

Farm And Road Safety Experts Urge Truck And Trailer Operators To Secure Their Load

Farm equipment roadway crashes most often occur with tractors, planters, combines and other large machinery. Farm trucks and trailers, given their size, weight and speed, are also at risk. Safety experts advise ensuring trucks and trailers are in good operating condition, clearly marked with required lighting and loaded securely.

"In the rush of a spring planting season and the summer growing season, the focus is on field equipment," said Angie Johnson, North Dakota State University Extension farm and ranch safety specialist. "Unfortunately, trucks and trailers can become something of an afterthought."

Loads such as seed, fertilizer, equipment and haybales are subject to vibration, swaying, centrifugal force, inertia, wind and other forces during transit. Johnson says improper load securement is common.

"If those loads aren't properly secured, they may topple onto the roadway, slide forward into the cab or fall backward off the truck or trailer," says Johnson.

"Farmers do get relief from some regulations, but the regulations that cover load securement aren't among them," says North Dakota Highway Patrol Trooper Joshua Anderson, truck safety expert. Those regulations are set by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

Bulk materials such as manure, seed and fertilizer that are not confined in containers should be contained in a vehicle and covered to prevent them from falling onto the roadway, says Anderson. For other cargo, such as seed bags and hay bales, load securement regulations are based on weight and length. Anderson provides the following guidance:

- Half the article's weight must be accounted for in the working load limit (WLL) of the securement devices. For example, when hauling 3,000 pounds of hay bales, the WLL of the devices used (such as straps or chains) must be equal to half that weight, or 1,500 pounds. If the WLL is not marked on the device, federal regulations provide WLLs for multiple types of tie-downs.

- The WLL calculation also depends on the number of sides of the vehicle/trailer to which the securement device is attached. If it is attached to both sides, credit is given for the device's entire WLL. If the device attaches to only one side of the trailer (such as a chain on a piece of equipment looped through a ring and back to the same side), credit is given only for half of the WLL.

- Multiple cargo items loaded side by side (such as three round bales) can be secured with the same tie-down, but the weight of all three must be accounted for in the load limit calculation.

- If the article is shorter than 5 feet or less than 1,100 pounds, a sin-

gle tie-down is sufficient. Two tie-downs are required for items (a) 5 feet long or less and more than 1,100 pounds, and (b) 5 feet to 10 feet long. For every additional 10 feet (or fraction thereof), add another tie down. For example, a 24-foot load requires four tie-downs: two for the first 10 feet, one for the next 10 feet and one for the last 4 feet. A trailer loaded with hay bales would likely require two straps on the front stack and one on each subsequent stack, Anderson says any trailers on the highway with just the front and rear stacks strapped aren't legal.

- With structures like a headache rack or gooseneck hitch to prevent forward movement, only one tie-down is required for every ten feet. However, ensure the cargo does not extend above the protective structure. This problem often occurs on gooseneck trailers when bales or other cargo are stacked above the gooseneck.

Purdue University Extension provides in-depth instructions for securing all kinds of loads, as well as specific guidance on securing hay bales for transport.

"It's easy to think that a load is secured 'good enough' for a short haul or convenience," Johnson says. "But if you need to make a quick maneuver to avoid a road hazard or if you need to make a sudden stop, that's when having that load properly secured is essential."

Johnson says it is also important that securement straps and chains are in good condition. Straps that are frayed, punctured, partially cut or extremely weathered will have a dramatically reduced load limit and will be flagged as a violation by law enforcement.

Del Peterson, a safety expert with the NDSU Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute, notes that farmers and ranchers should be aware of load restrictions along their routes.

"Those seasonal weight restrictions protect roads from damage when they are most susceptible in the spring," says Peterson. "On rural gravel roads, ignoring weight restrictions could result in trucks and trailers becoming stuck, with possible damage to the roadway or the equipment."

Peterson also notes that many rural bridges are posted for low load capacities.

"Some of those bridges are approaching 100 years old and were never designed for the loads that we now regularly see," says Peterson. "Add to that the wear and tear they've seen over the years, and you can see why the weight limits are low. Find an alternate route."

Additional state load restriction information can be found on the North Dakota Department of Transportation website: <https://www.dot.nd.gov/driver/commercial/northdakota-load-restrictions>.

ND Weekly Gas Price Update

Average gasoline prices in North Dakota have fallen 4.7 per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.54/g Monday, according to GasBuddy's survey of 493 stations in North Dakota. Prices in North Dakota are 15.6 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand 54.0 cents per gallon higher than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has decreased 11.7 cents compared to a week ago and stands at \$5.500 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the least expensive station in North Dakota was priced at \$3.13/g on Sunday while the most expensive was \$4.09/g, a difference of 96.0 cents per gallon.

