

2025 HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES

HB 1562

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1562
1/27/2025

Relating to training for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.
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10:14 a.m. Chairman M. Ruby opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Ruby, Vice-Chairman Frelich, Representatives Anderson, Beltz, Bolinske, Davis, Dobervich, Fegley, Holle, Kiefert, Rios, Rohr

Members Absent: Representative Hendrix

Discussion Topics:

- Proposed amendments to include provisions for districts
- Training completion time

10:14 a.m. Representative Osowski, District 42, introduced the bill and submitted testimony, #31467.

10:17 a.m. Aimee Copas, Executive Director of NDCEL, testified in favor and submitted testimony, #31645.

10:21 a.m. Leslie Bieber, Superintendent of the Alexander Public School, testified in opposition and submitted testimony, #31681.

10:25 a.m. Rebecca Pitkin, Executive Director of the Education Standards and Practices Board, testified in a neutral capacity and submitted testimony, #31543.

10:33 a.m. Chairman M. Ruby closed the hearing.

Jackson Toman, Committee Clerk

Good morning Mr., Chairman and members of the Human Services Committee.

My name is Doug Osowski, District 42, Grand Forks

HB 1562 - Is a comprehensive training and professional development program for teachers, administrators, and ancillary staff within school districts. The program is focused on youth behavioral health and child abuse and neglect, ensuring that school personnel are well-equipped to handle these sensitive and crucial matters.

Here's a summary of the key points:

Training Requirements:

- **Frequency:** Every two years.
- **Duration:** Minimum of eight hours of professional development.
- **Audience:** Elementary, middle, and high school teachers, administrators, and ancillary staff.
- **Content Areas:**
 - Trauma
 - Social and emotional learning, including resiliency
 - Suicide prevention
 - Bullying
 - Understanding the impact of youth behavioral health wellness on family structure, education, juvenile services, law enforcement, and healthcare
 - Knowledge of behavioral health symptoms and risks
 - Awareness of referral sources and evidence-based intervention strategies
 - Evidence-based strategies to reduce risk factors
 - Current or new evidence-based behavior prevention or mitigation techniques

Behavioral Health Resource Coordinator:

- Each school must designate an individual as a behavioral health resource coordinator.
- The superintendent of public instruction will collaborate with regional education associations to provide training materials, information, and training opportunities.
- Contact information for the behavioral health resource coordinator must be maintained.

Mandated Reporter Training:

- Before initial licensure and each renewal, public and nonpublic school teachers, administrators, and counselors must complete the online interactive training module for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.
- Training is provided by the Department of Health and Human Services and qualifies for continuing education credits for license renewal.

This structured approach aims to equip educators with the necessary knowledge and tools to support student well-being effectively and fulfill their responsibilities as mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect.

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Human Services Committee, I ask for your support of HB 1562.

Thank you.



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HB 1562
House Education Committee
January 27, 2025

Good morning, Chairman Ruby and members of the Human Service Committee. My name is Rebecca Pitkin, and I am the executive director of the Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB). I am here today to provide neutral testimony on HB 1562 which would require, before initial licensure and for each renewal, completion of an interactive training module provided by the department of health and human services for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect and to provide documentation. My testimony will address the way ESPB could manage the potential requirements. The amended language of the bill requires initial license candidates and those applying for a renewal to complete the training previously completed at the school district level. ESPB could handle this in the same way as the youth mental health competency requirements.

Senate Bill 2048 (64th Legislative Assembly) mandates a mental health competency course for all initial licenses. Those graduating from a North Dakota institutions have this built into their preparation program and some teacher education programs currently require mandated reporter training as part of the student teaching seminar. The board may issue a provisional license for up to two years to a teacher licensure candidate that does not meet the requirements of this mental health competency. If the bill becomes law, ESPB would request additional programming in our ND Teach platform as is customary when changes are needed. The application would then contain language informing the applicant of the training requirements as well as including a place for them to upload their completion certificate. All website licensure information would be amended to reflect the changes so applicants were aware of this as they begin the process.

ESPB asks that several considerations be addressed:

1. Non-public administrators do not need a teaching license, so ESPB could not monitor this.
2. The requirements for Youth Mental Health competencies have the following language: *The board may issue a provisional license for up to two years to a teacher licensure candidate that does not meet the requirements of this section.*

The rationale for this language is to enable an out of state teacher who has not completed the training to begin teaching immediately, which is best for students. *Does the committee believe applicants should have two years to complete the training?*

3. HB 1238 proposes a life license at 20 years; ESPB would potentially not require this training after the 20-year license is issued.
4. ESPB issues a 40-day license to allow teachers to begin teaching when they are missing some element of their complete application. Both applicants and administrators request this license and

acknowledge the missing element in writing. *Does the committee believe the training should be completed before ESPB issues a 40-day license?*

ESPB anticipates a smooth transition, once programming is complete, and seeks clarification on the above items to ensure adherence to the law.

