



2025 ASBSD Legislative Resolutions

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. 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, consistent with the SD Early Learning Guidelines, 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

REVISED: 2019

2. COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports compulsory school attendance to age 18 or until a student graduates or earns their GED.

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. ASBSD also understands that to accomplish this goal cooperative funding and support for at-risk youth must be provided to the districts.

ADOPTED: 2008

REVISED: 2024

A. Achievement and Equity

3. CURRICULUM ADOPTION

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the authority of the local school board to implement curriculum best suited for their local school district within the content standards adopted and implemented by the State Board of Education without statutory intrusion.

RATIONALE

Local school boards across the state are best suited to make decisions regarding what curriculum is best for their K-12 students. New laws dictating curriculum in the public schools of South Dakota would be a hinderance to the state and local boards, who are the knowledgeable decision makers in these areas, and potentially limit the education of students.

ADOPTED: 2021

REVISED: 2024

B. Local Governance

1. STUDENTS RECEIVING ALTERNATIVE INSTRUCTION (HOMESCHOOL) FOLLOWING LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES AND RULES

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports all local school district eligibility requirements, policies and rules related to student participation in extracurricular, co-curricular and all other school sponsored activities be obeyed by alternative instruction (homeschool) students planning to participate.

RATIONALE

The statute does require an alternative instruction (homeschool) student participating in public school district activities be held to the same local training rules. ASBSD believes all students, regardless of path of education, participating in an activity be held to the same standard and follow all protocols.

ADOPTED: 2008

REVISED: 2022

2. SCHOOL DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION SYMBOLS and EVENTS

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

REVISED: 2020

3. DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY REGARDING TRANSGENDER LEGISLATION

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the judgment, integrity and local control of public school boards and school districts to act in the best interest of all their students, school and community and show respect for all students, staff and other individuals, when making decisions on transgender matters that impact their local policies, facilities and other school procedures.

RATIONALE

Local public school boards and districts have been met with these matters previously and have prudently reached a decision that works best for all parties involved.

ADOPTED: 2016

REVISED: 2023

B. Local Governance

4. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL PROTECTION FOR COMPLIANCE WITH STATE LAW

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports provisions 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 enacted 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 13-67-5, 13-34-25 and 13-24-24 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 or the display of the national motto and we believe this right should be extended to all laws requiring school district compliance with state law.

ADOPTED: 2016

REVISED: 2023

5. SCHOOL BOARD AND SCHOOL BOND ELECTIONS

RESOLUTION

ASBSD opposes any legislative mandate which would require public school district annual school board elections, or special elections, or both, be held on any date other than what is determined by the local school board.

RATIONALE

It is important for locally elected school boards to be able to decide, within the parameters of state statute, the date they will hold their school board and school bond elections, in order to maintain the non-partisan nature of these elections. School bond elections should also be left to local control of the school board so the district can meet construction project timelines and favorable interest rates, should the bond be passed by the local voters. Since 1939 the locally elected school board has had the statutory authority to set the date of the annual school election and since 1981 the locally elected school board has had the statutory authority to choose to hold a general school district election in conjunction with a regular municipal election. School elections are a local decision and should remain as such.

ADOPTED: 2020

REVISED: 2022

B. Local Governance

6. SCHOOL ADMISSION IMMUNIZATION EXEMPTION AND REQUIREMENTS

RESOLUTION

ASBSD opposes the repeal of immunization requirements or expansion of the immunization exemptions for students for public school admission beyond what is currently permitted in state law.

RATIONALE

The current immunization requirements and exemptions for students for school admission in school law provide sufficient personal rights and protection to families and students who fall within those criteria, as well as a safe environment for fellow students and school staff. Expansion or repeal of these exemptions would endanger the health of students and staff and the safe environment provided within the school.

ADOPTED: 2021

REVISED: 2024

7. BOARD MEMBER RECALL PROCESS

RESOLUTION

ASBSD opposes legislation implementing a recall process for school board members.

RATIONALE

State law (SDCL 3-17) currently contains a process for the removal of a school board member for multiple reasons making the implementation of a recall process unnecessary.

ADOPTED: 2023

8. LOCAL CONTROL OF FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the decision-making ability of local school boards to determine, based on state law and/or their local school board policies, the appropriate use of their facilities and the activities sponsored by the district.

RATIONALE

Local school boards are best equipped to determine the best use of their facilities, as well as the activities the district chooses to sponsor, in accordance with state law and/or their local school board policies.

ADOPTED: 2023

B. Local Governance

9. PARENT AND GUARDIAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the engagement of parents and guardians in education and encourages collaboration between parents or guardians and schools with the goal of supporting student learning, growth and development, so long as it doesn't limit the authority of the local school board or abridge or intrude upon the educational process.

