



**Testimony Senate Bill 2013**  
**House Appropriations**  
**Education Standards and Practice Board**

Good morning, Chairman Monson and members of the Committee. I am Rebecca Pitkin, Executive Director of the Education Standards and Practices Board. I am here representing our board in support of continued funding for the North Dakota Teacher Support System and the passthrough grant through NDDPI to ESPB. The national and state teacher shortage is not new. Solving shortages does not rest on recruitment alone, since high rates of turnover quickly undo schools' efforts to bring in new hires. Teacher turnover matters for many reasons and the average teacher replacement cost to separate, recruit, hire, and train is \$9,000 a year in rural districts and even more in urban districts. Retention data collected by the Teacher Support System since 2016 shows their program matters and the NDTSS retention rate is on average 6.3% higher than non-NDTSS enrolled teachers. This fact aligns with a body of current research which indicates if teachers are supported the first years of teaching, they are more effective and likely to stay in the field as the highest turnover is usually with the first three years of teaching. The funding from the 67<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session added funding for a second year and almost doubled the number of new teachers who have been a part of the NDTSS. ESPB and the Teacher Support System recognize the challenges teachers face and want to provide the support past funding has provided. A June 2022 report stated 100% of the top 50 US companies have mentoring programs for "resiliency, purposeful professional development, and talent retention. The Teacher Support System provides this for our teachers who work with our most precious commodity-children who deserve an effective and supported teacher who is engaged in their chosen vocation.

Thank you for your continued support of teacher mentoring, an investment that makes a measurable difference. This concludes my testimony, and I will answer any questions.

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