



The Council

Policy and Program Evaluation Division

Exciting things are happening with the Policy and Program Evaluation Division in October!

Last week, Shannon Fleischer, Policy and Program Evaluation Division Director, traveled to Helena, Montana, to participate in the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society's (NLPES) 2025 Professional Development Seminar. This yearly seminar brings legislative program evaluators and performance auditors together from across the country to network, share ideas, and learn together.

The seminar kicked off with welcome addresses from Montana Legislative Auditor, Angus Maciver, and NLPES chair, Drew Dickinson. It featured keynote speaker presentations and focused breakout sessions. Shannon's favorite topics included data visualization, cost-effectiveness analysis, and completing timely, organized evaluations. She brought home useful ideas on conducting effective and efficient program evaluations.

The Legislative Council also received recognition at the seminar for starting its new Policy and Program Evaluation Division.

This week, we began the onboarding process for four new policy analysts! See more about Janet, Jared, Jason, and Joe below in Employee Spotlights.

Upcoming Meetings

October

- 14-15** Rural Health Transformation
- 15** Education
- 16** Legislative Task Force on Government Efficiency
- 22** Legacy and Budget Stabilization Fund Advisory Board
- 23** Emergency Response Services
- 24** Tribal and State Relations
- 28-29** Higher Education Institutions
- 30** Employee Benefits Programs

November

- 6** Energy Development and Transmission
- 12** Higher Education Funding Review
- 13** Agriculture and Water Management
- 18** Health Care
- 19** Human Services

December

- 9** Water Topics Overview
- 11** Child Custody Review Task Force



Jason Fincel

Jason joined the Legislative Council as a Policy Analyst in the new Policy and Program Evaluation Division. Jason recently graduated from North Dakota State University with a master's degree in public policy. Previously, he obtained a bachelor's degree in political science at the same institution. He is originally from Grand Marais, Minnesota, and lived in Calgary, Alberta, during his high school years. He enjoys skiing, reading, and writing.



Jared Baesler

Jared Baesler joined the Legislative Council as a Policy Analyst for the Council's new Policy and Program Evaluation Division. He brings with him 4 years of experience from the North Dakota Department of Emergency Services, where he served as a critical infrastructure analyst.

Jared grew up in southwest North Dakota and graduated from the University of North Dakota with a bachelor's degree in political science. In his free time, Jared enjoys hiking, listening to podcasts, and watching documentaries.



Joe Bahr

Joe Bahr joined the Legislative Council as a Policy Analyst in the new Policy and Program Evaluation Division. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations and German Studies from Brigham Young University and is currently finishing his Master of Arts in International Relations from a cooperative program between the Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, and the University of Potsdam.

Originally from Bismarck, Joe is excited to return home after spending 10 years living out of state. In his free time, he enjoys spending time with family, watching and playing basketball, and traveling.



Janet Drew

Janet Drew joined the Legislative Council as a Policy Analyst for the new Policy and Program Evaluation Division. Janet most recently served as a Legislative Advisor for the Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau within the United States Department of State. She also has over 20 years of experience working for a United States Senator. She is very happy to be working in a legislature again.

Janet grew up in north central Iowa and received her bachelor's and master's degrees in political science from the University of Northern Iowa. In her free time, she likes to garden, fish on the Mississippi River with her father, and scuba dive.

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