



# North Dakota Small Organized Schools

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Chairman Owens and members of the House Education Committee, my name is Michael Heilman and I am the Executive Director of the North Dakota Small Organized Schools (NDSOS). I am here in support of HB 1188. Recruitment and retention of teachers is a real issue for the 154 member schools of NDSOS. All school, including NDSOS members, have seen the applications for teachers in their districts go from low to zero in some cases. Special Education is one of the many areas schools struggle to find qualified individuals, and in an area with some of our most vulnerable students.

Providing an opportunity for schools to employ a special education technician will assist school district efforts to fill, hard to fill positions. It will also provide much needed assistance to special education teachers who have seen their caseloads increase, and most importantly provide highly trained individuals to work under a special education teacher to serve students.

An additional benefit of HB 1188 might be that individuals who become special education technicians may decide to pursue a special education teaching credential. NDSOS support HB 1188.

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**The mission of NDSOS is to provide leadership for the small/rural schools in North Dakota and to support legislation favorable to their philosophy while opposing legislation that is harmful.**