

North Dakota State Staff Senate Meeting Minutes

February 9, 2026 @ 2:30pm CT via MS Teams



The NDUS Staff Senate serves to represent staff employees from the eleven academic institutions and employees throughout the university system. The Senate identifies staff interests and issues; acts as a forum for the discussion of staff-related matters; and facilitates communication on behalf of the campus staff members with the NDUS Commissioner and the State Board of Higher Education.

- 1) Called to Order at 2:30 pm by Anna Kinney.
- 2) Roll Call
 - a) BSC –
 - b) CTSO – Greg Carlson, Marla Hagemeister, Joshua DeNio
 - c) DCB – Jennifer Cote, Misty Lindgren
 - d) DSU – Laura Fetting
 - e) LRSC – Meghan Dimmler
 - f) MaSU – Shannon Hofer, Mindy Oconnor
 - g) MiSU – Heather Halverson
 - h) NDSCS – Amy Carson, Maggie Jordahl, Heather Nelson
 - i) NDSU – Andrea Ludwig, Jenn Young
 - j) UND – Anna Kinney, Brandon Wallace
 - k) VCSU – Erin Edinger
 - l) WSC – Carol Campbell
 - m) HRC Rep (Mindy Oconnor) – Present
 - n) SBHE Rep (Anna Kinney) – Present
- 3) Approval of Agenda – Approved by unanimous consent
- 4) Approval of [January meeting minutes](#) – Approved by unanimous consent
- 5) Welcome SBHE Chair Kevin Black
 - a) Introduction by SBHE Rep Anna Kinney
 - i) Kevin Black serves as the Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Creedence Energy Services, a leading specialty chemical provider in the oil and gas industry with operations in North Dakota, Montana, Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico. Kevin has previously served higher education as a Trustee of the NDSU Development Foundation, Minot State Board of Regents, and past chair of the UND Petroleum Engineering Advisory Board. Kevin also serves on the board of the Minot Chamber EDC, Minot Sunrise Rotary Club, and the North Dakota Petroleum Council, and he was appointed by Governor Doug Burgum to serve on the North Dakota Economic Development Foundation in 2019. Kevin earned a degree in Industrial Engineering & Management from NDSU in 2010, and he resides in Minot, ND, with his wife Kalli and three children Reagan, Rawley, and Reese.
 - ii) Kevin Black shared his appreciation for all that staff do and the impact that staff had on him during his time in higher ed. He thanked staff for all that they do to serve students as that is the purpose of higher ed.
 - b) Open discussion, Q&A

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- i) Priorities
 - (1) Funding formula
 - (a) Started asking about it when he asked about it when he started on SBHE 4 years ago.
 - (b) Very tricky and a lot of things go into it.
 - (c) Can do better. Need a formula but need something better. Can simplify it. Make it outcome driven.
 - (d) Interim legislative committees –
 - (i) working on funding formula; VPs of finance from several of the institutions; good to see UND and NDSU working together
 - (ii) other higher ed committee – really catch all
 - (2) Dual credit
 - (a) SBHE voted to allow NDSU & UND expand dual credit into their home counties
 - (b) Might be allowed to fully expand it.
 - (c) Black is a big fan of dual credit.
 - (d) Students get into the system earlier and it saves families and students a ton of money. Need to ensure that it's quality and accessible.
 - (3) Tenure
 - (a) Big topic last 2 legislative sessions
 - (b) Goal is to make sure it doesn't get mentioned at the next legislative session
 - (4) Reduced credit degree programs
 - (a) Pressure was coming; don't want to be the last one
 - (b) Wanted to be thoughtful and have good guard rails around it
 - (c) Better to do it right than fast so conversation lasted 7 months
 - (d) Only 2 programs at each institution and can only be Bachelor of Applied Science
 - (5) Shared resources/services
 - (a) Be very strategic about what to do with shared resources/services
 - (b) Black is from Williston and realizes how hard it would be to get a Director of HR from Williston
 - (6) 3 Presidential Searches
- ii) Anna – Staff Recognition – starting soliciting nominations; Professional Development and shared resources; Tuition waivers
- iii) Tuition waivers
 - (1) Carol
 - (a) In gathering stage for tuition waivers
 - (b) Get data to better develop a proposal
 - (c) 4 areas of focus
 - (i) Current policies at each institution and financial impact of waivers for both employees and spouse/dependent
 - (ii) Policies from across the country

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- (iii) Looking at proposals that were brought forth in the past and what were the obstacles to them being implemented
- (iv) Soliciting input for a wish list that is narrowed down to feasible proposals
- (2) Black – won't be easy – not easy anytime you are talking about money; thinks we can't afford not to look at this and modify it; it's an investment in our employees and their professional development
- (3) Look on Teams for what others are doing, wish list file, etc.
- (4) Meredith Larson said there are people that are willing to help with Century Code if it has to be rewritten. Anna said she'd work with CCF when we're ready.

