

2013 HOUSE EDUCATION

HB 1429

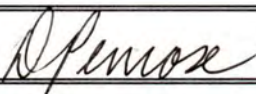
2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Education Committee
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1429
February 4, 2013
18240

☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

Ch. Nathe: We will open the hearing on HB 1429. We will also leave it open for Rep. Heilman to speak when he comes.

Sen. Murphy: Sponsor, support. In the opinion of a lot of people, this is sorely needed, it's early childhood education. My wife is a K-teacher. She knows what kids need; but we have a lot of frustration amongst K and 1st grade teachers because we have what is called the common core, a national program that is pushing down expectations into the lower grades, where 2nd graders were supposed to be doing something now that is reaching down into K. Because K isn't mandated, some teachers feel like they can't set standards for people to come into K, but they have a lot of expectations put on them that they are responsible for, but they are getting a lot of children whose parents are not taking the proper amount of time teaching them what needs to be taught. There are kids that can't handle a pencil, crayon, or go to the bathroom by themselves. If you can prepare these children, they have a much better chance of success and having a good attitude about school and of course, that carries on and makes a huge difference down the road.

Rep. Rust: One part of the bill is to allow local school boards to use local dollars, tax dollars, to support an early childhood education program and the second part deals with an appropriation to do that. Is that correct.

Sen. Murphy: That's a basic understanding. We have a situation where there is so much demand for early childhood education, we have 47 of our school districts currently operating one illegally so to speak. This bill would make them whole. The appropriation would allow for perhaps 20 to 30 pilot programs, up to \$100,000 each, one district could start one of those programs; up to \$100,000 would cover things like a highly qualified teacher, if they want to go with 10 students, it's a 10 to 1 ratio. If they added a little more money for an aide, then you have another six kids so that district could pilot 16 children in that program. Of course, a lot of districts might apply for \$60,000-70,000 or less. In that case, there would be more money for a few more districts to try and get in.

Rep. Rust: In section 1, it appears to authorize or allow school districts to expend tax dollars for an early childhood program. When you talk about the 47 school districts that are operating an early childhood program, essentially they have an

early childhood program and they are using some funds that someone could take them to task over, saying you have no authority in the law to do that. The law provides for them to be able to do K-12.

Sen. Murphy: I believe that is essentially the case. The demand at the local level, these school boards and superintendents, these officials have come up with some kind of a solution trying to help out and that's kind of what was the case. It might be different funds as you say.

Ch. Nathe: Thank you. Further testimony in support.

Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent of Dept. of Public Instruction: Support (see attached 1).

Ch. Nathe: Is this \$5 million fiscal note included in the Governor's budget.

Kirsten Baesler: No. It is not currently in the budget, this would be an appropriation aside from our DPI budget.

Ch. Nathe: What does an early childhood program look like at a school district.

Kirsten Baesler: There are 47 school districts that are operating pre-schools in ND. The task of the DPI is to approve schools and programs for K-12 programs. If they are running a K-12 program, they can apply for approval for their preschool program. The Dept. has set up a plan to distribute the money. We have 47 schools approved to operate a preschool in the state of ND. Those preschool programs operate under a manner of different types of funding. Some are Title I, special education, private donations, tuition-based. There are a multitude of funding capacities go into those existing preschool programs. We have become aware that there are other schools, K-12 schools, that might be operating a preschool program, but have not applied for approval and I think there is some sense of worry that they might be using some local dollars in there and so they haven't applied for approval from the DPI. We already have the approval process in place to approve whether it would be high quality, and is going to be offering our students the high quality that they expect from our K-12 systems. We would like the school districts, with this grant, to submit an application to DPI with their version of what would work best in that local school district. Of those 47 schools that are operating preschools, there are a multitude of different models. Some go 1/2 day and fit two groups of students into the day, some have a M/W/Th, or a 2 day week program, or 3 day week program. We would encourage those school districts to develop a model that would best fit their school district, depending on busing, etc. Then we would approve those grant applications.

Ch. Nathe: On line 9, page 1, prekindergarten is struck, and then we have early childhood education program, are we talking about the same thing.

Kirsten Baesler: It is. Early childhood education program is a more accepted terminology, as it has evolved.

Ch. Nathe: On lines 21-22, as far as the grant, it says it must be approved in according with section 15.1-37-01, can you explain that section to me.

Kirsten Baesler: That would be the approval process for making sure that the teacher ratio, certified teacher would be in place, they would be highly qualified, they would meet the background checks that are required of our K-12 system.

Rep. Schatz: Why wasn't this put in DPI's budget.

Kirsten Baesler: Essentially the budget was drafted before the election. So, as part of my plan, a comprehensive plan for us to deliver to the state taxpayers the quality education they want. I worked with Sen. Poolman and Rep. Heilman to develop something that would offer us the opportunity.

Rep. Hunskor: In the 47 school districts that operate an early childhood program, what is the percent of kids that are of that 4 year-old age group that would be involved. Some parents don't want their children away from home at that early age. Are you reaching the kids that need to be reached or are they at home, because this is voluntary.

Kirsten Baesler: Yes, this proposal is by no means a mandatory. This is a completely voluntary program. There are a few people in the audience that can speak to the programs in their K-12 systems. We're finding that there is an immense demand from the people in our communities to our K-12 districts to have a preschool. Would we still not reach every child that needs help, that's a possibility. But those parents that are working, that 78% of those mothers of 0-5 years old, who are working, are looking for a place. They understand that their children aren't getting from them what they need to succeed in school. That's unfortunately the world we live in today. It's easier for us to teach the children within the school districts located around the state.

Rep. Hunskor: You indicated that there is a great demand. It is probably from the middle-income, higher-income folks and the kids that really need to be reached in the lower-income home, may get missed.

Kirsten Baesler: I would agree. The middle-income parents of these students, they do have the means to advocate for what they need. Those that are in poverty and the lower income, they may not be as articulate and able to become as organized. I believe the public school districts do a great job of seeking out those children. They know who they are in their communities and reach out to them.

Rep. Schatz: Who are the 47 districts, are they on the website.

Kirsten Baesler: Yes they are on our website but we also do have a listing.

Ch. Nathe: On page 6 of your testimony, you mentioned about ND is one of 11 states that do not currently fund public preschool options at the district level. If we were to do this, would this add more FTE's to the district to carry out these programs.

Kirsten Baesler: If the appropriation is approved, we are imaging \$100,000 to each school district. That would allow for 1 full time teacher and a 1/2 time aide, getting 16 students in the classroom. The other portion of the bill is changing the language of the state century code to allow local monies to also be used. I believe this is a very critical piece of what you are being asked to do this year. For instance, \$100,000 in the West Fargo school district for 1 classroom would not really meet the needs that West Fargo would be experiencing. They would like the opportunity to augment that \$100,000 grant from DPI with their local monies in order to hire more teachers.

Ch. Nathe: Is the ratio too low. Are we going to see more teachers, because it is 10 to 1, or 16 to 1 if have an aide. How did you come up with that ratio.

Kirsten Baesler: Those are the recommended ratios for our early childhood programs.

Ch. Nathe: Who recommended those to you.

Kirsten Baesler: I believe to align with the Human Services regulation for their daycare.

Rep. Rust: With Child Find, it tries to identify those students aged 3 and above, that need special education services. Then you have federal Head Start program that tries to get into the schools, low-income people. Would it be safe to say that this bill would open up that early childhood education to more people. This bill is not really targeted toward any particular group, it is for all children to attend, is that correct.

Kirsten Baesler: Yes, as I mentioned, Head Start is a wonderful federal program, but it is not located throughout ND. We're missing many of our children. A special education unit does a good job and since I've come to the Dept. I've realized the wonderful working relationship between the DHS and DPI for those younger students, that both departments are trying to help. This program is about catching those kids when they are the most eager to learn and not have that achievement gap.

Rep. Rust: But this does not have income guidelines attached to it. This is for all students whose parents would probably like them to attend.

Kirsten Baesler: That's correct, there are no income guidelines. We didn't anticipate income guidelines on the application form. There has been some conversation that that might be of interest for the House to consider. We would be amenable to that.

Rep. Rust: At times, as a practicing superintendent, I would hear from those people who probably missed the income guidelines. They were just above or for those people that felt that the forgotten group in this was those people above the poverty guidelines because many of those children had needs and should be in a program, just like the others. It is a comment I've heard often about them feeling like they are left out and that it's on them to pay the program.

Kirsten Baesler: It's also something to consider as we look at the income that some of our families are making; particularly in the western part of our state, oil impacted, but even here in Bismarck and Jamestown, we see the secondary impact go further east. These are students that have been very mobile and then moved a lot because of the nature of their parents' occupations. What we've seen in the qualifications for our Title I, which is measured by free and reduced lunch, we've seen that qualification be reduced because the incomes that they are making in the oil fields, are significantly high and so they are not qualifying for the income guidelines, but the needs are certainly there. That's a unique situation we're facing in ND.

Rep. Meier: With the 47 districts that already have programs in place, would you envision those districts actually applying for this or would this be for new districts.

Kirsten Baesler: I do suspect that it will be a combination of both. Some will apply for these funds and there will be some new districts that would be applying.

Rep. Meier: With let's say 30 new districts, would you envision that they would actually put these programs then in their school buildings to accommodate.

Kirsten Baesler: Space is certainly an issue. They would have to consider again where to put the program. That's why we wanted to leave the application form open so that it would fit local needs, but there will be many school districts in the state of ND that won't apply for these grants, because they simply don't have the room to offer preschool; whether they look for rent space in a church, an off-site space. If it's a half-day program they wouldn't need to worry about meals. It has to be left up to local control. I do anticipate that many would really want to, but wouldn't have the physical space to provide for it.

Rep. Heller: This is a pilot project to start using tax dollars to fund this, so after this pilot is finished, would those students be added to the baseline, added into the district numbers for the state to fund under weighted student units.

Kirsten Baesler: At this time, there is no plan for us to add that to the foundation aid formula. Right now, we are at K-12, which is what the student weighted units measure. The K has a weighting factor and then grades 1-12. At this point, there hasn't been any conversation about adding this to an FTE ADM. We would like to begin piloting this program, gathering the data on the improvements and results of it and see where we go from there.

Rep. Heller: If we are able to use local tax dollars, will those school districts have a separate account then for preschool kids apart from the tax dollars that go to foundation aid.

Kirsten Baesler: Yes, in my experience, when we have a special program, we would levy a tax for preschool and that would go into a separate general fund account.

Rep. Heller: On the ratio of not attending early childhood education and prison population, and since ND is one of the last states to enter this preschool, so all of the other states that have been doing this, should have really good statistics showing that their prison population has decreased. There should be a lot of statistics out there that we shouldn't have to start from the ground up to know what is going to happen.

Kirsten Baesler: I would imagine that could be true, depending on their data collection systems and how they operated it. We want to have a firm foundation and create a strong baseline of data and information so we can measure and report back to the ND legislators what that has done. I'm not familiar with what the other states have collected on their prison populations and their early childhood programs.

Rep. Heller: Where did you get those statistics.

Kirsten Baesler: I used several resources (see attached 1a).

Rep. D. Johnson: One of the things that I would like to see is a joint effort between Head Start and PreK, and the Title program. Do you envision the money to help both the waiting lists for Head Start and replace Title money if that is cut back. Is there enough money to go around with these programs, with the needs that are out there.

Kirsten Baesler: I don't think this bill, with the appropriation, is going to even come close to the needs that are out there. If we go into Sequestration and Title I funding, the loss of the preschool program funding that we will see throughout the state will be significant. I do hope that this would help supplement what school districts are doing. I think Devils Lake is a wonderful example of that cooperation between the local school district and the Head Start. Unfortunately, there aren't enough Head Start programs throughout where we can have that cooperative effort. I would like to see this as an alternative. I don't think this appropriation is even going to come close to meeting what we could. The most significant piece is to allow local school districts to be able to access local dollars. If the local community is demanding it and saying that this is what they need, I believe they should have the opportunity to have a preschool program without having to worry about whether they are in violation of state code.

Rep. J. Kelsh: What is the length of day for a preK student, how that is worked out with day care. I am assuming that the parents drop them off at a day care and they somehow have to get to school and how long would they attend school, and how would they get back.

Kirsten Baesler: The typical school day will vary from each district, some half days, some run 3 hour programs, and some run a full day program, 2 days/week. Normally school districts operate on a 8-4 pm school day, so many of the K-12 school students their parents work 7:30 to 5:30 pm. Most often, every community has some sort of afterschool or before school program whether it be a private daycare center, public daycare center or an afterschool program. From what we've heard from the parents that are picking up their children at noon, because it is a half-day program,

they usually take their lunch hour, arrange for carpooling similar to what they do in a normal day to day operations.

Rep. Hunsakor: You said that this \$5 million isn't going to go far. If you have 20 or 30 pilot programs as you said, and they are successful, there isn't any doubt that many schools going to want to start a program, which is going to cost many dollars. How do you see that down the road as far as 5-10 years from now, we're going to have to put a lot more money into the entire education system.

Kirsten Baesler: That is exactly why I want to start collecting that data, because in 4 years or 2 years, I want to be able to come to you and tell you what your investment has done, and this is where it saved you money.

Ch. Nathe: I don't see a reporting requirement on the bill, you wouldn't be opposed to report to LM after the two year pilot program.

Kirsten Baesler: I would welcome that opportunity.

Rep. Meier: Currently in code, is there any age requirement for preschool kids to start.

Kirsten Baesler: Currently there is not. The compulsory age of attendance is 6-16 in ND. That is the only requirement that we have.

Rep. Rohr: So we have the Head Start program, privatized preschool, so I'm trying to figure out how many students that you are considering in your pilot program. Then I would also like to have a reference to the comment on page 6, about the fact that we are 1 of 11 states that do not currently public preschool options at the school district level and what there outcomes are because they've chosen not to fund it as well.

Kirsten Baesler: We arrived at the number of students that we felt that we would like to have our districts reach those 16 students. So one school district has a \$100,000 cap, depending on how they might function their day, that \$100,000, with 181 school districts. If it's going to 2 days, 3 days, half day, hopefully getting 32 students in with a teacher and an aide, that is how we developed the number.

Rep. Heller: In present code right now, are early childhood programs limited to a certain age.

Kirsten Baesler: I believe our Head Start goes 3-5 year olds. The DHS, in conjunction with the DPI, operates most of our preschool programs, other than they monitor the daycare centers and the ratio for that. The 47 public school districts that we have in operation now are 4 year olds that are approved.

Rep. Heller: So it is limited to 4 year olds.

Kirsten Baesler: Yes.

Rep. Heller: The ND Early Childhood Education Council, do they minutes from their meetings published online.

Kirsten Baesler: I'm not sure. I have not met with that council yet.

Rep. B. Koppelman: The districts that might be using funds questionably, whether they can use local money or not, are they now coming to try and get this taken care of so they aren't in an illegal position.

Kirsten Baesler: Just to clarify, the school districts that will be speaking after me are operating within the provisions that are provided by them in law. The ones that are not listed on the sheet (1b packet) are the ones that want to do it anyway and aren't reporting to DPI for approval. That opens up a huge liability to those school board members if they aren't being responsible and they are approving the appropriation for this and it hasn't gone through the proper channels. We're trying to remove that liability.

Rep. B. Koppelman: Usually the best pilot projects are those that you can measure a small cohort of a larger cohort completely. For example, one school district vs. the state or one elementary school vs. a whole school district. This to me if you're going to reach from anywhere from 16-32 kids, doesn't seem like it's going to give us a good pilot program.

Kirsten Baesler: I believe the Dept. would be very open to setting guidelines in which you would like the application system to contain. We'd be open to that.

Ch. Nathe: Are you working on guidelines for this.

Kirsten Baesler: Yes we do, but we are open to working on this together to put together what the parameters would be.

Rep. J. Kelsh: When you talk about how it isn't in law that this can be done, but it's not in law that they can't do this either. I could see how they could be in trouble if they were shorting other classes that are provided for in law.

Kirsten Baesler: I think you have captured it exactly. It is such a gray area, they aren't using funds that were appropriated by the state for K-12 education, but they aren't certain whether there is a problem or not. This bill would clarify that they are able to do it.

Rep. D. Johnson: With the 47 schools that are already doing some form of this already, wouldn't there already be some data between Head Start and preschools that are already in place.

Kirsten Baesler: You will hear from some of our school districts today that have collected the data, that are already currently operating preschool programs.

Rep. Rohr: Would we be able to use the funds, the tax dollars, for privatized preschool, to use for these schools as well.

Kirsten Baesler: My understanding is that state funds can't go to private education. As it exists now, I would have to say that the answer would be no, but if something changes this session, that may be a possibility.

Ch. Nathe: Thank you.

Sen. Nicole Poolman: Co-sponsor, support (see attached 2). The website for the Education Commission of the state, it's available on your legislative site. It is a non-partisan organization and they have plenty of information and all of the information that I gave you and the information you see here comes from the reports that they commissioned. We are currently underserving our Head Start population in the state of ND, so you have many children who are poor enough to qualify for head start and they are not being served right now. You also have plenty of people that are working poor. One of the shocking pieces of information that the head start people mentioned in their testimony was that, right now, a single mother who works as a CNA makes too much money to qualify for a head start program. I really see that a public preschool could offer an option for that mother who can't qualify for head start and certainly can't afford a private preschool. I am not here to advocate for mandatory preschool. If somebody came back in a couple of sessions from now and said that they wanted to mandate preschool for everybody, I would be the first person to stand up here and say, that's not our intent. That was never the intent of this legislation. We heard in the Senate, that it is rural areas where a private preschool essentially can't make enough money to make it go. We heard testimony from Drayton's superintendent and he has 60-70% of his students qualified for SOS (socio-economic status) and Title I. He enrolled them in preschool and they are now in 2nd grade. When tested in the 2nd grade in reading, all of the kids are proficient. He doesn't qualify for any Title I funding for those children. I think that you will find, if this legislation goes through, more and more of those kinds of stories.

Ch. Nathe: You see this bill as a way to reach the kids that the current head start program does not reach.

Sen. Nicole Poolman: Right, especially if the head start allocation to increase the amount of kids that we reach does not pass, this is what I would see as hitting some of those kids.

Ch. Nathe: What grade do you teach.

Sen. Nicole Poolman: I am a high school teacher. I have personal history with public preschool because I sent my first two children to private preschool, Montessori, and that's another point that I would like to make. I still would send my kids to the same Montessori that they went to. But there are many that cannot afford a program like that. My third child was developmentally not right, I just knew something was wrong. He wasn't meeting any of the developmental milestones. Because I was a teacher, and have experience in education, I knew that something

was wrong. I finally brought him in to our public preschool, because it offers services for children with special needs. That was the first time that someone was able to tell me, yes he shows signs of autism. That was the first time people could hand me books and information where I could finally see this is what is happening to my son. Parents living in poverty aren't going to be able to know that something is wrong and be able to afford to do something about it. This is going to give you another avenue to catch some of those kids in terms of early intervention. Maybe they come in for the public preschool but you realize that this little boy needs to be over here in the special needs preschool and we need to start addressing that. That's another piece of the Drayton puzzle. Many of you asked about school days and how that would work. In Drayton, in the morning, they have their public preschool, and then in the afternoon they keep the kids with special needs and they give them a double dose. I think that was a major key component of their success up there. There are many different ways we can do it.

Rep. Meier: How many kids actually were in the preschool program in Drayton.

Sen. Nicole Poolman: I don't. But I don't see this as a West Fargo, Bismarck, or Fargo type of districts. I see this helping the smaller districts, where 32 kids would probably encompass everyone in that district.

Rep. Meier: When you sent your children to Montessori, what was the student to teacher ratio.

Sen. Nicole Poolman: I know it was lower than 1 to 10.

Rep. Rohr: I agree that brain development is definitely key. The other part is the psychosocial needs or the basic needs of a child are not met at that age, there is no way that they can learn. So this isn't a mandatory program, it is still voluntary. How are you going to get to the kids that really need it.

Sen. Nicole Poolman: We could talk for a long time on how I wish we could see head start, early childhood, special education, and public preschool all falling under the DPI. My hope is that in the smaller towns and rural areas that are social services people could be put in contact with our public preschools. That we would be able to communicate between the agencies to track these kids down.

Rep. B. Koppelman: Do you see this program as being income-qualified.

Sen. Nicole Poolman: In our discussions, we had talked about that and I am an advocate for that. I would like to see it serve poor kids first and if there are slots open after that, I would love to see that happen that the other kids take advantage of this program as well.

Rep. B. Koppelman: Do you think we can learn from the districts that have been doing this already, but maybe haven't been reporting it to the state.

Sen. Nicole Poolman: I do. I do think that this is an important piece of this bill, that they are required to use PowerSchool and start reporting how these kids are doing, especially as they hit the 3rd grade. I think we will see positive results. In the last session, this bill actually passed the House and died in the Senate and right now we have a 6-0 Do Pass coming out of the Senate Education Committee, and so we're on the right track. I think that people are changing in terms of their understanding of the importance of educating our young people and it really is time to catch up while we still can.

Ch. Nathe: The bill you're talking about passing out of your committee, was that bill similar to this bill.

Sen. Nicole Poolman: It is identical, almost.

Ch. Nathe: Money too?

Sen. Nicole Poolman: The money is a little lower on our side, but I think it was just rounded up, it's almost \$5 million on our side as well.

Rep. Heller: What's that bill no.

Sen. Nicole Poolman: SB 2229.

Ch. Nathe: Thank you. Further testimony in support of HB 1429.

Denise Soehren, Principal for Billings County School District: Support (see attached #3).

Rep. Heller: How do you fund your preschool right now.

Denise Soehren: We have a tuition base that we have parents pay and then we do some private funds.

Rep. Heller: How much does each family have to pay.

Denise Soehren: It varies. I offer a variety of options. I have 3 full days, or some parents can choose to come 1/2 day or they can come 2 full days. It is about \$120/mo. for 3 full days, half day is \$60/mo., and 2 days is about \$100/mo.

Rep. Heller: Do you have to turn some children away, that you're full.

Denise Soehren: At this point, I have not. I am not good about turning kids away. I've added staff, other aides. My big issue is the space in our rooms. I am finding that in my last open house to sign up for classes next year, and just in Medora, I have 12 kids signed up already. I have 8 kids signed up that want to come from Beach, and I have 5 kids that have called and put their name on a waiting list from Belfield because our small towns do not have preschool in their areas. I don't know

how I'm going to deal with those kids yet. Of course, priority are the Billings County kids.

Rep. Meier: How many licensed teachers do you have currently in your school and then how many aides.

Denise Soehren: I have a preschool in each building; so I have a preschool in Fairfield and one in Medora. Each one has a certified teacher and one aide.

Rep. Meier: Do you have a 1 to 10 ratio, or what.

Denise Soehren: Fairfield has currently 12 kids, so there are two adults in the room and Medora has 13 kids, with 2 adults.

Ch. Nathe: Thank you. Further testimony in support.

Janelle Ferderer, Director of Emmons County Special Education Unit, and Emmons County Preschool: Support (see attached 4).

Rep. Heller: When you said you had 30 kids seeking enrollment and some are on a waiting list. Is it because you don't have the space or the parents can't afford the tuition.

Janelle Ferderer: The waiting list contains kids that were wanting to get in this year that I haven't been able to. We are already taking names for next year. I also have a couple that have 2 year olds that have called for the following year to make sure that they have a spot. Our classrooms are full, so I wasn't able to help the kids on the waiting list.

Ch. Nathe: If this bill were to pass, would this open up more spots in your district.

