

**MINUTES – Board Meeting
Thursday, March 10, 2022
CTE Conference Room and Teams**

The Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB) meeting was called to order at 8:02am by Chair Carly Retterath. Board members present in person were Siri Coleman, Sonya Hansana, Carly Retterath, and Patti Stedman. Andrea Fox, Joshua Standing Elk, Cory Steiner, and Superintendent Kirsten Baesler joined by Teams. Ben Johnson joined the meeting at 11am.

Also present were ESPB Executive Director Rebecca Pitkin, Assistant Director Mari Riehl, and Amy Bigelow from ESPB, Carl Karpinski from Attorney General's Office, Michelle Griffin from UND, Jen Wallender from Western Governor's University, Elizabeth Combs and Debra Warren from Frontline Education, Erin Jacobson and Marijke Leibel from Teacher Support System, and other online guests.

Additions/Changes to the Agenda – Items to add to the agenda include board cases for Jameson Varholdt and Jeffrey Ball, action items for Kyle Bryce Laxdal, Travis Bennett, and Doug Miller. Patti Stedman made a motion to approve the agenda with additions. Motion seconded by Sonya Hansana. All voted in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Motion to Ratify January Licensure List – Patti Stedman made motion to ratify the February 2022 licensure list. Seconded by Siri Coleman. All voted in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

CASES

Grosskrutz, Joshua – Mr. Grosskrutz's file was reviewed by the Board after a Request for Inquiry was filed by a parent. Becky pointed out to the Board that the sanctions they would typically impose have already been completed by Mr. Grosskrutz. An investigation was completed by the local sheriff's office. Patti Stedman made motion to dismiss the case. Motion seconded by Siri Coleman. Board members who voted yes were Siri Coleman, Andrea Fox, Sonya Hansana, Carly Retterath, Joshua Standing Elk, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

Sederquest, Kelsey – Ms. Sederquest's file was reviewed by the Board after it was determined that she'd been teaching without a license from the beginning of the school year until December 21, 2021. Siri Coleman made a motion to send a Request for Inquiry to Ms. Sederquest's administrator to find out more background and to dismiss case against the teacher. Seconded by Cory Steiner. After further discussion, Andrea Fox asked for a friendly amendment to include a fine of \$100 and to send reminder letter to Ms. Sederquest about the importance of having a license. Siri Coleman agreed to the amendment and it was seconded by Cory Steiner. Board members who voted in favor were Siri Coleman, Andrea Fox, Sonya Hansana, Carly Retterath, Joshua Standing Elk, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

Schmidt, Kelsie – Before discussion began on Ms. Schmidt's file, Carly Retterath disclosed that Ms. Schmidt works for her district, but she's not in a supervisory position to Ms. Schmidt. Sonya Hansana also disclosed that she knows Ms. Schmidt from a neighboring district. Cory Steiner disclosed that he knows the family. All stated they feel they can vote impartially. No board members expressed concern about Carly, Cory, or Sonya participating in discussion or voting on the case.

In 2020 Ms. Schmidt's license was revoked and her settlement agreement stated she could re-apply for licensure in two years. She's now submitted an application for renewal. Her criminal case was ultimately dismissed. There was much discussion by the Board. Andrea Fox expressed concern with details of the case and a great level of discomfort.

Andrea Fox made a motion to deny Ms. Schmidt's application for license renewal. Motion seconded by Patti Stedman. Board members who voted yes were Siri Coleman, Andrea Fox, Sonya Hansana, Carly Retterath, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. Joshua Standing Elk voted no. Motion carried.

Patti Stedman asked if a license was issued, would there be an option for closer monitoring. Carly said yes, the Board could choose to issue a license for a shorter amount of time. Attorney Carl Karpinski reminded the Board that the reason Ms. Schmidt's license was revoked was under NDCC 15.1-13-25(c) stating the individual is incompetent, immoral, intemperate, or cruel, 15.1-13-25(j), and Administrative Code 67.1-03-01-02(3), (4), and (6), not NDCC 15-1-13-26 which would require a license to be revoked due to a crime against a child or a sexual offense. Carl clarified that this denial is based on same reasoning.