6) Reports

a) Campus Updates – Submit to website

- i) DCB – Narrowed search for Campus Dean and will be having in-person interviews next week.
- ii) DSU – Hosting an alumna that is a clinical addiction counselor to come talk about understanding behavioral health
- iii) MaSU – Hired a new Dean of Students, Rhonda Nelson; Renovations of Old Main are on track to move in next fall.
- iv) MiSU – Renovations starting in the Student Center; Some logistical moves. Upcoming Silent Auction in March.
- v) NDSCS – Afternoon for Staff Professional Development next month – motivational speaker and Title IX training.
- vi) NDSU – Interim President Berg started today; NDSU is switching conferences to Mountain West
- vii) UND – Brandon – lot of conversations about weather closures/delays; Mariah has accepted a position out of state so will no longer be at UND and on their Staff Senate nor on State Staff Senate – do have a nominee to replace her
- viii) WSC – SBHE met at Williston last month – encouraged people to attend the meeting if it comes to your institution

b) SBHE Staff Advisor Report (Anna Kinney):

- i) Kevin gave the report.
- ii) Levi Bachmeier's former role on SBHE has been filled by Michelle Kommer.
- iii) 3 Presidential Searches so a lot of interim meetings to discuss those.
- iv) SBHE representative election: Voting to approve Anna Kinney as the SBHE rep for FY27.
 - (1) BSC – Absent
 - (2) CTSO – Yea
 - (3) DCB – Yea
 - (4) DSU – Yea
 - (5) LRSC – Yea
 - (6) MaSU – Yea
 - (7) MiSU – Yea
 - (8) NDSCS – Yea

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- (9) NDSU – Yea
- (10) UND – Yea
- (11) VCSU – Yea
- (12) WSC – Yea
- (13) Anna is approved as the SBHE rep for FY27.

c) HRC Update (Mindy Oconnor):

- i) Looking at getting a new background check vendor
- ii) Policy reviews
- iii) HRC policy updates will no longer go to Admin affairs, they will go to Presidents Council instead.
- iv) Future HRC votes if HRC needs input from VP, Finance Business, etc. that will need to be requested from the appropriate parties before HRC meeting/vote.
- v) It was requested by leadership and the commissioner to put the commissioner back in the positions to make some decisions because he is listed as the manager of the plan. - voted on and passed

7) Business Agenda

a) Taskforce Chair Updates

i) Legislative Taskforce / Bylaws (Anna Kinney)

(1) Bylaws updates – Had revisions given at the last meeting.

(a) Motion to approve the Bylaws revisions as presented at the January meeting – Laura, 2nd by Andrea

- (i) BSC – Absent
- (ii) CTSO – Yea
- (iii) DCB – Yea
- (iv) DSU – Yea
- (v) LRSC – Yea
- (vi) MaSU – Yea
- (vii) MiSU – Yea
- (viii) NDSCS – Yea
- (ix) NDSU – Yea
- (x) UND – Yea
- (xi) VCSU – Yea
- (xii) WSC – Yea

(b) Bylaws edits are approved.

ii) Staff Recognition (Heather Halvorson)

- (1) Been approved for our State Staff Recognition Award. Email has been sent to Mike O'Toole to send out.
- (2) Email will be going out and Heather will be including link in chat.
- (3) Anna said Chair Black is already looking to expand it.

iii) Professional Development (Greg Carlson)

- (1) Good meeting on Thurs., Jan. 29th. Next meeting is Thurs., Feb. 12th. Have meetings scheduled into May. Key topics include discussion of topics along with determining and leveraging existing resources for sharing across the system.

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iv) Staff Affairs (Carol Campbell)

- (1) Included above with Chair Black topics.
- (2) Employees at the place you are employed is 100% plus some fees for both in person and online for up to 3 courses per year. 50% waiver to other institutions. Spouse and dependent are tuition waivers only for 50% of online or in-person classes. For CTS and NDUS, 100% for in-person and 50% for online. Grad classes and anything over \$5250 is taxable.
- (3) Joshua DeNio pointed out that some of the CTSO work remotely and the only option is online courses.

v) Executive Committee (Mike O'Toole)

- 8) Open Discussion
- 9) Next Meeting: March 9, 2:30-4:00 CT.
- 10) Adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Additional Information:

- NDSSS Website - <https://staffsenate.ndus.edu/>
- Campus Updates Submission - <https://staffsenate.ndus.edu/campus-update-submission-form/>