

K-12 Education Coordination Council Meeting Minutes

2 PM Tuesday, January 11, 2022 – Coteau Conference Room, State Capitol, Bismarck, ND

Council Members Present: Chairman Schaefer, Donna Fishbeck (designee for Superintendent Baesler), Senator Oban, Senator Davison, Nick Archuleta, Dr. Aimee Copas, Karl Lembke, Wayde Sick (designee for Jeff Fastnacht), Brandt Dick, Kevin Hoherz, Jen Weber, Maria Neset (designee for Governor Burgum).

Attending virtually: Marc Bluestone Sr., Superintendent Baesler, April Foth, Dr. Rupak Gandhi, Representative Heinert, Michelle Strand, Melissa Vollmer.

Present: Kayla Effertz Kleven, Alexis Baxley

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Schaefer at 2:03 PM. Chairman Schaefer indicated that all meetings would be special because they would not have been posted at the beginning of the year. He asked all members to submit agenda items two days before scheduled meetings in order to be included. He thanked members for attending. This is the first meeting on the calendar with a minimum of four every year. He thanked members for their time and effort over the last year and their persistence and dedication.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Schaefer asked if North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) Fiscal Director Jamie Mertz was present to report on finances or invoices. Jamie Mertz was not in attendance so it was decided to delay the report until the next meeting. Chairman Schaefer indicated the meeting minutes and invoices are in the consent agenda and he entertained a motion to approve the consent agenda. Karl Lembke made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Brandt Dick seconded the motion. Chairman Schaefer called for discussion. Hearing none, he called for a voice vote. The motion to approve the consent agenda, including the meeting minutes and the invoices, passed.

Council membership and duties recommendations

Members received written recommendations from the Legislative Approval Initiatives subcommittee on council membership and duties recommendations which were also in the meeting packet. (See Appendix A.) The executive committee and the Legislative Approval Initiatives committee spent time reviewing this. This council was tasked with studying the membership and duties and making a recommendation. Chairman Schaefer asked Representative Heinert if he wanted to add anything. Representative Heinert stated the document should speak for itself. Chairman Schaefer pointed out that there have been changes recommended and went over those changes. (See Appendix B.) The first change was a move from three to four members of the legislative assembly and a change from one member to two members from each chamber of the legislative assembly with one member selected by the respective majority leader of each chamber and one member selected by the respective minority leader of each chamber.

The next change comes under gubernatorial appointees. The slight change was from an individual representing a tribal school to representing tribal school interests. This was followed by an individual employed as a public elementary school teacher and an individual employed as a public secondary school teacher. This would be an additional member to the council. "G" is recommended to be stricken, "a one-stop communication and information hub" from the duties. The council would also shift from (meeting) four times per calendar year to six times per biennium. Schaefer asked for thoughts on these recommendations and suggestions for additions and deletions. Dr. Fishbeck stated Superintendent Baesler would like some input on term limits and membership by Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB) in terms of their role.

Chairman Schaefer first talked about ESPB and the science of reading and the work the agency does with the credentialing of science of reading. He also talked about the discussion the executive committee had about membership groups and how to determine which groups to add. ESPB operates on its own set of guidelines and representation and they contribute to the betterment of education in North Dakota. One consideration would be to add a member from the ESPB. Chairman Schaefer asked if Superintendent Baesler had a specific recommendation.

Chairman Schaefer stated that when a motion is made, the council might need to consider this addition in the motion. Maria Neset clarified that in the specific example of the science of reading, the K12 Coordination Council didn't put any weight behind it because it came in the middle of the (legislative) session; the K12 Coordination Council had not been asked for support or recommendation for that specific one. She clarified the council called in the necessary people when recommendations were needed. She is not necessarily opposed to ESPB. Chairman Schaefer felt it does allow the council to involve the contributions of another agency without having them become a member of the council. Chairman Schaefer asked for questions. There were none.

