

2025 SENATE HUMAN SERVICES

SB 2176

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

SB 2176
1/28/2025

Relating to the children's cabinet; to provide for a legislative management report; and to provide an appropriation.

9:01 a.m. Chairman Lee called the meeting to order.

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

Discussion Topics:

- Governors' role
- Gaps in services
- Early childhood supports
- Memberships adjustments
- Local initiatives
- Membership engagement

9:02 a.m. Senator Axtman Introduced the bill and submitted testimony #31866.

9:05 a.m. Michelle Strinden, Lieutenant Governor, testified in favor and submitted testimony #32118.

9:08 a.m. Meghan McCann, Executive Vice President for The Forum for Youth Investment, testified in favor and submitted testimony #31896.

9:13 a.m. Dana Kunzman, The Forum for Youth Investment, testified in favor and submitted testimony #31897.

9:16 a.m. Michelle Strinden, Lieutenant Governor, testified in favor.

9:19 a.m. Senator Hogan testified in favor and submitted testimony #32069 and #32070.

9:26 a.m. Kim Jacobson, Director for Agassiz Valley Human Service Zone, testified in favor and submitted testimony #31733.

9:40 a.m. Maria Neset, Chief of Staff to the Lieutenant Governor, testified in favor #31820.

9:43 a.m. Chairman Lee closed the hearing.

Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk

Testimony Prepared for the
Senate Human Services Committee

January 28, 2025

By: Kim Jacobson, Agassiz Valley Human Service Zone Director

RE: SB 2176: Relating to the North Dakota Children's Cabinet

Chair Lee, and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, my name is Kim Jacobson. I am the Director for the Agassiz Valley Human Service Zone, which includes the counties of Traill and Steele. In addition, I serve as Vice-Chair of the North Dakota Children's Cabinet. I am here today to provide testimony in support of SB 2176.

The North Dakota Children's Cabinet was first established during the 66th Legislative Assembly (SB 2313). The Children's Cabinet consists of fourteen members. As an inaugural member of the cabinet, I have served since inception with the first meeting being held in November 2019.

The Children's Cabinet role is to assess, guide, and coordinate care across branches of state government and tribal nations. This is a significant responsibility and one that the cabinet has taken with great duty. The cabinet meets each month, and we learn about children's system needs and trends. We have heard about service gaps, challenges, and innovations. In addition, the Children's Cabinet has been diligently working on how to best employ the responsibility provided and to make a difference.

Over the last several years, the Children's Cabinet has been focused on studying other Children's Cabinet models in the United States to help guide our effectiveness and ability to impact. In result, a charter and strategic plan was developed and finalized in 2024. This is the road map to help guide the vision, mission, and goals of the Children's Cabinet. SB 2176 is a critical piece to support the work of the cabinet.

SB 2176 offers stability by relocating the staffing and administrative services from the department of health and human services to the office of the governor. We learned through our work over the past several years that the most impactful Children's Cabinets in the United States are located within their respectful governor's office. This supports a multidisciplinary approach and insight with governor's office priority setting. I believe that this would be an impactful change for North Dakota.

Despite the North Dakota Children's Cabinet meeting each month, there is much work to be done. The addition of designated working groups is critical to supporting the efforts of the cabinet. Workgroups would allow for focused study of assigned topics, could engage a larger span of those with subject-matter expertise and lived life experience to bring workgroup findings and recommendations before the Children's Cabinet. This concept allows for more effective work, reduction of systems conflict, while increasing the probability of positive outcomes.

There has already been at least one example of how a topic could be brought forward to the Children's Cabinet through a workgroup concept this legislative session. The testimony of Lynn Flieth, RSR Service Zone Director on HB 1095 called for collaborative work related to child protective services. She states that "because Child Protection Service activities transcend any single entity, and rely upon a community response, the original intent of this bill (HB 1095) may be more comprehensively and appropriately addressed in a coordinated effort through a statewide approach, perhaps through the Children's Cabinet. It would be beneficial to be inclusive of other service providers, law enforcement and the legal community along with the Child Protection system and schools to enhance understanding, strengthen systems, and to optimally support children and their families." This is just one example of ways that the changes proposed in SB 2176 could bring systems together to help build stronger support, wise investments, and improve care to North Dakota children.

I respectfully ask the committee for consideration of amendment. I ask for consideration for the appointment of a human service zone director (legal custodian of foster children in the public child welfare system) to be a standing member appointee on the cabinet. This would ensure a voice for one of our most vulnerable groups of children on the cabinet. Furthermore, I recommend to the committee consideration that one of the appointees listed on Page 2, line 5 be dedicated to a parent. While many of the professionals appointed to the cabinet are parents, it is a dual role. It would be beneficial for the cabinet to have a member whose primary appointment role is to represent the perspective of a parent.

Thank you for consideration of my testimony. I stand for questions from the committee.

Senate Bill 2176
Lt. Governor Michelle Strinden
Senate Human Services Committee
Sen. Judy Lee, chair
January 28, 2025, 9:00 AM
Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

Good morning, Senator Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee. For the record, my name is Michelle Strinden, Lieutenant Governor for the State of North Dakota. I am here to provide our support for SB 2176, which proposes to move the administration of the Children's Cabinet into the Office of the Governor.

- I served as chair of the cabinet for nearly two years.
- During that time, I recognized the need for intentional focus and support to drive the cabinet to support children's systems.
- Moving the cabinet's administration within the Governor's Office will place additional focus on the cabinet and accelerate progress for children and families.
- We've partnered with an external consulting service that supported the development of a strategic plan and actionable goals.
- Working with the consultants, we'll continue to develop measures of success and working groups to dive deeper into issues across juvenile justice, child welfare, mental health continuum, education, early childhood and much more.
- Both the previous and current administrations have been engaged in supporting this effort. Both budget proposals included a line item that supports the cabinet with consultants and costs related to meetings, administration, document preparation, and other expenses.

- The Armstrong budget recommends \$100,000 dollars, including \$65,000 to support the cabinet's administration with facilitation consultants and \$35,000 in ongoing appropriations for supportive services to continue the cabinet's efforts.

I would like to introduce Meghan McCann and Dana Kunzman with The Forum of Youth Initiative to walk through the national landscape of state Children's Cabinets and walk through the North Dakota strategic plan.

Senate Bill 2176
Sen. Michelle Axtman
Senate Human Services Committee
Sen. Judy Lee, chair
January 28, 2025, 9:00 AM
Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

Good morning, Chair Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee. For the record, my name is Michelle Axtman, Senator from District 7. As a member of the Children's Cabinet for two years and a recent appointment as Chair, I am here to provide supportive testimony for Senate Bill 2176.

For some history, the Children's Cabinet was established in 2019 by Senate Bill 2313. The intent of the cabinet is to support cross-agency collaboration and service delivery to improve outcomes for children and families. You will hear later from Forum for Youth Initiative on cabinets across various states and different structures and governance within government. The intent of this bill is to move the Children's Cabinet, which is currently administered within the Department of Health & Human Services, into the Office of the Governor. As you can see, the entire bill is underlined as it will be a new section to chapter 54-07 of North Dakota Century Code.

I am now going to walk through the changes noted in this bill by sections.

Section 1, Subsections 1 and 2: This language is consistent with what is currently in law regarding the membership, I believe Senator Hogan will be discussing some proposed amendments later.

Section 1, Subsection 2 g.: Clarifies that the commissioner is from the department of health and human services.

Section 1, Subsection 2 i.: Changes department to the governor's office.

Section 1, Subsection 3: Changes "chairman of legislative management" to "the governor, in collaboration with the chairman of legislative management"

Section 1, Subsection 5 a.: Adds "and families"

Section 1, Subsection 5 i.: Adds "Establish and oversee designated working groups to develop policies impacting children and families; and"

Section 1, Subsection 5 j, 1 and 2: Adds in "Other designated working groups on children and family issues"

Section 1, Subsection 6: Changes "department" to "office of the governor", "and coordinate with other designated working groups on children and family issues"

Section 1, Subsection 7 a.: Adds "The presiding officer of the children's cabinet may designate working groups and appoint or remove liaisons to serve on the working groups"

Section 2: This repeals the former section in code that had the children's cabinet in 50-06-43.1.

Section 3: Provides an appropriation to support the administration of the children's cabinet and coordinating designated working groups.

This covers the language changes and would like to now ask Lieutenant Governor Michelle Strinden to provide testimony related to her previous role as chair.

Children's Cabinet Network

Meghan McCann, J.D.
Dana Levine Kunzman

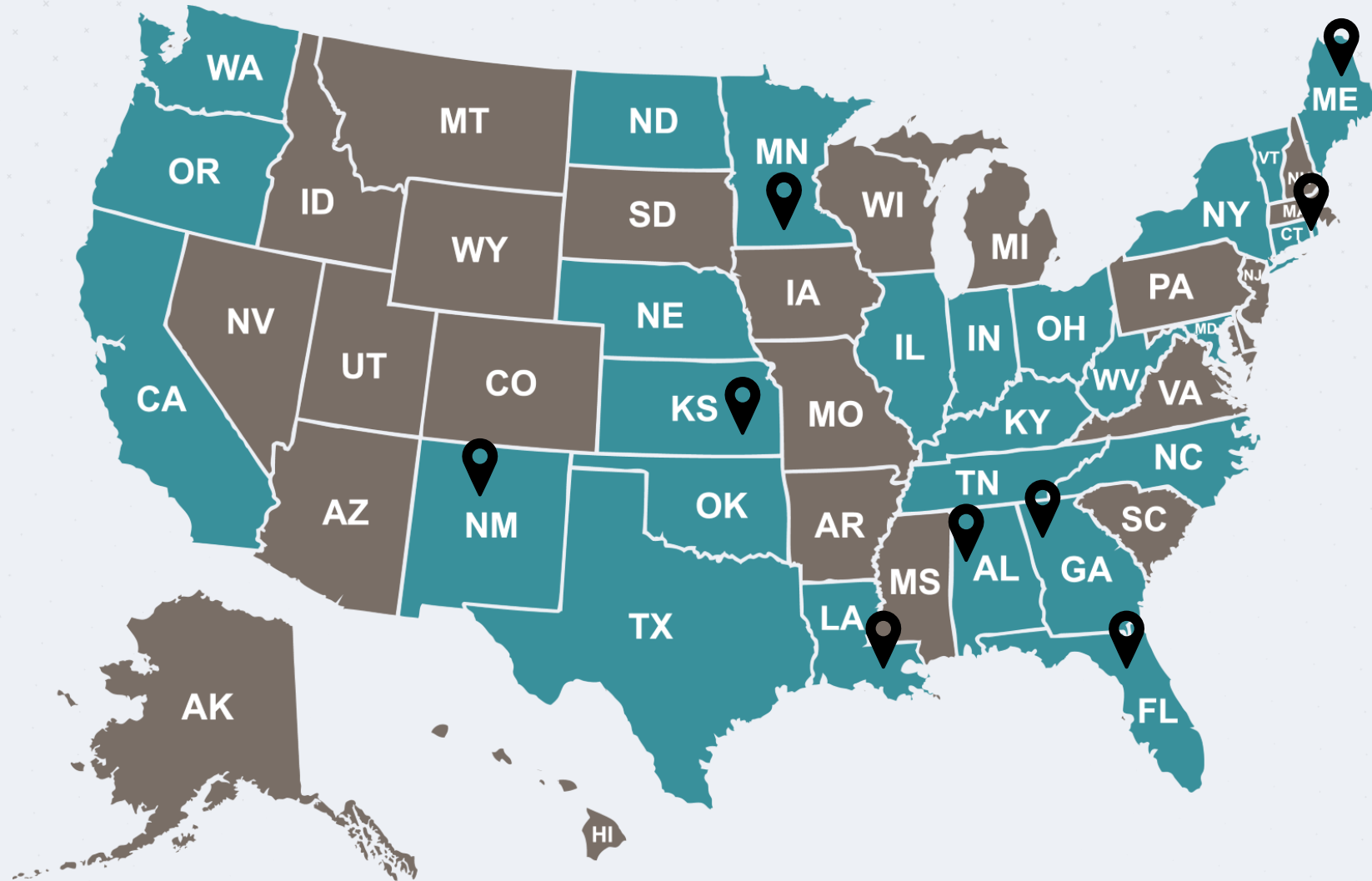




Forum Vision

All young people reach their fullest potential in education, work, and life.

Children's Cabinets





Themes

- Governance Structures
- Funding
- Strategic Planning
- Purpose
- Membership and Staffing



Children's Cabinet

Be Legendary.



