

NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

TSI Accountability Expectations

Kara Welk
Director,
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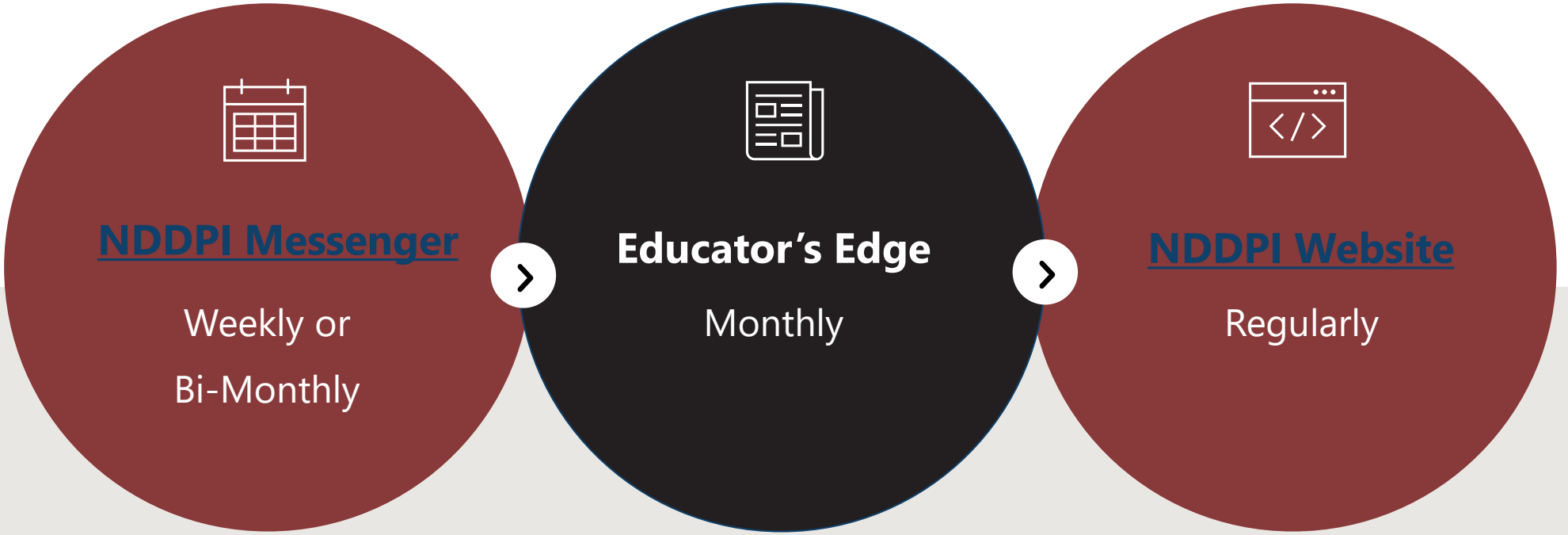
Rachel Tabler
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Assessment and Accountability

ESSA and Accountability

- ✓ The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law on December 10, 2015. ESSA reauthorized the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was previously reauthorized as No Child Left Behind (NCLB).
- ✓ The law builds on key areas of progress and ongoing efforts to improve educational opportunities for all students in North Dakota.
- ✓ On September 1, 2017, NDDPI received official approval of the North Dakota State ESSA Plan.
- ✓ NDDPI staff continues to review the law and engage in deliberate stakeholder involvement through the ESSA Implementation Committee, which approves any accountability process revisions that don't require a full state plan amendment.
- ✓ NDDPI is preparing to submit an ESSA State Plan Amendment, so it'll be important to stay informed of critical updates affecting schools.

How do you keep up?

