



DRAFT

2019 ASBSD Legislative Resolutions

Revised: 8/8/2018

Overview

ASBSD Resolutions are policy statements adopted by the ASBSD membership that guide your Association's advocacy efforts at the state and federal levels. A subcommittee of the ASBSD Board of Directors – called the ASBSD Policy and Resolutions Committee – develops draft policy statements for consideration by the full membership at the ASBSD Delegate Assembly.

A. Achievement and Equity

1. PRESCHOOL STANDARDS

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the South Dakota Early Learning Guidelines for voluntary preschool education programs.

RATIONALE

Preschool is defined as any public education program for children under age 5. Research points to clear short and long-term benefits of pre-k (pre-school) programs. It's widely accepted that early experiences form vital connections in a child's brain and influence how a child learns and develops throughout life. According to research, quality pre-k (pre-school) programs reduce the number of students in need of special education services and the number of students that have to repeat grades. Research has also documented long-term efficiency of pre-kindergarten (pre-school) programs through a reduction in the juvenile crime rate and lessening later reliance on public assistance programs.

ADOPTED: 2008

REVISED: 2017

2. STATE FUNDED PRESCHOOL

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports state funding of public voluntary preschool education programs so long as it does not jeopardize or repurpose current funding of public K-12 education.

RATIONALE

State funding for voluntary pre-school programs would be a welcome addition to the public K-12 funding model. However, that funding would need to be a supplement to the current funding model, not utilized to supplant it, in any way. Any adjustment to the current funding model, which did not add new money to the model, would jeopardize academic opportunities currently in place in public school districts.

ADOPTED: 2017

A. Achievement and Equity

3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PROPOSED DELETION)

RESOLUTION

~~ASBSD supports full funding for mandated professional development.~~

RATIONALE

~~ASBSD supports professional development for teachers and administrators. Because of mandates for new innovations, we believe full funding to train professionals is essential.~~

ADOPTED: 2008

REVISED: 2018

4. COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports compulsory attendance in public school to age 18 or until a student graduates.

RATIONALE

In today's global economy, every South Dakota student deserves the lasting benefits of a high school diploma. Maintaining compulsory attendance age until 18 will make public school policy mirror BIE policy, minimizing the potential for students to transfer to public school in order to drop-out of high school.

ADOPTED: 2008

5. SOUTH DAKOTA ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS, GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND STATE ASSESSMENT EXAMS (PROPOSED AMENDMENT)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports South Dakota academic content standards, with sufficient financial resources and professional development for school staff, to facilitate implementation of the standards and graduation requirements as well as the full participation of students in state assessment exams.

RATIONALE

South Dakota academic content standards and graduation requirements serve as expectations for what students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade level and upon graduation. The review, revision, development, and feedback process involves stakeholders throughout the state of South Dakota and is an ongoing and critical component to ensure South Dakota students in every classroom receive current and relevant learning experiences. The goal is that all students will graduate college, career, and life ready.

ADOPTED: 2010

REVISED: 2018

A. Achievement and Equity

6. EXTRA AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – FREE PARTICIPATION

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports extra and co-curricular activities as an important component of South Dakota’s system of public education and opposes legislation that will in any way establish fees for participation in extra and co-curricular offerings.

RATIONALE

The South Dakota Constitution guarantees a free public education to all students. Extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, though not always offered for academic credit, are a valuable part of a child’s education and should remain free to all public school students.

ADOPTED: 2010

REVISED: 2014

7. SCHOOL EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports continued commitment by the legislature to enhance the ability to attract, recruit and retain quality personnel in South Dakota public schools.

RATIONALE

To ensure public schools can recruit and retain quality employees, the state must maintain a long-term financial commitment to our schools in order to provide competitive salaries for their school employees.

ADOPTED: 2013

REVISED: 2017

B. Local Governance

1. STUDENTS RECEIVING ALTERNATIVE INSTRUCTION (HOME SCHOOL INSTRUCTION)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports state guidelines for evaluating the academic progress of students receiving alternative instruction, the establishment of effective state regulations to ensure exempted students receive a high quality education and the right of the local public school board to decide criteria for allowing alternative instruction students to participate in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities.