Thank you for your considerations and this concludes my testimony.

Rebecca Pitkin, PhD

rpitkin@nd.gov

701.328.9646



1 HB 1482 Municipal Bond Election – Opposition

2 Chair Hetland and Members of the Committee,

3 I am here today to testify in opposition to HB 1482. While I understand the intent behind this
4 legislation, I have several concerns regarding its implications for school districts and local
5 governance.

6 One of the most significant issues with HB 1482 is the prolonged period between potential
7 election dates. Under the proposed changes, after the November 2024 election, there would not
8 be another opportunity for an election until June 2026. This 19-month gap is highly problematic
9 for school districts and other local entities that may need to seek voter approval for critical
10 initiatives. The inability to call an election for such an extended period could severely hinder the
11 ability of school districts to respond to urgent financial or operational needs, potentially
12 impacting the quality of education and essential services. Furthermore, this delay to critical
13 projects for over a year may result in increased costs, deferred infrastructure improvements, and
14 challenges in addressing emergent needs in communities.

15 Furthermore, the proposed requirement that bond elections that all political subs achieve a 60%
16 supermajority presents another hurdle. This higher threshold may prevent necessary projects
17 from moving forward, even when supported by a significant majority of voters. In contrast,
18 allowing a simple majority in primary and general elections would align with democratic
19 principles and ensure that critical projects can proceed with the community's support. A
20 practical compromise to consider would be allowing voter decisions to take place during primary
21 or general elections, with a simple majority rule of 50% +1 voter determining the outcome. This
22 approach balances fiscal responsibility with the flexibility necessary for local entities to address
23 time-sensitive issues.

24 I urge the committee to carefully consider the practical implications of HB 1482 and explore
25 potential amendments that would provide districts with the flexibility they need to meet the
26 demands of their constituents while maintaining voter oversight and fiscal responsibility.

27 Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions the committee
28 may have.

Testimony in Opposition to HB 1562 as Written

Chairman Ruby and Committee Members,

My name is Leslie Bieber, and I serve as the superintendent of the Alexander School District in Alexander, ND. I want to thank the committee for the opportunity to provide testimony on the importance of mandated reporter training. While I support the intent of this bill, I urge the inclusion of provisions that allow flexibility in the mandated training options for educators and staff.

This year, I personally completed the mandated reporter training before introducing it to my staff. I found it to be thorough and valuable, but also extremely challenging due to its emotionally heavy content, particularly the sections on neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse. I took the step of warning my staff about the difficult material and the time frame to take it.

One of my licensed staff members, a survivor of abuse, shared with me that even hearing my warnings triggered their trauma, making the training unmanageable for them. This individual is dedicated to our students but found the mandated training to be an emotional barrier rather than an educational tool.

I respectfully request that this bill be amended to include provisions allowing districts to select alternative, sensitive, yet equally effective training options. This flexibility would empower schools to address the diverse needs of their staff and still ensure that all educators are prepared to fulfill their roles as mandated reporters.

Thank you for considering this important perspective. I will stand for any questions.

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1562
2/12/2025

Relating to training for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.
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9:39 a.m. Chairman M. Ruby opened the meeting.

Members Present: Chairman Ruby, Vice-Chairman Frelich, Representatives K. Anderson, Beltz, Bolinske, Dobervich, Fegley, Holle, Kiefert, Rios, Rohr

Members Absent: Representatives Davis, Hendrix

Discussion Topics:

- Proposed amendments relating to child abuse and neglect training

9:40 a.m. Representative Holle moved to amend the bill relating to child abuse and neglect training. LC#25.1193.01001

9:40 a.m. Representative Rohr seconded the motion.

9:42 a.m. Voice vote passed.

9:42 a.m. Representative Rohr moved a Do Pass as Amended.

9:42 a.m. Vice-Chairman Frelich seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Matthew Ruby	Y
Representative Kathy Frelich	Y
Representative Karen Anderson	Y
Representative Mike Beltz	Y
Representative Macy Bolinske	Y
Representative Jayme Davis	AB
Representative Gretchen Dobervich	Y
Representative Cleyton Fegley	Y
Representative Jared Hendrix	AB
Representative Dawson Holle	Y
Representative Dwight Kiefert	Y
Representative Nico Rios	Y
Representative Karen Rohr	Y

9:43 a.m. Motion passed 11-0-2.

