

Breckenridge Public Schools

"Home of the Cowboys & Cowgirls"

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #846 • DISTRICT OFFICE
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March 11, 2019

In this packet are letters of support and quotes from Breckenridge staff and students regarding the proposed partnership between Breckenridge School and North Dakota State College of Science. Also included are talking points from the Breckenridge School Board and Superintendent.

Letters

- Nathan Anderson, Breckenridge Ag Instructor
- Austin, Breckenridge Junior
- Justin Neppl, Executive Director Southern Valley Economic Development Authority
- Dr. John Richman, President North Dakota State College of Science

Quotes

- Students in the pilot program
- High School Counselor

Talking points

- Breckenridge School Board and Superintendent

February 21, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

I have had the opportunity to team teach a college welding course with an instructor from the North Dakota State College of Science in Wahpeton, ND during the 2018/2019 school year. I have seen firsthand the amazing opportunities available to our students just across the river.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) is very popular with our students. We do not have another college close to us where Breckenridge students can go to get CTE college courses. NDSCS is less than a ten minute drive away from our campus and they have amazing CTE courses, but at this time, our students cannot access them due to current laws.

In our high school, we offer a wide variety of CTE courses. We simply do not have the same resources in place like NDSCS has. During this school year, our students have been able to use state of the art welding equipment such as multi-process welders and a virtual welding unit that a high school just cannot afford. Having such a great resource so close and not being able to utilize it to its full potential just seems wrong. It is my hope that legislation can be passed allowing Breckenridge and NDSCS to partner and grow together providing amazing learning opportunities to our students.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathan Anderson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nathan Anderson
Breckenridge Ag Instructor

Letter of support from a Breckenridge student participating in a pilot program through a grant written by NDSCS.

February 26, 2019

Dear Representative Backer,

I am part of a group of twelve students that had the privilege to enroll into a dual credit class for welding and manufacturing credits. This opportunity has brought many benefits to me and my classmates. For example, the shop at our high school has four old welding stations making it very difficult to keep everyone engaged in an activity at the same time. This leads to students wasting time and using valuable class time waiting for their turn to weld, but when we go over to NDSCS, the local college, there are thirty-two welding stations. Each welding station is equipped to produce a different variety of welds unlike the ones at the high school. This keeps students engaged and constantly learning by experience. Furthermore, going over to the college provides a professor that specializes in the area that you are learning, giving a deeper understanding to a topic.

The program has allowed me to learn skills otherwise unobtainable at the high school, and has heavily benefited everyone involved in it. With the expansion of this service to become free to qualifying students, the amount of appreciation from the student body would be immeasurable.

Respectfully,

Austin
Junior Student



March 7, 2019

Dear Legislators,

I am writing a letter of support for Bill SF 1938. Working in Economic Development for the City of Breckenridge and Wilkin County I understand the value of training a work force equipped with the skills the employers within our geographical region are desiring. The biggest issue that we hear from the local businesses is a lack of skilled workforce to fill the available positions in the region. According to the local job opening reports, there are more than 500 job openings within 20 miles of Breckenridge. All the seniors graduating from High School in the same 20-mile radius still would not be able to fill all the job openings available in the area assuming we could place them immediately in the workforce.

Training our workforce needs in many of these skilled areas begins with a partnership with NDSCS. Geographically, it makes sense for Breckenridge High School to partner with a highly qualified college like NDSCS that can deliver top notch training we can't offer at Breckenridge High School and would be cost prohibitive to provide, all in less than a 10-minute bus ride.

Our region wants to grow, and we need your help being able to provide the specific skilled training by gaining access to all the available resources located in our backyard. Providing support to Bill SF 1938 will aid in our efforts in Economic Development, provide great opportunities to the students at Breckenridge High School, and would help immensely the current and future businesses in Breckenridge and the surrounding areas. If you want to visit with me on the topic, please contact me via cell phone at 701.640.8243 or email at justin@sveda.biz

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin Neppi", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Justin Neppi
Executive Director
Southern Valley Economic Development Authority



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John Richman, Ph.D., President

February 26, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of the partnership between Breckenridge Minnesota Public School and North Dakota State College of Science, which would allow Breckenridge juniors and seniors to take career and technical education classes on the NDSCS campus under an arrangement similar to PSEO with Minnesota institutions of higher education.

I am supportive of this innovative option for Breckenridge students for several reasons, including:

- 1) **Safety and convenience for the Breckenridge students.** The NDSCS campus is approximately only three miles from the Breckenridge High School. The nearest Minnesota institution of higher education with similar CTE programming is located approximately 50 miles to the north.
- 2) **Relevant career and college skills training.** NDSCS's mission is to educate and train a workforce with relevant skill sets necessary to fill the workforce needs in our region. Our College offers state-of-the-art facilities, equipment and highly-trained instructors in several CTE-focused programs. This partnership will provide Breckenridge students with hands-on experiences the school district is not financially equipped to provide.
- 3) **Exposure to new career opportunities.** This partnership will provide students with ways to explore career paths of interest and provide exposure to new career opportunities relevant to the agricultural and manufacturing backbone of Breckenridge and the surrounding area. Exposure to and exploration of our CTE programs will allow students to obtain the skill sets needed to open unlimited opportunities to become productive, long-term community members. These high school students are essential to the future of the local workforce and area economic development.