Janelle Ferderer: I would hope so. I think that 40-45 would be a good number for our program. Right now there is an issue of space and there is also an issue of staffing, but if this bill were to pass, I would certainly make every effort to provide that experience to every student that would be seeking it, yes.

Ch. Nathe: What are your tuition rates.

Janelle Ferderer: Our tuition rates are fairly low because I do believe that the low-income people are the kids that we really want to have in our program, so I haven't been charging an outrageous amount. We charge the parents who are paying tuition, \$500/yr. The majority of funding comes from our special education program because it is still considered a special needs preschool and we recently started working with Title I program to provide funds through their program. We also have had significant donations from the community, including the Linton Lions Club, Strasburg Lions Club and various civic groups throughout our communities have supported us very nicely.

Rep. J. Kelsh: A pre-kindergarten teacher, do they have to have the same qualifications as a K-1, 2 teacher.

Janelle Ferderer: Our preschool teachers are all highly qualified, meaning that they all have a teaching license. The teacher that is currently in the preschool program has a master's degree in early childhood education. I believe that the bill would require that the teachers for early childhood be licensed and there is a specific endorsement for early childhood teaching through Standards and Practices.

Ch. Nathe: Thank you. Further testimony in support.

Brandt Dick, Superintendent of HMB (Hazelton, Moffitt, Braddock) School District and Underwood School District: Support. We have had a public preschool at Underwood for over 15 years. The funding originally was for special needs students and then they wrote a grant and expanded it to other students. We do have a tuition base as well. Results in our school district are elementary school at Underwood was listed as a rewards school when DPI wrote for a waiver for No Child Left Behind, which means that we're in the top 5% of all elementary schools. In visiting with our principal, Barb Robinson feels that our preschool education is one of the major reasons for that. We do open it to all students. We are seeing some challenges with some families that are struggling to meet the tuition, so we're in the process of raising some funds for that. We have three half-days/wk. for 4 year olds and we also provide for 3 year olds as well. We do have a full licensed teacher and an aide for our preschool. It is right in our school and it has been a wonderful program for us.

Rep. Heller: How much do you charge.

Brandt Dick: I don't know exactly. I know we did an analysis and did raise it a little bit, but that was still less than a daycare. I think it is roughly \$110/mo. for the 3 days and \$65-70 for the 2 day, half day.

Rep. D. Johnson: Are you working with Head Start too, or is this strictly a preschool.

Brandt Dick: We do not have any head start programming in our area. We do actually receive students from Turtle Lake and other area communities just because there is no preschool in our area. The space we use is right in our school.

Rep. Rohr: Do you see because of the recruitment issues that there will be districts sharing their preschool teachers, maybe have half-days in this community and then the teacher would travel to another school for the remainder of the day.

Brandt Dick: We do have kids coming from Turtle Lake because they see the value we have in our program. Also as the superintendent of HMB, I've seen kids in special needs, where some of our parents have provided students to the Emmons County special ed. program. We are actually at Hazelton. We do have the space and we're looking at having our own special ed. program at HMB. We're working on that. There is a need in the rural communities definitely.

Rep. J. Kelsh: We had a bill last week where it would have bought down college debt for preschool teachers and daycare because of their low wages. Is that pretty much throughout the whole system, that pre-K teachers are paid at a low rate.

Brandt Dick: At our school district, at the Underwood School District, we have a licensed teacher, we pay her on the license just like any other teacher. There is no different in the pay. We also have an aide, so our numbers are approx. 7-8 students in each section, so we have two adults for 7-8 students. Our aide is just like the other aides that we have.

Ch. Nathe: Thank you. Further testimony in support.

Kayla Pulver-Macher, ND Education Association: Support.

Ch. Nathe: Thank you.

Rep. Joe Heilman: Sponsor, support. As you see, there is a lot of support for this bill. From my perspective, it is hard for me to accept the fact that our societal pressures on the families and the make-up of our families these days are such that a lot of kids aren't getting the attention and help that they need to become nurtured in an environment that supports learning. When I came to that acceptance, obviously forgetting how I was raised and looking at reality, I think there are some things that we can do to help with those issues. A lot of these kids aren't getting what they need. Whatever the local school districts can do to help that I think is a start. The kids deserve our help. I felt there were a couple of important points in the bill. From what I understood, the law was fairly fuzzy on whether or not local school districts could be supporting this with local funds. If you read the current law, the stricken out parts says the board of a school district may establish a prekindergarten program and may receive and expend any state monies specifically appropriated for the program. But our state doesn't specifically appropriate for preK. so the permissive language in section 1 is really what I think is really important as a step 1, so that if the local governments wish to implement a preK program they can do so, and they can support it with local funds. There are many things that school districts are doing already even though the law is fuzzy, because the demand is so high. The parents are demanding the help. If this is something that the citizens are demanding, then we should at least make it allowable for the locals to do it. Section 2 is the appropriation for grants. We crunched some basic numbers on what a teacher and aide would cost and it was about \$100,000 if you were to have both. That's only 16 children if you have a teacher and an aide, and only 10 if you just have the teacher. If DPI was to give \$100,000 grant to school districts, in the neighborhood of 25 that would be able to benefit from this. I think we want to see head start continue because they help the neediest of the needy kids, but we don't have anything to say about that program from a state level because it is a federal program. I like to see different ideas, different implementations come through and that's why I like the local control piece of this and still have DPI with some oversight so we can get the data behind that. This really is a part of the plan to have one of the best K-12 systems in the country and I think that as a state, that should be one of

our goals, is to help create that environment for learning so our return on investment later is as high as it possibly can be.

Rep. Heller: How is the law fuzzy.

Rep. Heilman: I think that there wasn't inclusive language anywhere that said they can raise local taxes if they wanted to do it. That was my understanding in speaking with superintendents, but they were figuring out ways to do it anyway. I want to make sure that as a state we can do this; explicitly say it in law, in statute, that if the local school districts want to have a vote and raise their property taxes or whatever to support a pre-K program, they should be able to do that.

Rep. Heller: Do you think that every school district would take it to the vote of the people, or would it be that some school boards could make the decision.

Rep. Heilman: Not exactly sure how every school board elects to make those decisions. Of course, if they are going to raise taxes, I would hope that goes to the vote of the people; I don't think they can otherwise. If they can find other creative ways to do it, that is great. You also see the federal and private gifts as well. If they have support for it that way and the school district says we can pay for this without using state appropriated funds for the K-12 system, I wanted to make sure that this wasn't taking away from foundation aid payments for this. We need to keep them separated. I don't ever want to see a day when we are mandating pre-K. I think it should only be for those that need the help. I don't want to get involved in the kids' lives earlier than we have to. But in some cases, we do.

Rep. Heller: Right now, if this were to pass and they can use local tax dollars to fund this, would it only be for a certain age group.

Rep. Heilman: I would leave that up to the school districts to determine how they want to implement the program. If they want to say 4 year olds only, and they have to meet some income eligibility requirements, I would prefer that. Because I want to know what works best. I think it works best to have this delivered through the local school districts.

Rep. Heller: So right now in 15.1-37-01, it says it is limited to those who reach the age of 4 by August. So would you change that part of the code too, so then that would open it up for younger kids to get in.

Rep. Heilman: I didn't want to touch that piece. So if the current law says 4 years old is the earliest, that is fine with me.

Rep. J. Kelsh: You said that you would hope that if they were going to do this they would go to the vote of the people. Are you saying that even if they have mills that they could legally levy without going to the vote of the people, do you mean that they should even in those cases.

Rep. Heilman: If they have local funding available and it doesn't take away from the K-12 system for their school district, and they have excess mills, maybe that's something the local taxpayer should take up. If they can provide it without taking away from the k-12 system, I am fine with that. If their school board decides to implement a program and they have monies available, I'm okay with that.

Rep. J. Kelsh: There is a 12% limit on the amount of dollars they can increase. So in a lot of school districts the mill levy has actually gone down; the valuation has gone up, mill levies have actually gone down, so are you saying that this would be included in that 12%. They still couldn't go over the 12% to put on a mill to do this program.

Rep. Heilman: I'm not an expert in how that works, but I imagine you are correct.

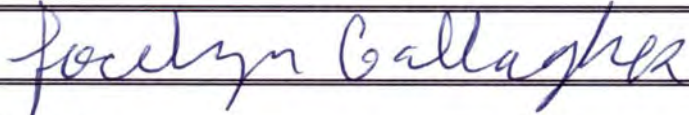
Ch. Nathe: When we hear the Governor's K-12 bill tomorrow, that may become clearer at that time. Thank you Rep. Rep. Heilman. Further testimony in support. Testimony in opposition. We will close the hearing.

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Education Committee Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1429
February 11, 2013
18667

☐ Conference Committee



Minutes:

Chairman Nathe: He passed out amendments for their consideration. This has to do with early childhood grants that are currently being done by 47 school districts. Program is voluntary. The proposed amendment is taking section 2 out, taking money out of the bill but yet keeping section 1 in it so districts who do this don't feel they are operating illegally. This makes it so they are doing it according to code.

Rep. Meier: The bill sponsor was ok with taking the money out?

Chairman Nathe: Correct

Rep. Heller: I was wondering if this is constitutional to use tax dollars because doesn't the constitution say that the state will fund primary education and talking with Anita primary does not include anything below 1st grade.

Chairman Nathe: No they were not run by Anita, they struck pre-kindergarten and put early childhood education in there.

Rep. Koppelman: Could we ask Anita to come down and speak on this?

Rep. Johnson: If we take section 2 out there would be no money.

Chairman Nathe: Correct, but we want to make it legal for the other 47 districts that are doing these right now.

Rep. Johnson: Most of these programs are run with grants, gifts, and title one, federal money. I think the approval was to use grants and gifts from private organizations, wasn't it?

Chairman Nathe: Anita will speak to the amendment, specifically to section 1, line 11 and help walk us through that.

Anita Thomas, DPI: Are there specific questions you would like me to address?

Rep. Heller: In the constitution when it said the word primary, that the state is required to educate a child from primary to the end, what that word meant?

Anita Thomas: (4:36) Read the definition and gave explanation.

Rep. Koppelman: When we had DPI talking about the local districts using their own means, not state funds, to fund pre-school programs that were in addition to what the state currently allows and I asked how many districts are there, she answered they don't know because they don't register or get approved by us. Would there be some language we could add to this so they have to register with DPI?

Anita Thomas: There would be no reason why you couldn't require that the program be approved.

Chairman Nathe: Do you have language to that effect Rep. Koppelman that we can add to the amendment?

Rep. Koppelman: I will take it up this afternoon.

Rep. Rust: I assume the state has extended it for Kindergarten, correct?

Anita Thomas: The state pays for Kindergarten, yes.

Rep. Rust: A school dis-bands a program because they had to use local tax dollars and they thought they were spending dollars inappropriately?

Anita Thomas: We are looking at the language to authorize the use of local tax revenues.

Rep. Hunskor: If this bill were to pass the way it is with section 1 and 2 in it, is the 5 million dollars for early childhood education legal under current law?

Anita Thomas: I don't understand, you're providing a grant to a public school district and not requiring they do it.

Chairman Nathe: Rep. Koppelman will work on the amendment and take it up this afternoon.

Rep. Hunskor: Is it not going to pass if the 5 million is in there?

Chairman Nathe: The prime sponsor discussed that, yes and it is not in the DPI budget.

Chairman Nathe: Putting this in code takes away any questions on being in compliance or not.

Rep. Kelsh: The major hang-up is the baseline fund.

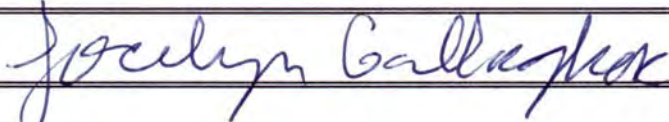
Chairman Nathe: Rep. Carlson has granted us an extension past today. It is too important a bill to rush.

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Education Committee
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1429
February 11, 2013
18795

☐ Conference Committee



Minutes:

Rep. Koppelman: I believe we adopted the amendments we had this morning.

Chairman Nathe: No, we didn't adopt anything this morning, they were just proposed.

Rep. Koppelman: These proposed amendments I've given you include the amendments from this morning that were proposed but also included the one that says page 1, line 10 after and insert, then it says provided the program is approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction in accordance with chapter 15.1-37. He continues on with information on the amendment.

Rep. Kelsh: If amendments are adopted all the bill would do is make sure that it's legal for schools to use money from local tax revenues and some state monies for early childhood education.

Chairman Nathe: It would put it in code so it takes away any liability for the 47 districts already doing it.

Rep. Meier: With that I would move the amendment.

Chairman Nathe: We have a do pass on the amendment from Rep. Meier, is there a second?

Chairman Nathe: Second by Rep. Koppelman

Rep. Koppelman: I believe that ones that we've been referring to as the not so legal to make more legal, that list doesn't exist. They don't currently report to DPI. Rep. Heller has the ones that have pre-K and that sort of thing.

Chairman Nathe: If this bill were to pass and be in code they would have an up-to-date list on everybody as its being done.

Rep. Heller: Right now we are discussing Rep. Koppelman's amendment.

Rep. Kelsh: You said they would be on the list but if the school districts are just doing it and haven't gotten approval are they still going to be immune from being out of compliance?

Rep. Koppelman: You might liken this to amnesty. Those who might be doing things wrong are given the opportunity to register and become in compliant and then they are legal, however if this is passed, those that choose not to step forward and become compliant become clearly illegal.

Chairman Nathe: It gives them the opportunity to step forward.

Chairman Nathe: Any other discussion on the amendment? **Let's do a voice vote on the amendment. All in favor, I, all opposed, motion passes, amendment passes. HB 1429 as amended.**

Rep. Heller: I would like to further amend this bill that if school districts so choose to use local tax dollars for a pre-school that there would have to be some sort of a notification or something to the patrons of that district saying that they are going to use local tax dollars for a pre-school program that will be put in a fund separate from the taxes that go for the other schooling. So local people know their taxes will increase and it didn't come from the state, it was local decision to do it.

Chairman Nathe: Kirby, can you do one on the fly quick if we go on to the next bill? We do need to get this out today. We're killing the money in it but I'd like to get this out today.

Chairman Nathe: Any ideas to the amendment how we could write that?

Rep. Koppelman: I think we could ask DPI how they report now. My understanding is for all those current pre-k that's what you might say is somewhat sanctioned by the state is for special education and those dollars on their reporting are separate dollars reported. The only questions in terms of reporting would be is there a differentiation between pre-k that is non-special ed and pre-k that is special ed. That would be the line item that would spell it out.

Chairman Nathe: In chapter 15317, Rep. Koppelman, did that have a reporting requirement in there addressing Rep. Heller's needs?

Rep. Koppelman: The only question I asked Anita was whether or not that pertains to reporting requirements; I didn't ask if you had to single it out.

Rep. Mock: Point of order did Rep. Heller was that a motion to amend?

Rep. Heller: Yes

Rep. Mock: I just wanted to make sure if that was a motion that I just needed to second that.

Chairman Nathe: For the clerk and I, Rep. Heller has a motion, second by Rep. Schatz, to provide a reporting requirement.

Rep. Heller: Yes, on the local level that each school would have to let their patrons know that they are starting a program and how much more revenue it will take. If this bill does not have money in it, is there a reason it has to be out today?

Chairman Nathe: No, it doesn't have to be, I would just like to get out today if we could.

Rep. Mock: Is the purpose of amendment to be above and beyond the school board budgeting meetings and is this a public notification that would have to be made to all in the school district, I want to clarify how the notice would be delivered.

Rep. Heller: Thought it would be advisable to do this and I haven't worked out all the details and I would like a little more time.

Chairman Nathe: Can you speak in regards to the reporting.

Mr. Johnson, ND Education Council: (13:46) Rep. Rust covered it pretty accurately. He provided information on reporting.

Chairman Nathe: (15:58) everybody come back here in 5 minutes.

Discussion went to HB 1237 when committee reconvened from 16:00 to 29:00 minutes on the recording.

MINUTES FOR HB 1429 RESUMED ON RECORDING AT 29:00 ON JOB 18795

Chairman Nathe: Let's go back to HB 1429. Rep. Heller will pass out the hand written amendment.

Rep. Rust: This does not address separate accounting of the program. Is it in the code or manual already?

Rep. Heller: In order for them to publish this in the paper every year wouldn't they have to have some sort of accounting that separates it off, otherwise how will they know?

Rep. Rust: There is a difference between if you're going to do this after the program has been done so you know the amount?

Rep. Koppelman: Are we heading in the direction where we just tell them they have to take it a vote of the people if they want pre-school?

Rep. Heller: That is a good point.

Rep. Schatz: Can we change the very first three words once each year or in the first year?

Chairman Nathe: The beginning of the school year, the end of the school year, would that alleviate your concerns Rep. Rust.

Rep. Rust: I don't have a problem with it being at the beginning either, it could be a budget.

Rep. Rust: Local tax revenue is being used for pre-K, if you have so much money that you can pay for things that aren't required by law then maybe we're giving you too much money.

Chairman Nathe: We have a do pass motion this amendment that's been written up now.

Rep. Heller: We do, I don't recall that.

Rep. Mock: Is it required to notify the public on any other programs above and beyond what we are obligated?

Chairman Nathe: That is in the overall budget but is it drilled down to that level?

Rep. Rust: In school districts money is line itemed so you see how much is allocated for activities.

Rep. Koppelman: We've amended the bill with the first set of amendments, correct?

Chairman Nathe: Correct.

Rep. Koppelman: This bill no longer has money in it, can we study this a little longer and find a better way to do it.

Rep. Heller: I would like us to reconsider putting this amendment on right now.

Chairman Nathe: You want to withdraw the amendment?

Rep. Heller: Right

Chairman Nathe: Rep. Heller withdraws the amendment. Rep. Schatz seconds. Amendment is withdrawn.

Chairman Nathe: We have amended HB 1429 with a set of amendments that were passed earlier. Your wishes?

Rep. Koppelman: I request we hold this bill for more information.

Chairman Nathe: I want to move it. We have a do pass motion by Rep. Kelsh, second by Rep. Johnson. Any other discussion on HB 1429 as amended? Seeing none we will take a roll vote, 7-4-2, bill carrier is Rep. Mock.

Y1
2/11/13

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1429

Page 1, line 2, remove "; and to provide an appropriation for early childhood"

Page 1, line 3, remove "education grants"

Page 1, line 10, after "and" insert ", provided the program is approved by the superintendent of public instruction in accordance with chapter 15.1-37,"

Page 1, remove lines 16 through 24

Page 2, remove lines 1 through 14

Renumber accordingly

Date: Feb 11, 2013

Roll Call Vote #: _____

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1429

House EDUCATION Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken: ☐ Do Pass ☐ Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations

☐ Do Not Pass ☒ Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Meier Seconded By Rep. Koppelman

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe			Rep. Bob Hunskor		
Rep. Mike Schatz			Rep. Jerry Kelsh		
Rep. Joe Heilman			Rep. Corey Mock		
Rep. Brenda Heller					
Rep. Dennis Johnson					
Rep. Ben Koppelman					
Rep. Lisa Meier					
Rep. Karen Rohr					
Rep. David Rust					
Rep. John Wall					

TOTAL (YES) _____ (NO) _____ (ABSENT) _____

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT _____

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

Rep. Koppelman's proposed amendment
to have registration for pre-K programs.
voice vote, motion passes.

Date: 2/11/13Roll Call Vote #: 12013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE
ROLL CALL VOTESBILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1429

House

EDUCATION

Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken: ☒ Do Pass ☒ Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By

Rep. Kelsh

Seconded By

Rep. Johnson

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe	✓		Rep. Bob Hunsakor	✓	
Rep. Mike Schatz	✓		Rep. Jerry Kelsh	✓	
Rep. Joe Heilman			Rep. Corey Mock	✓	
Rep. Brenda Heller		✓			
Rep. Dennis Johnson	✓				
Rep. Ben Koppelman		✓			
Rep. Lisa Meier		✓			
Rep. Karen Rohr		✓			
Rep. David Rust	✓				
Rep. John Wall					

TOTAL (YES) 7 (NO) 4 (ABSENT) 2FLOOR ASSIGNMENT Rep. Mock

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1429: Education Committee (Rep. Nathe, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (7 YEAS, 4 NAYS, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1429 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 2, remove "; and to provide an appropriation for early childhood"

Page 1, line 3, remove "education grants"

Page 1, line 10, after "and" insert ", provided the program is approved by the superintendent of public instruction in accordance with chapter 15.1-37,"

Page 1, remove lines 16 through 24

Page 2, remove lines 1 through 14

Renumber accordingly

2013 SENATE EDUCATION

HB 1429

2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Education Committee
Missouri River Room, State Capitol

HB 1429
3-19-13
20113

☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 15.1-09-58 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to early childhood education.

Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

Chairman Flakoll opened the hearing on HB 1289. All members present and accounted for.

Representative Joe. Heilman, District 45: The bill allows permissible language for local schools to fund a K-12 program if they choose. This passed the House with no money and no appropriation in it. It passed with the smallest of margins. This clarifies so there is no questions whether or not if the local school district wishes to implement an early childhood program because of the demand, they can do so. I hope you pass this as you have before so we have the policy side of the equation.

Senator Phil Murphy: I would be happy to entertain any questions.

Senator Heckaman: Are you anticipating rolling these two bills together or keeping 2229 and this separate?

Senator Phil Murphy: We sent the other one with money in it to the House.

Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction: I wish to testify in support of HB 1429 (Written Testimony #1 attached) I received info from an Educator in Edgely, Darlene Muslet. She is the pre-school teacher. They used stimulus funds there to begin their pre-school. After that, they chose to continue the program so they used Title I funds. They saw such positive gains and are concerned with the sequestration and title I funding. They don't want their funds to disappear. This bill allows them to use state and local funds to continue their program. There is a difference between casual vocabulary and academic vocabulary. Academic are things such as compare and contrast. We expect our students to know those when they enter kindergarten.

Senator Poolman: Are most of the 47 pre-schools running now funding themselves through the title I money?

Kirsten Baesler: Many are using title I funding but it is a mix.

Chairman Flakoll: When did Edgely start the preschool?

Kirsten Baesler: 1991 when she wrote a grant.

Chairman Flakoll: Daycares think this will take away some of their profit. Is this something the department could work through in conjunction with some daycare providers?

Kirsten Baesler: That is a possibility. HB 1356 that is a study resolution to study all of the early childhood programs in our state including our licensed day care centers, in home child care providers, our head start programs, private and public pre-schools. That might be a nice solution to the problem for school districts that don't have space. I believe that is part of what the study will encompass. My perspective of that is that I don't believe our children should be looked at as a profit margin. That isn't part of my responsibility. I view myself as an advocate of our children who can't vote.

Senator Heckaman: Did you ask for additional money in case of the sequestration?

Kirsten Baesler: Yes we did. We showed programs working that are now in jeopardy.

Senator Heckaman: Did you ask for a specific amount or leave it to appropriations?

Kirsten Baesler: We asked for 7.5 million dollars.

Brandt Dick, Superintendent of Hazelton-Moffit-Braddock School District and Underwood School District: I am here to speak in favor of HB 1429. (Written Testimony #2 attached) Ended at 18:00

Senator Marcellais: How much do you charge for tuition?

Brandt Dick: The two day program is roughly \$85 per month and the three day is \$110. It is less than daycare per hour.

Chairman Flakoll: Does your calendar follow an academic calendar.

Brandt Dick: We follow the school calendar.

Chairman Flakoll: Are the busses on a different stagger?

Brandt Dick: Some ride on the bus with everyone else. We provide transportation and charge \$10 per month.

Chairman Flakoll: Are they counted as if they are a second grade student for the purposes of transportation reimbursement?

