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Data-Driven Decision Making and Board Reporting Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Rob Lech

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Course Meeting Date: February 1, 2023 (8:30 AM - 11:30 AM)

Course Meeting Location: Bismarck Hotel (Grand Pacific Room)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course helps business managers recognize the questions they, and their school boards, should be asking about their schools and where to find data to respond to those questions. It aims at teaching business managers how to formulate budgetary and operational recommendations in response to such findings and how to effectively and efficiently report and correspondingly make recommendations.

COURSE GOALS

Upon completion of the course Business Managers should be able to:

- Understand what data is, why it is important, and how to use it to improve your school district.
- Locate and identify reliable sources of data.
- Explore methods to solicit and use public input for board and administrative decision making.
- Identify common board agenda items that require data to support decision making.
- Organize data and use tools to effectively analyze and report the implications of the data to the board, administration and the public.
- Identify the link between data-driven educational operations planning and student achievement.

RESOURCES NEEDED FOR CLASS

Required

- Participants should bring to class a laptop computer capable of wireless internet connectivity.
- Resources for use during class and for referral to complete class assignments will be available in the course toolbox.
- [Class presentation](#)

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

1. Complete **one** of the three projects listed below.

- In preparation for negotiations, gather salary and benefit information from your district and a minimum of 4 additional school district who are comparably sized and/or geographically relevant North Dakota school districts.
 - Identify the data sources that you would use to secure the following:
 - K-12 Enrollment
 - Number of Teacher FTE's
 - Average Years of Teacher Experience
 - Teacher Salary Breakdown* (BA/BS+0 with zero experience, BA/BS+15/16 credits and 10 years of experience, MA/MS+0 with 10 years of experience, MA/MS+15/16 with 20 years of experience) – *modify to suit your district as necessary.
 - Average Salary
 - Average Benefits
 - Average Total Compensation
 - Total Number of Contract Days
 - Total Compensation Per Day
 - Total District Expenditures for Teacher Salary and Benefits
 - Teacher Salary & Benefits Per Student
 - Total General Fund Expenditures
 - % of General Fund Budget Dedicated to Teacher Compensation
 - Note: Some of this information will be available in Finance Facts and some you may need to request from business managers and superintendents.
 - Prepare a report for the Board that provides a breakdown of the requested data for each district, including your district. You may choose to add information, as appropriate.
 - Recommended tools that may be helpful in preparing the report may include MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, Powerpoint, etc) or other digital tools and/or format of your choosing.
 - **Formatting and style should be appropriate for public presentation.**
 - Project must be an original work of your own creation.
 - **Project must be submitted to the instructor via email at robert.lech@k12.nd.us by April 2, 2023.**

OR

- **Prepare a report to the school board on data privacy.** This should include information on the application of 15.1-07-25.3. The presentation should be approximately 15 minutes in length and cover, at minimum:
 - Definition of FERPA
 - Definition of Personally Identifiable Information (PII)
 - Directory Information allowed to be disclosed in your district
 - Who is designated as a privacy officer in your district and what are his/her responsibilities
 - Which parties receive student data, what is the purpose of that party to your district and how it impacts operations and/or instruction, and is parental consent required? (see Policy FGA-E8 in your district)
 - Resources include
 - NDSBA Policy Ponderings, July 2015 and September 2015 (Found in Course Toolbox)
 - Your district's policy FGA and corresponding board regulations and exhibits
 - **Formatting and style should be appropriate for public presentation.**
 - Project must be an original work of your own creation.
 - **Project must be submitted to the instructor via email at robert.lech@k12.nd.us by April 2, 2023.**

OR

- **Create a Standard of Effort report to share with your school board.** This should include an executive summary outlining the purpose and introduction of the report, a peer district analysis, including at least 4 other comparably-sized and/or geographically relevant school districts, and historical financial information for your district covering the last five years.
 - The Peer District Analysis should include, at minimum, compare revenue, fund balance, and expenditure performance of your district in relation to the selected peer school districts.
 - The historical financial information should include data trends of the last 5 years related to revenue, expenditures, balances, and levies.
 - Use the Standard of Effort exemplar as a guide and tailor it to your own needs.
 - Note: JPS completes a Standard of Effort report in odd years opposite the 3-5 Year Plan. This would be the better option for February 2023 over 3-5 Year Plan.

