

North Dakota Higher Education Challenge Fund  
September 23, 2025, Committee Meeting Minutes

The North Dakota Higher Education Challenge Fund Committee met on Tuesday, September 23, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. CST., via a hybrid meeting option of face-to-face and Microsoft Teams. The meeting will originate in the Bismarck State College National Energy Center of Excellence conference room 335.

Committee Chair Maria Neset called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. CT.

1. **Roll Call**

**Committee Members present:**

Chair, Maria Neset  
Senator Randy Burckhard  
Senator Ronald Sorvaag  
Representative Bob Martinson  
Representative Karen Grindberg  
Mr. Kevin Black  
Mr. Rick Burgum  
Ms. Taya Spelhaug

**Institutions and Institution Foundation representatives:**

BSC: Ms. Kari Knudson  
DCB: Tina Webb  
DSU: Mr. Ty Orton, President Molander  
LRSC: President Simone, Ms. Erin Wood  
MaSU: Mr. Lon Jorgensen  
MiSU: Mr. Rick Hedberg, Ms. Kate Marshall  
NDSCS: Mr. Matthew Hallaway  
NDSU: Mr. John Glover, Ms. Jennifer Reinhold, Mr. Isaac Erickson  
UND: Ms. DeAnna Carlson Zink  
VCSU: Mr. Cory Anderson  
WSC: President Hirning, Mr. Hunter Berg

**North Dakota University System Office and Guests:**

Ms. Mindy Sturn  
Ms. Bethany Kadrmas  
Ms. Sharon Schwartzbauer

2. **Approval of Agenda**

The committee moved to approve the agenda, as presented.  
Approved by consensus.

3. **Approval of February 20, 2025, Meeting Minutes**

The committee moved to approve the minutes, as presented.

Approved by consensus.

4. **Approval of updated North Dakota Higher Education Challenge Fund Rules of Operation and Procedures**

Ms. Mindy Sturn stated that during the last legislative session, an amendment was made to subsection 1 of section 15-10-48.2 of the North Dakota Century Code. The North Dakota Higher Education Challenge Fund Rules of Operation and Procedures were updated on page 4 to reflect this amendment. The addition of academic scholarships was added as an additional use for the NDSU Agriculture, Research, and Extension.

5. **Challenge Grant Fund Balances-2025-27 Biennium**

Ms. Mindy Sturn provided an update on the Challenge Grant Fund balances allocated for the 2025-27 Biennium to each Institution, as well as the grand total allocated of \$24,760,000. There is a total of \$7,983,003 pending approval at today's meeting from the Fund applications submitted, which would leave \$16,776,997 remaining for the biennium if all applications were approved today.

**Regular Scope & Funding Application Approvals**

1. **BSC State Request: \$532,173**

- a) Summary of Applications-Informational only
- b) BSC Foundation Endowment for Scholarships-Application
- c) Document Support-BSC Foundation Endowment for Scholarships
- d) BSC Foundation Scholarships-Application
- e) Document Support-BSC Foundation Scholarships

Ms. Kari Knudson presented BSC's state request for fund applications.

Burgum moved, Black seconded, to approve BSC's state request fund applications, items b-e, as presented.

Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

2. **DSU State Request: \$680,200**

- a) Summary of Applications- Informational only
- b) College on the Hill Endowments-Application
- c) Cornerstone Traditions Scholarship-Application
- d) Document Support-All Fund Applications

Mr. Ty Orton presented DSU's state request for fund applications.

Martinson moved, Burgum seconded, to approve DSU's state request fund applications, items b-d, as presented.

Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

3. **MaSU State Request: \$581,186**

- a) Summary of Applications- Informational only
- b) Annual Scholarship for Academic Excellence Campaign-Application
- c) Document Support-Annual Scholarship for Academic Excellence Campaign
- d) MSU Endowment for Academic Excellence Campaign-Application
- e) Document Support-MSU Endowment for Academic Excellence Campaign

Mr. Lon Jorgenson presented MaSU's state request for fund applications.

Sorvaag moved, Spelhaug seconded, to approve MaSU's state request fund applications, items b-e, as presented.

Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, Black and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

4. **MiSU State Request: \$403,288**

- a) Summary of Applications- Informational only
- b) Classroom Enhancements-**SCOPE**
- c) Scholarship Endowment-1-Application
- d) Scholarship Endowment-2-Application
- e) Scholarship Endowment-3-Application
- f) Scholarship Endowment-4-Application
- g) Scholarship Endowment-5-Application
- h) Scholarship Endowment-6-Application
- i) Scholarship Endowment-7-Application
- j) Scholarship Endowment-8-Application
- k) Scholarship Endowment-9-Application
- l) Scholarship Endowment-10-Application
- m) Academic Scholarship Campaign-Application
- n) Document Support-All Fund Applications

Mr. Rick Hedberg presented MiSU's Scope application, Classroom Enhancements. Committee member Burgum asked for more details to be provided in Scope applications to clarify exact intent of funds. Mr. Hedberg acknowledged and explained he used language from the ND HE Challenge Grant Rules of Operation in the educational infrastructure section and indicated their plan would not be to renovate class space, but to provide equipment, technology, resources, and lab materials. Mr. Hedberg stated they will provide more details for future applications.

