

**2015 SENATE EDUCATION**

**SB 2210**

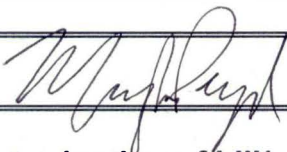
# 2015 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Education Committee**  
Missouri River Room, State Capitol

SB 2210  
1/20/2015  
Job # 22178 (34:17)

☐ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

INITIAL HEARING  
relating to regional education associations

## Minutes:

Attachments #1-#6

**Chairman Flakoll** called the committee to order at 9am with all committee members present.

**Gary Lee**, District 22 Senator (*see attachment #1*)

**Senator G. Lee:** This offers a change to the business structure to the REAs and allows them to be their own fiscal agent. Attached to my testimony is a summary provided by Jon Martinson with the School Board Association of what has happened over time and some of the dollars that have come through. REAs get their funds through a school formula, grants, and services they provide. The only new sections to law are on page 3 of the bill lines 1-13 where it indicates regional education association legal status and asks that they become a body corporate. This will allow them to spend and receive state and federal dollars, contract for any lawful purpose and they could sue and be sued as a corporation. One thing it doesn't allow them is to tax. We would have to directly give them that authority in order for them to be a taxing entity.

**Senator Schaible:** Right now with the current structure, member schools can join or opt out. Using the Rough Rider Association for example, now that Dickenson left, how will that affect member schools?

**Senator G. Lee:** It gives them another option to manage their own fiscal affairs. The member schools don't change unless they want to opt out.

**Senator Schaible:** Do you see this as an expansion of purchasing buildings and becoming another entity rather than supplementing schools like what was originally planned?

**Senator G. Lee:** I would hope they wouldn't begin to buy buildings. I would expect that they would rent space to house their employees and services.

(10:15) **Richard Marcellais**, District 9 Senator (*see attachment #2*)

(13:30) **Luke Schaefer**, Director of Mid-Dakota Education Cooperative (*see attachment #3*)

**Chairman Flakoll:** Is your budget housed in Minot?

**Schaefer:** Correct, Minot Public Schools is our fiscal agent.

**Chairman Flakoll:** There a bill in the House with ending fund balances. This may help untangle this issue.

**Schaefer:** Any remaining fund balances would count toward that school district.

**Senator Schaible:** Could you go more in depth on your third point about the REA providing opportunities for additional funding?

**Schaefer:** Currently school districts often receive local funds. As operating under the same fiscal agent ID number, REA's are then ineligible to receive funding because that school district has already received funding. It limits that opportunity.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Do you see any changes in the relationship if this bill is to pass?

**Schaefer:** In my estimation, no. currently their board approves our bills as well as our governing board, but other than that there would be no change.

**Vice Chairman Rust:** Would you elaborate on the part of your testimony that says, "this definition would assist the REA's as they work to remove the geographic location of a student as a factor in the equity of education"?

**Schaefer:** We are very heavily funded through grants. Any time we can get access to additional funds, we can better provide support. As the REA's were formed, it was recognized that we were created to help eliminate so that location wasn't a factor in education and every student would get the same supports regardless of where they were. The more funding that we can acquire, the more that we can deliver. Many of our schools outside of the metropolitan areas frequently ask us to come out and provide support, so many of our districts will receive support from our professional development providers. The bigger public schools have their own sets of professional development or curriculum directors to assist with that. That's how we can help diminish location as an equity factor.

(21:20) **Robert Lech**, Superintendent of the Jamestown School District (*see attachment #4*)

**Chairman Flakoll:** Will you share your thoughts on the earlier discussion regarding owning buildings or property, should we worry about that?

**Lech:** There will be a natural progression on the growth of the REAs before that becomes the question. As those entities and their responsibilities grow, there may be a potential need. However I don't see that as an issue right now.

(25:18) **Lyle Krueger**, Executive Director of the Missouri River Educational Cooperative (*see attachment #5 & 5b*)

**Chairman Flakoll:** Did your REA vote to support this?

**Krueger:** Yes we did.

(27) **Broc Lietz**, Business Manager for the Fargo Public School district (*see attachment #6*)

**Chairman Flakoll:** Regarding the ending fund balance discussed earlier, your intent wouldn't be that if this were to happen, you could park your money with an REA is it?

**Lietz:** Absolutely not. We will be fiscally responsible and accountable to our tax payers.

(30:45) **Tamera Uselman**, Superintendent of Bismarck Public Schools

: I like what the REA's do and have done particularly with children who are not in the bigger cities. I also like how they partner well with Bismarck Public Schools. For these reasons I support SB 2210.

**Chairman Flakoll** closes the hearing on SB 2210

(32:40) **Senator Schaible** moves a do pass.

**Senator Marcellais** seconds the motion.

**Chairman Flakoll:** I would like to note how far the REA's have come in the many years we have worked with them. They were vital to the situation when bringing in FHI360 in the HESS grants.

**A vote was taken for the motion of Do Pass: Yes: 6, No: 0, Absent: 0**

**Senator Marcellais** will carry the bill.

**Chairman Flakoll** closes the hearing.

**2015 SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. SB 2210**

Senate Education Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment  
☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation  
☐ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations  
☐ Place on Consent Calendar  
Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Senator Schaible Seconded By Senator Marcellais

| Senators           | Yes | No | Senators           | Yes | No |
|--------------------|-----|----|--------------------|-----|----|
| Chairman Flakoll   | X   |    | Senator Marcellais | X   |    |
| Vice Chairman Rust | X   |    | Senator Oban       | X   |    |
| Senator Davison    | X   |    |                    |     |    |
| Senator Schaible   | X   |    |                    |     |    |
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Total (Yes) 6 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Senator Marcellais

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

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2210: Education Committee (Sen. Flakoll, Chairman) recommends DO PASS**  
(6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2210 was placed on the  
Eleventh order on the calendar.

**2015 HOUSE EDUCATION**

**SB 2210**



# 2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Education Committee**  
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

SB 2210  
3/9/2015  
24520

☐ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

*Donna Whetham*

## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to regional education associations; and to repeal relating to regional education associations.

Attachment #1-3.

## Minutes:

**Chairman Nathe:** opened the hearing on SB 2210.

**Senator Gary Lee: District 22.** (1:00-4:14) Introduced SB 2210. The only changes by Anita Thomas was on page 1 section 3. (See Attachment #1).

**Rep Meier:** Do you for see that the REA's would have to hire additional staff to perform the duties you are asking for?

**Luke Schaefer: Director of Mid-Dakota Education Cooperative,** in support of SB 2210. (6:19-10:00). (See Attachment #2).

**Rep Meier:** You are looking at shared services compared to having their own staff?

**Luke Schaefer:** In some regards, like a shared business manager where we could purchase time. Where we would not need a full time equivalent position.

**Chairman Nathe:** Would that be the shared services between all the REA's, like one accountant for example?

**Luke Schaefer:** Absolutely.

**Rep B. Koppelman:** Under this bill with this change to body corporate, is this a government entity or is this a business association in its new form?

**Luke Schaefer:** My understanding is that we would be a non- governmental agency.



**Rep B. Koppelman:** Are we going to reach the point where the state rather than funding REA's out of the funding formula with a weighting factor, maybe we should be giving that directly to the school districts that generate that formula weight based on their students? And allow them to purchase service from the REA? Do you support that if it becomes a non-governmental agency?

**Luke Schaefer:** I can see where you would see that happening. Some districts may decide to go that route. I don't know it would be the best for professional development as a whole. What the REA's are able to provide is a concise set of direction that multiple school districts can engage in. In performing quality embedded professional development. The way we understood how this bill was written is that REA's would be a non-governmental agency.

**Vice Chairman Schatz:** How do REA's directly help children?

**Luke Schaefer:** There are a great many ways and help them succeed. Succeed 2020 is a grant where we are working toward successful college and career for all students. We have some REA's offer direct student services in terms of career guidance, working all the way up to offering student internships.

**Vice Chairman Schatz:** Is this like a school counselor?

**Luke Schaefer:** Yes in some cases, there are also career advisors in the state.

**Vice Chairman Schatz:** Is all your income records subject to open records?

**Luke Schaefer:** I believe that they are.

**Rep Hunskor:** If you may hire a person to take care of the business for all the schools and that person would be housed in one of the schools?

**Luke Schaefer:** I assume that one of the REA's would house the shared service personnel. It would be in one of the REA's and we are based in a school or a university.

**Chairman Nathe:** The Hess grant was \$ 25 million dollars, was that correct? How much is left?

**Luke Schaefer:** Yes over 5 years. We are in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year so there is 2 years left.

**Rep Rohr:** Are you currently able to accept private donations?

**Luke Schaefer:** Yes, providing the school district with which we are engaged with as a fiscal agent is not receiving the same. Such as the Bremer Foundation that will only grant to one organization and we are engaged with them then we could not.

**Chairman Nathe:** So this bill would give you the ability to accept a grant from Bremer?

**Luke Schaefer:** Yes.

**Jon Martinson:** School Board Association: (16:42) We are pleased to be involved with REA's and the growth has been gratifying. The growth has been slow. I think the legislature has provided some budget support which we really appreciate. I would like to respond to Rep B. Koppelman's question that the money going directly to the school district. There was a school district that did want that to happen and it wasn't successful. In order to get the REA's running, we had to work hard to break down the barrier between school districts. There was a lot of suspicion between the school districts. If we went back to providing the individual school districts it would undermine the effort that we made to work together. I don't think that is the way to go. We are supportive of SB 2210.