Brandt Dick: We can't count that. We can only count K-12.

Chairman Flakoll: What is the breakout of the ridership of family versus the bus?

Brandt Dick: It depends on where they live. We do provide an in town bus service from November-March. If it is a cold day 80-95% come. Roughly 80% for the rural areas.

Senator Luick: Of the families participating in this program, how many aren't that have that option?

Brandt Dick: Very few. I think close to 100% participation. We get other communities as well.

Chairman Flakoll: What is 2 day versus 3 day difference?

Brandt Dick: We are seeing 3 years olds go to the two day and 4 year olds go to 3 day.

Senator Poolman: Can you give me a percentage on a scholarship?

Brandt Dick: This year we have seen some needs. It has been an easy sell.

Senator Marcellais: What methods are you using to identify special education students?

Brandt Dick: If we see needs, we go through the process of identification for special education.

Senator Marcellais: Do you develop IEPs for those students?

Brandt Dick: Yes we would. We have seen some on IEP that have been able to get off IEPs.

Doug Johnson, NDCEL: We support HB 1429. Last session I remember the conference committee for SB 2150, the school policy bill. If we had a preference SB 2229 is better.

Chairman Flakoll: Do you have an idea how many districts do work with their local daycare providers?

Doug Johnson, NDCEL: I have worked with many districts. It would be a guess.

Chairman Flakoll: Closed the hearing on HB

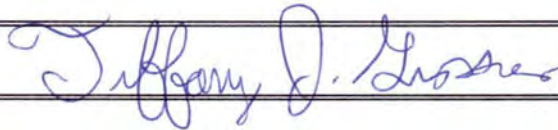
2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Education Committee
Missouri River Room, State Capitol

HB 1429
3-19-13
20115

☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 15.1-09-58 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to early childhood education.

Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

Chairman Flakoll opened the hearing on HB 1429

Senator Poolman: Move a Do Pass on Engrossed HB 1429

Senator Luick: Second

Senator Marcellais: Do we want to add the amendment to include similar to SB 2229?

Senator Poolman: As a sponsor of SB 2229 and the concept I want this language to be safe and I think the appropriation is at risk in the other chamber. Please don't do that.

A roll call vote was taken for a Do Pass on Engrossed HB 1429: 4 yeas, 2 nays, 0 absent

Senator Poolman will carry

Date: 3-19-13

Roll Call Vote #: 1

**2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE
ROLL CALL VOTES**

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1429

Senate Education Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken: ☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Amended ☐ Adopt Amendment
☐ Rerefer to Appropriations ☐ Reconsider

Motion Made By Poolman Seconded By Luick

Senators	Yes	No	Senator	Yes	No
Chairman Tim Flakoll	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Senator Joan Heckaman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vice Chairman Donald Schaible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Senator Richard Marcellais	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Senator Larry Luick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Senator Nicole Poolman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Total (Yes) 4 No 2

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Poolman

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1429, as engrossed: Education Committee (Sen. Flakoll, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (4 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed HB 1429 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.

2013 TESTIMONY

HB 1429

TESTIMONY ON HB 1429
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
February 4, 2013
By: Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent
701-328-4570
Department of Public Instruction

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kirsten Baesler and I am the Superintendent of Public Instruction. I am here to speak in favor of HB 1429 to provide an appropriation for early childhood education grants.

I am speaking in favor of this bill today because I think we have a tremendous opportunity in North Dakota to create the best educational system in this country, possibly in the world. To begin creating that system we must make investments in programs and areas that provide the most and best results. Early childhood education does just that. I am not talking about preschool in terms of daycare alternatives or simply getting children emotionally ready for kindergarten. Early childhood education does more than that. Early childhood education takes advantage of the opportunity to teach a child when they are the most eager and ready to learn. We have the opportunity to not just prepare our students for kindergarten but to really begin the learning process for these children and begin their lifelong educational experience - preparing them for a lifetime of learning.

One argument often levied against early childhood education is that we will be taking these young children from their homes and families. The fact is that 52% of our four year olds in North Dakota are already in some sort of formal daycare setting. Some may argue that if children are already in daycare, why create new programs for early education. Why not let kids stay in daycare and then start learning in kindergarten or first grade? The answer is because quality early learning programs matter and they make a difference. Advances in brain research show that children are born learning - 85% of brain development happens before age 5. Research shows early learning experiences that are engaging and active actually thicken the cortex of an infant's brain, creating a brain with more extensive and sophisticated neuron structures that later determine intelligence and behavior. The preschool years are the time in which the brain begins to determine which connections to keep and which to eliminate. These first years of life impact the success students experience later in school and literally build the foundation of success in learning.

The first five years are also when children build the social and emotional skills they need to succeed in school. Teachers expect children to be able to follow directions, start and finish projects, and know when they need to ask for help. These are the skills I saw lacking most in my kindergarten, first and second graders. I saw these students frequently because they were removed from the classroom and sent to the principal's office. The very students that can't afford to

be out of the classroom and miss out on teacher instruction and learning are the very ones that are in the principals' offices across North Dakota for time-outs.

If a child can't follow directions, he or she will have difficulty attending to the task of learning. There are proven effective methods for teaching these skills and building attention. Such "soft" skills are just as important as cognitive or "hard" skills—like being able to count, recite the alphabet, and write their names.

While most upper-income children have vibrant early experiences, children in poverty often live in chaotic environments. Low-income parents may struggle to find a job or pay the bills, and consequently don't have the means to create a stimulating learning environment for their young children. Middle-income children most often have two working parents who consequently don't have the time to create a stimulating learning environment. In North Dakota 78% of mothers with children under the age of five work outside the home. This inequality in opportunity created between upper income and middle to low income students leads to the achievement gap that is evident as early as nine months of age and continues to inhibit students' progress throughout elementary school and beyond.

There are few proven strategies to close the achievement gap during the K-12 school years. **But high-quality early childhood education programs prevent the achievement gap from forming.** Decades of research on programs indicates that high-quality early childhood programs for vulnerable children increase

childhood literacy and high school graduation rates by as much as 80%.

Disadvantaged children who don't participate in high-quality early education programs are 50% more likely to be placed in special education and 25% more likely to drop out of school, thereby imposing significant costs on society.

Headstart programs are valuable, but they aren't operating in many areas of our state and they still reach only a small percentage of eligible children. Approval of HB 1429 would enable school districts in every part of the state to provide the same learning experiences to our young people.

Leading economists say that early childhood education is a sound public investment. Every dollar spent on early childhood education programs yields \$7 to \$9 in future savings on expenditures like special education and the criminal justice system. Early childhood education programs can also improve America's competitiveness in a global economy. Rob Grunewald - Regional Economic Analyst with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis has written:

“careful academic research demonstrates that tax dollars spent on early childhood education provide extraordinary returns compared with investments in the public, and even private, sector. The potential return from a focused, high-quality program is as high as 16 percent per year. Some of these benefits are private gains for the children involved in the form of higher wages later in life. But the broader economy also benefits because individuals who participate in high-quality programs have greater skills than they otherwise would, and they're able to contribute productively to their local economies. Thus, it's estimated, the annual *public* return to good ECD programs is 12 percent.”

Shortly after my election I visited the state penitentiary to learn more about the educational systems provided there. I learned that if during the prisoner's intake assessment it was discovered that the prisoner did not have a high school diploma or a GED they started that program immediately during their incarceration. This tells me we understand the direct correlation between education and the ability to become a productive contributing citizen in North Dakota. The state's current investment in our children's education in \$3,390 per child per year yet the state's current investment for a prisoner at the penitentiary is over 10 times that - at \$36,000 per prisoner per year.

The question elected officials and the public must confront is stark: Do we fund early childhood education now, or pay considerably more later for the costly social problems that result when children are not successful in school?

Our country's students and North Dakota's students are constantly being compared to nations around the world and we hear they are falling behind. Let's take a look at some of those countries.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has published *Education at a Glance 2012*, which is a research document that enables countries to see themselves in the light of other countries education performance.

- Across the 34 OECD studied countries in 2010, 79 percent of 4-year-olds were enrolled in preschool education. In the European Union, the percentage was 83.
- In comparison, only 69 percent of U.S. 4-year-olds were enrolled in early childhood education, ranking the U.S. 28th among 38 nations studied.
- The top 15 countries, including many of the U.S. economic competitors, all had enrollments exceeding 90 percent.
- The typical preschool starting age for U.S. children is 4, compared with a starting age of 3 or younger in 21 other OECD countries.

These findings matter because OECD data suggest that enrollment in early childhood education correlates with higher educational achievement later in a student's academic career.

As businesses and corporations look at moving to North Dakota, high quality school systems with early education options are a priority. North Dakota is one of 11 states that do not currently fund public preschool options at the school district level. This is a need for families, workforce development, communities, and business to consider as they decide to locate in North Dakota.

While I was the President of Mandan's school board the state invested in education by providing funding for all day every day kindergarten programs. We took advantage of that opportunity and since then Mandan's kindergarten scores on

the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) test that measures growth have been 8, 10 and 12, points above the national average expected. Principals from Kulm and Minnewauken report similar results. This is what investment in kindergarten programs has done. I ask you to imagine what investment in early education programs will do.

There has been significant progress made in setting the groundwork for early education programming in North Dakota. The Department of Public Instruction has an Early Childhood Education framework that will be formally reviewed against the department's protocol for developing standards. In addition, we are working with the Information Technology Department (ITD), as part of the Governor's Early Childhood Council, on a possible data system that would be connected to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). The Department of Public Instruction is striving to be prepared in the event state funding will be provided for early childhood education. We know it is becoming increasingly more important for children to come to school prepared and ready to learn. There are higher expectations today than in the past. We want our children to begin learning early and continue to learn through college and beyond. It will be imperative that our North Dakota children have a solid foundation leading to the strongest possible PK-20 educational system ever.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has a comprehensive plan for education. Our plan includes ensuring that students have the best educational experience possible -from early beginning to a successful end. North Dakota has a good educational system. In order to move from “Good” to “Great”, and get the greatest investment for our dollars for the future of North Dakota, we need to support quality early childhood education programs. I am reminded of the words of Wayne Gretzky “I skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been.” The fact is our children are ready to learn very early but by the time we begin to offer them education at age 5 or 6 we have already missed the puck.

Approving this bill will allow school districts to take the next step in creating our first class education system in North Dakota with proven academic results. Again, this isn’t about starting kids earlier, it’s about catching kids when the moment is right.

Thank you, Representatives. That concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Resources HB1429

K. Baesler, Superintendent
Department of Public Instruction

Resources:

- <https://my.vanderbilt.edu/camillabenbow/news/early-childhood-education-in-u-s-is-trailing-behind-other-countries/>
- <http://www.oecd.org/>
http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB9145/index1.html
- http://www.ecs.org/html/issueEL_new.asp
- *Brain Initiative, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, 2006*
- National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. 2000, *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.
- Wills, Christopher, *The Runaway Brain*; 1993.
- Purves, Dale, MD, *Body and Brain*, Harvard University Press; 1988. Adopted from Thompson, DW, *On Growth and Form*, Cambridge University Press.
- <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate/StateLanding.aspx?state=nd>
- North Dakota's State Automated Reporting System 2011-2012 Data. NDDPI Management and Information Systems unit. Retrieved January 23, 2013.
- <http://www.tnr.com/article/politics/magazine/108185/>
- <http://www.forbes.com/sites/baldwin/2012/11/25/do-you-live-in-a-death-spiral-state/>
- <http://preschoolmatters.org/2011/06/06/the-bottom-ten-a-closer-look-at-no-program-states/>
- <http://nieer.org/>
- <http://www.ndchildcare.org/data-pub/>

Grade Organizational List-Preschool

The list contains North Dakota Public School Districts that received approval for a grade organization that includes pre-kindergarten.

NDCC 15.1-37-01

Early Childhood Education Program Approval Requirements:

- **Approved Curriculum**
 - English/Language Arts
 - Writing
 - Math
 - Social Studies
 - Science
 - PE
 - Health
- **Highly Qualified Teaching Staff**
- **School Board Approval**
- **In Compliance**
 - Health, Fire & Safety Requirements

Early Childhood Education Program Approval Form located at:

www.dpi.state.nd.us/EarlyChildhoodEduc/preschool/approval.pdf

For further information please contact:

Tara Bitz, Early Childhood Administrator
(701) 328-4646 or tbitz@nd.gov

Cathy Ebert, Administrative Assistant
(701) 328-2824 or cmebert@nd.gov

Updated 11-13-2012

School District PK Grade Organization

Alexander	Mapleton
Ashley	Marmarth
Barnes Co. North	Max
Belcourt	Medina
Billings Co.	Minnewauken
Drayton	Montpelier
Edgeley	Mt. Pleasant
Emerado	Munich
Fordville-Lankin	New Rockford-Sheyenne
Ft. Totten	New Town
Gackle-Streeter	North Star
Garrison	Park River
Grafton	Pingree-Buchanan
Kensal	Richland
Kidder Co.	Solen
Killdeer	Starkweather
Kulm	Surry
Larimore	Tioga
Leeds	Underwood
Lewis & Clark	United
Linton	Valley-Edinburg
Litchville-Marion	Warwick
Maddock	Wishek
Manvel	

There is no information online for the Governor's Early Childhood Education Council. The following information has been provided by Kayla Effertz from the Governor's Office.

EC Council Sub Committee—Quality Assurance

May 24, 2012 conference call

Present: Gwen M., Stephanie , Tami , Carol E.

Discussion: This sub committee also existed with the last council, so rather than try to 'reinvent' the wheel, we decided to review what happened with that group and move forward on issues that still need to be addressed. The past quality assurance committee addressed the need for an increase of public awareness, and identified these specific concerns: barriers, opportunities, access, increase programs through availability, and expanding the quality rating system.

One barrier is the mindset that there is a difference between 'education' at preschool and at day care. Too often the assumption is that education doesn't happen in day care.

Another barrier: the private sector finds it very difficult to find funding for quality. How can we 'require' a high standard if there are not funds to meet the requirement? Also, it is clear that one characteristic of quality child care is highly educated teachers. Education requires funding. Some scholarships exist, but caregivers probably need more information about them.

One topic not addressed was how the ND early learning guidelines align with quality assurance. The members today decided to do some comparing/contrasting between these guidelines, PreK curriculum, QRIS, ND licensure, and perhaps even the ND Higher Education common course outcomes. We need a system to cross check; make sure we are all on the same page.

The Sub Committee also discussed tracking children. If every child could be given an ID, we could collect information on where the child is in the systems and then address quality assurance. Gear Up for Kindergarten can give us some data.

Next Steps: There will be a QRIS meeting Thursday June 21. Gwen will participate representing our sub committee (Carol will try to attend through SKYPE or phone conference). We will try to meet after that (perhaps June 28) for additional discussion on quality assurance. We may want to ask the Data Collection sub- committee for some information on tracking quality child care.

Quality Assurance Sub committee meeting July 11, 11 AM. Present-Tiffany, Tammy, Roxane, Carol

CCR&R and/or Child Care Services need to be at any meetings in the state where the child care crisis is being discussed to assure that the discussions include some information about QUALITY child care!

We support QRIS, and continue to support grants, scholarships for QRIS activities, but a first step may be to address the issue of licensing in the state-making sure everyone providing child care is licensed is a first step to quality child care.

Roxane's statement:

In order to promote quality in any state-driven initiative to increase child care capacity, we endorse that all projects require collaboration with the North Dakota Department of Human Services Early Childhood Services office and North Dakota's Child Care Resource and Referral system in planning and implementation. We also endorse that new or improvement projects promote developmentally appropriate practices, universal design for learning, and accessibility for both children and staff.

link for SB 2298 – this is the bill that was passed last session regarding Inclusive Child Care:

<http://www.legis.nd.gov/assembly/62-2011/documents/11-0313-07000.pdf>

Other discussions:

-Does the Lt Governor/Governor have any resolutions?

-CCR&R, Jennifer Barry (Child Care Services), should have data regarding how many people are providing child care without licenses/providing child care with the 'self certification' .

-inclusion for children with disabilities-is that a part of this sub committee or more for retention/expansion or recruitment?

-We still need to all be on the same page-programs licensed by DPI, Title I, child care licensing, etc.

-we need to have another discussion (quality assurance sub committee) before the whole council meets in August, especially to hear from those members unable to participate today—Gwen, Marc, Wilfred, Jennifer, and Kayla or Tami from the Governor's offices.

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**Early Childhood Education Council Agenda
Brynhild Haugland Room**

1:00-4:30

FEBRUARY 2, 2012

- 1. Review Committee Membership & Mission**
- 2. Review Current State Funded Early Childhood Programs**
- 3. Update on Programs**
 - a. Gearing Up for Kindergarten**
 - b. Facility Grants**
 - c. Professional Development Grants**
- 4. Discussion on Subcommittee Structure & Key Topics**
- 5. Public Comment**

2011-13 Early Childhood Education Council

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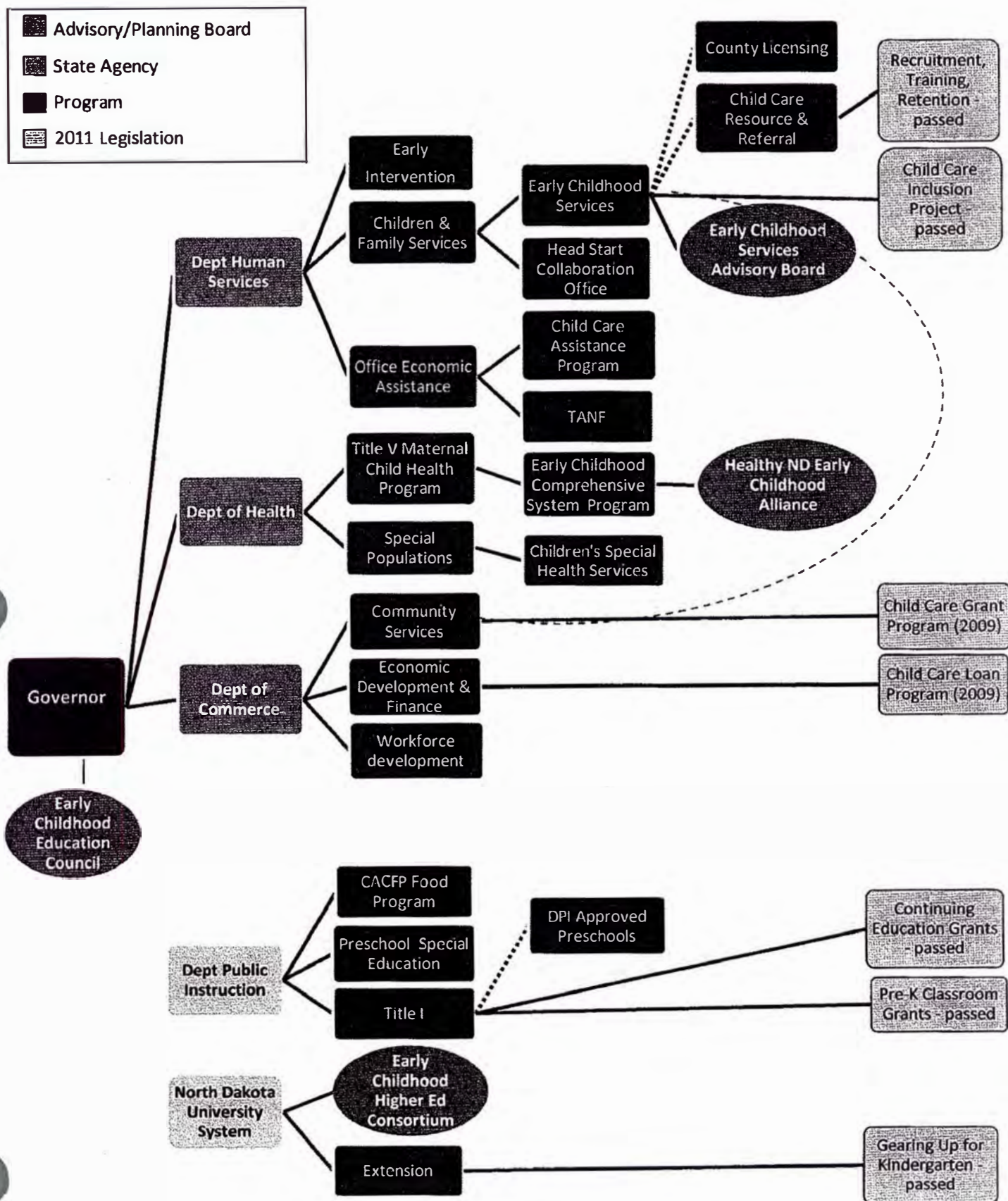
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North Dakota Early Childhood Diagram



9. If the superintendent of public instruction approves the loan, the superintendent may determine the loan amount, the term of the loan, and the interest rate, in accordance with the requirements of this section.
10. The superintendent of public instruction may adopt rules governing school construction loans.
11. For purposes of this section, a construction project means the purchase, lease, erection, or improvement of any structure or facility by a school board, provided the acquisition or activity is within a school board's authority.

SECTION 31. AMENDMENT. Section 15.1-37-01 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

15.1-37-01. Early childhood education program - Approval.

1. Any person or school district operating an early childhood education program may request approval of the program from the superintendent of public instruction. The superintendent shall approve an early childhood education program if the program:
 - 1-a. Is taught by individuals who are licensed to teach in early childhood education by the education standards and practices board;
 - 2-b. Follows a developmentally appropriate curriculum; and
 - 3-c. Is in compliance with all municipal and state health, fire, and safety requirements; and
 - d. Limits its enrollment to children who have reached the age of four before August first in the year of enrollment.
2. ~~Per student funding will not be provided to individuals or school districts offering a prekindergarten.~~In determining the state aid payments to which a school district is entitled, the superintendent of public instruction may not count any student enrolled in a regular early childhood education program.

SECTION 32. AMENDMENT. Subsection 1 of section 15.1-37-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

1. The North Dakota early childhood education council consists of:
 - a. A chairman appointed by the governor;
 - b. The superintendent of public instruction, or the superintendent's designee;
 - c. The state health officer, or the officer's designee;
 - d. The director of the department of human services, or the director's designee;
 - e. The North Dakota head start - state collaboration administrator, or the administrator's designee;
 - f. The commissioner of higher education, or the commissioner's designee;
 - g. The commissioner of commerce, or the commissioner's designee;
 - h. The chairman of the senate education committee, or the chairman's designee;
 - h-i. The chairman of the house of representatives education committee, or the chairman's designee; and
 - i-j. The following gubernatorial appointees:

- (1) The superintendent of a school district having at least one thousand students in average daily membership;
- (2) The superintendent of a school district having fewer than one thousand students in average daily membership;
- (3) The superintendent of a school district headquartered on a reservation or including reservation land within its boundaries;
- (4) ~~The principal of a school district;~~
- (5) ~~An individual employed as an elementary school teacher;~~
- (6) An individual representing a non-religious-based provider of preschool early childhood education;
- ~~(7)(5)~~ An individual representing a religious-based provider of preschool early childhood education;
- ~~(8)(6)~~ An individual representing a center-based licensed child care provider;
- ~~(9)(7)~~ An individual representing a home-based licensed child care provider;
- ~~(10)(8)~~ An individual representing a reservation-based head start program;
- ~~(11)(9)~~ An elected member of a school board;
- ~~(12)(10)~~ The parent of a child not yet enrolled in elementary school; ~~and~~
- ~~(13)(11)~~ The parent of a child with special needs disabilities not yet enrolled in elementary school; ~~and~~
- (12) An individual representing children with disabilities.

SECTION 33. AMENDMENT. Section 15.1-37-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

15.1-37-03. Council - Duties.

