

Mandan Public School District

District Offices

Date: Wednesday, March 10, 2021
To: North Dakota House Education Committee
From: Jeff Fastnacht, Asst. Superintendent
Re: Support for SB 2196

Good Afternoon, Chairman Owens and members of the committee. I am Jeff Fastnacht, Asst. Superintendent at Mandan Public School. I am also a member of the North Dakota State Board of Public Education, President of the North Dakota Board of Career and Technical Education, and important for this testimony a member of the North Dakota Education Coordination Council.

I stand in support of an educational system that meets the unique needs of each and every one of our students. I stand in support of a system that allows students to pursue their passions and improves student engagement, resulting in improved learning outcomes. I stand in support of the work done by Dr. Steiner, Dr. Steinhoff, and others to advance personalized learning in our state.

I believe a change is needed in North Dakota statute to allow schools to innovate within a framework, allowing us to transform our schools without cumbersome paperwork and reporting requirements. It is my experience that innovation is already happening in our schools. We have outstanding leaders and educators moving our schools, particularly our high schools, in a new direction. This bill allows for the creation of a North Dakota Learning Continuum under the leadership of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Ms. Baesler. This framework would then be reviewed by the Education Coordination Council and ultimately approved by the State Board of Public Education. This framework will provide the foundation needed for schools to create alternate pathways toward graduation outside of the regimented and one-size-fits-all Carnegie system we have now.

I support SB 2196 and look forward to working on this with outstanding educational leaders as you have heard from today.

Thank you for your time and I would stand for any questions from the committee.

"Where the Best Begin"