**Rep B. Koppelman:** My thought was once these entities stand on their own they should become mature enough that they wouldn't have to rely on the state seed money. It is more of a long term question. I could ask the question whether or not we should cease to fund them from the state. It is not a question of do we overnight defund them.

**Lyle Krueger: Executive Director of Missouri River Educational Cooperative.** The question arose by Rep B. Koppelman in regards to the body corporate designation and the reason it was proposed it allowed us to work with the state to determine if we would become a municipality or a governmental agency. There is that flexibility to work with the state to best determine what we would be. That is the reason for the body cooperate designation. There is several REA's who provide the before and after school programs, STEM, CTE, and online IT course work. That impacts students and their achievement.

**Vice Chairman Schatz:** So they are not standardized, there are eight different REA's and they all do a different thing?

**Lyle Krueger:** Within the REA's we try to adhere to the local requests of the membership of the REA. Basically if districts have a concern that they want and cannot provide on their own they can come to us. We are not mandating anything, they come to us.

**Vice Chairman Schatz:** So your answer is no, they are not standardized.

**Lyle Krueger:** No they are not standardized.

**Chairman Nathe:** They come to you and ask for something they need or for help and the needs are different.

**Lyle Krueger:** Yes, we try to reach the needs of those interested districts.

**Broc Lietz: Business Manager of Fargo Public Schools:** in support of SB 2210. Unable to attend. Written testimony. (See Attachment # 3).

**Chairman Nathe:** Any other support for SB 2210? Any opposition to SB 2210? Seeing none. Closed the hearing on SB 2210.

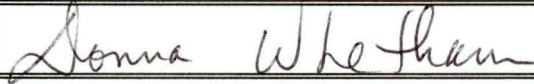
# 2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee  
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

SB 2210  
3/10/2015  
24570

☒ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to regional education associations; and to repeal relating to regional education associations.

## Minutes:

**Chairman Nathe:** reopened the hearing on SB 2210. on page 3 lines 1-13 is the new language.

**Rep B. Koppelman:** I f we are going to change the REA's into non-governmental entity does change the idea behind sending public money directly through them for a goal. Are they at a point where they can go out on their own and rely on school districts to contract with them and pool their money when it comes to professional development? In talking with North Dakota United as well as School Board Association, they had opposite views. One of the points is that this organization would still be governed by school board and is still partly a governmental organization. But when I pointed out school board association is governed by members and that is clearly not a governmental entity. What do we do? I don't know if I am in favor of this bill unless we finish framing what is an REA. Their initial charge was to handle professional development as well as the sharing of resources such as technology. Now most of their funds are done through grants and they are directed the way the grant is earmarked. So it may not be under the focus of the original REA's when we had to seed the money to them and we almost had to force the schools to participate. Now that they are participating I don't know if it is necessary to continue to treat it that way.

**Chairman Nathe:** The bill gives them the chance to form a corporation and they can end up doing some cost sharing. They can manage their own books. The Hess fund will come to an end. Hess is talking about doing that again, this bill helps them get to that point. If we don't have this bill they might not want to continue, that is my opinion. The REA's operate separately but they work with the districts with what they need. I was invited out to see some schools by REA's to see how the REA's work with schools. They are doing a

wonderful job. I think this bill is needed for the future of REA's and they do a wonderful job. Any way we can support the REA's, and this bill does it, I am all for it.

**Rep Looyen:** Yes, when you asked the question will this give them and opportunity to hire a business manager and buy time and share them out. Rep B. Koppelman you have some good ideas and they should be sought out in a new bill maybe next session and have a full hearing on it and give everyone the ability to testify on it. **I move a do pass on SB 2210.**

**Rep D. Johnson: Seconded .**

**Vice Chairman Schatz:** I will resist the motion. I feel this goes in a whole new direction. Corporation, I do not think that is a good idea. The original intent of these REA's when they were small was a good idea, but when you get a big organization like this. Hess will find a way to give education \$20 million dollars without creating corporate REA's. I don't see where they are really helping kids. I see where they are helping the school boards and the administrations. Professional development doesn't necessarily help the teachers. I know that for a fact. There is a lot of duplication in this and it is getting way to big and I am not in favor of it.

**Rep Rohr:** You took a tour, and the committee has not heard a list of what are the REA's accomplishments?

**Chairman Nathe:** I would refer you to Senator Kyle Davison to give you more detail. From my one day trip talking to administration and staff, they liked the training they have had and programs made possible by the REA's. I saw a program in Hazen that was making concrete and making projects and that was as a result of the REA program. The teachers and students were excited about this. Senator Davison could give you a better list than I could. I became a believer when seeing it in action. It is a huge asset to the smaller schools and they are all individual entity. There are some better REA's than others.

**Rep Rohr:** Not everyone participates, so we are creating a different standard for some schools and not others and should we include an audit than in this bill than to determine what they actually accomplish and how it impacts the teachers and students on a positive basis?

**Chairman Nathe:** I don't know if we need that. I asked the question about being equal and the reason they are not all equal is that some superintendents don't want to be included. Some schools just go through the motions by bringing in a sheet of paper have the staff read it for the next hour , then they check the box off and they did their PD. REA's have higher quality programs. They have trainers with a customized training for that school and are able to give better professional development programs.

**Rep Rohr:** If it is so good why aren't we making sure all districts are involved in this then?

**Chairman Nathe:** You can't force them to do it.

**Rep B. Koppelman:** From another bigger school district West Fargo, they used to do more of what you are saying and they didn't like it as well. They have worked outside of the



REA's and with them as well for professional development where they are bringing in their own trainers. So they are doing some of that as well.

**Chairman Nathe:** They have the resources to do that where small schools don't.

**Rep B. Koppelman:** That is very true. What Rep Looyesen said before he made the motion. I don't think what I am asking for is a bill in of itself. All I am suggesting is if this goes forward that I suggest we change the funding formula of the bill and redirect those PD dollars through the REA to go through the school districts as opposed to a direct payment to a private company. That is all I was suggesting. It is two pieces of the bill we already have. The piece concerns me a little bit with how the dollars are used is to say the dollars we send directly to REA's cannot be used for administration. We should earmark the money to get a professional developer or renting the room. This isn't for hiring the business manager who lives in Bismarck and you have to pay part of his fee.

**Rep D. Johnson:** I look at the REA in our area and we have a college and Class A schools, Class B schools large and small, and I would like to see the money go back to the REA where they can coordinate the money to help develop PD and other things they do with outreach education between schools. I think the way we started up is working and we have seen the success of it. There are only a handful of schools that are not involved in an REA.

**Rep. Olson:** If we do give REA's the right to incorporate and we continue sending them state money will we be able to look at their books, will they be subject to open records?

**Chairman Nathe:** I think it was said the records will be open.

**Vice Chairman Schatz:** I called Legislative Council to ask Anita, to find who they are accountable to, are they under administrative rules and who audits them. They are only accountable to themselves, they are not under administrative rules and they are not audited. We give them money and we make rules for all these organizations that are units of government that we give money too. But the REA's don't have any. I think they can do everything they want without this bill. We talk about giving them \$20 million dollars from Hess, we don't know if they will give them anything. I don't care to see them out there soliciting from industry, that is not their business. Their business is taking care of kids. There are a lot of things I don't think this bill is very pertinent to.

**Rep Meier:** I will resist the motion as well. I remember when JPA's became REA's and the state used to fund them very small. I know they serve a great purpose. They are a great tool for smaller schools especially but my concern is the way this bill reads is along with the state giving them a very good lump sum to REA's now we are creating another entity, a bigger entity for them to do with private dollars whatever they wish.

**A Roll Call Vote was taken. Yes: 7 No: 6 Absent: 0. Motion carried.**

**Rep Looyesen: will carry the bill.**

Date: 3-10-15  
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2210

House Education Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment  
☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation  
☐ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations  
☐ Place on Consent Calendar

Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Rep. Looyzen Seconded By Rep. Johnson

| Representatives      | Yes | No | Representatives | Yes | No |
|----------------------|-----|----|-----------------|-----|----|
| Chairman Nathe       | ✓   |    | Rep. Hunskor    | ✓   |    |
| Vice Chairman Schatz |     | ✓  | Rep. Kelsh      | ✓   |    |
| Rep. Dennis Johnson  | ✓   |    | Rep. Mock       | ✓   |    |
| Rep. B. Koppelman    |     | ✓  |                 |     |    |
| Rep. Looyzen         | ✓   |    |                 |     |    |
| Rep. Meier           |     | ✓  |                 |     |    |
| Rep. Olson           |     | ✓  |                 |     |    |
| Rep. Rohr            |     | ✓  |                 |     |    |
| Rep. Schreiber Beck  |     | ✓  |                 |     |    |
| Rep. Zubke           | ✓   |    |                 |     |    |
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Total (Yes) 7 No 6

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Rep. Looyzen

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

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2210: Education Committee (Rep. Nathe, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS**  
(7 YEAS, 6 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2210 was placed on the  
Fourteenth order on the calendar.