RATIONALE

Parents/guardians have a fundamental right to oversee the care, custody and control of their children. Educators, administrators and school boards want parents and guardians to be invested and involved in their child's education. Schools welcome their input and influence on their child's intellectual development with the understanding between the two parties that an open dialogue be maintained in accordance with school board policy regarding the classroom and its materials, instead of actions that disrupt student learning. Parents have a responsibility to present concerns in a matter that aligns with established board policy and models respectful discourse for all students involved.

ADOPTED: 2023

10. SCHOOL, INSTRUCTIONAL AND LIBRARY MATERIALS REVIEW

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports adherence to local school board policies for review of school, instructional and library materials for both school district employees and the public.

RATIONALE

Locally elected school board members adopt school board policies that best fit their school district. Policies governing review of school, instructional and library materials have been thoroughly vetted by the school board and administration and are best suited for the review process in the district. These policies should be regularly reviewed by the school board and district's administration to ensure they meet the needs of the district.

ADOPTED: 2023

REVISED: 2024

11. NONPARTISAN SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the provision in state statute (SDCL 13-7-13) maintaining the nonpartisanship of public school board elections.

RATIONALE

The purpose of South Dakota's public school system is to educate children. Education to students is provided in an unbiased and nonpartisan manner for the best possible learning environment to be achieved and successful outcomes to be attained. Locally elected leaders of public schools within the state's public education system must remain unbiased and nonpartisan when making decisions in the best interest of students and school systems. Therefore, local public school board elections should maintain their nonpartisan status, allowing local voters to focus on the individual candidate running and not their political party affiliation.

ADOPTED: 2023

B. Local Governance

12. SCHOOL BOARD POLICY (ADOPTION PROPOSED)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the local control of school boards in creating, reviewing, adopting, implementing and maintaining their school board policies.

RATIONALE

Local school boards thoroughly develop school board policies that best fit the needs of their students and staff and represent the interests of the local community, which elected them, and implement the policies through a rigorous process. School boards complete the policy process in an open forum with input available from the public throughout the policy adoption proceedings. Finally, school boards are well aware of educational and societal issues that affect their district and develop school board policies promptly to address these matters. A mandate removing the local control of school boards in the policy process would hinder its right to govern.

ADOPTED: 2024

13. MANDATES ON DISPLAYS IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS (ADOPTION PROPOSED)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD opposes mandate requiring or limiting displays in any area of public school buildings beyond what is currently required in state statute.

RATIONALE

Beyond what is currently required in state law, mandates that require or limit displays, in any manner, are unnecessary. Local school leaders can decide what should or should not be displayed in common areas in school buildings and classrooms. Local school boards have the authority to implement policies managing displays in their buildings and are trusted to do so by their communities. Further laws diminishing this power are an erosion of local control.

ADOPTED: 2024

C. School Finance

1. CONSISTENT SPARSITY FUNDING

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports consistent 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

2. SCHOOL FUNDING – ENROLLMENT AVERAGING

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the implementation of enrollment averaging or current enrollment, whichever is larger, in place of the singular use of the fall enrollment count for the state aid formula calculation.

RATIONALE

The provision in the state aid formula that allowed for two-year averaging of school district enrollment was eliminated in 2016, but with year to year fluctuations in student enrollment, public schools would benefit from enrollment averaging to provide stability in their budgeting process.

ADOPTED: 2016

REVISED: 2024

3. CAPITAL OUTLAY ADJUSTMENTS

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports legislation amending Capital Outlay fund caps in SDCL 13-16-7.2 to allow a school district flexibility within the levy.

RATIONALE

Since the implementation of the Capital Outlay growth caps, schools have experienced growing pressure on the Capital Outlay fund. Inflation has led to rising costs and resulted in schools having to postpone projects due to the inability to raise the needed funds because of the caps imposed on the Capital Outlay levy. Legislation amending the caps and providing more flexibility to districts would benefit fiscally responsible building projects.

ADOPTED: 2018

REVISED: 2023

C. School Finance

4. GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND ELECTION

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

5. INCREASING STATE AID

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports an annual increase to State Aid without a growth cap, but rather a focus on public school districts receiving the maximum amount of state budget dollars available.

RATIONALE

The Governor and the Legislature have a constitutional obligation to maintain a state education funding system that provides for public schools to deliver a high-quality education and competitively compensate district employees. To accomplish that, an annual increase in state aid must be provided without a percentage limit.

Appropriating funds for public schools is a constitutional requirement of South Dakota under Article 8, section 1, and must be a state budget priority. State Aid is critical to schools in order for them to maintain a consistent revenue source and without it, schools would not be able to withstand the inflationary increases of salaries, and operational expenses of schools and thus not meet the standard of education expected. In addition, schools are required by state law to meet accountability rules to maintain teacher salaries. Without State Aid schools could not meet those state mandated requirements.