Chairman Schaefer asked Executive Director Kayla Effertz Kleven if she had information on term limits, She said the only members who have limits are the governor's appointees. The others don't because they are named in law by position. The governor appointees' term limit is four years. The existing language states that the governor may stagger the initial appointments to the council so no more than three members' terms expire in any year. Chairman Schaefer commented that the members' terms were staggered in the first appointment.

This information is being presented as a co-recommendation from the Legislative Approval Initiatives committee and the executive committee. Chairman Schaefer entertained a motion to approve the recommended action. Alexis Baxley questioned what the issue is. It was explained that it is to clarify term limits. Chairman Schaefer went over the terms. Not all positions are termed positions. Many are named directly. Jen Weber's term was up in 2018 but she renewed. Some of the terms are staggered to avoid all members rolling over in the same year. Jen Weber asked a clarifying question about the term limits. Chairman Schaefer put this forth as a good question to discuss in the motion. Maria Neset thought it was specific to the person filling the role. Senator Oban clarified what is stated in law (4-year terms).

Chairman Schaefer proposed a motion to discuss term limits for an appointed position to three terms (or twelve years). Representative Heinert moved with a motion to adopt what was presented in written format. Maria Neset asked a clarifying question about the content to be included. Chairman Schaefer clarified that the whole written text would be included.

Chairman Schaefer reiterated that Representative Heinert made a motion for what was written and presented on paper and Senator Davison was a second. Chairman Schaefer called for discussion on the motion.

Senator Oban made a statement about constructive criticism of the number of responsibilities assigned to the council members. She wanted to clarify what the changes to the responsibilities of the subcommittee would be. It appears that the only change to the subcommittee's responsibilities would be the removal of the one-stop hub. Senator Oban questioned whether there was a discussion about the others.

Chairman Schaefer thought this task could be handled from the redesign of the subcommittees. Representative Heinert thought this was an unusual session with many tasks assigned to the committee which will probably not be the case going forward. He thought it could be handled with the addition of the two new members.

Chairman Schaefer asked for a roll call vote on the motion at hand. Motion carries.

Name	Vote (Y/N)
Dr. Jeff Fastnacht/or Wayde Sick	Y
Nick Archuleta	Y
Kevin Hoherz	Y
Michelle Strand	Y
Melissa Vollmer	Y
Dr. Aimee Copas	Y
Brandt Dick	Y
Karl Lembke/or Alexis Baxley	Y
Governor Burgum/or Maria Neset	Y
April Foth	Y
Dr. Rupak Gandhi	Y
Superintendent Baesler/Dr. Donna Fishbeck	Y
Dr. Jen Weber	Y
Marc Bluestone Sr.	Y
Representative Heinert	Y
Senator Oban	Y
Senator Davison	Y
Chairman Luke Schaefer	Y

Annual Report Review

Chairman Schaefer gave everyone a few moments to review the annual report. (See Appendix C.) Kayla Effertz Kleven then presented it. Chairman Schaefer asked Kayla to review updates and items of which to take note. Kayla discussed the timeline on page five. It shows the bulk of the work which happened and how it happened. There was a strong recognition of determining what needed to be reacted to. She highlighted page 6 at the bottom of the timeline – the predictor. That could change a little bit to take off in February and March the combined Interim Policy Committee meeting which could potentially be moved to April. It lists when we are convening as a full council.

The adopted goals are on page nine. There is a tentative (meeting) on January 11. This report is supposed to reflect the calendar year 2021. She suggested putting the Strategic Theme Goals (if they are approved) in the calendar to show that goals are being reached. There was a discussion about the content on pages thirteen through nineteen. Page thirteen is an initial summary of the program reviews with the innovation waivers. The information on legislative approval initiatives on page nineteen of the annual report includes the additional responsibilities of the K12 Coordination Council. It also serves the

purpose of a method for remembering processes. The letter to Jim Uppgren will be changed to reflect what was on the record.

