

# ***STRATEGIC PLAN***

## **North Dakota Geographic Alliance**



**2015 to 2020**

**Overview:** The North Dakota Geographic Alliance (NDGA) was established in 1991 with the support of the National Geographic Society (NGS). Housed at Minot State University, NDGA is composed of K-12 teachers, college and university educators, personnel from a variety of other education-related groups, and citizens, all of whom have vested interests in improving geography instruction in North Dakota. The Alliance works in collaboration with many state organizations and agencies.



## **Strategic Planning Committee**

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## *I. History of NDGA*

The North Dakota Geographic Alliance (NDGA) was founded in 1987 and became a member of the National Geographic Society Alliance Network in 1991. NDGA, with Dr. Doug Munski as Coordinator, was housed at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks until 1995 when it was moved to Minot State University, Minot, ND. Dr. Eric Clausen served as coordinator from 1995-2006. From May of 2006 until the present, Marilyn Weiser has held the position of coordinator.

NDGA has sponsored a variety of professional development programs for teachers as well as geography education outreach activities since 1991. Over 2,500 teachers have participated in NDGA activities in all regions of the state. We partner with other agencies in the state to integrate curriculum content and to leverage funding. NDGA is the premier leader of standards-based geography and social studies professional development in the state.

The Board of Directors, leadership teams and membership is governed by the Constitution that was revised in 2007. Minot State University is the host institution that provides NDGA with office space and business/grant services.

In 2003, the ND State legislature allocated \$125,000, along with local funds, to support a partial NGEF Endowment. The 2009 State Legislature allocated NDGA \$226,000. \$149,000 was from private donations. \$500,000 was matched by the National Geographic Education Foundation for \$1,000,000 endowment.

Programs and outreach throughout its history have included:

- Alliance Summer Geography Institute offered for continuing education and university graduate credit
- Quarterly Dakota Alliance Newsletter and website, each with a focus on providing teachers with innovative teaching strategies and relevant ideas for classroom instruction
- Participation in National Geographic Society-led campaigns to raise the level of geographic literacy and to empower students and teachers with global knowledge
- Partnerships with interdisciplinary organizations and agencies to provide professional development programs to teachers across the state

In 2007, under new leadership, a five-year Strategic Plan was written. In 2010, under the direction of the National Geographic Education Foundation (NGEF), NDGA began to develop a more comprehensive plan. Along with a very knowledgeable consultant, we moved quickly until the devastating 2011 flood. The impact of the flood, literally, put our Strategic Planning efforts on the back burner for over a year. It was difficult to regain our momentum. Funds were allocated to pay a small group to complete the task. The Strategic Plan, during its writing, has made great strides and many goals wither have been achieved or are in the process. The final revision of the plan took place in September of 2015.

## *II. Vision, Mission, Values*

### **Vision**

North Dakota students will be equipped with geographic knowledge and skills to become productive global citizens and problem solvers in an interconnected world.

### **Mission**

Increase the level of geographic literacy among K-12 students, teachers and citizens. Foster innovation in geographic education by providing high quality professional development and resources.

### **Core Values**

North Dakota Geographic Alliance values its role as a trusted resource and promoter of geography education. We value:

1. Quality—NDGA fosters excellence in all aspects of advancing geography literacy
2. Collaboration—NDGA pursues input and cooperation in reaching common goals
3. Innovation—NDGA promotes best practices in professional development and curricular integration
4. Accessibility—NDGA ensures that opportunities and materials are available to all schools, educators, and students
5. Responsiveness—NDGA responds to diversity and changes in education, seeks the input of external stakeholders, and addresses the evolving needs of teachers and students.

## *III. Current Situation*

### **Current Educational Landscape of ND**

- New superintendent at Department of Public Instruction (DPI)
- DPI implements legislated policy and the Education Standards and Practices Board determines quality
- Teacher preparation standards require three geography credits
- Graduation requirements include 3 units of Social Studies to include:
  - 1 unit of History
  - ½ unit US Government and ½ unit Econ OR 1 unit of Problems of Democracy
  - Two ½ units of any other SS which much include
    - Civics
    - Civilization
    - Geography
    - History
    - Multicultural Studies
    - ND Studies
    - Psychology

- Sociology

- Legislature determines funding criteria for schools
- Charter schools are illegal in ND
- Implementation of ND Common Core compliance since 2014
- Role of local school board is to set policy that is consistent with ND policy, however, educational delivery is extremely diverse throughout the state
- Escalating need for English Language Learners (ELL) instructors
- The oil boom is impacting the educational landscape as illustrated in the chart titled, “School Enrollment Growth”
  - Prior to the oil boom, school population had been steadily declining. There has been significant growth across the state, leading to new demands for schools, teachers, and infrastructure. NDGA leadership is vital to meeting the challenge to maintain and enhance the presence of geography in the classroom.

### School Enrollment Growth

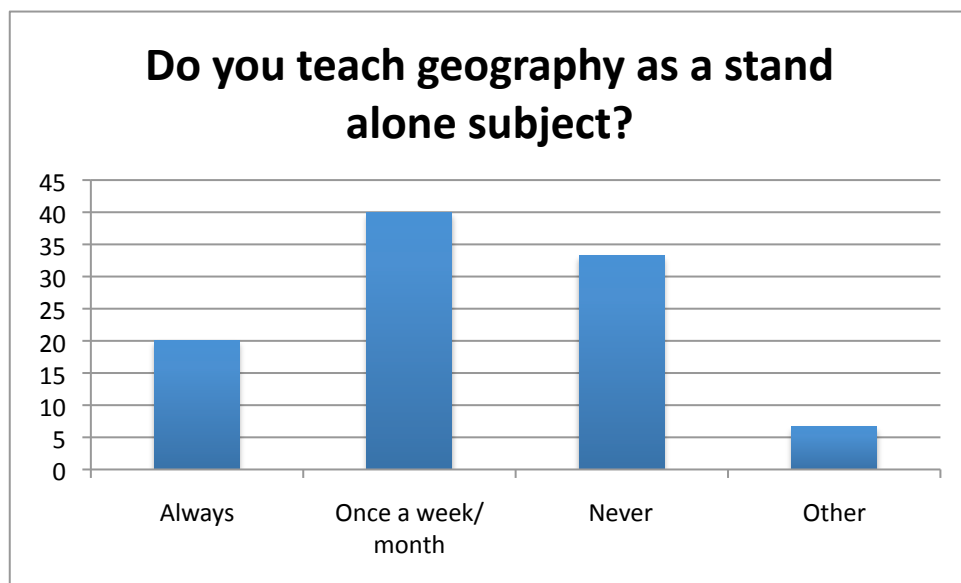
	2005-2006*	2009-2010*	2014-2015*
<b>Public</b>	97,120	93,715	104,278
<b>Non-public</b>	8,261	7,604	8,153