Martinson moved, Burckhard seconded to approve MiSU's scope application for Classroom Enhancements, as presented.

Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, Black, Burgum, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

Mr. Rick Hedberg then presented MiSU's state request for fund applications.

Burckhard moved, Spelhaug seconded to approve MiSU's state request fund applications, items c-n, as presented.

Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

5. **NDSCS State Request: \$321,600**

- a) Summary of Applications- Informational only
- b) Allied Dental Lab Restoration-**SCOPE**
- c) NDSCS Hoist Project-**SCOPE**
- d) NDSCS Hoist Project-Application
- e) Delores "Darcy" Ann Lipp Nursing Tribute Endowment-Application
- f) The Bradley A & Claudia L Ballweber Endowment-Application
- g) Kim J Nelson Excellence Endowment-Application
- h) Clayton S. Patterson Memorial Endowment-Application
- i) William Rothwell Center for Math & Science Endowment-Application
- j) Mark J. and Rhonda M. Kuhn Endowment-Application
- k) Endowment Scholarships-Application
- l) Gene Haas Scholarships-Application
- m) Roger & Donna Hentges Endowed Scholarships-Application
- n) Neal & Phyllis Folstad Endowment-Application
- o) Document Support-All Fund Applications

Mr. Matthew Hallaway presented NDSCS's Scope application, Allied Dental Lab Restoration.

Martinson moved, Burgum seconded to approve NDSCS's Allied Dental Lab Restoration Scope application, as presented.

Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

Mr. Matthew Hallaway presented NDSCS's Hoist project Scope application.

Martinson moved, Grindberg seconded to approve NDSCS's Hoist Project Scope application, as presented.

Grindberg, Martinson, Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

Mr. Matthew Hallaway presented NDSCS's state request fund applications.

Sorvaag motioned, Martinson seconded to approve NDSCS's state request fund applications, items d-o, as presented.

Martinson, Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

6. **NDSU State Request: \$1,687,870**

- a) Summary of Applications- Informational only
- b) Scholarship-11439-Application
- c) Scholarship-11463-Application
- d) Scholarship-11512-Application
- e) Scholarship-11521-Application
- f) Scholarship-11545-Application
- g) Scholarship-20432-Application
- h) Scholarship-20443-Application
- i) Scholarship-20478-Application
- j) Scholarship-20485-Application
- k) Scholarship-20658-Application
- l) Scholarship-20677-Application
- m) Scholarship-20710-Application
- n) Scholarship-20720-Application
- o) Scholarship-20750-Application
- p) Scholarship-20759-Application
- q) Scholarship-20794-Application
- r) Scholarship-20830-Application
- s) Scholarship-20894-Application
- t) Scholarship-20937-Application
- u) Scholarship-20966-Application
- v) Scholarship-20980-Application
- w) Scholarship-20983-Application
- x) Scholarship-21039-Application
- y) Scholarship-21061-Application
- z) Scholarship-21070-Application
- aa) Scholarship-21071-Application
- bb) Scholarship-21074-Application
- cc) Scholarship-21077-Application
- dd) Scholarship-21078-Application
- ee) Scholarship-21082-Application
- ff) Scholarship-21084-Application
- gg) Scholarship-21085-Application
- hh) Scholarship-21086-Application
- ii) Scholarship-25714-Application
- jj) Scholarship-26014-Application
- kk) Scholarship-26112-Application
- ll) Scholarship-26232-Application
- mm) Scholarship-26487-Application
- nn) Scholarship-40186-Application
- oo) Scholarship-40282-Application

pp) Document Support-All Fund Applications

Mr. John Glover presented NDSU's state request for fund applications.

Burgum moved, Sorvaag seconded to approve NDSU's state request fund applications, items b-pp, as presented.

Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

7. **NDSU ARE State Request: \$1,348,050**

- a) Summary of Applications-Informational Only
- b) Research Fund-30633-**SCOPE**
- c) Livestock Evaluation Faculty Fund-40265-**SCOPE**
- d) Research Fund-30633-Application
- e) Livestock Evaluation Faculty Fund-40265-Application
- f) Scholarship-15844-Application
- g) Scholarship-20234-Application
- h) Scholarship-20280-Application
- i) Scholarship-20570-Application
- j) Scholarship-20824-Application
- k) Scholarship-20907-Application
- l) Scholarship-20973-Application
- m) Scholarship-21036-Application
- n) Scholarship-21068-Application
- o) Scholarship-21069-Application
- p) Scholarship-26021-Application
- q) Document Support-All Fund Applications

Mr. John Glover presented NDSU's Scope application, Research Fund-30633.

Martinson moved, Grindberg seconded to approve NDSU's Scope application, Research Fund-30633, as presented.

Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

Mr. John Glover presented NDSU's fund application, Research Fund-30633. Committee member Martinson asked for further details on the fund application. Mr. Glover explained this application would be a research focused project in the area of improving cattle production by focusing on the commitment to developing innovative science-based solutions to enhance the health, performance, and sustainability of our livestock. Committee member Burgum asked that in future applications, more detail needs to be provided on the project description. Mr. Glover acknowledged.

Martinson moved, Spelhaug seconded to approve NDSU's fund application, Research Fund 30633, as presented.



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Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, Black, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

Mr. John Glover presented NDSU's Scope application, Livestock Evaluation Faculty Fund-40265.

Sorvaag moved, Burckhard seconded to approve NDSU's Scope application, Livestock Evaluation Faculty Fund-40265, as presented.

Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, Black, and Chair Neset voted yes. Burgum voted no. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 7-1.

Mr. John Glover presented NDSU's fund application, Livestock Evaluation Faculty Fund-40265. Committee member Martinson questioned if this type of project had been approved in the past. Mr. Glover stated it had been approved last biennium and stated this project would provide funding to support our judging programs for our students in these respective areas. The support that comes out of this endowment supports our coaches and our faculty and lecturers that are part of the program, as well as scholarship support to help the students. It provides experiential learning opportunity for the students in their academic pursuits.

Sorvaag moved, Black seconded to approve NDSU's fund application, Livestock Evaluation Faculty Fund-40265, as presented.

Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, Black, Spelhaug, and Chair Neset voted yes. Burgum voted no. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 7-1.

Mr. John Glover presented NDSU's remaining state request for fund applications, items f-q.

Burgum moved, Martinson seconded to approve NDSU's state request fund applications, items f-q, as presented.

Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

8. **UND State Request: \$1,323,636**

- a) Summary of Applications- Informational only
- b) Faculty Endowment-41632-College of Ed. & Human Development-**SCOPE**
- c) Faculty Endowment-41632-College of Ed. & Human Development-Application
- d) Educations Infrastructure-41661 Nistler college of Business & Public Administration-**SCOPE**
- e) Educations Infrastructure-41661 Nistler college of Business & Public Administration-Application
- f) Faculty Endowment-44513-Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-**SCOPE**
- g) Faculty Endowment-44513-Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-Application
- h) Faculty Endowment-41685 College of Arts and Sciences-**SCOPE**
- i) Faculty Endowment-41685 College of Arts and Sciences-Application
- j) Faculty Endowment-41697 College of Education and Human Development-**SCOPE**
- k) Faculty Endowment-41697 College of Education and Human Development-Application
- l) Faculty Endowment-41713 Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-**SCOPE**
- m) Faculty Endowment-41713 Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-Application

- n) Faculty Endowment-47631 College of Engineering and Mines-**SCOPE**
- o) Faculty Endowment-47631 College of Engineering and Mines-Application
- p) Student Scholarship-40867 Academic Affairs-Application
- q) Student Scholarship-40865 Academic Affairs-Application
- r) Student Scholarship-41645 John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences-Application
- s) Student Scholarship-41630 College of Engineering and Mines-Application
- t) Student Scholarship-45459 College of Arts and Sciences-Application
- u) Student Scholarship-45457 Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-Application
- v) Student Scholarship-41641 College of Arts and Sciences-Application
- w) Student Scholarship-41269 College of Arts and Sciences-Application
- x) Student Scholarship-41637 Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-Application
- y) Student Scholarship-41639 College of Engineering and Mines-Application
- z) Student Scholarship-47542 College of Arts and Sciences-Application
- aa) Student Scholarship-41643 College of Engineering and Mines-Application
- bb) Student Scholarship-41159 College of Engineering and Mines-Application
- cc) Student Scholarship-41675 Academic Affairs-Application
- dd) Student Scholarship-41663 Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-Application
- ee) Student Scholarship-48506 College of Arts and Sciences-Application
- ff) Student Scholarship-41667 College of Nursing and Professional Disciplines-Application
- gg) Student Scholarship-48451 College of Arts and Sciences-Application
- hh) Student Scholarship-40488 College of Education and Human Development-Application
- ii) Student Scholarship-41679 Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-Application
- jj) Student Scholarship-45733 Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-Application
- kk) Student Scholarship-41687 College of Engineering and Mines-Application
- ll) Student Scholarship-45464 Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-Application
- mm) Student Scholarship-40828 College of Engineering and Mines-Application
- nn) Student Scholarship-44611 Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-Application
- oo) Student Scholarship-41320 College of Nursing and Professional Disciplines-Application
- pp) Student Scholarship-41703 Academic Affairs-Application
- qq) Student Scholarship-40598 College of Nursing and Professional Disciplines-Application
- rr) Student Scholarship-40956 Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-Application
- ss) Student Scholarship-40977 John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences-Application
- tt) Student Scholarship-41711 Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-Application
- uu) Student Scholarship-47230 Nistler College of Business and Public Administration-Application