**2015 TESTIMONY**

**SB 2210**

# |

1/20/2015

Testimony to the  
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Senator Gary Lee  
District 22

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for the record I'm Senator Gary Lee District 22 in Cass County. I'm here as a sponsor of Senate Bill 2210.

In 2005 as a member of the Senate Education committee, I supported the investment in Regional Education Associations (REA) to establish a systematic service delivery model of education services to support local school districts throughout North Dakota. Over the last 10 years we've seen these services quickly expand to include state-wide collaboration for professional development, after-school programs, on-line dual credit classes, and healthy schools programs to name just a few.

With this growth come challenges, Senate Bill 2210 addresses one of these challenges. In 2005 and currently REAs use a school district as their fiscal agent which includes the use of both the schools tax exempt number and bank accounts. Early on this worked well, but now some REAs have up to 20 different grant funds, bill for services such as their after-school programs, and have between 10-50 full and/or part-time employees.

I believe it's time through Senate Bill 2210 to allow these REAs as needed to establish their own entity which would include their own tax ID number.

I ask for your support for Senate Bill 2210.

Senator Gary Lee  
District 22

#1

# PREPARING STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS

## Executive Summary: History of JPAs, REAs, and Succeed 2020

Through REA programming North Dakota students are better prepared for college and careers in our workforce.

Regional education associations (REA) unite school districts to improve their educational programs and services through cooperation and pooling of resources, working in collaboration with Job Service, Commerce, local businesses, state and local agencies, among other organizations. Currently the Hess Corporation and the state of North Dakota act as supporting partners. As of March 2013, there are eight REAs serving 96 percent of all public schools districts and 99.5 percent of all students in the state.

REAs support initiatives, programs, and activities that serve students and education professionals with fiscal support from local funding, memberships of school districts within the designated regions, state funding, and, at times, grants. Oversight of each REA is a governing board comprised of member district representation, as well as an annual report of student and professional activities and/or services to the superintendent of public instruction.

State funding to REAs increased over the years to reflect not only an increasing number of students in the state, but also the growing role, influence, and expectations that school districts have of REAs. The 2011 Legislative Assembly streamlined a long list of administrative functions and student services that REAs were required to share with other REAs to specifically focus on (1) professional development, (2) technology and technology support, (3) school improvement, (4) student achievement data collection and analysis, and (5) curriculum enrichment.

### REAS HAVE GROWN OVER TIME:

REAs have received state funding through several legislative sessions. Major legislative actions include:

- Funding of JPAs was initiated by the 2003-05 North Dakota legislature.
- The 2005-07 North Dakota legislature reconfigured JPAs to REAs. The REAs received \$759,886 in state funding during 2005 and 2006.
- In 2009 HB 1400 provided to each of eight REAs \$25,000 and \$2.6 million distributed through the education formula.
- The 2011 legislative session provided partial funding in each REA for a 12 month coordinator (currently called director) position.

### History of Legislative Funding for Regional Education Associations

|                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 2003-05 Appropriation . . . . . | \$250,000 total     |
| 2005-07 Appropriation . . . . . | \$2 million total   |
| 2005-07 Appropriation . . . . . | \$2 million total   |
| 2007-09 Appropriation . . . . . | \$3 million total   |
| 2009-11 Appropriation . . . . . | \$2.8 million total |
| 2011-13 Appropriation . . . . . | \$3.8 million total |
| 2013-15 Appropriation . . . . . | \$4.3 million total |



## NORTH DAKOTA SENATE

STATE CAPITOL  
600 EAST BOULEVARD  
BISMARCK, ND 58505-0360

Senator Richard Marcellais  
District 9  
RR 1, Box 267A  
Belcourt, ND 58316-9787  
rmarcellais@nd.gov



COMMITTEES:

Education  
Government and Veterans Affairs

### **Testimony for SB 2210 Relating to Regional Education Associations**

**Chairman Flakoll, members of the Senate Education Committee, for the record my name is Richard Marcellais, Senator from District 9, Rolette County.**

**Regional Education Association is a group of school districts seeking to improve their educational programs and services through cooperation and pooling of resources.**

**There are eight Regional Education Association (see attached) in North Dakota, and 93% of all the public school districts in the state are members of an Regional Education Association. Over 98% of all public school students in the state are served by an Regional Education Association. Each Regional Education Association offers unique programs and services based on the needs of the region. Beginning in 2011, all the Regional Education Associations began working toward offering a common core of high quality programs and services in the areas of professional development, technology support, data systems support, school improvement support and curriculum enrichment.**

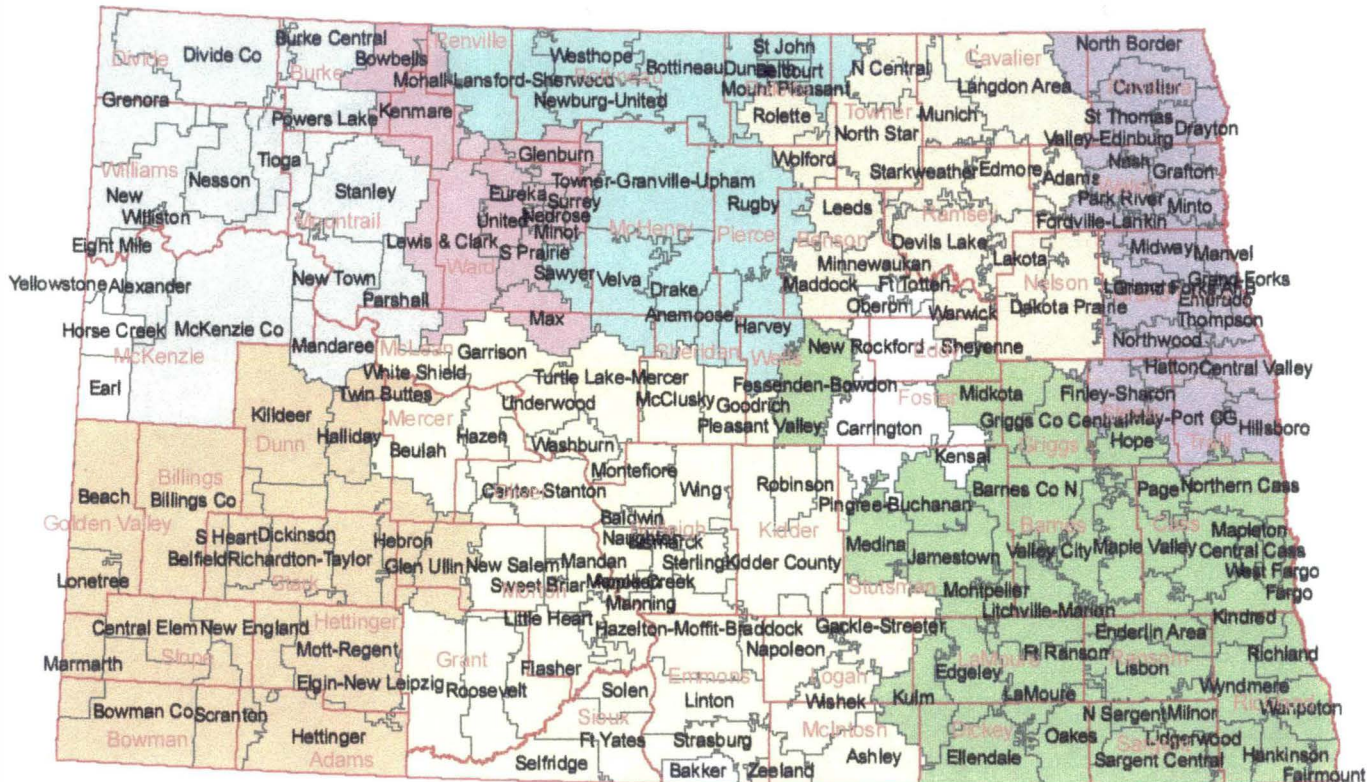
**The primary members are the Regional Education Regional Directors (see attached) Other members include Regional Education Association lead administrators and representative from other organizations that help to advance North Dakota Regional Education Associations mission. North Dakota Regional Education Association promotes collaboration among the eight Regional Education Association in order to produce higher degree of statewide resource efficiency and program and service effectiveness than might otherwise be achieved by individual Regional Education Associations operating independently.**

**That concludes my testimony in support of SB 2210. I will try an answer any questions. Thank You**



# Regional Education Associations (2010-2011)

10/22/2010



- Northeast Ed Services Cooperative (NESC)
- Roughrider Ed Services Program (RESP)
- Mid-Dakota Ed Cooperative (MDEC)
- Missouri River Ed Cooperative (MREC)

- South East Ed Cooperative (SEEC)
- Red River Valley Ed Cooperative (RRVEC)
- North Central Ed Cooperative (NCEC)
- Great Northwest Ed Cooperative (GNWEC)

The State of North Dakota  
Department of Public Instruction  
Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, Superintendent  
Office of School District Finance and Organization  
600 East Boulevard Avenue, Dept 201  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0440

Note: District dissolution not yet complete  
(Nash School District was dissolved, but still appears on the map).