\*<https://dpi.state.nd.us/resource/directry/archive/dir0910.pdf>

\*<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/resource/directry/dir1415.pdf>

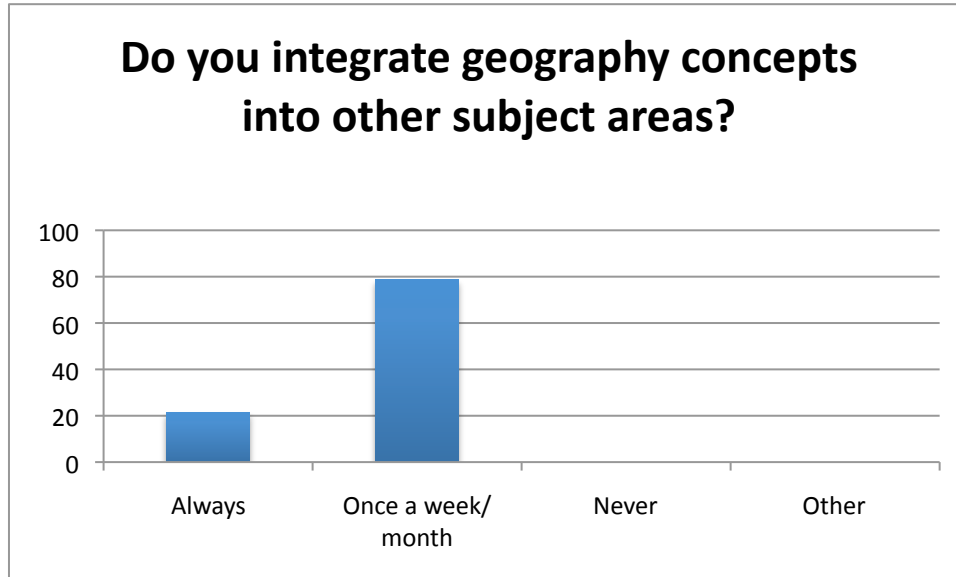
\*<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/resource/directry/dir0506.pdf>

- May 2014, 50 elementary teachers were sent two questions via Survey Monkey. 30% of the teachers responded. The results of these surveys influenced many components of our Strategic Plan.
  - The purpose of this question was to help determine the current status of geography education in elementary classrooms. Geography, as indicated by the chart, is never taught in 33.5% of classrooms.





- The purpose of this question was to determine the extent of geographical knowledge and confidence teachers have in order to integrate geography into other subjects.



## Current Mandates

<b><i>Formal Mandates</i></b>
Constitution
Minot State University (MSU) Development Foundation/National Geographic Education Foundation Memorandum of Agreement
MSU Business Office-Grants & Accounting
ND Department of Public Instruction
State and National Standards—2014 Implementation of State Common Core State Standards
National Geographic Education Foundation Grant Criteria
Matching Funds
Partnerships with Memorandum of Agreement
Tri-University Credit Approval Guidelines
<b><i>Informal Mandates (unspoken rules, assumptions)</i></b>
Limited Budget Flexibility
Responsibility to Partnerships
Expectations of Alliance Board and Membership
Provide current and relevant Professional Development

## Analysis of Stakeholders' Needs and Perceptions

- As a result of complete reorganization in 2006-2007, baseline data was collected relative to stakeholders' needs and perceptions as related to implementation of a strategic plan. On a face-to-face survey, teachers revealed a need for resources and training. (See Appendix C)

- Minot State (host university) instructors interviewed indicated a need for resources for pre-service teachers
- Department of Public Instruction official indicated a need for professional development in support of Common Core
- Discussions with administrators, technology coordinators, and State School Board Association members expressed a need to raise the level of geographic literacy
- Students and parents (as reported from surveyed classroom teachers) have a perceived need for geographic charts and maps

## SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)

- **Strengths**—NDGA is viewed as a premier professional organization.
  - Viewed as a trustworthy educational leader within the state
  - Regarded as a knowledgeable and professional organization
  - Considered to be the voice for geographic education
  - Diverse group of stakeholders including policy makers and many state organizations and agencies
  - Sponsors quality professional development
  - Development of dynamic partnerships with many state organizations and agencies
  - Guaranteed endowment funding (NGEF, ND Legislature and private donors)
  - Long-time, dedicated and knowledgeable NDGA member serving as valued coordinator
  - Open communication with many state organizations and agencies
  - Capable board members representing all areas of ND
  - On-going support from host institution
  - Solid, positive relationship with National Geographic Education Foundation
- **Weaknesses**—Effective and sufficient communication among NDGA members and statewide community
  - Lack of sufficient and consistent compensation for services rendered by NDGA members
  - Lack of funding to adequately compensate full-time coordinator and part-time office assistant(s)
  - Communication is at times unclear within the organization regarding activities and task assignments
  - Lack of definition of roles and expectations for both staff and volunteers
  - Minimal number of NDGA members involved as volunteers
  - Lack of continued and sustained funding at higher levels beyond the endowment through NGEF if we are to realize our vision
  - Concern that if personnel left, the organization could collapse
  - Inconsistent office schedule
  - A board that is not fully engaged and does not fully understand its role
  - Limited visibility in the education community outside of K-12 education
  - Governance and funding sustainability requires heavy reliance on part-time employees and volunteer labor
- **Opportunities**—Opportunities exist within a favorable economy and expanding educational program and services
  - Favorable local economy and budget surplus

- State government and institutions that are positively disposed to NDGA
  - Booming hydrocarbon industry that will continue to impact the economy in ND in the next decade
  - Many potential partners and advocates who are willing to actively support NDGA
  - Exposure of pre-service teachers to geography education
  - An educational system that can be acted on from both bottom up and top down efforts
  - Help meet needs of English Language Learners
  - Promote Advanced Placement Human Geography
  - Working with Home Schools
  - Advance efforts to promote GIS and ConnectEd
- **Threats**—Keeping up with growth and change in population and education
    - Face-to-face meetings difficult due to state size and travel conditions
    - Common core implementation and requirements
    - Expensive infrastructure needs and housing shortage in western ND
    - Increasing number of non-English speaking students
    - Dramatic increase of school population in western ND
    - Few high schools offer geography

## Major strategic decisions

Sustainable financing, effective leadership and involvement of members reflect our mission. We aspire to be an organization that leads to effectual goal setting. Therefore, our strategic decisions include:

- Informing and coordinating internal and external stakeholders using an effective communication system
- Implementing a Strategic Plan that outlines the planning of professional development, strengthening organizational structure and clarifies the governance of the organization
- Evaluating programs, organizational structure, governance, as well as the Strategic Plan
- Implementing methods for sustaining leadership in NDGA
- Developing programs and designing ways to promote awareness of the critical importance of geographic literacy
- Developing leadership-training programs to strengthen organization
- Financial planning and fund raising that result in financial and organizational stability and sustainability

