



National Career  
Development  
Association

**GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE  
FY2025-2026  
Mid-Year Report**

**Co-Chairs:**

- Sarah JanTausch, [sarah@valuesbasedcareers.com](mailto:sarah@valuesbasedcareers.com), 740-816-4909
- Steven Thomas, [sdthomas25@gmail.com](mailto:sdthomas25@gmail.com), 313-378-6806

**Committee Organization:**

- **Board Liaison:** Marty Apodaca
- **ACA Contacts:** Guila Todd & Caitlin Flanagan
- **Committee Members:** The NCDA GRC list sits between 40-50. It is made up of 15-20 active members and an additional 30 interested parties who engage as needed on key topics. Please contact co-chairs for the list.

**Committee Activities to Date**

Committee Reorganization & Structure:

- Re-organization of the committee that included onboarding and training a new co-chair and transitioning out a retiring co-chair.
- Committee capacity building and training to support shift in advocacy priorities.
- Worked with NCDA to update the GR webpages.

Strategic Planning & Budget:

- Strategic planning completed by co-chairs for FY2025-2026 year.
- Analysis of federal landscape to evaluate and realign advocacy activities.
- A budget for new programming, legislative tracking tools, capacity building, and direct support for CDAs for state level advocacy was submitted at the end of FY2024-2025. Sarah presented to the board in the fall (FY2025-2026) and worked with Board Liaison, Marty, to align planning with board priorities and outcome targets. Planning and final budget was submitted in December. The budget was approved in spring 2026.

Legislative & Regulatory Tracking:

- For the first quarter of FY2025-2026, legislative tracking was completed through the remaining months of the prior vendor, then manually by the committee from January through budget approval in the spring.
- Following budget approval, a RFP was issued to find a new legislative tracking tool. A new vendor was selected and secured in May 2026. The committee co-chairs are working with the vendor to configure and set up tracking priorities with a full rollout planned for later this summer.

Coalition Building

- The committee has worked with SHRM, the National Skills Coalition, the American Counseling Association, and is planning further coalition building with national organizations with shared missions.

- Steven partnered with Markell to launch and coordinate a state capacity assessment and evaluation survey to guide future planning and training efforts.

#### Advocacy, Policy & Public Statements:

- The committee tracks federal and state legislation and regulations on a weekly and monthly basis flagging hot topics for committee review and evaluation.
- The co-chairs flag emergent, high-visibility opportunities.
- Co-chairs worked with the board to complete three key public statements and comments:
  - Signed on to the National Skills Coalition Letter supporting career technical education and other topics. Contact co-chairs for a copy of the letter.
  - NCDAs, along with representatives of organizations across workforce development boards, state and local governments, community and technical colleges, adult educators, labor and labor-management partnerships, community based organizations, workers and businesses, submitted a letter in June 2026 about prioritizing a response to economic changes which affect workers and learners.
  - Wrote and submitted public comment on the federal proposed RISE (Reimagining and Improving Student Education) rules.
- Led a letter writing campaign for NCDAs members in 6+ states that supported continuing advocacy related to the RISE regulations.
- Partnered with Senator Merkley's staff on advocacy related to RISE regulations.

#### Training

- Provided training in monthly meetings for committee members.
- Hosted and led training at the NCDAs conference to build capacity.

#### **Projected Plan/Work Planned to be Completed through September 30.**

- Complete legislative tracking vendor onboarding and account configuration.
- Lead training at the NCDAs conference to build capacity.
- Craft dynamic reporting through the legislative tracking vendor to give direct access for all NCDAs members to track federal and state regulations and legislation with the click of a button behind the member paywall.
- Create, launch, and implement grant programs for state CDAs to build capacity and host engagement events with legislators and policy makers at the local and state levels.
- Provide training to all NCDAs members through a live virtual webinar.
- Host an advocacy summit to build capacity and train members in partnership with advocacy expert speakers.
- Submit budget request for FY2026-2027 that will include renewal of funds for key programming and an extension request for funds not used during the shortened window from FY2025-2026.