

# Certification Central

ND's 1<sup>st</sup> Alternative Educator Preparation Program

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## Written Testimony in Support of SB 2332 (with amendment)

Good Morning, Chairman Schaible and Senate Education Committee,

For the record, my name is Dr. Katherine Terras and I represent Certification Central, which is ND's 1<sup>st</sup> 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."

To fully support SB 2332, we propose one minor amendment:

- In Section 1 (#7, page 2,) add the following: **e. meet program approval standards and requirements set by the board for teacher education programs for the licensure of educators.** According to ND's Pk-12 Education Strategic Vision Framework, "Quality Education Personnel" is a strategic theme. Quality personnel are trained by quality educator preparation programs that are aligned to national teaching standards and demonstrate a positive impact on PK-12 student learning.

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.