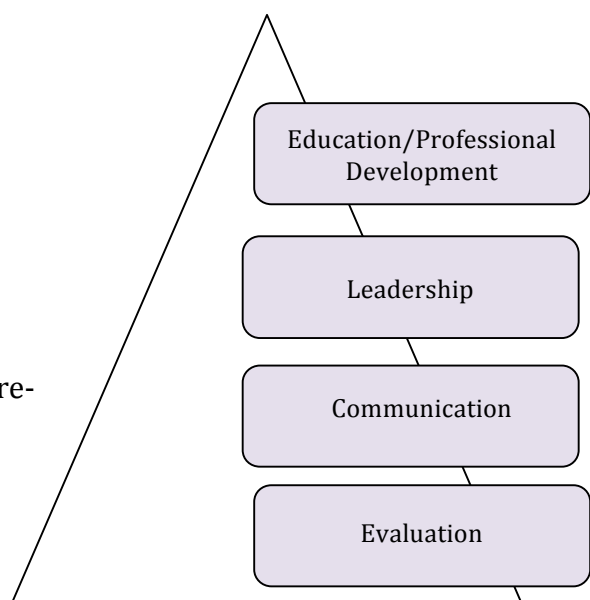
## IV. Goals

### Strategic Goals

#### 1. Education/Professional Development

**Goal:** To strengthen educational activities, professional development, partnerships and community involvement supporting K-12 and pre-service geography education.

**Rationale:** It is mainly through education and professional development that the level of geographic literacy will be raised. The integration of geography with other



disciplines will ensure that geographic literacy is promoted through courses outside of the discipline.

## 2. Leadership

**Goal:** Promote and encourage NDGA Board members, coordinator(s), NDGA members and stakeholders to participate in leadership training to grow in ways that mutually benefit the individual and the organization.

**Rationale:** Training of new members and leaders is necessary for NDGA to continue to grow and sustain leadership

## 3. Communication

**Goal:** Use effective internal and external communication strategies to inform and collaborate with the NDGA Board, NDGA members and external stakeholders

**Rationale:** Effective communication enables NDGA to inform and collaborate with all stakeholders

## 4. Evaluation

**Goal:** Establish a system to evaluate NDGA leadership and programs to expand and improve the organization

**Rationale:** Evaluation is paramount for individual and organization improvement, as well as to measure the effectiveness of programs and our ability to plan for the future

# *V. Objectives & Strategies*

## 1. Education/Professional Development

**Goal:** To strengthen effecti educational activities, resources, partnerships and professional development supporting K-12 and pre-service geography education, to include GIS, which under the present 'crowded' curriculum climate, is a stretch

**Strategy One:** Utilize partnerships to enable NDGA to conduct professional development that is readily accessible to elementary and secondary teachers across the state of North Dakota.

### Objectives:

- Strengthen partnerships with existing state agencies and local corporations such as Bremer, Great Plains Software; civic and private groups; agriculture and oil related businesses to financially

support, plan and implement the annual NDGA Summer Institute based on a regional rotation (SE, NW, NE, SW) the first week of June. (Program Team, office staff; ongoing)

- Partner with ND Forest Service to plan and implement the annual GeoFIT (Forestry Institute for Teachers), based on a regional rotation (SE, NW, NE, SW) the first week of August (Program Team, office staff; ongoing)
- Partner with ND Agriculture Department to plan and implement an annual Ag in the Classroom during the month of July in NW North Dakota. (Area Ag teachers, office staff; July)
- Partner with ND State Historical Society, ND Forest Service, US Park Service, ND Council on the Arts and EduTech (State Education Technology Services) to plan and implement the annual ND Teacher Resource Coalition Workshop, based on a regional rotation (SE, NW, NE, SW) the third week of June. (Program Team, office staff; June)
- Develop and maintain a partnership with the ND Humanities Council by sharing and integrating their values to provide high quality professional development. (Coordinator; ongoing)
- Seek 2-4 additional national and state partnerships to financially support, plan and implement professional development. (Program Team, office staff; ongoing)

**Strategy Two:** Promote and encourage teacher-student-community participation in educational activities that support geographic awareness.

**Objectives:**

- Provide resources such as maps and geography-related activities to engage parents and community members to have fun with geography while learning and practicing skills needed to become geographically literate (NDGA office; ongoing)
- Offer support and involvement in state activities, i.e., History Day, State Geography Bee, State Library Association Summer Reading Kickoff (NDGA office; ongoing)
- Promote Geography Awareness Week website, publicize activities and distribute materials. (NDGA office; November)

**Strategy Three:** Provide for NDGA stakeholders high quality educational resources that are aligned with the NDGA mission

**Objectives:**

- Expand educational resources by keeping a supply of current political and thematic maps available (NDGA office; ongoing)
- Utilize NDGA website to disperse information and connect members to resources (NDGA members and Office Staff/Webmaster; ongoing)
- Provide lesson plan template and incentive to be used for all lesson submissions to be published on NDGA website (NDGA Coordinator; September 2016)
- Determine incentives for submission of lesson plans for publication (NDGA Board; October 2016)
- Gather and publish lesson plans on NDGA website (Coordinator and Webmaster; ongoing)
- Produce or collect instructional materials that meet proficiencies in geography required by the State Common Core Standards and National Standards and that promote best teaching practices (NDGA office; ongoing)

- Promote interdisciplinary collaboration by identifying geographic concepts in other curriculum areas and develop resources that integrate and support geo-literacy advancement (NDGA office; ongoing)

**Strategy Four:** Develop and extend NDGA services and programs to Pre-service Teachers

**Objectives:**

- Involve ND university education methods instructors in discussion of Alliance partnership in pre-service program (Coordinator; 2016 and ongoing)
- Develop a plan for establishing and maintaining visibility in pre-service university classrooms (Coordinator and Program Team; 2016 and ongoing)
- Offer support to pre-service instructors and students (Program Team; 2016 and ongoing)

## 2. Leadership and Membership

**Goal:** Promote and encourage NDGA Board members, coordinator(s), NDGA members and stakeholders to participate in leadership training to grow in ways that mutually benefit the individual and the organization.