Counts, Lloyd – Mr. Counts's file was reviewed due to past background offenses that he self-disclosed on his application for an interim substitute license. He has been off probation for 4 years. Patti Stedman made a motion to approve Mr. Counts' application for an interim substitute license. Motion seconded by Sonya Hansana. Andrea Fox asked if Patti would be open to amendment asking him to self-disclose any subsequent offenses and Carly Retterath asked that when he applies for renewal in two years, that he completes a new background check. Patti agreed to the amendment and Sonya seconded. Board members who voted in favor were Siri Coleman, Andrea Fox, Sonya Hansana, Carly Retterath, Joshua Standing Elk, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

Ball, Jeffrey – Mr. Ball's file was added to the agenda after an article appeared in the news and he was placed on administrative leave from Minot Public Schools. To date, no charges have been filed. Siri Coleman made a motion to table Mr. Ball's case until more information is available. Motion seconded by Andrea Fox. Siri Coleman, Andrea Fox, Sonya Hansana, Carly Retterath, Joshua Standing Elk, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

Varholdt, Jameson – Before discussion began Andrea Fox recused herself from the case. Mr. Varholdt's case was continued from February 2022. Information received from Mr. Varholdt's attorney shows that a plea agreement will likely be reached, but has not been finalized through the court system.

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Cory Steiner made a motion to approve Mr. Varholdt's application for renewal contingent on settlement on a misdemeanor of the current case and if not, his file will come back before the Board for further review. Motion seconded by Patti Stedman. Board members who voted yes were Siri Coleman, Sonya Hansana, Carly Retterath, Joshua Standing Elk, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Andrea Fox did not vote. Motion carried.

The regular meeting was recessed at 8:56am and meeting of Administrative Subcommittee was called to order.

Administrative Subcommittee – Reviewed by Administrative Subcommittee of the Education Standards and Practices Board. Administrative Subcommittee members present were Sonya Hansana, Carly Retterath, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. Ben Johnson and Kathy Lentz were absent.

Thom, Robert – Administrative Subcommittee voted at the February 2022 meeting to file a Request for Inquiry on Mr. Thom for employing a school counselor who has not held a license for the 2021-2022 school year.

Superintendent Baesler reviewed the School Compliance Report that each school district is required to submit each year. In this compliance report, it is outlined that schools must have a licensed school counselor and that if false statements are submitted in the compliance report it could be a class A misdemeanor.

Cory Steiner motioned to fine Mr. Thom \$250 and to include a statement in his settlement agreement that further violations on the compliance report will result in Board review for potential suspension or revocation. Motion seconded by Patti Stedman. Administrative Subcommittee members who voted in favor were Sonya Hansana, Carly Retterath, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

The regular meeting was resumed at 9:19am.

Review of Driver Education for Kyle "Bryce" Laxdal – Mr. Laxdal has a past DUI offense, which would prevent him from obtaining a driver education endorsement. In the past, an applicant who had previously been charged with a DUI wrote to the Board asking if he would be allowed to pursue completing the driver education coursework. The Board did approve this and allow that applicant to pursue driver education coursework.

Attorney Carl Karpinski reminded the Board that as long as 5 years has lapsed since the offense occurred that a person is considered rehabilitated. Becky has provided the Department of Transportation classification of offenses to the Board for reference of moving violations.

ESPB Assistant Director Mari Riehl asked if once Mr. Laxdal's 4th moving violation is more than 3 years old in November 2022, if he can move forward with his driver education endorsement? Administrative Rule 67.1-02-03-06(7)(q) states "Provide by January first of each year a complete abstract of the applicant's driving record for the past thirty-six months from a state driver's licensing office evidencing a satisfactory driving record free from any conviction that would constitute the basis for suspension or revocation on the instructor's operator's license, and not more than three moving traffic violations." Mr. Laxdal's DUI will be 5 years old in November 2022.

Patti Stedman made a motion that in November 2022, once Mr. Laxdal has no more than 3 moving violations in the past 36 months and his DUI charge is more than 5 years old, a driver education endorsement can be issued to him. Motion seconded by Siri Coleman. Board members who voted yes were Siri Coleman, Andrea Fox, Sonya Hansana, Carly Retterath, Joshua Standing Elk, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

February Minutes, License, and Financial Reports – The February 2022 financial report showed \$63,728.83 in total income received, \$64,814.18 in total expenses, with a net income of minus \$1,085.35. The February 2022 licensure report documented 859 items issued. This number includes background checks, endorsements, late fees, and application fees.