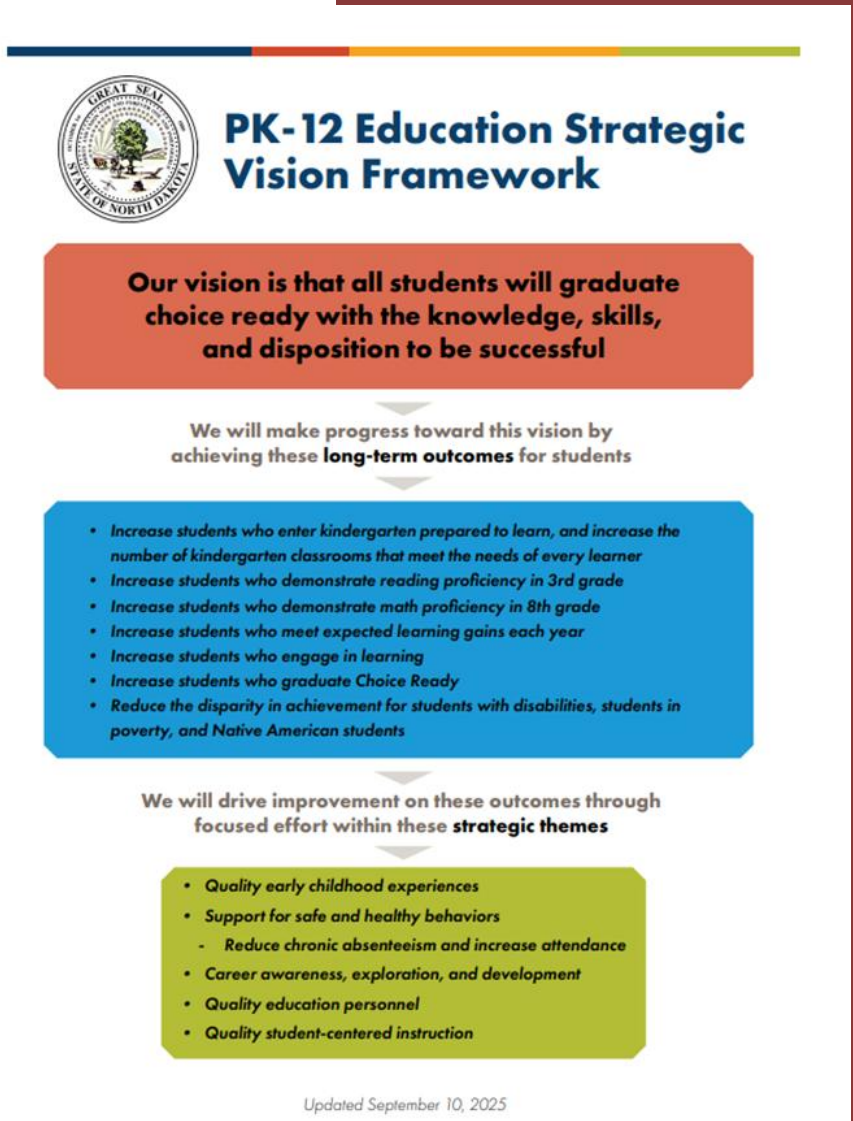
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Purpose of Accountability

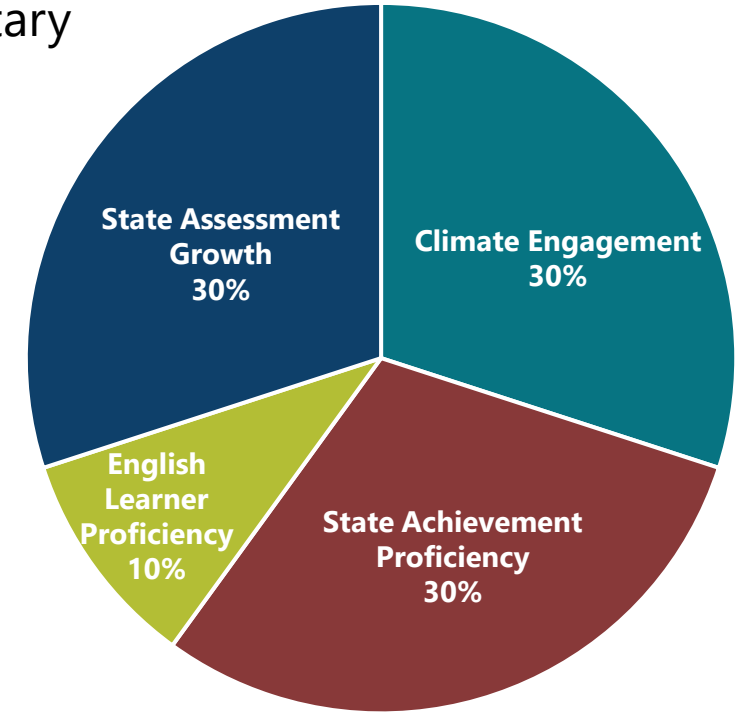
The purpose of the ND accountability system is to provide statewide responsibility to all stakeholders to pursue the ND PK-12 Strategic vision and to do the following:

- Provide transparency and public reporting of key performance and improvement indicators for all schools, districts, and the state;
- Ensure all schools and districts are engaged in a process of continuous improvement;
- Identify when and where desired results are not being achieved, prioritize which schools are most in need of support, and
- Allocate resources and support services, increase oversight and engagement, and elevate accountability for those schools most in need of support.

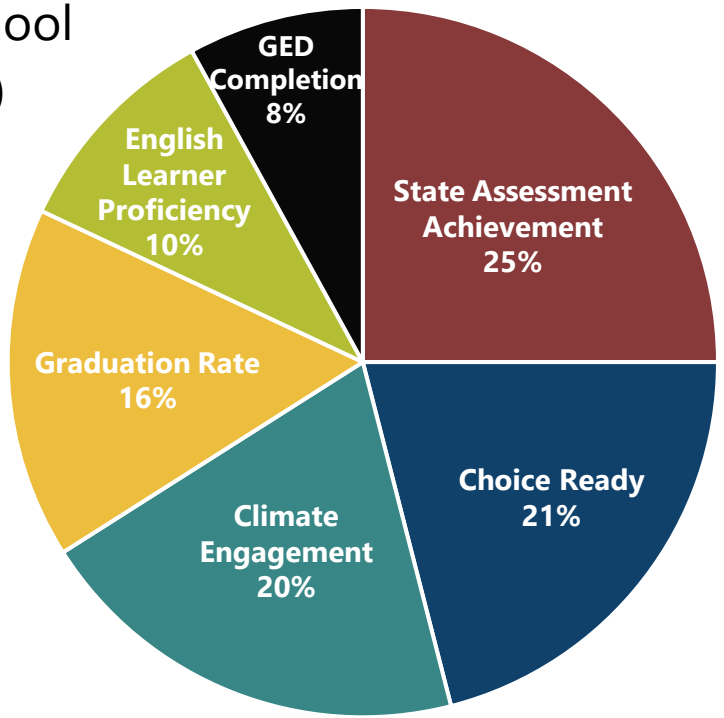


Elementary & High School Accountability System

Elementary
(K-8)



