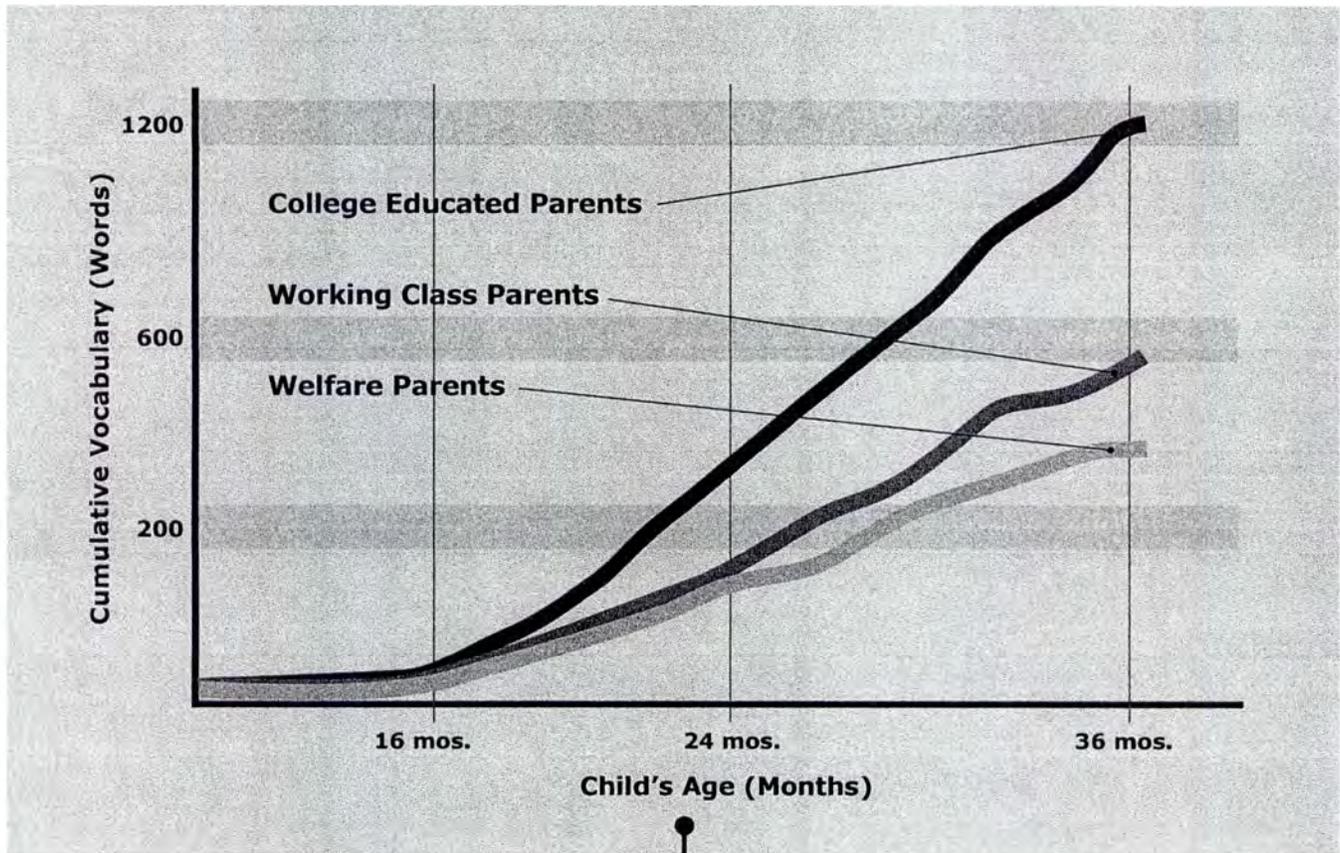
The early years matter because, in the first few years of life, 700 new neural connections are formed every second. Neural connections are formed through the interaction of genes and a baby's environment and experiences, especially "serve and return" interaction with adults, or what developmental researchers call contingent reciprocity. These are the connections that build brain architecture – the foundation upon which all later learning, behavior, and health depend.

*Image source: Conel, J.L. The postnatal development of the human cerebral cortex. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1959*