The national average price of gasoline has fallen 9.4 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.97/g on Monday. The national average is up 39.1 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 93.4 cents per gallon higher than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than eleven million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Historical gasoline prices in North Dakota and the national average going back five years:

April 20, 2025: \$3.00/g (U.S. Average: \$3.10/g)

April 20, 2024: \$3.37/g (U.S. Average: \$3.67/g)

April 20, 2023: \$3.52/g (U.S. Average: \$3.68/g)

April 20, 2022: \$3.87/g (U.S. Average: \$4.10/g)

April 20, 2021: \$2.76/g (U.S. Average: \$2.87/g)

Neighboring areas and their current gas prices: Sioux Falls- \$3.54/g, down 7.5 cents from last week's \$3.61/g, Fargo- \$3.29/g, down 12.4 cents from last week's \$3.41/g, South Dakota- \$3.62/g, down 1.2 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.63/g.

"Average gasoline prices declined in 48 states over the last week, while diesel prices fell in 46 states, offering a welcome break at pumps, with the national average price of gasoline dipping below the \$4 per gallon mark over the weekend," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "However, that relief may prove fleeting. Oil prices surged in Sunday night trading after Iran re-closed the Strait of Hormuz and President Trump signaled further escalation if Tehran does not come to an agreement. With global oil flows remaining at risk, renewed volatility is

taking hold, and the continued back-and-forth is making any lasting resolution increasingly fragile. As a result, gasoline prices are likely to rise again in the days ahead, with diesel expected to follow if disruptions persist, and many of the states that exhibit price cycling could see increases in the next 24-48 hours."

GasBuddy®, a PDI Technologies company, is North America's trusted fuel savings platform, helping consumers fuel up for less for

North Dakota Stockmen's Association Publishes New Brand Book

The 2026 North Dakota Brand Record is now available from the North Dakota Stockmen's Association (NDSA).

The new 688-page brand book contains information regarding the nearly 20,000 brands renewed during North Dakota's recent brand renewal period. It also features a hard cover for improved durability and longevity, said Joan Zimmerman, NDSA brand recorder.

The 2026 North Dakota Brand Record is perfect-bound, blue in color, 8.5 x 11 inches in size and uses the same open design and easy-to-navigate index as previous editions. "Its hard cover also makes the

over twenty-five years. With over 100 million app downloads, GasBuddy delivers real-time prices at 150,000+ stations and tangible savings through Pay with GasBuddy+™. It is the most authoritative source of station-level fuel pricing data, updating averages 288 times daily from the broadest mix of inputs - spotter reports, direct station integrations, and transactional data. GasBuddy data is accessible at <http://prices.GasBuddy.com>.

book a special legacy piece," Zimmerman said.

This is the latest edition of the state's brand record. The first was published in 1892.

The book is available for a discount fee each if it is picked up at the NDSA office, located at 4520 Ottawa St., Bismarck, ND 58503 or separate fee, which includes postage, if it is mailed. The prices include the original book, as well as five annual supplements, which will be mailed in approximately February each year.

For more information, e-mail brands@ndstockmen.org or call (701) 223-2522.

Minutes Of The New Town School District No. 1

NEW TOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES MARCH 10, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pete Young Bird, BJ Brady, Doug Bratvold, DJ Driver, Marietta Heart

Present: 5 OTHERS PRESENT: Marc Bluestone, Nancy Reimer, Orrin Weyrauch, Robert Smith, Tanya Houle, Jennell Bear, Jackie Wollschlager, Sharon Dana and Amy Dana.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting called to order at 6:08 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda, tabling item 12. This motion, made by Doug Bratvold and seconded by Marietta Heart, carried.

BJ Brady: Yes; Doug Bratvold: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

3. Community Input

There was none.

4. Principal Reports

Jennell Bear gave the elementary school report.

Amy Dana gave the middle school report.

Robert Smith gave the high school report.

5. Athletic Director Report

Orrin Weyrauch gave the athletic director's report.

