

NASB LEGISLATIVE NOTES

TRACKING THE 2025-26 LEGISLATURE FROM THE NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS



2,000,000 Nebraskans 329,000 Students 1,700 Locally Elected School Board Members 260 Member Districts/ESUs ONE NEBRASKA

109th Legislature, 1st Session - February 13, 2025 - Day 26 of 90 - <https://members.nasb.org/government-relations>

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OF BILLS TRACKED

107

<https://nasb.envisiams.com/legislative-bills>

BILLS WE ARE TESTIFYING ON

52*

So far ...

THOSE WE SUPPORT

24

THOSE WE OPPOSE

28



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Sen. Dave Murman, Chair
Sen. Jana Hughes, Vice Chair
Sen. Danielle Conrad
Sen. Megan Hunt
Sen. Margo Juarez
Sen. Dan Lonowski
Sen. Glen Meyer
Sen. Rita Sanders

REVENUE COMMITTEE

Sen. Brad von Gillern, Chair
Sen. Mike Jacobson, Vice Chair
Sen. Eliot Bostar
Sen. George Dungan
Sen. Teresa Ibach
Sen. Kathleen Kauth
Sen. Dave Murman
Sen. Tony Sorrentino

DAY 26 OF 90 ... KEY BILLS ON GENERAL FILE

The following bills have already been voted out of Committee, and are on **General File**, to now be heard by the full Legislature. As a reminder, the process for lawmaking in Nebraska, a bill is first introduced, heard by its respective committee, if voted out by a majority of the committee, it moves to General File, where it is heard by the full Legislature. If it has a majority on General File it moves to Select File, then Final Reading, then to the Governor.

LB 31 **LB 140** **LB 296** **LB 300** **LB 390** **LB 428**



LB 31 (Conrad) Require school policies relating to the use of student surveillance, monitoring, and tracking technology by school districts



Student surveillance and tracking defined as: digital hall passes, anti-vaping devices, fingerprints swipes, cameras, and electronic surveys. The bill's hearing brought out some strange alliances with representatives from both Protect Nebraska Children and the ACLU indicating support. There was good testimony in opposition from school IT professionals. Sen. Conrad indicated wanting to work with stakeholders as this bill moves forward and we hope to work with her.



LB 140 (Sanders on behalf of the Governor) Require school policies relating to use of electronic communication devices by students



Requires district policy to prohibit cell phone use by students with some exceptions (when required by IEP, in case of emergency). Does not apply to non-public schools. Colby testified as the only opponent to the bill. His testimony was well received, as he threaded the needle of support for the underlying concept with concerns about the technical aspects of the bill. He highlighted the challenges with enforcing a ban during "school functions" and also shared the concern with giving teachers the ability to modify. Finally, he highlighted the confusing language of a mandate with exceptions, requesting the committee be clear. All comments were taken well by the committee. Much discussion and questions of Colby surrounded where this best fits. He shared that local boards are the best place for this, but if the State is going to dictate minimum standards, they need to be clear and enforceable. The committee amendment clarifies the ban during "school functions", making it easier to enforce. It also removes classroom teachers as having the ability to ban cell phones in favor of a district policy. The legislation still leaves it up the local school board which is contrary to the intent of the introducer and supporters who prefer a strict ban.



LB 296 (Arch) Require the State Department of Education to create a centralized education records system and employ registrars relating to students under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court and change provisions relating to graduation requirements and the State Department of Education Improvement Grant Fund



Causes the creation of a database for kids in the juvenile justice system. Will assist districts who take kids from placements by assuring their records go with them.

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LB 300 (Murman) Change provisions relating to the Superintendent Pay Transparency Act and provide a limit for superintendent and educational service unit administrator compensation

GF Limits Superintendent pay to five times a “beginning teacher’s salary” as defined. The committee amendment changes the bill from a limit on Superintendent salary to 5 times the beginning teacher pay amount to a mandate that the beginning teacher’s salary for the first year is at least 20% of the salary paid to the Superintendent in the same contract year. This bill does not take into consideration market conditions related to experience and district location which play heavily into negotiations. We continue to oppose this bill as it is the school boards who should determine pay.

GF LB 390 (Murman) Require each school board to adopt a policy relating to access by a parent, guardian, or educational decisionmaker to certain school library information

Last Monday, Senator Murman introduced LB 390. The committee amendment strikes the word “online” with reference to the library catalog which will give districts some flexibility. There was no opposition testimony to the bill.

GF LB 428 (Murman) Change provisions relating to school policies on the involvement of parents, guardians, and educational decisionmakers in schools

Requires district policy on student surveys. No surveys requesting students provide sexual, mental health, medical, religious or sensitive nature without first notifying parents at least 30 days prior. Gives parents rights to review survey and exempt their student from taking it. There was only one testifier in support and no other testimony. The committee amendment struck the 30 day requirement and replaced it with a 15 day requirement which was suggested by our members. School librarians indicate they can work with this bill. We will continue to monitor.