Strategic Planning



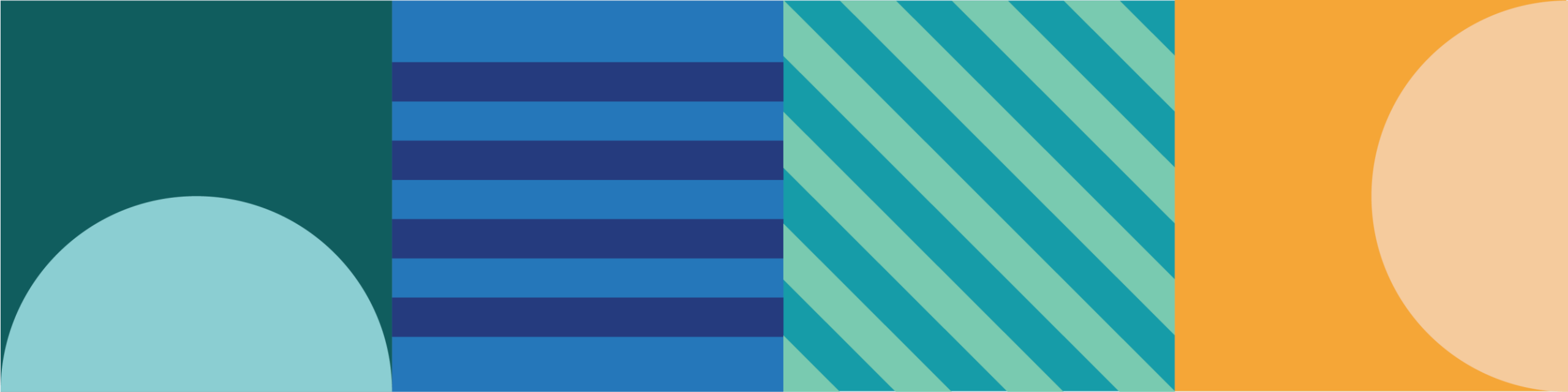
- Refining Values, Vision and Mission



- Building A Road Map



- Sustainability



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Have questions? Contact us.

[FORUMFYI.ORG](https://forumfyi.org)

Children's Cabinet Network

Meghan McCann, J.D.
Dana Levine Kunzman

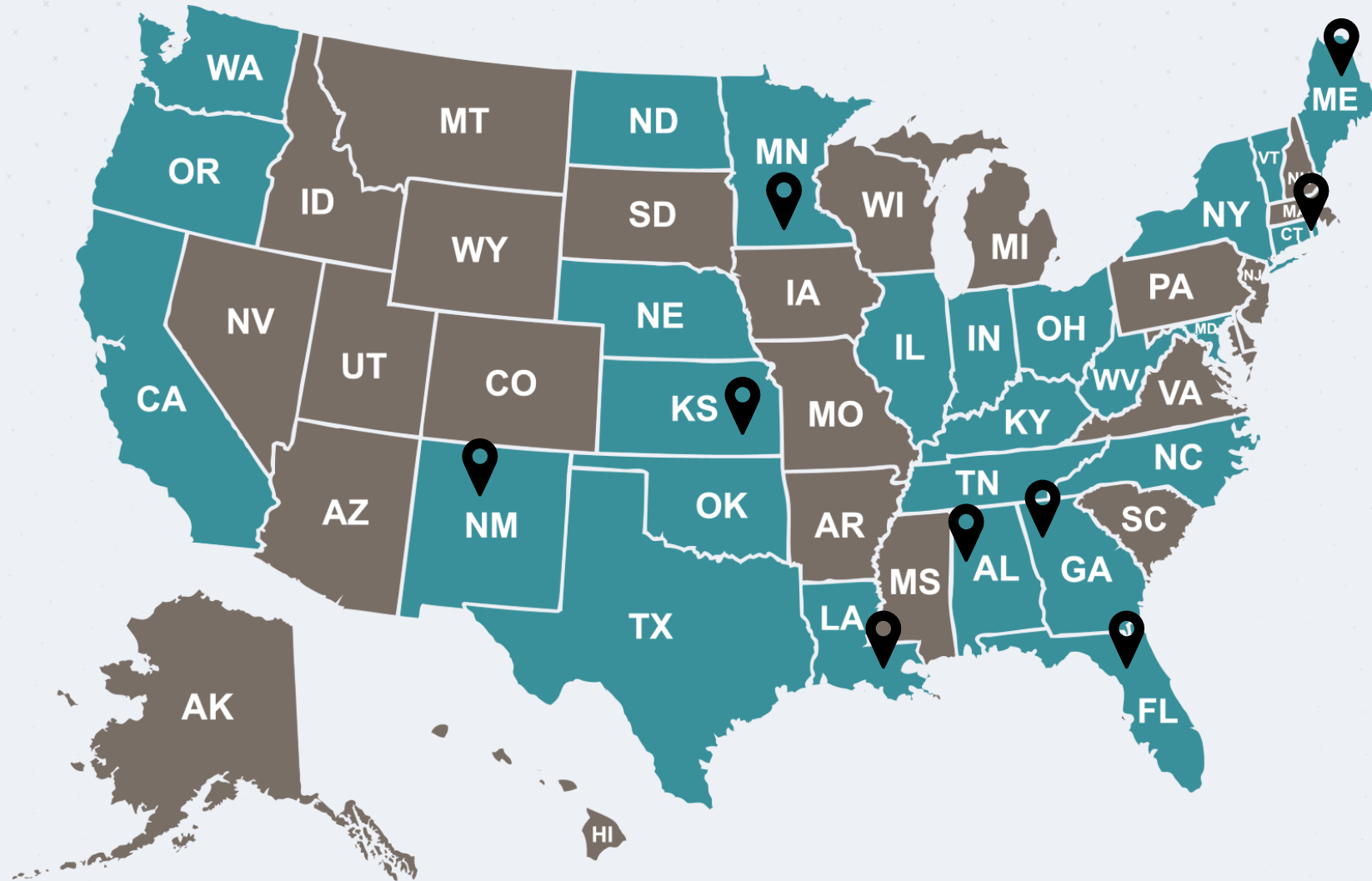




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Strategic Planning



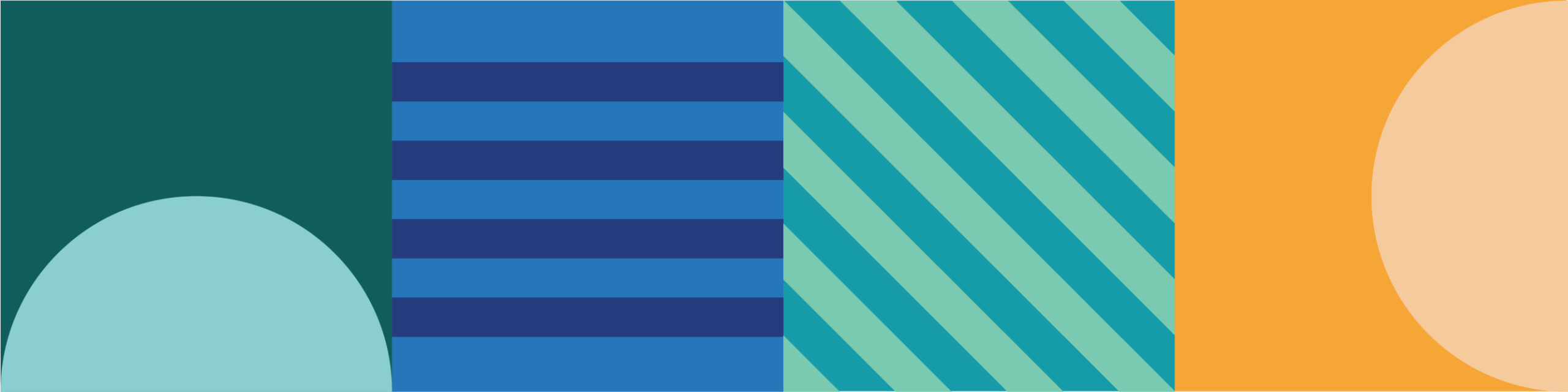
- Refining Values, Vision and Mission



- Building A Road Map



- Sustainability



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Have questions? Contact us.

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Testimony
SB 2176
Senate Human Services Committee
January 28, 2025

Chairman Lee, for the record, my name is Kathy Hogan. I represent District 21 which is central Fargo and a portion of West Fargo.

The Children's Cabinet is an exciting effort to strengthen collaboration and coordination across all systems to better support children and families. Breaking down silos both at the state and local level by developing a common vision and values can be very important and can change systems to better serve and support families.

I was on the drafting committee for SB 2176 and regretfully, I forgot to include a change in selection process for the legislative membership, so I have drafted the attached amendment for your consideration. An additional amendment on page 2 was added regarding travel reimbursements because it was duplicative.

A second discussion that was held was regarding lines Section 1 #2 i, regarding the four community at large members. Currently we are blessed to have two people representing local schools, a private agency representative and a zone director. We may want to consider modifying this section to ensure a strong voice for people who interact with a range of children's issues and expertise from the local perspective.

Attached is a copy of the draft amendment. I am more than willing to answer any question.

25.1017.01001
Title.

Prepared by the Legislative Council
staff for Senator Hogan
January 27, 2025

Sixty-ninth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO

SENATE BILL NO. 2176

Introduced by

Senators Axtman, Hogan

Representatives O'Brien, Pyle

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-07 of the North Dakota
2 Century Code, relating to the children's cabinet and designated working groups; to repeal
3 section 50-06-43.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the children's cabinet; to
4 provide for a legislative management report; and to provide an appropriation.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 54-07 of the North Dakota Century Code is created
7 and enacted as follows:

8 **Children's cabinet - Membership - Duties - Working groups - Report.**

9 1. The children's cabinet is created to assess, guide, and coordinate the care for children
10 and families across the state's branches of government and the tribal nations.

11 2. The children's cabinet is composed of:

12 a. The governor, or the governor's designee;

13 b. The chief justice of the supreme court, or the chief justice's designee;

14 c. ~~A member~~Two members of the house of representatives ~~from an even-numbered~~
15 ~~legislative district and a member of the house of representatives from an~~
16 ~~odd-numbered legislative district~~, appointed by the majority leader of the house of
17 representatives to serve two-year terms;

18 d. ~~A member~~Two members of the senate ~~from an even-numbered legislative district~~
19 ~~and a member of the senate from an odd-numbered legislative district~~, appointed
20 by the majority leader of the senate to serve two-year terms;

- e. The superintendent of public instruction, or the superintendent's designee;
 - f. The director of the committee on protection and advocacy, or the director's designee;
 - g. The commissioner of the department of health and human services, or the commissioner's designee;
 - h. A representative of the tribal nations in the state, who is appointed by the governor; and
 - i. Four individuals representing parents, private service providers, or other community interests, who are appointed by the governor to serve a term of two years, at the pleasure of the governor; ~~and who are entitled to reimbursement from the governor's office for travel and lodging at the same rate as provided for state officers and employees.~~
3. The governor, in collaboration with the chairman of the legislative management, shall appoint as the presiding officer of the children's cabinet a member of the governor's cabinet or a legislator serving on the children's cabinet. The children's cabinet shall select one of its members to serve as the vice-presiding officer.
 4. The children's cabinet shall meet at least quarterly. Additional meetings may be held at the discretion of the presiding officer.
 5. The children's cabinet shall:
 - a. Coordinate broad-based leadership across programs, agencies, branches of government, and tribal nations to meet the needs of children and families;
 - b. Develop strategies to address gaps or needs regarding early care and education, medical and behavioral health, community, child welfare, and juvenile justice;
 - c. Develop strategies to provide for the full continuum of care in the delivery of services, including promotion, prevention, early identification and intervention, service delivery, and recovery;
 - d. Seek to engage cooperation across public and private service providers;
 - e. Provide a comprehensive vision for how and where children are best served, attending to children and families in a respectful and relevant manner;
 - f. Seek strategies to provide services to children without consideration of prior engagement with juvenile services;

- 1 g. Provide for the active participation of consumers and providers statewide on
- 2 advisory committees;
- 3 h. Receive information and recommendations from the department of health and
- 4 human services, department of corrections and rehabilitation, and other state
- 5 agencies;
- 6 i. Establish and oversee designated working groups to develop policies impacting
- 7 children and families; and
- 8 j. Provide an annual report to the legislative management and governor regarding
- 9 the activities and findings of:
- 10 (1) The children's cabinet; and
- 11 (2) Other designated working groups on children and family issues.
- 12 6. The office of the governor shall provide staffing and administrative services for the
- 13 children's cabinet and coordinate with other designated working groups on children
- 14 and family issues.
- 15 7. a. The presiding officer of the children's cabinet may designate working groups and
- 16 appoint or remove liaisons to serve on the working groups.
- 17 b. A member of the children's cabinet or working group who is not a state employee
- 18 is entitled to reimbursement for mileage and expenses as provided by law for
- 19 state officers and employees, to be paid by the office of the governor.
- 20 c. A state employee who is a member of the children's cabinet or working group is
- 21 entitled to receive that employee's regular salary and is entitled to reimbursement
- 22 for mileage and expenses to be paid by the employing agency.
- 23 d. A member of the children's cabinet or working group who is a member of the
- 24 legislative assembly is entitled to receive per diem compensation at the rate
- 25 provided under section 54-35-10 for each day performing official duties of the
- 26 children's cabinet or working group. The legislative council shall pay the per diem
- 27 compensation and reimbursement for travel and such expenses as provided by
- 28 law for any member of the children's cabinet or working group who is a member
- 29 of the legislative assembly.