The distribution of this annual report during an off-legislative year was discussed. It was questioned whether paper copies should be sent out. Executive Director Effertz Kleven was open to distribution ideas. Chairman Schaefer thanked her. He read the language change on the letter on page twenty. The comments were all submitted to the council collectively. Chairman Schaefer thanked Executive Director Kayla Effertz Kleven for putting together the report. It was noted that the report needs to be approved before being distributed.

Chairman Schaefer encouraged a motion for discussion. Dr. Rupak Gandhi proposed a motion to accept the report as presented. Dr. Aimee Copas seconded the motion. Dr. Copas asked if there was a budget to mail paper copies of the report to legislators. There was group discussion on possible distribution methods. Chairman Schaefer suggested a digital distribution would be useful. Dr. Donna Fishbeck suggested making hard copies available to individuals that request one. Maria Neset feels the report validates the work the K12 Coordination Council is doing. She stressed the importance of all legislators receiving either a digital or paper copy to highlight the council's work.

Senator Oban suggested that information presented as part of strategic conversations would be more effective than sending it by regular mail. Representative Heinert agreed with the suggestion. He asked if the information would be presented to the Interim Education Committee. Chairman Schaefer indicated it will be presented at a joint meeting of the K12 Council and the interim legislative education policy committee meeting. Chairman Schaefer suggested 100 hard copies be made available.

Chairman Schaefer asked if CCSO would like some hard copies. Representative Heinert thought digital copies would be sufficient and the agencies could print their own copies. Alexis Baxley thought paper copies by February would be useful. It was decided 100 copies would be sufficient for now. Chairman Schaefer said there was a first and second on the motion to approve the draft of the Annual Report adopting the key changes which were outlined. No further discussion. Roll call vote. Amy Copas made the motion. Brandt Dick second the motion. Motion carries. This report will be the report which will be provided to the State Board of Education sometime this year.

Name	Vote (Y/N)
Dr. Jeff Fastnacht/or Wayde Sick	Y
Nick Archuleta	Y
Kevin Hoherz	Y
Michelle Strand	Y
Melissa Vollmer	Y
Dr. Aimee Copas	Y
Brandt Dick	Y
Karl Lembke/or Alexis Baxley	Y
Governor Burgum/or Maria Neset	Y
April Foth	Y

Dr. Rupak Gandhi	Y
Superintendent Baesler/Dr. Donna Fishbeck	Y
Dr. Jen Weber	Y
Marc Bluestone Sr.	Y
Representative Heinert	Y
Senator Oban	Y
Senator Davison	Y
Chairman Luke Schaefer	Y

Meeting Topic Recommendation: Joint K12 Coordination Council and Interim Education Policy Committee

The agenda order was changed due to Superintendent Baesler being absent from the meeting. The Council will look at conducting a joint discussion at not the next Interim Legislative Education policy meeting but the following one. The strategic vision report will be presented to the legislative committee. Chairman Schaefer proposed that at the next Council meeting, the Strategic Vision report would be presented for discussion and the leading issue from that discussion would be presented for the joint discussion of the legislative committee and Council.

Senator Oban talked about cross-discussions for legislators to have a better understanding of what is happening in the field of education. It would be beneficial to find an issue within the strategic vision in order to have a directed conversation. Chairman Schaefer said a motion is not needed unless committee members want to present items to consider. Today’s conversation will be around the structure of the meeting and content. What do we like, dislike, and what should be changed?

Senator Davison asked if there were any particular outcomes for which the interim committees are looking and for which they would like any key input. Senator Oban is specifically looking at the interim as an opportunity to educate legislators who do not serve on the education committees or who do not have a lot of experience in the field of education.

Senator Oban suggested some topics to be addressed. What does innovation look like? What policies can be implemented to create innovation? What does innovation look like? What are schools being tasked with doing differently and why is it important? Her goal – create a better understanding of what is happening in the field and create trust in those carrying it out.