Representative Holle will carry the bill.

9:43 a.m. Chairman M. Ruby closed the meeting.
Jackson Toman, Committee Clerk

February 12, 2025

Sixty-ninth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO

HOUSE BILL NO. 1562

Introduced by

Representatives Osowski, Hauck, Heilman, Maki, Morton

2-12-25
JMS 1013

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 15.1-07-34 of the North Dakota Century Code,
2 relating to training for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect; and to repeal
3 section 15.1-19-29 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to training for mandated
4 reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.

5 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

6 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 15.1-07-34 of the North Dakota Century Code is
7 amended and reenacted as follows:

8 **15.1-07-34. Youth behavioral health and child abuse and neglect training ~~for~~**
9 **teachers, administrators, and ancillary staff.**

- 10 1. Every two years, ~~each~~ school district may provide a minimum of eight hours of
11 professional development on youth behavioral health, child abuse, and child neglect to
12 elementary, middle, and high school teachers; and administrators. ~~Each~~ school
13 district may encourage ancillary and support staff to participate in the professional
14 development. Based on the annual needs assessment of the school district, these
15 hours may be designated from the following categories:
- 16 a. Trauma;
 - 17 b. Social and emotional learning, including resiliency;
 - 18 c. Suicide prevention;
 - 19 d. Bullying;

JB 2013

- 1 e. Understanding of the prevalence and impact of youth behavioral health wellness
- 2 on family structure, education, juvenile services, law enforcement, and health
- 3 care and treatment providers;
- 4 f. Knowledge of behavioral health symptoms, and risks;
- 5 g. Awareness of referral sources and evidence-based strategies for appropriate
- 6 interventions;
- 7 h. Other evidence-based strategies to reduce risk factors for students; or
- 8 i. Current or new evidence-based behavior prevention or mitigation techniques.
- 9 2. Each school within a district shall designate an individual as a behavioral health
- 10 resource coordinator.
- 11 3. The superintendent of public instruction shall collaborate with regional education
- 12 associations to disseminate information, training and instructional materials, and
- 13 notice of training opportunities to school districts and nonpublic schools. ~~This~~The
- 14 training must qualify for continuing education credits that count toward license
- 15 renewal.
- 16 4. The superintendent of public instruction shall maintain the contact information of the
- 17 behavioral health resource coordinator in each school.
- 18 5. ~~Before initial licensure and each subsequent renewal of licensure, a public or~~
- 19 ~~nonpublic school teacher, administrator, librarian, and counselor shall complete the~~
- 20 ~~online interactive training module provided by the department of health and human~~
- 21 ~~services for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect and provide~~
- 22 ~~documentation of the completed training to the education standards and practices~~
- 23 ~~board. The training must qualify for continuing education credits that count toward~~
- 24 ~~license renewal~~submit documentation to the education standards and practices board
- 25 verifying completion of a mandated reporter training program for suspected child
- 26 abuse or neglect. The department of health and human services shall develop and
- 27 provide an online interactive training module that may be used by a college of teacher
- 28 education, an individual educator, and an educational institution to fulfill the training
- 29 requirement. A college, school, and regional education association may offer a
- 30 mandated reporter training program that satisfy the requirements outlined in this
- 31 section for subsequent trainings at the district level.

Jim 3 of 3

1 **SECTION 2. REPEAL.** Section 15.1-19-29 of the North Dakota Century Code is repealed.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
HB 1562**

Human Services Committee (Rep. M. Ruby, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS** ([25.1193.01001](#)) and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (11 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1562 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

2025 SENATE HUMAN SERVICES

HB 1562

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

HB 1562
3/5/2025

Relating to training for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect; relating to training for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.

11:11 a.m. Chairman Lee opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Lee, Vice-Chairman Weston, Senator Van Oosting, Senator Clemens, Senator Hogan, Senator Roers.

Discussion Topics:

- School district requirements
- Teacher Licensing Requirements
- System of Care grant
- Childhood trauma content

11:11 a.m. Representative Doug Osowski introduced the bill.

11:16 a.m. Rebecca Pitkin, Executive Director of Education Standards and Practices Board, testified in favor and submitted testimony #38461.

11:30 a.m. Amy De Kok, Executive Director of North Dakota School Boards Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony #38797.

11:39 a.m. Carly Retterath, Assistant Superintendent for Mandan Public Schools, testified in favor and submitted testimony #38726.