## FIVE NUMBERS TO REMEMBER ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

# 18

### 18 MONTHS: AGE AT WHICH DISPARITIES IN VOCABULARY BEGIN TO APPEAR



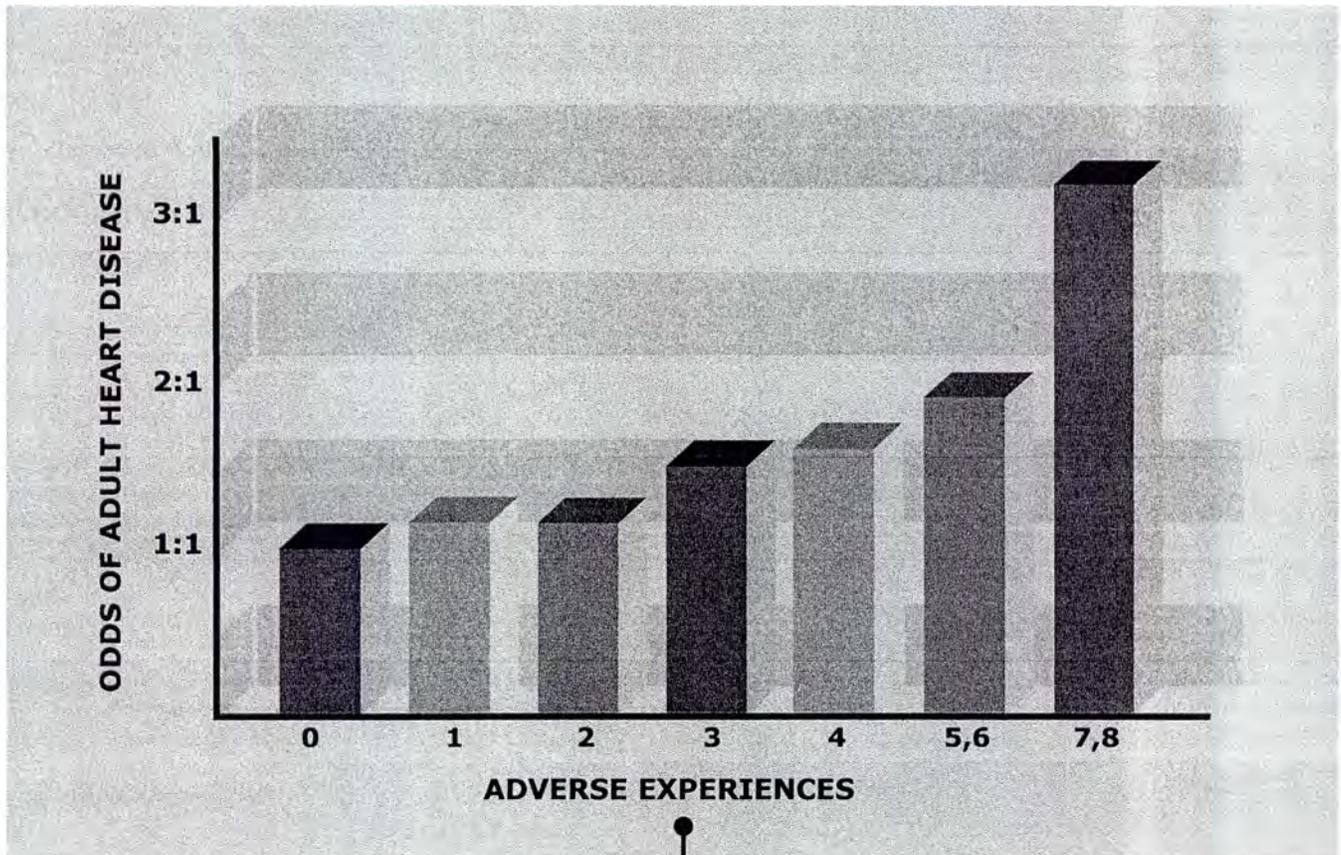
2

Early experiences and the environments in which children develop in their earliest years can have lasting impact on later success in school and life. Barriers to children's educational achievement start early, and continue to grow without intervention. Differences in the size of children's vocabulary first appear at 18 months of age, based on whether they were born into a family with high education and income or low education and income. By age 3, children with college-educated parents or primary caregivers had vocabularies 2 to 3 times larger than those whose parents had not completed high school. By the time these children reach school, they are already behind their peers unless they are engaged in a language-rich environment early in life.

Source: Hart, B., & Risley, T. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experiences of young American children*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.

