

MINUTES – Board Meeting

Thursday, August 7, 2025

Teams

The Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB) meeting was called to order at 8:00am by Board Chair Cory Steiner. Board members present by video conference were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Evan Kritzberger, Sarah Lerud, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, Sory Steiner, and Dena Venneman.

Board members Dustin Hager, Sheila Schlafmann, and Superintendent Kirsten Baesler were absent.

Also present were ESPB Executive Director Rebecca Pitkin, Mari Riehl, and Amy Bigelow from ESPB, Mark Openshaw from Office of Attorney General, Arlene Wolf from DPI, Amber Haskell from NDUnited, Lisa Colon Durham from ETS, Erin Jacobson and Marijke Leibel from ND RISE and other online guests.

Introductions were held.

Motion to Include Additional Agenda Items – A case for Evan Brandt is the only addition to the agenda. Evan Kritzberger made a motion to accept the agenda as amended, seconded by Siri Coleman. Board members who voted in favor were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Evan Kritzberger, Sarah Lerud, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, Sory Steiner, and Dena Venneman. None opposed. Motion carried.

Motion to Ratify June and July Licensure List – Sarah Lerud made a motion to ratify the June and July licensure lists. Motion seconded by Angela Nagel. Board members who voted yes were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Evan Kritzberger, Sarah Lerud, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, Sory Steiner, and Dena Venneman. None opposed. Motion carried.

CASES

Millspaugh, Emma – Ms. Millspaugh's file was reviewed after she self-disclosed background offenses on her application for licensure. Attorney Mark Openshaw checked, and Ms. Millspaugh is up to date with all fines. Siri Coleman made a motion to approve Ms. Millspaugh's application for licensure with the requirement that she self-report any additional violations. Seconded by Patti Stedman. Siri said Ms. Millspaugh has been transparent and continues to work toward improvement. Patti agreed. Board members who voted yes were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Evan Kritzberger, Sarah Lerud, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, Sory Steiner, and Dena Venneman. None opposed. Motion carried.

Brandt, Evan – At the June 2025 meeting the board passed a motion to issue a letter of reprimand to Mr. Brandt for being in violation of NDCC 15.1-13-25(1)(j) with a copy to be sent to his district. The settlement agreement also included a requirement that he complete additional testing quarterly for one year. Since then, Mr. Brandt has submitted a copy of his medical marijuana card and does not wish to sign the settlement agreement from June 2025.

The board could choose to push forward with litigation, could amend the June settlement agreement to remove testing since he has the medical card now to legally

use marijuana.

Patti Stedman questioned if Mr. Brandt had submitted documentation of his medical card originally, if a settlement agreement would have even been issued. She also asked if the copy of the medical card submitted is the official one.

Evan Kritzberger made a motion to reissue the settlement agreement to remove testing requirements but still include a letter of reprimand. Mr. Brandt also needs to self-report any future incidents. The motion was seconded by Jenny Bladow. Evan said if Mr. Brandt has a medical card, that's between him and his healthcare provider. He is more concerned about the ethical aspect and feels the letter of reprimand is necessary as Mr. Brandt did break the Code of Ethics and the settlement agreement in place at the time. Mark Openshaw noted that the amended settlement agreement still being issued for being in violation of 15.1-13-25(j) and 67.1-03-01-03(8). Siri Coleman asked if the board would want continued proof of a valid medical card? Cory Steiner said he believes that would be outside of the board's scope. Jenny said she feels the board needs to have a conversation about districts and if they have acceptable use policies. Cory said all districts do have a policy. Board members who voted in favor of the motion were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Evan Kritzberger, Sarah Lerud, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, Sory Steiner, and Dena Venneman. None opposed. Motion carried.

Regular meeting recessed at 8:22am.

Administrative Subcommittee – Called to order at 8:22am by Administrative Subcommittee Chair Cory Steiner. Reviewed by Administrative Subcommittee of the Education Standards and Practices Board. Administrative Subcommittee members present were Sarah Lerud, Patti Stedman, Cory Steiner, and Dena Venneman. Dustin Hager and Sheila Schlafmann were absent.

