

# **North Dakota K12 Coordination Council**

## **2025 Annual Report**

September, 2025

Letter from the Executive Director

Annual Accomplishments

Council Purpose

K12 Coordination Council Membership

Subcommittee Membership

Upcoming Meetings

Legal Reference – NDCC 15.1-01

Prepared by: North Dakota K12 Coordination Council



### **Continuous Improvement: A Priority**

The purpose of the North Dakota K12 Education Coordination Council, herein referred to as “the Council” is to create efficiencies—but, more importantly, to develop effective and innovative ways for educational professionals to collaborate in achieving our ultimate goal: providing more opportunities for every child to succeed in an ever-changing world.

This important work does not happen by accident. The Council is composed of twenty dedicated stakeholders representing a broad range of educational and professional backgrounds. Each member brings unique skills, experiences, and perspectives to the table. Our meetings are often lively and engaging yet always centered around a shared mission—to ensure that every North Dakota student gains the skills, knowledge, and dispositions necessary for lifelong success.

The Council’s subcommittees continue to lead focused efforts to support their identified goals. Each subcommittee develops an annual scope of work, meets regularly to review progress, and uses data to inform adjustments throughout the year. During the past year, the **Support and Innovation Subcommittee** advanced important legislative efforts, including the development of **Senate Bill 2263**, which sought to support statewide training for teachers in the mastery learning framework. Although this bill, sponsored by Senator Rauschenberger, did not pass, it successfully elevated awareness of innovative approaches that can be strengthened through interagency collaboration.

The Council also supported **Senate Bill 2262**, which was signed into law by Governor Armstrong. This legislation authorizes The Council to enter into contracts to support educational research and provides an appropriation to advance that work.

At the request of the North Dakota Legislature, the Council will be placing major emphasis this year on a statewide **study of student attendance**—not only examining barriers that impact learning and school progress, but also exploring how schools are addressing attendance concerns in ways that support both students and educators. This study aligns with our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and doing what is right for North Dakota’s students.

In addition, the Council is developing a **comprehensive communication plan** to ensure that members effectively share information, discussions, and findings with the agencies and

organizations they represent. Strengthening these communication pathways will enhance coordination across systems and sustain meaningful impact.

The design of the Council is both visionary and practical. By bringing together experts from multiple agencies, the Council serves as a vital liaison among the Governor's Office, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, and educational stakeholders across the state.

I deeply appreciate the commitment of every individual who serves on the K12 Education Coordination Council. Together, we are linking agencies and organizations with one common thread—our students. We have accomplished much, but there is still important work ahead. Thank you for your continued partnership and support as we strive to make a lasting difference in education across North Dakota.

**Dr. Mark Vollmer**

Executive Director

North Dakota K12 Education Coordination Council



## **2025 Annual Report List of Accomplishments**

### **Successful Passage of SB 2262**

The passage of Senate Bill 2262 strengthened the work of the K12 Coordination Council by supporting research through contracted studies. All subcommittee research efforts continue to align with the mission and vision of the full Council, emphasizing collaboration and continuous improvement across North Dakota's education system.

### **Support and Innovation Subcommittee**

The Support and Innovation Subcommittee advanced awareness and understanding of Mastery Framework techniques to better support students at all grade levels. The committee continues its research into effective programs that promote continuous improvement, with the ultimate goal of increasing graduation rates and ensuring more students graduate **Choice Ready**.

### **Aspirational Goals Subcommittee**

This subcommittee maintains a focus on student achievement through ongoing analysis of multiple data sources to track progress toward established goals. Emphasizing growth in all areas of education, the committee ensures alignment between its goals and those set by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction to foster statewide consistency and accountability.

### **Statewide Projects, Duplication, and Replication Subcommittee**

This subcommittee supported research into workforce shortages across North Dakota, extending beyond the teaching profession. The group continues to investigate the implementation and effectiveness of statewide projects to determine their impact and identify potential duplication of services within the state's educational systems.

### **Upcoming Work**

- A focused effort on improving student attendance, as recommended by the North Dakota State Legislature.
- A renewed emphasis on clear, transparent communication within the organization to ensure the Council's work remains open for review and collaboration.
- Continued attention to student performance through regularly monitored aspirational goals.
- Support for all aspects of education—including educators, families, and students—with an enhanced focus on advancing opportunities for student success.