RATIONALE

School boards and the Department of Education are responsible for the education of students receiving alternative instruction. State guidelines and regulations would provide school boards with criteria to determine if revocation of an application is warranted. When issues of participation in public school activities arise, the authority to determine who may participate should rest solely with the local public school board.

ADOPTED: 2008

REVISED: 2017

2. SCHOOL FINANCES

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports local governance in the management of district funds.

RATIONALE

Control of school finances should rest with the local public school board within the district.

ADOPTED: 2009

REVISED: 2012

3. CHARTER SCHOOLS (PROPOSED AMENDMENT)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD opposes any new legislation that creates charter schools ~~beyond what is currently authorized in statute, which permits Pilot Charter Schools for American Indian Students.~~

RATIONALE

Any ~~legislation that expansion beyond what is currently allowed in state statute~~ has the potential to introduce charter schools and could take ~~public school~~ funding from ~~current public~~ schools, receive waivers from state standards of accreditation and teacher certification, be selective in the students who may enroll, and be detrimental to local public school districts, should be opposed.

ADOPTED: 2012

REVISED: **2018**

B. Local Governance

4. PUBLIC FUNDING FOR NON-PUBLIC EDUCATION

RESOLUTION

ASBSD opposes any law that diverts public dollars to fund non-public education in any manner.

RATIONALE

Legislation that diverts public dollars to non-public schools would be detrimental to the public education system.

ADOPTED: 2015

REVISED: 2016

5. PRIVATE SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

RESOLUTION

ASBSD opposes state law allowing tax credits from the insurance company premium and annuity tax to fund a private school scholarship program and permits contributions made by the insurance companies to remain anonymous.

RATIONALE

The state law allowing the diversion of public dollars to non-public schools is detrimental to the public education system and, in the opinion of ASBSD, is unconstitutional. In addition, the scholarship program is based on an antiquated school funding system and may result in the program no longer remaining fiscally neutral for the state. Permitting contributions made by insurance companies to remain anonymous places their special interests above their tax obligation to the state and undermines transparency established in other state laws. ASBSD supports amending SDCL 13-65 to require contributions to the scholarship fund to become public information. ASBSD also supports amending SDCL 13-65 to require any school receiving funds under SDCL 13-65 to follow all state requirements that public schools follow, including (but not limited to) accepting students under the State's Open Enrollment statutes and requiring the school to continue educating all accepted students until tuition/scholarship dollars are no longer paid or the student is expelled pursuant to State law.

ADOPTED: 2016

6. SCHOOL DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION SYMBOLS

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the local control by public school boards, and encourages them to seek input from community stakeholders on matters that involve symbols and events they believe uniquely identify their school.

RATIONALE

Public school districts are sensitive to the representation and depiction of all people through the use of mascots, nicknames, logos or other symbols and school events. Public school boards are open to discussion with local Native American tribes, community organizations and members on the utilization of these symbols and maintain their local control to make determinations on usage based on these discussions and what is best for the district, as a whole.

ADOPTED: 2016

B. Local Governance

7. USE OF BATHROOM, LOCKER ROOM AND OTHER FACILITIES

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the judgment and integrity of local public school boards and school districts to act in the best interest of their students, school and community and show respect for all students, staff and other individuals including using bathrooms, locker rooms and other facilities.

RATIONALE

Public school boards, as elected leaders, are responsive and accountable to local citizens, and, as noted by Gov. Dennis Daugaard in his 2016 veto message of House Bill 1008, “can, and have, made necessary restroom and locker room accommodations that serve the best interests of all students, regardless of biological sex or gender identity.” Local public school boards and districts who have been met with these matters previously have prudently reached a decision that works best for all parties involved.

ADOPTED: 2016

8. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL PROTECTION FOR COMPLIANCE WITH STATE LAW

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports a provision in law that would require the South Dakota Attorney General’s office to represent a public school district, should it face a lawsuit while complying with the state law, and indemnify the public school district for any financial liability incurred by the district rising out of the lawsuit.

RATIONALE

Public school districts respect the letter of the law and implement statutory requirements handed down to them by the legislature. Should a district face litigation for complying with state law, ASBSD believes a legal and financial partnership with the State of South Dakota is necessary. There is precedent in law related to this request as SDCL 13-34-25 states the attorney general would represent a school district at no cost should it be sued for complying with state statute related to use of textbooks, and we believe this right should be extended to all laws requiring school district compliance with state law.

ADOPTED: 2016

9. BEHAVIORAL and MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES (NEW RESOLUTION)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports additional State and Federal resources for schools to support the behavioral and mental health of students in K-12 public schools.

RATIONALE

Public schools are experiencing a growing need for support in mental health resources including, behavior specialists and social workers, which most schools cannot afford. An increasing number of students with behavior and mental health issues have taxed the resources available in schools. Learning and instruction are disrupted and hindered if a student’s behavioral or mental health problems are not addressed. Support from state and federal funds is essential to providing the resources needed.

ADOPTED: **2018**

B. Local Governance

10. SAFE SCHOOLS RESOURCES (NEW RESOLUTION)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports additional State, Federal, and local resources for schools to create a safe learning environment for all students in K-12 public schools.

RATIONALE

Recent incidences of violence in schools is causing a revelation of school safety plans. Additional resources are needed to:

- a. Dedicate more resources to community efforts to “wrap services around” students. This starts at the district and school building level with programs that nurture students’ social and emotional needs and growth. Through this support, communities can implement threat assessment and help students in need of intervention;
- b. Provide sustained and flexible funding for comprehensive school safety planning and implementation. School boards may consider building improvements and school climate programs to enhance safety which can require capital outlay funds;
- c. Fund more collaborative projects between schools and local law enforcement. ASBSD believes the best option to ensure school safety is through partnership with local law enforcement agencies, specifically in the form of school resource officers being in schools.

ADOPTED: 2018

11. ALTERNATIVE INSTRUCTION OVERSIGHT (NEW RESOLUTION)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports state law granting school boards the authority to approve or deny homeschool exemption requests.

RATIONALE

Many parents and guardians provide effective alternative instruction for their students in legitimate settings, with capable home instructors. However, public schools have experienced an increasing trend of parents or guardians utilizing alternative instruction laws as a way to circumvent compulsory attendance, or remove their children from school all together. Using alternative instruction exemptions for inappropriate purposes harms those students and the alternative instruction community who use the exemption for its intended purpose. School boards should have the authority to approve or deny alternative instruction exemptions based on identified criteria, if they have reason to believe the application will not lead to viable instruction.

ADOPTED: 2018

C. School Finance

1. SCHOOL FUNDING (PROPOSED AMENDMENT)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports a state education funding system that provides adequate aid for public schools to deliver a high quality education to all students, competitively compensate district employees and allow local management of funds, through the following provisions:

- Utilizes revenue, and any potential growth, generated by the half-cent increase to the state's sales tax dedicated to teacher salaries;
- Raises the state average teacher salary to at least \$48,500 or higher and continues to review teacher salaries in order to stay competitive in region markets;
- Allows school districts to negotiate salary agreements that best fit their teaching staff within the mandated allocations set in statute;
- Covers the additional cost of benefits and overhead expenditures school districts incur;
- Sets student to teacher ratio levels that judiciously distribute dollars to school districts;
- Maintains the flexibility provision for districts to use capital outlay dollars for general fund expenses;
- Continues to review the distribution of other revenue funds;
- Ensures school districts have a process should they need a waiver from any piece of the funding system's statutory requirements;
- Appropriates funding to increase efficiencies through technology improvement grants, utilization of shared services, e-Learning programs, a teacher mentoring program and for national board certification for teachers;
- Allows school districts whose maximum per student capital outlay levy is under the state average to maintain or increase their Capital Outlay up to \$3,000 per thousand at the discretion of the school board.