**Strategy One:** Recruit members for board positions

**Objectives:**

- Adhere to NDGA Constitution timelines/calendars to manage recruitment and election (Annually; Board members and Coordinator)
- Post position openings on NDGA website (annually January; Office Staff)
- Board members personally contact potential recruits (annually March; Board Members and Coordinator)
- Compile candidate information (Nominating Team, Coordinator and Staff; April)
- Generate a press release announcing new and retiring board members for each election cycle (Nominating Team and Staff; June)

**Strategy Two:** Encourage participation of NDGA members, coordinator(s), and stakeholders in management training to assume a role in organizational responsibility, such as taking over projects and programs and conducting in-service sessions in their school districts that advance geographic literacy

**Objectives:**

- NDGA board members will participate in annual training/capacity building retreat (Coordinator and Constitution Team; annually/Spring)
- Conduct a new board member orientation (Nominating Team and Staff; annually Summer)
- Develop leadership training opportunities for all members and stakeholders (Office Staff; annually & ongoing)
- Create a job description for Coordinator, committee chairpersons and Teacher Consultants NDGA Board of Directors (2016)
- Generate new formats for low-cost, sustained basic workshops to gain new TCs and committee members (Program Team 2017)

**Strategy Three:** Provide transition suggestions and mentoring services for a new coordinator

**Objective:**

- Current coordinator will make all records, data, deadlines, available to new coordinator
- Current coordinator will be available to ease the transition process (Coordinator)

### 3. Communication

**Goal:** Use effective internal and external communication strategies to inform and collaborate with the NDGA board, NDGA members and external stakeholders

**Strategy One:** Deliver and expand effective internal communication to inform and collaborate within the organization

**Objectives:**

- Maintain website to better reflect and inform stakeholders of NDGA's mission, membership benefits, annual events, programs, and opportunities (Program Team; ongoing)
- Links to teacher-generated material (Program Team; ongoing)
- Produce and post an online Newsletter to the Alliance website bi-monthly, reaching 1,000 readers (Program Team; ongoing)
- Use of electronic surveys for teacher feedback and planning (on-going; July 2017; coordinator and webmaster)

**Strategy Two:** Promote effective external communication to raise awareness of NDGA and promote and advance the level of geo-literacy

**Objectives:**

- Utilize technologies to inform public of role and goals of NDGA (ongoing; Communication Team and webmaster)
- Hire personnel to develop a visually appealing brochure promoting NDGA as an educational organization (2016; Board & coordinator)
- Expand NDGA exposure at public events such as State Fair, state conferences, bookstores, libraries, etc. (2016; Communication Committee)
- Invite external stakeholders, e.g. business leaders, legislators, etc. to participate in Alliance events and meetings for the purpose of visibility and promoting the critical need for geography education in our schools (2016; Coordinator and Board)
- Formulate a plan and budget for someone to monitor current and potential state-level education policies beginning in 2016 and produce a report summarizing issues relevant to geography so the NDGA board and members can stay informed, stay on the radar screen and to go about the important business of reinforcing our 'brand.'
- Define a plan for outreach to media by assigning a member to write a minimum of 6 press releases a year to announce the election of new board members, the Friend of Geography, ND Geography Teacher of the Year and awards received by members and other significant events related to the organization to

### 4. Evaluation



**Goal:** Establish and implement a system to evaluate NDGA leadership and programs in order to expand and improve the organization

**Strategy One:** Develop and complete an assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the NDGA coordinator

**Objectives:**

- Design a tool to assess the coordinator (Board; 2017)
- Coordinator and Board complete the assessment of coordinator (Coordinator & Board; December 2017)
- Discussion of completed assessment by board (Early 2017; Board)
- Discussion of assessment between coordinator and president (2017; President and Coordinator)

**Strategy Two:** Develop an assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the NDGA Board

**Objectives:**

- Design a tool assessing board effectiveness (fall of 2018; Coordinator and President)
- Completion of assessment by board members (spring 2018; Board)
- Discussion of completed assessment by board (spring 2018; Board)

**Strategy Three:** Develop an assessment of NDGA programs

**Objectives:**

- Create pre- and post-assessment tools appropriate for NDGA programs (ongoing 2014; Instructor of Record or Leader)
- Compile and evaluate results (ongoing 2018; Instructor of Record or Leader)
- Establish a database to archive results for future planning and improvement (2019; office staff)

## ***VI. Organizational Design***

### **Current NDGA Culture**

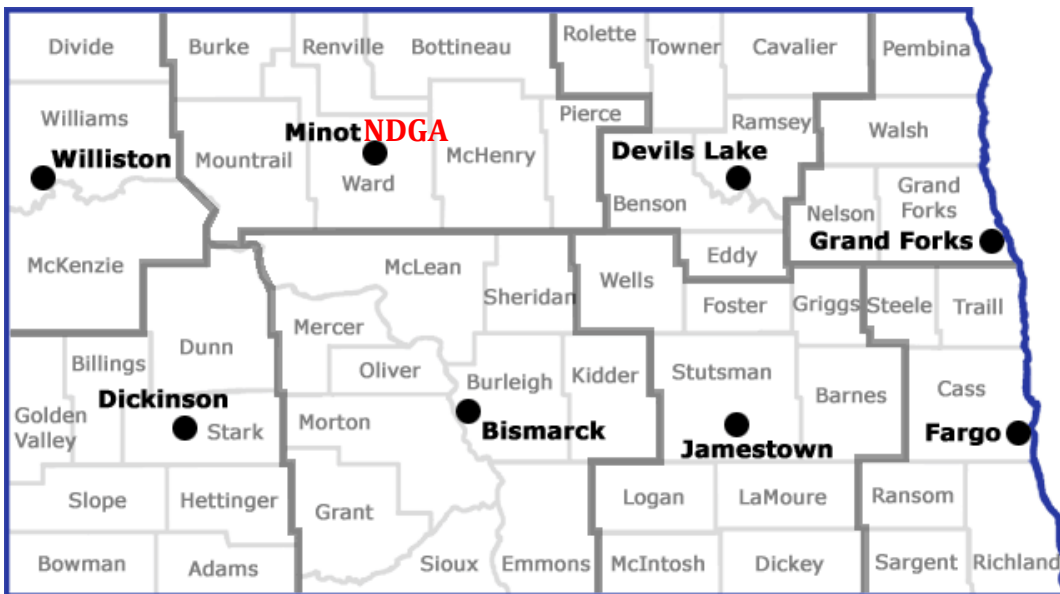
NDGA's current organizational style is coordinator driven. We are moving to being more team driven and empowering our members to take on roles of leadership. Teams have been established to focus the responsibilities of the board, freeing the coordinator to manage and support programs rather than control and lead them. Our strategic planning efforts have moved us to implement a leadership training retreat with the goal of expanding NDGA leadership. This will enable our coordinator to focus on meeting the responsibilities and policies put forth by National Geographic Educational Foundation and Minot State University.