Ms. DeAnna Carlson Zink requested to present UND's six Scope applications related to Faculty Endowments at one time. Chair Neset and the committee approved this request. Mr. Burgum commented that he was pleased with seeing UND use these matching funds for something that is hard to get, which is endowed position for faculty. He commended UND.

Martinson moved, Burckhard seconded to approve UND's six Scope application requests for Faculty Endowments, items b, f, h, j, l, and n, as presented.

Grindberg, Martinson, Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

Ms. DeAnna Carlson Zink presented UND's Scope and Fund applications, Educations Infrastructure-41661 Nistler College of Business & Public Administration. Committee members stated they felt this item was more of a scholarship project and asked that UND resubmit the application at the next applicable meeting as a scholarship project. Ms. Carlson Zink acknowledged.

Burgum moved, and Sorvaag seconded to remove the Scope and Fund applications, Educations Infrastructure-41661 Nistler College of Business & Public Administration from UND's submission today.

Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

Ms. DeAnna Carlson Zink then presented UND's remaining state request for fund applications, items p-uu.

Martinson moved, Spelhaug seconded to approve UND's state request fund applications, items p-uu, as presented.

Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

9. **UND School of Law: \$125,000**

- a) Summary of Applications- Informational only
- b) Student Scholarship-40212 School of Law-Application
- c) Student Scholarship-41061 School of Law-Application
- d) Student Scholarship-41316 School of Law-Application
- e) Student Scholarship-41673 School of Law-Application

Ms. DeAnna Carlson Zink presented UND School of Law's state request for fund applications.

Burgum moved, Sorvaag seconded to approve UND School of Law's state request fund applications, as presented.

Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, Black, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

10. **UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences (UND SMHS): \$235,000**

- a) Summary of Applications- Informational only
- b) Faculty Endowment-41716-SMHS-**SCOPE**
- c) Faculty Endowment-41716-SMHS-Application
- d) Student Scholarship-40962 SMHS-Application
- e) Student Scholarship-41331 SMHS-Application
- f) Student Scholarship-45957 SMHS-Application
- g) Student Scholarship-41705 SMHS-Application
- h) Student Scholarship-47108 SMHS-Application
- i) Student Scholarship-41701 SMHS-Application

Ms. DeAnna Carlson Zink presented UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences (UND SMHS) Scope application, Faculty Endowment-41716.

Burgum moved, Black seconded to approve UND SMHS's Scope application, Faculty Endowment-41716, as presented.

Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, Black, Burgum, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

11. **WSC State Request: \$720,000**

- a) Summary of Applications-For Information Only
- b) Simulation and Experiential Learning Systems-**SCOPE**
- c) Simulation and Experiential Learning Systems-Application

President Bernell Hirning presented WSC's Scope application, Simulation and Experiential Learning Systems.

Sorvaag moved, Burckhard seconded to approve WSC's Scope application, Simulation and Experiential Learning Systems, as presented.

Sorvaag, Grindberg, Martinson, Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

President Bernell Hirning presented WSC's state request fund application.

Spelhaug moved, Sorvaag seconded to approve WSC's state request fund application, as presented.

Grindberg, Martinson, Black, Burgum, Spelhaug, Burckhard, Sorvaag, and Chair Neset voted yes. Bachmeier absent. Motion passed 8-0.

**Other Committee Business**

12. Semi-Annual Report June 30, 2025-Ms. Sturn

Ms. Mindy Sturn provided the semi-annual report for the period ending June 30, 2025, highlighting the changes from December 31, 2024, report, excluding the current biennium activity. She also mentioned that the next Private Match Pending Report for the 2017-19 biennium will be presented at the March 2026 meeting, as the due date for those collections would be January 2026.

13. Open Discussion

Chair Neset stated our next planned committee meeting would potentially take place the week of December 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> and that Ms. Sturn would be following up with committee members soon to select a date.

The meeting adjourned at 2:53 pm