Schools need State Aid and the Legislature needs to fund it annually with maximum amount of dollars available. School districts must be appropriated the maximum amount of dollars available to pay for the growing needs within school districts to:

- a. provide the best quality education for each student;
- b. provide salary increases to teachers, as well as maintain salaries for all personnel, and remain competitive in regional teacher salaries to attract and retain our best teachers;
- c. meet inflationary increases in the operation of the schools;
- d. maintain safety and health related services;
- e. provide current technology and instructional materials.

ADOPTED: 2018

REVISED: 2024

C. School Finance

6. ACCOUNTABILITY WAIVERS

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the waiver process option for school districts to seek relief from accountability requirements, including, but not limited to, meeting the average teacher compensation, minimum teacher salary and the general fund reserve cash caps. In a fiscal year where school districts are not provided the statutorily required increase in state aid, waivers from accountability requirements should be considered.

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

REVISED: 2024

7. PROTECTING SCHOOL DISTRICT VALUATIONS

RESOLUTION

ASBSD opposes legislation that would reduce or cap any property valuations without the inclusion of a hold harmless clause for school districts.

RATIONALE

ASBSD believes protecting property valuations to support school funding must be a priority in South Dakota. Any legislation that significantly reduces or implements a cap on property valuations without a hold harmless for schools would have a drastic negative effect on school finance.

ADOPTED: 2019

REVISED: 2024

8. FUNDING FOR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) PROGRAMS

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports new funding for public schools for Career and Technical Education (CTE) options and opportunities within their district, and for collaborated efforts with neighboring districts.

RATIONALE

South Dakota has a need to create an expanded and educated workforce. As education needs of students change, we need to adapt and change to create educational opportunities, which will offer resources that help guide students down pathways of success, not just in education, but for success in their future career goals. An expansion and creation of CTE options could provide partnership opportunities for neighboring school districts that could offer expanded educational opportunities. ASBSD supports the state creating grant opportunities for districts, which could be applied for by local districts to create and expand CTE centers by matching those grant funds with local funds.

ADOPTED: 2022

C. School Finance

9. TRANSFERS FROM CAPITAL OUTLAY TO GENERAL FUND (ADOPTION PROPOSED)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD supports the increase of the percentage amount a school district can transfer from its capital outlay fund to its general fund.

RATIONALE

With the change in teacher pay accountabilities public school districts will need to explore different funding options to ensure they meet what's required in state law. Increasing the percentage amount a school district can transfer from its capital outlay fund to its general fund presents a different option to public school districts to utilize in their general fund to meet the teacher pay accountabilities without having to raise taxes through an opt-out, which would put increased property tax pressure on constituents. Providing this additional funding option benefits the public school districts and, most importantly, their local taxpayers.

ADOPTED: 2024

D. Taxation

1. PROPERTY TAX REDUCTION OR REPEAL

RESOLUTION

ASBSD opposes the reduction or repeal of property tax without a new source of revenue being implemented to replace those dollars lost or a hold harmless clause being included in any proposal.

RATIONALE

Property tax dollars are the main source of local revenue for South Dakota's public school districts and any reduction or repeal of these dollars removes much needed funding from these districts. Any repeal or reduction of a property tax must be replaced with a new revenue source or include a hold harmless clause in order for the district to meet its budget obligations.

ADOPTED: 2022

REVISED: 2023

2. TAX COLLECTION ADMINISTRATION FEE

RESOLUTION

ASBSD opposes legislation imposing a fee on local school districts to be paid to another local government entity for collecting and distributing property taxes.

RATIONALE

South Dakota's K-12 public school funding system makes school districts heavily reliant on property taxes to fund the many components in their budget, but within the state's property tax system are not equipped to collect or distribute local dollars. School districts should not be assessed a fee for the collection and distribution of dollars they are dependent upon, but are not allowed to collect themselves (SDCL 10-21-1).

ADOPTED: 2023

3. STATE REVENUE COLLECTION (ADOPTION PROPOSED)

RESOLUTION

ASBSD opposes the repeal or reduction of a state revenue source without the increase to an existing revenue source or implementation of a new revenue source to replace the lost dollars.

RATIONALE

The state aid funding formula relies on two funding sources in local property tax dollars and state revenue collection. If either source of revenue for the state aid funding formula receives a cut the other must make up the loss in funding or, if the revenue is not made up, funding for public schools will be cut. A reduction or repeal of a state revenue source without it being recouped from another or new revenue source would be detrimental to public schools.

ADOPTED: 2024

E. Personnel

1. 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 review and subsequently require the state to supply the necessary 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 legislature to review and subsequently require the funding necessary to meet the fiscal impact on public school districts and consider providing additional funding, if determined as being needed, prior to the passage of all mandates placed on local public school districts.

ADOPTED: 2008

REVISED: 2023

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