Founded in 1903, NDSCS is the second oldest two-year comprehensive college in the nation, with locations in Wahpeton and Fargo, N.D. The College offers a variety of face-to-face, distance education and online courses, as well as workforce training. NDSCS offers degrees, certificates and diplomas in more than 80 academic options in traditional career and technical studies as well as liberal arts. Additional information can be found online at ndscs.edu.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Breckenridge Public School as they seek to establish a unique and innovative partnership with NDSCS for the benefit of their students and our community.

Sincerely,

John Richman, Ph.D.
President

Breckenridge Quotes

- This class has taken my welding experience to the next level. The NDSCS welding program has expanded the way I think about the courses that could be taken. I think that it is great to have students engaged in a different environment and with an actual college instructor. Our college instructor was able to show us the right way to use the new welders and show us how to properly weld.
 - *Jonah, Junior Student*
- Before I took these classes I had some previous knowledge of welding and these classes have broadened my knowledge of welding and opened up more job opportunities for me in the future.
 - *Chris, Senior Student*
- We have been able to be more productive because NDSCS has a greater amount of resources than our school shop has. They have 32 welding stations that we can use while Breckenridge's shop only has four. In a class of 12 this makes a huge impact because more students are able to do work and projects at a time.
 - *Gavin, Junior Student*
- I'm a student from Breckenridge High School in a college class teamed up with NDSCS. This class has impacted my life in big ways. I learned how to weld and that has helped me get a job and a raise at my job.
 - *Dylan, Senior Student*
- With the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year, Breckenridge High School and NDSCS came together to form a partnership that would allow Breckenridge students to partake in a pilot program utilizing the NDSCS manufacturing curriculum, instructors, and facilities. Breckenridge students and parents had to pay a reduced rate of tuition to NDSCS in order to participate in this program while Breckenridge High School provided a certified instructor who transported and oversaw the students during a class period every day at the NDSCS campus.
- I feel there has been a remarkable impact on the students participating in this program. Every one of the students who is taking this course is thriving. These are students who succeed in hands-on learning opportunities. The fact that these students were able to go to a state of the art facility to work on their skills is incredible and irreplaceable.
- The chance these students took on trying this program may lead them to pursue further education when they may not have considered it in the past.
- This is a unique and special situation that Breckenridge Public Schools has with North Dakota State College of Science therefore I wholeheartedly support and promote the continuation and growth of this program.
- I truly believe the more opportunities our students have to explore higher education will help them become productive, successful and responsible members of society.
 - *Kimberly Quast, Breckenridge High School Counselor*

Breckenridge Public School

Talking Points for a PSEO Agreement with NDSCS

1. This agreement is specific to ISD #846 students and NDSCS CTE programs.
2. This is a very specific and unique situation with a very narrow impact on State funding. Breckenridge and Wahpeton are the only border cities in which the Minnesota community does not have a post-secondary option and the border state community does.
3. NDSCS is less than 3 miles from Breckenridge High school. The next closest CTE post-secondary school is an hour away.
4. Breckenridge School Board members are in full support of this partnership.
5. Dr. Richman, President of NDSCS, and his staff are very interested in partnering with Breckenridge Schools. They are willing to be flexible with their time and resources within their capacity. NDSCS has proposed a fee structure per credit that would be well within the cost of PSEO CTE credits in MN post-secondary schools.
6. Breckenridge has aging facilities and outdated equipment no longer relevant to 21st Century Learning in our CTE shop areas.
7. Space is a limiting factor to expansion in Breckenridge for CTE programming, especially programs that require lab/shop space.
8. District size prevents us from offering a variety of electives in the CTE area.
9. NDSCS has state-of-the-art equipment with a variety of offerings that would allow Breckenridge students to explore interest areas and exposure to new career opportunities we cannot offer in our small school setting.
10. The economic backbone of Breckenridge and our surrounding area is agriculture and the manufacturing that goes along with the ag industry. Students graduating with skill sets obtained in CTE programs have unlimited opportunities to stay in the Breckenridge community and surrounding area which is essential for the local workforce and area economic development.
11. With this partnership, we would be creating opportunities for students in careers important to our region: diesel mechanics, ranch management, H-Vac, plumbing, dental, nursing, small engines, auto, welding. This could create the next generation of workforce for CTE fields right in our backyard.
12. Recently our licensed agriculture teacher resigned to move closer to family near the metro area leaving Breckenridge without a licensed CTE ag teacher. We are in the process of recruiting a replacement for this ag position but at this time have no applicants. Licensed agriculture teachers are very difficult to find especially in our area. If we cannot find a teacher, these courses would have to be cut from our student offerings. A partnership with NDSCS would keep Breckenridge students from losing access to CTE classes in this content area. Again, agriculture is the predominant industry supporting the Breckenridge economy.