



North Dakota Small Organized Schools

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HB 1362– Testimony in Support with Changes
House Human Services Committee
Representative Weisz – Chairman
January 30, 2023

Chairman Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee, my name is Michael Heilman. I am the Executive Director of the North Dakota Small Organized Schools (NDSOS). I represent 154-member school districts of the North Dakota Small Organized Schools.

Like NDCEL we too agree with most of this bill and support the amendments proposed by Dr. Copas. NDSOS believes that the primary stakeholder in the education of a child, is the child and the parents of that child. Those same parents that reside in the local school districts and elect their local school board members. We feel the intent of section 4 of this bill could undermine that local authority. That may not be the intent of the bill, but if it is interpreted in that manner, it would seem local school board no longer have any authority and serve no purpose. Local school boards are charged with running local schools within the parameters set by this body and with support and oversight from the Department of Public Instruction. NDSOS believe and supports that structure. We also believe that the current structure ensures decisions impacting parents and children in local school districts is best made by local school boards and the people that elect them.

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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.