The council shall:

1. Review the delivery availability and provision of early childhood education, care, and services in this state;
2. ~~Conduct a needs assessment;~~
3. ~~Review early childhood education standards and propose revisions to the standards as needed;~~
4. Review identify opportunities for public and private sector collaboration in the delivery provision of early childhood education, care, and services in this state;
5. ~~Develop a comprehensive plan governing the delivery of early childhood education in this state; and~~
- 6.3. Identify ways to assist with the recruitment and retention of individuals interested in working as providers of early childhood education, care, and services, including training and continuing education or professional development opportunities;

4. Seek the advice and guidance of individuals who are uniquely familiar with the nature, scope, and associated challenges of providing early childhood education, care, and services in geographically and socioeconomically diverse settings, and develop recommendations pertaining to the short-term and longer-term improvement and expansion of early childhood education, care, and services in this state; and
5. Provide a biennial report regarding its activities findings and recommendations to the governor and the legislative ~~council~~ assembly.

SECTION 34. APPROPRIATION - SCHOOL DISTRICT RAPID ENROLLMENT GROWTH - GRANTS. There is appropriated out of any moneys in the oil and gas impact grant fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$5,000,000, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the superintendent of public instruction for the purpose of providing a grant to any school district that can demonstrate rapid enrollment growth, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2011, and ending June 30, 2013.

1. If the number of full-time equivalent students enrolled in a school district has increased by at least seven percent annually and if that increase is equal to at least twenty-five full-time equivalent students, as demonstrated by the district's September tenth fall enrollment report, the district is entitled to receive a grant equal to the per student payment provided for in section 15.1-27-04 multiplied by the actual increase in its full-time equivalent student enrollment.
2. If the amount of the appropriation provided for in this section is insufficient to meet the obligations of this section, the superintendent of public instruction shall prorate the payment based on the percentage of the total amount to which each school district is entitled.
3. The superintendent of public instruction may not expend more than \$2,500,000 in grants under this section during the first year of the biennium.
4. Any district that is precluded from receiving state aid under section 15.1-27-35.3 is not eligible to receive a grant under this section.

SECTION 35. APPROPRIATION - GEARING UP FOR KINDERGARTEN. There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$625,000, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the superintendent of public instruction for the purpose of supporting the gearing up for kindergarten program provided by the North Dakota state university extension service, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2011, and ending June 30, 2013. The North Dakota state university extension service may use up to \$125,000 of the amount appropriated for administrative purposes.

SECTION 36. TRANSPORTATION GRANTS - DISTRIBUTION.

1. During each year of the 2011-13 biennium, the superintendent of public instruction shall calculate the payment to which each school district is entitled based on the state transportation formula as it existed on June 30, 2001, except that the superintendent shall provide reimbursement at the rate of:
 - a. One dollar and three cents per mile for schoolbuses having a capacity of ten or more passengers;
 - b. Forty-six cents per mile for vehicles having a capacity of nine or fewer passengers;
 - c. Forty-six cents per mile, provided:
 - (1) The student being transported is a student with a disability, as defined in chapter 15.1-32;

Early Childhood Education Council Recommendations Legislative Outcomes

- **Child Care Grant Program**
 - The ECEC recommended \$500,000 to continue the child care grant program at the Department of Commerce. The executive budget recommended \$500,000. The legislature authorized the Department of Commerce to use the unspent funds from the previous biennium, but did not provide any new funds for the program.
- **Childcare Loan Program**
 - The ECEC recommended \$1,250,000 to continue the childcare loan program. The executive budget recommended \$1,250,000. The legislature authorized the Department of Commerce to use the unspent funds from the previous biennium, but did not provide any new funds for the program.
- **Pre-K Classroom Incentive**
 - The ECEC recommended \$125,000 of one time funding for a grant program to assist in renovations of classrooms to comply with Pre-K classroom requirements and recommendations. The executive budget recommended \$125,000. The legislature fully funded this initiative.
- **Gearing Up for Kindergarten**
 - The ECEC recommended \$1,330,000. The executive budget recommended \$830,000. The legislature funded \$625,000 for this program.
- **Continuing Education Grants \$150,000**
 - The ECEC recommended \$150,000. The executive budget recommended \$150,000. The legislature funded \$150,000 for this program.
- **Child Development Associate Grants \$150,000**
 - The ECEC recommendation was for \$150,000. The executive budget recommended \$150,000. The legislature did not fund this program at the Department of Commerce, but rather funded a \$3.1 million grant to Human Services to provide grants to child care service providers for workforce development, quality improvement, technical assistance, and capacity building.

Funding the Gearing Up for Kindergarten Program

Gearing Up for Kindergarten is a school readiness and parent education program.

- * This document outlines various possibilities and resources available to districts and schools for funding a Gearing Up for Kindergarten program. The funds outlined in this document could be used to fund the program or to supplement the amount of funds received through the NDSU Extension Service, for costs such as materials and snacks.

State Funds

During the 2011 62nd North Dakota Legislative Assembly, within SB 2150, flow-through funds were appropriated to the NDSU Extension Service to help support the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program in the amount of \$625,000. The NDSU Extension Service has approximately \$500,000 available for grants to implement the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program.

Since these funds flow through the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI), but are administered through NDSU, there are no additional federal requirements that must be adhered to, making it an ideal funding source for districts. However, since the amount appropriated probably cannot serve all North Dakota schools, some schools and districts may need to look for other sources of funding to implement a Gearing Up for Kindergarten program.

Federal Title Funds

- Title I – Title I funds can be used for the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program in Title I buildings. Schoolwide programs could serve all students and parents. Targeted assistance programs could only serve at-risk students and their parents as identified through a selection process. All Title I rules and regulations would still need to be followed in regard to the program.
- Title I ARRA Funds – The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has applied for a waiver to extend the period of availability for ARRA funds. If approved, we will have an extension for LEAs to spend the Title I ARRA funds through June 30, 2012. These Title I ARRA funds can be used to support the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program.
- Title I Parent Involvement Set Aside – If a district's Title I allocation is \$500,000 or more, then they are required to set aside 1% of their district's Title I allocation for parent involvement. Only 5% of these funds may be used at the district level, 95% must be given to the participating schools. Districts must document on their consolidated application that they have reserved, at a minimum, the 1% for parent involvement and specifically outline how these funds will be spent. These funds are ideal to help support the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program.

- Title I – Program Improvement 10% Set Aside for Professional Development – A school or district identified for program improvement (during years 1 and 2) must spend not less than 10% of the district's/school's allocation of Title I Part A funds for the purpose of providing high-quality professional development that directly addresses the academic achievement problems that caused the identification. Since this is a parent training program, these set aside funds for professional development could be used to pay the stipends for teachers to provide training to parents, as well as other costs to support the training aspects of a Gearing Up for Kindergarten program.
- Title II A – Title II A funds designated for professional development could be used to support professional development in the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program.
- REAP (Rural Education Achievement Program Initiative) – These funds target small rural districts. Eligible school districts are allowed to combine the funding under the federal Title programs and can use these funds for any authorized activity. If your district is eligible, funds can be REAPed into Title I to support the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program. All Title I rules and regulations would still need to be followed in regard to the program.
- Transferability – These funds target larger urban districts. If your district is eligible, funds can be transferred into Title I and used to support the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program. All Title I rules and regulations would still need to be followed in regard to the program.
- Program Improvement Funds – Schools in program improvement may receive additional funds to help them make adequate yearly progress. Using these additional program improvement dollars to support the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program would be an allowable use of the funds. In particular, elementary schools may want to pursue this.
- Small Rural Schools Achievement Program Funds through REAP – Eligible schools can apply these additional funds through the U.S. Department of Education. These funds can be used for authorized activities under the Title programs and can support any of the supplemental activities under the federal programs, including the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program.
- Reallocated Title I Funds – These funds are available to school districts that would like to add to their Title I program, but need additional funds to accomplish their plan. The funds must supplement your current local and Title I budget. These funds are made available each year in September/October and could be used to support any additional activity that will enhance services for Title I students.

Special Education Funds

- Special Education Discretionary Funds – The NDDPI Special Education unit is in the process of updating the forms and requirements for the 2011-2012 discretionary grants. Once the forms are updated, these grants will be available to special education units, school districts, and agencies working to improve outcomes for children and students with disabilities. Grant approval is extremely competitive and based on need and program description. The maximum amount given for each grant will be \$15,000, which must be used during the 2011-2012 school year. In addition, schools would have to show in their application that the funds will be used for children with disabilities as a way to offer early learning before they begin school. A final report will be required in July 2012. As stated, the funds are competitive, but requesting

funding for the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program would be an allowable use of these funds. Schools that partner with a special education unit would increase their chances of receiving a discretionary grant.

The discretionary grant information will be posted on the NDDPI Special Education unit website. We will inform special education units, school districts, and other agencies through email when this information is posted.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Alison Dollar at (701) 328-2277 or adollar@nd.gov.

- Special Education Preschool Funding – The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction Special Education Unit is also responsible for administering Special Education preschool funding. These preschool funds may be a potential source of funding for the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program. To inquire about the possibility of utilizing these funds, please contact Nancy Skorheim at nskorheim@nd.gov or (701) 527-1384.

Other Options

- Pool Your Resources – In North Dakota, it is becoming quite common for districts to cooperate and share services. Federal regulations allow school districts to pool their resources to share services among several schools. One district would simply agree to be the fiscal agent and the funds would flow through that district to pay for the shared activities. Several area districts close in proximity could pool their funds to support the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program. Another viable option would be to share resources through your local Regional Educational Association (REA).
- Gifted funds specifically for the program (e.g., gifts from community, trust fund from former student)
- Granted funds specifically for the program (e.g., fundraisers)
- Tuition (e.g., parents pay a fee for the program)
- Donations specifically for the program (e.g., organized donations from city)
- Education Jobs Fund Program – In August 2010, Congress approved the Education Jobs Fund Program. North Dakota received \$21.5 million for the Education Jobs Fund Program. Each district received an allocation proportionate to the amount of funds allocated through the State School Aid formula for the 2011-2012 school year. It will be a standalone grant that districts can access through September 30, 2012.

Districts have the discretion to decide how to use these funds, within the parameters of the law. Allowable expenditures include compensation and benefits necessary to support school level positions. Therefore, these funds may potentially be allowable to help support the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program.

Congress is currently debating another potential Jobs bill, which has a provision for educators. If passed, funding could be available in school year 2012-2013.

Jerry Coleman, the department School Finance Director, is the contact person for the Education Jobs Fund Program and can be reached at jcoleman@nd.gov.

This information, as well as other Title I related information, can be found online at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/earlychild/index.shtm

Gearing Up For Kindergarten Program Update

The project began July 1, 2011, and the first task was to hire the ½ time coordinator and develop the program participation criteria. We used an advisory group to be sure it met with legislative intent and Tim Flakoll and Kathy Hawken served as our advisors. We also involved Dr. Rick Buresh (Fargo Public Schools) in respect to the former Commission on Educational Improvement and its discussions. Dr. Buresh provided input in the development phase to be sure it met with the intent of that committee work as well. Our partners at the Department of Public Instruction, Laurie Matzke in particular, have also been instrumental in supporting the program's development. The biggest obstacle for schools is the cost of the program. The legislated funds cover part of the costs and Laurie prepared an excellent document to share with administrators who are looking for ways to fill the funding gaps. Laurie also took time to offer presentations at several meetings this past fall, such as the Title 1 conference, that really helped schools to look at options they might otherwise have missed. This information is now on our website as well.

As of today there are 54 sessions that will take place in this current school year, which accounts for about ½ of the funds available for this year. We are quite pleased with this because the majority of schools indicated they could not operate the program until next year due to the need to budget for the costs not covered by the legislated funds. We refer to these schools who signed up this fall as our 'early adopters' and have appreciated the opportunity to test our processes and refine our training efforts with these schools.

Schools will be reimbursed after their class is done, as long as they follow the program criteria. They will submit a report based on a brief checklist provided to assure they have met program criteria. Bills will be coming in soon for those who finished the series in December, but most will not finish until spring and bills won't be processed until then.

Our program coordinator, Judith Konerza, addressed all school superintendents yesterday and will be addressing all elementary principals in a couple weeks. Dr. Larry Nybladh (Grand Forks) is the current chair of the State Superintendent's group and he also added his endorsement of the program and the difference it is making in Grand Forks. Judith is entering a very intense phase for our program implementation phase because now is the time to market the program across the state in preparation for next year. We know budgets are being built for next year and this is the time that we need to get information out for a successful program year in 2012-2013. We also discovered a unique need in larger school districts that are attempting to serve all interested families. The task involves some significant coordination when a school district operates with several buildings and hundreds of families. A model is being developed in the eastern part of the state that combines public and private partners to establish a coordinated effort through the entire school district. This is in direct contrast to our smaller schools who are more easily able to serve all families with 2 or 3 sessions that are organized by the teachers involved.

In the meantime we have used our administrative budget to hire a half-time coordinator, establish a web presence, travel to school-related meetings to promote the program, printing of promotional materials, development of marketing tools, and pay a contracted services person to update the curriculum based on ongoing feedback. First Lady Betsy Dalrymple volunteered to record a PSA for program promotion and we are running that radio and TV promo this week and next week, in conjunction with the school administrator meetings taking place. If our budget allows, we will do this again in the future.

Now that all the program and promotional pieces are in place, we are marketing the program for next year and fully expect to use all of the funds (and possibly have a waiting list) by the end of next year. We did not receive research funds so ongoing program research is very limited. Fortunately, we have a doctoral student in the education department at NDSU who is continuing basic evaluation research for 2011-2012. This will be key to providing documentation of program impact, however, it will not be as extensive as in the past.

While the program involves a significant effort with schools right now, we are very cognizant of the fact that this is a parental involvement program and the key to success is in supporting the parents of kindergartners as they work through this transition phase in the child's life. Research indicates that this transition is a critical point in the child's educational journey. We have just now begun to work on our Gearing Up website, including administrator resources and parent resources. The site is operational but not at all complete. This task will be a priority in the next phase of development. Most of the parents of 4 year-olds are very technologically savvy and we hope to take advantage of social media and other technologies as we continue on the path of working with parents.

If there are any other questions please feel free to let me know. We will be happy to participate in the work of the Lt. Governor's committee in the future.

Thank you for your interest in the program!

Contact:

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NDSU NORTH DAKOTA
STATE UNIVERSITY

State Resources Dedicated to Early Childhood

February 2012

1) Workforce Development

- Growing Futures Professional Development System
 - **Online system** for trainer and training approval, and which tracks the training and qualifications of the workforce.
- Development of **120 hours of free online progressive training** which fulfills the training requirements of the Child Development Associate credential (CDA).
 - The CDA is a national credential recognizing competence of the provider in an early childhood setting.
- During the last biennium, **95 individuals** (44 west - 51 east) earned the CDA, and **39 individuals** completed some of the training (in-progress).
- **Goal for this biennium** is to support **110 additional people** (55 west - 55 east) in completing the CDA.

2) Quality Enhancement

- **Home and center providers** may enroll in a quality enhancement program.
 - Combines training and onsite technical assistance from a trained consultant as well as grants to purchase needed supplies and equipment for the childcare program.
- During the last biennium, **71** (33 west - 38 east) **in-home providers** and **18 child care centers** (8 west - 10 east) completed the quality enhancement project and received the full grant available. Many other providers completed some of the training and consultation and received a partial grant.
- **Goal for this biennium** - 200 licensed home providers and 24 child care centers will complete the enhancement program.
- This biennium, we have added a **NEW peer coaching component**.
 - Experienced, quality child care providers will have the opportunity to share their expertise with newly licensed providers.
 - This component involves training and incentives for both the peer coach and the new provider.

3) Capacity Building and Recruitment

- **Last biennium**, CCR&R worked with **95 home providers** across the state (43 west - 51 east) to complete the recruitment program and become licensed. Additional providers received some start up assistance and became licensed.
- **Goal for this biennium** is to support **180** (90 west and 90 east) **new home providers** and **8** (4 west - 4 east) **new child care centers** through the licensing process, and to provide them with the start-up assistance they need to be successful in the childcare business.

State Resources Dedicated to Early Childhood

February 2012

North Dakota Department of Commerce

Childcare Infrastructure and Business Plan Development

- Commerce received state funds last biennium for childcare infrastructure and business plan development (\$500,000).
- \$96,000 was unspent from the 2009 biennium, but authority was granted to carry the appropriation into this biennium with the intent that up to 50% of it can be applied to special needs infrastructure.
- The program provides financial assistance to North Dakota licensed childcare providers who care for children.
- The program also provides matching grants with a maximum of \$10,000 for business plans and a maximum of \$5,000 to assist in modifying or adapting infrastructure for their current operations.
- Providers are required to provide a 25% match.

Development Fund Childcare Program

- Program has \$1.25 million to help start up and expand childcare facilities in ND.
- Funds may be used for working capital, equipment purchase, to purchase and/or improve real estate – to increase number of daycares and expand existing.
- Up to \$100k can be borrowed at a 2.5% interest. (fixed)
- Currently about \$900k is committed – 17 facilities = ~\$54k each (average). The current amount committed is projected to add approximately 67 employees statewide.

North Dakota Department of Human Services

Growing Childcare Initiative

- Funding (\$3.1 million) was provided during the 2011 legislative session (SB 2057) that would continue the work of the Growing Childcare Initiative which was originated in the 2009 legislative session.
 - The Growing Childcare Initiative focuses on **workforce development, quality enhancement, and capacity building efforts** for early childhood services.
 - The department has contracts with the two Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies in the state to deliver the program.
 - Licensed child care providers in ND include:
 - 111 licensed child care centers
 - 863 licensed group providers
 - 381 licensed family providers
- Total capacity 29,774**

Prior to the launch of the Growing Childcare Initiative:

- 106 centers
- 884 group providers
- 421 family providers

Total capacity 29,443

State Resources Dedicated to Early Childhood

February 2012

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

- **Pre-K Classroom Incentive**
 - \$125,000 of one time funding for a grant program to assist in renovations of classrooms to comply with Pre-K classroom requirements and recommendations.
- **Continuing Education Grants**
 - The legislature funded \$150,000 assisting North Dakota residents to further their education in early childhood. Individuals may receive a \$1,200 grant to a ND college or university if they are a preschool teacher or teacher assistant for whom a baccalaureate degree will be required in the future or an individual working in the childcare industry and/or Head Start program who wishes to obtain a Child Development Associate Degree, Associate of Arts Degree, or Bachelor Degree in Early Childhood Education.

North Dakota University System

- **Gearing Up for Kindergarten**
 - Gearing Up for Kindergarten is a parent and family education program that supports child development, school readiness and healthy parenting. Gearing Up for Kindergarten combines preschool learning activities for children as well as educational opportunities for parents. The legislature funded \$625,000 for this program.

Early Childhood Education Council

Recommendations Prepared For:

Governor John Hoeven

and the

North Dakota Legislative Assembly

and the

North Dakota Commission on Education Improvement

Committee Members:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	3-4
II.	NEEDS ASSESSMENT	5-13
	Early Head Start.....	6
	Head Start	7-8
	Child Care.....	8-11
	Pre-Kindergarten	12
	Early Childhood Costs.....	12-13
III.	RECOMMENDATIONS	
	Capacity Growth	14
	Child Care Grant & Loan Program	14
	Pre-K Facility Incentive	14
	Program Incentives.....	15
	Gearing Up For Kindergarten	15
	Educator Development.....	16-17
	Continuing Education Grants	16
	CDA Grants	16-17
	Program Accountability	18
	Child Identification.....	18
	Head Start Data Sharing Agreements.....	18
IV.	EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FUNDING.....	19

INTRODUCTION

The 2009 Commission on Education Improvement and the Legislative Assembly established the Early Childhood Education Council to understand and address the needs of early childhood education, which is defined as all education activity prior to the kindergarten year. Early childhood education includes many programs that range from child care, federal programs such as Head Start, private and publicly funded pre-kindergarten, and the professional development that is needed to ensure quality instruction.

The Early Childhood Education Council is comprised of twenty-one members and chaired by the Lt. Governor. The Council has divided into three subcommittees: Development of Early Childhood Educators; Quality Assurance and Participation; and Needs Assessment. Each subcommittee was given a specific area to review for policy and program improvements. The Development of Early Childhood Educators reviewed the topics of professional development and higher education through the approach of a career ladder plan. The Needs Assessment committee reviewed the three areas of pre-school offerings, child care offerings, and other early childhood services for pregnant women, infants and toddlers. The committee also reviewed the information to identify sources of information that could be inputted into the North Dakota Longitudinal Data Collection. Finally the Participation and Quality Assurance Committee was charged with identifying how to increase the public awareness of early childhood programs, increasing the availability of quality programs through state funded facility improvement and expansion grants and reviewing the quality rating program for early childhood programs.

Each subcommittee met throughout the course of January 2010- August 2010 to address the needs of early childhood education. The issues discussed were numerous and very diverse. However the committees focused on the ages of birth to five years old with recommendations that centered

around four themes: capacity growth, program incentives, educator development, and program accountability.

The findings of the needs assessment and the recommendations of the council are for the consideration of the Governor and legislative assembly to address and use to guide the advancement of early childhood education in North Dakota. For the purpose for this document the term pre-k will be used in reference to preschool activities.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The North Dakota Early Childhood Education Council was charged with conducting a needs assessment for the State of North Dakota. The needs assessment committee was comprised of Carol Olson, Nancy Langseth, Sharon Hanson, Linda Rorman and Cheryl Masset-Martz.

Currently the early childhood care and education options within the state include the following main categories: child care; Early Head Start; Head Start; and Pre-kindergarten(Pre-K). The needs assessment reports on facts and data for the state of North Dakota. The following questions guided the committee's search for information: Who is not being served due to lack of resources? What is the number of parents with childcare needs? How many legal unlicensed childcare providers operate in the state? Where is double counting occurring? Who is affected the most when a pre-school is started? Who is partnering and who are they partnering with?

According to 2009 data from North Dakota Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) there are a total of 47,419 children age of five and under in the state of North Dakota. The breakout is as follows:

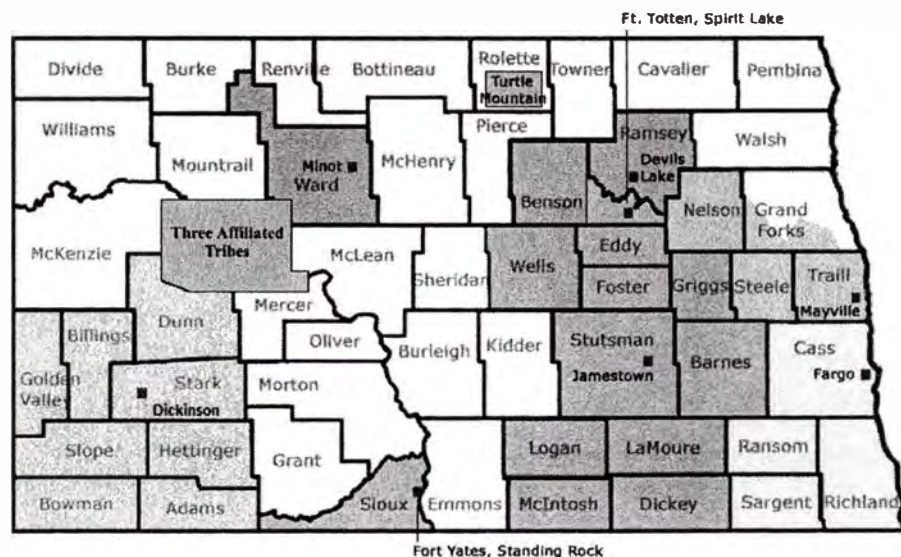
24,682 children	0-2 years
7,791 children	3 years
14,946 children	4-5 years

In the 2009 legislative session, the state of North Dakota invested a total of \$2,070,000 in new funds into Early Childhood Education. The Department of Commerce received \$1,820,000 in general funds for matching funds to establish or expand childcare options in communities. The North Dakota State University Extension Service received \$250,000 to support Parenting Resource Centers.