Senator Oban sees a disconnect in the knowledge of the issues facing the field on a daily basis. Senator Davison stated that legislators like to hear about issues and questions surrounding problems they are trying to solve. Legislators like to hear about the decisions they have made and how they are affecting students. He used an example of the expansion of funding for Medicaid for mental health purposes. His point is when talking about behavioral health and the tie to teacher burnout, how are legislators’ decisions around funding increasing services. For example, how can those dollars be targeted to proper staffing? He followed a logical process from decision to implementation to future decisions/actions.

Chairman Schaefer talked about the opportunity to bring up other ideas, for example, special education units to apply for Medicaid reimbursements. This would allow us to capitalize on the council’s time. Chairman Schaefer asked if this would be coupled with a roadshow. Kayla Effertz Kleven said yes. She detailed the process. The second roadshow will be in April in a smaller town location.

Chairman Schaefer asked questions about the roadshow process. Dr. Jen Weber asked for a description. Dr. Gandhi highlighted different practices utilized across the state and how they are being implemented. The roadshow highlights the innovative practice in action. Those districts could present at the Governor's Education Summit to share what they are doing with other districts. He questioned if the roadshows would be strictly in person or whether there would be a hybrid option.

Chairman Schaefer stated that an important factor when considering this is the safety of all involved. He asked for suggestions for protective factors. He thought we could also consult the schools. He thought we would definitely provide a hybrid option. Maria Neset suggested smaller groups in several different classrooms. Chairman Schaefer thought the subcommittee could determine the details. Dr. Gandhi suggested looking at protocols that would not create additional work for teachers or districts.

Strategic Themes final goal recommendations

Chairman Schaefer turned the conversation over to Superintendent Baesler as a committee chair on the Strategic Themes subcommittee. Superintendent Baesler provided information on the subcommittee. The committee has been tasked with creating aspirational goals. Superintendent Baesler said Shelby Hubach was the leader of this work. Shelby worked with Marzano to determine aspirational goals to bring to the full committee. The long-term outcome is to "increase students who meet expected learning gains each year". (See Appendix D.) She relayed the approved method to measure this goal. "# of students who move from novice to partially proficient + # of students who are proficient + # of students who are advanced divided by all students who attended the full academic year (FAY) and completed two consecutive test administrations."

Superintendent Baesler also went over the point system and how to award points based on the percentage of students who are behaviorally committed, behaviorally compliant, and behaviorally disengaged. She also went over the previous formula which was revised. This method of measure mirrors what districts are being measured on for accountability measures for the US Department of Education. The approved aspirational goal was stated. It was decided that a measurable goal cannot be recommended for this long-term outcome due to a lack of a system of reliable and valid statewide measures.

The state does not have a statewide measure to determine where kindergarten students come from. It was decided to make a recommendation to the 68th legislative assembly to create a system to monitor this information to determine how to track kindergartners entering the school system ready to learn.

Brandt Dick asked about the formula and whether students arriving from out of state would be counted. Superintendent Baesler said no. Alexis Baxley asked about the process to make legislative recommendations. She asked what happens if the committee can't all agree on the same recommendation to the legislature.

Chairman Schaefer said a process was set up at the last meeting to utilize a majority vote to address this issue. A majority vote will allow us to supply a voting record to document how involved agencies feel on the topic. Dr. Jen Weber talked about the SLDS system and how it will come into play. Funding for this part of the process needs to be considered. Superintendent Baesler agreed it is important to build a system that is valid and reliable while also considering how it will be paid for and how it will be evaluated.

Dr. Jen Weber sees lack of funding as an obstacle.

Superintendent Baesler asked if there was a discussion about the Choice Ready scholarship and the changes. She sees that as a topic for further discussion at a future meeting. Chairman Schaefer agreed with Dr. Jen Weber that funding is a valid point.

Superintendent Baesler gave background on the transfer of the scholarship from a state scholarship to a Choice Ready Scholarship. The data collection mechanism was previously through the eTranscript. Changes need to be made. ITD attributed the cost of this to the NDDPI. The takeaway is that the change was not funded or accounted for in any of the participating agencies' budgets.

