



1 **HB 1388 – Funding Formula**

2 **NDCEL Testimony in Support**

3 Chairman Owens, members of the House Education Committee, for the record, my name is Dr.
4 Aimee Copas. I serve as the Executive Director for the ND Council of Educational Leaders
5 representing all our K12 school administrators, directors and school leaders.

6 HB 1388 is the result of much work done over the past 4 years with the K12 funding formula to
7 ensure the bill is supporting schools appropriately and also getting to legislative intent in getting
8 all schools on the formula and support in a common way on the formula. 4 district superintendents
9 and 1 business manager from the NDCEL Legislative Focus Group were invited to assist the
10 interim committee in their study this past session.

11 This bill continues to acknowledge challenges within our school funding model upholding last
12 session’s work on getting schools to on-time funding while caring for our declining enrollment
13 districts, an attempt at increasing the per-pupil payment, and it does also encapsulates the work
14 done during the interim on the K12 weighting factors.

15 Ensuring that there is the per-pupil increase at least in the amount proposed in this bill is critically
16 important. Each year, experienced a myriad of challenges along with that, including for example,
17 increasing staffing costs by honoring contracts already in place, increased costs due to behavioral
18 and mental health challenges, many districts with increasing enrollment and still experiencing a
19 funding mechanism that doesn’t yet completely recognize those students until the next year.

20 While the 1% per pupil payment increase each year doesn’t solve all the problems it is a much-
21 needed shot in the arm of school district funding.

22 It is worth emphasizing that this bill continues to move in the modality agreed upon last session to
23 move the 94 transition minimum districts to be on the formula. I hope we can all continue to
24 recognize that this will be very challenging for these districts. The weighting factor work has been
25 a heavy lift but an important one. As mentioned, if you look at pages 4-5 – it shows us the 7-year

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for all students in North Dakota.*

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



- 1 goal with the weighting factors showing an increase for districts with fewer than 260 students.
- 2 This has the most dramatic impact on the transition minimum districts. This is taking no new
- 3 money as the 15% reduction in budget is the funds used to fuel the weighting factor adjustments.
- 4 Furthermore, the work done in this bill to support the transition maximum districts is helpful to
- 5 them as well and carves for them a pathway to being fully on the formula.
- 6 We strongly recommend a Do-Pass on HB 1388.