# PK-12 Education Strategic Vision Framework

**Our vision is that all students will graduate choice ready with the knowledge, skills, and disposition to be successful**

**We will make progress toward this vision by achieving these long-term outcomes for students**

- *Increase students who enter kindergarten prepared to learn, and increase the number of kindergarten classrooms that meet the needs of every learner*
- *Increase students who demonstrate reading proficiency in 3rd grade*
- *Increase students who meet expected learning gains each year*
- *Increase students who engage in learning*
- *Increase students who graduate Choice Ready*
- *Reduce the disparity in achievement for students with disabilities, students in poverty, and Native American students*

**We will drive improvement on these outcomes through focused effort within these strategic themes**

- *Quality early childhood experiences*
- *Support for safe and healthy behaviors*
- *Career awareness, exploration, and development*
- *Quality education personnel*
- *Quality student-centered instruction*



## K12 Education Coordination Council Committee Members

|                                                                                           |                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b><u>Lt. Governor Michelle Strinden</u></b><br>Governor's Office                         | <b><u>Superintendent Kirsten Baesler</u></b><br>Superintendent of Public Instruction     |
| <b><u>Senator Donald Schaible</u></b><br>Senate Majority Legislative<br>Assembly Member   | <b><u>Senator Ryan Braunberger</u></b><br>Senate Minority Legislative<br>Assembly Member |
| <b><u>Representative Pat Heinert</u></b><br>House Majority Legislative<br>Assembly Member | <b><u>Representative David Richter</u></b><br>Legislative Management<br>Assemble Member  |
| <b><u>Amy De Kok</u></b><br>North Dakota School Boards Association                        | <b><u>Justin Fryer</u></b><br>North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders<br>(NDCLE)     |
| <b><u>Sonia Meehl</u></b><br>State Board for Career and Technical Education               | <b><u>Nick Archuleta</u></b><br>North Dakota United                                      |
| <b><u>Jeremy Mehlhoff</u></b><br>Public School Principal Representative                   | <b><u>Brandt Dick</u></b><br>North Dakota Small Organized Schools                        |
| <b><u>Angel Lindseth</u></b><br>North Dakota School Counselor Association                 | <b><u>Luke Schaefer</u></b><br>Regional Education Association Director<br>Council Chair  |
| <b><u>Beth Slette</u></b><br>Public School Administrator Representative                   | <b><u>Melissa Vollmer</u></b><br>Special Education Unit Director<br>Representative       |
| <b><u>Sara Medalen</u></b><br>Public School Elementary Teacher Representative             | <b><u>Dr. Sarah Ricks</u></b><br>Public School Secondary Teacher Representative          |
|                                                                                           | <b><u>Vacant</u></b><br>Tribal School Representative                                     |

## **Subcommittee Member List:**

### **Executive Committee:**

**Executive Director: Mark Vollmer**

**Members:**

1. Luke Schaefer
2. Supt. Kirsten Baesler/ Supt. Levi Bachmeier
3. Maria Neset
4. Sarah Ricks
5. Melissa Vollmer
6. Senator Ryan Braunberger
7. Rep. David Richter

### **Aspirational Goals:**

**Chair: Supt. Kirsten Baesler/Levi Bachmeier**

**Members:**

1. Maria Neset
2. Justin Fryer
3. Angel Lindseth
4. Rep. David Richter

**Ex-Officio:**

1. Dawn Ulmer
2. Stan Schauer
3. Laurie Matzke
4. Ellie Shockley

### **Statewide Projects, Duplication & Replication:**

**Chair: Brandt Dick**

**Members:**

1. Rep. Pat Heinert
2. Lucas Greff
3. Sara Medalen
4. Senator Don Schaible
5. Jeremy Mehlhoff

**Ex-Officio:**

1. Dawn Ulmer
2. Laurie Matzke

### **Support & Innovation**

**Chair: Sarah Ricks**

**Members:**

1. Senator Ryan Braunberger
2. Beth Slette
3. Melissa Vollmer
4. Sonia Meehl

**Ex-Officio:**

1. Luke Schaefer
2. Wayde Sick

### **Review of Initiatives (Special Topic Working Group)**

**Chair:**

**Members:**

1. Brandt Dick
2. Jeremy Mehlhoff
3. Sara Medalen
4. Nick Archuletta

### **Legislative Approval Initiatives (Special Topic Working Group)**

**Chair: Luke Schaefer**

**Members:**

1. Supt. Kirsten Baesler / Supt. Levi Bachmeier
2. Maria Neset
3. Rep. David Richter
4. Sarah Ricks
5. Stanley Schauer
6. Amy De Kok

## **North Dakota K12 Coordination Council**

### **2025 Subcommittee Proposed Scope of Work**

#### **Aspirational Goals**

1. Review and update current council goals.
2. Recommend potential updates to strategic vision outcomes, focusing on:
  - Mathematics
  - Absenteeism

#### **Statewide Projects, Duplication, and Replication**

##### ***Guiding Question:***

What statewide agencies and support systems exist to address barriers and help ensure students stay engaged in and attending school?