Early Head Start

Early Head Start is a comprehensive child development program serving infants, toddlers, pregnant women and their families. Early Head Start is a year round program that enhances children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development; assist pregnant women to access comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care; support parent efforts to fulfill their parental roles and help parents move toward self-sufficiency. Children and families are eligible to participate in Early Head Start programs if they are from families with low-incomes. Early Head Start follows the same federal poverty guidelines as Head Start programs.

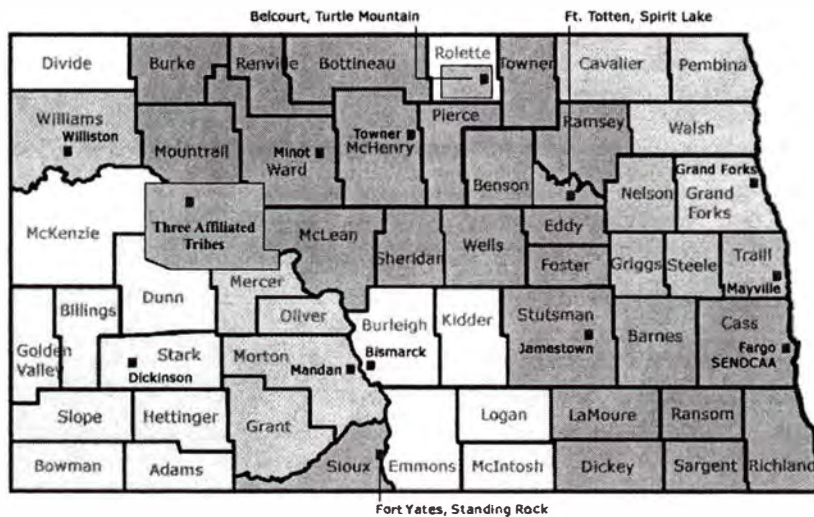
The North Dakota Head Start State Collaboration Office (NDHSO) is within the Division of Children and Family Services in the North Dakota Department of Human Services. As of July 2010, the NDHSO reported Early Head Start served 565 infants, toddlers and pregnant women. There are twelve Early Head Start sites in the state. Participant numbers include Head Start sites and children on the reservations in the state of North Dakota. The counties that are not served by Early Head Start include: Divide, Williams, McKenzie, Burke, Mountrail, Renville, Bottineau, McHenry, Peirce, Towner, Cavalier, Pembina, Walsh, McLean, Mercer, Oliver, Sheridan, Burleigh, Kidder, Morton, Grant, Emmons, and Rolette County. The following map of shaded areas depicts the locations of the Early Head Start sites in North Dakota.



Head Start

All Head Start programs in North Dakota are 80 percent federally funded and 20 percent locally funded. The Head Start grantees provide comprehensive services designed to benefit children three to five years of age and their families with low incomes (at or below 100% of the federal poverty guidelines). Head Start is a comprehensive child development program regulated through the federal Head Start Performance Standards. These regulations establish performance standards and minimum requirements with respect to health, education, family services, and parent involvement. Upon enrollment each child completes required screenings to determine if he or she is in good health and is appropriately developing. Screenings help to identify possible areas of concern and result in referrals for additional services and assessments in health and developmental domain areas. Ongoing assessment continues throughout the child's enrollment using appropriate observation and researched based assessments. Each Head Start program uses research based curricula and follows the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework. Each Head Start program is required to facilitate alignment of curricula and assessments with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and as appropriate, State early learning guidelines (standards) and kindergarten curricula. The Head Start programs promote and support appropriate curricula for limited English speaking children and expand partnerships with local education agencies that include partnerships with pre-kindergarten and transitions to kindergarten.

As of July 2010, the NDHSO reported that Head Start serves 2,946 children. There are sixty-one Head Start sites in the state. Participant numbers include Head Start sites and children on the reservations in the state of North Dakota. The counties that are not served by Head Start include: Divide and McKenzie counties. The following map of shaded areas depicts the locations of the Head Start sites in North Dakota.



Child Care:

North Dakota State requires the licensing of all people who care for more than five children. Anyone caring for more than four infants or six or more children without a state license is operating against the law. Licensed providers have one inspection each year and renew their childcare license depending upon application either annually or every other year, and receive licensing study at that time. North Dakota Department of Human Services, Early Childhood Services Division, establishes state early childhood licensing standards and issues licenses to providers of early care and education. The types of licenses include:

Licensed Family/Group Child Care: In family child care, the provider is the owner/operator of a home-based business. Normally, children of all ages are together in a family setting, but providers are limited to no more than seven children. The exceptions are 1) if a provider chooses to care for four children under two years old, no older children may be included and 2) two additional school-age children can be enrolled during, before and after school hours. Family providers are required to include their own children under age 12 in the adult-child ratios. Licensed group child care providers with a group license may be home-based or in a public or privately owned building. The maximum group size is 18, but the program may be restricted to a

lesser number if space is limited, or if local ordinances are more restrictive. Providers with group licenses will have additional staff when the number of children in attendance exceeds required adult-child ratios.

Licensed Child Care Center: Programs caring for more than 18 children must be licensed as centers. Some centers are owned by private, for-profit businesses and some are operated by nonprofit entities such as religious groups, parent boards, or hospitals. The number of children a center can provide care for at any given time is based on square footage and adult-child ratios.

Licensed School-age Care: Licensed school-age programs provide care exclusively for school-age children before and after school, during school holidays and summer vacations.

Licensed Pre-K Programs: Licensed Pre-Ks are part-time programs for 2-to 5-year-old children for the purpose of educational and social experiences. Hours are limited to three hours a day.

Unlicensed Care in North Dakota: In accordance with state law, individuals caring for more than five children must be licensed and inspected twice per year by county social service offices.

Caring for five or fewer children is legal and falls into two categories:

- 1) Self-declared Providers: Providers must sign a document promising to follow limited rules and agree to background checks on abuse and neglect. Becoming a self-declared provider allows them to enroll children whose care is subsidized by federal financial assistance programs. Their connection with county social services is minimal, and county social service staff does not inspect their programs. Social services will, however, investigate complaints if appropriate.
- 2) Legal-unlicensed Providers: Providers who are caring for five or fewer children have no legal obligation to follow state child care licensing rules or have any contact with county

social services offices. County social service staff does not inspect their homes or investigate complaints.

There can be multiple licensure including two or more licenses.

CCR&R reported that licensed childcare in the state of North Dakota serves a total of 38,699 children between the ages of 0-5 years of age. The breakout by provider category and accompanying chart that follows.

Licensed Family Child Care – 2,569

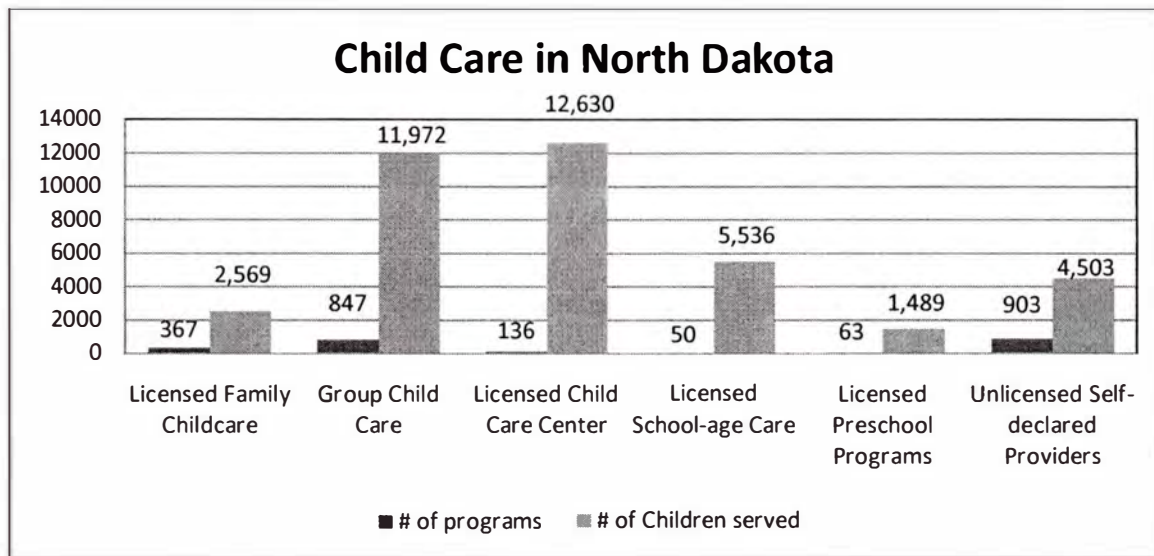
Group Childcare – 11,972

Licensed Childcare Center – 12,630

Licensed School-age Care – 5,536

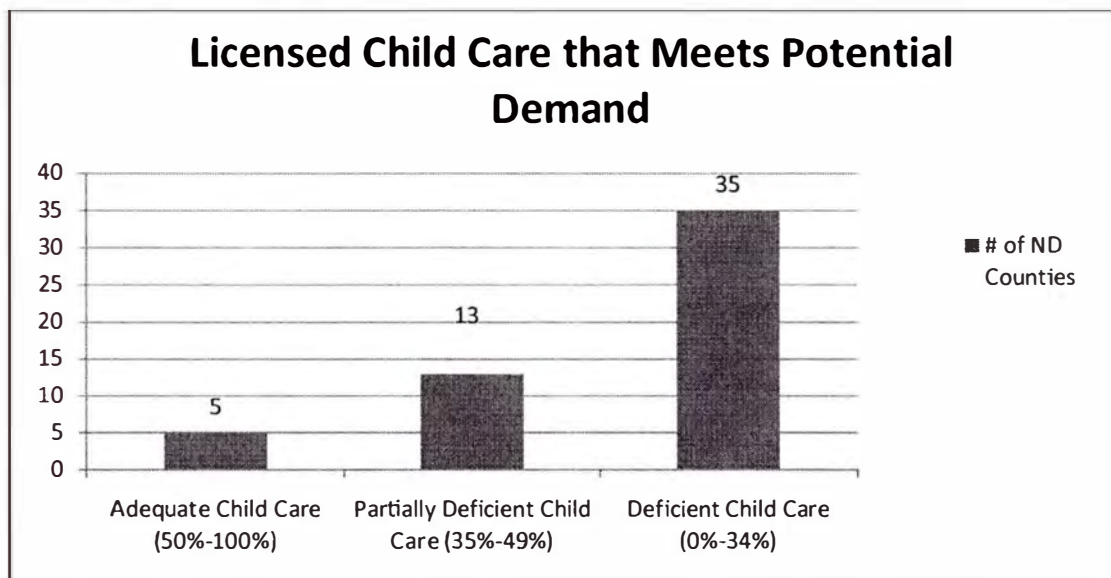
Licensed Pre-K Programs – 1,489

Unlicensed Self-declared Providers – 4,503



According to the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies, NACCRRA, the industry standard for adequate childcare is a program capacity over 50% of the child population ages 0-12. North Dakota CCR&R reported that only five counties provide adequate (50%-100%) child care: Adams, Cass, Grand Forks, Ramsey, and Sheridan. There are 13

counties that are partially deficient (35%-49%) in child care: Bottineau, Burleigh, Dickey, Eddy, Griggs, Hettinger, Logan, Pembina, Richland, Stutsman, Towner, Trail, and Wells. There are 35 counties that are deficient (0%-34%) in child care: Barnes, Benson, Billings, Bowman, Burke, Cavalier, Divide, Dunn, Emmons, Foster, Golden Valley, Grant, Kidder, Lamoure, McHenry, McIntosh, McKenzie, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Mountrail, Nelson, Oliver, Pierce County, Ransom, Renville, Rolette, Sargent, Sioux, Slope, Stark, Steele, Walsh, Ward, and Williams. CCR&R reported that potentially 80,646 children ages 0-12 are in need of care in North Dakota while capacity exists for 32,707 children.



According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the 2009 hourly wage for child care workers in North Dakota was \$8.38. This resulted in child care workers making approximately \$17,440 a year. The North Dakota Employment and Projects data reported that child care workers are projected to grow from 4,283 to 4,446 between 2008-2018.

Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K):

Currently the state of North Dakota does not provide state funded Pre-K. However there are Title I and private Pre-Ks across the state. An accreditation of a Pre-K requires a license from the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (DPI). There are three criteria that need to be met for a Pre-K to be approved by DPI: 1) is taught by individuals who are licensed to teach in early childhood education by the education standards and practices board; 2) follows a state required developmentally appropriate curriculum; and 3) is in compliance with all municipal and state health, fire, and safety requirements. {ND 15.1-37-01} A Title I Pre-K has to follow specific federal guidelines which include teacher qualification, parent involvement, and aid/paraprofessional qualifications. A North Dakota Department of Human Services licensed pre-school has to follow specific state guidelines which include teacher qualification, facility requirements, staff ratios, and minimum sanitation and safety requirements. The breakout of pre-schools licensed and approved by DPI and DHS are as follows:

DPI Title 1 Pre-K – 25

DPI – 44

DHS – 122

Early Childhood Costs

- It currently costs approximately \$15,000 to fund one child in Early Head Start for twelve months.
- It currently costs approximately \$8,000 to fund one child in Head Start for nine months.
- It currently costs approximately \$8,000 to fund one child in a child care center for twelve months.
- It currently costs approximately \$5,000-\$6,000 to fund one child in a home child care setting for twelve months.

- It would cost approximately \$800-\$1,600 to fund one child in a state and local funded Pre-K program.

According to the North Dakota Vital record statistics, North Dakota resident live birth rates have increased since 2001. The breakout is as follows:

2001 – 7664 children (age 9 now)

2002 – 7755 children (age 8 now)

2003 – 7976 children (age 7 now)

2004 – 8179 children (age 6 now)

2005 – 8381 children (age 5 now)

2006 – 8616 children (age 4 now)

2007 – 8818 children (age 3 now)

2008 – 8931 children (age 2 now)

2009 – 8974 children (age 1 now)

RECOMMENDATIONS

CAPACITY GROWTH

Issue: For a community to have adequate or above adequate supply of child care facilities, industry standards report that counties should have identifiable services for at least 50% of the demand for child care services. Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) reports that in 2009, only 5 of 53 counties demonstrated satisfying 50% of demand; which translates to a statewide estimated need of 80,646 children ages 0-12 potentially needing childcare with licensed childcare capacity only 32,707. The 2009 session enacted a grant and loan program administered from the Department of Commerce to improve the safety and capacity of child care in North Dakota. After two rounds of funding, 316 facilities have received grants in 75 communities.

Recommendation: Continue funding for childcare grant program (\$500,000) and childcare loan program (\$1,250,000) to expand and initiate new child care facilities.

Issue: Private pre-k, child care companies, and public schools have expressed interest in expanding the capacity of pre-k options in North Dakota. One of the challenges that exist is the lack of physical space, or the ability to meet the state safety requirements of hosting Pre-K classrooms. To rehabilitate a classroom space to be conducive for a Pre-K classroom is very cost intensive considering the specialized equipment such as furniture and plumbing fixtures.

Recommendation: Create an incentive for schools to make safety compliant spaces available for new Pre-K classes. A grant of \$5,000 per classroom, for up to 25 classrooms should be made available to school districts to be used for the costs of providing space. Grant criteria should include efficiency of space and cooperation with existing programs (\$125,000).

PROGRAM INCENTIVES

Issue: Early childhood education research supports a number of programs yielding significant impacts that improve a child's potential for success throughout their school experiences and beyond. The NDSU Extension Service has developed, piloted and researched a school readiness program that is making a difference with young children. The "Gearing Up for Kindergarten" program is unique because it involves a series of 10 or 16 educational experiences for the four year old and their parents. A licensed kindergarten teacher conducts the program during after school hours with four year olds and their parents. A parent educator also spends time with parents to provide research-based educational information that enhances their child's growth and development. The Gearing Up for Kindergarten program was developed with input from the early childhood education community and is aligned with the ND Early Learning Guidelines, Ages 3-5 Years. It was also developed with consideration for the Content and Achievement Standards established by the ND Department of Public Instruction, grades K-12.

Recommendation: Support and expand the NDSU Extension program, "Gearing Up for Kindergarten". Costs include statewide program coordination (\$330,000); reimbursable grants of \$2000 for each session that serves 15 children and families (covers cost of kindergarten teacher and parent educator) (\$500,000).

The Council also recommends funding for expansion of the Parent Resource Centers (PRC) to serve all 8 regions in the state. The PRC Network will provide all training and support for implementing the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program throughout the state. (\$500,000) (Total recommendation: \$1,330,000).

EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT

Issue: 87% of Head Start Pre-K teachers on North Dakota reservations meet the Pre-K teaching experience requirement (Standing Rock, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indian Tribe, 3 Affiliated Tribes and Spirit Lake). In September 2013 this standard will increase, requiring 50% of all Head Start Pre-K teachers to hold a bachelor's degree. If this requirement is not met, federal funding will be jeopardized. Currently, 63% of North Dakota Pre-K teachers obtain this credential; however, only 16% of the Pre-K teachers on the reservations meet this requirement. Under provisions of House Bill 1400, passed by the 61st Legislative Assembly, North Dakota residents may receive a \$1,200 continuing education grant towards an advanced education degree. Legislative requirements for the grants include: 1) Be licensed to teach by the education standards and practices board; 2) Have taught in this state during each of the last three school years; and 3) Be enrolled at an institution under the control of the state board of higher education in either a master of education program in educational leadership or a program leading to a specialist diploma in educational leadership; 4) Be pursuing the requirements for a certificate in career development facilitation; or 5) Be pursuing a school counselor credential. This grant program has been successful with 65 students receiving grants to date.

Recommendation: Sustain the continuing education grant program with revisions for eligibility and enhanced funding to cover the increased demand by Pre-K teachers to achieve a bachelors of science or bachelors of arts degree. The Council also recommends that student teaching requirements should be covered by supervised work experience for pre-k teachers with some experience (\$150,000).

Issue: There is a need to support individuals who want to improve their proficiency in the child care and early childhood education field. The Child Development Associate credential is recognized for

degree earning credits by the board of higher education programs, and is likely to increase the quality of the educational environment in child care programs. The North Dakota Growing Futures Advisory Committee represents a wide variety of early care and education interests across the state, including state government and county licensing, higher education, Head Start, CCR&R, state professional associations such as NDAEYC and NDCCPI, and representatives of various child care program settings. This advisory committee has developed a professional development system that strives to grow the knowledge and competencies of early childhood practitioners, promotes the development of successful careers in early care and education, and strengthens early childhood programs to support healthy developmental and learning outcomes for children.

Recommendation: Fund grants for Child Development Associate earners. This as a beginning educational strategy that supports professional development in the early childhood care settings. This Growing Futures plan is adopted as a professional development system for individuals working in early childhood care and education settings (\$1200 x 125 grant recipients to be administered by CCR&R.) (\$150,000 total).

The Council also recommends the University System coordinate and facilitates degree earning credits for successful completion of CDA test completion.

PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY

Issue: To determine a program's effectiveness and resource management, there is a need for the ability to track students from birth (or first contact) to workforce. This information will provide program administrators and policy makers the information needed to make effective and timely decisions for early childhood care and education.

Recommendation: The State Longitudinal Data System should establish child identification at the earliest age possible.

Issue: The Head Start program collects valuable information that can measure program effectiveness based upon student outcomes, if student's data is transitioned into K-12 systems. Currently the state of North Dakota is not aligning the information with the state education system. The opportunity to align data that currently exists presents an opportunity to make programmatic and policy decisions.

Recommendation: Through the establishment of data sharing agreements, input Head Start and Early Head Start educational information into the SLDS statewide data system. In the future other programs receiving state support should also provide input.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FUNDING

1. Child Care Grant Program	\$500,000
2. Childcare Loan Program	\$1,250,000
3. Pre-K Classroom Incentive	\$125,000
4. Gearing Up for Kindergarten	\$1,330,000
5. Continuing Education Grants	\$150,000
6. Child Development Associate Grants	\$150,000

Total:	<u>\$3,505,000</u>
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Data Visualizations

Proof Into Policy: Pre-k Milestones

-K Now | March 16, 2012

PEW CENTER ON THE STATES INFOGRAPHIC

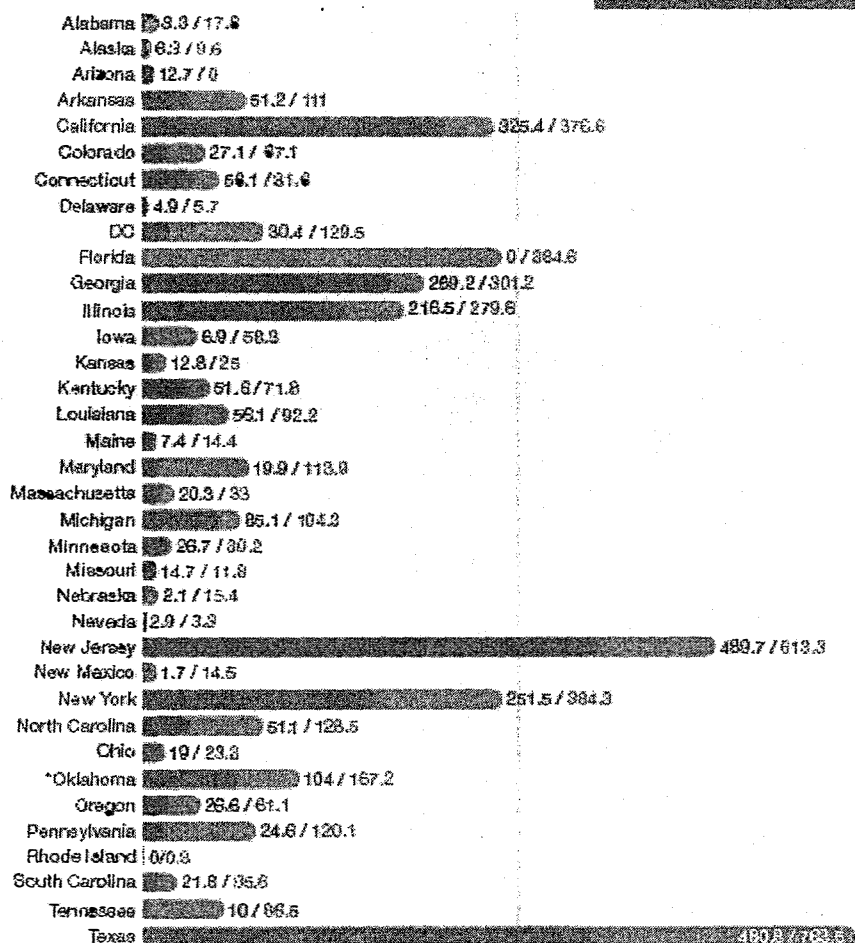
Proof into Policy: Pre-k Milestones

**Pre-k funding nationwide:
2005-2012**

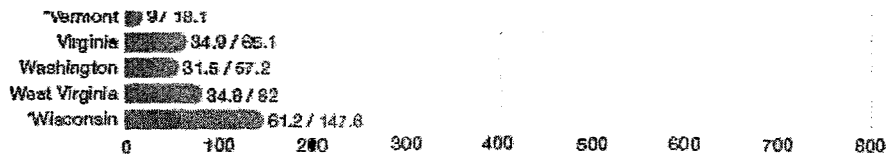
(dollars expressed in millions)

2005

2012



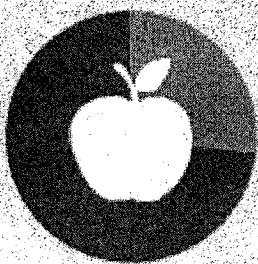
42



*2012 data not available for Oklahoma (2010), Vermont (2011) and Wisconsin (2011).