Becky noted that we are where we should be at this point in the fiscal year with income and expenses. \$30,000 has been budgeted for additional office help and a very small amount of that has been utilized. The budget for next year will be additional, as Teacher Support System was given the GEER II grant. Budget committee will be meeting in April. Licensure has continued to grow each year in February.

All voted in favor of accepting the February minutes, license, and financial reports. None opposed. Motion carried.

ED Evaluation – The complete evaluation has been provided to the Board. Continuing to look at additional staff. This evaluation tool was put together in 2017. Board Chair Carly Retterath encouraged the Board to look at the evaluation when a retreat is held for possible updates.

The Board had asked Becky for a report about how Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE) is going. She continues to do MCEE presentations for teacher preparation programs. Becky asked that this be included in the minutes that it's one of her reports she continues to provide to the Board.

All voted in favor of accepting the evaluation as reported. None opposed. Motion carried.

Shortage Areas – In December 2021 Ellie Shockley and Josef Kolosky from DPI shared data they've collected on shortage areas. The Board has also been provided data on the number of alternative access licenses, permits, out-of-field endorsements that have been issued. Sonya Hansana moved to declare all content areas critical shortage areas for the 2022-23 school year. Motion seconded by Cory Steiner. Board members who voted yes were Siri Coleman, Andrea Fox, Sonya Hansana, Carly Retterath, Joshua Standing Elk, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

2022-2023 Board Meeting Dates – The Board reviewed possible dates for the 2022-2023 meetings. ESPB meeting dates will be August 11, September 8, October 13, November 10, December 8, January 12, February 9, March 9, April 14, May 11, and June 8.

Doug Miller – Request for Extension – Mr. Miller has written to the Board asking for a 4-month extension to his license expiration date to complete the necessary re-education credits for renewal. Andrea Fox made motion to extend Mr. Miller's license expiration date for 4 months, as requested. Motion seconded by Patti Stedman. Board members who voted in favor were Siri Coleman, Andrea Fox, Sonya Hansana, Carly Retterath, Joshua Standing Elk, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

Travis Bennett – Late Fee Waiver Request – Autumn Bennett, Mr. Bennett's spouse, submitted a request for waiver of the late fee on his behalf. Sonya Hansana made a motion to deny the request to waive Mr. Bennett's late fee. Motion seconded by Cory Steiner. Board members who voted yes were Siri Coleman, Andrea Fox, Sonya Hansana, Carly Retterath, Joshua Standing Elk, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

Frontline Presentation – Frontline provides school district administration software and services and has also developed a series of online substitute teacher training courses – 12 courses that take approximately 20 to 23 hours to complete. All course objectives have been aligned to InTASC standards.

Becky is asking the Board to consider lessening the 48 semester hour requirement for individuals who complete Frontline substitute training, adding a pathway for those wishing to obtain an interim substitute license. Becky has already reached out to stakeholders and welcomes their feedback.

Carly Retterath expressed concern that if the semester hour requirement isn't removed for applicants who complete Frontline substitute training, we aren't really addressing the shortage. The Board could consider requesting an administrative recommendation for those who have no college credits. Becky asked the board to consider options, then a special meeting will be held to review. Once rules are drafted they are put out for public comment, and all comment must be reported back to the Board.

CTE – Becky is asking the Board to revisit the idea of CTE licensed individuals who have a bachelor’s degree and have completed Transition to Teaching being allowed to test into new content areas. Becky will draft rules and this will be discussed further at a special meeting.

Director’s Report – At least every 5 years, Administrative Rules requires the procedure for program approval be revised. Becky works to conduct standards reviews with stakeholders and make changes to the necessary manuals. Standards are being reviewed for accuracy and alignment.

Teacher Support System – Teacher Support System presented on their 2020-2021 Retention Study. Data has shown that teachers who participate in the TSS mentoring program during their first year of teaching are consistently retained at a higher rate than those who do not. From the 2015-2016 school year to the 2020-2021 school year, 46.3% of new teachers in North Dakota were mentored through Teacher Support System.