11:47 a.m. Kimberly Jacobson, Director of Agassize Valley Human Service Zone, testified in favor and submitted testimony #38794.

11:54 a.m. Leslie Bieber, Superintendent of Alexander Public School, testified in favor and submitted testimony #38811.

12:01 p.m. Christy L. Dodd, Executive Director of Family Flourish ND, testified in opposition and submitted testimony #38688.

12:12 p.m. Greg Kasowski, Executive Director of Children's Advocacy Centers of North Dakota, submitted testimony in opposition #38801.

12:15 p.m. Christopher Dodson, ND Catholic Conference, testified in neutral.

12:16 p.m. Chairman Lee closed the hearing.

Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk

HB 1562
Senate Human Services Committee
March 5, 2025
Education Standards and Practices Board

Good morning, Chairman and members of the Committee. My name is Rebecca Pitkin, and I am the executive director of the Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB). I am here today to provide testimony in support of HB 1562 which requires, before initial licensure, completion of an interactive training module provided by the department of health and human services for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect, or other developed mandated reporter training, and to provide documentation. My testimony will address the way ESPB would manage the requirements.

The language of the bill requires initial license candidates to complete the training previously completed at the school district level. ESPB would handle this in the same way as the youth mental health competency requirements.

Senate Bill 2048 (64th Legislative Assembly) mandates a mental health competency course for all initial licenses. Those graduating from North Dakota institutions have this built into their preparation program and some teacher education programs currently require mandated reporter training as part of the student teaching seminar. The board may issue a provisional license for up to two years to a teacher licensure candidate that does not meet the requirements of the mental health competency.

If the bill becomes law, ESPB would request additional programming in our online ND Teach platform as is customary when changes are needed. The application would then contain language informing the applicant of the training requirements as well as including a place for them to upload their completion certificate. All website licensure information would be amended to reflect the changes so applicants are aware of this as they begin the process of obtaining an initial license.

ESPB anticipates a smooth transition, once programming is complete and will work with colleges and universities to ensure completion before initial licensing. This is important training that all licensed individuals need and ESPB will gladly support this requirements of this bill.

Thank you and this concludes my testimony.

Rebecca Pitkin, PhD
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701.328.9646



Empowering families to thrive by providing community-driven resources that foster safe and nurturing environments for children.

Senate Bill 1562

Senate Human Services Committee

Testimony Presented by Christy Dodd, MPH

Email: cdodd@familiesflourishnd.org

March 5, 2025

Chairman Lee and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee:

My name is Christy Dodd, and I am the Executive Director of Families Flourish ND (formerly known as Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota). I want to thank the committee for the opportunity to provide testimony on the importance of mandated reporter training. I am here today to provide testimony in opposition of HB 1562 which requires MR training before initial licensure only. This means that a teacher would only have to take mandated reporter training once in their career. I stand here in front of you today because our children in North Dakota deserve more than that.

Currently teachers are required to take the online mandated reporter training each year (per HB 1144 in the 2023 session) and HB 1562 would take it from a yearly update/renewal to once prior to initial licensure. Families Flourish ND oversees the free online MR training in partnership with DHHS. During the first year this training was required we had 10,883 individuals take the training. This was a 482% increase in the number of individuals taking the training. The 2 busiest months for the training are August and September each year just prior to the start of the school year. In August we had 9,045 individuals take



Empowering families to thrive by providing community-driven resources that foster safe and nurturing environments for children. the training and in September we had an additional 3,756 individuals trained. I have heard many concerns over the amount of time that it takes to complete the training but we have been pulling and tracking the data with the medium time it takes for those that take the Educator Course to complete the training is 1 hour and 10 minutes or 70 minutes of time. This is taking out the outliers who stayed logged into the system for over 10+ hours including someone who left the system open for over 200 days. During this same time period between when mandate reporter training was required and prior to December 2023 DHHS saw a 20% increase in the number of reports of suspected child abuse and neglect.

Teachers and school personnel spend the largest chunk of time with children during waking hours each year outside of parents/guardians. Often times schools are the place where children feel the safest. Teachers are our first line of defense in protecting our most vulnerable population. HB 1562 with the amendment takes the training for MR from yearly to prior to obtaining their license. This is a disservice to not only the children here in ND but also to the teachers. I can't tell you the number of times that I have heard from a teacher who when they find out that I work in child abuse prevention have mentioned a concern about making a report or knowing how or what to report. We can't expect someone who has taught for 5 years without any updates or refreshers on reporting to remember and feel comfortable when they don't feel comfortable now and I know they have had updates for the last 2 years. Laws here in ND change as does the process for reporting and the current online MR training is updated to reflect that. Our children deserve to be protected and grow up with happy childhoods.