NOTE: Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming do not have state pre-k programs.

State funding for pre-k more than doubled nationwide to \$5.4 billion from FY02 to FY10.



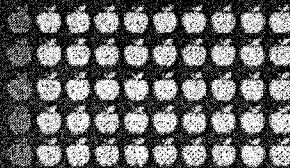
27%
of all four year olds are
in state funded pre-k
programs (2010)

The number of states with at least one pre-k program meeting eight or more of 10 NIEER quality benchmarks rose from five in 2002 to 24 in 2010.*

2002

5

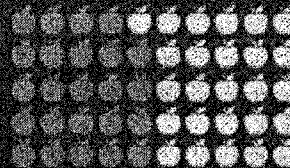
States Improved
pre-k program quality



2010

24

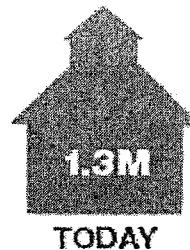
States Improved
pre-k program quality



*Includes the District of Columbia.

► ACCESS TO PRE-K

Access increased from just
700,000 children in 2001 to
more than 1 million today.



Sources: Pew Center on the States, 2011; NIEER

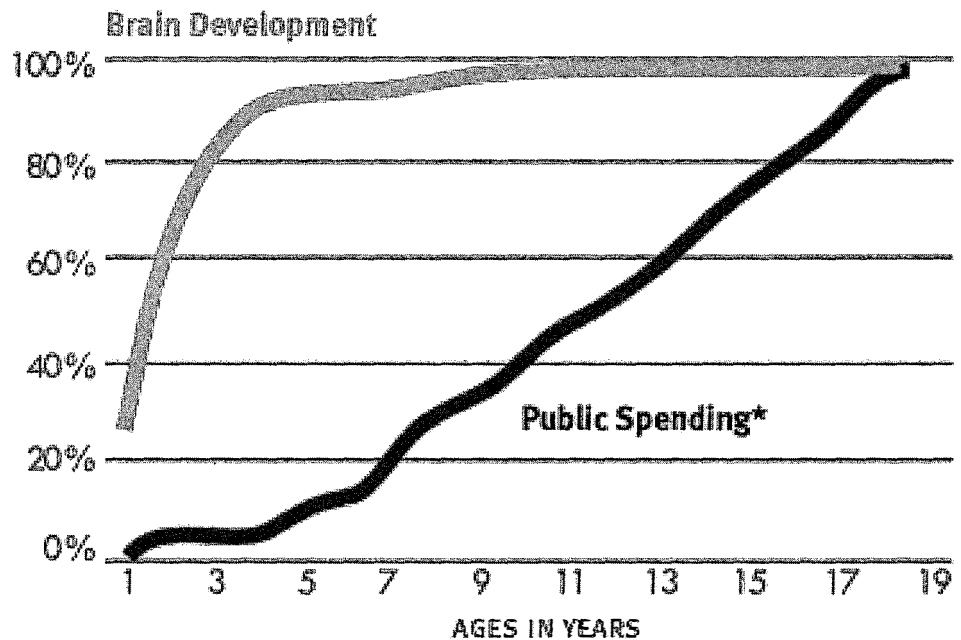
Infographic by Evan Potter and Carla Uriona

Date: March 16, 2012
Project: Pre-K Now
Issues: Families
State: National
Report: Transforming Public Education

Did you know?

A brain develops the most from age 0-5, but only 5% of public investment in children happens during that time.

- Differences in language development between children exposed to high and low quality vocabularies appear as early as sixteen months. By the time they enter school, the gap only increases in the absence of early intervention.



* Portion of total public investment in children being spent during indicated year in children's lives.

Source: The RAND Corporation




Ready for Kindergarten and Beyond

Results from Pre-k Programs in Five States


- A study of five high-quality, state-funded pre-k programs in New Jersey, Oklahoma, Michigan, South Carolina and West Virginia, found children made important learning and development gains beyond those that would naturally occur in one year. The programs resulted in improvements in areas that lay a foundation for school success, including gains of 31% in vocabulary; 44% in early math skills; and 85% in print awareness.
- Research on New Jersey's Abbott preschool program, which serves 44,000 children, shows gains in oral language, reading and math skills have persisted as they have progressed into the early elementary grades. Grade retention has been cut in half.
- Oklahoma's high-quality, state-funded preschool program also showed gains in early reading and math skills. Low-income, Latino and African American children showed the greatest gains.

Longitudinal Study: Chicago Child-Parent Centers

Children who attend high-quality preschool do significantly better in K-12 and beyond than children who do not, according to a 28-year study of more than 1,400 low-income African American children who attended Chicago Public School's large-scale preschool program.

- 
- Preschool participants
 - Scored better on reading and math achievement tests;
 - were less likely placed in special education;
 - were less likely to be held back a grade; and
 - were more likely to graduate from high school.

A Proven Investment That Pays Off

- Early interventions for disadvantaged children are more economically efficient and produce higher returns than remedial programs to help teenagers and young adults catch up later on, according to James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economics.
 - Economists have found that high-quality early childhood education offers one of the highest returns of any public investment – more than \$7 for every dollar spent. It saves government spending on K-12 education, public assistance and the criminal justice system, and increases tax revenues as a result of higher earnings.
- 

TESTIMONY ON HB 1429
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
February 4, 2013

"Mr. Chairman and members of the committee:

My name is Denise Soehren and I am the Principal for the Billings County School District. I'm in favor of this bill because of the educational benefits for schools when preschool programs are part of the system.

According to the National Education Association, research shows that providing a high quality education for children before they turn five yields significant long-term benefits. The Abecedarian Project states that children in quality preschool programs are less likely to repeat grades, need special education, or get into future trouble with the law.

We have had preschool in our district for the past 4 ½ years. We hire certified early childhood teachers and our curriculum is approved through the Department of Public Instruction. Preschool is the foundation for academic learning in our district. In preschool, students will listen to poetry and songs -- building blocks needed to grasp phonics and reading skills when it is developmentally appropriate. The play that takes place with water, sand, and containers form the foundation for understanding some basic math concepts. Matching, sequencing, one-to-one correspondence are all activities that are done over and over in the preschool setting and help children get ready to learn academics. Watching other children pursue a challenging task is also

helpful. The presence of other children and the exposure to a wide variety of materials are two reasons why a preschool is a good thing.

In our district we have seen that the children who attend preschool are entering kindergarten with better pre-reading skills, richer vocabularies, and stronger basic math skills than those who do not. Students who received early intervention services in preschool have only needed minimal supports going into kindergarten. Teachers see the benefits with students especially in the social skills. Students entering kindergarten feel confident and safe in the school environment because of the familiarity already established.

In closing, I would like to remind all of you that the world that our children are living in is not the same as it was even ten years ago. Most families have both parents working or are living in a single parent household. Many children live in situations that are not ideal especially now with the lack of housing that many of our towns are experiencing.

Children need to be exposed to vocabulary rich environments if we want to see them have academic success. By providing preschool to children we are giving them the head start that is needed in today's rigorous academic standards.

TESTIMONY ON HB 1429
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES EDUCATION
COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 4, 2013

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Janelle Ferderer, Director of the Emmons County Special Education Unit and the newly expanded Emmons County Preschool program, and I would like to provide testimony in favor of House Bill 1429 regarding appropriation for early childhood education grants.

I have been a teacher in an early childhood program for 23 years and in school administration for 13 years. I have seen the benefits of early childhood education firsthand in the individual children I have worked with and in the data I have collected over the years.

Emmons County has had some type of preschool program for more than 25 years, including a special education preschool program, Headstart and a private preschool program; however, many children have not had the opportunity to attend an early childhood program and parents have been frustrated by the limited opportunities.

In 2009, the Emmons County Special Education Unit used ARRA funds to expand the special needs preschool to include more students without disabilities and partnered with the Linton Senior Citizens group and developed a classroom space in the Linton Senior Citizens' Center. The response from parents was overwhelming. Instead of having 8 to 10 students, we currently have 40 children enrolled in our various educational groups, and still have several children on a waiting list. As of today, 30 children are already seeking enrollment in the 2013-2013 program. I believe this is because parents realize the positive impacts of early childhood education. I have attached 4 letters of testimony from parents who currently have students enrolled in our program.

I am hoping the following attachments will persuade the committee to move forward in funding early childhood education programs in North Dakota, since funding our biggest challenge.

Attachment 1: Summarizes the early reading proficiency (letter naming) among Kindergarten students in the Linton Public School District from 2007 to 2013. The data demonstrates significant improvements in these scores after the first group of preschool students started Kindergarten in 2010, and have remained higher each consecutive year.

Attachment 2: Summarizes overall reading and math data for all 3 districts in Emmons County, segregated by students who attend a preschool program and

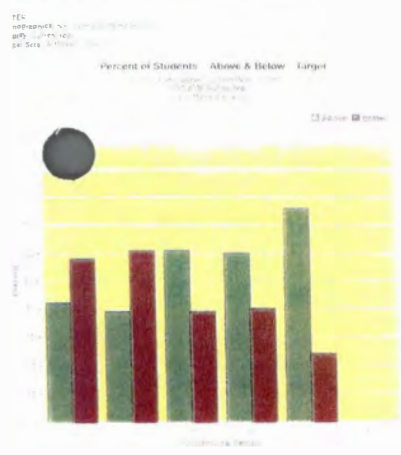
those who did not. Page 2 of the attachment depicts the actual numbers and percentages for current grades 1 through 5, on which the graph is based.

Attachment 3 (p. 1-5) Facts related to the returns on investments in early childhood education in school readiness, academics, economics, and community benefits based on national statistics. Proven benefits include less special education placements, less grade retention, higher graduation rates, decreased dependence on welfare, and decreased rates of crime. Economists estimate that every dollar spent on early childhood programs provide a return of \$7 to \$17 in reduction of government spending in these areas. The early childhood years are a critical learning phase where attitudes towards learning, social constructs, and language skills are hardwired. By age 5, it is possible to predict with depressing accuracy who will complete high school and college and who won't.

Attachment 4 (p. 1-2) An article about North Dakota Law Enforcement backing state Pre-K programs based on research on early childhood education programs reducing crime and welfare, increasing graduation rates, and providing economic relief to struggling families. Children who attend quality early childhood programs are significantly less likely to commit a violent crime in their lifetime.

Attachments 5-9 are testimonies from parents who have children enrolled in our program.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide testimony related to HB 1429. I sincerely believe that early childhood education is an investment that our state cannot afford to disregard.

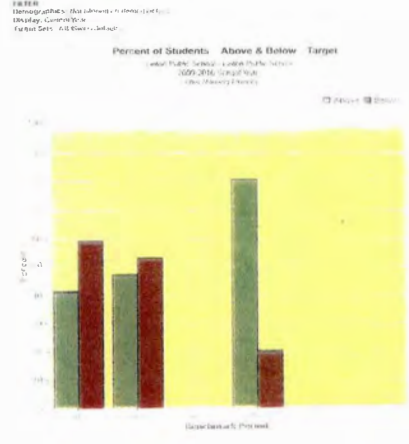


Emmons County Preschool Data

Linton Public School Kindergarten

letter naming scores from 2007-2008 to 2012-2013

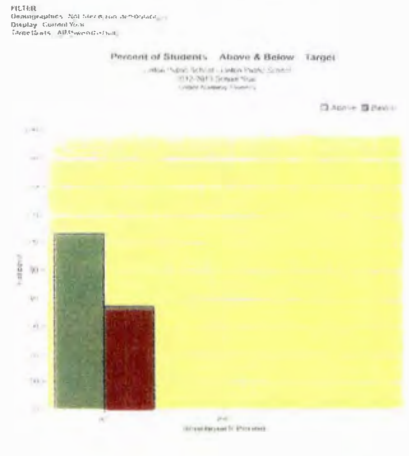
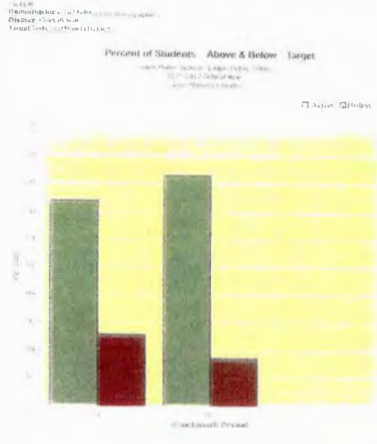
Green = Above target
Red = Below target



1st year preschool students started Kindergarten. ↓

2ND year

Current year



Attachment 1

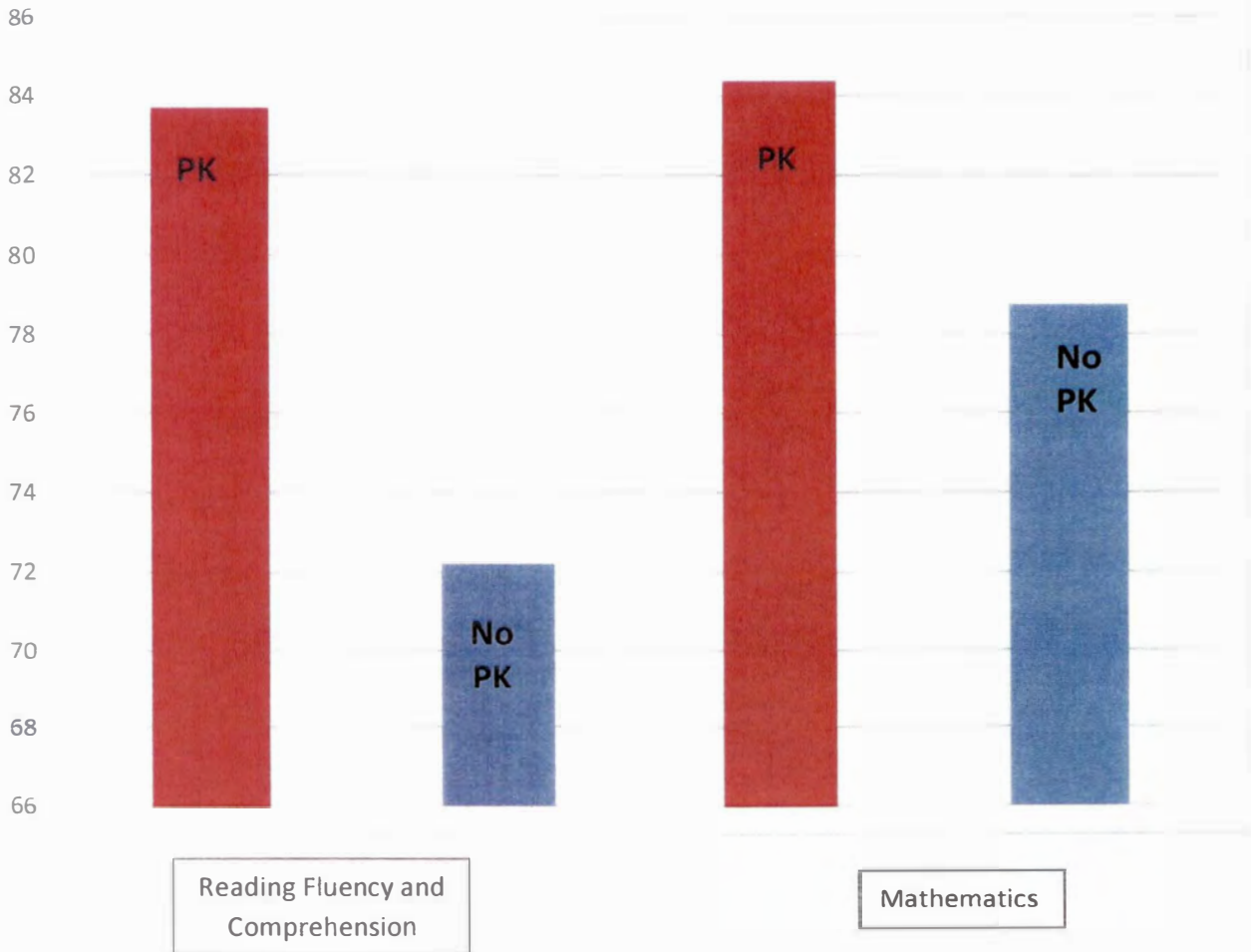
Percent of Students Above Target in Reading and Math

Grades K-5 – Emmons County

Red = Children who attended the Emmons County Preschool Program

Blue = Children who did NOT attend the Emmons County Preschool Program

Data Summary



Percent of Students Above Target in Reading and Math

Grades K-5 – Emmons County

Red = Children who attended the Emmons County Preschool Program

Blue = Children who did NOT attend the Emmons County Preschool Program

Data Summary

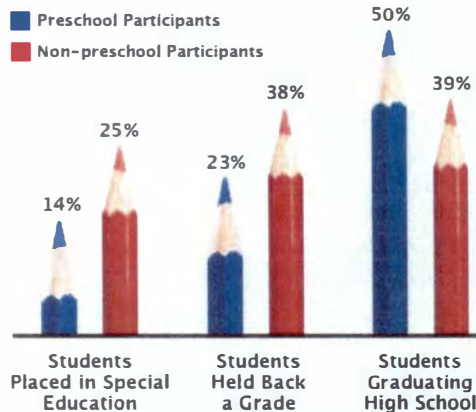
District	Grade	Total Students	# PK	# No PK	% Reading Above Target (PK)	%Reading Above Target (No PK)	Math % Above Target (PK)	Math % Above Target (No PK)
Linton	K	19	13	6	67	56	54	83
	1	18	9	12	100	78	89	56
	2	25	13	13	100	83	96	92
	3	16	3	9	**0	85	**33	77
	4	14	5		80	100	80	78
	5							
HMB	K	8	3	7	100	80	100	80
	1	8	1	5	100	67		
	2	6	1	8	100	60	100	100
	3	8	0	4		63		
	4	5	1	10	0**	50		
	5	12	2	5	50	40		
Strasburg	K			8				
		12	4	8	75	25	75	38
	1	10	2	9	100	100	50	88
	2	10	1	8	0	67	100	100
	3	8	0	12		63		63
	4	13	1	7	100	83	100	83
	5	8	1		100	100	**0	86
		187	48	131	84	72	84	79

Investing for the Future

"From birth until about 5 years old, a child undergoes tremendous development. If this period of life includes support for growth in language, motor skills, adaptive abilities and social-emotional functioning, the child is more likely to succeed in school and to later contribute to society. Conversely, without support during these early years, a child is more likely to drop out of school, depend on welfare benefits and commit crime—thereby imposing significant cost on society. Early Child Development programs recognize this potential—and this risk—and seek to nurture healthy development from the earliest years."

*—Economist Arthur Rolnick
Economist Roh Grunewald
Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis*

The Business Case for Preschool Chicago Child Parent Center Preschool



Source: Long-term Effects of an Early Childhood Intervention on Educational Achievement and Juvenile Arrest (2001)

National research shows that children who attend high quality preschool programs are less likely to be placed in special education, are less likely to be held back a grade, and are more likely to graduate from high school.



School Readiness Investment

High quality preschool is a proven investment in children's foundation for learning. National research shows that high quality preschool programs:

- Provide children opportunities to build a foundation of social and emotional skills needed to succeed in school
- Provide children language rich environments which help develop important preliteracy and early mathematics skills
- Provide English learners with language development experiences
- Help close the school readiness gap before it becomes the achievement gap

"Students who start school behind tend to stay behind. Ninety five percent of California's kindergarten teachers say their students who attended preschool are better prepared for kindergarten in both social and academic areas."

— Preschool California



Academic Investment

High quality preschool is a proven investment in children's academic success. National research shows that high quality preschool programs:

- Provide learning experiences that positively affect early brain development
- Improve performance on standardized tests in reading and math
- Decrease the likelihood of being placed in special education
- Minimize the risk of repeating a grade
- Increase the likelihood of graduating from high school and attending college

"Big gaps in educational attainment are present at age 5. Some children are bathed in an atmosphere that promotes human capital development and, increasingly, more are not. By 5, it is possible to predict, with depressing accuracy, who will complete high school and college and who won't."

*- James Heckman Ph.D.
Noble Laureate and
University of Chicago Professor of Economics*

Economic Investment

High quality preschool is a proven investment in keeping the local community and state competitive in a global economy. National research shows that high quality preschool programs:

- Cultivate a better educated and more skilled workforce
- Decrease employee turnover and absenteeism because parents can focus on their jobs when their children are in a safe learning environment
- Provide a \$7 to \$17 return on investment by reducing government spending on education, the criminal justice system and public assistance, and increasing tax revenue
- Reduce special education costs
- Increase employment rates and individual earning potential



"Education can be an important component of a focused economic development strategy, as well as a plan for long term national economic growth."

- National Institute for Early Education Research

Community Investment

High quality preschool is a proven investment in building strong, safe, and prosperous communities. National research shows that high quality preschool programs:

- Increase home ownerships
- Reduce crime and arrest rates for juveniles and adults
- Improve family and peer relationships
- Promote a healthier lifestyle

"High quality preschool is a proven strategy for promoting both individual success and shared prosperity."

- Pre-K Now



North Dakota Law Enforcement Back State Pre-K

January 22, 2009

MANDAN, N.D. — North Dakota Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem, Mandan Police Chief Dennis Bullinger and Burleigh County Sheriff Pat Heinert held a news conference today to rally support for the governor's proposal to create a state pre-kindergarten program. They cited research showing that early childhood education promotes school success, improves graduation rates and ultimately reduces crime.

[To read the research report, click here.](#)

The new proposal, supported by Gov. John Hoeven, would create a two-day-a-week pre-k program aimed at servicing North Dakota children. Research shows that children who benefit from high-quality early education are significantly more likely to graduate high school and avoid delinquent behavior and crime later on.

The law enforcement leaders released a report entitled "High-Quality Early Education: The Key to Crime Prevention and School Success in North Dakota." The report shows that new support for high-quality early education would lead to significant reductions in crime, drug abuse and juvenile violence in North Dakota. To read the [report](#), click here.

"Not only are the benefits of high-quality early education transformative for children who participate, it also has substantial long-term benefits through reduced crime and violence in our communities," Bullinger said. "A commitment to early childhood education will ensure that we have better performing students, a stronger workforce and safer streets."

Stenehjem, Bullinger and Heinert are all members of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS, a national anti-crime organization that supports policies proven through research to prevent crime and violence.

Over a 40-year period, researchers studied children who attended a Michigan preschool together with similar children who did not attend the high-quality program. The resulting study found that children who benefited from the early education program were 44 percent more likely to graduate from high school than those who did not participate. The at-risk children left out of the program were also five times more likely to commit a violent crime by age 40.

"The benefits of the proposed pre-kindergarten program clearly outweigh the cost," Stenehjem said. "The bottom line here is that high-quality pre-k will help kids succeed in school and cut crime in the long run."

Another long-term study of the Child-Parent Centers found that at-risk children who did not benefit from the high-quality preschool program were 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a

violent crime by age 18. Children who miss out on pre-kindergarten are also more likely to become unwed parents, become dependent on welfare and abuse illegal drugs.

Currently in North Dakota, the federally-funded Head Start program and early childhood special education programs serve less than 30 percent of children from low and moderate-income families.