LB 303 - SCHOOL FINANCE

LB 303 (Hughes at the request of the governor) - Change provisions relating to foundation aid and certain certification dates and provide for base levy adjustments under TEEOSA and create the School Finance Reform Commission

Heard 2/10/25. Lowers max levy cap from \$1.05 to \$1.02. Increases foundation from \$1500/student to \$1590, adjusts base levy adjustment to 0.30 (25-26). Creates school finance reform. Colby testified that our members appreciated the increased state investment, and compared to what has happened in past sessions, this is a bill that has a chance to move forward, and keeps local control in mind. He also strongly advocated for at least two school board members from different perspectives to be a part of the school finance reform committee.

SUPPORTING TEACHERS

LB 149 (Hansen) Eliminate the prohibition on suspending a student in pre-k through second grade

Not yet scheduled. Repeals LB 362 from last session prohibiting the suspension of students in pre-K to 2nd grade.

LB 408 (Dungan) Adopt the Special Education Teacher Forgivable Loan Program Act

Heard 2/11/25. Provides for dollars as a forgivable loan for up to 25 eligible students seeking certification to be a Special Ed teacher. Recipient must teach in Nebraska for at least five years.

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LB 430 (Murman) Provide an additional exception to the prohibition on suspending a student in prekindergarten through second grade and change provisions relating to short-term and long-term suspension under the Student Discipline Act

Not yet scheduled. Requires additional information be provided by the principal to the parents of the student being suspended, including details on the actions taken by the school to address the behavior before the suspension, available or recommended resources, and the school's plans and strategies for moving forward.

DUAL CREDIT AND ELIMINATING TRAINING MANDATES



LB 173 (Prokop) Appropriate funds for aid to community colleges and state intent



Replaces one-time funding for dual-credits with state funds. **CALL TO ACTION** ... The hearing will be Thursday, February 27th. If you have a Senator on the Appropriations Committee, please call or email and voice your support!

https://nebraskalegislature.gov/committees/landing_pages/index.php?cid=2



LB 670 (Murman at the request of the Governor) Require schools to adopt a safety plan and provide and change requirements related to training for staff of child care and schools

Heard 2/4/25. Requires the adoption of a safety plan policy related to fire/tornado drills and vehicle safety. Changes some provisions of required safety training, giving greater board discretion. Safety plans to be submitted to the school safety director.

BONDS



LB 135 (Holdcroft) – Provide, change, and eliminate provisions relating to elections for certain purposes related to bonds and tax levies



Heard 1/22/25. This bill eliminates ability of school and ESU bond elections to be held during special elections with exception for emergencies only. While amendments continue to be proposed, we continue to oppose the bill asserting that the current boundaries around bond elections are sufficient and that districts need the flexibility to hold elections as their districts need. Contractors continue to have concerns the bill will cause market spikes for design and construction. **CALL TO ACTION** ... Call or email your Senator(s) now!

CLASSROOM/CURRICULUM



LB 213 (Holdcroft) Require the State Board of Education to adopt academic content standards on human embryology under the science education standards

Hearing is 2/24/25. The bill requires that NDE write standards on embryology, that classroom instruction includes the 23 stages of embryology, and that specific visual instructional materials be used. Nebraska College and Career Ready Standards for Science include content related to prenatal development in the indicators which show how students might meet a standard. This bill suggests that standards be written at a knowledge level contrary to the inquiry-based model of Science that requires students to think like scientists. Instructional material selection is a local school district and teacher responsibility. In short, this curriculum is not suitable for K-12 students.

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ESU LEVY REMOVAL

LB 389 (Murman) Eliminate the levy authority of educational service units and provide state funding to educational service units


Heard 2/7/25. Eliminates levy authority of ESUs after 2028-29. Provides for state appropriation in lieu of levy authority. Appropriation would be less than currently receiving through levy authority. No return of levy authority if the State does not make good on its commitment to fund. The hearing last week went well with many testifying to the value of ESUs to their districts. Mary Yilk (ESU 9) did a great job in sharing the actual impact of the bill. Mary is in her eighth year on the ESU 9 Board, spent 10 years as an elementary teacher in Hastings, then served as an elementary principal at Doniphan-Trumbull for 21 years where ESUs played a critical role in providing professional development for teachers, staff support, specialized areas such as PT, OT, school psychologist, speech therapists and other resources. "Without the expertise of ESU staff, my ability to serve students and educators effectively would have been significantly impacted. **I am concerned that eliminating their levy authority while shifting funding to the state might create an unintended negative impact. Removing local funding authority means uncertainty and a potential lack of sustainability.**"

PINK POSTCARDS


There are two bills in Revenue, one we support, one we oppose. This is another **CALL TO ACTION** on both! Please contact your Senator(s) and members of the Revenue Committee to explain the benefits of LB 683 and why LB 384 is unnecessary. Share our experiences with these meetings and the importance of your budget hearings.

https://nebraskalegislature.gov/committees/landing_pages/index.php?cid=12

LB 683 (Raybould) Change provisions relating to duties of county assessors regarding notification of real property assessments and eliminate and change provisions of the Property Tax Request Act

 Not yet scheduled. This bill would change the "pink post card" meeting notice to a notice of the political subdivision's budget hearings.