Senator Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to share my concerns about this bill. For the



Empowering families to thrive by providing community-driven resources that foster safe and nurturing environments for children. reasons mentioned, I respectfully request a do not pass of HB 1562 as amended and will now stand for any questions.

Christy Dodd

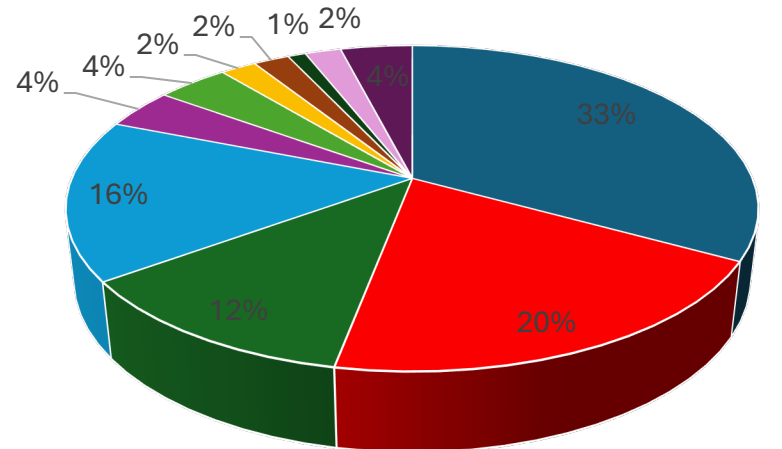
Executive Director

Families Flourish ND

Reports of Suspected Child Abuse & Neglect

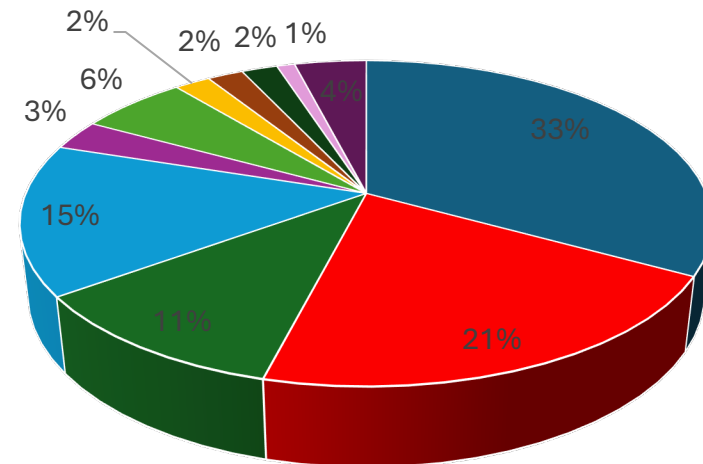
Report Source

FFY 2023



■ Law Enforcement ■ Educators ■ Medical
■ Social Services ■ Other ■ Parent
■ Friend / Neighbor ■ Anonymous ■ Mental Health
■ Child Care ■ Other Relative

FFY 2024



■ Law Enforcement ■ Educators ■ Medical
■ Social Services ■ Other ■ Parent
■ Friend / Neighbor ■ Anonymous ■ Mental Health
■ Child Care ■ Other Relative



Empowering families to thrive by providing community-driven resources
that foster safe and nurturing environments for children.

Mandated Reporter Training: Educator Course Overview

Month	Number of Users that Completed Educator Training		
	July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023	July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	July 1, 2024 – Dec 31, 2024
July	29	35	89
Aug	467	4,963	9,045
Sept	506	4,741	3,756
Oct	382	543	613
Nov	100	60	232
Dec	108	59	118
Jan	56	106	-
Feb	44	141	-
Mar	29	110	-
Apr	42	56	-
May	28	33	-
Jun	11	36	-
Total	1,802	10,883	13,853

2022-2023 School Year

- There were 10,853 Teachers, Administrators, and Other Specialists within the School Year.
- We had 1,802 Unique Users complete the Educator Course within the Mandated Reporter Training.
- If we assume that the 1,802 Unique Users that completed the training in School Year 2022-2023 were within the Education System, **17% of the Teachers, Specialists, and Administrators completed the MRT.**

2023-2024 School Year

- There were 10,946 Teachers, Administrators, and Other Specialists within the School Year.
- We had 10,883 Unique Users complete the Educator Course within the Mandated Reporter Training.
- If we assume that the 10,883 Unique Users that completed the training in School Year 2023-2024 were within the Education System, **99% of the Teachers, Specialists, and Administrators completed the MRT.**

If the Unique Users completing the Educator Course were within the Education System,
then from School Year 2022-2023 to 2023-2024 there was a

482% INCREASE

in Teachers, Specialists, and Administrators completing the training.