## FIVE NUMBERS TO REMEMBER ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

**3:1** 3:1 ODDS OF ADULT HEART DISEASE  
AFTER 7-8 ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES



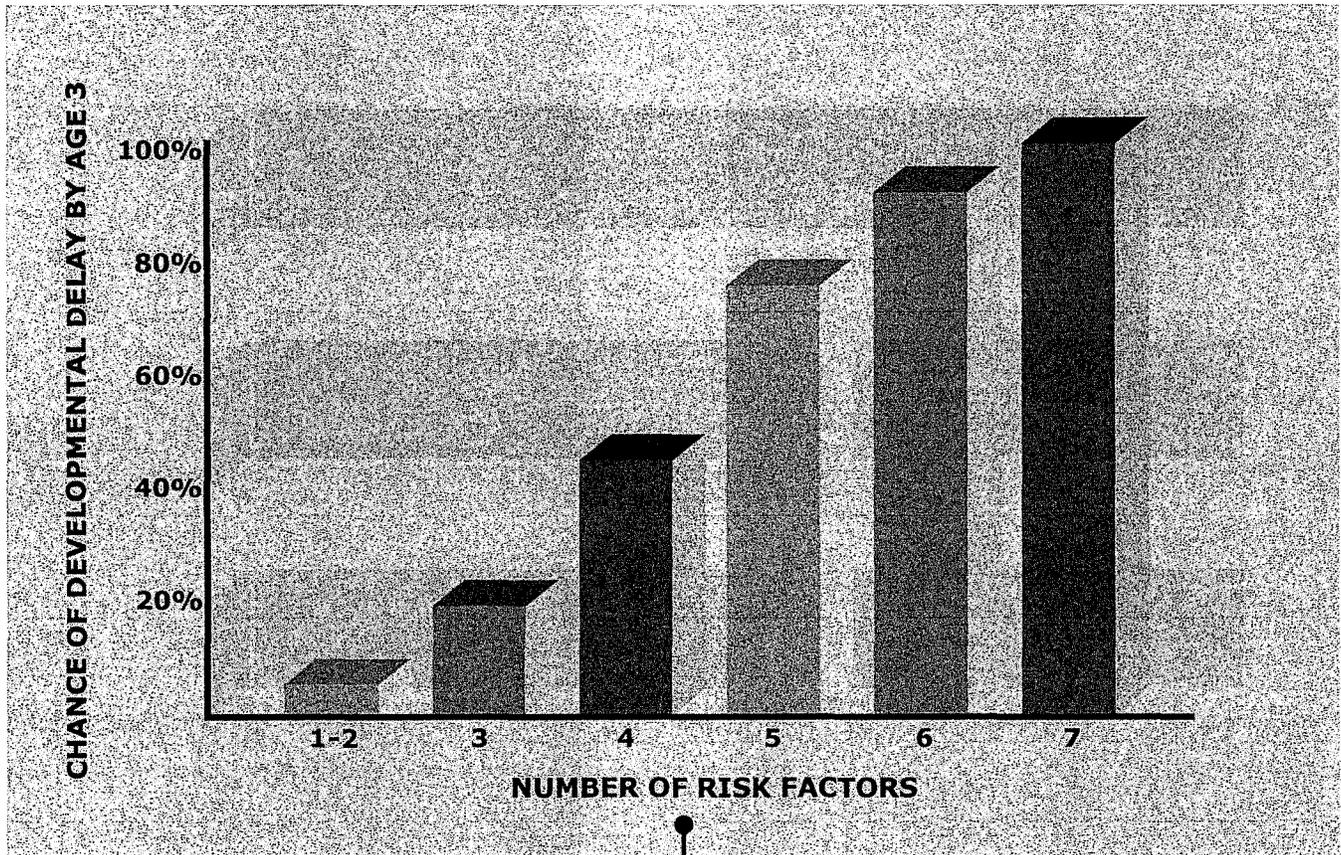
4

Early experiences actually get into the body, with lifelong effects—not just on cognitive and emotional development, but on long term physical health as well. A growing body of evidence now links significant adversity in childhood to increased risk of a range of adult health problems, including diabetes, hypertension, stroke, obesity, and some forms of cancer. This graph shows that adults who recall having 7 or 8 serious adverse experiences in childhood are 3 times more likely to have cardiovascular disease as an adult. And children between birth and three years of age are the most likely age group to experience some form of maltreatment—16 out of every thousand children experience it.

*Source: Dong et al. (2004)*

# FIVE NUMBERS TO REMEMBER ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

**90-100** 90-100% CHANCE OF DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS WHEN CHILDREN EXPERIENCE 6-7 RISK FACTORS



3

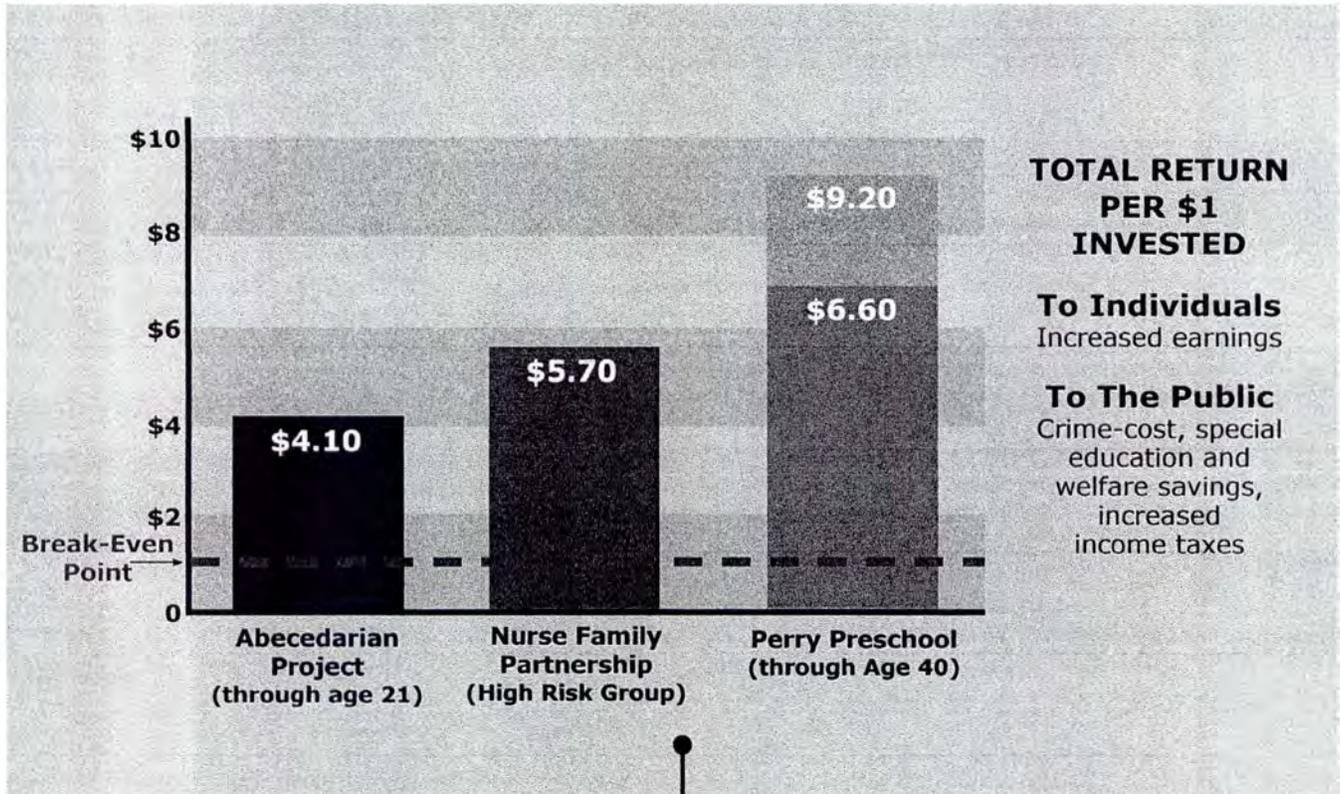
Significant adversity impairs development in the first three years of life—and the more adversity a child faces, the greater the odds of a developmental delay. Indeed, risk factors such as poverty, caregiver mental illness, child maltreatment, single parent, and low maternal education have a cumulative impact: in this study, maltreated children exposed to as many as 6 additional risks face a 90-100% likelihood of having one or more delays in their cognitive, language, or emotional development.

