



# North Dakota Small Organized Schools

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SB 2032 – Testimony in Support  
House Education Committee  
Representative Heiner – Chairman  
March 1, 2023

Chairman Heinert and member of the committee, my name is Michael Heilman. I am the Executive Director of the North Dakota Small Organized Schools (NDSOS). I represent 150-member school districts of the North Dakota Small Organized Schools. NDSOS stands in support of SB 2032.

NDSOS was an active participant in the support and startup of one of the programs that this appropriation supports. A think tank of small school superintendents met with representatives from University of Mary and from those conversation the online elementary education program became a reality in a matter of months. The program had 44 enrollee's the first year. These individuals have been able to stay in their communities and in some cases continue to work as para-educators. What a great way to support our schools and individuals that wish to become teachers.

This bill provides much needed funds to support putting teacher in our classrooms by allowing paraprofessionals working in our schools to become teachers. We think this is a great way to help address the teacher shortage.

NDSOS asks for your support of SB 2032.

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**The mission of NDSOS is to provide leadership for the small/rural schools in North Dakota and to support legislation favorable to their philosophy while opposing legislation that is harmful.**