As of January 1, 2024, we started collecting the duration or the time it takes to complete the training. For the 2024-2025 School Year (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025), in the data we have collected so far (July 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024), we found that the **MEDIAN TIME** it takes for those that take the Educator Course to complete the training is **1 HOUR AND 10 MINUTES.**

1 HB 1562 – Senate Human Service Committee

2 Mandan Public Schools – Carly Retterath Testimony

3 Good morning, Chairwoman Lee and members of the Human Services committee. For the record,
4 my name is Dr. Carly Retterath. I am the Assistant Superintendent for Mandan Public Schools,
5 representing the North Dakota Council for Educational Leaders. I respectfully urge you to give
6 HB 1562 a Do Pass recommendation.

7 Schools are entrusted with the responsibility of caring for and educating students, and ensuring
8 their safety must be a top priority. It is essential to provide training for teachers, administrators,
9 and other school personnel in behavioral health and child abuse and neglect. Furthermore, it is
10 important that preservice teachers receive this training prior to obtaining licensure to adequately
11 prepare them to address these issues from the onset of their careers.

12 With the current amendments, this version of the bill allows districts the flexibility to deliver this
13 needed training in a way that makes sense for their district and staff. The online video-based
14 training provides districts with many opportunities to ensure staff have access to the training in
15 time and cost-effective ways. Furthermore, the flexibility in training delivery methods means that
16 districts can tailor the sessions to fit their unique schedules and needs, maximizing both
17 engagement and effectiveness.

18 We are in full support of the bill in its current form because it addresses these important training
19 needs in a comprehensive and practical manner. I would be happy to stand for any questions.

20 I urge you to give HB 1562 a DO PASS recommendation. I would be happy to stand for any
21 questions.



Testimony prepared for the Senate Human Services Committee
HB 1562 – Training for mandatory reporters
Kim Jacobson, Agassiz Valley Human Service Zone Director
March 5, 2025

Chair Lee, and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, my name is Kim Jacobson. I serve as the Director of Agassiz Valley Human Service Zone, which includes the counties of Traill and Steele, and as President of the North Dakota Human Service Zone Director Association (NDHSZDA). I am here today to provide testimony in support of HB 1562.

Human service zones serve as the legal designee for completing suspected child abuse and neglect assessments (commonly known as CPS). In this role, once the assessment process is complete, zones partner with the Children and Family Services Division of North Dakota Health and Human Services to determine if our factual findings meet the legal definition of child abuse and/or neglect.

Community partners are a critical piece of our child welfare safety net. The value and contributions of both unmandated and mandated reporters are significant. They play a key role in bringing forth concerns. Without our partners, our system would not be as effective in ensuring child safety.

The North Dakota Human Service Zone Director Association recognizes the importance of school professionals receiving diverse training including mental health topics. It is important for our community educators to be well-equipped to meet the diverse needs of today's students. HB 1562 provides training flexibility for veteran education professionals. At the same time, it prioritizes mandatory reporting training for new education professionals. If more frequent or refresher training is needed, mandatory reporting training is available online and at no cost.

House Bill 1562 supports local decision-making in determining how to fulfill school district training obligations, which allows schools to focus on their roles as educators and specific community needs, including mandatory reporter training. I respectfully request a "do pass" on House Bill 1562. Thank you for your consideration of my testimony. I stand for questions from the committee.



NDSBA
**NORTH DAKOTA SCHOOL
BOARDS ASSOCIATION**

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HB 1562
Testimony of Amy De Kok
Senate Human Services Committee
March 5, 2025

Chair Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, my name is Amy De Kok, and I am the Executive Director for the North Dakota School Boards Association (NDSBA). NDSBA represents all 168 public school districts and their governing boards. I am here in support of HB 1562, and to advocate for the proposed amendments to the training requirements for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.

During the last legislative session, the Legislature enacted a requirement that all public and nonpublic school teachers, administrators, and counselors complete an online interactive training module provided by the ND Department of Health and Human Services and submit documentation of its completion annually. While well-intentioned, the implementation of this requirement has presented several challenges that HB 1562 seeks to address.

The current mandated training module, which lasts over three hours, has proven to be burdensome for educators who already balance numerous professional development requirements and instructional responsibilities. Additionally, for some educators who have personally experienced childhood trauma, this training can be particularly difficult to complete in a structured online setting without flexibility in delivery methods.

