

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church**

201 N State Street, New Ulm, MN 56073  
Office: 507.354.3641 Fax: 507.354.1195

Email: church@splnewulm.org  
Website: splnewulm.org



**ST PAUL'S**  
**LUTHERAN**  
CHURCH & SCHOOL

**St. Paul's Lutheran School**

126 S Payne Street, New Ulm, MN 56073  
Office: 507.354.2329 Fax: 507.354.3893

Email: school@splnewulm.org  
Website: splnewulm.org/school

April 8, 2025

*Via E-Mail Delivery*

Senator Mary K. Kunesch, Chair  
3209 Minnesota Senate Bldg.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Jason Rarick, Republican Lead  
3413 Minnesota Senate Bldg.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Kunesch and Senator Rarick,

Thank you for your service and leadership to the Senate Education Finance Committee. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to share my testimony. I am writing to oppose the proposed elimination of nonpublic pupil transportation services and other aids to nonpublic students. The elimination of these services would cause stress and anxiety for our students and their families.

St. Paul's Lutheran School in New Ulm, MN, has an enrollment of 316 students in grades K-8. We have served our community and surrounding area for more than 135 years. This year, we have one hundred twenty students qualify for public bus transportation. The current busing to our school has worked well for our families. We also utilize textbooks and health services funds.

Eliminating nonpublic school support will have an impact on the mental well-being of the children who will be affected. Generations of families utilize St. Paul's School. These families are part of our school family. Students build a connection with their teacher. We have been working our way out of a mental health challenge for a few years. The governor's proposal to eliminate funding for transportation, as an example, has the potential to rip away at the work we have done to help the children through these challenges. A parent who is unable to send their child to our school may have to choose another school in order to get transportation on the very same bus they would be riding to get to our school. This is a situation that we should not ask of our children or the hard-working parents. As we've seen in the last several years, any disruption to a student's educational journey can be devastating and increases the risk of falling behind.

I ask you to ensure fair and equitable treatment of students that attend St. Paul's and other nonpublic schools in Minnesota and oppose the proposal to cut funding for nonpublic schools.

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Our students are working hard and scoring high on their standardized tests. We have been working hard together with the public schools. Now is not the time to eliminate funding for nonpublic students and their families.

Sincerely,

Peter A. Markgraf  
Principal

CC: Members of the Senate Education Finance Committee