Maria Neset suggested that the sooner the policy for the recommendation and request gets fleshed out the sooner these budget considerations can be determined and put forth for the Governor's budget. Superintendent Baesler suggested being intentional about the work being done and pulling in other agencies.

Representative Heinert questioned how this process can be created in four months. Superintendent Baesler said we have a lot of things that are locally developed. It might involve bringing together local leaders and having a discussion about the most efficient process at the state level. Superintendent Baesler will defer to local leaders.

Dr. Copas and Maria Neset discussed the variety of measures being used by different districts. The wide variety of growth levels and kindergarten readiness within a classroom was mentioned. Superintendent Baesler discussed the proposed assessment tool being utilized to determine whether the kindergarten class itself is ready for the students it will be receiving. Chairman Schaefer agreed. He stated classrooms with prior data are better able to prepare.

Superintendent Baesler addressed Heinert's question. The legislature would not be expected to start from ground zero but to receive recommendations and be ready to support a grassroots-developed recommendation. Chairman Schaefer stated that based on these grassroots ideas coming together the Council could come up with something to recommend to the legislature. Superintendent Baesler concurred. Chairman Schaefer asked whether the council would vote on the recommendation. Superintendent Baesler thought it would be developed by the subcommittee and approved by the full council.

Representative Heinert still has concerns about the timing of this proposal. He thinks it will be difficult to make this come together. He feels there are legislators who are not ready to jump into the pre-k arena. There will also be changes to the legislature which will make this difficult. He suggested waiting until the 69th legislative assembly. Superintendent Baesler suggested keeping it as an aspirational goal for the 68th legislative assembly and to continue to work on it. Superintendent Baesler said there are others on the committee who make want to speak to the distinction between pre-kindergarten versus the 0-5 age group.

Maria stated that she thinks we need to start having the conversation even if the legislature is not ready to take it up. She also suggested broadening the language. Melissa Vollmer thought it would be better to have the 0-5 language rather than pre-kindergarten. Superintendent Baesler suggested a language change that would mention early childhood. Chairman Schaefer asked about language stating that children enter kindergarten "ready to learn". Superintendent Baesler thought this will not work because we don't know have information about where students are coming from. That is the challenge. We need a system that determines where the quality early childhood learning centers are and how the classrooms are preparing for students.

Chairman Schaefer said we would like to receive approval on these three goals. He suggested that if a system is not built in time, it would be suggested a study be implemented to review these.

He asked if it would be in a motion with all three or be presented as three individual motions. He discussed the pros and cons of this. Superintendent Baesler moved to approve the remaining three goals of the strategic vision with the change of language regarding pre-k. Maria Neset seconded. There was

discussion. Representative Heinert will resist the motion based on the third goal. He is concerned with the language questioning where the “bad” spots for 0-5 are located. He also thought we are going beyond the scope of the K12 Council. Nick Archuleta did not think it was outside of the scope of the council.

The rewording which was placed in the chat by Kirsten Baesler was read by Chairman Schaefer.

“At this time, a measurable goal cannot be recommended for this long-term outcome due to a lack of a system of reliable, and valid statewide measure to assess students who enter kindergarten prepared to learn as well as a ~~lack of a pre-kindergarten system to~~ monitored by the state early childhood experiences in the state. The ND K–12 Coordination Council will make recommendations to the ND 68th Legislative Assembly to build a system of reliable, and valid measures to assess programs and services in addition to student assessments to determine students are entering kindergarten prepared to learn.”

Maria Neset had a couple of thoughts. The goal is for school districts to have a way to look at incoming students. She is fine with drawing the line if it is necessary. There were comments by another council member. Superintendent Baesler welcomed suggestions. She talked about the efficiencies of government. This is an attempt to operate as a team that says North Dakota knows its students are ready to learn. It explores the questions: Are they (the students) curious? Do they have a mind that is ready to learn? Kirsten Baesler will accept whatever the council decides as a whole.