They also called on North Dakota's Congressional delegation to include funding for early education and childcare as part of federal efforts to revamp the ailing economy. President Obama pledged \$10 billion in new funding for early childhood education during the 2008 presidential campaign.

The law enforcement leaders said that in addition to the long-term economic benefits of reduced crime and welfare and improved graduation rates, new support for early education and care would bring short-term relief to families struggling to meet the cost of daycare and boost the economy by creating jobs.

"Let's not drop the ball on America's youngest generation. If our state and national policymakers advance substantial increases in early childhood education, we can give these kids a helping hand now, not a hand out later," Heinert said.

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FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS is a bipartisan, anti-crime organization led by more than 4,500 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, other law enforcement leaders and crime survivors, including 28 in North Dakota.

TESTIMONY ON HB 1429
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
February 4, 2013

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am Nancy Aldrich a former pre-school teacher at Ashley Public School and currently the kindergarten teacher in the Ashley Public School.

My comments will be short and to the point. It has been my observation and experience that preschool education helps in many ways:

- It gets pre-school aged children used to a school schedule.
- It helps pre-school aged children to know their way around the building and to get to know the staff.
- It prepares pre-school aged children in getting used to working in groups.
- It helps develop their social skills.
- It forms the basis for students to following directions.
- Pre-school attendance helps in the development of small muscle control.
- Pre-school helps to reduce separation anxiety.

TESTIMONY ON HB 1429
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
February 4, 2013

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lisa Hendrickson and I am providing this testimony not only as a parent of two children who have had access to an outstanding Preschool program, but also as an elementary special education teacher that receives children in a professional setting.

As a parent and educator the value of an adequately supported preschool program, like the one here in Emmons County is not only a benefit for the community but most importantly for the children that attend. The data has proven time and time again that children who access an early intervention program have continued success when they enter the public school system.

As a parent, moving here from another state where there was no formal preschool program, it was a huge relief to my husband and I that there was a program available for our oldest daughter to attend. Our second daughter has also benefited from her sister attending as that knowledge was shared with her at home as they “played school”. Currently our second daughter is attending the same preschool as her sister; and I can only continue to see the benefits as she also experiences that great head start she is receiving before entering Kindergarten.

As a teacher, having the preschool available makes my job as the elementary special education teacher much smoother to help our special needs students make the transition from Preschool to Kindergarten. They are already exposed to a routine, social skills training, a discipline system, and academics that they would otherwise have not had the frequency of; had they not been enrolled in a Preschool program.


I feel that it is in the best interest of all Representatives and Legislators to be supportive of the bills being presented before them regarding preschool and early childhood program support this session. This state is in a place financially that we have the ability to provide education to even the youngest of our state's residents. In turn, hopefully these youth will continue to become one day the leaders that the state of North Dakota has helped to shape.

TESTIMONY ON HB 1429
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
February 4, 2013

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bridget Leier and I am providing testimony for what the Emmons County Preschool program has done for my kids. I have now had two children attend this program. My daughter was writing her name, signing, telling stories and knew so much more when she entered Kindergarten that she would have without this program. She also has had an easier time adjusting to her new class, following the rules, learning consequences and in general acting appropriately in class. If it would not have been for this program I do not think this would have been as smooth of a transition as it has been.

My son is currently in the program. Before he started Preschool he was very quiet and didn't talk a lot. He was only three so this was normal for a boy. Since he has started school he talks all the time, he loves going and now he loves that he knows a lot of the same things as my six year old daughter does. I think that helps with their interaction as well because they can now relate to each other more than they could before. Another thing that I think is great about the program is it gets these small children in the same class room as kids with special needs. This I believe is huge. They are at a perfect age where they learn and accept kids how





they are and are more willing to help them. I truly believe that in the long run this helps with bullying and other kids being picked on because they are different.

When kids see this when they are younger they accept them and that acceptance stays with them as they grow.

Please pass Senate Bill 2229 and House Bill 1429 to help ensure that our children can continue to receive this tremendous service and help them grow, learn and ultimately put them ahead of the game once they start school.

Thank you for your consideration.



TESTIMONY ON HB 1429
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES EDUCATION
COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 4, 2013

My name is Marie Schuetzle and I would like to provide testimony in favor of Senate Bill 2229 regarding appropriation for early childhood education grants. I have been able to witness the benefits of preschool programming both as a parent as a medical professional. The academic and emotionally development I have seen in my 4 year old son in the past year can, in great part, be contributed to his preschool experience. The capacity to learn and develop is so great at this stage of life; I am so appreciative that he can benefit from trained educators during his preschool years to optimize his potential. I believe he would not be at the level he is without that experience.

As a genetic counselor, I have had the opportunity to work with children and families with special needs. Not only does early education benefit children with special needs but also their siblings who may not have special needs but benefit from another setting of structured learning. I have heard feedback from many families highlighting the benefits of these programs.

The preschool setting is an accessible source of high quality education that benefits many children during those important stages of early development. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I appreciate your time and attention and ask for your support of House Bill 1429.

Edgeley Public School District #3

High School Principal Education

Todd Kosel
President

Fiest, Vice Pres.

Elementary Principal Director

Garitt Irej
Director

Director

Business Manager

Patricia Ann VerDouw

RICHARD DIEGEL, Superintendent

PO Box 37 307 6th Street

EDGELEY, NORTH DAKOTA 58433

Phone: (701) 493-2292

Fax: (701) 493-2411

Board of

Mike Long,

Steve

Wendy Boom,

Patti Solinger,

Kent Madcke,

To Whom It May Concern:

Our school district has operated a preschool with Title 1 funds for three years and we have been impressed to see the many benefits. A 2011 study published in "Science" reveals that many preschoolers who attend quality preschools experience cognitive benefits that help them make better life choices, have higher success levels in education and future careers than children who don't attend preschool. Research also shows almost 80% of brain development occurs before age five. Our preschool program is able to lay the foundation for knowledge, social skills, and confidence. We are paving the way for successes throughout their school year and later in life.

Our kindergarten teacher has found that children who have attended our Title 1 preschool have already developed cognitive abilities, listening skills, and are more prepared to learn reading and math than children who do not participate in preschool. She has also observed that preschool participants can become more academically advanced than non-participants in pre-numeracy and literacy, such as letter-word identification and spelling. We have also found significantly less primary students needing to be progress monitored with the dibels benchmark system.

She feels with the implementation of Common Core Standards, it is essential children entering kindergarten already have a solid foundation in literacy and math. Without preschool, we can expect to see lower test scores for those students tested on future Common Core standards.

A parent survey is given during each school year and the comments have been nothing but positive. We'd like to share a few quotes from the parents:

"Title 1 has taught my son so many wonderful things. He has grown in so many ways. The program has given us opportunities that we would have not have had otherwise. We love the program and we are excited to enroll our younger son next year."

"My child absolutely loves preschool. He is constantly challenged and stimulated."

"My child has learned a lot this preschool year. I am confident he is ready for Kindergarten because he had the opportunity to attend preschool."

Edgeley Public School District #3

"The preschool program in Edgeley is excellent! My son now knows all of his letters and how to make each letter sound. He has made lots of new friends and I have no doubt he is now ready for Kindergarten."

"Extremely beneficial – my child has learned so much and is so much more prepared for Kindergarten than my other two older children who did not have this program."

"My child was one that would not sit down at home when we tried to help her learn. After starting preschool, she was eager to come home and tell us what she learned and always wanted to expand further."

"Preschool has been great for our child/family! It gives my child something to look forward to! She comes home and teaches us what she learned that day like she's the teacher! Preschool has not only taught her the basics of learning, but how to work with others too."

Respectfully Submitted:

Garitt Irey
Pre K – 6th Grade Principal
Edgeley Elementary

Kelli Just
Pre School Teacher
Edgeley Elementary

Johnson, Dennis E.

1429

From: Deb Follman <Deb.Follman@sendit.nodak.edu>
Sent: Monday, February 11, 2013 7:24 PM
To: Johnson, Dennis E.; Hofstad, Curt L.; Oehlke, H. Dave
Cc: 'Scott Privratsky'
Subject: PreK Data Sweetwater Elementary School Devils Lake
Attachments: PreK Data Sweetwater Elementary School Devils Lake.docx

Hi Dennis, Curt, and Dave,

I have put together some data from Sweetwater Elementary for the past 4 years with students attending the prekindergarten classroom in Devils Lake. There are actually 4 different groups of students.

Group D - Kindergarten in 2011-12

Group C - Grade 1 in 2011-12 (We have 2 years of their data - K, 1)

Group B - Grade 2 in 2011-12 (We have 3 years of their data - K, 1, 2)

Group A- Grade 3 in 2011-12 (We have 4 years of their data - K, 1, 2, 3)

The data that has been gathered is from students who receive free and reduced lunches (students living in poverty or at the lower socio-economic level) at Sweetwater.

These students were followed from Kindergarten through grade 3. There are 2 groups - students who attended the PreK program and students who did not - Non PreK.

As you can see, in every assessment, the PreK students outperformed the Non PreK students beginning in the fall and through the spring. There is little increase in some of the scores because the expectations are higher as the year progresses. Some of them show growth on the next assessment, but not enough to be proficient. If they are down at the lowest level when they come in, it is difficult to get them to proficiency by the end of the year.

This data demonstrates that students do not "EVEN OUT" or "catch up" by grade 3. In fact, we usually have to take resources away from other students to put all of our efforts towards these students who come in with absolutely few or no readiness skills.

Some people against the PreK funding say it is the parents responsibility. Here is my response:

When families live in poverty, they often:

1. Do not often have the skills to provide opportunities for readiness activities, such as reading to your child, providing pencils, crayons, scissors, etc. They usually did not have this modeled for them, they don't know that is what you are suppose to do with/for your preschooler.
2. Do not have the money to buy materials if they do know that is the right thing to do.
3. Do not have the time - if they are working 2 or 3 jobs - as many families do - they are not with their child enough to provide the readiness skills.
4. Do not have the money to send their children to a private preschool.
5. Do not have the resources, such as a vehicle or reliable vehicle to take the child to preschool in the morning and pick them up at noon.
6. If they do have a job, it is often low-paying, which does not make allowances for leaving work at 8:30 a.m. to deliver the child to a preschool and leave again at 11:30 a.m. to pick them up (think about the McDonald's worker - that is the busiest time).
7. Are most busy getting food to eat, clothes to wear, and a safe place for their children to sleep/play - readiness skills are the least of their concerns and worries.
8. Years of research demonstrate that the first 5 years of a child's life establish the foundation for learning and achievement throughout life. The sooner we can begin educating a child, the more likely they are to grow up to be responsible contributing member of society.

In the middle and upper class world, I agree - parents can be responsible. The real truth is that when you talk about poverty - **those children are "left behind before they even hit the elementary school doors."**

We need PreKindergarten funding!!!

Thanks for reading this long email - just wanted to give you some more information to use for supporting the two PreKindergarten Bills!

THANK YOU - THANK YOU - THANK YOU!

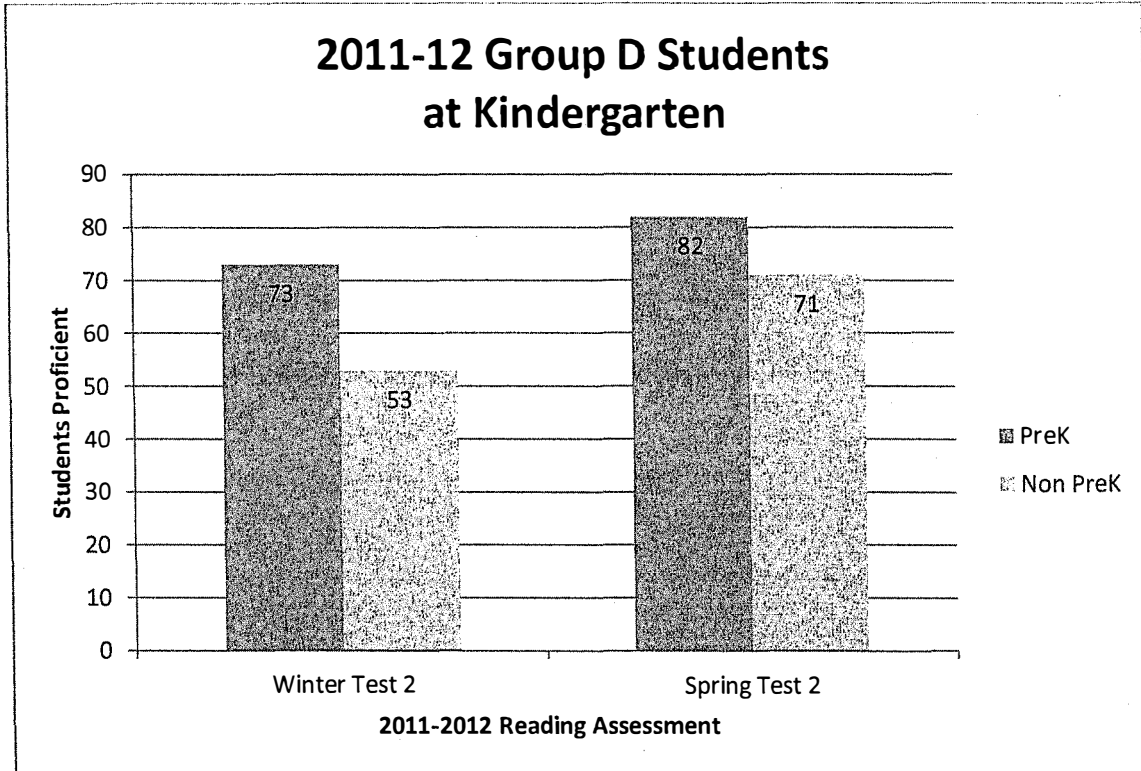
Deb Follman

Dr. Debra Follman, Principal
Sweetwater Elementary School
1304 2nd Ave. NE
Devils Lake, ND 58301
701-662-7630

Sweetwater Elementary - Devils Lake, North Dakota

Dr. Deb Follman, Principal

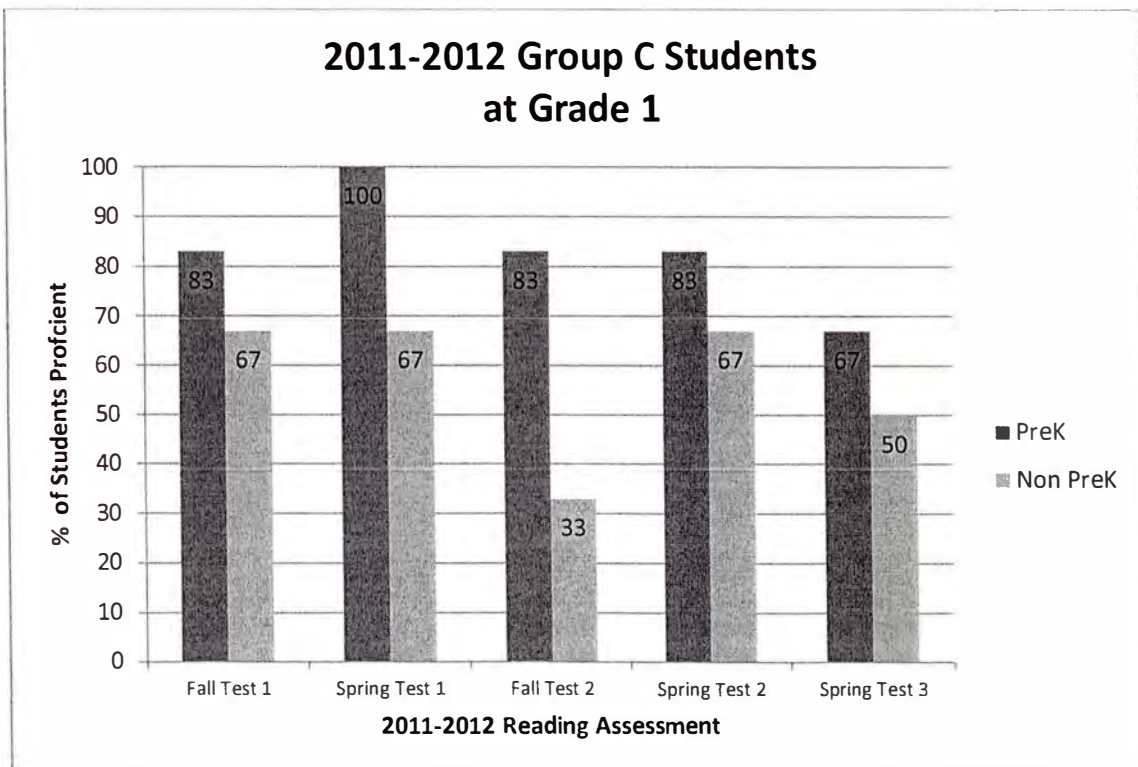
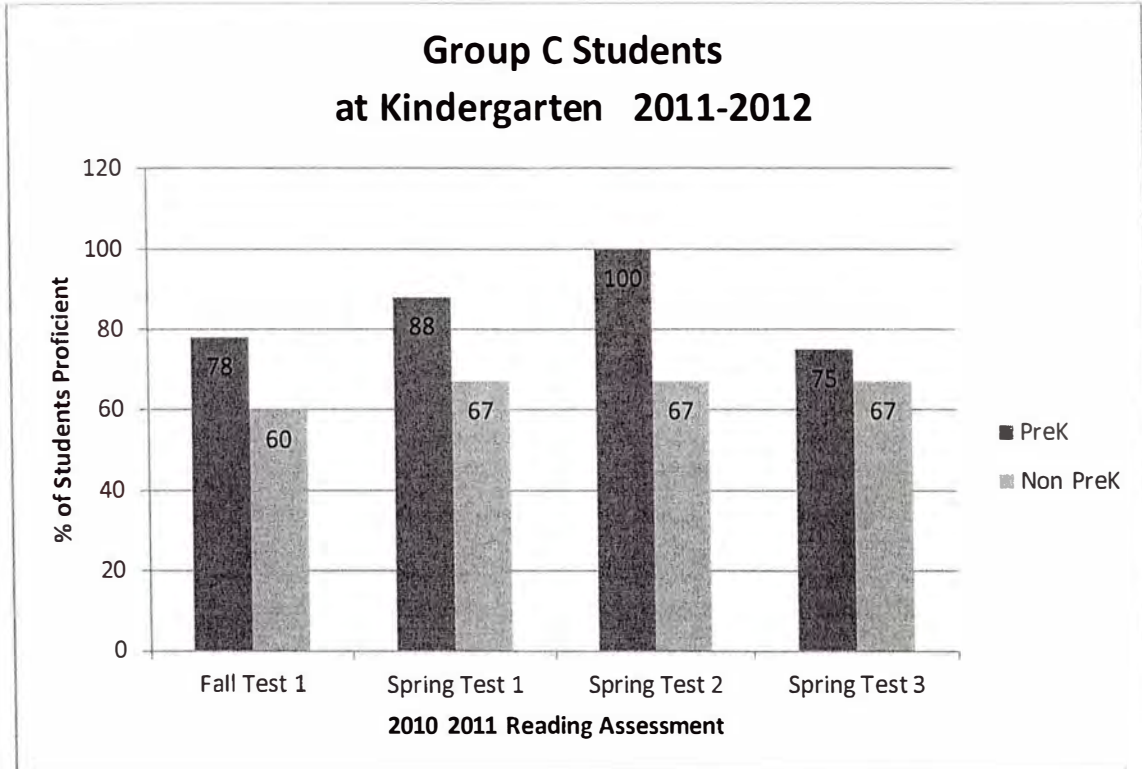
Data from assessment results of students receiving free/reduced lunches



Sweetwater Elementary - Devils Lake, North Dakota

Dr. Deb Follman, Principal

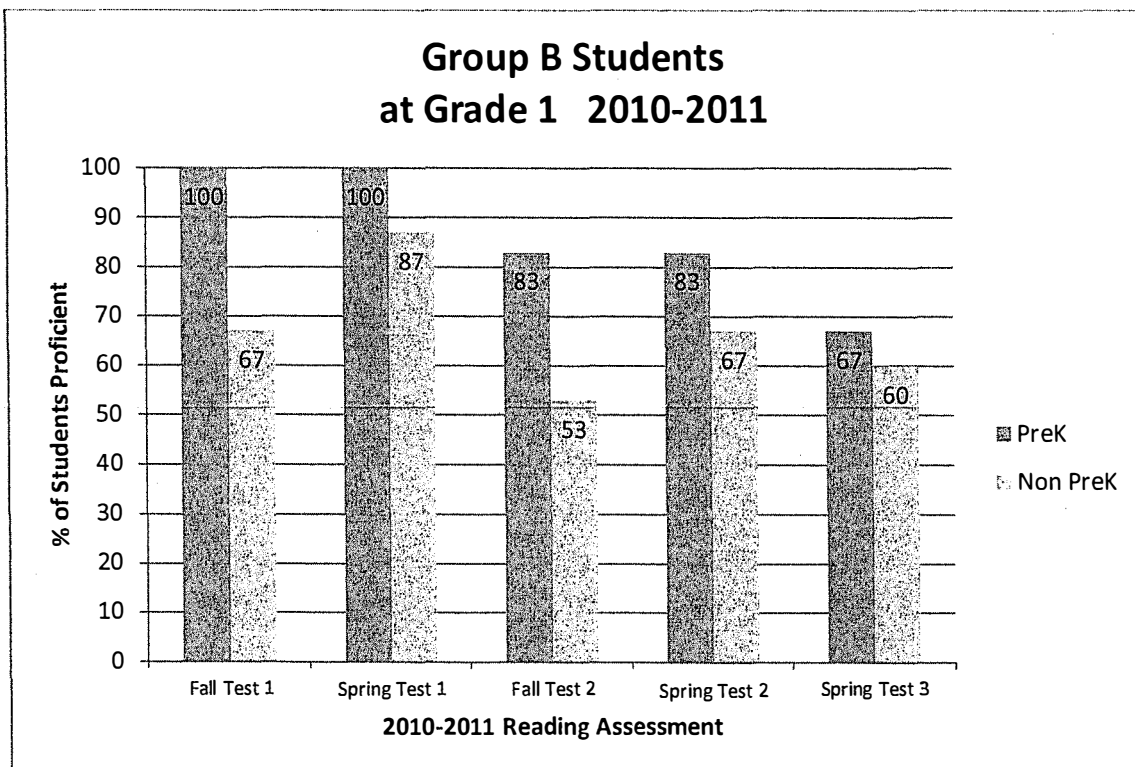
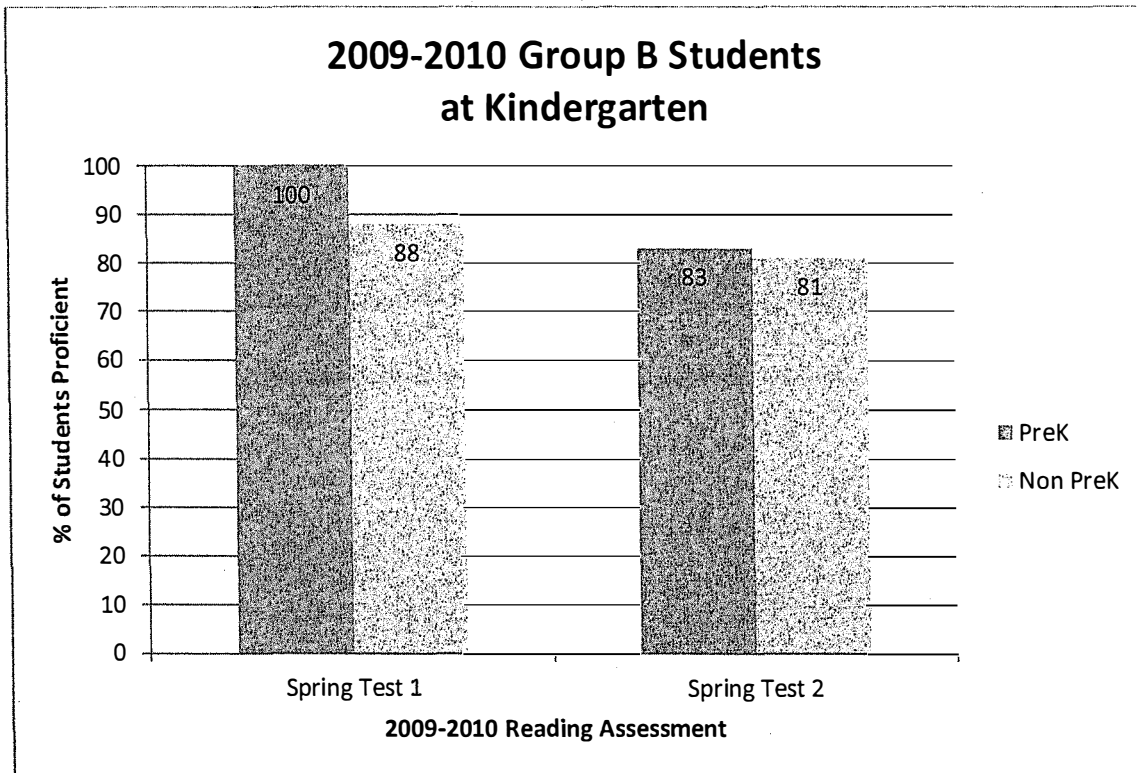
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Sweetwater Elementary - Devils Lake, North Dakota

