

NORTH DAKOTA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

Governmental Affairs Committee

Wednesday, August 12, 2026

10:30 a.m.

Minutes

The meeting was called to order by chairwoman Orton at 10:34 a.m.

Participating in the meeting:

Committee Members

Michelle Orton, chair, Dickinson

Collette Hertz, Harvey

Carrie Zachmann, Beach

Robin Nelson, Fargo

Lynn Carlson, Finley-Sharon

Staff

Amy De Kok, NDSBA Executive Director

Marci Narum, NDSBA Communications & Marketing Manager

Committee Members Absent:

Jason Rohr, Jamestown

Terry Snider, Grand Forks

Mike Lautenschlager, Lewis & Clark

De Kok reviewed the agenda and gave an overview of the process and the options available to the committee for four-year-old resolutions and resolutions submitted to the committee.

RESOLUTIONS THAT ARE FOUR YEARS OLD AND SCHEDULED TO BE DROPPED

A. FUNDING

7. COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS. NDSBA shall support the state ensuring program funding equity for school districts, including full funding of the costs associated with English language learners.

Adopted in 2014; readopted in 2018 and 2022.

8. SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION LOAN PROGRAM. NDSBA shall support increasing the total funds available for the School Construction Loan Program.

Adopted in 2014; readopted in 2018 and 2022.

9. TEACHERS' FUND FOR RETIREMENT AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEM. NDSBA shall

support adequate and sustainable funding for TFFR and PERS programs.

Adopted in 2014; readopted in 2018; and amended and readopted in 2022.

10. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. NDSBA shall support separate state funding for preschool programs meeting prescribed standards.

Adopted in 2010; readopted in 2014, 2018, and 2022.

11. FUNDING ADEQUACY, BOARD TAXING AUTHORITY, AND PROPERTY TAX REDUCTIONS. NDSBA will

support direct state funding of K-12 education at a level adequate to reduce reliance on local property taxes.

Adopted in 2006; readopted in 2010, 2014, 2018, and 2022.

C. STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

2. NORTH DAKOTA STATE STANDARDS. NDSBA shall support the ongoing implementation of North Dakota State Standards.

Adopted in 2014; amended and readopted in 2018; and readopted in 2022.

D. PERSONNEL

2. SIGN-ON BONUSES. NDSBA shall support legislation expanding the criteria for eligible individuals who can receive sign-on bonuses under the School Board authority provision granted in North Dakota Century Code 15.1-09-33.1.

Adopted in 2022.

Nelson moved to recommend resolutions A7 – A11, C2, and D2 for re-adoption as written. Hertz seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The committee reviewed a proposed Standing Resolution submitted by the Fargo Board of Education by Fargo board member, Robin Nelson:

A resolution to support state legislation that assists in the retention and recruitment of a high-quality education workforce to ensure the success of all North Dakota students.

WHEREAS, despite being considered one of the most attractive states for teaching on several measures, more than 60% of North Dakota school leaders report that it is either very difficult or impossible to fill teacher vacancies; and

WHEREAS, 33% of North Dakota teachers leave the teaching profession within the first five years, reflecting a high teacher attrition rate; and 6 out of 10 North Dakota teachers cited burnout (2022) as a contributing factor to teacher attrition; and

WHEREAS, a survey conducted in 2023 showed 88% of North Dakota educators believe teacher retention is a major issue, and only 19% of educators under age 30 and 24% of educators between ages 30 and 39 say they plan to retire in the education field; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of North Dakota established the Teacher Retention and Recruitment Task Force in 2023 via Executive Order 2023-08 to increase recruitment to the teaching profession, improve teacher preparation programs across the state; and

WHEREAS, North Dakota's students, families, schools, and communities depend on the education workforce, and retaining educators is essential for positive student outcomes, strong schools, and vibrant communities;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that NDSBA shall support state legislation that assists in the retention and recruitment of a high-quality education workforce, including teachers, administrators, and support staff, to ensure the success of all students.

Robin Nelson

NDSBA Governmental Affairs Committee, Fargo Board of Education member 2739 30th Avenue S
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Hertz made a motion to adopt as written; Carlson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The committee reviewed a proposed Standing Resolution submitted by Valley City Public Schools by Valley City board president, Sherri Horsager:

A resolution to support adequate, sustainable, and collaborative advocacy for K-12 public school funding and educator competitiveness in North Dakota.

WHEREAS, North Dakota's public schools are essential to the educational success of students, the strength of local communities, and the long-term economic vitality of the state; and

WHEREAS, School districts across North Dakota continue to experience increasing costs related to employee compensation, health insurance, retirement contributions, utilities, transportation, technology, special education, school safety, and other operational expenses that are outpacing growth in state funding; and

WHEREAS, Local school boards have worked diligently to be responsible stewards of taxpayer resources, yet growth in state revenues for K-12 education has not kept pace with the actual cost of operating high-quality public schools; and

WHEREAS, North Dakota has experienced a decline in its national standing for teacher compensation, making it increasingly difficult for school districts to recruit, retain, and develop highly qualified teachers, administrators, and support staff in an increasingly competitive regional and national labor market; and

WHEREAS, Competitive educator compensation is directly connected to student achievement, educational stability, and the long-term success of North Dakota's workforce and economy; and

WHEREAS, Ensuring competitive compensation and adequately funding public education is a shared priority among school boards, educators, administrators, teachers, parents, and community members committed to providing high-quality educational opportunities for every North Dakota student; and

WHEREAS, Collaborative advocacy among organizations including the North Dakota School Boards Association (NDSBA), North Dakota United (NDU), the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders (NDCEL), North Dakotans for Public Education, local school boards, and local teacher associations strengthens the voice of public education

before the Legislative Assembly and demonstrates a unified commitment to North Dakota's students.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the North Dakota School Boards Association support legislation that provides adequate, sustainable, and predictable increases in K-12 funding that reflect the actual cost of educating students, enable school districts to remain competitive in recruiting and retaining high-quality educators, and strengthen North Dakota's position in regional and national educator compensation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NDSBA actively pursue collaborative advocacy with North Dakota United (NDU), the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders (NDCEL), North Dakotans for Public Education, local school boards, local teacher associations, and other statewide education partners to develop and promote a unified legislative agenda supporting strong, sustainable investment in North Dakota's public schools and the professionals who serve students every day.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NDSBA encourage local school boards and local teacher associations across North Dakota to work collaboratively within their communities and collectively advocate before state policymakers for increased, sustainable investment in public K-12 education.

Sherri Horsager

School Board President Valley City Public Schools 460 Central Ave. N.

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Robin Nelson made a motion to adopt the proposed resolution with amendments, adding the words "to the extent possible" to the fourth line in the first BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED paragraph:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NDSBA actively pursue collaborative advocacy with North Dakota United (NDU), the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders (NDCEL), North Dakotans for Public Education, local school boards, local teacher associations, and other statewide education partners to develop and promote a unified legislative agenda, **to the extent possible**, supporting strong, sustainable investment in North Dakota's public schools and the professionals who serve students every day.

Hertz seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Having completed committee business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

Marci Narum, Recording Secretary