



# North Dakota Small Organized Schools

Mr. Michael Heilman  
Executive Director  
3144 Hampton Street  
Bismarck, ND 58504  
[mheilmanndsos@gmail.com](mailto:mheilmanndsos@gmail.com)  
701-527-4621

Mr. Brandt Dick  
President  
1929 N. Washington Steet. Ste.A  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
Brandt.Dick@k12.nd.us  
701-415-0441

Mr. Steven Heim  
Vice-President  
PO Box 256  
Drake, ND 58736  
Steve.heim@k12.nd.us  
701-465-3732

1 Testimony in Support of SB 2354

2 Chairman Beard and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

3 I am writing in support of Senate Bill 2354, which seeks to establish a comprehensive wireless  
4 communication device policy in North Dakota schools. This bill is an important step in ensuring that  
5 technology is used in a manner that enhances student learning while minimizing distractions and  
6 promoting overall well-being.

7 The prevalence of wireless communication devices in schools has significantly increased over the past  
8 decade, leading to both benefits and challenges. While technology can serve as a valuable educational  
9 tool, excessive and unregulated use of smartphones and other devices during school hours has been  
10 linked to decreased academic performance, increased distractions, and negative impacts on students'  
11 mental health. SB 2354 provides a balanced and thoughtful approach to addressing these concerns by  
12 requiring school districts to implement policies that regulate device use in a way that prioritizes learning  
13 and student well-being.

14 Key aspects of SB 2354 that merit support include:

- 15 1. **Minimization or Prohibition of Device Use During School Hours** – The bill appropriately limits  
16 device use during instructional time while allowing for exceptions that support educational and  
17 health-related needs.
- 18 2. **Teacher Discretion for Educational Use** – Allowing teachers to permit device use for  
19 instructional purposes ensures that technology remains an asset in the classroom rather than a  
20 distraction.
- 21 3. **Health Care Considerations** – Recognizing that some students require access to their devices for  
22 medical reasons, such as managing diabetes or other conditions, is an essential component of  
23 the bill.
- 24 4. **Consistency Across Grade Levels** – Establishing uniform policies across all grade levels will  
25 provide clarity and equity for students, parents, and educators alike.
- 26 5. **Evidence-Based Smartphone Practices** – The bill promotes research-driven policies that reflect  
27 best practices in technology use for academic success and mental well-being.

---

## Board of Directors

### Region 1

Mr. Tim Holte, Supt. Stanley  
Mr. Kris Kuehn, Supt. Ray

### Region 2

Mr. Monte Mayer, Supt. Velva  
Mr. Steven Heim, Anamoose & Drake

### Region 3

Dr. Frank Schill, Supt. Edmore  
Mr. David Wheeler, Supt. Manvel

### Region 4

Mr. Brian Christopherson, Supt. New Salem  
Mr. Russ Ziegler, Supt. Elgin-New Leipzig

### Region 5

Mr. Rick Diegel, Supt. Kidder Co.  
Mr. Brandt Dick, Supt. Burleigh County

### Region 6

Mr. Mitch Carlson, Supt. LaMoure  
Dr. Steven Johnson, Supt. Ft. Ransom

**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.**

28 Additionally, SB 2354 appropriately requires school districts to solicit stakeholder input, ensuring that  
29 policies reflect the needs and concerns of students, parents, and educators. The requirement for annual  
30 policy reviews based on emerging research ensures that North Dakota schools remain adaptable to new  
31 findings and best practices regarding technology use in education.

32 I urge the committee to support SB 2354.

33 Mr. Michael Heilman – Executive Director

34 North Dakota Small Organized Schools

35 [mheilmandsos@gmail.com](mailto:mheilmandsos@gmail.com)

36 701.527.4621

37