Changes in our state which impact NDGA culture

- Energy
  - Population Changes
    - Increased growth

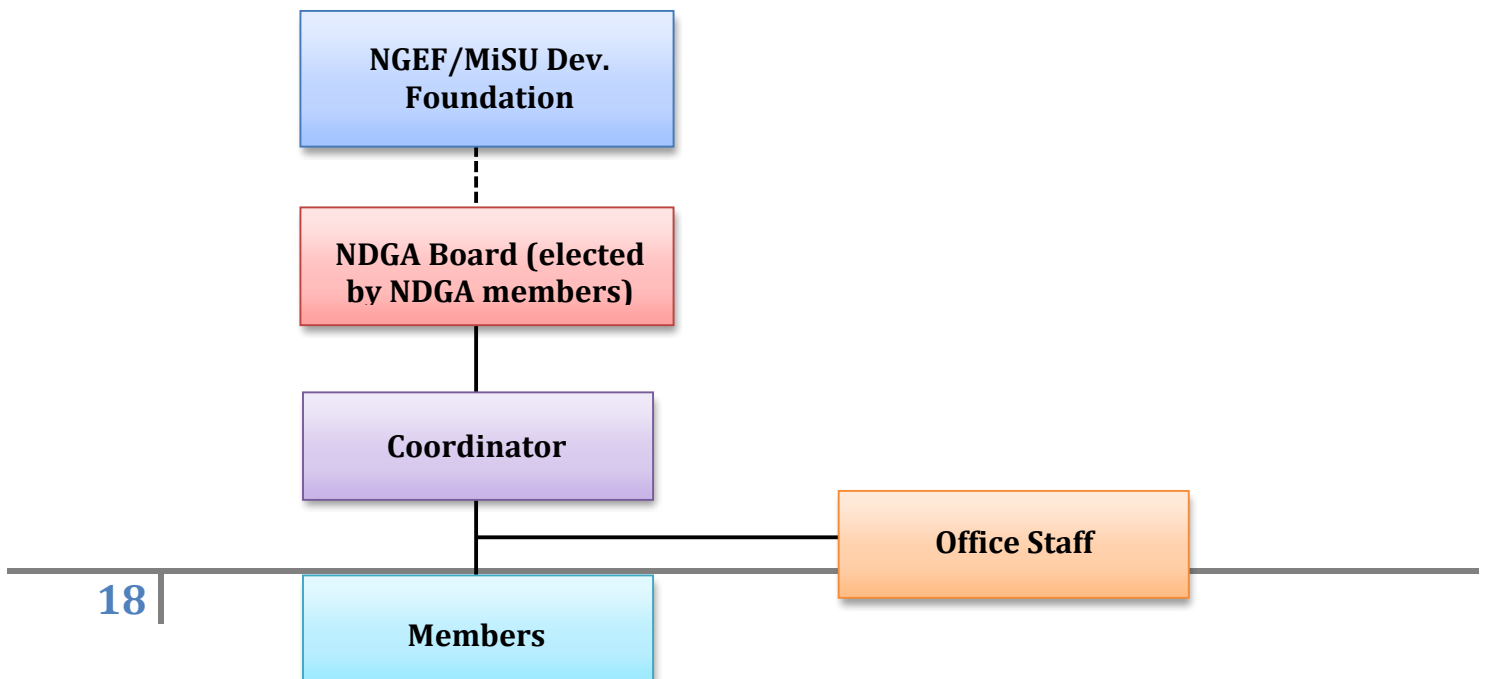
- Demographic changes
- Transient
- Infrastructure
- Economy
- Education
- Technology
  - Information disseminated electronically
  - Virtual meetings replacing face-to-face
- Common Core Implementation
  - Support integrated instruction

**Physical Location of NDGA (Minot State University)**



- Major Cities

**NDGA Structure – Internal and External Organization**



### **National Geographic Education Foundation**

- Oversees the endowment
- Oversees and approves budget items
- Supports NDGA’s mission, vision, and goals

### **Minot State University Development Foundation**

- Oversees the budget and approves budget items
- Provides office space, clerical and technical support
- Supports NDGA’s mission, vision, and goals

### **NDGA Board**

- Voluntary board members are elected by NDGA members
- Includes 5 teacher members, 5 general members and the Alliance Coordinator
- Guides the organization, following adherence to its mission, vision, values and strategic plan
- Further job responsibilities outlined in Constitution (see Appendix A)
- Time table for recruiting and electing new Board member (see Appendix B)

### **Coordinator**

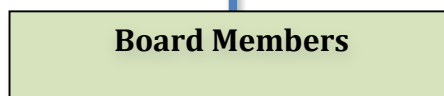
- Selected by NGEF and approved by the board
- Responsible for day to day administration and operation of the organization in compliance with NGEF, NDGA Constitution, host institution, state, and federal policies
- Further job responsibilities outlined in Constitution (see Appendix)

