

NDAB Resolution 2022-01:

State 2023-2025 Biennial Appropriation for North Dakota Vision Services / School for the Blind (NDVS/SB)

Whereas, statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau in 2020 indicated that there were 760,394 residents living in North Dakota. Conservative Demographic studies have consistently demonstrated that 3.3% among the general population have medical conditions which mildly, moderately, or severely compromise their eyesight, this means that there is a significant population of people in North Dakota affected by uncorrectable sight loss; and,

Whereas, the loss of eyesight is a major life-altering disability that requires specialized and specific rehabilitation skills training to help people of any age cope with this condition; and,

Whereas, North Dakota Vision Services / School for the Blind in Grand Forks has the components for a comprehensive center-based rehabilitation training program, is recognized regionally and nationally as a program of excellence and high quality, has the capability and capacity that allows it to serve people of all ages (i.e., has both children and adult oriented training programs); and,

Whereas, children and adults with sight loss, who receive a regimen of specific, comprehensive, intensive center-based blindness skills training, such as that which is available at NDVS/SB, are employable and are capable of functioning with a high degree of independence;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by North Dakota Association of the Blind in Convention assembled at the Holiday Inn Express Southwest in Fargo, ND on this Sunday, June 12, 2022 that, we strongly urge that Governor Doug Burgum and the 68th North Dakota Legislative Assembly that will convene on January 3, 2022 to maintain and increase the appropriation for North Dakota Vision Services / School for the Blind (SB2013) in the state budget which is adopted for the 2023 -2025 biennium so that the NDVS/SB appropriation will,

- Maintain funding for all the current professional positions serving children and adults across the state to ensure that the frequency and intensity of services required to attain their goals is met.
- Increase funding for the temporary salary allotment to maintain the appropriate number of part-time employees that work evenings and overnight during short-term programs for students and adults who come to the training center for intensive instruction.
- Increase the operating portion of the NDVS/SB budget to appropriately adjust for greater costs of service-related travel, maintenance of the facility, purchase of modern technology, and for essential professional staff development.