Kevin Hoherz asked if this would move the needle forward for students coming into school. Will this help them? Will this give us answers and benefit them? Will this make teachers’ classes more effective?

Chairman Schaefer stated that with Superintendent Baesler’s comment about the paradigm shift that we are looking at it as being the classroom being ready for the students versus the students being ready for the classroom. Superintendent Baesler stated that she feels that it would. She feels this information would help district administrators in setting up classrooms. Assessments would allow teachers’ workloads to be adjusted based on information gathered. This would allow for further hiring of staff to account for additional identified needs. Superintendent Baesler sees the data as vital to making changes that will help teachers and students.

Brandt Dick asked whether it would be possible to find an assessment for five-year-olds that will give accurate data. Superintendent Baesler mentioned the kindergarten entry assessment which is a state-adopted tool. This was developed in collaboration with teachers in North Dakota and other states. This is available but is not widely used due to cost and lack of training. If this was a recommended tool the costs would need to be considered.

Melissa Vollmer talked about assessments for children at all levels. She explained that the term assessment doesn’t necessarily mean reading and math scores. It includes other indicators.

Maria Neset talked about assessment tools that pre-schools use. There are options that involve other factors. April Foth mentioned the importance of having a consistent tool. How are students doing socially and emotionally, do they know the shapes, alphabet, etc.?

Chairman Schaefer asked whether the age requirement for entry to school was seven. Superintendent Baesler affirmed this. She also affirmed his question about whether the school can determine which grade level to place a child when he or she arrives.

Motion to accept all three goals with a change to the language of the third goal. No more discussion was put forth. A roll call vote was taken. Superintendent Baesler made the motion and Maria Neset seconded the motion.

Name	Vote (Y/N)
Dr. Jeff Fastnacht/or Wayde Sick	Y
Nick Archuleta	Y
Kevin Hoherz	Y
Michelle Strand	Absent (left early)
Melissa Vollmer	Y
Dr. Aimee Copas	N
Brandt Dick	N
Karl Lembke/or Alexis Baxley	N
Governor Burgum/or Maria Neset	Y
April Foth	Y
Dr. Rupak Gandhi	Y
Superintendent Baesler	Y
Dr. Jen Weber	Y
Marc Bluestone Sr.	Y
Representative Heinert	N
Senator Oban	Y
Senator Davison	Absent (left early)
Chairman Luke Schaefer	Y

There were four nos. The motion carried. Chairman Schaefer asked for council members to explain their reasoning behind their no vote if they so desired. He wants to understand why they voted no. Dr. Copas explained she wasn't comfortable with the verbiage. She thought it was too vague. The language about readiness does not seem to relate to the goal in her opinion. The language does not address how to achieve the goal. She questioned whether more description could be added.

Superintendent Baesler felt Dr. Copas had a good point. The subcommittee members struggled with aspirational goals. What are the factors to create change? The subcommittee started looking at it as they would a standard. The state sets the standard for the "what"; the district sets the standard for the "how" and what do they need to change in implementation and action.

Brandt Dick voted no because of the third goal. He feels that the pre-K portion does not fit in with the vision of the council since we are a K12 Coordination Council.

Chairman Schaefer thanked members for their input. He stated the council's next goal is to build this and determine the next steps.

Representative Heinert asked for a vote tally. Dr. Donna Fishbeck provided one: there were twelve yes votes, and four no votes for a total of sixteen. Two members were absent.

Representative Oban asked whether it is the goal that is being identified or the outcome. Dr. Copas talked about funding for pre-k and the recent move of early childhood to DHS. She questioned the ability to accomplish the council's proposed goal.

Wayde Sick made a comment about the Workforce Development Council. They make recommendations on initiatives they support, not necessarily what they will do. He feels the K12 Coordination Council's proposed goal would fall into the category of supporting through a recommendation.

Chairman Schaefer reiterated this thought. He thanked members for sharing and collaborating and stressed the purpose of the council. He asked members to consider how to make this work within the goals of the council.

Meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m.