Source: Barth et al. (2008)

## FIVE NUMBERS TO REMEMBER ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

# 4-9

\$4 - \$9 IN RETURNS FOR EVERY DOLLAR INVESTED IN EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS



5

Providing young children with a healthy environment in which to learn and grow is not only good for their development—economists have also shown that high-quality early childhood programs bring impressive returns on investment to the public. Three of the most rigorous long-term studies found a range of returns between \$4 and \$9 for every dollar invested in early learning programs for low-income children. Program participants followed into adulthood benefited from increased earnings while the public saw returns in the form of reduced special education, welfare, and crime costs, and increased tax revenues from program participants later in life.

*Sources: Masse, L. and Barnett, W.S., A Benefit Cost Analysis of the Abecedarian Early Childhood Intervention (2002); Karoly et al., Early Childhood Interventions: Proven Results, Future Promise (2005); Heckman et al., The Effect of the Perry Preschool Program on the Cognitive and Non-Cognitive Skills of its Participants (2009)*

## WHAT THESE FIVE NUMBERS TELL US

700  
700 PER SECOND

18  
18 MONTHS

90-100  
90-100%

3:1  
3:1 ODDS

4-9  
4-9 DOLLARS

1. Getting things right the first time is easier and more effective than trying to fix them later.
2. Early childhood matters because experiences early in life can have a lasting impact on later learning, behavior, and health.
3. Highly specialized interventions are needed as early as possible for children experiencing toxic stress.
4. Early life experiences actually get under the skin and into the body, with lifelong effects on adult physical and mental health.
5. All of society benefits from investments in early childhood programs.

Chairmen Nathe and House Education Committee. My name is Kelli Just and I am the preschool teacher at Edgeley Public School in Edgeley. I have had the wonderful opportunity to work with preschool students for the past 4 school years. However, this August when the first day of school arrives, I will not be standing in front of my door ready to greet new students with a smile. The Edgeley School Board recently made the difficult decision to eliminate our Title One preschool program and my position due to lack of federal funding.

This is devastating for our children. Our preschool program has been able to lay the foundation of knowledge, social skills, and confidence for our preschoolers. We have helped pave the way for successes throughout their school year and later in life.

I could spend hours telling you about the many academic skills we cover throughout our day - learning the alphabet letters and sounds, number skills such as adding, subtracting, and counting, color and shape recognition, etc. My students can identify trapezoids and octagons, tell you the difference between hibernation and migration, and I'm so proud that they have just begun to learn sight words too!

Our kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Kelly Anderson, has found that children who have attended our Title One preschool have already developed cognitive abilities and listening skills, and are more prepared to learn reading and math than children who do not participate in preschool. She has also observed preschool participants can become more academically advanced than non-participants. This is extremely important because Mrs. Anderson feels with the implementation of Common Core Standards, it is essential children entering kindergarten already have a solid foundation in literacy and math. Without preschool, we can expect to see lower test scores for those students tested on future Common Core standards.

If you think it's just educators who feel the need for preschool, please listen to a few quotes from parents:

*My child has learned a lot this preschool year. I am confident that he is ready for kindergarten because he had the opportunity to attend preschool.*

*My child was one that would not sit down at home when we tried to help her learn. After starting preschool, she was eager to come home and tell us what she learned and was always wanting to expand further.*

*The preschool program in Edgeley is excellent! My son now knows all of his letters and how to make each letter sound. He has made lots of new friends and I have no doubt that he is ready for kindergarten.*

*Preschool has been great for our child and family! It gives my child something to look forward to. She comes home and teaches us what she learned that day like she's the teacher. Preschool has not only taught her the basics of learning, but how to work with others too.*

*Preschool is extremely beneficial. My child has learned so much and is so much more prepared for kindergarten than my other two older children who did not have this program.*

In conclusion, I encourage you all to support SB 2229 and fund preschool across our state. These little children are the future of our great state and please be a part of the village that it takes to raise a child.

Thank you for your time.

#3A

## Edgeley Public School District #3

**High School Principal**  
Todd Kosel

**Elementary Principal**  
Garitt Irej

**Business Manager**  
Patricia Ann VerDouw

**RICHARD DIEGEL, Superintendent**  
PO Box 37 307 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
EDGELEY, NORTH DAKOTA 58433  
Phone: (701) 493-2292  
Fax: (701) 493-2411

**Board of Education**  
Mike Long, President  
Steve Feist, Vice Pres.  
Wendy Boom, Director  
Patti Solinger, Director  
Kent Madcke, Director

Chairman Nathe, and members of the House of Representatives Education committee: my name is Garitt Irej and I am the elementary principal at Edgeley Schools, and I would like to bring your attention to the effects of Senate Bill 2229 on the Edgeley School District. Thank you for taking the time to listen to my testimony. I will try to be brief, but would like to explain in detail the interest that the Edgeley School District has in SB 2229 and the importance of not only offering pre-school programs, but the need for funding for these programs.

Edgeley School District has offered pre-school since the 2009-2010 school term, when it was fully funded with federal stimulus money. After those funds were no longer available, the program utilized Title I funds to continue. We are currently experiencing cuts in Title I, with the state projecting a 9% cut in federal Title I allocations for next year.

