



Testimony SB 1329
Education Standards and Practices Board
House Education Committee
January 31, 2023; 10:00 AM
Dr. Rebecca Pitkin

Good morning, Chairman Heinert, and members of the House Education Committee. My name is Rebecca Pitkin, and I am the Executive Director of the Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB). I represent the ESPB Board which met on January 17, 2023, and I testify in opposition to HB 1329. Our board appreciates and understands the sentiment of this bill and are “all about supporting teachers” and recognizes much is to be done to keep teachers in the field, yet they feel this is not the answer. The Board acknowledged the potential fiscal impact (\$25,000 a year) of this bill to a fee funded occupational board, yet board members articulated the potential impact on the safety of children. Changing a 30-year life license to a 20-year life license eliminates two additional checks on a teacher’s background. At each 5-year renewal, applicants must answer the questions on the attached application. A recent review of board cases over the past three years indicated the following:

2020: 20% of the cases (33) fell into the category of not needing two additional renewals. Six individuals received board sanctions.

2021: 23% of the cases (65) fell into the category of not needing two additional renewals. Eight individuals received board sanctions.

2022: 55% of the cases (60), fell into the category of not needing two additional renewals. Seven individuals received board sanctions.

In addition, our board noted the importance of the ongoing learning credits needed for each renewal, noting teachers are expected to be life-long learners. In summary, the Board's greatest concern is loss of opportunity for individuals upon license renewal, to self-report any offenses in the 10-year span between a 20-year license when an applicant would be approximately 40 years old, and a 30-year license, thus not meeting the Board's non-negotiable of doing what is best for children.

This concludes my testimony, and I will answer any questions

Part 1. Must be completed by all applicants. Please check "yes" or "no" for each question.

1	Are you legally eligible to work in the United States? You must have a valid United States Social Security number to be eligible for a North Dakota license.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2	Are you able to provide documentation of your eligibility to work in the United States?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3	Were you ever arrested, charged, or convicted of a misdemeanor or felony other than minor traffic offenses? If yes , attach your signed and dated letter of explanation and submit copies of the court records.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4	Have you ever been dismissed (fired) from any teaching job, resigned at the request of your employer, or while charges against you or an investigation of your behavior were pending, been suspended without pay, or been let out of a contract early? You must answer "yes" even if the matter was later resolved with any form of settlement or severance agreement regardless of its terms. If YES, enter your explanation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5	Are you presently being investigated by your current or any previous employer or by any licensing, certification, or other regulatory body for any alleged misconduct or other alleged grounds for discipline? If yes , attach your signed and dated letter of explanation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6	Have you ever had a license denied, suspended, or revoked in any state, or have you in any way been sanctioned by a licensing, certification, or other regulatory agency or body? If yes , attach your signed and dated letter of explanation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7	If you graduated in teacher education after September 1, 1980, have you completed a course in Native American studies and Multicultural education? If you graduated prior to September 1, 1980, mark "n/a".	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8	Can you demonstrate competencies in youth mental health?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Part 2. List your current and last two places of contracted education employment. Substitute teachers please mark substitute. New graduates please mark n/a.

K-12 School Name, City, and State	Grade/Subject	Dates inclusive (mm/yy to mm/yy):
Immediate Supervisor	Contracted <input type="checkbox"/> Substitute <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Years of employment:
K-12 School Name, City, and State	Grade/Subject	Dates inclusive (mm/yy to mm/yy):
Immediate Supervisor	Contracted <input type="checkbox"/> Substitute <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Years of employment:
K-12 School Name, City, and State	Grade/Subject	Dates inclusive (mm/yy to mm/yy):
Immediate Supervisor	Contracted <input type="checkbox"/> Substitute <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Years of employment:

Part 3. NDCC 15.1-13-15 requires first time applicants subscribe to the oath of affirmation below.

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of North Dakota, and I will faithfully discharge the duties of my position, according to the best of my ability. I declare under penalty of perjury the information furnished herein is to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, correct, and complete.

I understand that knowingly providing false information may be grounds for denial of licensure. **ESPB is authorized to release Social Security Numbers to the BCI and the FBI.**

Subscribed to me this _____ day of _____, 20_____, City of _____, State of _____.

Your signature must be **original** and dated in the last six months.

Signature of Applicant

Return original form to:
Education Standards and Practices Board
2718 Gateway Ave, Suite 204
Bismarck ND 58503-0585
(701) 328-9641 office
(701) 328-9647 fax

In compliance with the Federal Privacy Act of 1974, the disclosure of the individual's social security number on this form is mandatory pursuant to North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) 43-50-02. The individual's social security number is used by the ESPB as an identification number for file control purposes, background checks, and recordkeeping. ESPB does not advocate, permit, nor practice discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, or disability as required by various state and federal laws.