Dr. Deb Follman, Principal

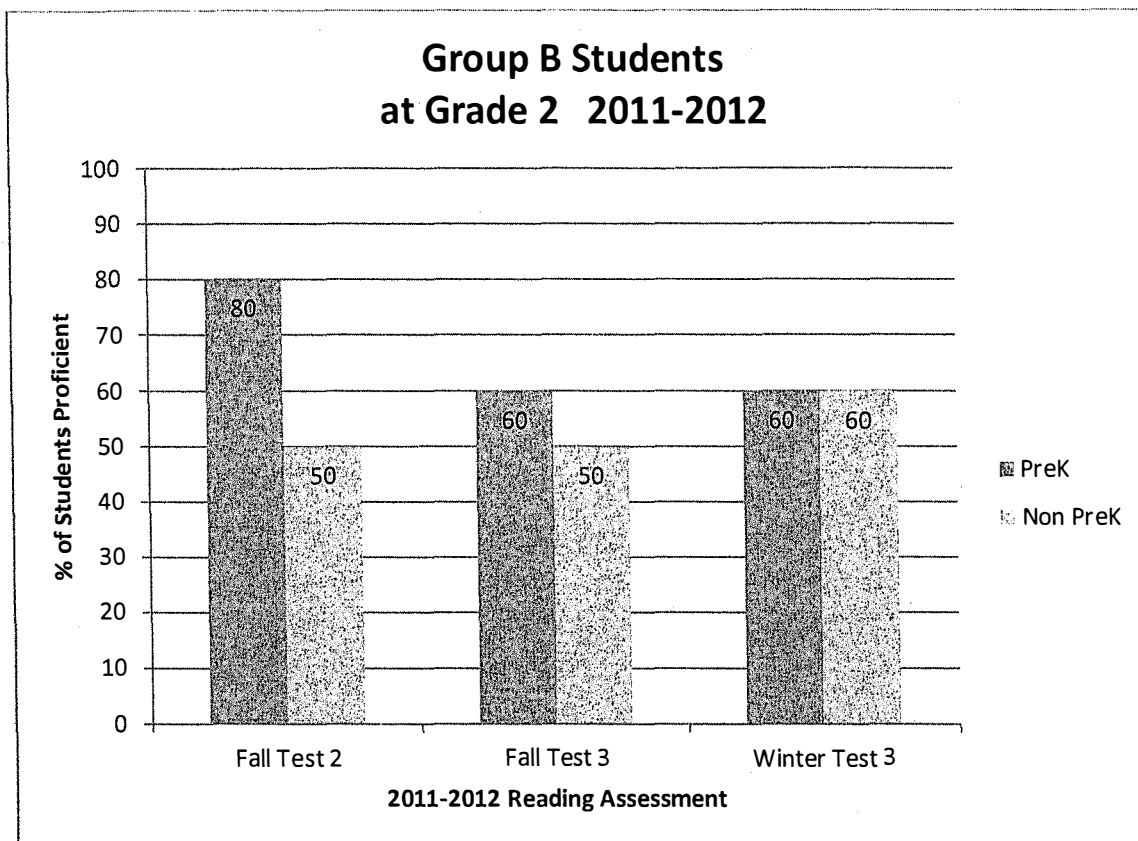
Data from assessment results of students receiving free/reduced lunches



Sweetwater Elementary - Devils Lake, North Dakota

Dr. Deb Follman, Principal

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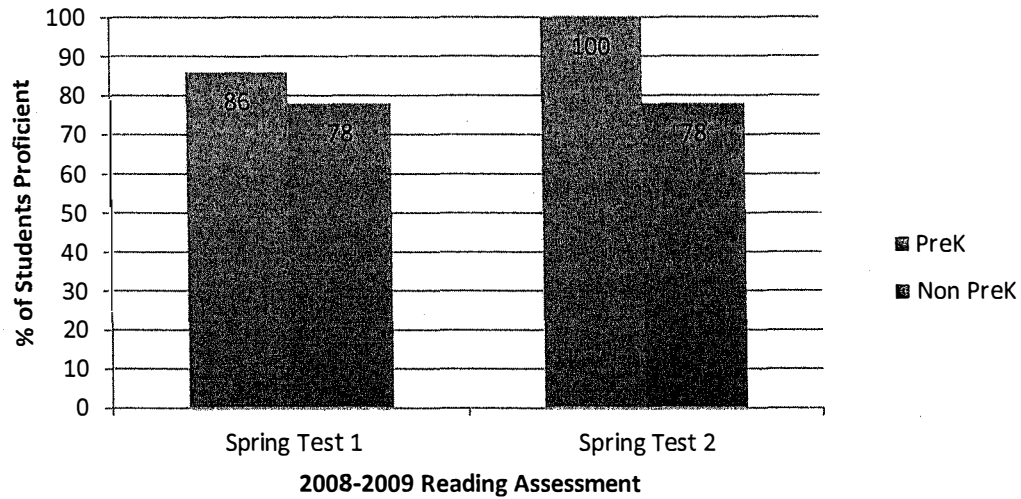


Sweetwater Elementary - Devils Lake, North Dakota

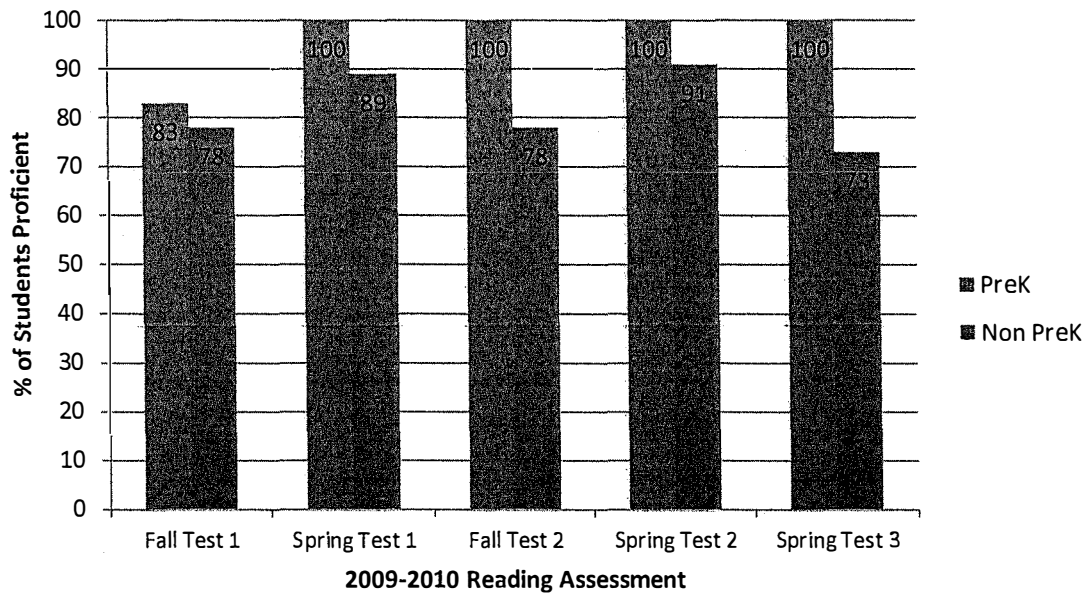
Dr. Deb Follman, Principal

Data from assessment results of students receiving free/reduced lunches

**2011-2012 Group A Students
at Kindergarten**



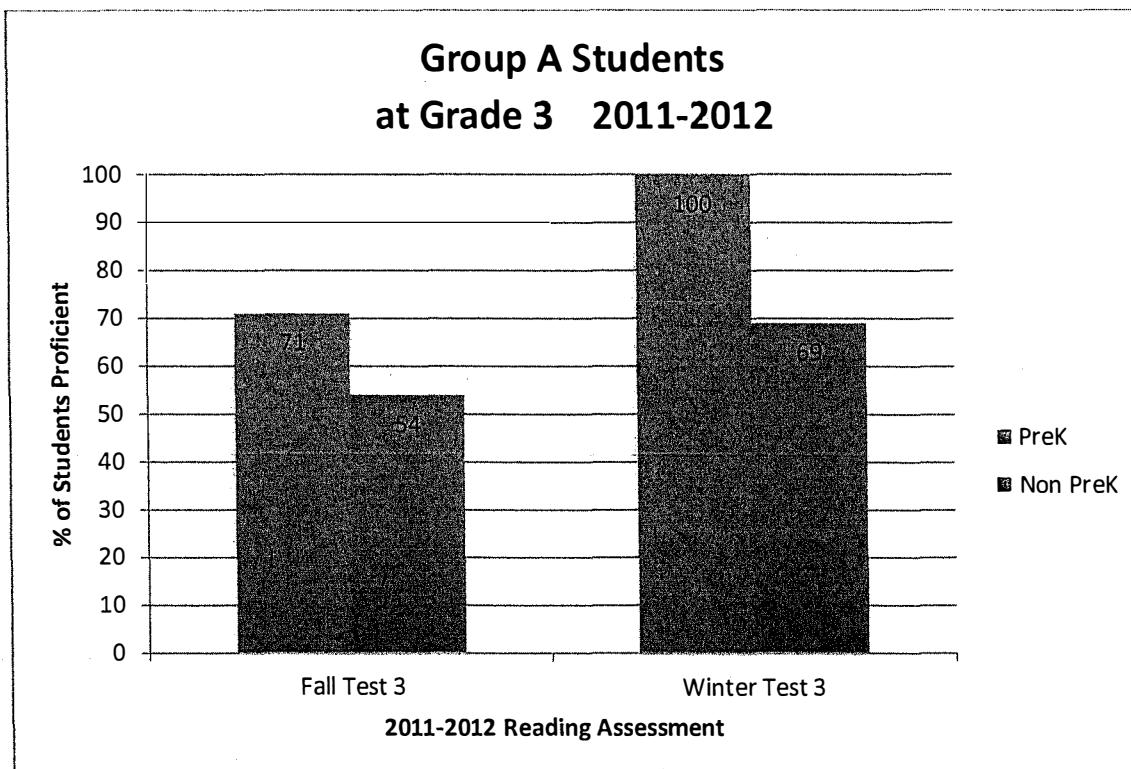
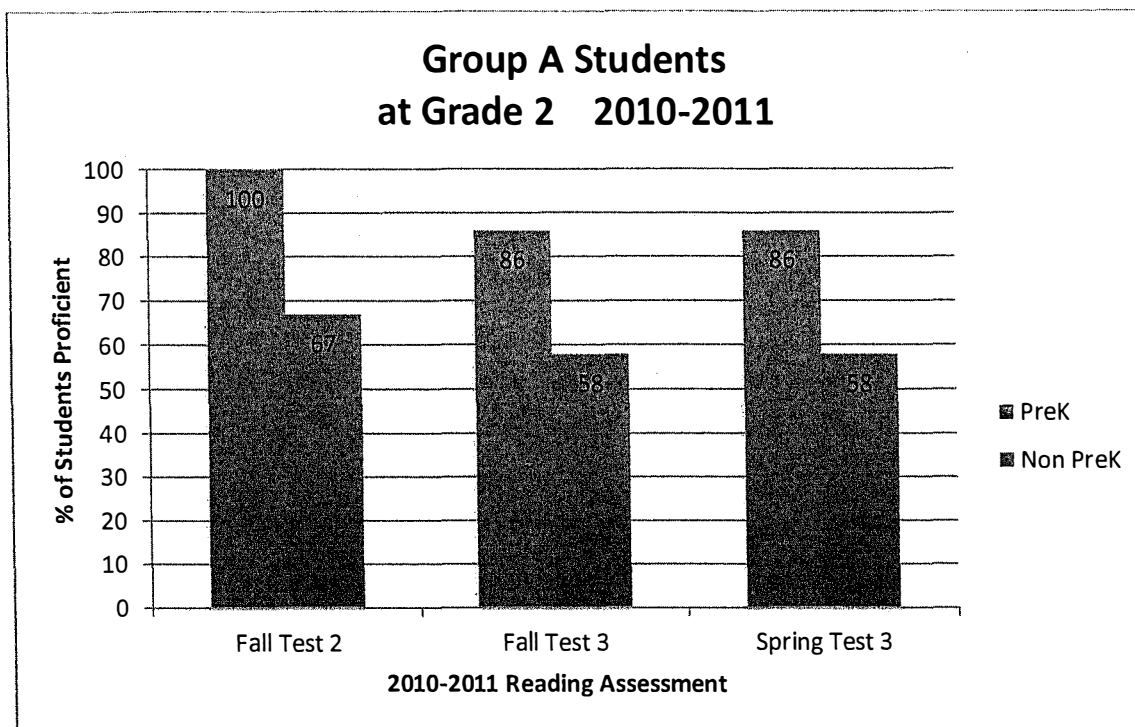
**Group A Students
at Grade 1 2009-2010**



Sweetwater Elementary - Devils Lake, North Dakota

Dr. Deb Follman, Principal

Data from assessment results of students receiving free/reduced lunches



2. Once each year, the board of each school district providing a program of early childhood education shall publish in the official newspaper of the district the total cost of providing the program. The publication must indicate personnel costs, facility costs, insurance costs, and any transportation costs, incurred as a result of the program. The publication must also indicate the amount of any federal funds and any gifts, grants, and donations received for the program.

February 6, 2013

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HB 1429

Page 1, line 2, remove "; and to provide an appropriation for early childhood"

Page 1, line 3, remove "education grants"

Page 1, remove lines 16 through 24

Page 2, remove lines 1 through 14

#1

TESTIMONY ON HB 1429
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
March 19, 2013
By: Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent
701-328-4570
Department of Public Instruction

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kirsten Baesler and I am the Superintendent of Public Instruction. I am here to speak in favor of HB 1429 to provide an appropriation for early childhood education grants.

I am speaking in favor of this bill today because I think we have a tremendous opportunity in North Dakota to create the best educational system in this country, possibly in the world. To begin creating that system we must make investments in programs and areas that provide the most and best results. Early childhood education does just that. I am not talking about preschool in terms of daycare alternatives or simply getting children emotionally ready for kindergarten. Early childhood education does more than that. Early childhood education takes advantage of the opportunity to teach a child when they are the most eager and ready to learn. We have the opportunity to not just prepare our students for kindergarten but to really begin the learning process for these children and begin their lifelong educational experience - preparing them for a lifetime of learning.

One argument often levied against early childhood education is that we will be taking these young children from their homes and families. The fact is that 52% of our four year olds in North Dakota are already in some sort of formal daycare setting. Some may argue that if children are already in daycare, why create new programs for early education. Why not let kids stay in daycare and then start learning in kindergarten or first grade? The answer is because quality early learning programs matter and they make a difference. Advances in brain research show that children are born learning - 85% of brain development happens before age 5. Research shows early learning experiences that are engaging and active actually thicken the cortex of an infant's brain, creating a brain with more extensive and sophisticated neuron structures that later determine intelligence and behavior. The preschool years are the time in which the brain begins to determine which connections to keep and which to eliminate. These first years of life impact the success students experience later in school and literally build the foundation of success in learning.

The first five years are also when children build the social and emotional skills they need to succeed in school. Teachers expect children to be able to follow directions, start and finish projects, and know when they need to ask for help. These are the skills I saw lacking most in my kindergarten, first and second graders. I saw these students frequently because they were removed from the classroom and sent to the principal's office. The very students that can't afford to

be out of the classroom and miss out on teacher instruction and learning are the very ones that are in the principals' offices across North Dakota for time-outs.

If a child can't follow directions, he or she will have difficulty attending to the task of learning. There are proven effective methods for teaching these skills and building attention. Such "soft" skills are just as important as cognitive or "hard" skills—like being able to count, recite the alphabet, and write their names.

While most upper-income children have vibrant early experiences, children in poverty often live in chaotic environments. Low-income parents may struggle to find a job or pay the bills, and consequently don't have the means to create a stimulating learning environment for their young children. Middle-income children most often have two working parents who consequently don't have the time to create a stimulating learning environment. In North Dakota 78% of mothers with children under the age of five work outside the home. This inequality in opportunity created between upper income and middle to low income students leads to the achievement gap that is evident as early as nine months of age and continues to inhibit students' progress throughout elementary school and beyond.

There are few proven strategies to close the achievement gap during the K-12 school years. **But high-quality early childhood education programs prevent the achievement gap from forming.** Decades of research on programs indicates that high-quality early childhood programs for vulnerable children increase

childhood literacy and high school graduation rates by as much as 80%.

Disadvantaged children who don't participate in high-quality early education programs are 50% more likely to be placed in special education and 25% more likely to drop out of school, thereby imposing significant costs on society.

Headstart programs are valuable, but they aren't operating in many areas of our state and they still reach only a small percentage of eligible children. Approval of HB 1429 would enable school districts in every part of the state to provide the same learning experiences to our young people.

Leading economists say that early childhood education is a sound public investment. Every dollar spent on early childhood education programs yields \$7 to \$9 in future savings on expenditures like special education and the criminal justice system. Early childhood education programs can also improve America's competitiveness in a global economy. Rob Grunewald - Regional Economic Analyst with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis has written:

“careful academic research demonstrates that tax dollars spent on early childhood education provide extraordinary returns compared with investments in the public, and even private, sector. The potential return from a focused, high-quality program is as high as 16 percent per year. Some of these benefits are private gains for the children involved in the form of higher wages later in life. But the broader economy also benefits because individuals who participate in high-quality programs have greater skills than they otherwise would, and they're able to contribute productively to their local economies. Thus, it's estimated, the annual *public* return to good ECD programs is 12 percent.”

Shortly after my election I visited the state penitentiary to learn more about the educational systems provided there. I learned that if during the prisoner's intake assessment it was discovered that the prisoner did not have a high school diploma or a GED they started that program immediately during their incarceration. This tells me we understand the direct correlation between education and the ability to become a productive contributing citizen in North Dakota. The state's current investment in our children's education in \$3,390 per child per year yet the state's current investment for a prisoner at the penitentiary is over 10 times that - at \$36,000 per prisoner per year.

The question elected officials and the public must confront is stark: Do we fund early childhood education now, or pay considerably more later for the costly social problems that result when children are not successful in school?

Our country's students and North Dakota's students are constantly being compared to nations around the world and we hear they are falling behind. Let's take a look at some of those countries.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has published *Education at a Glance 2012*, which is a research document that enables countries to see themselves in the light of other countries education performance.

- Across the 34 OECD studied countries in 2010, 79 percent of 4-year-olds were enrolled in preschool education. In the European Union, the percentage was 83.
- In comparison, only 69 percent of U.S. 4-year-olds were enrolled in early childhood education, ranking the U.S. 28th among 38 nations studied.
- The top 15 countries, including many of the U.S. economic competitors, all had enrollments exceeding 90 percent.
- The typical preschool starting age for U.S. children is 4, compared with a starting age of 3 or younger in 21 other OECD countries.

These findings matter because OECD data suggest that enrollment in early childhood education correlates with higher educational achievement later in a student's academic career.

As businesses and corporations look at moving to North Dakota, high quality school systems with early education options are a priority. North Dakota is one of 11 states that do not currently fund public preschool options at the school district level. This is a need for families, workforce development, communities, and business to consider as they decide to locate in North Dakota.

While I was the President of Mandan's school board the state invested in education by providing funding for all day every day kindergarten programs. We took advantage of that opportunity and since then Mandan's kindergarten scores on

the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) test that measures growth have been 8, 10 and 12, points above the national average expected. Principals from Kulm and Minnewauken report similar results. This is what investment in kindergarten programs has done. I ask you to imagine what investment in early education programs will do.

There has been significant progress made in setting the groundwork for early education programming in North Dakota. The Department of Public Instruction has an Early Childhood Education framework that will be formally reviewed against the department's protocol for developing standards. In addition, we are working with the Information Technology Department (ITD), as part of the Governor's Early Childhood Council, on a possible data system that would be connected to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). The Department of Public Instruction is striving to be prepared in the event state funding will be provided for early childhood education. We know it is becoming increasingly more important for children to come to school prepared and ready to learn. There are higher expectations today than in the past. We want our children to begin learning early and continue to learn through college and beyond. It will be imperative that our North Dakota children have a solid foundation leading to the strongest possible PK-20 educational system ever.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has a comprehensive plan for education. Our plan includes ensuring that students have the best educational experience possible -from early beginning to a successful end. North Dakota has a good educational system. In order to move from “Good” to “Great”, and get the greatest investment for our dollars for the future of North Dakota, we need to support quality early childhood education programs. I am reminded of the words of Wayne Gretzky “I skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been.” The fact is our children are ready to learn very early but by the time we begin to offer them education at age 5 or 6 we have already missed the puck.

Approving this bill will allow school districts to take the next step in creating our first class education system in North Dakota with proven academic results. Again, this isn’t about starting kids earlier, it’s about catching kids when the moment is right.

Thank you, Senators. That concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Testimony for 1429

Chairman Flakoll and members of the Senate Education Committee, for the record my name is Brandt Dick and I am the Superintendent of Hazelton-Moffit-Braddock School District and Underwood School District. I am here to speak in favor of 1429.

At Underwood School District we have had a Public Preschool Program for over 18 years. The program began as a way to educate students with disabilities. The program has grown and expanded to where we now have two half-day and three half-day options for all preschool students. We have close to 100% participation in our preschool program from our community, as well as students from neighboring communities of Turtle Lake and Washburn. We have found that having a public preschool has benefited both special need students as well as regular education students. Some of our special need students—especially in the area of speech development—have actually been able to gain the services needed at an early age and have been able to continue their education without special educational services.

Right now we charge tuition, and utilize funding from the state for those students that are identified as special educational students. We also have raised funds to help those families in need who cannot afford the preschool tuition amount. I would ask this committee to strongly consider an amendment similar to 2229 that would allow grants for programs in existence or for new programs.

At Hazelton-Moffit-Braddock, we are seriously considering adding a preschool program as we are seeing the benefits of those students that have completed the preschool program in Linton. Geographical distance prevents some families from utilizing the preschool program in Linton. A strong preschool program is definitely something young families take into consideration when looking at communities in which to reside and raise their families.