Clark, Sarah – At the June 2025 meeting the Administrative Subcommittee passed a motion to dismiss the Request for Inquiry that had been filed against Ms. Clark. Since then, additional information has been received showing that Ms. Clark has continued to have individuals teaching in her school who do not have a valid teaching license. Becky reminded the subcommittee that the board cannot take action on individuals who do not have a valid license.

In all letters of response, an agreement developed with DPI for supervising teachers is mentioned. Patti Stedman asked if ESPB was aware of that agreement or know what it's referring to. No, we do not. Cory Steiner clarified that the school is approved by DPI, so the licensure requirements are the same for their non-public school as any other school. Patti asked if anything needs to be sent to Ms. Clark, since she's now aware that licenses are required for all teachers. The office has been working with the two teachers listed on the Request for Inquiry to get them licensed. Becky reminded the board of the chart that was developed last year regarding teaching without a license and

the consequences determined. The chart outlines a \$250 fine for the administrator. Patti also pointed out that Ms. Clark became an administrator in Spring 2024, so she's a new administrator and may have been following what had been done in the past.

Patti Stedman made a motion to issue Ms. Clark a stern letter of reprimand sent from Becky about the importance of having all teachers licensed, with a copy to her school board. Seconded by Sarah Lerud. Patti is comfortable if the subcommittee wants to issue a fine, but she feels maybe Ms. Clark is just learning the ropes. Sarah pointed out that all letters said the arrangement was with previous administration, so a little grace may be given. Cory Steiner agreed that a letter is appropriate, with a copy to the school board. Administrative Subcommittee members who voted yes were Sarah Lerud, Patti Stedman, Cory Steiner, and Dena Venneman. None opposed. Motion carried.

Lund, Jeremy – Information was received from Mr. Lund's school district that he was discharged for cause. Patti Stedman made a motion to send a Request for Inquiry to Mr. Lund. Motion was seconded by Sarah Lerud. Patti believes this should be looked into since he was discharged for cause. Cory Steiner commended the incoming superintendent for bringing this to the Board's attention, as it's the right thing to do. Mark wanted to clarify is the Board requesting additional information from the school or from Mr. Lund. The request for additional information will be from both the district and Mr. Lund. Administrative Subcommittee members who voted yes were Sarah Lerud, Patti Stedman, Cory Steiner, and Dena Venneman. None opposed. Motion carried.

Administrative Subcommittee adjourned at 8:41am and the regular meeting resumed.

Before Mark Openshaw left the meeting, Becky asked him to provide additional information about when administrators need to report when an individual is terminated for cause or given the option to resign instead of being terminated for cause. Mark said there are a few concerns with legislating moral issues. The issue is if someone resigns instead of being terminated, there is the risk of them going to another district. Mark suggested that there is increased communication between administrators so that if a person resigns or is terminated for cause, the complaint is warranted with ESPB.

Mark also let the board know that the full-day board training will be held in October and all board members will be invited. Attorneys from Office of Attorney General will be there to provide information about voting, BCI, ect.

Election of Officers – Cory Steiner said he's more than willing to stay on as chair but is also open to someone else taking over the responsibility.

Patti Stedman made a motion to have Cory remain chair. Seconded by Angela Nagel. Board members who voted yes were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Evan Kritzberger, Sarah Lerud, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, Cory Steiner, and Dena Venneman. None opposed. Motion carried.

Cory Steiner made a motion to nominate Evan Kritzberger for vice-chair. Seconded by Sarah Lerud. Board members who voted yes were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Evan Kritzberger, Sarah Lerud, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, Cory Steiner, and Dena Venneman. None opposed. Motion carried.

Approval of ND RISE and ESPB Budgets – Both budgets have been provided to the board. The budget subcommittee reviewed the budgets and approved them. Going forward, ND RISE will continue to provide additional budget information to the board.

Patti Stedman made a motion to approve both ESPB and ND RISE budgets as presented. Seconded by Angela Nagel. Patti thanked Becky and ND RISE team for showing all details, as that makes the subcommittee and board's jobs easier. Board members who voted yes were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Evan Kritzberger, Sarah Lerud, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, Cory Steiner, and Dena Venneman. None opposed. Motion carried.