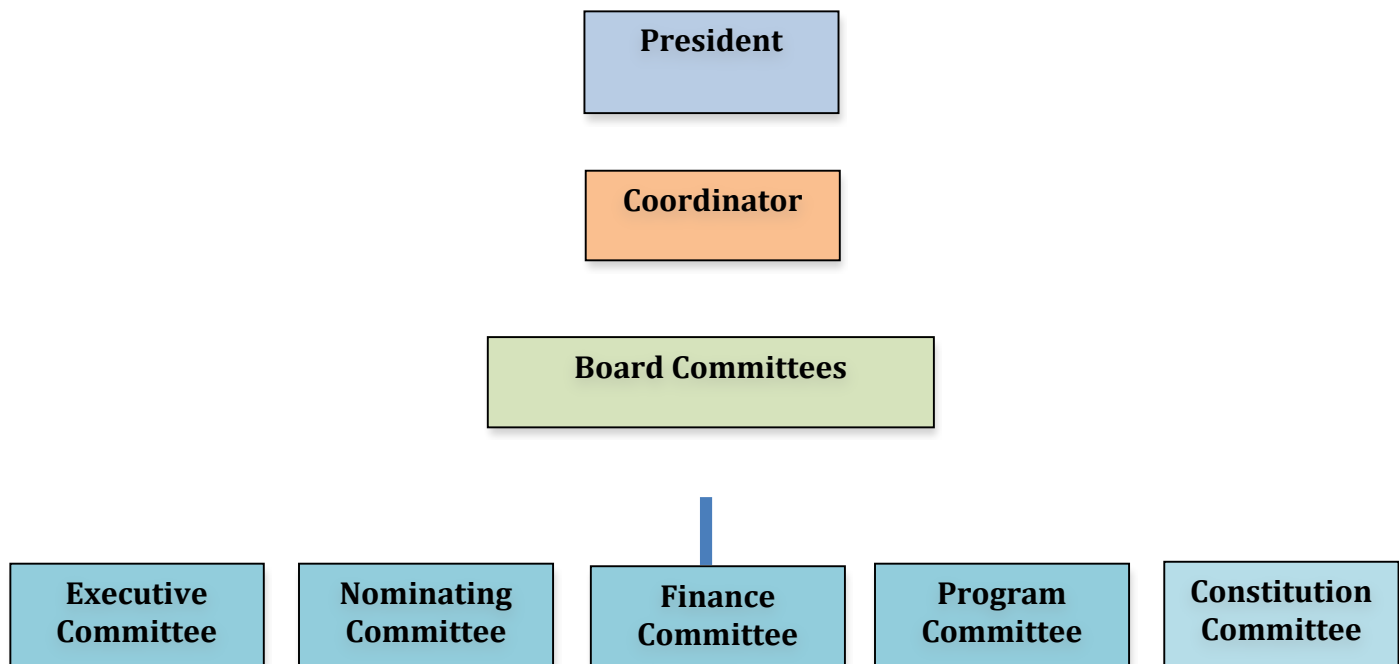
### **Office Staff**

- Accountant, hired by Board
- Office Assistant, hired by Accountant and responsible for duties as assigned by Accountant

### **Members**

- Free membership
- Open to any individuals interested in geography
- Opportunities for professional development and access to geographic resources
- Encouraged to become leaders within the organization





NDGA Board composition and terms are defined in the NDGA Constitution. In addition, board members' responsibilities will include membership and active participation on a committee intended to further NDGA's mission and attain NDGA's goals and objectives. Each board member shall serve on at least one committee. There will be a designated leader for each committee.

Committees are as follows:

- Executive
  - Appointed by board
  - Members include coordinator (team chair), board chairperson, teacher member, general member
  - Power to make board decisions (with exception of constitution changes)
  - Minutes of meeting forwarded to board members
- Nominating
  - Appointed by board
  - Responsible for recruiting members for open board positions
  - Maintain and update list of potential candidates
  - Orientation of new board members
  - Create job descriptions for board members
  - See Appendix for schedule as described in the Constitution
  - Appointed by board
  - Responsible for constitution review and revision proposals
- Finance
  - Appointed by board
  - Responsible for budget input and supervision
  - Pursue funding opportunities

- Program
  - Appointed by board
  - Responsible for maintaining, monitoring, improving and evaluating current programs
  - Assist with new program development
  - Develop evaluation method for evaluation of programs and activities
- Constitution (see Appendix A)
  - Appointed by board
  - Responsible for constitution review and revision proposals

## *VII. Financial Plan*

### **Background**

By some measures NDGA has achieved a level of financial sustainability. It was able to secure private funds and an appropriation from the North Dakota legislature which was fully matched by National Geographic. This \$1,000,000 endowment returns funds annually (variable depending on market value) to NDGA. In addition NDGA has actively sought programming funds from a variety of partners. However, these funds only allow for three paid part-time positions: coordinator, bookkeeper and an office assistant). Currently, NDGA has approximately \$30,000 available for all three positions. Given the activity level of NDGA, these part-time hours are not adequate and the amounts of pay available are not enough.

NDGA is very fortunate to have dedicated members who serve in numerous volunteer positions. The value of their time is simply impossible to calculate. All volunteers should receive meaningful recognition. Consideration should be given to compensation for planning professional development programs, leadership training, educational travel and work on special projects. These actions all require additional and predictable operating funds.

## Near-Term Financial Plan

2015-2016 Budget:

Currently, NDGA staffing, recruitment and programming relies on monies from

- NGEF endowment funding
- In-kind funding from Minot State University, NDGA Board of Directors and staff, ND Forest Service, Teacher Resource Coalition
- Grants
  - Department of Agriculture
  - Montana-Dakota Utilities

2015-2016 Budget Summary

- \$24,000 Staffing
- \$14,000 Supplies
- \$17,000 Programming/Educational Resources Expenses
- \$20,000 In Kind
- \$12,000 Other Funds

## Long-Term Financial Plan

**Pursuing New Funds** (Finance Team, Coordinator, Board Members; ongoing)

Pursue grant writing opportunities

- Search for available foundation, government, charitable, corporate grants
- Hire a grant writer

Seek funding in ND Foundation Directory, e.g.

- Otto Bremer Foundation
- Northwest Area Foundation
- Bush Foundation

Solicit additional sustainable funding from the North Dakota State Government

- Consult with state legislators for advice on how to pursue additional state funding
- Enlist NDGA members to contact and lobby their Senators and Representatives to support funding

Pursue donations from business, industry, and individuals

Projected Budget—Beyond 2017

- \$64,000 Staffing (add project manager)
- \$30,000 Supplies
- \$34,000 Programming/Educational Resources Expenses
- \$25,000 In Kind
- \$25,000 Other Funds to build capacity (see below “Uses of New Funds”)

## Uses of New Funds

In a perfect world, we would have 10 times as much money as. The budget would call for these priorities:

- Full time, dedicated, enthusiastic, creative coordinator and 2 staff members
- Fully funded out of state travel to supplement Regional Geography for 5 ND K-12 educators per year
- Fully funded international travel to supplement World Geography for 5 ND K-12 educators per year
- Funding to establish Geography Clubs in each ND school district with a paid advisor. Fund enticing club activities, travel and adventure within the state

This is the real world. New funding is a **necessity** to build capacity for NDGA. For this organization to be sustainable and grow, new funding must be sought. These funds would be listed according to priority and the good of the organization.

- Hiring a grant writer
- Adequate compensation for coordinator, administrative staff
- Hire project manager
- Adequate compensation for board members to carry out the Strategic Plan goals as active team members, e.g.
  - Serve as web master
  - Write GeoGrams
  - Maintain Facebook page
  - Giant Map project
- Adequate compensation for members for work done to advance NDGA to carry out the Strategic Plan goals, e.g.
  - NDGA Promotion Coordinator
  - Professional Development (Task Force, Instructor of Record)
  - Professional writing and reporting
  - Shared lesson plans on website
- Expenses needed to enable NDGA members to participate in personal and professional growth and teacher growth opportunities
  - travel
  - lodging
  - substitute teacher
- Expanding professional development such as GIS training
- Leadership training for new and current board members
  - Board retreat
- Leadership shadowing for new leaders
- NDGA grant availability for teachers

## *VIII. Evaluation of Strategic Plan*

<b>Annual (October) Measures of Progress</b>						
<b>Goals</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Who will use this information ?</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Data Collection Tool</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Adaptations &amp; Adjustments</b>
<b>Education/ Professional Development</b>  Evaluation done by Program Team	What relevant and effective educational activities, professional development and resources supporting K-12 and pre-service geography education did we offer?	Project coordinator, NDGA Board, AC	Attendees	Tri-University Assessment ; on-line follow-up survey; attendance count from workshop or activity	Is this an increase? What is the feedback?	Maintaining, revising or abandoning strategies or plans relevant to evaluation results. Update all relevant information.