30 **SECTION 2. REPEAL.** Section 50-06-43.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is repealed.

1 **SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION - OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR - CHILDREN'S CABINET.**

2 There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise
3 appropriated, the sum of \$220,000, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the office of
4 the governor, for the purpose of administering the children's cabinet and coordinating
5 designated working groups, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027.

NORTH
Dakota

Be Legendary.

Children's Cabinet



2024 Annual Report

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Executive Summary

North Dakota's Children's Cabinet was created by [2019 Senate Bill No. 2313](#) to assess, guide and coordinate care for children across North Dakota branches of government and tribal nations. The Cabinet meets monthly to receive information and collaborate on strategies that address gaps and the full continuum of care and delivery of services regarding early care and education, medical and behavioral health, community, child welfare, and juvenile justice issues. This year's annual report describes that work and captures the progress and momentum towards improving outcomes for North Dakota's children and families.

In addition to the work of the North Dakota Children's Cabinet in meeting its statutory responsibilities and planning for the long-term future of our children, the Cabinet identified that a strategic plan and technical assistance was critical to its future success and sustainability. North Dakota became a member of the Forum for Youth Investment's Children's Cabinet Network in the fall of 2023 and the second portion of this report documents its 2024 planning work with the Forum for Youth Investment in helping to illuminate a path forward.

2024 Meeting Resources and Information

Tuesday, Jan. 16 - [Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Presentation: [Region V Children's Services Coordinating Committee](#)

Tuesday, Feb. 20 - [Agenda](#)

Presentation: [Graduation, Behavior and School Discipline](#)

Presentation: [ND System of Care](#)

Tuesday, March 19 - [Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Tuesday, April 16 - [Agenda](#)

Presentation: [Lighthouse Overview](#)

Tuesday, May 21 - [Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Presentation: [ND Children's Cabinet Presentation May 2024 \(Kringlie\)](#)

Presentation: [ND Children's Cabinet Presentation May 2024 \(Riehl\)](#)

Tuesday, June 18 - [Agenda](#)

Presentation: [Current State of SOR in ND \(Whipple\)](#)

Presentation: [NDDPI](#)

Tuesday, July 16 - [Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Tuesday, Aug. 20 - [Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Presentation: [ND Children's Cabinet Presentation August 2024](#)

Presentation: [CIP Presentation August 2024](#)

Tuesday, Sept. 17

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, Oct. 15 - [Agenda](#)

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, Nov. 19

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, Dec. 17

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Members of the North Dakota Children's Cabinet

Representative Michelle Strinden (Chair)
State House of Representatives

Representative Brandy Pyle
State House of Representatives

Senator Kathy Hogan
State Senate

Senator Michelle Axtman
State Senate

Honorable Lisa McEvers
Justice, North Dakota Supreme Court

Superintendent Kirsten Baesler
Superintendent, Department of Public Instruction

Maria Neset
Policy Advisor, Governor Burgum's Office

Wayne Salter
Commissioner, Dept. of Health and Human Services

Veronica Zietz
Director, Committee on Protection and Advocacy

Russel Riehl
Parent, Private Service Provider, or Other Community Interest

Kimberly Jacobson (Vice Chair)
Parent, Private Service Provider, or Other Community Interest

Janell Regimbal
Parent, Private Service Provider, or Other Community Interest

Shawn Huss
Parent, Private Service Provider, or Other Community Interest

Daniell Breland
Tribal Nations Representative

Forum for Youth Investment

Meghan McCann
Vice President, State Policy

Dana Kunzman
Senior Director, Cross-Systems Consulting

Other Acknowledgements & Gratitude

The Children's Cabinet would like to recognize Governor Doug Burgum for his commitment to advancing the work around children's systems in partnership with the three branches of government. The strategic plan as well as the collaborative effort ahead would not have been possible without his support to allocate funding from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funds. These funds have and will continue to be instrumental in facilitating the critical work across agencies alongside state and local partners to support the children and families of North Dakota.

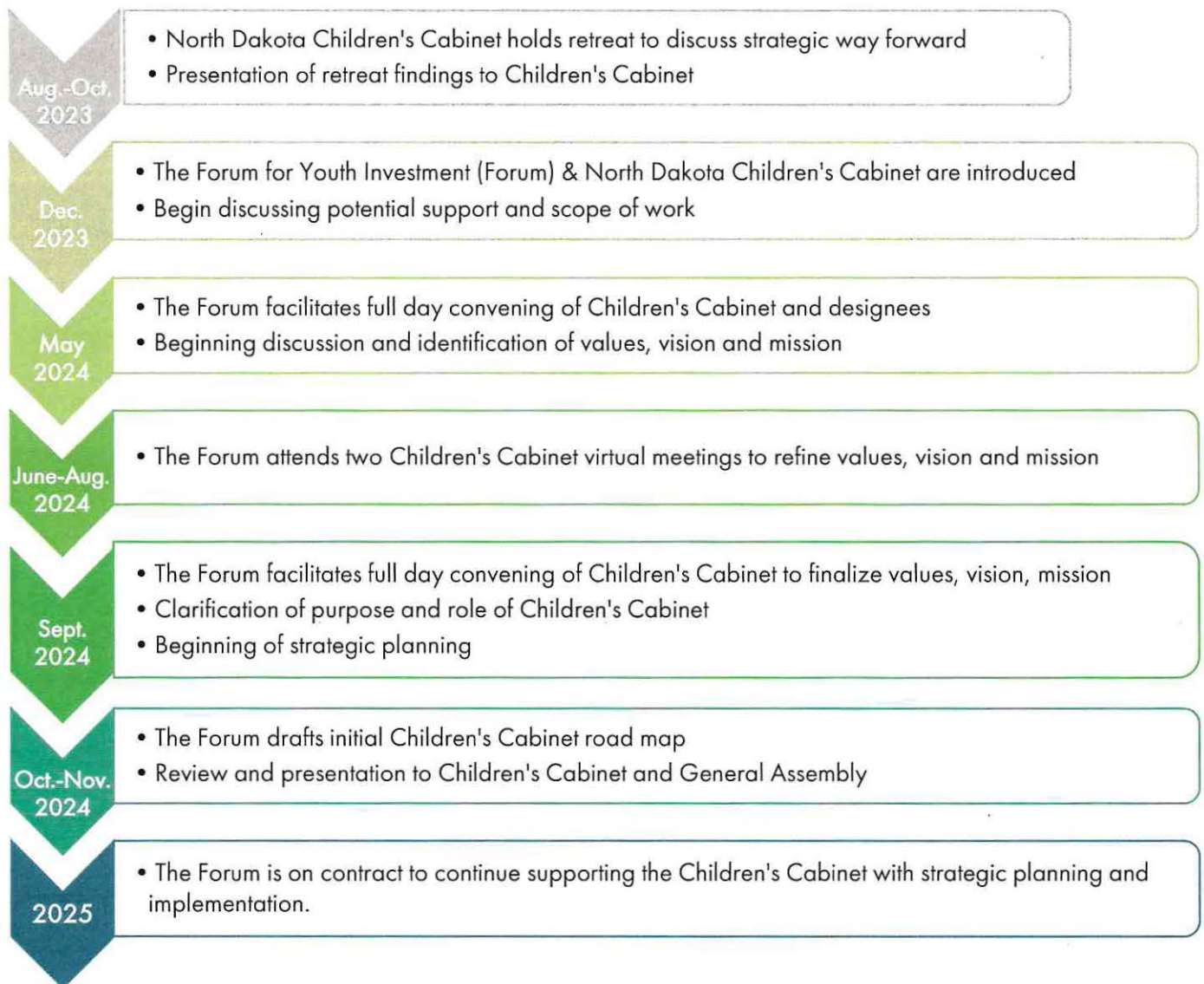
Enabling Statute

N.D. Cent. Code § 50-06-43.1. Children's cabinet - Membership - Duties - Report

1. The children's cabinet is created to assess, guide, and coordinate the care for children across the state's branches of government and the tribal nations.
2. The children's cabinet consists of the following members:
 - a. The governor, or the governor's designee;
 - b. The chief justice of the supreme court, or the chief justice's designee;
 - c. A member of the house of representatives from an even-numbered legislative district and a member of the house of representatives from an odd-numbered legislative district appointed by the majority leader of the house of representatives to serve two-year terms;
 - d. A member of the senate from an even-numbered legislative district and a member of the senate from an odd-numbered legislative district appointed by the majority leader of the senate to serve two-year terms;
 - e. The superintendent of public instruction, or the superintendent's designee;
 - f. The director of the committee on protection and advocacy, or the director's designee;
 - g. The commissioner of the department, or the commissioner's designee.
 - h. A representative of the tribal nations in the state, who is appointed by the governor; and
 - i. Four individuals representing parents, private service providers, or other community interests, who are appointed by the governor to serve a term of two years, at the pleasure of the governor, and who are entitled to reimbursement from the department for travel and lodging at the same rate as provided for state officers and employees.
3. The chairman of legislative management shall appoint one of the legislative members to serve as the presiding officer of the cabinet. The children's cabinet shall select one of its members to serve as the vice-presiding officer. The cabinet shall meet at least quarterly. Additional meetings may be held at the discretion of the presiding officer.
4. The children's cabinet shall:
 - a. Coordinate broad-based leadership across programs, agencies, branches of government, and tribal nations to meet the needs of children;
 - b. Develop strategies to address gaps or needs regarding early care and education, medical and behavioral health, community, child welfare, and juvenile justice;
 - c. Develop strategies to provide for the full continuum of care in the delivery of services, including promotion, prevention, early identification and intervention, service delivery, and recovery;
 - d. Seek to engage cooperation across public and private service providers;
 - e. Provide a comprehensive vision for how and where children are best served, attending to children in a respectful and relevant manner;
 - f. Seek strategies to provide services to children without consideration of prior engagement with juvenile services;
 - g. Provide for the active participation of consumers and providers statewide on advisory committees;
 - h. Receive information and recommendations from the department of health and human services, department of corrections and rehabilitation, and other state agencies; and
 - i. Provide an annual report to the legislative management and governor regarding the activities and findings of the cabinet.
5. The department shall provide the children's cabinet with staffing and administrative services.
6. A member of the cabinet who is not a state employee is entitled to reimbursement for mileage and expenses as provided by law for state officers and employees, to be paid by the department. A state employee who is a member of the cabinet is entitled to receive that employee's regular salary and is entitled to reimbursement for mileage and expenses to be paid by the employing agency.

A member of the cabinet who is a member of the legislative assembly is entitled to receive per diem compensation at the rate provided under section 54-35-10 for each day performing official duties of the cabinet. The legislative council shall pay the per diem compensation and reimbursement for travel and expenses as provided by law for any member of the cabinet who is a member of the legislative assembly.

Process Overview



Values, Vision, Mission & S.O.A.R

Values

- 360 Communication: the Children's Cabinet will engage in open, honest and meaningful communication that leads to positive results for all children and families.
- Optimism: the Children's Cabinet will be solutions-focused, adopting a can-do attitude while avoiding the impulse to admire the problem.
- Accountability: the Children's Cabinet accepts clear accountability for leadership and allows all members to know their role and responsibility while sharing a common vision.

Vision: The North Dakota Children's Cabinet ensures that all children are prepared and successful, equipped with the skills, knowledge, and resilience to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Mission: The North Dakota Children's Cabinet collaborates to elevate what works and drive towards a seamless network of services and supports that meet the needs of every child and family.

S.O.A.R. Analysis

	Internal	External
Current	Strengths Multidisciplinary/Three Branches Varied experiences: lived/work Good listeners Committed to the cause Organized momentum Know each other/meet regularly Similar values Diverse backgrounds Genuine willingness and want to work together Genuine openness to ideas Turnover has not impacted function	Opportunities Cross-agency collaboration became more "real"/deeper during pandemic response. ND is small enough and has systems that are straightforward enough that change is possible. We are often 1 degree removed from being able to make changes happen State with strong economy and strong financial position Children's Cabinet is in statute and has a home in Gov. office – confers respect.
Future	Aspirations Create a safe space for voices to be heard Advocate Improve communication and inclusion through the process We can have an impact Broaden our network through working groups on specific topics Create/broaden engagement Unified voice	Results Be the leader for Children's systems in U.S. Support families Share success and replicating success cross-system Children and their families are resilient When kids make mistakes there are restorative paths available to them People know how to advocate for themselves and access services they need Healthy, safe children and families Dashboard of well-being. Synergy between systems: the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Foster a culture of continuous quality improvement.

Current Children's Cabinet Charter

Name of Coordinating Body: North Dakota Children's Cabinet

Administrative Home: Department of Health and Human Services provides administrative support

Staffing: No permanent staff support.

Funding: \$45/day compensation and travel expenses

Membership: 12 members appointed by the Governor, and their designees

Structure:

Co-Chaired by legislative representatives.