HB 1562 offers a practical solution by allowing schools, colleges, and regional education associations the ability to provide mandated reporter training that satisfies the requirements for subsequent training at the district level. This change does not diminish the importance of ensuring educators are adequately trained to recognize and report suspected child abuse or neglect. Rather, it enhances accessibility and accommodates the diverse needs of educators while maintaining the integrity of the training content.

By providing school districts with more flexibility in how the training is delivered, we can ensure that mandated reporters receive high-quality, evidence-based training in a manner that is more efficient and less distressing for those with past trauma experiences. Furthermore, allowing schools and regional

education associations to facilitate training will better integrate mandated reporter education into existing professional development frameworks, making compliance more feasible for all involved.

I urge the Committee to support HB 1562 and help refine this important training requirement in a way that benefits both educators and the students they serve. Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.



Senate Human Services Committee
Testimony In Opposition to House Bill #1562
3-5-25

Madame Chair, members of the Senate Human Services committee, my name is Greg Kasowski, Executive Director of the Children's Advocacy Centers of North Dakota.

We are in opposition to engrossed House Bill 1562.

We are, however, supportive of the original bill which required mandated reporter training at initial licensure and then at each subsequent licensure renewal. This seems like a fair compromise between annual training verses once a career.

Educators are invaluable partners in keeping kids safe in North Dakota. They occupy a unique and incredibly critical position as individuals with eyes on children on a daily basis for extended periods of time. A semi-regular training, completed at each licensure, on the topic of child abuse, is a small ask for such an important topic.

Finally, it should be noted that House Bill 1238 aims to change lifetime teaching licensure from 30 years to 20 years. This would mean there would be two fewer times that educators would be required to participate in the mandated reporter training.

Madame Chair, members of the committee, we would recommend either returning to the original version of the bill, or recommending a DO NOT PASS on House Bill 1562.

Sincerely,

Greg Kasowski
Executive Director



Testimony in Opposition to HB 1562 as Written

Madam Chair Lee and Committee Members,

My name is Leslie Bieber, and I serve as the superintendent of the Alexander School District in Alexander, ND. I want to thank the committee for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning mandated reporter training. I strongly support the amendments of this bill, with the inclusion of provisions that allow flexibility in the mandated training options for educators and staff.

This August, I personally completed the new mandated reporter training before introducing it to my staff. I found it to be thorough and valuable, but also extremely challenging due to its emotionally heavy content, particularly the sections on neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse. I took the step of warning my staff about the difficult material and the time frame to take it.

One of my licensed staff members, a survivor of abuse, shared with me that even hearing my warnings triggered their trauma, making the training unmanageable for them. This individual is dedicated to our students but found the mandated training to be an emotional barrier rather than an educational tool.

I respectfully request that the committee keeps the amendments to the bill which allow districts to select alternative yet equally effective training options. This flexibility would empower schools to address the diverse needs of their staff and still ensure that all educators are prepared to fulfill their roles as mandated reporters.

Thank you for considering this important perspective. I will stand for any questions.

Respectfully,

Leslie Bieber

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

HB 1562
3/25/2025
11:02 A.M.

Relating to training for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.
--

11:02 a.m. Chairman Lee opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Lee, Vice-Chairman Weston, Senator Van Oosting, Senator Clemens, Senator Hogan, Senator Roers.

Discussion Topics:

- Training Procedure Review
- Child Protective Services training

10:39 a.m. Kim Jacobson, Director of Agassiz Valley Human Service Zone, answered committee questions.

11:11 a.m. Jonathan Alm, Chief Legal Officer with Department of Health and Human Services, answered committee questions.

11:17 a.m. Chairman Lee led committee discussion on potential amendments regarding credentialing of reporters and mandatory reporting component.

11:26 a.m. Chairman Lee closed the hearing.

Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

HB 1562
3/25/2025

Relating to training for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.
--

3:52 p.m. Chairman Lee opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Lee, Vice-Chairman Weston, Senator Van Oosting, Senator Clemens, Senator Hogan, Senator Roers.

Discussion Topics:

- Recurring Training Sessions

3:53 p.m. Senator Roers moved amendment on page 2, adding line J. Child protective services and renewal and on page 2 line 5 striking non-relevant language "administrator through counselor".

3:54 p.m. Senator Van Oosting seconded the motion.

3:55 p.m. Kim Jacobson, Director of Agassiz Valley Human Service Zone, answered committee questions.

3:58 p.m. Johnathan Alm, Chief Legal Department of Health and Human Services, answered committee questions.