There are several factors that determine a school's Title I allocation, these figures include a school district's poverty level and the number of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch. Edgeley's local economy has been robust - LaMoure County ranked 14<sup>th</sup> of all counties in the nation in per capita income in a study conducted by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis last December. Thus, Edgeley's Title I determining factors dropped significantly this year, resulting in an estimated 40% loss of Title I funding for next year. Edgeley's funding will drop from our current allocation of \$97,382 to a projected allocation of \$55,000.

Edgeley has already been making program cuts to accommodate reduced Title I funding. Last year, we reduced staff in the Title I program by moving one of our two Title I teachers to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade and hiring two para-professionals. To accommodate these further cuts, we are now beginning the process of a Reduction in Force for our pre-school teacher, and reducing para-professionals in our Title 1 schoolwide program from two to one.

Currently, North Dakota is identified by *The State of Preschool 2010: State Preschool Yearbook* as being in *The Bottom Ten*, which means we are one of only ten states in the nation that do not have a state-funded preschool program.

With the importance of preparing our students for the common core standards which require higher performance target goals and the blessing of a great economy in North Dakota, I would like to ask you to pass this important legislation with the funding intact.

Thank you for your time.

Chairmen Nathe and members of the committee, for the record, I am Angela Kuntz, Pre-School teacher, Reading Specialist and English Language Learner teacher for Wishek Public School. I am here today in support of Senate Bill 2229.

I have been an educator in North Dakota for 14 years. In those 14 years I have taught kindergarten for ten years and preschool for two years. I am here today on behalf of Wishek Public School, where we have operated a pre-school program for four and five year olds for the past two school years within our public school, utilizing local fundraisers and private donations.

In 2011, I volunteered to take on the preschool position because I feel the importance of early intervention in early childhood education. I wanted to be a part of helping families identify learning delays as well as develop routine and structure for all students. In addition, I know that is imperative we now prepare pre-school age students for kindergarten to meet North Dakota Common Core standards.

Our preschool students learn letters, letter sounds and numbers. They recite their ABC's. They sing their days of the week and months of the year songs. They identify colors, shapes, patterns, rhyming words, and opposites. Each child is learning to write and working on developing fine motor skills such as using pencils, crayons, glues and scissors. Students are also learning how to follow directions and to follow a structured routine. Preschool also encourages positive



social interaction between the same age peers. In order to accomplish all this, I utilize community volunteers.

In the past two years of Wishek Pre-School, we have identified three special needs students. Early identification and intervention is very important in school success. In the past two years of Wishek Pre-School, we have identified three special needs students as well as students that are developmentally and/or socially delayed. Getting students in to school earlier gives them a stronger foundation for their future education and allows us, as a staff and administration to prepare for upcoming years. Almost of half of our preschool class this year, qualifies for the free and reduced lunch program and many come from broken homes. Many of these children will never be exposed at home or in a daycare to any of early childhood education they are being given in our pre-school. Times have changed and we must change with the times.



I have heard rumors that those opposed to funding early childhood education or preschool are those who think preschool replaces daycare. That is simply not true. I can honestly tell you that we are not a daycare and that the students who come to school are there to learn. Most of the families who have a preschooler pay for daycare while their child is attending preschool. It would be a financial hardship for most and unattainable for some to have to pay for preschool.



As a rural community, the Wishek Public School offering preschool is the only early childhood education program in the area. We are a rural area with limited resources and funding options. Thankfully, North Dakota is a growing state with increasing tax revenues. We need to best prepare and educate our students for our future growth. Senate Bill 2229 is the long-term funding option we need to continue to the pre-school program in the Wishek Public School into the future.



Since No Child Left Behind was put in place, the educational expectations for our children have been raised to levels no children in the history of North Dakota have had to experience. With the implementation of the common core standards how do we, us, everybody here, expect these children to successfully achieve these standards? The answer to this is simple. We start educating them earlier or we start lowering our standards of expectations. If we do not invest in putting programs in place that will assist our children in achieving federally mandated standards, we are setting our children up for failure. The time to act is now. We cannot afford to send kids to school behind the eight ball for a couple years and then to realize the ramifications your no vote had.

I ask for your support. Please give a "do pass" and yes vote to Senate Bill 2229.

Thank you.



Chairman Nathe and members of the Committee, for the record, I am Kathryn Pinke and am here today in support of SB 2229.

In 2007, my husband and I made the choice to relocate from Fargo to Wishek to raise our family and own and operate my husband's family business. I quickly learned the differences in the educational opportunities from the city to rural as Wishek is. I am a lifelong North Dakotan that was raised by an early childhood educator mother with public education in Grand Forks. Prior to our son, now 15 years old, moving to Wishek, he had one year of public school education in Northwood and otherwise private school education in Fargo. I want to give as many opportunities to all children in the Wishek Public School system as possible despite our rural location.

In 2011, BECEP (Head Start) federal funding was cut. Our community would no longer be offering Head Start to income qualifying pre-school aged children. I felt this was imperative for the strength of our community to find a way to continue early childhood education despite federal funding cuts. I assisted in helping organize a community meeting that was held at the Wishek Public School for those interested in a possible pre-school. 30 different families attended along with our school's superintendent and a school board member. We all agreed to move forward together in helping the pre-school get started. A group of parents organized to hold a pancake fundraiser. A few of us asked businesses for private donations. In less than six weeks, we raised \$9,000 from our local community. This was the foundation of the Wishek Pre-School.

In speaking with parents and our school's administration, we all agreed that we do not want people to have to pay for educational programs at a public school. Public schools like ours in

Wishek are proactive in developing a way to add pre-school without funding while adhering to state accreditation guidelines.