- **Project must be submitted to the instructor via email at robert.lech@k12.nd.us by April 2, 2023.**

OR

- **Complete your district's required 3-5 Year Long Range Planning Report** potentially with additional data reporting components to fit your school district's needs.
 - This must include a system to solicit community feedback as an aspect of the report (see the JPS report to see one example of how this could be done)
 - Note: While not part of the assignment, the 3-5 Year Plan requires a community/school board presentation that would need to be completed prior to June 30.
 - Note: JPS completes the 3-5 Year Plan in even years opposite a Standard of Effort Report. This would not be required by NDCC for February 2023 class. Standard of Effort Report is recommended over 3-5 Year Report.
 - **Project must be submitted to the instructor via email at robert.lech@k12.nd.us by April 2, 2023.**

OR

- A participant may propose a project of interest or need that relates to data collection, reporting, and decision making for their district. **This request, including details of the project, must be submitted in writing to the instructor at robert.lech@k12.nd.us by April 3, 2022.** It should be comparable in size and scope to the course projects described in the syllabus. Project must be an original work of your own creation.

Assignment Resources

[Finance and Operations](#)

[February 2022 Finance Facts \(Excel\)](#)

[Historical Finance Facts](#)

Policy Ponderings ([July 2015](#), [September 2015](#))

[Policy FGA](#), [FGA-E7](#) and [FGA-E8](#) Exemplars

[JPS Standard of Effort Exemplar](#) (Includes All Required Assignment Components)

[3-5 Year Plan NDSBA Template](#)

[JPS 3-5 Year Plan Exemplar](#)

GRADES

Grades will be calculated on a **100-point** scale and based on 25 points for attendance/class participation and 75 points for the final assessment. The grading scale is as follows:

- **85 – 100** = Mastery (M): Student has completed proficient work on all course objectives and advanced work on some objectives.
- **60 – 84** = Proficient (P): Student has completed proficient work on the majority of and/or most important objectives, although not on all objectives. Students must receive at least a proficient to pass a course.
- **00 – 59** = Developing (D): Student is missing a majority of and/or important objectives and is consequently at significant risk of failing the next related course or being unable to perform the skills covered in the course. Students who receive this designation will be required to retake the course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion (as defined in the NDSBMCP Student Handbook) and is prohibited. Academic dishonesty may be treated as an academic matter or as a disciplinary matter at the discretion of the instructor. The instructor may reflect the incident of dishonesty in the student's grade. If the student has a grievance related to this action, that grievance may be filed in accordance with the NDSBMCP grading grievance procedure. Alternatively, the instructor may refer the case as a disciplinary matter to the NDSBA Executive Director, who is authorized to take disciplinary action, which may include, but not be limited to, withholding course credit, suspending participation in the program, or permanently removing the individual from the program. Prior to making a disciplinary decision, the NDSBA Executive Director will meet with the student, provide a detailed list of charges against them, the corroborating evidence, and offer them an opportunity to respond.

DISABILITY SERVICES

Services will, to the extent feasible, be provided for students with temporary or permanent disabilities. Accommodations and services will be based on the individual student's disability-based need. Students with a disability need should contact patty.verdouw@ndsba.org one week prior to the class meeting date to request accommodations.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance and participation in class activities are considered integral parts of certification. Since this course meets for only a few hours, attendance in classes is expected of all students. Attendance and, if applicable, participation may significantly impact grading.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments will only be accepted under to extreme circumstances as determined by the instructor on a case-by-case basis.

CLASS CANCELLATION

If a course is cancelled, NDSBA will attempt to notify students via email three days prior to the scheduled class date. NDSBA will inform students of the make-up arrangements for a cancelled class.