

Multidistrict Units

Through the use of multidistrict units, school districts benefit by working together.

Regional Education Associations

School districts in various parts of the state have entered into a joint powers agreement for the purpose of providing improved educational services within the geographic area of members. Membership in a Regional Education Association (REA) is voluntary.

Any school district, political subdivision, agency, or organization may be a member of a Regional Education Association by obtaining authority from its governing body and signing an agreement, with concurrence by resolution of current members of the REA.

The governing body of the REA consists of one board member appointed by each member school district.

The 2003 Legislative Assembly provided funding (NDCC 15.1-27-40) for those school districts participating in an REA wishing to receive reimbursement for expenses. Required criteria are outlined in NDCC 15.1-07-28, and the superintendent of public instruction must approve the agreement.

Legislation passed in 2007 provides the following:

- An REA may employ an individual to serve as a school district business manager or contract with any person to perform duties assigned to a school district business manager.
- Requires all members of the governing board to be school board members or the designee of a participating school district's board. Law also allows for the inclusion of ex officio nonvoting members on the governing board.
- An REA may prepare an annual plan regarding provision of special education and related services, including transportation of students enrolled in member districts.
- A portion of foundation aid will be paid directly to the REA in the same time and manner as other state aid payments.

Cooperatives

North Dakota law allows school districts to cooperate in the provision of educational services:

- School districts operating under an academic cooperative agreement approved by the superintendent of public instruction may participate in multiboard meetings as long as those meetings are concerned with cooperative activities (NDCC 15.1-09-30).

- School districts may employ a superintendent jointly with one or more other districts (NDCC 15.1-09-55).
- Districts cooperating with each other in the joint provision of educational services under a plan approved by the superintendent of public instruction are considered to be a single district (NDCC 15.1-29-03) for the purpose of providing one or more grade levels.

Special Education Multidistricts

Districts wishing to establish a multidistrict unit may petition the superintendent of public instruction, who will approve or disapprove based upon submitted plans. The plan submitted to the Department of Public Instruction must include the number of members on the multidistrict special education board, how each district will be represented, selection of officers, terms of office, meeting times, requirements for a quorum, and such other items as may be required by regulation of the superintendent of public instruction. The superintendent of public instruction must approve the plans annually.

School boards of participating districts appoint representatives on the multidistrict board. Compensation for board members is governed by NDCC 15.1-33-05. For a thorough explanation of legal requirements governing multidistrict special education, see NDCC Chapter 15.1-33.

Career and Technical Education Multidistricts

Area Career and Technical Education Centers conduct programs of vocational education (NDCC chapter 15-20.2). They are composed of three or more school districts and must have a plan approved by the State Board for Vocational and Technical Education. They are governed by a board of representatives from participating districts. Board members must be members of their local school boards.