My husband has previously served on the Wishek School Board. We have agreed that rarely do local schools have an opportunity to impact by adding an educational program. Most often our school board is making decisions about maintenance and equipment versus adding students in desks which is exactly what we have done with the Wishek Pre-School.

For the past five years, I have served on the Wishek Job Development Authority Board. I understand that strong communities are keys to attracting new workforce for our growing economy. In Wishek, we are an economic center of south central North Dakota. We want to offer families the strongest educational programs to recruit and retain them long-term. The Wishek Pre-School program has the same or higher enrollment than a majority of our kindergarten through grade 12 classes which is a consistent enrollment of classes of 20 years ago. North Dakota public education has the opportunity to now thrive and build up our next generation.

Communities like Wishek will continue to support projects and people through fundraisers. But our local residents as North Dakota taxpayers cannot be depended on annually to fund an educational program in our public school system above and beyond what they are already paying for through local and state taxes.

I am not going to quote research project after research project. You have heard the early childhood education advantages and statistics. But it is worth noting that in Wishek we stood by the FightCrime.org statistic of for every \$1 we invest in early childhood education there is a \$16 return to tax payers due to reduced crime related costs in the future. We believe we can pay now



for our children and reap the benefits in the future, or we can continue to ignore the statistics and pay more later.

The time is now to invest in early childhood education for North Dakota public schools. Our daughter, Elizabeth, is here today. She is thriving along with her 15 classmates with two half days of pre-school a week in Wishek. She wants to be a future business owner in Wishek or possibly a “bone doctor” in Bismarck. These children represent the next generation of North Dakota. We want them raised with every possible opportunity, even in rural communities.

Supporting pre-school programs in communities like Wishek that have adhered to and met state accreditation standards is the right choice for tax payer dollars. It supports students like Elizabeth and the next generation of North Dakota. It is the right decision today. It is the right decision for our future and it is the right decision for North Dakota.



I ask for your “do pass” and yes vote on SB 2229.

Thank you.



#6

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
March 20, 2013

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Janelle Ferderer, Director of the Emmons County Special Education Unit and the Emmons County Preschool program, and I am here to support Senate Bill 2229 and its appropriation for early childhood education grants.

I have been a teacher in an early childhood program for 23 years and in school administration for 13 years. I have seen the benefits of early childhood education firsthand in the individual children I have worked with and in the data I have collected over the years, including consistently higher reading and math scores throughout the elementary years for students who attended preschool. Our Kindergarten teachers will tell you that students who have attended preschool are more prepared to learn and succeed in their classrooms. Based on the progress this bill has made, I believe the importance of early childhood education programs is being recognized. However, they are not only important, but essential, to increasing positive educational, societal and economic outcomes for North Dakota.

In Emmons County, our school districts have been struggling to provide early childhood education services for more than 25 years. In 2009, ARRA funds were used to expand services, and the response from families has been overwhelming. We currently have 40 children enrolled in our various educational groups, and have several children on a waiting list. There are already 30 children seeking enrollment for the 2013-2014 school year, and I have received calls from parents seeking enrollment for the 2014-2015 school year. Without this bill's appropriation, we

may not have the resources to serve these children and these families. The opportunity to acquire additional funding would allow us to hire another teacher, or a full time aid, which would help us to serve **all** students seeking enrollment, and increase the quality of our program by decreasing the student to teacher ratio and providing resources for staff development and parent training.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction is currently working on several projects to increase quality and clarity for our early childhood education programs, including curriculum guidance, a developmental framework, and an early childhood data system. As a participant in several of these committees, I see early childhood educators in our state prepared and anxious to move forward in providing high quality, consistent programs for our young children. However, without funding assistance, school districts will be less likely to implement high quality early childhood programs, and the inconsistent implementation of a limited number of programs in North Dakota will continue. School districts should be provided the permission, as well as the financial assistance, to implement the Department of Public Instruction's guidance and increase the overall academic success of their students.

SB 2229 and its appropriation is a critical piece of legislation that would assist our school districts in moving forward in their efforts to engage highly successful learners. The building blocks for academic success are established early, and the early childhood years are a critical learning phase where attitudes towards learning, social constructs, pre-academic foundations, and language skills are hardwired. Economists estimate that every dollar spent on early childhood programs provides a return of at least \$10 in reduction of government spending in other areas, including special education placements, grade retention, remedial education programs, welfare, and the criminal justice system.



The economics of this issue are simple. We can invest in our children when they're young, by laying a solid foundation for future success, or we can ignore this need, and spend much more money down the road trying to fix problems that we could have prevented.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony related to SB 2229. Early childhood education is an investment in our children's future, and our state's future, that we cannot afford to disregard.

Attached: Parent Testimonies  
Marie Shuetzle  
Lisa Hendrickson  
Bridgette Leier  
Michelle Bosch



**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
March 20, 2013

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My name is Marie Schuetzle and I would like to provide testimony in favor of Senate Bill 2229 regarding appropriation for early childhood education grants. I have been able to witness the benefits of preschool programming both as a parent as a medical professional. The academic and emotionally development I have seen in my 4 year old son in the past year can, in great part, be contributed to his preschool experience. The capacity to learn and develop is so great at this stage of life; I am so appreciative that he can benefit from trained educators during his preschool years to optimize his potential. I believe he would not be at the level he is without that experience.

As a genetic counselor, I have had the opportunity to work with children and families with special needs. Not only does early education benefit children with special needs but also their siblings who may not have special needs but benefit from another setting of structured learning. I have heard feedback from many families highlighting the benefits of these programs.