Meeting Cadence: Monthly

History:

Year Established: 2019

Enabling Method: N.D. Cent. Code § 50-06-43.1

Primary Duties:

- Coordinate leadership
- Develop strategies to close gaps, create full continuum of care in service delivery, provide services regardless of system involvement
- Engage public and private providers
- Vision for how and where children are best served
- Participation of children, youth and families
- Receive information and recommendations from HHS, DOCR and other agencies.

Goals & Objectives: Pending (see below)

- Strategic Goal 1: strengthen foundational elements of the Children's Cabinet and promote statewide.
- Strategic Goal 2: identify and elevate promising practices to advance a seamless network of services and supports throughout North Dakota.
- Strategic Goal 3: define, measure and report out on the status of child-wellbeing in North Dakota.

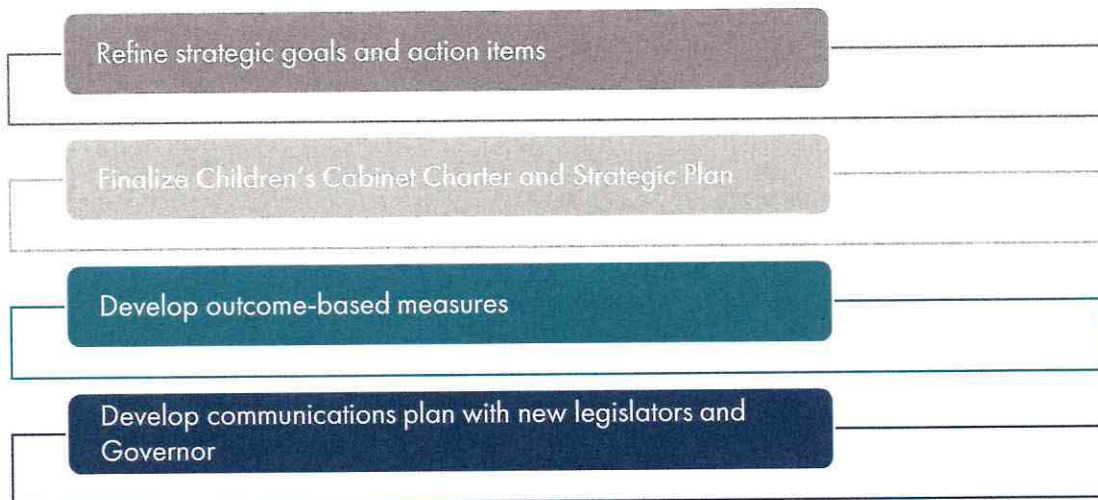
Reporting Requirement: annually on activities and findings

Links: <https://www.hhs.nd.gov/cfs/childrens-cabinet>

Strategic Plan [DRAFT]

Strategic Goal #1: strengthen foundational elements of the Children's Cabinet and promote statewide.			
Key Actions	Accountable	By When?	First step
Develop a North Dakota Children's Cabinet Logo			
Refine Children's Cabinet enabling statute: N.D. Cent. Code § 50-06-43.1			
Move Children's Cabinet to the Governor's Office			
Enlist thought partners and create feedback loop among youth ecosystem stakeholders			
Define focus of Children's Cabinet to "children" as ages 0-21; families with children; youth in key transition stages			
Establish a regular cadence of Children's Cabinet meetings and calendar deliverables (ex. Report xyz by x)			
Creating subcommittees to do the deep dives and report back with recs			
Create communication strategy for dissemination of Children's Cabinet initiatives			
Strategic Goal #2: identify and elevate promising practices to advance a seamless network of services and supports throughout North Dakota.			
Showcase innovations from North Dakota and other states			
Identify key criteria for promising practices and expected effects for positive outcomes			
Select early adopters for replication			
Curate repository of reports from state children-serving agencies (one-stop shop of resources).			
Identify gaps in services (Gap, Bridge or Gate?)			
Consult with: subject-matter experts, people with lived experience and industry leaders.			
Identify "risk points" when children and families transition between systems			
Create a visual to show the full continuum of services available			
Strategic Goal #3: Define, measure and report out on the status of child-wellbeing in North Dakota.			
Examine disaggregated data			
Establish outcome benchmarks / identify key outcome indicators			
Develop Annual Data Report on status of wellbeing in ND			
Identify and explore existing data: Lighthouse Project, Kids Count Data			
Define child well-being: What are we measuring against? What is the % change we hope to see?			
Develop reporting structure and infrastructure to house and report the data.			
Explore external partners: Kids Count (Annie E. Casey Foundation), Children's Funding Project			

Next Steps



Appendix A: Meeting Agendas

North Dakota Children's Cabinet Agenda

Monday, May 6, 2024
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Purpose: Set the North Dakota Children's Cabinet mission and vision to guide a strategic plan.

Objectives:

- Identify purpose, mission, and vision for the North Dakota Children's Cabinet.
- Connect with colleagues in an open dialogue and brainstorming.
- Begin thinking about long-term strategy and goals for the North Dakota Children's Cabinet.

Introductions [9:00-9:45]

- Name, affiliation, favorite summer vacation activity?
- Review agenda for the day and strategic planning process.

Community Agreements [9:45-10:00]

- We agree to:
 - Speak from our own experience.
 - Honor the complexity of this work.
 - Be imperfect in our learning and sharing.
 - Recognize each other's learning journey AND acknowledge impact.
 - Lean into conversations AND create space for all voices (move in, move out)
 - What's said here stays here, what's learned here leaves here.
 - Expect and accept non-closure.
- What else do we need to feel supported?
- If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

Children's Cabinet Strategic Planning – National Landscape [10:00-10:20]

Break [10:20-10:30]

Mission & Vision [10:30-12:00]

- What do we mean by mission & vision?
- Vision Prompt: In 5 years, what do you want the headline to be for this work?

Lunch on Your Own [12:00-1:00]

Mission & Vision [1:00-3:30]

- Revisit 2023 Retreat Priorities, Challenges and Opportunities

Closing [3:30-4:00]

- Next steps
- Closing reflection

North Dakota Children's Cabinet Agenda

Monday, September 16, 2024
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Purpose: Approve the vision, mission and values. Begin strategic planning and charter development.

Objectives:

- Approve mission and vision for the North Dakota Children's Cabinet.
- Connect with colleagues in an open dialogue and brainstorming.
- Begin short and long-term strategic planning for the North Dakota Children's Cabinet.

Introductions [9:00-9:30]

- Name, affiliation, favorite thing about back to school?
- Review agenda for the day and strategic planning process.

Community Agreements [9:30-9:45]

- We agree to:
 - Speak from our own experience.
 - Honor the complexity of this work.
 - Be imperfect in our learning and sharing.
 - Recognize each other's learning journey AND acknowledge impact.
 - Lean into conversations AND create space for all voices (move in, move out)
 - What's said here stays here, what's learned here leaves here.
 - Expect and accept non-closure.
- What else do we need to feel supported?
- If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

Children's Cabinet Charter Development [9:45-10:45]

- Identify role and purpose of Children's Cabinet
- Establish communication and working norms.

Break [10:45-11:00]

Charter Development Continued and/or Begin Narrowing Strategic Goals [11:00-12:00]

Lunch on Your Own [12:00-1:00]

Strategic Goal and Action Step Identification [1:00-2:45]

Closing [2:45-3:00]

- Next steps
- Closing reflection

Appendix B: The Forum for Youth Investment's Children's Cabinet Network

No single support or program is enough to ensure children and youth are on track developmentally, educationally, socially, and emotionally. Children's Cabinets are systematically changing the fragmented ways that state and local governments do business for children and youth. Since 2004, The Forum for Youth Investment has engaged with these coordinating bodies to support their operation and share lessons learned with the youth development field.

Unfortunately, the manner in which rules, regulations and government structures are crafted makes it difficult for leaders to create and implement coordinated programs and services that address the comprehensive needs of young people. But there is much that can be done to simplify and untangle the patchwork of policies and funding streams so they are more efficient and effective.

The Forum's policy staff support Children's Cabinets, also known as councils, commissions or P-20 councils. Children's Cabinets are typically made up of the heads of all government agencies with child- and youth-serving programs. They meet regularly to coordinate services, develop a common set of outcomes, and collaboratively decide upon and implement plans to foster the well-being of young people.

Members of this network receive technical assistance, share best practices and learn more about tools that bring efficiency and effectiveness to their efforts to improve outcomes for young people. Below are the states currently engaged in the Children's Cabinet Network.

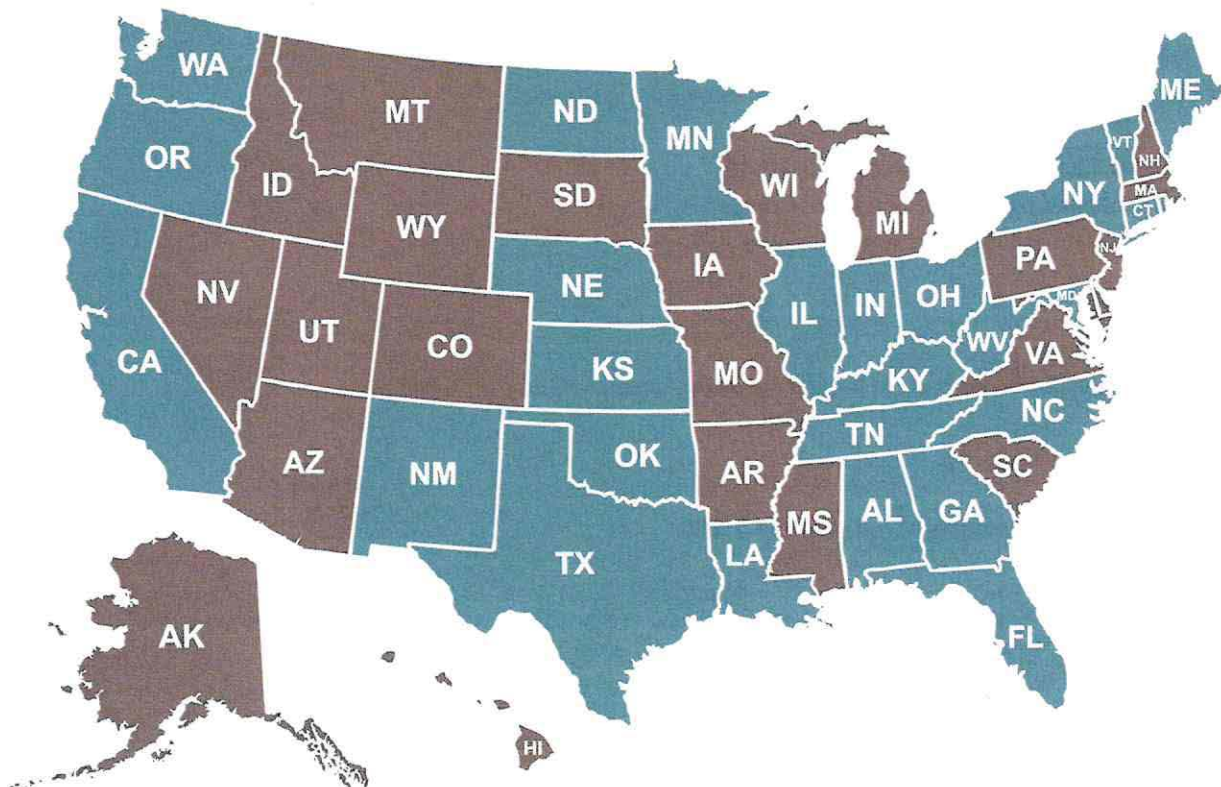


Figure 1. States engaged in the Forum for Youth Investment's Children's Cabinet Network.

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

SB 2176
2/3/2025

Relating to the children's cabinet; to provide for a legislative management report; and to provide an appropriation.

3:33 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:

- Zone Director
- Working group

3:35 p.m. Senator Hogan moved to adopt Amendment LC# 25.1017.01002.

3:35 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.

3:38 p.m. Senator Hogan motioned Do Pass as Amended and Rerefer to Appropriations.

3:39 p.m. Senator Roers 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.

Senator Hogan will carry the bill.

Senate Human Services Committee

SB 2176

02/03/25

Page 2

3:40 p.m. Chairman Lee closed the hearing.

Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk

February 3, 2025

Sixty-ninth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO

SENATE BILL NO. 2176

Introduced by

Senators Axtman, Hogan

Representatives O'Brien, Pyle

2-3-25
JB 1089

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-07 of the North Dakota
2 Century Code, relating to the children's cabinet and designated working groups; to repeal
3 section 50-06-43.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the children's cabinet; to
4 provide for a legislative management report; and to provide an appropriation.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 54-07 of the North Dakota Century Code is created
7 and enacted as follows:

8 **Children's cabinet - Membership - Duties - Working groups - Report.**

- 9 1. The children's cabinet is created to assess, guide, and coordinate the care for children
10 and families across the state's branches of government and the tribal nations.
- 11 2. The children's cabinet is composed of:
- 12 a. The governor, or the governor's designee;
- 13 b. The chief justice of the supreme court, or the chief justice's designee;
- 14 c. ~~A member~~Two members of the house of representatives from an even-numbered
15 legislative district and a member of the house of representatives from an
16 odd-numbered legislative district, appointed by the majority leader of the house of
17 representatives to serve two-year terms;
- 18 d. ~~A member~~Two members of the senate from an even-numbered legislative district
19 and a member of the senate from an odd-numbered legislative district, appointed
20 by the majority leader of the senate to serve two-year terms;

AB 2084

1 e. The superintendent of public instruction, or the superintendent's designee;

2 f. The director of the committee on protection and advocacy, or the director's
3 designee;

4 g. The commissioner of the department of health and human services, or the
5 commissioner's designee;

6 h. A representative of the tribal nations in the state, who is appointed by the
7 governor; and

8 i. FourFive individuals ~~representing parents, private service providers, or other~~
9 ~~community interests, who are,~~ appointed by the governor to serve a term of two
10 ~~years, at the pleasure of the governor, and who are entitled to reimbursement~~
11 ~~from the governor's office for travel and lodging at the same rate as provided for~~
12 ~~state officers and employees~~consisting of:

13 (1) A local school representative;

14 (2) A local special education representative;

15 (3) A human service zone director;

16 (4) A representative of a private agency that provides direct services to
17 vulnerable children; and

18 (5) A parent.

19 3. The governor, in collaboration with the chairman of the legislative management, shall
20 appoint as the presiding officer of the children's cabinet a member of the governor's
21 cabinet or a legislator serving on the children's cabinet. The children's cabinet shall
22 select one of its members to serve as the vice-presiding officer.

23 4. The children's cabinet shall meet at least quarterly. Additional meetings may be held at
24 the discretion of the presiding officer.

25 5. The children's cabinet shall:

26 a. Coordinate broad-based leadership across programs, agencies, branches of
27 government, and tribal nations to meet the needs of children and families;

28 b. Develop strategies to address gaps or needs regarding early care and education,
29 medical and behavioral health, community, child welfare, and juvenile justice;

Am 384

- 1 c. Develop strategies to provide for the full continuum of care in the delivery of
- 2 services, including promotion, prevention, early identification and intervention,
- 3 service delivery, and recovery;
- 4 d. Seek to engage cooperation across public and private service providers;
- 5 e. Provide a comprehensive vision for how and where children are best served,
- 6 attending to children and families in a respectful and relevant manner;
- 7 f. Seek strategies to provide services to children without consideration of prior
- 8 engagement with juvenile services;
- 9 g. Provide for the active participation of consumers and providers statewide on
- 10 advisory committees;
- 11 h. Receive information and recommendations from the department of health and
- 12 human services, department of corrections and rehabilitation, and other state
- 13 agencies;
- 14 i. Establish and oversee designated working groups to develop policies impacting
- 15 children and families; and
- 16 j. Provide an annual report to the legislative management and governor regarding
- 17 the activities and findings of:
- 18 (1) The children's cabinet; and
- 19 (2) Other designated working groups on children and family issues.
- 20 6. The office of the governor shall provide staffing and administrative services for the
- 21 children's cabinet and coordinate with other designated working groups on children
- 22 and family issues.
- 23 7. a. The presiding officer of the children's cabinet may designate working groups and
- 24 appoint or remove liaisons to serve on the working groups.
- 25 b. A member of the children's cabinet or working group who is not a state employee
- 26 is entitled to reimbursement for mileage and expenses as provided by law for
- 27 state officers and employees, to be paid by the office of the governor.
- 28 c. A state employee who is a member of the children's cabinet or working group is
- 29 entitled to receive that employee's regular salary and is entitled to reimbursement
- 30 for mileage and expenses to be paid by the employing agency.

Agg 4004

1 d. A member of the children's cabinet or working group who is a member of the
2 legislative assembly is entitled to receive per diem compensation at the rate
3 provided under section 54-35-10 for each day performing official duties of the
4 children's cabinet or working group. The legislative council shall pay the per diem
5 compensation and reimbursement for travel and such expenses as provided by
6 law for any member of the children's cabinet or working group who is a member
7 of the legislative assembly.

8 **SECTION 2. REPEAL.** Section 50-06-43.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is repealed.

9 **SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION - OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR - CHILDREN'S CABINET.**

10 There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise
11 appropriated, the sum of \$220,000, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the office of
12 the governor, for the purpose of administering the children's cabinet and coordinating
13 designated working groups, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
SB 2176**

Human Services Committee (Sen. Lee, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS** ([25.1017.01002](#)) and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** and **BE REREFERRED** to the **Appropriations Committee** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2176 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

2025 SENATE APPROPRIATIONS

SB 2176

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee Harvest Room, State Capitol

SB 2176
2/6/2025

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-07 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the children's cabinet and designated working groups; to repeal section 50-06-43.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the children's cabinet; to provide for a legislative management report; and to provide an appropriation.

2:56 p.m. Chairman Bekkedahl opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Bekkedahl, Vice-Chairman Erbele, and Senators Burckhard, Cleary, Conley, Davison, Dever, Dwyer, Magrum, Mathern, Meyer, Schaible, Sickler, Sorvaag, Thomas, Wanzek.

Discussion Topics:

- Committee Action

2:56 p.m. Chairman Bekkedahl opened discussion.

2:58 p.m. Senator Schaible moved a Do Pass.

2:58 p.m. Senator Davison seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Brad Bekkedahl	Y
Senator Robert Erbele	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	Y
Senator Sean Cleary	Y
Senator Cole Conley	Y
Senator Kyle Davison	Y
Senator Dick Dever	Y
Senator Michael Dwyer	Y
Senator Jeffery J. Magrum	N
Senator Tim Mathern	Y
Senator Scott Meyer	Y
Senator Donald Schaible	Y
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y
Senator Ronald Sorvaag	Y
Senator Paul J. Thomas	Y
Senator Terry M. Wanzek	Y

Motion Passed 15-1-0.

Senator Hogan will carry the bill.

Senate Appropriations Committee

SB 2176

02/06/2025

Page 2

3:03 p.m. Chairman Bekkedahl closed the hearing.

Elizabeth Reiten, Committee Clerk

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
ENGROSSED SB 2176 ([25.1017.02000](#))**

Appropriations Committee (Sen. Bekkedahl, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (15 YEAS, 1 NAY, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2176 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

2025 HOUSE EDUCATION

SB 2176

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

SB 2176
3/11/2025

Relating to the children's cabinet; to provide for a legislative management report; and to provide an appropriation.

3:37 p.m. Chairman Heinert called the hearing to order.

Members Present: Chairman Heinert, Vice Chairman Schreiber- Beck, Representatives, Conmy, Hager, Hatlestad, Hauck, Heilman, Jonas, Longmuir, Maki, Marchall, Morton, Novak, Osowski

Discussion Topics:

- Facilitation consultants
- Appropriation for supportive services
- Location of Children's Cabinet's

3:37 p.m. Senator Axtman introduced the bill and submitted testimony. #40512 #40515

3:44 p.m. LT. Governor, Michelle Strinden, testified in favor and submitted testimony and read Maria Neset's testimony. #40475 #40665

3:45 p.m. Meghan McCann, Executive Vice President for Policy, Forum for Youth Investment, testified in favor.

3:52 p.m. Kim Jacobson, Vice Chair, Children's Cabinet, testified in favor and submitted testimony. #40315

4:01 p.m. Vice Chair Schreiber- Beck adjourned the meeting.

Leah Kuball, Committee Clerk



Testimony prepared for the House Education Committee
SB 2176 – North Dakota Children’s Cabinet
Kim Jacobson, Agassiz Valley Human Service Zone Director
March 11, 2025

Chair Heinert, and members of the House Education Committee, my name is Kim Jacobson. I am the Director for the Agassiz Valley Human Service Zone, which includes the counties of Traill and Steele. In addition, I currently serve as Vice-Chair of the North Dakota Children’s Cabinet. I am here today to provide testimony in support of SB 2176.

The North Dakota Children’s Cabinet was established during the 66th Legislative Assembly (SB 2313). As an inaugural member of the cabinet, I have served since the Cabinet’s first meeting in November 2019.

The Children’s Cabinet exists to assess, guide, and coordinate care for children across branches of state government and tribal nations. We monitor the needs and trends that arise within the system of children’s care services that are available in North Dakota. We also network with community partners to learn about service gaps, challenges, and innovations. Our fourteen members meet monthly to share insights and strategize comprehensive service delivery for the children in our state.

For several years, a key focus of our approach to continuous quality improvement has been the study of other Children’s Cabinet models in the United States. Learnings from other Cabinets helped us develop a charter and strategic plan, which was finalized in 2024. This is the roadmap that guides the vision, mission, and goals of the Children’s Cabinet.

Senate Bill 2176 plays a pivotal role in that roadmap. One of our findings has been that the most impactful Children’s Cabinets in the United States are located within their respective governor’s offices. This positioning lays the foundation for a multidisciplinary Cabinet that can learn from, and collaborate with, the executive branch of state government. By relocating our staffing and administrative services from the Department of Health and Human Services to the Office of the Governor, SB 2176 offers the North Dakota Children’s Cabinet that same stability.

Additionally, SB 2176 provides the critical addition of designated workgroups to support Cabinet efforts. This will allow for the focused study of assigned topics by a wider range of subject matter experts who can present their findings and recommendations to the Children's Cabinet. In fact, this legislative session has raised several topics that could benefit from focused workgroups overseen by the Children's Cabinet. Local stakeholders have diverse perspectives on the needs of children in our communities — and how to meet those needs. For example, HB 1562 strengthens local decision-making in the frequency of mandated reporter training. If passed, this bill will be easy to implement and allow school districts to streamline staff workload while staying current on child safety issues. On the other end of the spectrum, HB 1095 would substantially increase the role of government in North Dakota schools. More importantly, its narrow focus on the investigation of abuse and neglect may lead to missed service opportunities that local families need to thrive. Lynn Flieth, the Director of RSR Human Service Zone, explained it perfectly when she testified that “because Child Protection Service activities transcend any single entity, and rely upon a community response, the original intent of [House Bill 1095] may be more comprehensively and appropriately addressed in a coordinated effort through a statewide approach, perhaps through the Children's Cabinet. It would be beneficial to be inclusive of other service providers, law enforcement and the legal community along with the Child Protection system and schools to enhance understanding, strengthen systems, and to optimally support children and their families.” Senate Bill 2176 provides the Children's Cabinet — and overall, the state — with the opportunity to respond holistically to the complex needs across our state. Focused workgroups will give us the opportunity to incorporate the perspectives of experts who serve children in a variety of ways: as educators, as parents, as health service providers, and more. These groups will also provide the Cabinet with greater capacity to incorporate evidence-based outcomes into recommendations. As a result, Senate Bill 2176 will reduce systems conflict and increase the probability of positive outcomes for the children and families we serve.

In conclusion, Senate Bill 2176 opens new doors for the Children's Cabinet. It gives us greater opportunity to hear from multi-disciplinary workgroups and supports a strategy-driven, solution-oriented, and collaborative approach to meeting needs. These strategic changes set the stage for service delivery improvements, prudent investments, and overall improved care for North Dakota children.

Thank you for considering my testimony. I stand for questions from the committee.

Senate Bill 2176
Lt. Governor Michelle Strinden
House Education Committee
Rep. Heinert, chair
March 11, 2025
Couteau Room, State Capitol

Good afternoon, Chair Heinert and members of the House Education Committee. For the record, my name is Michelle Strinden, Lieutenant Governor for the State of North Dakota. I am here to provide our support for SB 2176, which proposes to move the administration of the Children's Cabinet into the Office of the Governor.

- I served as chair of the cabinet for nearly two years.
- During that time, I recognized the need for intentional focus and support to drive the cabinet to support children's systems.
- Moving the cabinet's administration within the Governor's Office will place additional focus on the cabinet and accelerate progress for children and families.
- We've partnered with an external consulting service that supported the development of a strategic plan and actionable goals.
- Working with the consultants, we'll continue to develop measures of success and working groups to dive deeper into issues across juvenile justice, child welfare, mental health continuum, education, early childhood and much more.
- Both the previous and current administrations have been engaged in supporting this effort. Both budget proposals included a line item that supports the cabinet with consultants and costs related to meetings, administration, document preparation, and other expenses.

- Our office is supportive of the current line item of \$65,000 which is reflected in HB 1001. These funds will support the cabinet with \$30,000 for facilitation consultants and \$35,000 in ongoing appropriations for supportive services.
- We are in support of the amendments proposed by Senator Axtman and we are grateful for her leadership on this bill.

I would like to introduce Meghan McCann with The Forum of Youth Initiative to walk through the national landscape of state Children's Cabinets and walk through the North Dakota strategic plan.

Senate Bill 2176
Sen. Michelle Axtman
House Education Committee
March 11, 2025

Good morning, Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education Committee. For the record, my name is Michelle Axtman, Senator from District 7. As a member of the Children's Cabinet for two years and a recent appointment as Chair, I am here to provide supportive testimony for Senate Bill 2176.