Disability Waiver Policy – At the last meeting the board asked if a rubric/check sheet could be developed for disability waivers. The board has heard board discussion over the years about these requests and each individual's situation. They also know that each test needs to be attempted at least once, and the bigger picture of test attempts needs to be considered. Disability waiver requests also require a recommendation from someone who has seen the individual teach and medical information. Disability waivers have been considered since 2019. The office would be willing to share the list of waivers approved each month, if the board wishes. Cory Steiner appreciated the waiver policy developed and doesn't feel a list needs to be provided to the board each month, perhaps only the number approved each month.

Sarah Lerud made a motion to approve the policy as written. Seconded by Jenny Bladow. Board members who voted in favor were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Evan Kritzberger, Sarah Lerud, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, Cory Steiner, and Dena Venneman. None opposed. Motion carried.

Disability Waivers – Jenny Bladow made a motion to approve all disability waiver requests presented to the board at this meeting. Seconded by Siri Coleman. Board members who voted in favor were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Evan Kritzberger, Sarah Lerud, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, Cory Steiner, and Dena Venneman. None opposed. Motion carried.

Patti Stedman left the meeting at 9:08am.

June, July, and Special Meeting Minutes, License, and Financial Reports – Angela Nagel made a motion to approve the June, July, and special meeting minutes, license and financial reports. Motion was seconded by Evan Kritzberger. Board members who voted yes were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Evan Kritzberger, Sarah Lerud, Angela

Nagel, Cory Steiner, and Dena Venneman. None opposed. Motion carried.

The June 2025 financial report showed \$184,938.19 in total income received, \$123,833.76 in total expenses, with a net income of \$61,104.43. The June 2025 license/financial items totaled 947. This number includes background checks, endorsements, late fees, licensing fees, and application fees.

The July 2025 financial report showed \$162,596.30 in total income received, \$95,171.45 in total expenses, with a net income of \$67,424.85. The July 2025 license/financial items totaled 1053. This number includes background checks, endorsements, late fees, licensing fees, and application fees.

ETS Presentation – Lisa Colon Durham from ETS joined the meeting. Recently ETS has implemented Praxis Bridge, an alternative pass method for some tests. Lisa reviewed what the Praxis Bridge is, showed examples of the modules a test-taker would complete, and what the new score report will look like. After a person completes the Praxis Bridge and receives their Alt Pass, that score report takes only about a week for the test-taker to receive.

Praxis Steps is in development currently. It's a modular approach that allows test-takers flexibility to test when they feel ready. Steps allows a person to take the tests in sections, bank their scores along the way, and once all steps are passed, they have successfully completed the test. Also allows people who take the full Praxis and do not pass one section to retake just that step/section.

Director's Report – Programming has been completed to implement the new 25-year lifetime license. Mandated reporter training for initial license applicants is now law. Survey results continue to be positive. Becky provided updates on some past board cases and their status. Becky was in Fargo last week for math conference. Yesterday Mari and Becky presented at the DPI administrator's conference. Joint Boards meeting will be September 22nd and there is a remote option. Prevention and Correction essay from a previous case has been provided in the board materials.

Board Education: Strategic Vision – The PK-12 Education Strategic Vision is included in the board's materials. Becky is updating new legislative laws.

Year in Review – Becky shared an overview changes from the past year and of items that will be continued moving forward.

ND RISE Update – Enrollment is open for mentoring. Currently have around 600 enrolled and are projecting around 800 1st and 2nd year teachers. Offering options for New Mentor Training – online, in-person, and last chance.

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Board Member Reports

NDACTE – Nothing to report.

Association of Non-Public Schools – Preparing for the upcoming school year.

Association of School Administrators – NDCEL Administrator conference is being held today. Administrators are discussing how to implement cell phone policy and pledge of allegiance policy.

School Boards Association – Not present.

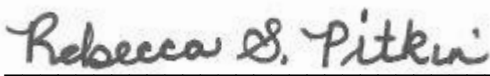
NDUnited – Nothing to report.

DPI –Arlene Wolf is newly appointed director of School Approval and Opportunity. DPI Drilldown held yesterday. High turnout this year with great topics. Legislative updates that affect schools and teachers. Transition from PowerSchool to Infinite Campus will be July 1, 2026, so preparing for that.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:12am.



Chair



Secretary/Executive Director