LB 384 (Storer) Require a majority of the elected members of the governing bodies of participating political subdivisions to attend joint public hearings under the Property Tax Request Act

 This bill, which was heard today, requires a majority of school board members to attend the "pink post card" meetings if the district is subject to participation. Colby has met with Sen. Storer to explain our opposition and support for LB 683 as an alternative.

STILL TO COME

Two bills centered around **School Safety** will be heard in Education next Tuesday, February 18th. Unfortunately, these bills represent unfunded mandates which schools can already do.

LB 517 (Juarez) Provide requirements for the state school security director regarding protective door assemblies and other school entry systems

Mandates annual inspection of protective door assemblies by a trained inspector. This is an unnecessary and unfunded mandate.

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 **LB 685 (Lonowski) Require schools to install a secure master key box as prescribed, provide powers and duties to the state school security director, change provisions relating to a grant program for security-related infrastructure projects and the School Safety and Security Fund, and provide for a transfer from the Cash Reserve Fund**

Requires a master key box at each school building. \$1 million dollar cash reserve transfer to provide for grants for the purchase of the boxes. State school security officer to oversee compliance. The one million dollar transfer is no guarantee that this mandate will be funded. Schools are already able to procure these boxes if they want and shouldn't be forced to purchase if they feel it's unnecessary.

And more Still To Come ... bills on the State & National Motto, AEDs, Chaplains, Religious Instruction, and the Ten Commandments which fall under the **Mandates** and **Local Control** categories.

 **LB 122 (Meyer) Require display of the state and national motto in schools**

Hearing is 2/24/25. Requires a poster no less than 8.5 by 11 inches in each classroom or other prominent place in each building.

 **LB 463 (Ballard) Require school districts to develop a cardiac emergency response plan under the School Safety and Security Reporting Act and provide for grants for such plans from the Medicaid Managed Care Excess Profit Fund**

Hearing is 2/27/25. Requires State School Safety director to develop model policies on emergency cardiac responses. Requires the purchase and placement of defibrillators on school grounds.

 **LB 549 (Lippincott) Allow a school board to employ a chaplain, including in a volunteer capacity, at a school**

Hearing is 2/24/25. Provides that a district may hire a chaplain. Schools can already do this, making this legislation unnecessary.

 **LB 550 (Lippincott) Require school districts to adopt a policy that excuses students to attend a released time course for religious instruction**

Not yet scheduled. Requires policy that excuses student to attend courses at least one class period per week for a course in religious instruction. Schools are already challenged to meet all of the required education, letting a student attend and receive courses from a potentially non-credentialed educator is problematic.

 **LB 691 (Murman) Require school districts and private, denominational, and parochial schools to display the Ten Commandments in school buildings as prescribed**

Hearing is 2/24/25. Requires the display of the Ten Commandments in each classroom or an elementary school and each building of a middle and high school in a framed poster of at least 11 by 14 inches. Does not require a school board to purchase but does provide for acceptance of donations. There will be a financial cost to districts.

LAWMAKING IN NEBRASKA: INTRODUCTION, COMMITTEE, GENERAL FILE, SELECT FILE, FINAL READING, GOVERNOR

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CALL TO ACTION

Reminder ... we could use your help with a **CALL TO ACTION** on the following bills!



LB 135 (Holdcroft) – Provide, change, and eliminate provisions relating to elections for certain purposes related to bonds and tax levies



LB 173 (Prokop) Appropriate funds for aid to community colleges and state intent



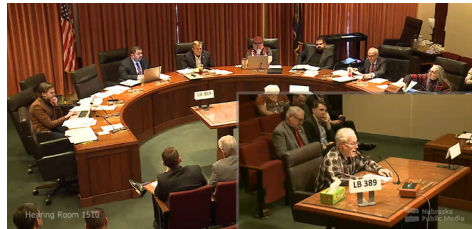
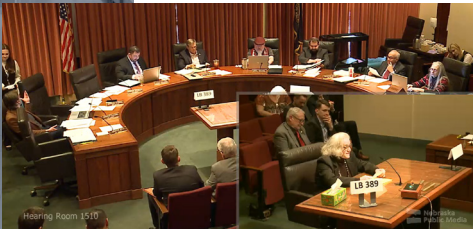
LB 384 (Storer) Require a majority of the elected members of the governing bodies of participating political subdivisions to attend joint public hearings under the Property Tax Request Act



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SHARING THEIR STORY

Thanks to your peers who have made it to Lincoln this session to help us testify for or against a particular bill. Your effort, energy and engagement do not go unnoticed! So far, Kathy Danek (Lincoln), Jane Erdenberger (Omaha), Kyle Fisher (Springfield Platteview), Shavonna Holman (Omaha), Charles Riedesel (Beatrice), Jeremy Shuey (Plattsmouth), Dave Welsch (Milford), and Mary Yilk (ESU 9) have sat in the Chair to share their story on various topics of expertise!



KEY LINKS AND RESOURCES

NASB Government Relations Page: <https://members.nasb.org/government-relations>

NASB Bills Page: <https://nasb.envisiams.com/legislative-bills>

Nebraska Legislature: <https://nebraskalegislature.gov/>

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