3:59 p.m. Senator Roers withdrew the motion.

3:59 p.m. Senator Van Oosting withdrew the second.

4:00 p.m. Chairman Lee closed the hearing.

Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

HB 1562
3/26/2025

Relating to training for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.
--

3:00 p.m. Chairman Lee opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Lee, Vice-Chairman Weston, Senator Van Oosting, Senator Clemens, Senator Hogan, Senator Roers.

Discussion Topics:

- Annual Renewals
- ND Education Standards and Practices Board

3:00 p.m. Senator Roers updated the committee on information regarding amendment on requirements of renewal and what needs to be addressed.

3:03 p.m. Senator Roers moved Amendment LC#25.1193.02001.

3:03 p.m. Senator Weston seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Judy Lee	Y
Senator Kent Weston	Y
Senator David A. Clemens	Y
Senator Kathy Hogan	Y
Senator Kristin Roers	Y
Senator Desiree Van Oosting	Y

Motion passed 6-0-0.

3:04 p.m. Senator Roers moved Do Pass as Amended.

3:04 p.m. Senator Weston seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Judy Lee	Y
Senator Kent Weston	Y
Senator David A. Clemens	Y
Senator Kathy Hogan	Y
Senator Kristin Roers	Y
Senator Desiree Van Oosting	Y

Motion passed 6-0-0.

Senate Human Services Committee
HB 1562
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Page 2

Senator Roers will carry the bill.

3:05 p.m. Chairman Lee closed the hearing.

Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk

March 26, 2025

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3/26/25
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Sixty-ninth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO
FIRST ENGROSSMENT**

ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL NO. 1562

Introduced by

Representatives Osowski, Hauck, Heilman, Maki, Morton

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 15.1-07-34 of the North Dakota Century Code,
2 relating to training for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect; and to repeal
3 section 15.1-19-29 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to training for mandated
4 reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.

5 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

6 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 15.1-07-34 of the North Dakota Century Code is
7 amended and reenacted as follows:

8 **15.1-07-34. Youth behavioral health and child abuse and neglect training ~~to~~for**
9 **teachers, administrators, and ancillary staff.**

- 10 1. Every two years, ~~each~~a school district may provide a minimum of eight hours of
11 professional development on youth behavioral health, child abuse, and child neglect to
12 elementary, middle, and high school teachers; and administrators. ~~Each~~A school
13 district may encourage ancillary and support staff to participate in the professional
14 development. Based on the annual needs assessment of the school district, these
15 hours may be designated from the following categories:
- 16 a. Trauma;
 - 17 b. Social and emotional learning, including resiliency;
 - 18 c. Suicide prevention;
 - 19 d. Bullying;

- 1 e. Understanding of the prevalence and impact of youth behavioral health wellness
- 2 on family structure, education, juvenile services, law enforcement, and health
- 3 care and treatment providers;
- 4 f. Knowledge of behavioral health symptoms, and risks;
- 5 g. Awareness of referral sources and evidence-based strategies for appropriate
- 6 interventions;
- 7 h. Child protective services;
- 8 i. Other evidence-based strategies to reduce risk factors for students; or
- 9 i.i. Current or new evidence-based behavior prevention or mitigation techniques.
- 10 2. Each school within a district shall designate an individual as a behavioral health
- 11 resource coordinator.
- 12 3. The superintendent of public instruction shall collaborate with regional education
- 13 associations to disseminate information, training and instructional materials, and
- 14 notice of training opportunities to school districts and nonpublic schools. ~~This~~The
- 15 training must qualify for continuing education credits that count toward license
- 16 renewal.
- 17 4. The superintendent of public instruction shall maintain the contact information of the
- 18 behavioral health resource coordinator in each school.
- 19 5. Before initial licensure, a public or nonpublic school teacher, administrator, librarian,
- 20 and counselor shall submit documentation to the education standards and practices
- 21 board verifying completion of a mandated reporter training program for suspected child
- 22 abuse or neglect. The department of health and human services shall develop and
- 23 provide an online interactive training module that may be used by a college of teacher
- 24 education, an individual educator, and an educational institution to fulfill the training
- 25 requirement. A college, school, and regional education association may offer a
- 26 mandated reporter training program that satisfy the requirements outlined in this
- 27 section for subsequent trainings at the district level.
- 28 **SECTION 2. REPEAL.** Section 15.1-19-29 of the North Dakota Century Code is repealed.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
ENGROSSED HB 1562**

Human Services Committee (Sen. Lee, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS** ([25.1193.02001](#)) and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1562 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.