## North Dakota Regional Education Association (NDREA) Contact Information

### Great North West Education Cooperative (GNWEC)

**Director**

David Richter  
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Williston State College  
1410 University Ave.  
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#3  
1/20

Testimony for Public Hearing  
Senate Education Committee  
January 20, 2015

Lucas G. Schaefer  
500 University Ave W  
Minot ND 58707

S.B. No. 2210 (Committee) - An Act Relating to Regional Education Associations

Good Morning Mr. Chairman and Senate Education Committee Members. My name is Luke Schaefer and I am the Director of Mid-Dakota Education Cooperative, one of the eight Regional Education Associations or REA's in North Dakota. Senate Bill 2210 will define an REA's legal status as a body corporate. I am testifying in support of this bill, and this testimony represents the shared support of the other REA directors, as well.

REA's were originally formed as Joint Powers Agreements and have been operating with funding from the legislature since 2003, but reconfigured as Regional Education Associations in 2005. Agencies like the REA's in ND have existed since 1967 in the United States. The state of Wisconsin made a similar distinction with their education associations 7 years after their inception (1983). This is a natural progression to consider.

Many REA's currently utilize local school districts as fiscal agents, operating under its policies and human resources procedures, as well as the fiscal agent's Employee ID Number. There are three points I would like to highlight regarding this. First, the definition provided in this bill would provide REA's the ability to better serve schools through shared services such as business managers, or difficult to fill positions, as well as consultants. Second, this legal status would shift the burden and liability the fiscal agent currently assumes to the Governing Board of the REA. Third, this distinction between the fiscal agent and the REA would provide opportunities for additional funding and sustainability for both entities as the current shared

Employee ID Number limits funding opportunities such as grants and donations from local, state, and national sources.

For REA's that have grown in budget and staff size, local school boards and REA boards have requested a streamlined process for accounting and human resources. The REA Directors have recognized that a clear definition would provide the eight REA's to work more collaboratively with each other through the same shared services model mentioned above.

The Governor's office and others, including a steering committee of private and public sector representatives saw the potential in REA's with the development of Succeed 2020, a private grant from the Hess Corporation. Regional Education Associations are beginning the process of becoming Accredited Bodies through the same Accrediting Body our schools use, AdvancEd. The depth and breadth of support that REA's are providing schools has expanded greatly. The REA's are seeking a proactive approach to better define the entities known as Regional Education Associations. I believe this bill provides a clear definition. This definition would assist the REA's as they work to remove the geographic location of a student as a factor in the equity of education. As Regional Education Associations, we want to carry out the mission to Support and Strengthen Education in North Dakota. This bill would allow NDREA to move forward more efficiently and effectively to strengthen that mission.

Thank you for your valuable time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Luke Schaefer

#4  
1/20

Testimony to the  
**Senate Education Committee**

January 20, 2015

By Robert Lech, Superintendent  
Jamestown School District

**RE: SB2210 – REA**

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Robert Lech and I serve as the superintendent of the Jamestown School District. And I would like to speak in support of Senate Bill 2210.

REAs continue to serve a critical role in K-12 education in North Dakota. REAs foster collaboration amongst school districts, cultivate innovative practices, leverage resources to provide necessary and timely trainings, and grow resources to service the varying needs of all school districts. REAs have already provided much in their short existence and it is exciting to consider the vast potential that exists for expansion.

I believe that I can offer a unique perspective regarding school districts and REAs. I have served as a school superintendent since the inception of what are now called Regional Education Associations (REAs) and have worked within three unique REAs (NCEC, MREC, and SEEC). I have experience with how size, geography, needs, and services all play integral roles in the scope and effectiveness of each REA.

During the initial approval and development stage of REAs in 2003 and 2005, it was critical to attach all aspects of the operations of REAs with school districts and their respective boards of education. Since then, though, many factors have influenced REAs and SB2210 would allow for REAs to move beyond the infancy stage and become more efficient in providing opportunities for students and school districts in ND.

The present organization of working through a school district is the right fit for some REAs at their present stage of development, but it is a hindrance for others. REAs have a vast potential to assist students and school districts, but until there is a greater ability to address their own financial and staffing needs, there will be a cap on how quickly and effectively they are able to grow as organizations.

SB2210 continues that connection to school districts and boards of education, but the powers outlined in section 15.1-09.2-04 would provide REAs with the ability for a much greater level of efficiency than in the present structure. For example, in the SEEC, of which my school district is a member, we manage 20 different grant funds made up of federal, state, and private funding utilizing 3 different fiscal agents. This means that staff managing these funds must become familiar and coordinate with three different systems to manage these initiatives effectively.

SB2210 does not mandate that REAs coordinate their own finances, employ staff, etc. It simply gives those REAs that have developed the appropriate capacity the ability to do so. I believe that it adequately promotes growth by respecting the varying needs of all REAs.

Mr. Chairman and committee members, that concludes my testimony and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.





#5 1/20  
**Missouri River Educational Cooperative**

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Mandan, ND 58554

Phone: 701-751-4041

Fax: 701-751-4043

Website: <http://mrecnd.org/>

January 20, 2015

Members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Lyle Krueger, Executive Director of the Missouri River Educational Cooperative (MREC), the Regional Education Association (REA) based out of Mandan, ND. I am writing in support of SB2210. The MREC is the second largest REA in the state providing service opportunities for 38 member public school districts and seven cooperating partners including two private schools and five institutions of higher learning. As an employee of the MREC for the past six years in various capacities, I have had the opportunity to learn the benefits we provide to member districts in multiple programs through assorted funding opportunities, including state foundation aid payments, local, state, and federal grants, as well as donations from local and state business entities. Unfortunately within the current structure utilized by the MREC in which our fiscal agent is also our tax exempt provider, we are sometimes limited in the funding options we have available to us such as grants we can apply for and donations in which business entities are willing to provide. SB2210 provides REAs with a legal designation that will alleviate such disparities.

Since the MRECs inception in 2006, it has had a strong working relationship with Bismarck Public Schools (BPS) as its fiscal agent. SB2210 allows the MREC to continue to utilize their current fiscal arrangement with BPS if desired or allows us the ability to become our own fiscal agent if the REA governing board and Bismarck Public Schools feel it is in the best interest of both entities. Such flexibility will permit our organization the time needed to better prepare for future growth allowing us to continue to assist member districts in meeting the educational needs of North Dakota students.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or further discussion at [lyle.krueger@mrecnd.org](mailto:lyle.krueger@mrecnd.org) or 701-751-4041 ext 105.

Sincerely,

Lyle P. Krueger  
Executive Director  
Missouri River Educational Cooperative

Encl.

#5



## UNDERWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 8

123 SUMMIT STREET • PO BOX 100

UNDERWOOD, ND 58576-0100

TELEPHONE (701)442-3201 • FAX (701)442-3704

<http://www.underwood.k12.nd.us>



### Administration

Brandt Dick, Superintendent  
Lee Weisgarber, PK-12 Principal  
Angela Riehl, Business Manager

### School Board

Jim LeRoy, President  
Brad Landenberger, Vice President

### Directors:

Taryn Kjelstrup  
Chad Weisenberger  
Brent Charging

January 16, 2015

Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I am writing in support of SB2210. I have been an active member of the Missouri River Educational Cooperative (MREC) by serving on the Governing Board, and these past two years as Lead Administrator. I feel that the MREC is an invaluable asset to the school district I serve, providing many beneficial services to our staff and students. I feel SB2210 would provide clarity as to what Regional Educational Units are defined by in our state, and would allow them to continue to grow.

I had the privilege of attending a National Educational Association Conference in December of 2013. It really showed the opportunities that the REA's in our state have to continue to grow and provide more services to local districts. We rely on the MREC to provide much of the Professional Development as we transition to the new ND State Standards, and AdvancEd school improvement model. We plan on continuing to utilize services offered by the MREC, and feel this bill would allow our state REA's opportunity to grow and help districts meet the educational needs of our students. I would be available for any questions or clarification at [brandt.dick@underwoodschool.org](mailto:brandt.dick@underwoodschool.org).

Sincerely,

Brandt J. Dick  
Superintendent, Underwood School District



**Ashley Public School**

703 W Main St  
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Web Site: [www.ashley.k12.nd.us](http://www.ashley.k12.nd.us)

Brad Webster  
Superintendent/Athletic Director

Jason Schmidt  
Elementary/Secondary Principal

January 16, 2015

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee:

I am writing in support of SB2210 as it will provide Regional Education Associations (REAs) such as the Missouri River Educational Cooperative (MREC), the opportunities to better receive multiple funding sources to assist school staff and students now and in the future.

We feel quite fortunate with the opportunities the MREC has provided to our district. The MREC has assisted us with providing our students and staff with educational opportunities. The REA has enabled the members to collaborate as a group; we are able to use resources from the member partners. This enables districts to utilize resources and collaborate with other districts, which prevents everyone from trying to reinvent the wheel. The networking is invaluable to the school district.

Our school district has participated in numerous services offered by the MREC. The following services are just a few of the activities we have used. Inservices relating to new evaluation tools for staff, Common Core Standards, PLC education enabling our staff more professional efficiency. Our school has also enlisted help with our ELL students, understanding the NWEA and State testing results, assisting staff to determine academic progress and growth measurement. The REA has paved the way to increased availability of dual credit courses for our students.