<p><b>Leadership</b></p> <p>Evaluation done by Nominating Team</p>	<p>How did we promote and encourage NDGA Board members, coordinator(s), NDGA members and stakeholders to participate in leadership training to grow in ways that mutually benefit the individual and the organization?</p>	<p>NDGA Board, AC</p>	<p>Attendees</p>	<p>Survey; Number of contacts with potential leaders</p>	<p>Is this an adequate number of potential leaders? What is the feedback?</p>
<p><b>Communication</b></p> <p>Evaluation done by Constitution Team</p>	<p>What effective internal and external communication strategies did we use to inform and collaborate with the NDGA Board, NDGA members and external stakeholders?</p>	<p>NDGA Board, AC</p>	<p>NDGA members and external stakeholders</p>	<p>Survey to determine if members are informed; types of communication used</p>	<p>Is this sufficient communication? Is this communication effective?</p>

<b>Evaluation</b>  Evaluation done by Executive Team	Did we establish a system to evaluate both NDGA leadership and programs to expand and improve the organization?	NDGA Board, AC	Coordinator, Board members, program participants	Interviews, survey	Is NDGA leadership effective? Are NDGA programs effective?	
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## ***IX. Implementation***

The Implementation Plan is embedded within the NDGA objectives and strategies of the Strategic Plan. Target dates for completion, responsible parties, and assignments are included in each objective. Based on evaluation, existing programs and strategies will be adapted or revised as needed. New programs will be launched as need develops or opportunities arise.

An annual review will be conducted in early October. The result of the annual review will determine updating the Strategic Plan.

## **Appendix A: NDGA Constitution**

### **NORTH DAKOTA GEOGRAPHIC ALLIANCE CONSTITUTION**

#### **Article I: Name**

The name of this organization is the NORTH DAKOTA GEOGRAPHIC ALLIANCE, hereafter referred to as “NDGA.”

#### **Article II: Purpose**

To promote the increase and diffusion of geographic knowledge, foster innovation in geographic education, and encourage stewardship and conservation of Earth’s natural and cultural resources in North Dakota pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade teaching and learning.

#### **Article III: Membership**

Section 1. Membership is available to all pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade teachers. General membership to open to all other interested persons. No person shall be discriminated against for membership on account of race, color, religion, sex, sexual preference, age, marital status, disability, or national origin.

Section 2. Dues/fees: All voting members shall pay an annual fee as set by the NDGA Board of Directors. The annual fee will be determined by a majority of the board membership at the annual business meeting. The membership fee period shall be from October 1 to September 30 each year.

#### **Article IV: Board of Directors**

##### Section 1. Membership

- A. Five teacher members.
- B. Five general members.
- C. The Coordinator, Co-Coordinator shall serve as voting members.
- D. The Minot State University Development Foundation Representative as appointed by that organization will serve as a voting member.
- E. Ex-officio member (s) serve as non-voting members.
- F. Each member will have one vote, regardless of the number of membership categories they represent.

Section 2. Terms of office for Board members begin on October 1 and end on September 30.

Section 3. Election of Teacher and General Board Director Members:

- A. The teacher board members shall be elected by the total paid teacher membership and are to serve for staggered five-year renewable terms so a term for one teacher board member ends each year.
- B. The general board members shall be elected by the total paid general membership and are to serve for staggered five-year renewable terms so a term for one general member ends each year.
- C. Annual NDGA elections will be held each May and will be by mail ballot. A call for nominations is to be mailed to all NDGA paid members at least one month prior to each election. A Board appointed nominating committee will review all nominations to verify qualifications and make additional nominations (if needed) before finalizing the ballot. Short biographies and written position statements are to be requested from all candidates and are to be supplied with ballots to all NDGA members. Mail ballots will be sent to all NDGA members at least two weeks prior to the required return date.
- D. Special elections may be scheduled as needed.
- E. If a board membership category changes, the board member can finish their elected term in the category of membership to which they were elected.

#### Section 4. Officers

- A. The Board Chair person will be elected annually from the teacher or general Board members by majority vote.
- B. A secretary will be appointed at each Board meeting.

#### Section 5. NDGA Board of Directors Duties

- A. Approve, authorize the NDGA annual program(s) and budgets.
- B. Appoint by majority vote of all NDGA board members, the NDGA Alliance Coordinator(s), Editor(s), and all project coordinators/managers.
- C. Establish privileges and responsibilities for each membership category.
- D. The Board may establish other officers and delegate responsibilities to those officers.

#### Section 6. Grants and Agreements

- A. The Board of Directors shall authorize all applications and proposals for Grants and agreements with individuals, organizations, and corporations for funding or service as deemed appropriate for the functions of the Alliance.
- B. All grants and agreements will be approved by majority of board members.
- C. The Board of Directors will serve as the Advisory Body for the National Geographic Education Foundation grant proposal approval and are responsible for making recommendations pertaining to expenditure of funds from the National Geographic Society Education Fund.

#### Section 7. Meetings

- A. The date and time of the annual meeting requires a one month advance notice to the membership.
- B. A draft of all board minutes will be sent to Board of Directors members within 10 calendar days.

- C. Approved minutes are available upon request to the NDGA membership.
- D. The Board or Executive Committee may authorize the use of mail or electronic ballots.
- E. In all matters, Board and committee meetings are conducted in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Section 8. Special Meetings, Notice

- A. May be called by the Chairperson of the Board.
- B. May be called at the request of a Board member.
- C. Notice of such meeting, stating the time and place of the meeting shall be given to each Board member by mail, telephone, electronically, or personally. Such notice shall be given not less than three (3) days or more than thirty (30) days before the meeting. The notice shall state the principal purpose or purposes of the meeting and the business conducted at the meeting shall be limited to that purpose or purposes.

Section 9. Quorum and Manner of Acting. A majority of members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting, and the act of a majority of the Directors present at any meeting at which quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Directors unless otherwise provided by law and this Constitution. Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board of Directors may be taken without a meeting, if all members of the Board shall individually or collectively consent to such action. Such consent or consents shall be recorded in the Minutes of the proceedings of the Board. Such action by consent shall have the same force and effect as a unanimous vote of such Directors.

Section 10. Attendance at NDGA Board of Directors meetings and all committee meetings Can be in person or electronically (by teleconference, video conference).

Section 11. Compensation

- A. The NDGA Board of Directors and committee members shall serve without compensation, however, reasonable expenses may be reimbursed.
- B. Travel, lodging, per diem may be paid to attend NDGA Board of Directors and Committee meetings and other reasonable miscellaneous expenses needed to conduct board meetings.
- C. Duties such as NDGA Alliance Coordinator, Co-coordinator, NDGA Executive Editor may be compensated.

