

**STATE BOARD OF PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
October 27, 2025**

State Board of Public School Education members met in Peace Garden Room at the State Capitol Building, Bismarck and via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, October 27, 2025

**State Board Members in Attendance:**

Chair Sonia Meehl  
Vice Chairman Mike McHugh  
Board Member Lyndsi Engstrom  
Board Member Eric Nelson  
Board Member Levi Bachmeier

**State Board Members in Attendance Virtually:**

Board Member Jason Rohr  
Superintendent Kirsten Baesler

**Others in Attendance:** Mark Openshaw (Assistant Attorney General), Jodi Johnson (County Supt.), Jeff Myers (Petitioner), Krista Myers (Petitioner), Marc Ritteman (Supt. Lewis & Clark School District), Troy Walters (Supt. Parshall Public School), Tanya Hunskor (NCEC Exec. Director), Aimee Erdman (NCEC), Adam Tescher (School Finance Officer, NDDPI)

**Others in Attendance Virtually:** Shauna Marchus (NDDPI Admin), Melissa Hamilton, Shena Anderson (Parshall Business Manager)

Chair Meehl called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 23, 2025**

Eric Nelson moved to approve the minutes from the September 23, 2025 meeting. Lyndsi Engstrom seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**2. Audit Presentation: North Central Education Cooperative - Tanya Hunskor, Executive Director**

Tanya Hunskor gave a presentation covering information regarding the NCEC staff and governing board, professional development activities, technology and innovation opportunities with the ND Educational HUB, school improvement support, student achievement data, curricular enrichment and advancements, statewide collaborative efforts, Cognia accreditation, fiscal documents including 2024 funding audit and the 2025 approved budget, and also reviewed their 2025-2028 strategic plan. She briefly discussed NCEC's successes and challenges, as well as their collaborative goals.

Mike McHugh moved to accept the audit presentation for NCEC. Levi Bachmeier seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. Hold a hearing, discuss, and take action on the Annexation of property from the Parshall Public School District No. 3 of McLean and Mountrail Counties to the Lewis and Clark Public School District No. 161 of Ward, McLean, Renville and Mountrail Counties in North Dakota. (Myers Annexation).**

The Myers annexation hearing was held beginning at 1:35 pm and was conducted by Administrative Law Judge Hope Hogan from the Office of Administrative Hearings, pursuant to North Dakota Century Code (N.D.C.C) Chapters 15.1-12 and 28-32. This was an evidentiary hearing for the Board to hear testimony and consider other evidence as presented on issues as outlined in the Myers Annexation packet from the Ward County Reorganization Committee, which was entered into evidence and marked as Exhibit 1. Judge Hogan explained the procedures of the hearing as well as the penalties for perjury. She noted that the Board wished to waive the rules of evidence per N.D.C.C § 28-32-24. She explained that at the close of testimonies, the State Board of Public School Education will make the final decision. If any party does not agree with the final decision, they may appeal under N.D.C.C ch. 28-32, the Administrative Agencies Practices Act. The proceedings were recorded, and all persons testifying were sworn in by Judge Hogan.

The Board heard testimony from:

- Jodi Johnson (Ward County Superintendent of Schools)
- Jeffrey Myers (petitioner)
- Mark Ritteman (Supt Lewis & Clark School District)
- Troy Walters (Supt. Parshall Public School)
- Adam Tescher (School Finance Officer, NDDPI)
- Shena Anderson (Parshall Business Manager)

Mark Openshaw noted that according to NDCC, the County Board and State Board are both allowed to adjust the bonded indebtedness and how it is dispensed.

Chair Meehl and Mark Openshaw read through the petition packet.

The board members held a discussion about bonded indebtedness, building fund levies, and sinking and interest, and how different levies pay different debts. It was explained that a sinking and interest levy is temporary and used only to repay specific, voter-approved bonds, once those bonds are paid off, the levy must end. In contrast, the building fund levy is a permanent, mill-based fund (capped at 20 mills) that can be used for maintenance, construction, or bonding, provided the district follows the required protest period.

Levi Bachmeier moved to approve the annexation to include that the petitioner will be responsible for the bonded indebtedness of the school district being detached from existing on July 1, 2025, until retirement of the existing bonded indebtedness, and petitioner will be responsible for all bonded indebtedness of the school district to which they are attaching. Mike McHugh seconded the motion.

<b>NAME</b>	<b>VOTE (Yes/ No)</b>
Board Member Levi Bachmeier	Yes
Vice Chair Mike McHugh	Yes
Board Member Lyndsi Engstrom	Yes
Board Member Jason Rohr	Yes
Superintendent Kirsten Baesler	Yes

Board Member Eric Nelson	Yes
Chair Sonia Meehl	Yes

Motion passed 7-0

Levi Bachmeier left the meeting.

Mark Openshaw noted the following edits to Parshall's calculations:

- M1: Parshall student population changed to 263 from 305; Per student valuation changed \$16,846, Difference: \$51,816
- M3: Per student valuation if approved for Parshall changed to \$16,820; Difference: \$51,858.
- Box #4: Change to \$42 instead of \$38

Board members listed relevant factors to be considered and added to the Findings of Fact.

Lyndsi Engstrom moved to approve the Myers petition for the following reasons:

- Family would have access to transportation
- Family willing to pay bonded indebtedness of both districts
- Petitioners would be able to vote in the school district in which their children attend, and potentially serve on the school board

Jason Rohr seconded the motion.

Board members held discussion and noted that the school district in which the land is being annexed away from is geographically land locked, which is not something every district has to deal with, so the domino effect theory is of greater concern and wanted on record for any potential future hearings in this geographical area. It was mentioned to consider promoting property exchange as a potential consideration as to not disrupt the taxable valuation of districts. A unique factor of this petition was also noted that the family is moving on the same quarter of land from one out lot that had already been annexed and its less than half mile away.

<b>NAME</b>	<b>VOTE (Yes/ No)</b>
Superintendent Kirsten Baesler	Yes
Board Member Levi Bachmeier	Absent
Vice Chair Mike McHugh	Yes
Board Member Lyndsi Engstrom	Yes
Board Member Eric Nelson	Yes
Board Member Jason Rohr	Yes
Chair Sonia Meehl	Yes

The motion passes 6-0. The Myers annexation is approved.

#### **4. Review and approve the new Dissolution Guide – Mark Openshaw**

Mark invited board members to submit edits, suggested additions, or changes to him via email. No one offered any feedback during the meeting.

Supt. Baesler moved to postpone this agenda item to the next meeting to give board members a chance to submit their feedback in writing. Eric Nelson seconded. Discussion was held regarding gathering additional feedback from the field. The Board asked Mark Openshaw to reach out to County Superintendents for additional feedback and consider their input. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:14 p.m.

Minutes taken and prepared by Shauna Marchus