The MREC has provided multiple educational opportunities for our staff and students not possible for our school district to provide due to lack of available professionals in our area and lack of resources. The MREC provides educational opportunities in a fiscally responsible manner.

The Ashley School District will continue to participate in services provided to member schools and support the continuation of the REA in our area. Students are the priority for the group. There is genuine concern for all of the students in North Dakota.

Sincerely,

Lucy Meidinger  
President Ashley Public School District Board  
President MREC Board



#56  
1/20/15  
SB 2210



# MREC

Missouri River  
Educational Cooperative  
[mrecnd.org](http://mrecnd.org)

## *Our Mission*

The Missouri River Educational Cooperative (MREC) seeks to provide the best educational opportunities to its member students, delivered in the most economical fashion.





## MREC At a Glance:

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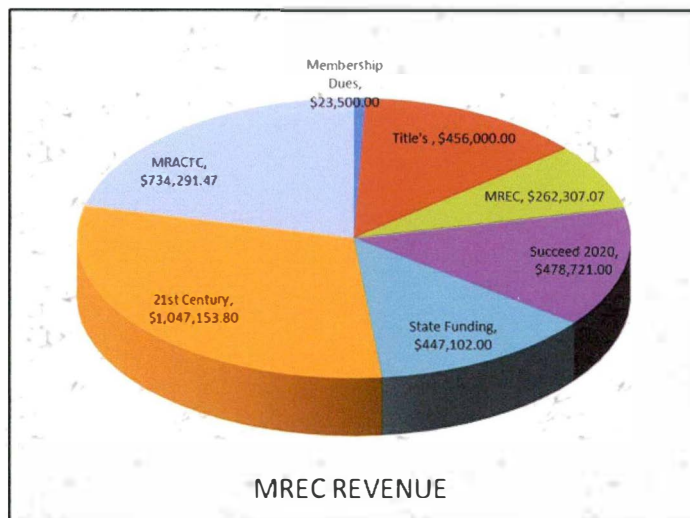
- One of eight Regional Education Associations (REAs) in the state serving approximately 20% of the students and teachers in the state.
- Our membership includes 38 Public School Districts, and 10 Partners including 7 Colleges/Universities, 2 Private Schools, and the Youth Correctional Center.
- Provide a multitude of services to our schools with programs in Professional Development, School Improvement, Curriculum Enrichment, Data Analysis, and Technology (More information on some of our major programs can be found in this brochure).
- Manage several grant and state funded programs, including: 21st Century After School Program, English Language Learners, Title III, Succeed 2020, Nutrition & Wellness, and the Missouri River Area Career and Technical Center (MRCTC)
- Have a governing board consisting of seven school board members and six administrators.
- Utilize an Administrator Cabinet that serves as a “think tank” of potential activities to better serve our member schools and in an advisory capacity to the governing board.
- Publish a weekly bulletin August through June via email and all MREC information can be found on our website: <http://mrecnd.org>
- MREC office is located at 3001 Memorial Hwy, Suite B, Mandan ND

## • Letter from the Director •

Dear Friends of the MREC

We hope you enjoy the second edition of the MREC brochure and find it informative. It is our intention to give the reader some basic information regarding the MREC, our structure and organization, as well as highlight some of our major services and programs as we support our member districts and cooperating partners in the mission of education. We invite the reader to visit our website to find more information and the latest updates regarding the MREC at <http://mrecnd.org>.

Nine years ago the MREC began with a group of 28 school districts, one private school, and three colleges/universities unsure of how, or even if, a group of schools working together would function. Our membership has grown since that time to include 38 school districts, two private schools and seven colleges/universities working together to provide quality educational opportunities for students and teachers. Our organization has gone from basic trust issues among small and large school districts and limited funding sources, therefore limiting programming, to a trusting and sharing climate among the schools with increased services through partnerships and grants.



The MREC is constantly searching to improve its structures in an effort to provide services its members need to carry out their mission. Over the past few years the MREC has began transitioning from offering a wide variety of 'activities' for our member schools, to a more focused collection of 'programs and services' in the areas of professional development, data analysis, school improvement, curriculum enrichment, and technology support.

On behalf of the MREC staff and governing board, I would like to thank our administrators, teachers, school board members, legislators, partners, and fellow REAs for all the support you have shown the MREC and look forward to working with you in our future together.

Sincerely,

Lyle P Krueger, MREC Executive Director

[lyle.krueger@mrecnd.org](mailto:lyle.krueger@mrecnd.org)





## • Our Members •

### • Governing Board •

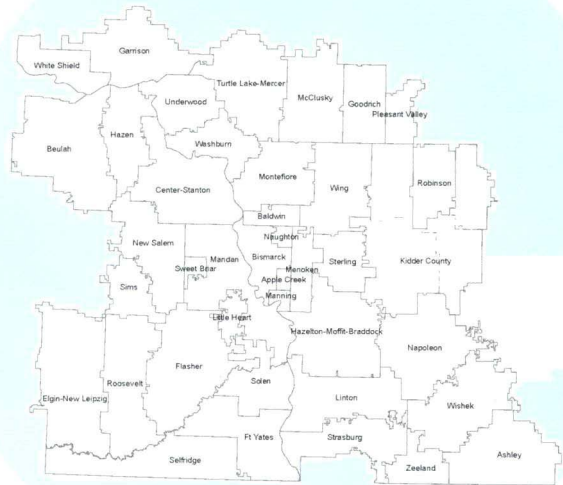
| MREC Section      | School Board Representative | Administration Representative |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Graded Elementary | Erich Kroh                  | Amanda Zabel                  |
| Large School      | Matt Sagsveen               | Mike Bitz                     |
| NW Section        | Jennifer Steffan            | Curt Pierce                   |
| NE Section        | Carl Young                  | Brandt Dick                   |
| SW Section        | Janelle Fredericks          | Justin Fryer                  |
| SE Section        | Lucy Meidinger              | Al Bjornson                   |
| At Large          | Cindy Schmidt               |                               |

### • Member Schools •

|                           |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Apple Creek               | Menoken             |
| Ashley                    | Montefiore (Wilton) |
| Beulah                    | Napoleon            |
| Bismarck                  | Naughton            |
| Carson                    | New Salem           |
| Center-Stanton            | Robinson            |
| Elgin-New Leipzig         | Roosevelt (Carson)  |
| Flasher                   | Selfridge           |
| Ft. Yates / Standing Rock | Solen-Cannon Ball   |
| Garrison                  | Sterling            |
| Goodrich                  | Strasburg           |
| Hazelton-Moffit-Braddock  | Sweet Briar         |
| Hazen                     | Turtle Lake-Mercer  |
| Kidder County             | Underwood           |
| Linton                    | Washburn            |
| Little Heart              | Wing                |
| Mandan                    | White Shield        |
| Manning                   | Wishek              |
| McClusky                  | Zeeland             |

### • Administrator Cabinet

John Jankowski - Napoleon  
Dale Eckstrom - Morton County Supt.  
Judy Zins - Flasher  
Tamera Uselman - Bismarck  
Brandt Dick - Underwood  
Todd Kayler - Beulah



### • Cooperating Partners •

Bismarck State College  
Dickinson State University  
Light of Christ Schools  
ND Youth Correctional Center  
Rasmussen College  
Sitting Bull College  
Shiloh Christian School  
United Tribes Technical College  
University of Mary  
University of North Dakota

## • Succeed 2020 •

During the winter of 2011, the launch of the Succeed 2020 initiative was announced. This ambitious endeavor seeks to improve all North Dakota students' preparation for college and careers by the year 2020. Succeed 2020 builds on prior state investments in education, the work of the North Dakota Commission on Education Improvement, and legislative actions from the most recent biennial sessions, which have strengthened staffing and responsibilities for the eight REAs throughout the State of North Dakota.

The Succeed 2020 project began as a competitive grant proposal process offered only to REAs within the State. As a result of the planning and proposal process, four grant applications were awarded, including the MREC, in July 2012. During this time the MREC coordinated with member school districts and various other local and regional stakeholders to form a consolidated leadership team. Along with our member districts, other stakeholders included but were not limited to: Standing Rock Department of Education, Bismarck State College, University of Mary, Sitting Bull College, United Tribes Technical College, Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce, ND Dept. of Public Instruction, Bank of North Dakota, ND Dept. of Career and Technical Education, and EduTech. As of 2014, all eight ND REAs receive Succeed 2020 funding.

As a result of the coordinated planning efforts for Succeed 2020, the MREC has developed and provided assistance to member schools, as well as collaborated with partners in higher education and industry through four separate program initiatives including:

- Professional Development / Curriculum

- STEM and CTE Prep

- Rigorous Academics

- Career Advising

In the 2013-2014 school year, 30 school districts participated in Succeed 2020 professional development opportunities; 191 teachers were involved in these trainings; 740 students were directly impacted by Succeed 2020 programs through career symposiums, STEM pedagogy, and the First Tech Challenge.