RATIONALE

The revamped funding system, which was implemented in 2016, has evolved in the brief time since it was put in place and will continue to do so, but the foundational belief remains the same that the school funding system must provide districts with adequate funding in order for public schools to provide quality education to their students.

ADOPTED: 2008

REVISED: 2018

2. CONSISTENT SPARSITY FUNDING

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports consistent district-level funding provided by the state for sparse public school districts as defined in SDCL 13-13-78.

RATIONALE

The state's sparse funding has provided much needed resources to the state's smallest and most rural schools. However, since the funding has been instituted, the amount of funding delivered to districts has declined and has been threatened for repeal. Given that sparsity funding amounts to more than 10 percent of the operating budget in some rural districts, the state's smallest most geographically isolated districts deserve consistent state supplemental funding.

ADOPTED: 2009

REVISED: 2014

C. School Finance

3. SCHOOL FUNDING – TWO YEAR ENROLLMENT AVERAGING

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports reinstating two-year enrollment averaging or current enrollment, whichever is larger, in place of the fall enrollment count for the state aid formula calculation.

RATIONALE

With the passage of SB 131 the provision of the state aid formula that allowed for two year averaging of school district enrollment was eliminated. With year to year fluctuations in student enrollment, public schools depend on two year averaging to provide stability in their budgeting process.

ADOPTED: 2016

4. CAPITAL OUTLAY ADJUSTMENTS (NEW RESOLUTION)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports legislation changing the Capital Outlay statutes specifically designed to set the Capital Outlay growth cap at 3 percent.

RATIONALE

Since the implementation of the Capital Outlay growth caps, schools have experienced growing pressure on the Capital Outlay fund. Adjusting the inflationary index to provide schools with a limit of 3 percent, but without a floor, would help minimize this pressure.

ADOPTED: **2018**

C. School Finance

5. GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND ELECTION (NEW RESOLUTION)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports legislation allowing a school bond to be approved by a simple majority vote.

RATIONALE

With the growth caps placed on Capital Outlay, schools are finding it increasingly difficult to fund major Capital Outlay projects, such as facility construction. School districts need the ability to pass bonds on local construction whereby a majority vote of the electorate is enough for it to pass. Under current law SDCL 7-24-2 county bonds only require a simple majority, while school related bonding requires a 60 percent vote to pass. Thus, the change would be consistent with another government subdivision requirement.

ADOPTED: 2018

6. PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR ALTERNATIVE INSTRUCTION (NEW RESOLUTION)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD opposes legislation exempting parents or guardians who provide alternative instruction from property taxes.

RATIONALE

Exempting specific tax payers from the need to pay for public education defeats the purpose of taxation of the general public to provide the constitutionally mandated support for public schools. Parents and guardians utilizing alternative instruction have made a choice when it comes to exempting out of the public school system and that choice should be respected, however, forgiving their tax obligation to fund public education is a dangerous precedent that would lead to any government service being provided on a use basis. Government cannot function in that model.

ADOPTED: 2018

C. School Finance

7. STATE AID INFLATION FACTOR (NEW RESOLUTION)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports adherence to the State Aid inflationary index by the Governor and the Legislature in the event dollars above what is distributed in the index factor cannot be provided.

RATIONALE

Since the change in the state funding formula in 1995, the concept of an inflation factor to increase the state aid formula over time has been based on 3 percent or CPI-W, whichever is less. The inflationary index has been appropriated by the Legislature each fiscal year, with the exception of FY 2011, 2018 and 2019. The inflation factor is critical to schools in order for them to maintain a consistent revenue source. There is growing concern when state dollars are limited, the inflation factor is optional and the legislature is not required to adhere to the law. Schools need the index factor and the Legislature needs to fund at least the minimum index requirement. School districts must be appropriated at least the index factor to pay for the growing needs to:

- a. to provide salary increases to teachers, as well as maintain salaries for all personnel
- b. meet inflationary increases in the operation of the schools,
- c. maintain safety and health related services
- d. provide current technology and instructional materials

The inflation factor cannot be optional. Appropriating funds for public schools is a constitutional requirement and education should be a state budget priority. There are strong reasons to have an inflationary index and the law must be followed.

