



1 HB 1349 – SPED weighting factor

2 Testimony in support

3 Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education Committee – I am here today
4 representing NDCEL and your K12 school leaders as we support HB 1349 that addresses
5 the Special Education weighting factor.

6 As school leaders working in partnership with the legislature – we spend each session
7 and each interim session grappling with gaps in the formula. One of the areas that we’ve
8 identified together that has been grossly underfunded is in special education. We’ve
9 lobbied congress continually to better fund IDEA, but sadly our students who struggle
10 the most and need more fiscal support are not seeing movement at the federal level.

11 The state has provided a small fiscal note to support those students, and this bill makes
12 a strong move in the right direction for our special education students. The weighting
13 factor adjustment outlined in this bill would bring the funding of special education closer
14 to the percentage that the state funds regular education students – close to 80%. Those
15 students deserve that adequate and equitable payment. Often, we are unable to provide
16 the kinds of raises to our employees at the level that we or our communities would like
17 to see – but frankly that is because dollars must be used to back fill underfunded areas
18 thereby making it difficult to be competitive with regard to salary.

19 This funding in combination with the proposed funding bill (SB 2284) (assuming both
20 stay at the funding level they are at now in the bills) would be supporting our public
21 schools in a way that would be tremendous for our students.

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

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