



NDSBA
NORTH DAKOTA SCHOOL
BOARDS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 7128
Bismarck ND 58507-7128
1-800-932-8791 • (701)255-4127
www.ndsba.org

HB 1467
House Education Committee
February 1, 2021
Testimony of Alexis Baxley

Good afternoon Chairman Owens and members of the House Education Committee. My name is Alexis Baxley, and I serve as the executive director of the North Dakota School Boards Association. NDSBA represents the elected school boards of all 175 public school districts and several special education units in North Dakota.

The North Dakota School Boards Association stands in opposition to HB 1467. We recognize the difficulties distance learning created for many parents and families in 2020. However, we believe there is nothing in state law that would have prohibited multiple families from gathering to supervise the distance learning provided by the local school district and adhering to state standards.

We are concerned with the sections of the bill that would allow the supervising parent to select or create the curriculum and instruction of their choice. Parents and students already have the opportunity to do this through homeschooling if they wish to make that choice.

If a parent's intention is to opt their children into pod education only for the duration of the emergency, and then return to the public setting, we have concerns about how school districts would be tasked with transitioning students who were without their classroom supports and potentially not adhering to the standards students who did not opt into pod education were.

The bill specifically exempts participants in pod education from four sections of NDCC, including NDCC § 15.1-21, the section of code related to curriculum and testing. However, students would only be exempt from these requirements for as long as they are using pod education. As soon as they return to public school, these requirements would apply, and school districts would be on the hook to assess where students are at in relation to mandated curriculum content and state standards. Any students who are behind or whose pod education did not adhere to state standards are likely to lag behind other students, potentially requiring additional instruction. While the bill prohibits districts from being held liable for any damages resulting from a parent's failure to educate a child under this section, they will be held liable for that student's test scores upon their return to the public school setting.

NDSBA is opposed to HB 1467 for these reasons, and requests that the committee to give the bill a do not pass recommendation. I would be happy to answer any questions.