ADOPTED: 2018

8. ACCOUNTABILITY WAIVER PROCESS (NEW RESOLUTION)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the waiver process option for school districts to seek relief from accountability requirements, including, but not limited to, meeting the target teacher compensation and the general fund reserve cash caps.

RATIONALE

There must be a balance between accountability and flexibility regarding funds for enhancing teacher salaries and general fund cash reserves. Each school district faces unique challenges and situations and the waiver process is an important component in guaranteeing flexible options for schools to meet the teacher salary targets and general fund cash reserve caps.

ADOPTED: 2018

D. Taxation

1. SALES TAX REVENUE (PROPOSED DELETION)

RESOLUTION

~~ASBSD supports the utilization of revenue collected from the half-cent increase to the sales tax for state funding of public K-12 education dedicated to teacher salaries.~~

RATIONALE

~~The half-cent increase to the sales tax provides the additional funding needed to support public education, especially in maintaining competitive teacher salary levels with neighboring states. Reference: SDCL 13-13-10.1, 13-13-73.6; 10-45-2 through 10-45-8; 10-45-71.~~

ADOPTED: 2015

REVISED: **2018**

2. SALES TAX EXEMPTION REVIEW (NEW RESOLUTION)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the review of current statutes which address sales and use tax exemptions and consider rescinding those that could contribute to the state's general fund

RATIONALE

The continual pressure on State government to fund needed services, especially public education, has forced the need to examine all sources of funding. With more than a billion dollars in exemptions to sales tax in South Dakota, serious consideration should be given to which exemptions are essential and which can contribute to sales tax revenue.

ADOPTED: **2018**

3. COMMITMENT TO THE HALF PENNY SALES TAX RATIO (NEW RESOLUTION)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports continued adherence to the original ratio of funds from the half penny sales tax established in HB 1182 (SDCL 10-58-7) in 2016 dedicated to funding teacher salaries.

RATIONALE

ASBSD believes the State must continue the revenue distribution ratio implemented when the half-cent sales tax was approved in order for schools to maintain funding teacher salaries at the rate required by state mandates attached to the additional dollars and to fulfill the purpose the original statute intended.

ADOPTED: **2018**

E. Personnel

1. CONTINUING CONTRACT (PROPOSED DELETION)

RESOLUTION

~~ASBSD supports legislation to deny continuing contract rights to teachers who have received two consecutive years of unsatisfactory evaluations.~~

RATIONALE

~~ASBSD believes students should have the best teachers in the classroom. Using the state mandated evaluation process, a teacher whose performance is determined to be deficient should lose their continuing contract rights.~~

ADOPTED: 2008

REVISED: **2018**

2. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports a local public school district's ability to develop hiring, evaluation and compensation policies to develop performance and market-based compensation mechanisms that support local efforts to recruit and retain quality staff.

RATIONALE

School boards, administrators and teachers are in the best position to decide whether the school district has the financial resources, personnel, data systems and desire to implement local policy. Districts should have the flexibility to adopt effective hiring, evaluation and compensation policies.

ADOPTED: 2010

REVISED: 2012

F. Unfunded Mandates

1. STATE EDUCATION MANDATES

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports legislative action to require the State to adopt a fiscal note associated with and providing funding for all mandates placed on local public school districts.

RATIONALE

When state mandates place additional burdens on school boards, funds should be allocated to compensate expenses incurred. Therefore, it should be the policy of the State Department of Education to adopt fiscal notes and request funding from the legislature, prior to the passage of all mandates placed on local public school districts.

ADOPTED: 2008

REVISED: 2017

2. FEDERAL MANDATES

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports full funding for all federal mandates.

RATIONALE

When federal policymakers enact laws intended to foster higher levels of school performance and academic achievement, Congress must adequately fund federal mandates to avoid causing local school boards to shift local resources to meet the demands of federal education policies.

ADOPTED: 2008

REVISED: 2016

G. Federal Relations

1. MEDICAID SERVICE REIMBURSEMENT

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the continuation of federal Medicaid Service provided to public school K-12 for providing health services to Medicaid-eligible students.