The preschool setting is an accessible source of high quality education that benefits many children during those important stages of early development. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I appreciate your time and attention and ask for your support of Senate Bill 2229.

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

March 20, 2013

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lisa Hendrickson and I am providing testimony not only as a parent of two children who have had access to an outstanding Preschool program, but also as an elementary special education teacher that receives children in a professional setting.

As a parent and educator the value of an adequately supported preschool program, like the one here in Emmons County is not only a benefit for the community but most importantly for the children that attend. The data has proven time and time again that children who access an early intervention program have continued success when they enter the public school system.

As a parent, moving here from another state where there was no formal preschool program, it was a huge relief to my husband and I that there was a program available for our oldest daughter to attend. Our second daughter has also benefited from her sister attending as that knowledge was shared with her at home

as they “played school”. Currently our second daughter is attending the same preschool as her sister; and I can only continue to see the benefits as she also experiences that great head start she is receiving before entering Kindergarten.

As a teacher, having the preschool available makes my job as the elementary special education teacher much smoother to help our special needs students make the transition from Preschool to Kindergarten. They are already exposed to a routine, social skills training, a discipline system, and academics that they would otherwise have not had the frequency of; had they not been enrolled in a Preschool program.

I feel that it is in the best interest of all Senators and Legislators to be supportive of the bills being presented before them regarding preschool and early childhood program support this session. This state is in a place financially that we have the ability to provide education to even the youngest of our state’s residents. In turn, hopefully these youth will continue to become one day the leaders that the state of North Dakota has helped to shape.

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
March 20, 2013

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bridget Leier and I am providing testimony for what the Emmons County Preschool program has done for my kids. I have now had two children attend this program. My daughter was writing her name, signing, telling stories and knew so much more when she entered Kindergarten that she would have without this program. She also has had an easier time adjusting to her new class, following the rules, learning consequences and in general acting appropriately in class. If it would not have been for this program I do not think this would have been as smooth of a transition as it has been.

My son is currently in the program. Before he started Preschool he was very quiet and didn't talk a lot. He was only three so this was normal for a boy. Since he has started school he talks all the time, he loves going and now he loves that he knows a lot of the same things as my six year old daughter does. I think that helps with their interaction as well because they can now relate to each other more than they could before. Another thing that I think is great about the program is it gets these small children in the same class room as kids with special needs. This I

believe is huge. They are at a perfect age where they learn and accept kids how they are and are more willing to help them. I truly believe that in the long run this helps with bullying and other kids being picked on because they are different. When kids see this when they are younger they accept them and that acceptance stays with them as they grow.

Please pass Senate Bill 2229 to help ensure that our children can continue to receive this tremendous service and help them grow, learn and ultimately put them ahead of the game once they start school.

Thank you for your consideration.

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2229**  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

March 20, 2013

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Michelle Bosch and I am providing testimony in support of SB 2229. I feel early childhood education is very important. My son is 4 and he is in preschool. Preschool has given him interest in wanting to learn. He says it is fun and he gets to learn things. He knows his alphabet and can write his name and all sorts of other words. He never wanted to learn how to hold a pencil when we, his parents, wanted to help him, but now he is crazy about learning.

I absolutely feel that early childhood education is important in preparing a child for school. I wish I would have had that opportunity as a child. I believe that early childhood education should receive funding from the state. Please consider passing SB 2229.

Thank you for your time.

#7

### Testimony for 2229

Chairman Nathe and members of the House Education Committee, for the record my name is Brandt Dick and I am the Superintendent of Hazelton-Moffit-Braddock School District and Underwood School District. I am here to speak in favor of 2229.

At Underwood School District we have had a Public Preschool Program for over 18 years. The program began as a way to educate students with disabilities. The program has grown and expanded to where we now have two half-day and three half-day options for all preschool students. We have close to 100% participation in our preschool program from our community, as well as students from neighboring communities of Turtle Lake and Washburn. We have found that having a public preschool has benefited both special need students as well as regular education students. Some of our special need students—especially in the area of speech development—have actually been able to gain the services needed at an early age and have been able to continue their education without special educational services.

Right now we charge tuition, and utilize funding from the state for those students that are identified as special educational students. We also have raised funds to help those families in need who cannot afford the preschool tuition amount. I feel the grants that are in this bill would benefit many young children in the state of North Dakota, especially in those areas where there are no other preschool options.

At Hazelton-Moffit-Braddock, we are seriously considering adding a preschool program as we are seeing the benefits of those students that have completed the preschool program in Linton. Geographical distance prevents some families from utilizing the preschool program in Linton. A strong preschool program is definitely something young families take into consideration when looking at communities in which to reside and raise their families.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL NO. ~~1429~~ 2229

Page 1, line 1, after "to" insert "create and enact a new section to chapter 57-15 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the authorization of a school district mill levy for an early childhood education program; and to"

Page 1, after line 15, insert:

"**SECTION 2.** A new section to chapter 57-15 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

**Early childhood education program - Mill levy - Voter approval.**

Upon approval by a majority of the qualified electors of the school district voting on the question at a regular or special election, the board of the district may dedicate a tax levy of one mill on each dollar of taxable valuation of real property in the district for the purpose of establishing and supporting an early childhood education program. All revenue accruing from this levy must be deposited in a separate fund known as the early childhood education program fund. If the need for the early childhood education program fund terminates, the board shall order the termination of the levy and shall transfer any balance remaining in the fund to the general fund of the school district."