You will find more information regarding each MREC Succeed 2020 program in the following pages

# SUCCEED2020▶

## ND Education and Workforce Initiative

# • Professional Development •

## Mission

The mission of the MREC Professional Development Program is to provide high-quality professional development for teachers and administrators to improve student achievement. Professional learning offerings are aligned with the needs and priorities of the member schools/districts of the MREC.

The MREC provides professional development on teaching and learning strategies to maximize opportunities for student achievement, using data, current research in best practices, and engaging and easy to access resources. The MREC assists schools with implementation by providing a conceptual framework, a general overview of learning goals/targets, and sharing resources/templates that can be used in the classroom in areas including, but not limited to, the major shifts in the content areas of English Language Arts and Math, the mathematical practices, and the K-12 literacy standards.

The MREC professional development team is dedicated to providing and building strong leadership as well as supporting educators and administrators in applying successful principles and practices into their classrooms and schools.

Furthermore, the MREC's professional development team is equipped to provide:

- An individualized, data-driven, school approach – meeting schools at their current state of implementation and supporting their unique needs
- Resources to help schools implement standards and the Smarter Balanced assessment
- Curriculum support, including assistance with aligning curriculum to standards
- Continued PD and support to help guide schools throughout the course of the school year
- Support in implementing interdisciplinary/cross-curricular practices and differentiated instruction
- Instructional strategies to promote/encourage student engagement
- Instructional support/coaching
- Other topics as requested (when possible)



Contact: Jennifer Grandalen • Professional Development Coordinator • [jennifer.grandalen@mrecnd.org](mailto:jennifer.grandalen@mrecnd.org)

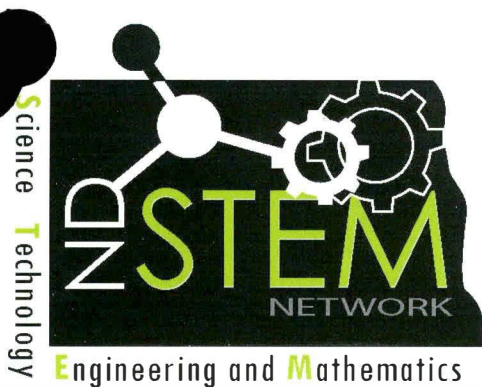
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Kelly Larson • PD/Curriculum Specialist • [kelly.larson@mrecnd.org](mailto:kelly.larson@mrecnd.org)

Melissa Mortvedt • Math Specialist • [melissa.mortvedt@mrecnd.org](mailto:melissa.mortvedt@mrecnd.org)



## • STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering and Math •



We live in an ever changing and evolving world, where the rate of human, social, economic, technological and cultural change continues to increase. The torrential pace of advances in technology are undeniable and unavoidable. Just as nature adapts to the surrounding environment, we must similarly empower our communities and schools to respond to changing global, technological, and economic conditions. The way we educate our children and the benchmarks by which our students progress throughout their academic career require us to reevaluate and update the minimum standard for achievement

to align with global workforce demands and advances in a technology based economy.

It is essential to update education standards and realign a system that fosters preparedness for careers, occupations, and industries that did not exist twenty or even ten years ago.

It is for these reasons that the MREC STEM program provides opportunities for teachers and students to create critical thinkers, increase science literacy, and enable the next generation of innovators. The MREC STEM program provides training to teachers so that the teachers can integrate STEM Strategies into their already existing curriculum. Some of the strategies that are provided include:

- 1. Pearson Project STEM
- 2. Goldenrod Research Robotics and Hydraulics
- 3. FIRST Tech Challenge Robotics Program
- 4. PAGE STEM Gender Equity Program
- 5. STEM Education Professional Development Training Sessions

It is important to understand that we need to provide teachers significantly more professional development in STEM teaching practices. The North Dakota State Standards in mathematics and literacy have some standards in common with the Next Generation of Science Standards; the standards in common develop problem solving, higher order thinking, identifying problems and solutions, and defending conclusions. STEM teaching practices, with their emphasis on hands-on, project-based learning (instruction) that solving higher order thinking skills, can address these standards across the curriculum.

Take time to consider what the MREC has to offer; reduce teacher workloads through the encouragement of teacher collaboration from multiple core disciplines to enhance student understanding and relevance of key subject matter.





## • NROC, HippoCampus & EdReady •



Our NROC Project membership provides you and your students unlimited access to all courses in the NROC Project library, including Algebra 1 – An Open Course. This course is designed to be used with first-time algebra students at a broad range of ability levels, from remedial to advanced. The content is correlated to all US state algebra frameworks and our local North Dakota State Standards. This course can be used as a stand-alone curriculum or as a supplement to any algebra textbook.



EdReady is a math readiness system to help students avoid the time and cost of remedial courses. Depending on how your institution will configure EdReady, your students may use EdReady to:

- Determine their readiness to take college-level math courses.
- Follow a personalized study path to master specific concepts in math.
- Prepare for specific standardized exams, such as the ACT®, SAT®, Accuplacer®, or Compass®.
- Identify programs, colleges, or universities that are appropriate for their skills and interests.
- Help manage and achieve academic and employment goals.



HippoCampus is an ever-expanding library of over 5,000 digital learning objects from 20 collections across many subject areas. Objects include presentations, simulations, worked examples, test prep, activities, and other multimedia instructional formats, all browsable by subject or collection. To view a webinar, check out <http://www.nrocnetwork.org/using-your-member-branded-hippocampus-site-classroom>

While there is a public HippoCampus site available to everyone, we have an MREC member-branded HippoCampus site (<http://www.hippocampus.org/HippoCampus/?user=myMREC>) that provides you with these key benefits:

- Expanded Terms of Use allow for institutional use.
- Seamless integration into your favorite applications with direct links to objects. When students click on the link, the object will launch in a clean window with no distractions.
- Most of the objects within HippoCampus have been correlated to the North Dakota State Standards
- Advertising-free access.



Contact: Melissa Mortvedt • Math Specialist • [melissa.mortvedt@mrecnd.org](mailto:melissa.mortvedt@mrecnd.org)

## • College and Career Readiness •

### Mission

The mission of the MREC College and Career Readiness Program is to enhance college and career counseling and planning at the middle school and high school levels to help students be better prepared for college and the workforce (increase college and career readiness).

### Services Provided

The MREC College and Career Readiness Program provides professional development, training, support, and other services on college and career readiness topics to counselors, administrators, and teachers through collaboration and direct support for schools and their students. The college and career coordinator will share resources and ideas and provide support in the implementation of school plans.



### What can the MREC College and Career Readiness Program do for your school? *College/Career Fair and*

- *Other Career Events*...various events scheduled each year
- *Job Shadowing*...assistance with contacts and starting job shadow programs
- *College and Career Days*...assistance with organizing a college/career day at your school
- *College/Career Speakers*... assistance in finding college/career speaker(s) for your school
- *College and Career Readiness Resources and Support*...providing resources, training, professional development, and/or support related to college and career readiness for your school (students and staff) including:
  - Roads to Success, RUReadyND, and the Career Outlook
  - ACT, WorkKeys, and other testing
  - North Dakota Academic & CTE Scholarships
  - Resumes, Cover Letters, and Mock Interviews
  - Career Clusters, Interest Inventories, Plans of Study, and Student Portfolios
  - Career Classes and Individual Consultative Sessions
  - School Career Development Plan
  - Workshops/seminars/courses, including some continuing education opportunities
  - Other school requests (when possible)

### Resources

For college and career resources, please check out the career resources link on the MREC website.



Contact: Jennifer Grandalen • MREC College & Career Resource Coordinator • [jennifer.grandalen@mrecnd.org](mailto:jennifer.grandalen@mrecnd.org)



## • MRACTC •

The MRACTC is a Virtual Career and Technical Center established in 2008 as a partnership between the MREC and Bismarck Public Schools. The MRACTC delivers career and technical courses to students utilizing interactive television and online virtual classroom environments. Our goal is to provide students with opportunities to enroll in Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses in specific career clusters in order to complete a program of study in these career pathways and to ensure that all of our students have the same educational opportunity regardless of the size or location of the school.

Courses are available in Agriculture, Aviation, Electronics, STEM, Energy Tech, Family & Consumer Science, Information Technology, Marketing, and Medical-Related Careers. The MRACTC also provides support to enhance the Welding Programs operating in MRACTC schools. Several of these courses are offered for dual credit.

Courses taught online require students to be self-motivated and responsible to access their course online on a daily basis. Hands-on components, career exploration activities, and field trips are included in the design of these courses. All staff members are Bismarck Public School certified teachers.

These courses are not intended to compete with local school CTE programs, but rather to enhance the curriculum offerings in the local school district by providing opportunities not otherwise available to them. The MRACTC provides financial support for member schools to provide an Online Coordinator/Facilitator to help promote student success in online classes.

Recent studies show that CTE concentrators outperform other students in reading and math achievement as well as high school graduation rates.

Enrollment has grown each year, from 33 students in 2008 to over 400 in the 2014/15 school year. Of these approximately 325 are taking courses online and 75 via interactive television in cooperation with the Great Western Network.