Conference Presentation – Mari and Becky presented to Legislative Policy Committee on February 23rd. Becky is required to present this information as required by Section 2 of HB 1531 from the 66th Legislative Assembly (2019). Currently, two alternative programs have been approved to lead to licensure in North Dakota – American Board and Certification Central, which is a state-approved in-state program.

The teaching permit was established in 2019 and is available in non-core content areas. District verifies hours of experience, and the permitted teacher must enroll in mentoring program at district expense. As of now, the permit grandfathered in 2023. Becky has sent surveys to administrators who have permitted individuals and so far, there is overwhelming response that administrators would like to see this option continued. Becky has reached out to Senator Rust about drafting a bill to continue to the permit.

Mari attended a conference in February to talk about educator shortage and national themes. It’s apparent that retention is the new recruitment. There is no one answer that will solve the problem for every state – shortage isn’t limited to classroom teachers. It also includes counselors, school psychologists, ect.

Responses to the Shortage – Becky has asked Cory Steiner, Ben Johnson, and Superintendent Baesler to review some of the things they are doing in response to the shortage.

Cory reported that Northern Cass works with Valley City State University for dual credit courses for Introduction to Education and Exceptional Learners. They pay students as a paraprofessional during the school day to do this. There are 7 students in their pipeline that have been accepted to college and have identified teaching as their plan of study.

The district pays for all dual credit courses and will pay all fees for teachers to become qualified to offer dual credit courses through Higher Learning Commission.

At Bismarck Public Schools, Ben Johnson reported that they work in conjunction with University of Mary to pair up mentor/mentee pairs while students are completing their teacher education program. The goal is that eventually future educators will student teach with their mentors and then go on to become first-year teacher mentor/mentee pairs. Peer to Peer is a program through the district for pairs students without disabilities with exceptional learners. It started at Century High School and has now been started in other BPS schools and in other districts. Nearly 100 students participate in Peer to Peer across three high schools. The program helps the district save dollars paying paraprofessional, as students have a peer to help them with things paras would typically do. Bismarck Public Schools offers courses in Exploring Teaching Profession I and II and is working with University of Mary on these courses. Bismarck Public Schools continues to work with Bismarck State College on many dual credit courses.

Superintendent Baesler shared about a new type of “Grown Your Own” program, the Para to Teacher Pipeline. The program was initiated in Fall 2019 and Minot State did pilot program of 10 individuals that would begin Spring 2020. Currently all 10 are student teaching. Candidates were funded with CARES dollars. Additional candidates have been added and funded each year through grants, self-funded, and districted funded dollars. Currently 69 individuals are working through this program. There are new questions about what are sustainable ways to fund these programs after ESSER funds go away? In January 2022, the Tennessee Apprenticeship Program was approved by Department of Labor for teaching to be an approved apprenticeship program. Each year, thousands of dollars are given back to the Department of Labor that are unused for apprentice programs. North Dakota will continue to explore this option.

Board Member Reports

NDACTE – Brenda Tufte was not present at the meeting, but provided her written report. She shared the 3 main ideas of the NDACTE workgroup that met on March 2nd.

1. Grow your own programs that allow for dual credit and tuition support for ed majors willing to come back to their hometown to teach. The district could contribute dollars, the legislature, and perhaps even the community. If the teacher decided not to go teach in that district, the support would be treated as a loan.
2. Para to professional Program. Can take classes asynchronously online while working as a para. Possibly bring forward rule change to allow the para an alternative license if he or she has a certain number of years in the classroom as a para and all coursework complete except for student teaching.
3. Early provisional license without a conferred degree for someone who takes 6 semesters of coursework in an education major and just has the final 2

semesters left (one semester being student teaching and one semester being coursework – could be gen ed coursework or education coursework...we were leaning toward gen ed coursework). Student teaching would still be required, but they would do it on the job where they are teaching but receiving mentorship from a designated supervisor in the building...could be principal or another teacher, or a university professor if in the area...the supervisor is paid by the university. Student teaching could be extended to a year (best practice) then the summer following, they finish their semester of coursework (or split it into 2 summers).

Association of Non-Public Schools – Nothing to report.

Association of School Administrators – Nothing to report.

School Boards Association – Nothing to report.

NDUnited – Nothing to report.

DPI – Nothing additional to report.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:37pm.

Chair

Secretary/Executive Director