

NDSEB EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday May 1, 2024

The North Dakota State Electrical Board Education Advisory Committee was called to order at 8:30 AM by Executive Director James Schmidt. The meeting was held in the conference room at the North Dakota State Electrical Board.

Committee members present: James Schmidt – NDSEB Executive Director; Scott Halle – Training & Compliance Administrator; Tim Pull – Master Electrician Representative; Adam Kidwell – Related Apprentice Educator; Steve Mundahl – Journeyman Electrician Representative; Rob Zachariason – On Campus Representative; Ivan Maas – On Campus Representative; Brian Poykko – Professional Engineer Representative by Teams; Jeff Kirstein – Related Apprentice Educator by Teams.

The meeting agenda was reviewed and Jacob Backman NDSCS education was added to the agenda.

Meeting minutes from February 29, 2024 were reviewed, Steve Mundahl motioned to approve, seconded by Adam Kidwell, motion carried.

Committee reviewed submission from Magnum Electric including their policy statement and discussed the pros and cons of private entity programs being their own apprenticeship training provider, and that the committee will need to monitor these programs with extra effort to ensure they are following through with requirements. The Magnum Electric policy manual states apprentices are permitted up to three unexcused absences but has no mention of making them up, committee concern is that the program currently has the minimum number of required hours included and this amount of missed time would be a substantial reduction to that number. Other providers require all absences to be made up, and as there is no practical difference between excused and unexcused absences, all missed time needs to be made up for completion of program. Jeff Kirstein brought up need to monitor completion rate of students after first year of classes as every program has individuals that give up because it doesn't suit them or because of difficulty, and a very low number here could indicate program is not up to standards. Another area that needs to be addressed is the number of hours in the second, third, and fourth years of program, current syllabus submitted indicates these years only have 128 hours planned, but the NDSEB policy requires a minimum of 144 hours for each of the four years of the program. How Magnum Electric plans to conduct the classes was discussed and what they plan to do with apprentices in other locations than Fargo, James Schmidt contacted Christian Opp, and he responded that this program is for Fargo only, and outlying locations will continue to use the Electrical Association program for training.

Committee took a break from 10:00 to 10:15

Discussion resumed regarding Magnum Electric program with some members indicating that if the program was to recommend approval to the Board, it should only be on a provisional basis so they can be audited to verify it is meeting standards.

10:30 Nicole Wischnak – Director-Workforce Affairs and Sales with NDSCS joined the meeting by Teams.

Committee voted for recommending provisional approval of Magnum Electric’s apprenticeship program as a classroom only program conducted in Fargo, ND if all program adjustments listed in letter submitted to them today are made by May 8, 2024 by show of hands. In favor was Scott Halle, Jeff Kirstein, Brian Poykko, Rob Zachariason, Tim Pull, Ivan Maas, Steve Mundahl, against was James Schmidt, Adam Kidwell, motion carried.

Next item was AE-Tech program, no response was received from AE-Tech about the changes requested for program to be approved, no further action required by committee.

MMR Constructors apprenticeship program application was reviewed by committee members, questions about how to conduct audits and review of program discussed as there is minimal detail of how program will be delivered or if there will be a physical location for training. Concerns about a single remote instructor and how apprentices are monitored for participation and attendance were discussed. Rob Zachariason brought up an issue with the Apprenticeship Program Course Layout that indicates classes meet for two hours twice a week, but students are given six hours of credit per week. A list of four items were put in a rough draft and will be sent to MMR with a request for more information and clarification, committee consensus was to not recommend approval or denial of the program at this time.

The Apprentice Related Training Course Audit Checklist was reviewed by the committee and suggestions for editing and improving the list were discussed. James Schmidt will amend the form based on discussion and send it out to the group.

James Schmidt gave the committee an explanation of events involving the NDSCS correspondence program and information related to Jacob Backman, who is currently working through the program, he has been told he is completing the program too quickly and wants clarification. The program has not had a content person involved since Brian Fuder left, and it needs a review to determine if changes need to be made to program so it aligns with the related training policy and is beneficial to apprentices using this education path. Much discussion was held by the group about methods to improve the structure, timeline, and instructor availability to ensure students have someone to contact for questions and are completing the program in accordance with the current policy.

11:45 Jeff Kirstein left the meeting

The committee decided to set up a meeting with NDSCS and look over what the program consists of and if it is good as it is currently set up or if there are areas that need improvement. Tim Pull,

Ivan Maas, Adam Kidwell, and Scott Halle all agreed to meet at either Wahpeton or Fargo with Nicole Wischnak to look over the programs materials as soon as schedules permit.

12:30 Brian Poykko and Nicole Wischnak left the meeting

Steve Mundahl asked if in the future committee members could get some experience by attending classes put on by the established programs so when they are auditing new programs in the future, they are better prepared to make evaluations and know what to look for. Adam Kidwell offered their classes as an option for this type of experience, also Adam Kidwell and Rob Zachariason also offered to provide class evaluation forms that could be used by members when auditing classes.

Adam Kidwell made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Rob Zachariason seconded the motion, all in favor, meeting was adjourned at 1:00 PM.