# MRACTC

Missouri River Area Career & Technical Center

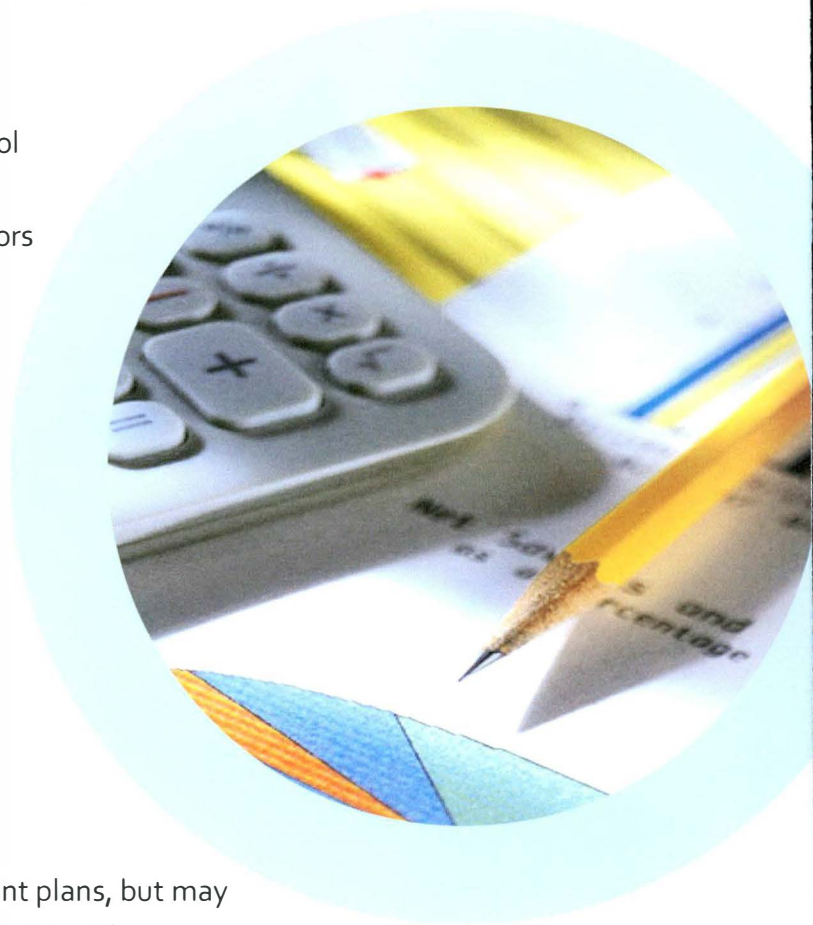


Contact: Doug Vannurden • Assistant CTE Director • [doug.vannurden@mrecnd.org](mailto:doug.vannurden@mrecnd.org)

## • Data & Assessment Services •

### **Data Report Access & Interpretation**

The MREC offers professional development for school staff in the access and interpretation of various data reports. More specifically, teachers and administrators can learn more about teacher data reports and aggregated school level data reports within their district. Trainings are available for various assessments including the North Dakota State Assessment, Northwest Evaluation Association MAP testing reports, and the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) reports. Additional trainings may be developed for other data reporting systems as requested.



### **Trend Analysis for School Improvement Teams**

School Improvement Teams often seek to target academic areas to include in their school improvement plans, but may be uncertain how to examine their assessment data to identify weaknesses. The MREC is able to assist with trend analyses which include the examination of student assessment data over a timespan of multiple years, when data is available.

### **Program Evaluation**

The MREC collects various types of survey data to determine the effectiveness of programs and professional development offered within our organization. As well, we are able to assist schools with this same type of evaluation, to help teachers and administrators make informed decisions about their school programs.

### **Other Data Analyses**

Other data analyses are available upon request.



Contact: Dr. Maggie Brockel • Data & Assessment Coordinator • [maggie.brockel@mrecnd.org](mailto:maggie.brockel@mrecnd.org)



## • Extended School Program •

**Program Overview:** The Missouri River Educational Cooperative Extended School Program (MREC/ESP) provides a safe and caring environment for children to further assist in their educational growth and success before and after school, as well as during the summer. The MREC/ESP before school, after school, and summer programs strive to increase students' skills in reading, mathematics, and science. Additionally, the MREC/ESP provides social and recreational opportunities to help children acclimate to social and educational environments.



**21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC)/Extended School Program:** This program is funded through a National 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Grant. Services have been established for academic enrichment and student improvement for students in grades K-5.



**Before School Program:** The MREC/ESP before school program was developed to assist students with homework that is not completed during the regular school day or to assist students to make up homework due to a student absence from school.

**After School Program:** The MREC/ESP after school program hours of operation begin after school is dismissed until 5:30p.m., Monday-Friday, any day school is in session during the regular school year. Students enrolled in the MREC/ESP program will participate in 65% academic learning each day. Activities include reading/science/math enrichment, additional tutoring, help with homework, and indoor/outdoor recreation. A nutritious snack is served each day.

**Summer School Program:** The MREC/ESP summer program helps students remember information from the regular school year over the vacation summer months. Fun, hands-on educational activities will be provided so students can enjoy the summer while learning! The summer program hours of operation are from 8:00a.m. to 5:30p.m., Monday-Friday, at our Mandan sites. Bismarck sites begin after BPS summer programming ends (CampEd) at 12:00noon and go until 5:30p.m.

### Locations:

- Bismarck Sites: Myhre, Dorothy Moses, Saxvik, Will-Moore
- Mandan Sites: Custer, Fort Lincoln, Mary Stark
- Cannon Ball and Theodore Jamerson

### MREC/Extended School Program

This program is a fee-based, non-grant funded program. Program operations are the same as the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. The program serves students in grades K-8.

### Locations:

- Lincoln Elementary School (7:00a.m. before school until 6:00p.m. after school. Summer programming hours will follow Bismarck Public School's schedule)
- Mandan Middle School (after school until 5:30p.m.)

Contact: Alicia Bohl • Program Director • [alicia.bohl@mrecnd.org](mailto:alicia.bohl@mrecnd.org)

Shelby Nottestad • Assistant Program Director • [shelby.nottestad@mrecnd.org](mailto:shelby.nottestad@mrecnd.org)



## • North Dakota Reading Corps •

North Dakota Reading Corps (NDRC) is a regional initiative that combines the people power of AmeriCorps with the science of how children learn to read. The goal is to help every child become a successful reader by the end of 3rd grade.



According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as "The Nation's Report Card", only 34% of fourth graders read at a "proficient" level in 2011. Thus, two-thirds of students did not finish third grade with these essential reading skills. In 2013, the NAEP data indicated that North Dakota was one of only three states that showed a statistically significant loss in the average reading score for fourth grade students; ranking 30th nationwide in fourth grade reading proficiency. Research shows that students not reading proficiently by grade three are four times more likely than proficient readers to drop out of high school.

AmeriCorps members are trained for NDRC on the literacy interventions, assessments, and progress monitoring tools used. NDRC is facilitated and operated through a joint partnership between the South East Education Cooperative (Fargo REA) and the MREC supported by the North Dakota State Commission on Community and National Service, The United Way of Cass Clay, Missouri Slope United Way, Fargo, West Fargo, Jamestown, Bismarck, Mandan, and Hazen school districts.

North Dakota Reading Corps members work one-on-one with eligible kindergarten through 3rd grade students who score in the 49th – 35th percentile for reading. Reading Corps members work with each child 20 minutes a day, five days a week with all current and former Reading Corps students being benchmarked each quarter. Each AmeriCorps volunteer member is paired with an on-site coach, a reading or student strategy specialist that provides daily support to the member, at the school in which they serve. North Dakota Reading Corps is a replicated program of the Minnesota Reading Corps that has an 84% success rate for students reading at or above grade level; the Minnesota Reading Corps program is funded by state allocations. In 2011-2012, North Dakota Reading Corps served 314 students, demonstrating an overall success rate of 89%. In 2012-13, 89% or 374 out of 421 students who participated in the program (for more than 4 consecutive weeks) achieved grade level reading proficiency, 98% or 412 out of 421 students participating in the literacy intervention program for more than four consecutive weeks demonstrated improved progress monitoring trends.



Contact Alicia Bohl • Program Director • [alicia.bohl@mrecnd.org](mailto:alicia.bohl@mrecnd.org)

Kayla Vandal • Master Coach • [kayla.vandal@mrecnd.org](mailto:kayla.vandal@mrecnd.org)



## • English Language Learners - Title III Program •

The MREC serves over 20,000 students from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Within member schools, there are five school districts that exclusively serve American Indian students located on the Standing Rock Reservation and the Fort Berthold Reservation. In addition, Native American students comprise as much as 25% of students in many of the schools that border the reservations. American Indian English Language Learners (ELLs) comprise the majority of identified ELL students in ND, followed by native Spanish speakers and a myriad of native languages spoken by new immigrant and political refugee children. New ELL students are arriving in the MREC's schools every year and the MREC is dedicated to helping its schools meet the needs of its ELL population.