For some history, the Children's Cabinet was established in 2019 by Senate Bill 2313. The intent of the cabinet is to support cross-agency collaboration and service delivery to improve outcomes for children and families. You will hear later from Forum for Youth Initiative on cabinets across various states and different structures and governance within government. The intent of this bill is to move the Children's Cabinet, which is currently administered within the Department of Health & Human Services, into the Office of the Governor. As you can see, the entire bill is underlined as it will be a new section to chapter 54-07 of North Dakota Century Code.

I am now going to walk through the changes noted in this bill by sections.

Section 1, Subsections 1 and 2: This language makes a few updates to the membership of the cabinet, to include the legislative members and increases the additional members from 4 to 5 to ensure representation from subgroups listed on page 2 lines 5-10.

Section 1, Subsection 2 g.: Clarifies that the commissioner is from the department of health and human services.

Section 1, Subsection 2 i.: Changes department to the governor's office.

Section 1, Subsection 3: Changes "chairman of legislative management" to "the governor, in collaboration with the chairman of legislative management"

Section 1, Subsection 5 a.: Adds "and families"

Section 1, Subsection 5 i.: Adds "Establish and oversee designated working groups to develop policies impacting children and families; and"

Section 1, Subsection 5 j, 1 and 2: Adds in "Other designated working groups on children and family issues"

Section 1, Subsection 6: Changes "department" to "office of the governor", "and coordinate with other designated working groups on children and family issues"

Section 1, Subsection 7 a.: Adds "The presiding officer of the children's cabinet may designate working groups and appoint or remove liaisons to serve on the working groups"

Section 2: This repeals the former section in code that had the children's cabinet in 50-06-43.1.

Section 3: Amendment to remove.

This covers the language changes and would like to now ask Lieutenant Governor Michelle Strinden to provide testimony related to her previous role as chair.

25.1017.02001
Title.

Prepared by the Legislative Council
staff for Senator Axtman
March 10, 2025

Sixty-ninth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO FIRST ENGROSSMENT

ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2176

Introduced by

Senators Axtman, Hogan

Representatives O'Brien, Pyle

- 1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-07 of the North Dakota
2 Century Code, relating to the children's cabinet and designated working groups; to repeal
3 section 50-06-43.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the children's cabinet; and to
4 provide for a legislative management report; ~~and to provide an appropriation.~~

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

6 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 54-07 of the North Dakota Century Code is created
7 and enacted as follows:

8 **Children's cabinet - Membership - Duties - Working groups - Report.**

- 9 1. The children's cabinet is created to assess, guide, and coordinate the care for children
10 and families across the state's branches of government and the tribal nations.
11 2. The children's cabinet is composed of:
12 a. The governor, or the governor's designee;
13 b. The chief justice of the supreme court, or the chief justice's designee;
14 c. Two members of the house of representatives, appointed by the majority leader
15 of the house of representatives to serve two-year terms;
16 d. Two members of the senate, appointed by the majority leader of the senate to
17 serve two-year terms;
18 e. The superintendent of public instruction, or the superintendent's designee;
19 f. The director of the committee on protection and advocacy, or the director's
20 designee;

g. The commissioner of the department of health and human services, or the commissioner's designee;

h. A representative of the tribal nations in the state, who is appointed by the governor; and

i. Five individuals, appointed by the governor to serve a term of two years at the pleasure of the governor, consisting of:

(1) A local school representative;

(2) A local special education representative;

(3) A human service zone director;

(4) A representative of a private agency that provides direct services to vulnerable children; and

(5) A parent.

3. The governor, in collaboration with the chairman of the legislative management, shall appoint as the presiding officer of the children's cabinet a member of the governor's cabinet or a legislator serving on the children's cabinet. The children's cabinet shall select one of its members to serve as the vice-presiding officer.

4. The children's cabinet shall meet at least quarterly. Additional meetings may be held at the discretion of the presiding officer.

5. The children's cabinet shall:

a. Coordinate broad-based leadership across programs, agencies, branches of government, and tribal nations to meet the needs of children and families;

b. Develop strategies to address gaps or needs regarding early care and education, medical and behavioral health, community, child welfare, and juvenile justice;

c. Develop strategies to provide for the full continuum of care in the delivery of services, including promotion, prevention, early identification and intervention, service delivery, and recovery;

d. Seek to engage cooperation across public and private service providers;

e. Provide a comprehensive vision for how and where children are best served, attending to children and families in a respectful and relevant manner;

f. Seek strategies to provide services to children without consideration of prior engagement with juvenile services;

- 1 g. Provide for the active participation of consumers and providers statewide on
2 advisory committees;
3 h. Receive information and recommendations from the department of health and
4 human services, department of corrections and rehabilitation, and other state
5 agencies;
6 i. Establish and oversee designated working groups to develop policies impacting
7 children and families; and
8 j. Provide an annual report to the legislative management and governor regarding
9 the activities and findings of:
10 (1) The children's cabinet; and
11 (2) Other designated working groups on children and family issues.

12 6. a. The office of the governor shall provide staffing and administrative services for
13 the children's cabinet and coordinate with other designated working groups on
14 children and family issues.

15 b. The governor or the governor's designee serving on the cabinet may appoint a
16 representative to serve in that official's capacity at a meeting if the governor or
17 governor's designee is unable to attend.

- 18 7. a. The presiding officer of the children's cabinet may designate working groups and
19 appoint or remove liaisons to serve on the working groups.
20 b. A member of the children's cabinet or working group who is not a state employee
21 is entitled to reimbursement for mileage and expenses as provided by law for
22 state officers and employees, to be paid by the office of the governor.
23 c. A state employee who is a member of the children's cabinet or working group is
24 entitled to receive that employee's regular salary and is entitled to reimbursement
25 for mileage and expenses to be paid by the employing agency.
26 d. A member of the children's cabinet or working group who is a member of the
27 legislative assembly is entitled to receive per diem compensation at the rate
28 provided under section 54-35-10 for each day performing official duties of the
29 children's cabinet or working group. The legislative council shall pay the per diem
30 compensation and reimbursement for travel and such expenses as provided by

1 law for any member of the children's cabinet or working group who is a member
2 of the legislative assembly.

3 **SECTION 2. REPEAL.** Section 50-06-43.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is repealed.

4 ~~**SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION -- OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR -- CHILDREN'S CABINET.**~~

5 ~~There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise~~
6 ~~appropriated, the sum of \$220,000, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the office of~~
7 ~~the governor, for the purpose of administering the children's cabinet and coordinating~~
8 ~~designated working groups, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027.~~

NORTH
Dakota

Be Legendary.

Children's Cabinet



2024 Annual Report

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Children’s Cabinet Strategic Planning 6

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 Members of the North Dakota Children’s Cabinet
 Forum for Youth Investment

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 Appendix B: Forum for Youth Investment Children’s Cabinet Network

Executive Summary

North Dakota's Children's Cabinet was created by [2019 Senate Bill No. 2313](#) to assess, guide and coordinate care for children across North Dakota branches of government and tribal nations. The Cabinet meets monthly to receive information and collaborate on strategies that address gaps and the full continuum of care and delivery of services regarding early care and education, medical and behavioral health, community, child welfare, and juvenile justice issues. This year's annual report describes that work and captures the progress and momentum towards improving outcomes for North Dakota's children and families.

In addition to the work of the North Dakota Children's Cabinet in meeting its statutory responsibilities and planning for the long-term future of our children, the Cabinet identified that a strategic plan and technical assistance was critical to its future success and sustainability. North Dakota became a member of the Forum for Youth Investment's Children's Cabinet Network in the fall of 2023 and the second portion of this report documents its 2024 planning work with the Forum for Youth Investment in helping to illuminate a path forward.

2024 Meeting Resources and Information

Tuesday, Jan. 16 - [Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Presentation: [Region V Children's Services Coordinating Committee](#)

Tuesday, Feb. 20 - [Agenda](#)

Presentation: [Graduation, Behavior and School Discipline](#)

Presentation: [ND System of Care](#)

Tuesday, March 19 - [Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Tuesday, April 16 - [Agenda](#)

Presentation: [Lighthouse Overview](#)

Tuesday, May 21 - [Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Presentation: [ND Children's Cabinet Presentation May 2024 \(Kringlie\)](#)

Presentation: [ND Children's Cabinet Presentation May 2024 \(Riehl\)](#)

Tuesday, June 18 - [Agenda](#)

Presentation: [Current State of SOR in ND \(Whipple\)](#)

Presentation: [NDDPI](#)

Tuesday, July 16 - [Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Tuesday, Aug. 20 - [Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Presentation: [ND Children's Cabinet Presentation August 2024](#)

Presentation: [CIP Presentation August 2024](#)

Tuesday, Sept. 17

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, Oct. 15 - [Agenda](#)

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, Nov. 19

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, Dec. 17

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Members of the North Dakota Children's Cabinet

Representative Michelle Strinden (Chair)
State House of Representatives

Representative Brandy Pyle
State House of Representatives

Senator Kathy Hogan
State Senate

Senator Michelle Axtman
State Senate

Honorable Lisa McEvers
Justice, North Dakota Supreme Court

Superintendent Kirsten Baesler
Superintendent, Department of Public Instruction

Maria Neset
Policy Advisor, Governor Burgum's Office

Wayne Salter
Commissioner, Dept. of Health and Human Services

Veronica Zietz
Director, Committee on Protection and Advocacy

Russel Riehl
Parent, Private Service Provider, or Other Community Interest

Kimberly Jacobson (Vice Chair)
Parent, Private Service Provider, or Other Community Interest

Janell Regimbal
Parent, Private Service Provider, or Other Community Interest

Shawn Huss
Parent, Private Service Provider, or Other Community Interest

Daniell Breland
Tribal Nations Representative

Forum for Youth Investment

Meghan McCann
Vice President, State Policy

Dana Kunzman
Senior Director, Cross-Systems Consulting

Other Acknowledgements & Gratitude

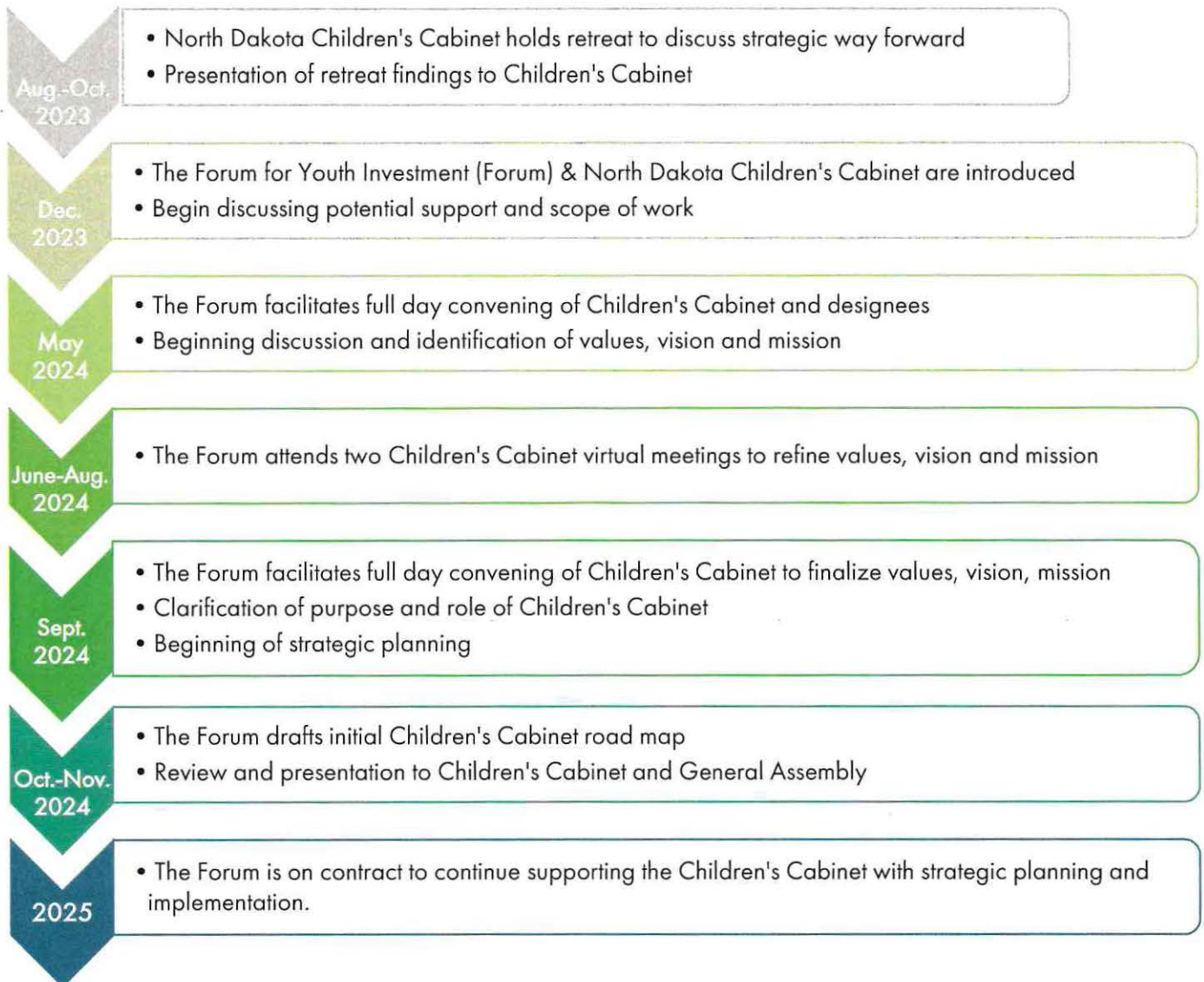
The Children's Cabinet would like to recognize Governor Doug Burgum for his commitment to advancing the work around children's systems in partnership with the three branches of government. The strategic plan as well as the collaborative effort ahead would not have been possible without his support to allocate funding from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funds. These funds have and will continue to be instrumental in facilitating the critical work across agencies alongside state and local partners to support the children and families of North Dakota.