RATIONALE

Public schools play a key role in identifying eligible children for Medicaid, connecting children to needed services in schools and communities. Medicaid service reimbursement funds help South Dakota public school districts provide outreach and coordination services that ultimately helps eligible children receive health services in a timely manner.

ADOPTED: 2008

REVISED: 2012

2. SCHOOL NUTRITION

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports flexibility in federal law for state and local food service personnel to adjust the nutrition requirements including changes to the calorie maximum, to ensure they are providing school meals that meet the needs of their diverse student body in their communities.

RATIONALE

A one-size-fits-all policy ties the hands of local public school lunch providers. According to recent report, the USDA's new regulations have led to hungrier students, wasted food, and increased costs for schools.

ADOPTED: 2010

REVISED: 2016

3. E-RATE

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports action by Congress and the Federal Communications Commission to strengthen the E-Rate program and improve the quality and speed of Internet connectivity in our nation's public K-12 schools.

RATIONALE

The E-rate program, officially called the Schools and Libraries Program Universal Service Fund, provides significant discounts to schools and libraries to help them build technology infrastructure and provide telecommunications and Internet services for students in low-income and rural areas. The program is a vital source of funding to maintain and improve Internet connectivity in public K-12 schools. Expansion of the federal E-rate program would improve access to technology for public K-12 schools and students.

ADOPTED: 2010

REVISED: 2012

G. Federal Relations

4. EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the federal education policy emphasizing the importance of local governance, providing states with more control over education standards and strengthening support for local control in managing school administration, budget development and related operations for public school district responsibilities.

RATIONALE

ESSA affirms state control of education standards by allowing them to set their own benchmarks for student achievement in math and reading. In addition, ESSA reaffirms the importance of local governance as state education standards will be up for peer review by public school board members, administrators, parents and other groups. A local governance measure included in the bill strengthens support for local control which will enhance the local district's goal of consistent student achievement.

ADOPTED: 2016

5. REPURPOSING FEDERAL FUNDING FOR SCHOOL CHOICE EXPANSION (PROPOSED AMENDMENT)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD opposes the repurposing of federal funds in order to expand school choice options.

RATIONALE

The repurposing of federal funds to expand school choice options ~~—as proposed in drafts of the federal budget—~~ would have lasting effects on public school programs that originally received these funds. The use of public funds to expand school choice damages public schools by removing dollars dedicated to these schools to support students in a multitude of programs.

ADOPTED: 2017

REVISED: **2018**



(DRAFT)

2019 ASBSD Standing Positions

Revised: 8/8/2018

OVERVIEW

Standing positions are broad policy statements that reflect the core beliefs of South Dakota's locally elected public school board members. Standing positions provide your school board association with general direction and guidance on a range of education policy issues.

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY (NEW STANDING POSITION)

School boards are encouraged to recognize the needs and strengths of all students. School boards should provide resources that will facilitate access to a high-quality, safe, and supportive education that prepares students for success. ASBSD urges local school boards to promote and support the significant benefits of learning in racially, ethnically, and socio-economically diverse settings, to commit to equity and excellence for all students, and to support the needs of English-language learners.

Proposed: 2018

HEALTH & WELLNESS

ASBSD believes that wellness is related to staff and students overall well-being and their readiness to teach and learn. A growing body of research links student wellness to positive academic results, affirming the important role school wellness plays in student achievement.

ASBSD believes local public school boards should work with community stakeholders in a coordinated approach to promote policies and practices that encourage and enable wellness, including healthy food choices, nutrition education, and regular physical activity.

Comprehensive local policy includes multiple aspects of student/staff well-being, including drug resistance, suicide prevention, violence prevention and all forms of bullying.

ASBSD urges local public school boards to adopt policy that promotes healthy lifestyles and student safety, but opposes state mandates, whether funded or unfunded, which would limit the authority of local public school districts to design appropriate wellness programs that reflect school and community standards.

