

2026 NBI Proposals

NBI 1

Strategic Goal: Creating Equity in Education – For every student to succeed, schools must reflect the communities they serve.

Submitted: 03/10/2026

Required Vote: Timely Submission – Majority Vote

NBI: SDEA in cooperation with any and all state education data collecting entities and/or through surveying of individual districts in SD shall collect information about the attendance and truancy status of students before those students were removed from school districts into home schooling.

SDEA shall develop the questionnaire to best collect relevant data. SDEA shall also decide the best way to synthesize and use collected data.

No personal data on students will be requested: only the attendance/truancy status of students will be requested.

Data collected will be organized to give a state-wide picture of the attendance/truancy status of SD students opting into home schooling.

This data can be used in discussions of the problem educators in SD have been seeing, often referred to as “dropping out by homeschool.”

Rationale: Homeschooling has boomed in districts since Governor Noem’s relaxing of homeschool accountability. Anecdotal evidence indicates that more-and-more students are being removed from district rolls when attendance and/or truancy becomes an issue involving students’ parents.

Public education also has been put under the microscope for every shortcoming; it would be good to have data that homeschooling may not be the panacea advocates claim, nor is it a failing of public education leading to this flight.

This data goes to answering the question of “why” more-and-more districts are seeing homeschooling increasing.

Submitted By: Steve O’Brien

Local Association: Watertown Education Association

Unit: Educators Guiding Learners Unit

Cost Analysis:

NBI 2

Strategic Goal: Improving the Lives of Educators – The educators who serve our students and our communities are the foundation of strong public schools.

Submitted: 03/21/2026

Required Vote: Timely Submission – Majority Vote

NBI: SDEA governance and staff shall convene a task force to review and reorganize the current SDEA Legislative Agenda. The purpose of this effort is to align, clarify, and simplify the document while preserving the priorities and intent of the existing language. The task force will complete this work prior to the 2027 SDEA Representative Assembly so that members may review and take action on the revised document.

Rationale: The SDEA Legislative Agenda has been amended over many years and would benefit from a comprehensive review and refresh. This New Business Item (NBI) provides SDEA governance and staff with the time necessary to undertake this important work before the 2027 SDEA Representative Assembly.

By prioritizing this effort, SDEA will be better positioned to navigate fast-paced and often unpredictable legislative sessions, align more effectively with coalition partners, and strengthen its ability to advocate for public education and union members in the face of anti-union and anti-public education efforts.

The 2026 Legislative Session saw many successes and underscored the importance of the Legislative Agenda as a tool through which members communicate priorities and positions to SDEA governance, staff, and lobbyists. As SDEA continues to organize and collaborate with coalition partners to advance pro-education policies and oppose anti-education agendas, a clear and streamlined legislative agenda will be essential.

Submitted By: Jennifer Macziewski & Debbie Rohlf

Local Associations: Rapid City and Hot Springs Education Associations

Unit: Western Unit

Cost Analysis:

NBI 3

Strategic Goal: Governance

Submitted: 03/21/2026

Required Vote: Timely Submission – Majority Vote

NBI: The SDEA offices in Pierre, South Dakota house extensive archival materials dating to the organization's founding in 1884. While these records are safely stored, they remain inaccessible to members. This proposal calls for a coordinated effort by SDEA governance and staff to digitize, update, and organize these materials, ensuring long-term preservation, enhanced accessibility, and meaningful integration into programming and communications for current and future members.

Rationale: Many of SDEA's historical records lack consistent preservation and accessibility, increasing the risk of loss, degradation, and limited use. While comprehensive physical preservation may be beyond current resources, digitization provides a practical, cost-effective way to safeguard these materials against deterioration or unforeseen events. This effort will ensure long-term preservation, expand stakeholder access, and, with the upcoming anniversary, create a timely opportunity to leverage these assets for storytelling, engagement, and institutional visibility.

Submitted By: Western Unit & Andrew Travers

Local Association: Rapid City & Sioux Falls Education Associations

Unit: Western & Eastern Prairie Units

Cost Analysis: