



North Dakota Small Organized Schools

Mr. Michael Heilman
Executive Director
3144 Hampton Street
Bismarck, ND 58504
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

HB 1398– Testimony in Support
House Education Committee
Representative Heinert – Chairman
February 14, 2023

Representative Heinert and members of the House Education 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 HB 1398 with the addition of the proposed amendment allowing for the integration of this curriculum as approved by the local school board.

There is no question that the availability of computer science and specifically cybersecurity education is important. Our schools can be a critical link in ensuring that students are given exposure, awareness and a career pathway if they choose. What we struggle with, especially our small schools, is finding the staff and the time to add another requirement. We continue to add, but seldom do we remove a requirement. Yes, we make concessions by allowing substitutions, which personally I appreciate and am in favor of, as it allows students to personalize their education to meet their needs. My concern is that additional requirements make personalization more difficult and why I support that addition of the integration plan language to this bill.

As we add requirements and alternative pathways to graduation, we also need to change the measures that assess what is a successful school. While at Century High School we took an in-depth look at the ACT exam and the math and science instruction. The math department discovered that many of our students were missing questions related to a particular math concept. The reason being, students in the typical math track (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II) were not receiving instruction in that concept until after the ACT was taken. Additionally, students taking an alternative math track may never be exposed to the concept.

Board of Directors

Region 1

Mr. Tim Holte, Supt. Stanley
Mr. John Gruenberg, Supt. Powers Lake

Region 2

Mr. Jeff Hagler, Supt. North Star
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
Dr. Kelly Peters, Supt. Richardton-Taylor

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. Lisbon

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.

At the elementary level additional requirements take minutes of instruction away from math and reading and these are curricula that are the most tested and most highly scrutinized. Our schools and the curriculum that is taught needs to evolve with the world we live in and so should the measures we use to judge a school's success.

NDSOS stands in favor of HB 1398 with the proposed amendment allowing for a locally approved integration plan.

Michael Heilman
NDSOS Executive Director
mheilmandsos@gmail.org
701.527.4621