**Article V: Committees**

Section 1. The Board of Directors may establish committees and duties for those committees as needed.

Section 2. Quorum and Manner of Acting. Unless otherwise provided by motion of the Board of Directors, a majority of a Committee (including alternates when acting in lieu of regular members of such Committee) shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business and the act of a majority of those present at a meeting at

which a quorum is present shall be the act of such Committee. The members of each Committee shall act only as a Committee and the individual members shall have no power as such.

**Section 3. Executive Committee**

- A. The Board of Directors will appoint the Executive Committee consisting of the NDGA Alliance Coordinator(s), Board Chair person, one teacher member and one general member.
- B. Except for the power to amend the Constitution, the Executive Committee shall have all of the powers and authority of the Board of Directors in the intervals between meetings of the board of Directors, subject to the direction and control of the Board of Directors.
- C. Executive Committee Chair person shall be the Alliance Coordinator or Co-coordinator and a secretary shall be appointed at each meeting.
- D. The Executive Committee will assist, facilitate, and ensure compliance in the execution of all NDGA activities and act as advisors to the principle investigator(s) for all grants and agreements.
- E. The date and time of the meetings will be announced to all Executive Committee members at least 3 calendar days prior to the meeting.
- F. Minutes or a summary of Executive Committee meetings will be forwarded to all NDGA Board members, within 10 calendar days, and will be available upon request, to the NDGA membership.

**Article VI. NDGA Coordinator(s)**

Section 1. Are responsible for the day-to-day administration of the NDGA business in compliance with all host, state, and federal policies.

Section 2. Are responsible for ensuring the execution of financial day-to-day activities, to include the obligation and expedition of funds in accordance with host, state, and federal policies.

Section 3. Work(s) in coordination with project manager(s) and other Board member(s) as needed to execute NDGA activities.

Section 4. Administer the Alliance in accord with the financial and programmatic guidelines Of the host institution and NGEF contract requirements.

Section 5. Coordinator(s) have authority to make or delegate all decisions for the Alliance consistent with Board approval, guidelines of the host institution and NGEF Contract requirements, and the NDGA Constitution.

**Article VII. NDGA Chief Editor**

Section 1. Is responsible for the oversight of all NDGA media to include publications, newsletters, NDGA Website.

Section 2. Works in coordination with Alliance Coordinator(s), project manager(s) and other board member(s) as needed to execute NDGA activities.

**Article VIII. NDGA Project Manager(s)**

Section 1. Are responsible for the implementation of assigned NDGA projects such as workshops, NGEF outreach programs.

Section 2. Work in coordination with alliance coordinator(s), Editor(s) and other board

members as needed to implement NDGA activities.

**Article IX: Amendments and Ratification**

Section 1. The constitution may be amended or ratified by affirmative vote of 2/3 majority of members. The voting process will be by mail and ballots must be mailed at least two weeks prior to the ballot return date.

Section 2. Provisions. All By-Laws of the Alliance shall be subject to alteration, amendment, or repeal, and any new By-Laws not inconsistent with any provision of law may be made and adopted by the vote a majority of the Board Directors and any annual, regular, or special meeting called for that purpose.

Section 3. Notice. Proposed amendments to the Bylaws shall be made in writing and distributed to all members of the Board of Directors not less than seven days before a meeting where action will be taken on the proposed amendments.

**By-laws of the North Dakota Geographic Alliance**

**Article I: Administrative Office**

Section 1. The NDGA Administrative Office will be in Minot, North Dakota, and the Minot State University Business Office will serve as the NDGA fiscal manager.

## **Appendix B: Recruiting New Board Members**

### NDGA STRATEGIC PLANNING

Objective: Recruiting new Board of Director's (BOD) members

Nominating Committee

Members (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Timeline:

March 31: Call for nominations mailed to members

April 15: Nominations due including short biographies and position statements

April 30: Nominating committee meets to review nominations, verify qualifications, and make additional nominations if necessary.

May 1: Ballots sent to members.

May 15: Ballots due. Ballots counted. New Board members notified.

June 1: Press release announcing new Board members-term beginning October 1.

June 15: Annual meeting. Date set for new BOD member's orientation

Ongoing: Maintain an updated list of potential board candidates.



# 2007 Face to Face Survey: *What Can We Do For You?*

## ***Executive Summary***

By Marilyn Weiser

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### *Executive Summary*

In the spring of 2006, the North Dakota Geographic Alliance (NDGA) Board of Directors elected to evaluate its mission and goals in the context of the status of geography/social studies education and the urgent and relevant need for professional development. Social Studies and all of its components have been left behind as a result of the priorities of the *No Child Left Behind Act*. The Board sought to determine how to meet the professional development needs of educators and to examine the quantity and quality of geography education reaching North Dakota students. There had not been an Alliance Summer Geography Institute since 2001, therefore it was necessary to evaluate and identify the needs of teachers by going directly to them. The most effective way was to meet with them face-to-face.

- A. Twelve superintendents were contacted in six Class A and six Class B North Dakota schools embracing a variety of demographic characteristics. Each administrator selected five key geography/social studies teachers representing K-12. The survey was emailed to those teachers and a face-to-face meeting was scheduled where the responses were discussed. Approximately 60 educators represented an evenly distributed number of elementary, middle, and high school teachers located in the four quadrants of the state. The survey was conducted between January and April of 2007.

#### The teachers provided vital data for consideration:

- overwhelming need for professional development up to date resources
- additional preparation time and support of efforts to put the standards into practice
- grade level multi-media and technology support
- enhancement of classroom skills and resources to teach the relevance of geography/social studies
- evaluation of and improving attitudes toward geography/social studies
- how to connect geography/social studies to the entire curriculum.

In addition, the nature of the face-to-face survey gave educators the opportunity to offer worthy concerns. Following are some of the most critical:

#### Concerns:

- geography should be required in the high school curriculum
- a goal of geography/social studies education in all ND classrooms should be to prepare students for productive citizenship
- we must achieve geographic literacy to provide students with skills necessary for productive employment and global citizenship by developing an understanding of local and world cultures
- need for follow up and communication after a professional development event
- Department of Public Instruction should provide an interactive link with lesson plans for each standard

- map and spatial skills need to be taught at every grade level

Geographic reality in ND schools and classrooms:

- some foreign exchange students know more about geography/history/social studies than ND students
- many teachers purchase materials with personal funds because of outdated resources such as a 1953 world map in a middle school classroom, a European map with the former USSR named in a third grade classroom, and 1987 atlases in a high school geography classroom

Overall, profound statements throughout the survey indicate a critical need for the resurgence of and attention to geography/social studies education and for providing teachers with materials and information necessary to successfully give students the power of global knowledge.