Enabling Statute

N.D. Cent. Code § 50-06-43.1. Children's cabinet - Membership - Duties - Report

1. The children's cabinet is created to assess, guide, and coordinate the care for children across the state's branches of government and the tribal nations.
 2. The children's cabinet consists of the following members:
 - a. The governor, or the governor's designee;
 - b. The chief justice of the supreme court, or the chief justice's designee;
 - c. A member of the house of representatives from an even-numbered legislative district and a member of the house of representatives from an odd-numbered legislative district appointed by the majority leader of the house of representatives to serve two-year terms;
 - d. A member of the senate from an even-numbered legislative district and a member of the senate from an odd-numbered legislative district appointed by the majority leader of the senate to serve two-year terms;
 - e. The superintendent of public instruction, or the superintendent's designee;
 - f. The director of the committee on protection and advocacy, or the director's designee;
 - g. The commissioner of the department, or the commissioner's designee.
 - h. A representative of the tribal nations in the state, who is appointed by the governor; and
 - i. Four individuals representing parents, private service providers, or other community interests, who are appointed by the governor to serve a term of two years, at the pleasure of the governor, and who are entitled to reimbursement from the department for travel and lodging at the same rate as provided for state officers and employees.
 3. The chairman of legislative management shall appoint one of the legislative members to serve as the presiding officer of the cabinet. The children's cabinet shall select one of its members to serve as the vice-presiding officer. The cabinet shall meet at least quarterly. Additional meetings may be held at the discretion of the presiding officer.
 4. The children's cabinet shall:
 - a. Coordinate broad-based leadership across programs, agencies, branches of government, and tribal nations to meet the needs of children;
 - b. Develop strategies to address gaps or needs regarding early care and education, medical and behavioral health, community, child welfare, and juvenile justice;
 - c. Develop strategies to provide for the full continuum of care in the delivery of services, including promotion, prevention, early identification and intervention, service delivery, and recovery;
 - d. Seek to engage cooperation across public and private service providers;
 - e. Provide a comprehensive vision for how and where children are best served, attending to children in a respectful and relevant manner;
 - f. Seek strategies to provide services to children without consideration of prior engagement with juvenile services;
 - g. Provide for the active participation of consumers and providers statewide on advisory committees;
 - h. Receive information and recommendations from the department of health and human services, department of corrections and rehabilitation, and other state agencies; and
 - i. Provide an annual report to the legislative management and governor regarding the activities and findings of the cabinet.
 5. The department shall provide the children's cabinet with staffing and administrative services.
 6. A member of the cabinet who is not a state employee is entitled to reimbursement for mileage and expenses as provided by law for state officers and employees, to be paid by the department. A state employee who is a member of the cabinet is entitled to receive that employee's regular salary and is entitled to reimbursement for mileage and expenses to be paid by the employing agency.
- A member of the cabinet who is a member of the legislative assembly is entitled to receive per diem compensation at the rate provided under section 54-35-10 for each day performing official duties of the cabinet. The legislative council shall pay the per diem compensation and reimbursement for travel and expenses as provided by law for any member of the cabinet who is a member of the legislative assembly.

Process Overview



Values, Vision, Mission & S.O.A.R

Values

- 360 Communication: the Children's Cabinet will engage in open, honest and meaningful communication that leads to positive results for all children and families.
- Optimism: the Children's Cabinet will be solutions-focused, adopting a can-do attitude while avoiding the impulse to admire the problem.
- Accountability: the Children's Cabinet accepts clear accountability for leadership and allows all members to know their role and responsibility while sharing a common vision.

Vision: The North Dakota Children's Cabinet ensures that all children are prepared and successful, equipped with the skills, knowledge, and resilience to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Mission: The North Dakota Children's Cabinet collaborates to elevate what works and drive towards a seamless network of services and supports that meet the needs of every child and family.

S.O.A.R. Analysis

	Internal	External
Current	Strengths Multidisciplinary/Three Branches Varied experiences: lived/work Good listeners Committed to the cause Organized momentum Know each other/meet regularly Similar values Diverse backgrounds Genuine willingness and want to work together Genuine openness to ideas Turnover has not impacted function	Opportunities Cross-agency collaboration became more "real"/deeper during pandemic response. ND is small enough and has systems that are straightforward enough that change is possible. We are often 1 degree removed from being able to make changes happen State with strong economy and strong financial position Children's Cabinet is in statute and has a home in Gov. office – confers respect.
Future	Aspirations Create a safe space for voices to be heard Advocate Improve communication and inclusion through the process We can have an impact Broaden our network through working groups on specific topics Create/broaden engagement Unified voice	Results Be the leader for Children's systems in U.S. Support families Share success and replicating success cross-system Children and their families are resilient When kids make mistakes there are restorative paths available to them People know how to advocate for themselves and access services they need Healthy, safe children and families Dashboard of well-being. Synergy between systems: the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Foster a culture of continuous quality improvement.

Current Children's Cabinet Charter

Name of Coordinating Body: North Dakota Children's Cabinet

Administrative Home: Department of Health and Human Services provides administrative support

Staffing: No permanent staff support.

Funding: \$45/day compensation and travel expenses

Membership: 12 members appointed by the Governor, and their designees

Structure:

Co-Chaired by legislative representatives.

Meeting Cadence: Monthly

History:

Year Established: 2019

Enabling Method: N.D. Cent. Code § 50-06-43.1

Primary Duties:

- Coordinate leadership
- Develop strategies to close gaps, create full continuum of care in service delivery, provide services regardless of system involvement
- Engage public and private providers
- Vision for how and where children are best served
- Participation of children, youth and families
- Receive information and recommendations from HHS, DOCR and other agencies.

Goals & Objectives: Pending (see below)

- Strategic Goal 1: strengthen foundational elements of the Children's Cabinet and promote statewide.
- Strategic Goal 2: identify and elevate promising practices to advance a seamless network of services and supports throughout North Dakota.
- Strategic Goal 3: define, measure and report out on the status of child-wellbeing in North Dakota.

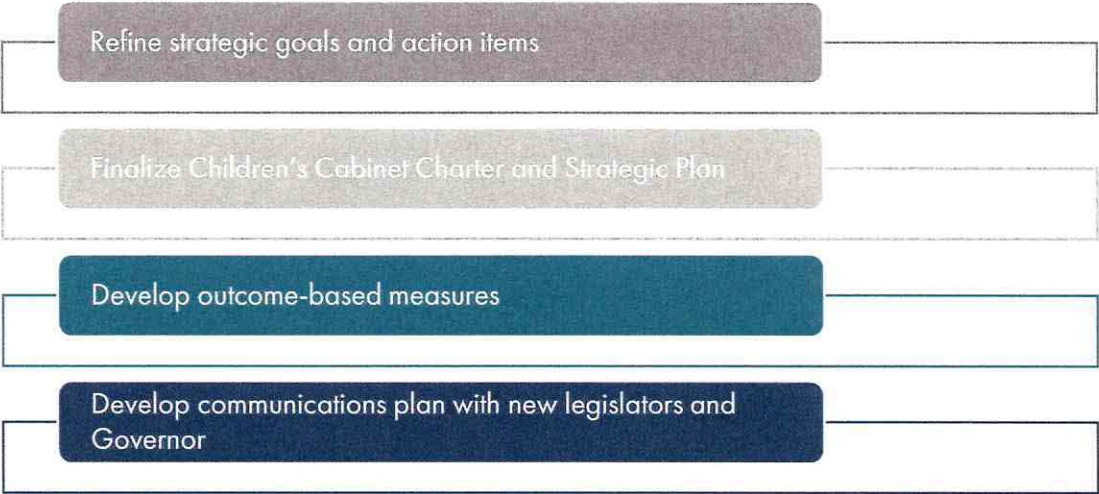
Reporting Requirement: annually on activities and findings

Links: <https://www.hhs.nd.gov/cfs/childrens-cabinet>

Strategic Plan [DRAFT]

Strategic Goal #1: strengthen foundational elements of the Children's Cabinet and promote statewide.			
Key Actions	Accountable	By When?	First step
Develop a North Dakota Children's Cabinet Logo			
Refine Children's Cabinet enabling statute: N.D. Cent. Code § 50-06-43.1			
Move Children's Cabinet to the Governor's Office			
Enlist thought partners and create feedback loop among youth ecosystem stakeholders			
Define focus of Children's Cabinet to "children" as ages 0-21; families with children; youth in key transition stages			
Establish a regular cadence of Children's Cabinet meetings and calendar deliverables (ex. Report xyz by x)			
Creating subcommittees to do the deep dives and report back with recs			
Create communication strategy for dissemination of Children's Cabinet initiatives			
Strategic Goal #2: identify and elevate promising practices to advance a seamless network of services and supports throughout North Dakota.			
Showcase innovations from North Dakota and other states			
Identify key criteria for promising practices and expected effects for positive outcomes			
Select early adopters for replication			
Curate repository of reports from state children-serving agencies (one-stop shop of resources).			
Identify gaps in services (Gap, Bridge or Gate?)			
Consult with: subject-matter experts, people with lived experience and industry leaders.			
Identify "risk points" when children and families transition between systems			
Create a visual to show the full continuum of services available			
Strategic Goal #3: Define, measure and report out on the status of child-wellbeing in North Dakota.			
Examine disaggregated data			
Establish outcome benchmarks / identify key outcome indicators			
Develop Annual Data Report on status of wellbeing in ND			
Identify and explore existing data: Lighthouse Project, Kids Count Data			
Define child well-being: What are we measuring against? What is the % change we hope to see?			
Develop reporting structure and infrastructure to house and report the data.			
Explore external partners: Kids Count (Annie E. Casey Foundation), Children's Funding Project			

Next Steps



Appendix A: Meeting Agendas

North Dakota Children's Cabinet Agenda

Monday, May 6, 2024

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Purpose: Set the North Dakota Children's Cabinet mission and vision to guide a strategic plan.

Objectives:

- Identify purpose, mission, and vision for the North Dakota Children's Cabinet.
- Connect with colleagues in an open dialogue and brainstorming.
- Begin thinking about long-term strategy and goals for the North Dakota Children's Cabinet.

Introductions [9:00-9:45]

- Name, affiliation, favorite summer vacation activity?
- Review agenda for the day and strategic planning process.

Community Agreements [9:45-10:00]

- We agree to:
 - Speak from our own experience.
 - Honor the complexity of this work.
 - Be imperfect in our learning and sharing.
 - Recognize each other's learning journey AND acknowledge impact.
 - Lean into conversations AND create space for all voices (move in, move out)
 - What's said here stays here, what's learned here leaves here.
 - Expect and accept non-closure.
- What else do we need to feel supported?
- If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

Children's Cabinet Strategic Planning – National Landscape [10:00-10:20]

Break [10:20-10:30]

Mission & Vision [10:30-12:00]

- What do we mean by mission & vision?
- Vision Prompt: In 5 years, what do you want the headline to be for this work?

Lunch on Your Own [12:00-1:00]

Mission & Vision [1:00-3:30]

- Revisit 2023 Retreat Priorities, Challenges and Opportunities

Closing [3:30-4:00]

- Next steps
- Closing reflection

North Dakota Children's Cabinet Agenda

Monday, September 16, 2024
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Purpose: Approve the vision, mission and values. Begin strategic planning and charter development.

Objectives:

- Approve mission and vision for the North Dakota Children's Cabinet.
- Connect with colleagues in an open dialogue and brainstorming.
- Begin short and long-term strategic planning for the North Dakota Children's Cabinet.

Introductions [9:00-9:30]

- Name, affiliation, favorite thing about back to school?
- Review agenda for the day and strategic planning process.

Community Agreements [9:30-9:45]

- We agree to:
 - Speak from our own experience.
 - Honor the complexity of this work.
 - Be imperfect in our learning and sharing.
 - Recognize each other's learning journey AND acknowledge impact.
 - Lean into conversations AND create space for all voices (move in, move out)
 - What's said here stays here, what's learned here leaves here.
 - Expect and accept non-closure.
- What else do we need to feel supported?
- If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

Children's Cabinet Charter Development [9:45-10:45]

- Identify role and purpose of Children's Cabinet
- Establish communication and working norms.