Renumber accordingly

*Passed*

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SB 2229

Page 1, remove lines 16 through 24

Page 2, replace lines 1 through 14 with:

**"SECTION <sup>3</sup> 2. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD  
EDUCATION - STUDY BY SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION -  
REPORT TO LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT.**

1. The superintendent of public instruction shall study the development, delivery, and administration of comprehensive early childhood care and early childhood education in this state. The study must include an examination of the availability, quality, and cost of services offered by existing public and private sector providers, the projected need for services during the coming ten to twenty years, and the ability of public and private sector providers to address the expansion of facilities or the creation of additional facilities.
2. The superintendent of public instruction may appoint a committee, work groups, task forces, and subcommittees, as necessary, to provide or obtain information required in conjunction with this study.
3. Before June 1, 2014, the superintendent of public instruction shall provide a final report, together with recommendations, to the legislative management."

Renumber Accordingly

*Carried*

March 28, 2013

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2229

In lieu of the amendments adopted by the House as printed on pages 1089 and 1090 of the House Journal, Senate Bill No. 2229 is amended as follows:

Page 1, line 2, remove "an appropriation for early childhood"

Page 1, line 3, replace "education grants" with "for a superintendent of public instruction study of early childhood care and early childhood education"

Page 1, remove lines 16 through 24

Page 2, replace lines 1 through 14 with:

**" SECTION 2. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD  
EDUCATION - STUDY BY SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION -  
REPORT TO LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT.**

1. The superintendent of public instruction shall study the development, delivery, and administration of comprehensive early childhood care and early childhood education in this state. The study must include an examination of the availability, quality, and cost of services offered by existing public and private sector providers, the projected need for services during the coming ten to twenty years, and the ability of public and private sector providers to address the expansion of facilities or the creation of additional facilities.
2. The superintendent of public instruction may appoint a committee, work groups, task forces, and subcommittees, as necessary, to provide or obtain information required in conjunction with this study.
3. Before June 1, 2014, the superintendent of public instruction shall provide a final report, together with recommendations, to the legislative management."

Renumber accordingly

Sixty-third  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2229

Introduced by

Senators Poolman, J. Lee, Murphy

Representatives Hawken, N. Johnson, Hogan

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 15.1-09-58 of the North Dakota Century Code,  
2 relating to early childhood education; and to provide an appropriation for early childhood  
3 education grants for a superintendent of public instruction study of early childhood care and  
4 early childhood education.

5 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

6 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 15.1-09-58 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
7 amended and reenacted as follows:

8 **15.1-09-58. ~~Prekindergarten program~~ Early childhood education - Authorization -**  
9 **Support.**

10 The board of a school district may establish a ~~prekindergarten~~ early childhood education  
11 program and may receive and expend any state support that program with:

- 12 1. Local tax revenues, other than those necessary to support the district's kindergarten
- 13 program and the provision of elementary and high school educational services;
- 14 2. State moneys specifically appropriated for the program, any federal;
- 15 3. Federal funds specifically appropriated or approved for the program, and any gifts; and
- 16 4. Gifts, grants, and donations specifically given for the program.

17 ~~**SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION.** There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general~~  
18 ~~fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$4,683,000, or so much of the~~  
19 ~~sum as may be necessary, to the superintendent of public instruction for the purpose of~~  
20 ~~providing annual early childhood education grants to eligible school districts, for the biennium~~  
21 ~~beginning July 1, 2013, and ending June 30, 2015.~~

- 22 ~~1. Any school district offering a program of early childhood education, approved in~~  
23 ~~accordance with section 15.1-37-01, is eligible to receive a grant under this section.~~

- 1 ~~2. The superintendent of public instruction shall provide for an annual application process~~  
2 ~~and shall select award recipients. The selection process must take into account the~~  
3 ~~geographic distribution of recipients, the district's service area, the general economic~~  
4 ~~circumstances within the service area, and the district's current or anticipated financial~~  
5 ~~commitment to providing early childhood education.~~  
6 ~~3. A school district may not receive more than \$100,000 annually under this section.~~  
7 ~~4. As a condition of receiving an early childhood education grant, a school district shall~~  
8 ~~commit to maintaining a full-time equivalent student-teacher ratio of ten to one or~~  
9 ~~sixteen to one if the teacher is assisted by a full-time classroom aid.~~  
10 ~~5. As a condition of receiving an early childhood education grant, a school district shall~~  
11 ~~commit to utilizing the PowerSchool information system and to providing data to the~~  
12 ~~superintendent of public instruction at the time and in the manner requested by the~~  
13 ~~superintendent.~~  
14 ~~6. The superintendent of public instruction shall monitor the grant recipients, compile~~  
15 ~~data regarding the recipients' provision of early childhood education, and report any~~  
16 ~~findings and recommendations to the legislative management.~~

17 **SECTION 2. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION -**  
18 **STUDY BY SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION - REPORT TO LEGISLATIVE**  
19 **MANAGEMENT.**

- 20 1. The superintendent of public instruction shall study the development, delivery, and  
21 administration of comprehensive early childhood care and early childhood education in  
22 this state. The study must include an examination of the availability, quality, and cost of  
23 services offered by existing public and private sector providers, the projected need for  
24 services during the coming ten to twenty years, and the ability of public and private  
25 sector providers to address the expansion of facilities or the creation of additional  
26 facilities.  
27 2. The superintendent of public instruction may appoint a committee, work groups, task  
28 forces, and subcommittees, as necessary, to provide or obtain information required in  
29 conjunction with this study.  
30 3. Before June 1, 2014, the superintendent of public instruction shall provide a final  
31 report, together with recommendations, to the legislative management.