

NASB State Board Candidate Questionnaire 2026



Nate Ostdiek – LD 6

1. **Local Control** - With so many decisions from the legislature impacting local boards, NASB is interested in your view of local control. Regarding education, what decisions do you feel are best made at the school board level vs. the State level?

Decisions on operations, staffing, and budget allocation/priorities are best left at the local board level. They know their communities and the district's needs. Core curriculum, credentialing, and other standards that are best kept consistent statewide should be managed at the state level. In the legislature, I want to maintain support for local control and move away from the trend of the legislature interfering heavily in day-to-day operations.

2. **School Funding** - Every year the legislature makes decisions about the way schools are funded, making predictability of funding a challenge. What changes and/or adjustments, if any, do you think the Legislature should address?

I think that the Legislature should continue to step up funding for special education to ensure its availability across the state. Prioritize predictable funding formulas and adjustments so there are not wild year-over-year swings that cannot be easily predicted. Building upon that, hopefully looking towards fiscal stability and longer-term funding cycle commitments. Education (alongside healthcare) is one of the core human investments by the state and should be a top priority.

3. **Role of Education in the State** - What role do you think PK-12 Education plays in the future success of the State and your community?

PK-12 education is the backbone of our communities and having high quality PK-12 is one of the main draws and appeals of Nebraska. We should continue to double down on that to ensure that Nebraska stays a fantastic place to live that people can see themselves wanting to start and grow a family in.

4. **Educational Workforce** - Educational workforce continues to be a challenge across the State from teachers to bus drivers. What would be your plan to address this challenge?

I would like to see an expansion of the Teacher Retention and Recruitment program, benefits tied to COL increases, and the inclusion of paraprofessionals and other

support staff. It's certainly a core area that needs more attention. I would also like to ensure that there is good affordable housing available across our state, to hopefully bring down housing costs and support those looking to work in education.

5. **Mandates** - School districts continue to be challenged by the increasing unfunded mandates put upon them by the State and Federal government. What is your response to mandates and the State's role in them?

We have a responsibility not to impose mandates on school districts if the State will not provide the funds to carry them out. It's a simple division of labor to me: just as you wouldn't accept a second job's worth of responsibilities without a pay increase, we shouldn't expect the same of our school districts, particularly during a period of high property taxes. We need to avoid creating new unfunded mandates and find additional state funding where possible. Ensuring TEEOSA remains predictable and that the state does not renege on its funding commitments is key as well.

Final Thoughts

Education is the backbone of Nebraska. I would like to serve on the education committee and do my best to collaborate with education professionals at all levels, from the classroom to the school board, to ensure that our youth have a world-class education system that remains strong and accessible to all Nebraskans.

How can voters contact you?

nate@natefornebraska.com