



1 HB 1028 – Transfer of School District Funds Between General Fund and Building Fund

2 Chairman Owens, Vice Chair Schreiber Beck and members of the committee. Good day and
3 welcome back to Bismarck! My name is Dr. Aimee Copas – I am the Executive Director for the
4 North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders (known as NDCEL). NDCEL is an umbrella
5 organization that represents and provides leadership development all school leaders in the state –
6 including school superintendents, principals, CTE directors, school business officials, technology
7 leaders, athletic directors, special education directors, and REA leaders. Please allow me to begin
8 by thanking you for your service.

9 This bill comes to you as an emergency request directly relating to COVID pandemic the spring
10 of 2020. During this time, districts had a variety of new costs that were directly related to COVID,
11 and some areas of typical school expenditure that were not seen due to the change in modality of
12 instruction. Because of this, some of our smaller districts were looking directly at having to make
13 a decision – that decision was whether they could choose to be thoughtful and prudent with any
14 excess funds and save them for later in the summer and for the costs they anticipated to ramp up
15 in-person learning, or to spend those dollars to ensure they were within the EFB limitations and
16 potentially spending those dollars in a way not needed by the district that spring. This impacted
17 approximately

18 In April and May NDCEL requested that the Governor provide an executive order to waive the
19 EFB rule for one year. Understandably, the legislature appropriately wanted to weigh in. As an
20 alternative, we recommended to districts to be prudent with their dollars. In consult with
21 legislative leaders in education we resolved that the appropriate concept would be to have school
22 boards experiencing this issue a ONE-TIME temporary transfer of funds to their building funds
23 and then to transfer it back into the general fund, so taxpayer’s dollars were spent wisely and ask
24 for an emergency measure for an allowance of this and to not reduce the school district’s
25 foundation aid payment.

26 This bill does not cost our state any money and rather serves as an appropriate tax SAVINGS for
27 our patrons in that the dollars are appropriately and prudently spent in this school year.

28 We ask that you consider this information and promote the positive passing of this bill.

*NDCEL is the strongest unifying voice representing and supporting administrators and educational leaders in pursuit of quality education
for all students in North Dakota.*

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