Break [10:45-11:00]

Charter Development Continued and/or Begin Narrowing Strategic Goals [11:00-12:00]

Lunch on Your Own [12:00-1:00]

Strategic Goal and Action Step Identification [1:00-2:45]

Closing [2:45-3:00]

- Next steps
- Closing reflection

Appendix B: The Forum for Youth Investment's Children's Cabinet Network

No single support or program is enough to ensure children and youth are on track developmentally, educationally, socially, and emotionally. Children's Cabinets are systematically changing the fragmented ways that state and local governments do business for children and youth. Since 2004, The Forum for Youth Investment has engaged with these coordinating bodies to support their operation and share lessons learned with the youth development field.

Unfortunately, the manner in which rules, regulations and government structures are crafted makes it difficult for leaders to create and implement coordinated programs and services that address the comprehensive needs of young people. But there is much that can be done to simplify and untangle the patchwork of policies and funding streams so they are more efficient and effective.

The Forum's policy staff support Children's Cabinets, also known as councils, commissions or P-20 councils. Children's Cabinets are typically made up of the heads of all government agencies with child- and youth-serving programs. They meet regularly to coordinate services, develop a common set of outcomes, and collaboratively decide upon and implement plans to foster the well-being of young people.

Members of this network receive technical assistance, share best practices and learn more about tools that bring efficiency and effectiveness to their efforts to improve outcomes for young people. Below are the states currently engaged in the Children's Cabinet Network.

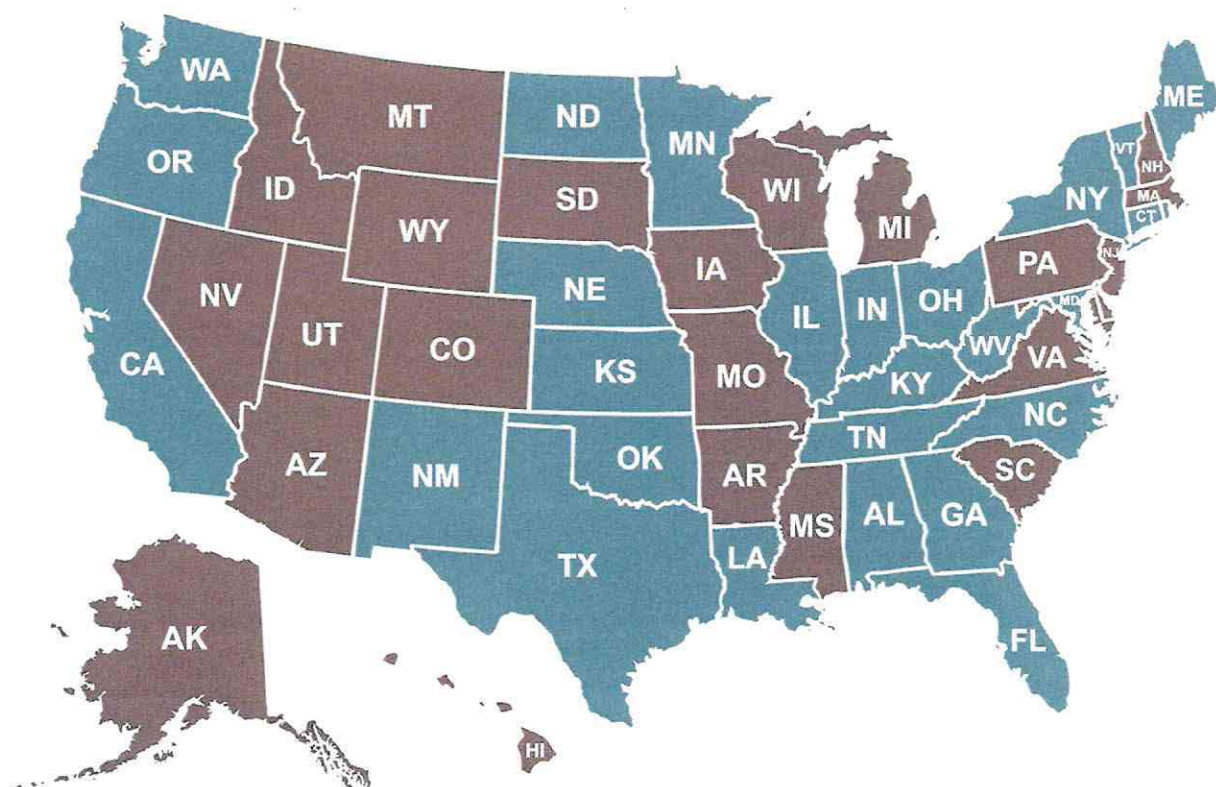


Figure 1. States engaged in the Forum for Youth Investment's Children's Cabinet Network.

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

SB 2176
3/19/2025

Relating to the children's cabinet; to provide for a legislative management report; and to provide an appropriation.

9:01 a.m. Chairman Heinert called the meeting to order.

Members Present: Chairman Heinert, Vice Chairman Schreiber- Beck, Representatives, Conmy, Hager, Hatlestad, Hauck, Heilman, Jonas, Longmuir, Maki, Marchall, Morton, Novak, Osowski

Discussion Topics:

- Committee action

9:03 a.m. Representative Hager proposed removing the appropriation.

9:03 a.m. Representative Novak seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Pat D. Heinert	Y
Representative Cynthia Schreiber-Beck	AB
Representative Liz Conmy	Y
Representative LaurieBeth Hager	Y
Representative Patrick R. Hatlestad	Y
Representative Dori Hauck	Y
Representative Matthew Heilman	Y
Representative Jim Jonas	Y
Representative Donald W. Longmuir	Y
Representative Roger A. Maki	Y
Representative Andrew Marschall	Y
Representative Desiree Morton	Y
Representative Anna S. Novak	Y
Representative Doug Osowski	Y

Motion carried: 13-0-1

9:04 a.m. Representative Hager moved a Do Pass as Amended.

9:04 a.m. Representative Jones seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Pat D. Heinert	Y
Representative Cynthia Schreiber-Beck	AB
Representative Liz Conmy	Y
Representative LaurieBeth Hager	Y
Representative Patrick R. Hatlestad	Y
Representative Dori Hauck	Y
Representative Matthew Heilman	Y
Representative Jim Jonas	Y
Representative Donald W. Longmuir	Y
Representative Roger A. Maki	Y
Representative Andrew Marschall	Y
Representative Desiree Morton	Y
Representative Anna S. Novak	Y
Representative Doug Osowski	Y

Motion Carried 13-0-1

9:05 a.m. Representative Marschall to place SB 2176 on the Consent Calendar.

9:05 a.m. Representative Hager seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Pat D. Heinert	Y
Representative Cynthia Schreiber-Beck	AB
Representative Liz Conmy	Y
Representative LaurieBeth Hager	Y
Representative Patrick R. Hatlestad	Y
Representative Dori Hauck	Y
Representative Matthew Heilman	Y
Representative Jim Jonas	Y
Representative Donald W. Longmuir	Y
Representative Roger A. Maki	Y
Representative Andrew Marschall	Y
Representative Desiree Morton	Y
Representative Anna S. Novak	Y
Representative Doug Osowski	Y

Motion carried: 13-0-1

Bill carrier: Representative Hauck

9:06 a.m. Chairman Heinert closed the hearing.

Leah Kuball, Committee Clerk

March 19, 2025

Sixty-ninth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO
FIRST ENGROSSMENT**

3/19/25 VC
1 of 4

ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2176

Introduced by

Senators Axtman, Hogan

Representatives O'Brien, Pyle

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-07 of the North Dakota
2 Century Code, relating to the children's cabinet and designated working groups; to repeal
3 section 50-06-43.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the children's cabinet; and to
4 provide for a legislative management report; ~~and to provide an appropriation.~~

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

6 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 54-07 of the North Dakota Century Code is created
7 and enacted as follows:

8 **Children's cabinet - Membership - Duties - Working groups - Report.**

- 9 1. The children's cabinet is created to assess, guide, and coordinate the care for children
10 and families across the state's branches of government and the tribal nations.
- 11 2. The children's cabinet is composed of:
- 12 a. The governor, or the governor's designee;
- 13 b. The chief justice of the supreme court, or the chief justice's designee;
- 14 c. Two members of the house of representatives, appointed by the majority leader
15 of the house of representatives to serve two-year terms;
- 16 d. Two members of the senate, appointed by the majority leader of the senate to
17 serve two-year terms;
- 18 e. The superintendent of public instruction, or the superintendent's designee;
- 19 f. The director of the committee on protection and advocacy, or the director's
20 designee;

Sixty-ninth
Legislative Assembly

- 1 g. The commissioner of the department of health and human services, or the
2 commissioner's designee;
- 3 h. A representative of the tribal nations in the state, who is appointed by the
4 governor; and
- 5 i. Five individuals, appointed by the governor to serve a term of two years at the
6 pleasure of the governor, consisting of:
- 7 (1) A local school representative;
8 (2) A local special education representative;
9 (3) A human service zone director;
10 (4) A representative of a private agency that provides direct services to
11 vulnerable children; and
12 (5) A parent.
- 13 3. The governor, in collaboration with the chairman of the legislative management, shall
14 appoint as the presiding officer of the children's cabinet a member of the governor's
15 cabinet or a legislator serving on the children's cabinet. The children's cabinet shall
16 select one of its members to serve as the vice-presiding officer.
- 17 4. The children's cabinet shall meet at least quarterly. Additional meetings may be held at
18 the discretion of the presiding officer.
- 19 5. The children's cabinet shall:
- 20 a. Coordinate broad-based leadership across programs, agencies, branches of
21 government, and tribal nations to meet the needs of children and families;
- 22 b. Develop strategies to address gaps or needs regarding early care and education,
23 medical and behavioral health, community, child welfare, and juvenile justice;
- 24 c. Develop strategies to provide for the full continuum of care in the delivery of
25 services, including promotion, prevention, early identification and intervention,
26 service delivery, and recovery;
- 27 d. Seek to engage cooperation across public and private service providers;
- 28 e. Provide a comprehensive vision for how and where children are best served,
29 attending to children and families in a respectful and relevant manner;
- 30 f. Seek strategies to provide services to children without consideration of prior
31 engagement with juvenile services;

- 1 g. Provide for the active participation of consumers and providers statewide on
- 2 advisory committees;
- 3 h. Receive information and recommendations from the department of health and
- 4 human services, department of corrections and rehabilitation, and other state
- 5 agencies;
- 6 i. Establish and oversee designated working groups to develop policies impacting
- 7 children and families; and
- 8 j. Provide an annual report to the legislative management and governor regarding
- 9 the activities and findings of:
- 10 (1) The children's cabinet; and
- 11 (2) Other designated working groups on children and family issues.
- 12 6. The office of the governor shall provide staffing and administrative services for the
- 13 children's cabinet and coordinate with other designated working groups on children
- 14 and family issues.
- 15 7. a. The presiding officer of the children's cabinet may designate working groups and
- 16 appoint or remove liaisons to serve on the working groups.
- 17 b. A member of the children's cabinet or working group who is not a state employee
- 18 is entitled to reimbursement for mileage and expenses as provided by law for
- 19 state officers and employees, to be paid by the office of the governor.
- 20 c. A state employee who is a member of the children's cabinet or working group is
- 21 entitled to receive that employee's regular salary and is entitled to reimbursement
- 22 for mileage and expenses to be paid by the employing agency.
- 23 d. A member of the children's cabinet or working group who is a member of the
- 24 legislative assembly is entitled to receive per diem compensation at the rate
- 25 provided under section 54-35-10 for each day performing official duties of the
- 26 children's cabinet or working group. The legislative council shall pay the per diem
- 27 compensation and reimbursement for travel and such expenses as provided by
- 28 law for any member of the children's cabinet or working group who is a member
- 29 of the legislative assembly.

30 **SECTION 2. REPEAL.** Section 50-06-43.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is repealed.

- 1 ~~SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION—OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR—CHILDREN'S CABINET.~~
- 2 ~~There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise~~
- 3 ~~appropriated, the sum of \$220,000, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the office of~~
- 4 ~~the governor, for the purpose of administering the children's cabinet and coordinating~~
- 5 ~~designated working groups, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027.~~

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
ENGROSSED SB 2176**

Education Committee (Rep. Heinert, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS** ([25.1017.02002](#)) and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** and **BE PLACED ON THE CONSENT CALENDAR** (13 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). SB 2176 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

2025 SENATE HUMAN SERVICES

SB 2176

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

SB 2176
3/31/2025

Relating to the children's cabinet; and to provide for a legislative management report.

9:05 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:

- Conference Committee

9:05 a.m. Chairman Lee opened committee discussion on concurring with bill.

9:06 a.m. Chairman Lee closed the hearing.

Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk