



1 HB 1188 – Special Education Technician

2 NDCEL Testimony in support with suggested amendment from Special Education Council

3 Chairman Owens and members of the House Education Committee. For the record, my name is
4 Dr. Aimee Copas and I am here today representing NDCEL with specificity to one of our affiliate
5 organizations, the Special Education Study Council – your ND Special Education Directors. In
6 conversations with this group, they’ve also suggested some amendments to the bill that strengthen
7 the bill and provide the language that would enable the best possible scenario for schools in the
8 implementation of a person serving in the role of a special education technician.

9 As you’ve heard representatives of education mention, staffing in our schools is a struggle. One
10 of the areas of the direst need and the greatest shortage is in our special education classrooms. The
11 addition of an individual who may already be serving in these classrooms that could, with
12 appropriate training and credentialing, be able to perform a greater service in these classrooms
13 without the burden of up to four years of training would be a huge benefit to our schools.

14 In preparation for the support of this bill, I worked with some of our states SPED directors and
15 they specifically asked for some minor adjustments to this bill to make it even more relevant and
16 applicable in the special education classroom.

17 If you could please take a look at the amendment provided to you, I’ll walk you through the
18 requested changes and indicate the rationale for them.

19 In section 2 (page 2 lines 22-31 and page 3 Lines 1-3) the directors are asking that the specificity
20 of what the director can do be redacted and replaced with “A special education technician
21 may: perform duties as requested by the special education director, local administrator, or
22 supervising special education teacher”. This adjustment would allow the individual to do the
23 needed things within the classroom at the request of their superiors. They felt it better to outline
24 what they cannot do rather than limit what they can.

for all students in North Dakota.

Executive Director: Aimee Copas-----Assistant Director: Russ Ziegler



1 The next requested edit is on page 3 addressing #4. On line 9, there is an indication that this person
2 may not conduct evaluations, neither formal or informal. They'd ask that the "informal
3 assessment" portion be redacted. The rationale for this is that informal assessments can already be
4 performed by individuals other than the teacher. For example we can have volunteers do
5 assessments such as dibbles, etc. Then, after that, we ask that language be included so that the
6 reflected language states:

7 (2). Formal ~~or informal~~ assessments; unless otherwise qualified to do so.

8 There are times when the special education technician may be qualified to do other assessments
9 so we'd not want to limit that opportunity.

10 Finally, a brief edit on lines 13-14 of page 3 would also be helpful. Part of the rationale for this
11 bill is to create a time saving opportunity for the special education teacher. Hence, we'd not want
12 to duplicate effort. To have the teacher in each scenario could be redundant at times. Please see
13 the below edit that would alleviate this allowing that technician to do more than just meetings
14 when **their** supervisor is present – ie. Others could be present in place of the supervising teacher
15 and their efforts would still be valid:

16 f. Participate in conferences or other multidisciplinary team meetings without the
17 presence of ~~the supervising~~ a supervising special education teacher; or service provider
18

19 The ND Special Education Directors believe that with these edits, this bill could bring to North
20 Dakota a much-needed support system in their special education classrooms. We ask that you
21 please consider adopting these amendments and as amended give the bill a do-pass
22 recommendation. Thank you.