6. Consent Agenda

a. Approve ACCB: Protection for Student Victims of Sexual Offenders (Second Reading)

b. Approve Amended BC: Meetings of the Board (Second Reading)

c. Approve BCAA: Board Meeting Agenda and Pre-Meeting Preparation (Second Reading)

d. Approve Amended BCAD: Executive Session Policy (Second Reading)

e. Approve Amended BCBA: Public Participation at Board Meetings Policy (Second Reading)

f. Approve Amended BFB to BDA: Procedure for Adopting Board Policy (Second Reading)

g. Approve Amended BGB to BFA: Board-Superintendent Relations Policy (Second Reading)

h. Approve Amended CBD to CCA: Superintendent and Other Administrative Professional Development Policy (Second Reading)

i. Approve Amended CDA to CABA: Creation and Elimination of Administrative Personnel Positions Policy (Second Reading)

j. Approve DAA: Role of Policy and Regulations for Non-Contracted Employees Policy (Second Reading)

k. Approve DAB: Definitions for Personnel Policies Policy (Second Reading)

l. Approve Amended DABB to DBBB: Physical Examination Policy (Second Reading)

m. Approve Amended DAGA to DDEA: Jury Duty to Jury and Witness Duty Policy (Second Reading)

n. Approve Amended DBAA: Recruitment - Recruitment-Hiring & Background Checks Policy (Second Reading)

o. Approve Amended DBC to DFC: Transfer & Reassignment Policy (Second Reading)

p. Approve Amended DBF to DFAB: Teacher Supervision Policy (Second Reading)

q. Approve Amended ABAA: School District Organization Plan Policy (Second Reading)

r. Approve AACA: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Policy (Second Reading)

s. Approve CAAB: Superintendent Evaluation Procedure Policy (Second Reading)

t. Approve CAAA-E: Superintendent Job Description Exhibit (Second Reading)

u. Rescind BB: Goals and Objectives of the School Board Policy

v. Rescind BCBC: Insurance for Board Members Policy

w. Approve Amended DABA: Indian Preference Hiring Policy (First Reading)

7. Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the consent agenda items. This motion, made by Doug Bratvold and seconded by DJ Driver, carried.

BJ Brady: Yes; Doug Bratvold: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

8. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from the February 10, 2026 special meeting, the February 10, 2026 regular meeting, and the February 24, 2026 special meeting. This motion, made by Doug Bratvold and seconded by BJ Brady, carried.

BJ Brady: Yes; Doug Bratvold: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

9. Open Enrollment/Tuition Agreements

There are none at this time.

10. Financial Reports and Bill Sets

Motion to approve the financial report and bill sets. This motion, made by DJ Driver and seconded by Marietta Heart, carried.

BJ Brady: Yes; Doug Bratvold: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

11. Approval of Teacher Contract for the 2026-2027 School Year

Motion to approve the teaching contract for Jera Pretends Eagle for \$53,000 with a BS+0 and 0 years' experience for the 2026-2027 school year. This motion, made by DJ Driver and seconded by Doug Bratvold, carried.

BJ Brady: Yes; Doug Bratvold: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

12. Board's Decision and Notice of Recognition of NTEA for Negotiations

Motion tabled.

13. Superintendent Report

Marc Bluestone gave the superintendent's report.

Motion to move the May board meeting to May 13th at 6:00 p.m. This motion, made by Marietta Heart and seconded by DJ Driver, carried.

BJ Brady: Yes; Doug Bratvold: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

14. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting. This motion, made by Doug Bratvold and seconded by BJ Brady, carried.

BJ Brady: Yes; Doug Bratvold: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

Meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Pete Young Bird Board President

Nancy Reimer Business Manager

NEW TOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES MARCH 25, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pete Young Bird, BJ Brady, DJ Driver (via phone) and Marietta Heart

MEMBERS ABSENT: Doug Bratvold Present: 4; Absent: 1

OTHERS PRESENT: Marc Bluestone, Nancy Reimer, and Jackie Wollschlager.

1. Call Meeting to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting called to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda. This motion, made by BJ Brady and seconded by Marietta Heart, carried.

Doug Bratvold: Absent; BJ Brady: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

3. Community Input

There was none.

4. Consent Agenda

a. Bill Set

b. Approval Amended DABA: Indian Preference Hiring Policy (Second Reading)

c. Reaffirm BCDD: Board Membership in Associations Policy

d. Approve AACA-AR: Section 504 Evaluation Standards and Procedures

e. Approve AACA-E: Section 504 Notice of Parent/Guardian and Student Rights Exhibit

f. Approve AACA-E2: Eligibility Determination Form Exhibit

g. Rescind CBBC: Superintendent Contract Renewal Policy

h. Reaffirm CAAA: Superintendent Recruitment and Appointment Policy

i. Rescind CBBC: Superintendent Evaluation Policy

j. Approve Amended BCBA to DBAD: Emergency Hiring of Classified Personnel Policy (First Reading)

k. Approve DCAD: Expense Reimbursement Policy (First Reading)

l. Approve Amended Exhibit AAC-E1: Filing a State or Federal Discrimination and/or Harassment Complaint

m. Approve AAC-E2: Discrimination and/or Harassment Complaint Confidentiality Assessment Exhibit

