State Capitol – 600 E Boulevard Ave – Dept. 215
Bismarck ND 58505-0230
Phone: 701.877.5703
E-mail: ndus.inquiry@ndus.edu Web: ndus.edu

North Dakota State Board of Higher Education Meeting and Strategic Retreat

Meeting Minutes
August 27, 2026

The State Board of Higher Education met and held a Strategic Retreat on August 27, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., CT in Room 335 of the National Energy Center of Excellence (NECE), 1200 Schafer St., Bismarck, ND 58501 on the campus of Bismarck State College.

Roll Call

SBHE Members

☒ Mr. Kevin Black, Chair
☒ Mr. DJ Campbell, Vice Chair
☒ Mr. Kelby Azure
☒ Mr. Curtis Biller
☒ Ms. Michelle Kommer
☒ Mr. Tim Mihalick
☒ Mr. Pat Sogard
☒ Dr. Josh Deere
☒ Dr. Crystal Alberts, Faculty Advisor
☒ Ms. Anna Kinney, Staff Advisor

Institutions

BSC: President Kalk, **DCB:** Dean Gorder, **DSU:** President Molander, **LRSC:** President Simone, **MaSU:** President Van Horn, **MiSU:** President Shirley, **NDSCS:** Interim President Karch, **NDSU:** President Stewart, **UND:** President Armacost, **VCSU:** Interim President Burgad, **WSC:** President Hirning.

System Office/Guests

NDUS: Commissioner Sanford, Ms. Bethany Kadrmas, Ms. Christina Pieske, Dr. Billie Jo Lorius, Mr. Eric Jensen, DC Lisa Johnson, DC Karla Mongeon-Stewart, DC Meredith Larson, **CTS:** DC Corey Quirk, **Sagency:** Mr. Mike Meagher, Mr. Jon McTaggart, Ms. Kathy Thornton-Bias.

North Dakota State Board of Higher Education Meeting

Call to Order

1. **#** Agenda
   Biller moved, Sogard seconded to approve the agenda as presented.
   Motion passed unanimously via voice vote.

 # Board Consent

2. June Meeting Minutes

SBHE Academic and Student Affairs Committee

3. Institutional Organizational Notice

a. Minot State University
    i. Name Change: Center for Extended Learning to Center for Online Learning and Testing

Mihalick moved, Campbell seconded to approve the consent agenda.
Motion passed, 8-0.

 # Board Business

SBHE Policies
2nd read

4. Policy 422 Review of Low-Completion Programs
   DC Lisa Johnson brought forth Policy 422 for 2nd read. She informed the board that since January of 2026, at least 40 programs have been terminated. Between 2019 to present, campuses have requested to inactivate 135 programs and terminate 112 programs of study.
   Biller moved, Mihalick seconded to approve Policy 422 as presented.
   Motion passed, 8-0.

5. Tik Tok Ban
   DC Corey Quirk gave a brief background on the ban and reasons why he supports rescinding it. Sogard asked how that will be executed, DC Quirk stated that it will be a tiered approach and each institution will need to be involved to accomplish it.
   Mihalick moved, Campbell seconded to rescind the Tik Tok ban.
   Motion passed, 8-0.

Other

6. Legislative Updates
   a. Higher Education Funding Review Committee – August 19
   b. Special Legislative Session – September 2
   c. Tentative Higher Education Institutions Committee in Devils Lake and Grand Forks – September 21 and 22
      DC Johnson gave a brief update on the Higher Education Funding Review Committee meeting that took place on August 19th, and some anticipated topics for the Special Legislative Session on September 2nd and the tentative Higher Education Institutions Committee on September 21st and 22nd as agendas have not been posted for these meetings as of yet.
   d. ERP Update (added by Chair Black)
      DC Corey Quirk gave an update on the status of the ERP project. He estimated that the entire project would take 3-7 years.

7. Public Comments
   There were no public comments.

8. Sagency Strategic Retreat

Sagency Strategic Retreat

The group participated in a strategic retreat facilitated by Sagency to discuss the future of the NDUS. Input was included from the President's retreat that took place on August 13, 2026.

1. **Outcomes and Expectation**
   Sagency began the retreat by outlining what they hope to accomplish during the retreat and how the Board will engage with the draft strategy.

2. **Where We Are in the Process**
   Sagency updated the group with what has been completed, who has contributed, and what remains to be developed. After a discussion of the elements of the NDUS Strategic Playbook was introduced, a resolution demonstrating the Board's support was drafted and added to the agenda to be voted on. After a few edits were recommended by Kommer, Campbell moved, Mihalick seconded to approve the resolution.
   Motion passed, 8-0.

3. **Mission and Core Business**
   Sagency reviewed NDUS's mission and discussed how NDUS can serve as a talent engine for North Dakota. The mission is as follows, "To enhance economic growth, social vitality, and quality of life for North Dakota through the discovery, sharing, and application of knowledge."

4. **Strategic Vision**
   Sagency identified the NDUS long-term vision, which is, "North Dakota will build the most effective higher education system for workforce growth and be an indispensable driver of economic growth and social vitality." In addition, Sagency also outlined the NDUS three bold five-year goals that define what success looks like for NDUS as a system. The three five-year goals are:
   1. Keep more North Dakota Students in North Dakota,
   2. Attract and retain more out-of-state students,
   3. Help more North Dakota adults complete degrees and credentials to advance their careers.

5. **Strategic Pillars and Initiatives**
   Sagency identified NDUS' four strategic pillars to guide the work and accomplish the vision and goals. These pillars are:
   1. Optimize our model,
   2. Prove our impact,
   3. Grow our reputation and reach,
   4. Deliver exceptional experiences.

6. **What the Strategy Will Require**
   The topic of what this means for coordination, accountability, funding, institutional roles, and decisions made across the system was discussed. Sagency emphasized the idea that NDUS must act like a system, not just a collection of institutions. This will require four initiatives to be managed as a system-wide priority rather than as separate institutional projects.

7. **Operating Model**
   Sagency identified the organizational, structural, and support changes needed, on the system's side, to carry out the strategy.

8. **Next Steps**
   Sagency outlined areas of alignment, items needing additional development, and matters to bring back to the Board. The Commissioner will gather input from various stakeholders and report back.

Adjourn

Chair Black adjourned the meeting at 2:45 p.m., C.T.