Adopted: 2008

Revised: 2015

INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION

ASBSD believes devoting public funds to elementary and secondary education is an investment in the social and economic future of our children, our communities, our state and our nation.

In South Dakota, public schools deliver an outstanding return on investment. The personal and economic benefits of a quality education have a direct and dramatic impact on individuals, families and communities. Investments in the public education system serve multiple ends, but none are more important to the economic future of our country than ensuring every child graduates from high school ready for the postsecondary education or the workplace.

ASBSD believes investing in elementary and secondary education leads to improved student outcomes, particularly when investments strengthen teacher quality, improve access to high quality public K-12 programs and provide extended learning opportunities for students at-risk.

South Dakota's Constitution prescribes the commitment to public education in Article 8, Section 1; "The stability of a republican form of government depending on the morality and intelligence of the people, it shall be the duty of the Legislature to establish and maintain a general and uniform system of public schools wherein tuition shall be without charge, and equally open to all; and to adopt all suitable means to secure to the people the advantages and opportunities of education."

Adopted: 2011

Revised: 2017

LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Public school districts are governed by elected leaders, who are responsive and accountable to local citizens. An informed, active citizenry is essential to our democratic and representative form of government.

Local boards, within guidelines established by state law, are vested with authority to make local education decisions. Local board members, as the elected representatives closest to the students, families and communities in which they live, are best positioned to understand student needs and identify effective solutions. A local public school board cannot delegate statutory duties and responsibilities. State law must allow governance flexibility to ensure all school boards are positioned to meet the needs of their community and the changing public school environment.

Public school boards are accountable to students, citizens and staff for: providing education programs; striving for excellence; identifying needs; adopting clearly defined written policies; measuring program success; and interpreting and disseminating information to the public; and setting the school calendar that best fits their district.

Public school boards function best in a non-partisan, broadly representative, team-spirited manner while putting district needs ahead of partisanship and special interest - be they political, racial, religious, geographic, economic, social, civic or any other form. The board and superintendent, along with other key personnel, serve as a local governance leadership team that works together to effectively and efficiently operate a public school district.

ASBSD supports the judgment and integrity of South Dakota public school board members and opposes initiatives or legislation that impedes a school board's ability to govern.

Adopted: 2007

Revised: 2015

NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

A range of statistical indicators reveal persistent and dramatic achievement gaps between Native American Indian students and their peers, depriving a significant portion of South Dakota's children of an equal opportunity to claim a more prosperous personal, social and economic future.

All students can face barriers to learning, but many of South Dakota's Native American Indian children are surrounded by a concentrated and generationally pervasive poverty that jeopardizes an individual's health, safety and personal belief in the value of education.

South Dakotans must continue to work toward solutions, which include but not limited to the Native American Achievement Schools Grant Program and the Paraprofessional Tuition Assistance Scholarship Program, while embracing the pride, heritage and dignity of Native American Indian culture and fostering collaboration and establishing long-term commitments to improving educational outcomes for Native American Indian students.

Adopted: 2010

Revised: 2016

OPEN GOVERNMENT AND TRANSPARENCY

As public bodies, school boards operate in a transparent manner that promotes active civic engagement and public discourse. Effective and efficient governance respects the public's right to observe, respectfully record a board meeting and petition government while operating under the legal framework of state and federal policy. Public school boards, as government entities closest to citizens, provide a wealth of public information, including thorough financial records.

ASBSD believes it is incumbent upon each public school board member to have a working knowledge of both open meeting laws and privacy laws.

ASBSD supports state policies and potential legislation allowing public school boards the local option to post official minutes and public notices online.

ASBSD supports full disclosure of conflicts of interest as prescribed by law (reference SDCL 3-23-6 through 3-23-9).

Adopted: 2009

Revised: 2017

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE

ASBSD believes South Dakota's public education system, through South Dakota's open enrollment laws, should provide parents and students the choice to attend any of South Dakota's public schools.

ASBSD supports open enrollment laws that work to promote cooperation among public school districts that help meet the educational needs of ALL students and families.

Adopted: 2007

Revised: 2016

SAFE AND SECURE SCHOOLS

ASBSD believes South Dakota public school students deserve to learn in a safe and secure school environment.