n. Approve AAC-E3: Discrimination and Harassment Training Requirements for Employers Exhibit

o. Approve AAC-E4: Reasonable Accommodation Request Physician Form Exhibit

p. Approve AAC-E5: Notice of Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Exhibit

q. Approve AAC-E6: Sample Website Posting for Title IX Compliance Exhibit

r. Approve Amended AAC-BR2: Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure

s. Approve Amended ABBF: Ticket Sales for Accessible Seating Policy (First Reading)

t. Approve DEBD: Maintaining Professional Employee/Student Boundaries Policy (First Reading)

u. Approve DE: Staff Code of Conduct Policy (First Reading)

v. Approve DFAA: Teacher Evaluation Policy (First Reading)

w. Approve Amended DCE to DKBA: Separation of At-Will Employees Policy (First Reading)

x. Approve Amended DAGE to DDC: Leave Without Pay Policy to Unpaid Leave Policy (First Reading)

y. Approve DHAB: Title 1 Qualifications Notification Requirement Policy (First Reading)

z. Approve Amended DDAA: Family and Medical Leave Act (First Reading)

5. Approval of Consent Agenda Items

Motion to approve the consent agenda items. This motion, made by BJ Brady and seconded by DJ Driver, carried.

Doug Bratvold: Absent; BJ Brady: Yes;

DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

Year: 3; Nay: 0; Absent: 1

6. Board's Decision and Notice of Recognition of NTEA for Negotiations

Motion to recognize the New Town Education Association for negotiations. This motion, made by Marietta Heart and seconded by BJ Brady, carried.

BJ Brady: Yes; Doug Bratvold: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

Year: 4; Nay: 0

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting. This motion, made by Marietta Heart and seconded by BJ Brady, carried.

Doug Bratvold: Absent; BJ Brady: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

Year: 3; Nay: 0; Absent: 1

Meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

Pete Young Bird Board President

Nancy Reimer Business Manager

NEW TOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES APRIL 7, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pete Young Bird, Doug Bratvold, DJ Driver (via phone) and Marietta Heart

MEMBERS ABSENT: BJ Brady Present: 4; Absent: 1

OTHERS PRESENT: Marc Bluestone, Nancy Reimer, Jackie Wollschlager, Paul Stremick, and Michael Heilman.

1. Call Meeting to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting called to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda. This motion, made by Marietta Heart and seconded by Doug Bratvold, carried.

BJ Brady: Absent; Doug Bratvold: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

3. Consider a Motion to go into Executive Session Pursuant to NDCC 44-04-18.27 for the purpose of naming finalists for the School Transition Superintendent

Motion to go into executive session at 6:05 p.m. pursuant to N.D.C.C. §44-04-18.27, as permitted by law. This motion, made by Doug Bratvold and seconded by Marietta Heart, carried.

BJ Brady: Absent; Doug Bratvold: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

Year: 3; Nay: 0; Absent: 1

Present in executive session: Pete Young Bird, Marietta Heart, Doug Bratvold, Delvin Driver Jr., Paul Stremick, Michael Heilman, Marc Bluestone, and Nancy Reimer.

The board reconvened in open session at 6:41 p.m.

4. Reopen Meeting to the Public and Name the Finalists

Motion to interview Leslie Bieber, Robert Poitra, and Dr. Jeff Thake. This motion, made by Marietta Heart and seconded by DJ Driver, carried.

BJ Brady: Absent; Doug Bratvold: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

Year: 2; Nay: 1; Absent: 1

5. Determine the Dates and Times of Interviews

Motion to do the interviews April 14th at 3:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. will be the interviews. This motion, made by Marietta Heart and seconded by Doug Bratvold, carried.

BJ Brady: Absent; Doug Bratvold: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

Year: 3; Nay: 0; Absent: 1

6. Confirm Interview Committee

The whole board will be conducting interviews.

7. Confirm Those Conduction Tours of the School and Community

Nancy Reimer will do the tours.

8. Confirm Interview Questions and Procedure

Michael Heilman will read the questions to the interviewees. Follow-up questions will be done at the end of the interview.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting. This motion, made by Doug Bratvold and seconded by Marietta Heart, carried.

BJ Brady: Absent; Doug Bratvold: Yes; DJ Driver: Yes; Marietta Heart: Yes

Year: 3; Nay: 0; Absent: 1

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Pete Young Bird Board President

Nancy Reimer Business Manager

NEW TOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES APRIL 13, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pete Young Bird, BJ Brady, Doug Bratvold, DJ Driver (via phone) and Marietta Heart

Present: 5

OTHERS PRESENT: Marc Bluestone, Nancy Reimer, Michael Heilman and Paul Stremick.

1. Call Meeting to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m.