

**STATE BOARD OF PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION
MINUTES OF MEETING
September 23, 2025**

State Board of Public School Education members met in the Peace Garden Room at the State Capitol Building, Bismarck and via Teams on Tuesday, September 23, 2025

State Board Members in Attendance:

Chair Sonia Meehl
Superintendent Kirsten Baesler

State Board Members in Attendance Virtually:

Board Member Lyndsi Engstrom
Board Member Eric Nelson
Board Member Jason Rohr

State Board Member(s) Absent:

Vice Chairman Mike McHugh
Board Member Levi Bachmeier

Others in Attendance: Mark Openshaw (Assistant Attorney General), Dr. Alyssa Martin (NDCDE), Rebecca Pollert (NDCDE)

Others in Attendance Virtually: Shauna Marchus (NDDPI Admin), Landon Rice

Chair Meehl called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. July 28, 2025 – Regular Meeting
- b. August 29, 2025 – Special Meeting

Jason Rohr moved to approve the minutes from the July 28 and August 29, 2025 meetings. Lyndsi Engstrom seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

2. North Dakota Center for Distance Education (NDCDE) - School Approval Report & Updates

Dr. Alyssa Martin reported that there are no changes in the school approval report from last year, noting they remain in compliance. Supt. Baesler moved to approve the NDCDE school approval report as presented in the packet. Jason Rohr seconded the motion. No discussion.

NAME	VOTE (Yes/ No)
Board Member Jason Rohr Board	Yes
Superintendent Kirsten Baesler	Yes
Member Lyndsi Engstrom	Yes
Board Member Eric Nelson	Yes
Chair Sonia Meehl	Yes

Rebecca Pollert shared that NDCDE's first independent audit was very successful. She mentioned that the auditors praised NDCDE operations, responsiveness, and compliance. She noted that the agency may move to a four-year audit cycle instead of two. She also explained that the final audit report will be completed in the fall and then submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Dr. Alyssa Martin shared that the NDCDE budget is being significantly streamlined which will help protect staffing for the next biennium. She continued with a brief enrollment update reporting that enrollment remains stable, with only about 100 fewer students than last year, despite new legislation which gave schools more control over access. She reported that physical education enrollment is down 20% possibly due to district policies and alternative virtual options. She explained that they are strategically reassigning multi-credentialed teachers to ensure they are working at full time capacity. Dr. Martin then outlined CDE's strategic initiatives, including a shift to competency-based education and the formation of an Advisory Board. She also reported that a new platform is being evaluated to improve course delivery and support bundled elementary offerings which may also benefit homeschool families. Dr. Martin responded to questions about agriculture education and CertX courses. She mentioned that dual credit courses are available through a partnership with ASU. To improve military readiness, CDE developed a five-course pathway with the ND National Guard. Additionally, three levels of elementary Spanish are now available.

3. **Final approval of the Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order for the dissolution of the Edmore School District No. 2 to the following school districts: Langdon Public School District No. 23 of Cavalier County, Park River Area Public School District No. 8 of Walsh County, Lakota Public School District No. 66 of Nelson County, Devils Lake Public School District No. 1 of Ramsey County and Munich Public School District No. 19 of Cavalier County in North Dakota. (Edmore Dissolution)**

Eric Nelson moved to approve the Findings of Fact, Conclusion of Law and Order for the Edmore Dissolution. Supt. Baesler seconded the motion. No discussion.

NAME	VOTE (Yes/ No)
Board Member Lyndsi Engstrom	Yes
Board Member Eric Nelson	Yes
Board Member Jason Rohr	Yes
Superintendent Kirsten Baesler	Yes
Chair Sonia Meehl	Yes

Motion passed 5-0.

4. **Review and Approve:**
 - a. **Updated Annexation Guide**
 - b. **New Dissolution Guide**
 - c. **New Reorganization Guide**

Mark Openshaw reported that he has made minor updates to the Annexation Guide and it is ready for the Board's approval.

Supt. Baesler moved to approve the updates to the annexation guide as presented, Lyndsi Engstrom seconded. No discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

NAME	VOTE (Yes/ No)
Board Member Eric Nelson	Yes
Board Member Lyndsi Engstrom	Yes
Superintendent Kirsten Baesler	Yes
Board Member Jason Rohr	Yes
Chair Sonia Meehl	Yes

The motion passes 5-0.

The group discussed the process of future updates. Superintendent Baesler suggested giving the State Board's attorney the authority to update the annexation guide as needed, rather than bringing each change to the board for approval. It was requested that the Board receive an annual update on any changes made. A formal statement outlining this authority and reporting process will be drafted for consideration as an addition to the Annexation Guide and will be approved at a future meeting.

Mark Openshaw reported that he is working on the creation of a dissolution guide which is very close to being completed and should be available for review and approval soon. He noted that he will then work on a Reorganization Guide, but that draft is at the infancy stage and will not be ready this year.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

Minutes taken and prepared by Shauna Marchus