

## **NDSEB EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday June 18, 2025

The North Dakota State Electrical Board Education Advisory Committee was called to order at 9:00 AM by Executive Director James Schmidt. The meeting was held at the NDSCS-Fargo campus in room #110.

Committee members present: James Schmidt – NDSEB Executive Director; Scott Halle – Training & Compliance Administrator; Ivan Maas – Power Limited Electrician; Rob Zachariason – On Campus Representative; Nichole Wischnak – Off Campus Related Training Provider; Brian Poykko – Electrical Engineer; Tim Pull – Master Electrician Representative; Steve Mundahl – Journeyman Electrician Representative; Adam Kidwell – Related Training Provider; Jeff Kirstein – Related Training Provider; Zach Sheeley – On Campus Representative.

Also in attendance from Bismarck State College: Jason Dockter; Vance Vesey; Kristi Weikum; Bradley Steier; Adam Gietzen.

James asked for any additional agenda items, nothing added.

The meeting minutes from May 8, 2025, were reviewed and approved as presented after a motion by Steve Mundahl, seconded by Adam Kidwell, the motion carried.

James asked the committee members their opinion about meetings in Fargo and everyone indicated it is more convenient; Adam and Jeff also offered the use of their facilities in Fargo for future meetings. After discussion the committee will decide on a meeting location in advance of each occasion, with a preference for meeting in Fargo as it is more convenient for everyone.

The representatives from Bismarck State College (BSC) introduced themselves to the committee and described their roles in the teaching process going forward, and the committee members introduced themselves to the BSC representatives. Vance presented BSC's proposal for the program to the committee, emphasizing they are committed to building a strong program by revising the second-year curriculum to align better for electrical education and adding more emphasis on theory and code. Vance stated he will be in charge of the program, and he will be the point of contact for questions or information. Adam pointed out the use of the word apprentice in the course summaries is not correct and should be changed, also that the program website still indicates there is a second-year option for completion of the program through online coursework and on the job training. Vance agreed that the use of the term apprentice should be changed and that there is no longer an option for work study now that the curriculum changes have been made and the website will need to be corrected. There was more discussion between BSC representatives and the committee members about contact hours between lecture and lab portions of the courses and how this is reflected in course credits, and if classes are based on 16-week blocks or 8-week blocks, there are some of each. The maximum number of students for the

program is currently limited to 18 students per year, they have that number currently enrolled for this fall, and there will not be any second-year courses offered this fall. The committee members offered some advice to the BSC representatives such as the importance of getting feedback from the students not only now but also in the future as they enter the workforce to determine what is working and what may need to be changed, getting graduates of the program on the advisory committee in the future, and tracking as much information as possible. The makeup of the advisory board for the program was reviewed and appears to have a good selection of industry representatives. Be sure to emphasize the mental skills needed for future success in their careers, the mechanical skills can be learned in the field but understanding theory will help them apply code in the future, code and theory seem to be the areas the applicants struggle with when preparing for exams. The committee inquired if the labs are set up and ready for students, BSC stated they are mostly ready, some equipment is not delivered yet due to supply issues, classroom materials are ordered and in place. Jason inquired about the next step in the process, James said the committee will discuss the proposal and will inform BSC what is determined.

BSC representatives left the meeting at 10:15 A.M.

Committee members were supportive of the BSC program with the changes discussed during the presentation, Rob Zachariason made a motion that the committee recommend to NDSEB Electrical Board to provisionally approve the program, Adam Kidwell seconded the motion. Discussion was held about whether provisional status is merited or necessary, and the ICTL classes in the fourth semester were also discussed whether they should be ELTR classes to separate them from the instrumentation program. Vance was called by cell phone to discuss but was unable to address the questions, and Jason was unavailable. The committee then voted on the motion as proposed with all members in favor of the motion, none opposed, motion carried at 10:40 A.M.

William Charles with H&H Electric entered the meeting at 10:41 A.M. and set up computer with in-room projector to address the committee about their application for a related training program. William described the policy requirements they are required to follow by their agreement with NCCER and displayed modules to train instructors and teach learning styles. He explained that NCCER runs their testing through Pearson Learning Platform and that all students will have a book and e-book assigned to them. Instructors will take a 40-hour course online and in-person at H&H, the in-person part will be taught by William. Each class will have a 2-week lead time for instructor preparation and all tests will be proctored in class using H&H computers with no access to any personal devices, William stated they have 14 apprentices signed up as interested in the program and all proposed instructors are employees of H&H Electric. Committee members inquired about where classes will be held and learning methods, William mentioned possibly doing some labs at job sites as it could be more practical. This was discouraged by committee and Zach pointed out that classroom learning conducted on the jobsite tends to turn into working at the jobsite with learning component diminished or eliminated. William stated

that the process is monitored through NCCER, and they will conduct audits to ensure that compliance is followed to ensure quality of the education process. He indicated he wants to hold apprentices accountable for their education and completing it in a timely fashion, James pointed out that a journeyman who is your foreman all day and also your instructor after work can lead to issues over time and has not been very effective in past experiences. Discussion was held about conflicts with management when project timelines are stressed and ensuring that students are in class when scheduled and not at work. How will these situations be addressed when management tells employees they can't be in class, what leverage is available to ensure education is the first priority. William stated he has put a lot of time and effort into ensuring the success of this program and wants it to work, this is being taken seriously both by him and management at H&H. The committee inquired about attendance and how any missed time will be made up, what methods are in place for this, William stated there is an attendance policy in the NCCER policy manual and committee felt this should be included in an H&H policy manual. Also, placement methods were discussed to provide a plan for accepting a student who has some education from another provider to allow them to integrate into this program, William discussed how he would accomplish this. The committee requested William submit a new application with a specific H&H Electric policy manual and all other items listed on application form including applications for all instructors.

William Charles left the meeting at 12:15 P.M.

Committee members discussed the merits of H&H program and some history background, room preferences for future meetings and if any day of the week is preferable, general consensus is Wednesdays are preferential. The committee reviewed material and letter submitted by Magnum Electric/PowerHouse, James indicated the Board provisionally approved the Magnum program for one more year at their last meeting. Also, discussion about the site visit at Magnum Electric and Dakotas Electrical Apprenticeships facilities was held, all agree that both were productive and successful.

Rob Zachariason made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Zach Sheeley seconded the motion, all voted in favor, none opposed, meeting adjourned at 12:25 P.M.