A growing body of research has linked student achievement and behavior, as well as staff morale, to physical building conditions. Every child deserves a safe, technologically-ready school facility designed for student learning.

ASBSD believes local public school boards are responsible for the adoption of plans to prevent and respond to situations that threaten the safety or well-being of students and staff. School districts are encouraged to work with government agencies, public safety officials and other first-responders to prepare effective emergency response plans.

ASBSD believes local public school boards, acting in compliance with federal and state law, must have the authority to enact and implement policies and procedures that maintain safe, orderly schools and create supportive learning cultures.

ASBSD supports current laws designed to keep convicted criminals from employment in schools and illegal drugs and weapons away from school buildings.

ASBSD urges parents, businesses and communities to work with local school boards to provide safe, crime-free schools.

Adopted: 2010

Revised: 2015

SCHOOL FINANCE

South Dakota's public school students deserve a comprehensive school finance system. School finance decisions, whether at the local, state or federal level, should build the capacity of the public education system to expand learning opportunities for students. Policy makers at all levels should fulfill commitments and obligations to public schools before providing financial support to non-public schools.

ASBSD supports a school finance system that:

- Provides necessary equitable, predictable and timely funding; and
- Provides equal opportunities to all students while addressing South Dakota's diverse student needs; and
- Provides judicious funding based on relief for enrollment fluctuations; and
- Provides locally elected public school boards the authority and responsibility to prioritize and allocate funding, within the mandates and parameters of each fund set in state statute, to best meet student needs; and
- Provide additional funding to meet state and federal expectations.

Adopted: 2007

Revised: 2016

SCHOOL REORGANIZATION

ASBSD believes school district reorganization, resource sharing and cooperative arrangements are in the best interest of South Dakota's public school students when:

- Educational outcomes, measured in expanded educational opportunities with expectations for improved achievement, is the most important consideration; and
- Geographical issues are considered, including the amount of student travel time and allowing for continued community participation; and
- Reorganization is voluntary – initiated and voted upon by the school board, or by the citizens of the public school districts.

Adopted: 2006

Revised: 2014

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

One of a local public school board's core responsibilities is to develop, adopt and oversee policies focused on improving student achievement and eliminating achievement gaps between low achieving students and students performing at or above grade level. Every student, regardless of individual differences, can achieve at high levels when the state, local public school boards and communities establish high expectations for students and provide necessary resources and support.

Today's public school boards strive to develop instructional policy that provides for multiple paths to knowledge that moves students to develop more critical thinking, collaborative problem solving and self-reliance skills.

As community leaders, public school board members focus on providing programs and working collaboratively with other agencies.

Student achievement should be gauged using an accountability system based on multiple assessments that are valid, reliable, defensible, credible and diagnostically meaningful to a variety of stakeholders.

ASBSD urges policymakers at all levels to support programs that promote high level skills such as digital literacy, innovative thinking, and interactive communication to engage learners leading students to succeed in today's highly competitive, global economy.

Adopted: 2010

Revised: 2016

TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

Technology has an essential and expanding role in our global society. Emerging information and communication technologies will reshape how students learn and how they apply their knowledge, skills and abilities.

ASBSD believes technology is transforming public K-12 education. The infrastructure, hardware, software, and platforms are either available or being developed that will change the nature of how we teach our children in profound and far-reaching ways.

ASBSD believes technology is a powerful, important tool for public education to be used in combination with proven teaching and learning strategies to ensure a high-quality education.

ASBSD supports technology initiatives that are focused on improved student outcomes and that reflect the need for ongoing support and renewal in the ever-changing technological landscape. Digital technology using virtual learning strategies, blended learning, and other cutting edge teaching coupled with quality training, will advance our students in the highly competitive global environment.

South Dakota's public school systems should embrace technology as a catalyst to improve teaching and learning. School district staff need support, through high-quality, embedded professional development, to integrate technology into their instruction. Technology integration is a critical tool to prepare our students for digital world that is transforming around them.

Adopted: 2012

Revised: 2015