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March 9, 2023

Chairman Wobbema and Members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee:

My name is Eric Ripley, Executive Director of Career & Technical Education (CTE) for the Grand Forks Public Schools and Director of the virtual Grand Forks Area Career & Technology Center. I am communicating my support of HB1348, relating to career and technology center boards.

HB1348's proposed language updates are a result of a collaborative effort of the statewide career and technical education (CTE) directors and submitted with our support. With the continued growth and expansion of CTE centers, both virtual and through the approved 13 CTE center applications for the Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund, HB1348 updates NDCC to provide a board structure specific for virtual area career and technology centers.

Currently, the approved virtual CTE centers within the state are as follows:

- Grand Forks Area Career & Technology Center
- Cass County Career & Technical Education Center
- Central Regional Area Career & Technical Center
- Great Northwest Career & Technology Center
- Roughrider Career and Technology Center

Specifically, HB1348 provides local flexibility to the member schools of a virtual area career and technology center to determine a center board makeup that best meets their needs and structure. Currently, this chapter within NDCC does not delineate between a traditional brick and mortar CTE center and virtual CTE center.

It should be noted that HB1178, approved by the House and referred to the Senate Education committee also impacts this chapter of the NDCC related to career and technology center boards, specifically 15-20.2-04 (Center Boards – Appointment of Members).

I would encourage the committee to provide your support for the proposed changes within HB1348 with a DO PASS recommendation, and consider working with Senate Education committee to merge HB1178 within HB1348.

Sincerely,

Eric Ripley
Executive Director of CTE & Technology
Grand Forks Public Schools
Grand Forks Area Career & Technology Center