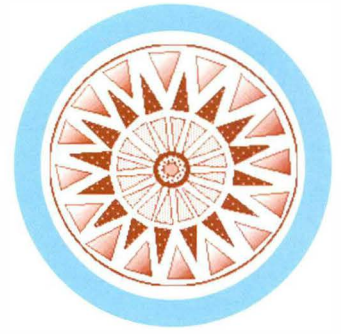
The MREC provides Title III support for its 38 schools, 2 private schools and 7 colleges/universities in a variety of ways such as:

- Professional development
- Instructional coaching in sheltered content methods that are linguistically and academically appropriate
- Curriculum development/alignment
- Formative and summative assessment
- English language proficiency assessment tools
- Creation of individualized language plans



Contact : Dr. Joan Aus • Director Title III / ELL Instructional Coach • [joan.aus@mrecnd.org](mailto:joan.aus@mrecnd.org)

## • Project Circle & Primary Circle •



The MREC received two grants that are focused on improving academic achievement for Native American English Language Learners. The primary goal of the CIRCLE Project, as implemented by the MREC, is to increase post-secondary academic success of Native American English Learners (ELs) in grades K-12 in targeted schools districts, such as: Cannon Ball & Solen, Standing Rock, White Shield, and Selfridge.

The primary elements of the project are:

- 1) Student focus, which will include activities to support student learning and development of career goals
- 2) Teacher focus, which will include professional development, teacher coaching as well as curriculum development
- 3) Parent and community focus, which includes collaboration with parent advisory groups, and cultural activities to develop a stronger connection between the schools and community
- 4) System focus, which will include data collection and tracking activities as well as instructional materials and activities provided by the MREC
  - Professional development activities will specifically address four areas:
  - English language proficiency with an emphasis on academic writing and vocabulary instruction.
  - Instructional strategies that are culturally relevant, meaningful and appropriate for Native American ELs.
  - Data-based decision-making for educators (staff will be trained on the use of data and online portfolios).
  - Native language and culture (integration of the languages and cultures of the students enrolled in the target schools will be provided).



Contact:

Dr. Joan Aus • Director/Instructional Coach Primary/Project Circle • joan.aus@mrecnd.org

Dr. Kathy Froelich • Cultural Coordinator Primary/Project Circle • kathy.froelich@mrecnd.org

Shawna Marion • ELL Instructional Coach Primary Circle • shawna.marion@mrecnd.org

Vanessa Peach • Data/Administrative Assistant & Math Instructional Coach Primary/Project Circle •  
vanessa.peach@mrecnd.org



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academic excellence.



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#6  
1/20

**Testimony on SB 2210**  
**Presented to the Senate Education Committee**  
**By Broc Lietz, Business Manager, Fargo Public Schools**

Chairman Flakoll and members of the Senate Education Committee, my name is Broc Lietz. I am the Business Manager for the Fargo Public School district and my testimony is in support of SB 2210.

Fargo Public Schools recognizes the value that Regional Education Associations provide to the State of North Dakota. Specifically, we are a member of the Southeast Education Cooperative, known to us as SEEC. Additionally, Fargo Public Schools has served as the fiscal agent for SEEC for many years and that relationship has done very well.

SB 2210 intends to further define the Regional Education Associations. More specifically, the bill provides for a legal status of the REA's and spells out detailed powers and services and provides for broader flexibility in the overall operation of the REA's.

We are very supportive of the direction SB 2210 provides for all Regional Education Associations and encourage a **DO PASS** recommendation out of committee.

11

March 9, 2015

House Education Committee

RE: SB 2210

#1  
SB 2210  
3/9/15

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, for the record I'm Senator Gary Lee, District 22 in Cass County. I'm here as a sponsor of Senate Bill 2210.

In 2005 as a member of the Senate Education Committee, I supported the investment in Regional Education Associations (REA) to establish a systematic service delivery model of education services to support local school districts throughout North Dakota. Over the last 10 years we've seen these services quickly expand to include state-wide collaboration for professional development, after-school programs, on-line dual credit classes, and healthy schools programs to name just a few.

With growth comes challenge, Senate Bill 2210 addresses one of these challenges.

In 2005 and currently, REAs use a school district as their fiscal agent, which includes the use of both the schools tax exempt number and bank accounts. Early on this worked well, but now some REAs have up to 20 different grant funds, bill for services, such as their after-school programs and have between 10-50 full and/or part-time employees.

I believe it's time through Senate Bill 2210 to allow these REAs, as needed to establish their own entity which would include their own tax ID number.

I ask for your support for Senate Bill 2210.

Senator Gary A. Lee  
District 22

# PREPARING STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS

## Executive Summary: History of JPAs, REAs, and Succeed 2020

Through REA programming North Dakota students are better prepared for college and careers in our workforce.

Regional education associations (REA) unite school districts to improve their educational programs and services through cooperation and pooling of resources, working in collaboration with Job Service, Commerce, local businesses, state and local agencies, among other organizations. Currently the Hess Corporation and the state of North Dakota act as supporting partners. As of March 2013, there are eight REAs serving 96 percent of all public schools districts and 99.5 percent of all students in the state.

REAs support initiatives, programs, and activities that serve students and education professionals with fiscal support from local funding, memberships of school districts within the designated regions, state funding, and, at times, grants. Oversight of each REA is a governing board comprised of member district representation, as well as an annual report of student and professional activities and/or services to the superintendent of public instruction.

State funding to REAs increased over the years to reflect not only an increasing number of students in the state, but also the growing role, influence, and expectations that school districts have of REAs. The 2011 Legislative Assembly streamlined a long list of administrative functions and student services that REAs were required to share with other REAs to specifically focus on (1) professional development, (2) technology and technology support, (3) school improvement, (4) student achievement data collection and analysis, and (5) curriculum enrichment.

### REAS HAVE GROWN OVER TIME:

REAs have received state funding through several legislative sessions. Major legislative actions include:

- Funding of JPAs was initiated by the 2003-05 North Dakota legislature.
- The 2005-07 North Dakota legislature reconfigured JPAs to REAs. The REAs received \$759,886 in state funding during 2005 and 2006.
- In 2009 HB 1400 provided to each of eight REAs \$25,000 and \$2.6 million distributed through the education formula.
- The 2011 legislative session provided partial funding in each REA for a 12 month coordinator (currently called director) position.

### History of Legislative Funding for Regional Education Associations

|                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 2003-05 Appropriation . . . . . | \$250,000 total     |
| 2005-07 Appropriation . . . . . | \$2 million total   |
| 2005-07 Appropriation . . . . . | \$2 million total   |
| 2007-09 Appropriation . . . . . | \$3 million total   |
| 2009-11 Appropriation . . . . . | \$2.8 million total |
| 2011-13 Appropriation . . . . . | \$3.8 million total |
| 2013-15 Appropriation . . . . . | \$4.3 million total |

Testimony for Public Hearing

Lucas G. Schaefer  
500 University Ave W  
Minot ND 58707

S.B. No. 2210 (Committee) - An Act Relating to Regional Education Associations

Good Morning Mr. Chairman and Education Committee Members. My name is Luke Schaefer and I am the Director of Mid-Dakota Education Cooperative, one of the eight Regional Education Associations or REA's in North Dakota. Senate Bill 2210 will define an REA's legal status as a body corporate. I am testifying in support of this bill, and this testimony represents the shared support of the other REA directors, as well.

REA's were originally formed as Joint Powers Agreements and have been operating with funding from the legislature since 2003, but reconfigured as Regional Education Associations in 2005. Agencies like the REA's in ND have existed since 1967 in the United States. The state of Wisconsin made a similar distinction with their education associations 7 years after their inception (1983). This is a natural progression to consider.

Many REA's currently utilize local school districts as fiscal agents, operating under its policies and human resources procedures, as well as the fiscal agent's Employee ID Number. There are three points I would like to highlight regarding this. First, the definition provided in this bill would provide REA's the ability to better serve schools through shared services such as business managers, or difficult to fill positions, as well as consultants. Second, this legal status would shift the burden and liability the fiscal agent currently assumes to the Governing Board of the REA. Third, this distinction between the fiscal agent and the REA would provide opportunities for additional funding and sustainability for both entities as the current shared Employee ID Number limits funding opportunities such as grants and donations from local, state, and national sources.

For REA's that have grown in budget and staff size, local school boards and REA boards have requested a streamlined process for accounting and human resources. The REA Directors have recognized that a clear definition would provide the eight REA's to work more collaboratively with each other through the same shared services model mentioned above.

The Governor's office and others, including a steering committee of private and public sector representatives saw the potential in REA's with the development of Succeed 2020, a private grant from the Hess Corporation. Regional Education Associations are beginning the process of becoming Accredited Bodies through the same Accrediting Body our schools use, AdvancEd. The depth and breadth of support that REA's are providing schools has expanded greatly. The REA's are seeking a proactive approach to better define the entities known as Regional Education Associations. I believe this bill provides a clear definition. This definition would assist the REA's as they work to remove the geographic location of a student as a factor in the equity of education. As Regional Education Associations, we want to carry out the mission to Support and Strengthen Education in North Dakota. This bill would allow NDREA to move forward more efficiently and effectively to strengthen that mission.

Thank you for your valuable time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Luke Schaefer



# 3  
SB 2210  
3/9/15

**Testimony on SB 2210**  
**Presented to the House Education Committee**  
**By Broc Lietz, Business Manager, Fargo Public Schools**

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We are very supportive of the direction SB 2210 provides for all Regional Education Associations and encourage a **DO PASS** recommendation out of committee.