##### ***Focus of Work:***

The subcommittee will begin by identifying barriers to student engagement and attendance. Once barriers are clearly defined, the group will transition to identifying the agencies and support systems that help students overcome these barriers.

#### **Support and Innovation**

The Support and Innovation Subcommittee will engage with the following topics and tasks over the next biennium:

1. Model Schools and Districts: Identify exemplar schools or districts demonstrating high achievement and high growth in student attendance, family engagement, and student engagement. Examine the policies, practices, and structures contributing to their success, and create a plan to share these effective practices statewide.
2. “Learn Everywhere” Opportunities: Investigate how “Learn Everywhere” initiatives are being utilized across the state and assess their impact on student engagement and learning outcomes.
3. Artificial Intelligence and Engagement: Explore how artificial intelligence (AI) is influencing student engagement, both positively and negatively, within schools.
4. Mastery Frameworks: Continue to monitor and highlight schools implementing mastery learning frameworks across North Dakota.

# K-12 Education Coordination Council

## 2025-2026 Meeting Dates

### Full Council

- September 18
- November 13

### Executive Committee

1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month @ 11:00 am – 12:00 pm (central)

#### 2025

- Aug 5
- Sept 2
- Oct 7
- Nov 4
- Dec 2

#### 2026

- Jan 6
- Feb 3
- Mar 3
- Apr 7
- May 5
- June 2

### Statewide Projects, Duplication & Replication

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month @ 3:00 – 4:00 pm (central)

#### 2025

- Sept 10
- Oct 8
- Nov 12
- Dec 10

#### 2026

- Jan 14
- Feb 11
- Mar 11
- Apr 8
- May 13
- June 10

### Support and Innovation

3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month @ 2:00-03:30 pm (central)

#### 2025

- Sept 15
- Oct 20
- Nov 17
- Dec 15

#### 2026

- Jan 12
- Feb 9
- Mar 16
- Apr 20
- May 18
- June 15

### Aspirational Goals

1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month @ 10:00 am – 11:00 pm (central)

#### 2025

- Aug 5
- Sept 2
- Oct 7
- Nov 4
- Dec 2

#### 2026

- Jan 6
- Feb 3
- Mar 3
- Apr 7
- May 5
- June 2

**TITLE 15.1  
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**CHAPTER 15.1-01  
STATE BOARD OF PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION**

**15.1-01-01. State board of public school education - Composition.**

1. The state board of public school education consists of the superintendent of public instruction and:
  - a. An individual representing Barnes, Cass, Grand Forks, Griggs, Nelson, Steele, and Traill Counties;
  - b. An individual representing Benson, Bottineau, Cavalier, McHenry, Pembina, Pierce, Ramsey, Renville, Rolette, Towner, and Walsh Counties;
  - c. An individual representing Dickey, Emmons, LaMoure, Logan, McIntosh, Ransom, Richland, and Sargent Counties;
  - d. An individual representing Burleigh, Eddy, Foster, Kidder, McLean, Sheridan, Stutsman, and Wells Counties;
  - e. An individual representing Burke, Divide, McKenzie, Mountrail, Ward, and Williams Counties; and
  - f. An individual representing Adams, Billings, Bowman, Dunn, Golden Valley, Grant, Hettinger, Mercer, Morton, Oliver, Sioux, Slope, and Stark Counties.
2. All board members other than the superintendent of public instruction must be qualified electors and must reside in one of the counties they represent.
3. The governor shall appoint new board members from a list of names submitted by a committee consisting of the president of North Dakota united, the president of the North Dakota council of educational leaders, and the president of the North Dakota school boards association. Two of the state board members must be members of the North Dakota school boards association.
4. Appointees serve for six-year terms, staggered so that the terms of two members expire on June thirtieth of each even-numbered year.
5. If a vacancy occurs, the governor shall appoint an individual to serve for the duration of the unexpired term.
6. Each member of the board is entitled to receive, from the biennial appropriation for the superintendent of public instruction, compensation in the amount of sixty-two dollars and fifty cents per day and reimbursement for expenses, as provided by law for state officers, if the member is attending board meetings or performing duties directed by the board. The compensation provided for in this section may not be paid to any member who receives a salary or other compensation as an employee or official of this state if the individual is serving on the board by virtue of the individual's state office or state employment.
7. The superintendent of public instruction shall serve as the executive director and secretary of the board. The superintendent shall call meetings as necessary, carry out the policies of the board, and employ personnel necessary to perform the board's duties.
8. The board shall annually elect one member to serve as the chairman.

