

Certification Central

ND's 1st Alternative Educator Preparation Program

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Written Testimony in Support of SB 2332

Good Morning, Chairman Owens and House Education Committee,

For the record, my name is Dr. Katherine Terras and I represent Certification Central, which is ND's 1st Alternative Educator Preparation Program approved by the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board (ND ESPB). We are in support of SB 2332, as this legislation provides a pathway for Certification Central to serve North Dakota as a lead, in-state alternative. Consequently, we strongly support the removal of the sunset clause language stating, *Effective through July 31, 2023*, to allow Certification Central to exist beyond this date. Since the enactment of this legislation, Certification Central has been honored to serve ND in the following ways:

- Obtained program approval from ND ESPB;
- Launched special education licensure and endorsement program July 2020;
- Launched the special education behavior intervention specialist endorsement September 2020;
- Became an approved continuing education provider from ND ESPB October 2020;
- Formed an advisory council and curriculum review committee;
- Began the national accreditation process through the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP);
- Providing behavioral consultation and educational diagnostics to districts/units; and
- Establishing the North Dakota Alternative Certification Association (NDACA) that promotes quality alternatives and provides a formal pathway for the collective voices of alternatives in ND.

We will continue to invest in the state where we were born and raised. We sold beautiful ND land to build this alternative program with the help of 10 highly trained curriculum developers who are teacher leaders in the field. One of the major tenants for Certification Central is affordability, which is why we offer a 60-70% savings. This legislation is frequently referred to as the "American Board bill," which is misleading. This legislation provides both in-state and out-of-state options, which includes more than just the "American Board."

When I testified in the Senate, I proposed an amendment that would require out-of-state alternatives to obtain program approval from the ND Education Standards and Practices Board to ensure the teaching standards in our state are upheld. Therefore, we strongly support the addition of 7e and 7f in Section 1. The American Board's testimony to the Senate supported the removal of clinical practice requirements, which include practicums and student teaching. This statement reveals that the American Board may not be implementing best practices, anchored in research, to train teachers. Teacher training programs across the nation are increasing teacher candidates' time spent in the field because of the research supporting how this is the best way to measure the impact they are having on PK-12 students. This is direct evidence as to why the American Board needs to obtain program approval from ESPB to ensure they are using quality programming to train our ND teachers. Relative to special education and students with disabilities, your committee unanimously passed HB 1131 to increase training for teachers serving students with dyslexia. Thank you for understanding the importance of well-trained teachers to serve our most vulnerable population of students.

In closing, I have had the privilege of training educators in ND for 20+ years and will continue to do so in the future. Growing our own in ND is essential to addressing the teacher shortage and Certification Central is here and ready to serve. This concludes my testimony, and I will now stand for questions you may have.