**15.1-01-02. Joint meetings - State board of public school education - State board of higher education - Education standards and practices board - State board for career and technical education.**

The state board of public school education, the state board of higher education, the education standards and practices board, and the state board for career and technical education shall meet together at least once each year at the call of the superintendent of public instruction, the commissioner of higher education, the executive director of the education standards and practices board, and the director of career and technical education for the purposes of:

1. Coordinating elementary and secondary education programs, career and technical education programs, and higher education programs;
2. Establishing high standards and expectations of students at all levels of the education continuum;
3. Ensuring that all students have access to challenging curricula;
4. Ensuring that the individuals instructing students at all levels of the education continuum are highly qualified and capable;
5. Cooperating in the provision of professional growth and development opportunities for individuals instructing students at all levels of the education continuum; and
6. Ensuring cooperation in any other jointly beneficial project or program.

**15.1-01-03. State board of public school education - Powers and duties.**

1. The state board of public school education shall:
  - a. Assist county committees in carrying out their duties.
  - b. Provide county committees with clerical assistance, plans of procedure, standards, data, maps, forms, and other materials, information, and services.
  - c. Appoint members to the county committee, if the county superintendent does not fulfill this duty, as provided for in section 15.1-10-01.
  - d. Provide oversight for regional education associations as required by chapter 15.1-09.1.
  - e. Establish and certify a North Dakota learning continuum to allow a district-approved, mastery framework policy to award units required under sections 15.1-21-01 and 15.1-21-02 and to waive unit instructional time requirements under section 15.1-21-03, upon the recommendation of the kindergarten through grade twelve education coordination council.
2. The state board of public school education may adopt rules in accordance with chapter 28-32.

**15.1-01-04. Kindergarten through grade twelve education coordination council.**

1. The state board of public school education shall oversee the creation and ongoing operation of the kindergarten through grade twelve education coordination council.
2. The council consists of:
  - a. Four members of the legislative assembly, two members from each chamber of the legislative assembly, one member selected by the respective majority leader of each chamber, one member selected by the minority leader of either chamber, and one member selected by the legislative management leader from the chamber from which the minority leader did not make a selection;
  - b. The governor or the governor's designee;
  - c. The superintendent of public instruction or the superintendent's designee;
  - d. The president of the state board for career and technical education or the president's designee;
  - e. The president of the board of the North Dakota council of educational leaders or the president's designee;
  - f. The president of the board of North Dakota united or the president's designee;
  - g. The president of the board of the North Dakota school boards association or the president's designee;
  - h. The president of the board of the North Dakota small organized schools or the president's designee;
  - i. The president of the board of the North Dakota school counselor association or the president's designee; and
  - j. The following gubernatorial appointees:
    - (1) An individual representing the statewide longitudinal data system committee;
    - (2) An individual representing tribal school interests;
    - (3) An individual employed as a public school administrator;
    - (4) An individual employed as a public school principal;

- (5) An individual employed as a public elementary school teacher;
  - (6) An individual employed as a public secondary school teacher;
  - (7) A director of a special education unit; and
  - (8) A director of a regional education association.
3. The term of office for a member appointed by the governor is four years. The governor may stagger the initial appointments to the council so no more than three members' terms expire in any year.
  4. The council shall select a presiding officer annually from among its members.
  5. A member of the council 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 council and to reimbursement for travel and expenses as provided by law, to be paid by the legislative council. A member of the council who is not a state employee is entitled to receive as compensation sixty-two dollars and fifty cents per day and to reimbursement of expenses as provided by law for state officers while attending meetings of the council, to be paid by the state board of public school education. A state employee who is a member of the council 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.
  6. The council may hire an executive director.
  7. The council shall:
    - a. Assist in the implementation, dissemination, and communication of the statewide strategic vision and evaluate progress toward meeting the identified goals and strategies.
    - b. Perform a continuous review of the effectiveness and efficiency of access and delivery of education services and programs in the state.
    - c. Identify opportunities for increased collaboration among state education entities and stakeholders.
    - d. Identify gaps or duplications in education services and programs and provide recommendations for addressing those gaps or duplications.
    - e. Study and evaluate new and emerging educational initiatives and trends and provide recommendations for policy changes to state entities or the legislative assembly if necessary.
    - f. Support the implementation, dissemination, and communication of local or regional educational initiatives and practices, including innovative education programs, on a statewide level.
    - g. Develop and utilize subcommittees as needed.
    - h. Seek advice and input from interested parties not appointed to the council as needed.
    - i. Review the North Dakota learning continuum and provide recommendations to the state board of public school education.
  8. The council shall meet at least six times per biennium.
  9. The council shall prepare and present an annual report of council activities to the state board of public school education and to the legislative management.