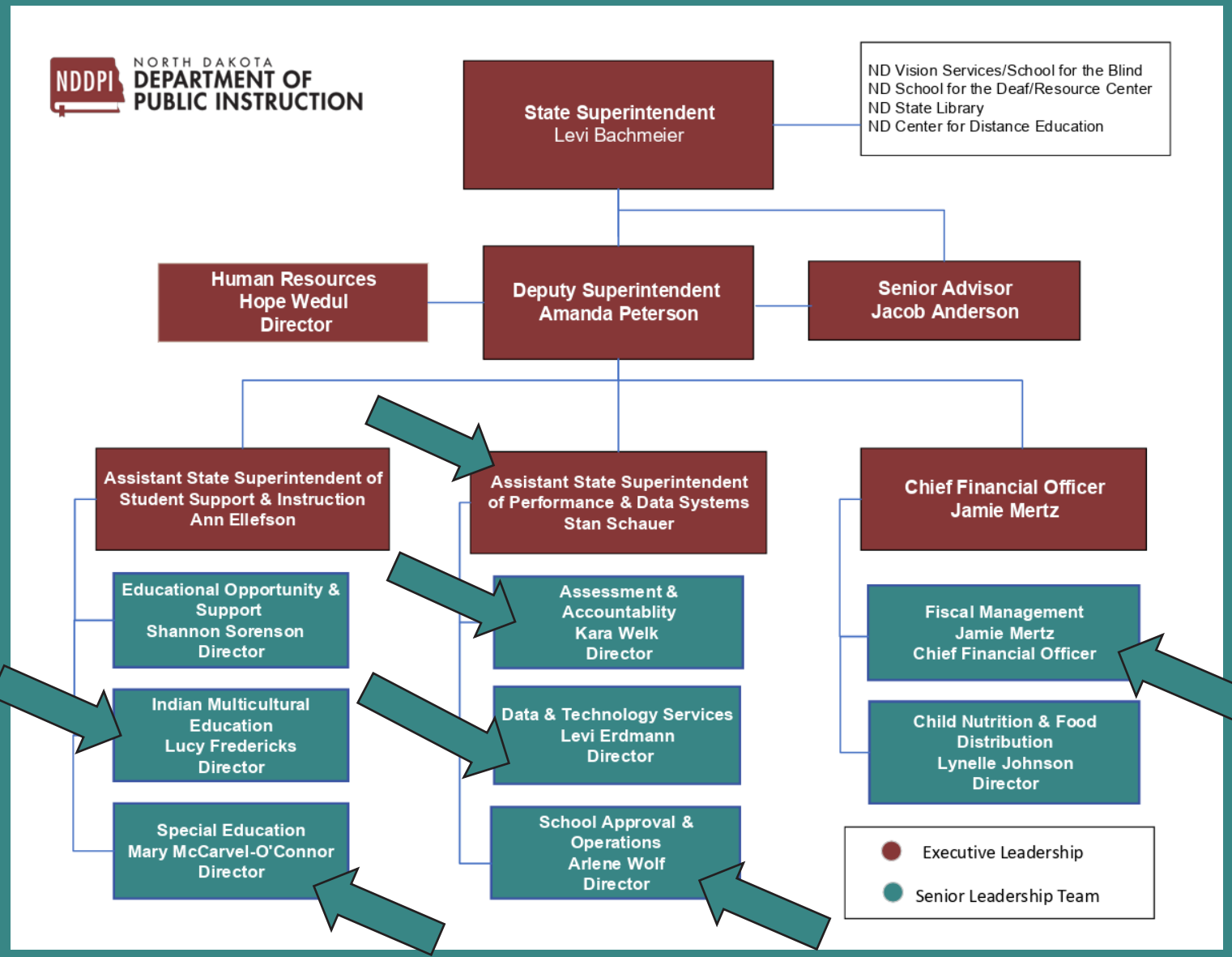
High School
(9-12)



For accountability purposes, grades 7 and 8 are included with the elementary report, except for large districts with an approved middle school.

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Accountability is administered by several NDDPI offices



Accountability Calendar

Listed below are the report deadlines, key dates, and links to additional information on the NDDPI website.

Student Engagement Survey	Survey Window: February 1 - February 28, 2027
North Dakota State Assessment WIDA Access for ELLs Testing	Assessment Test Windows
Graduation Report	Deadline to submit report: June 30
Choice Ready Report	Deadline to submit report: June 30

Accountability, Support, and Improvement

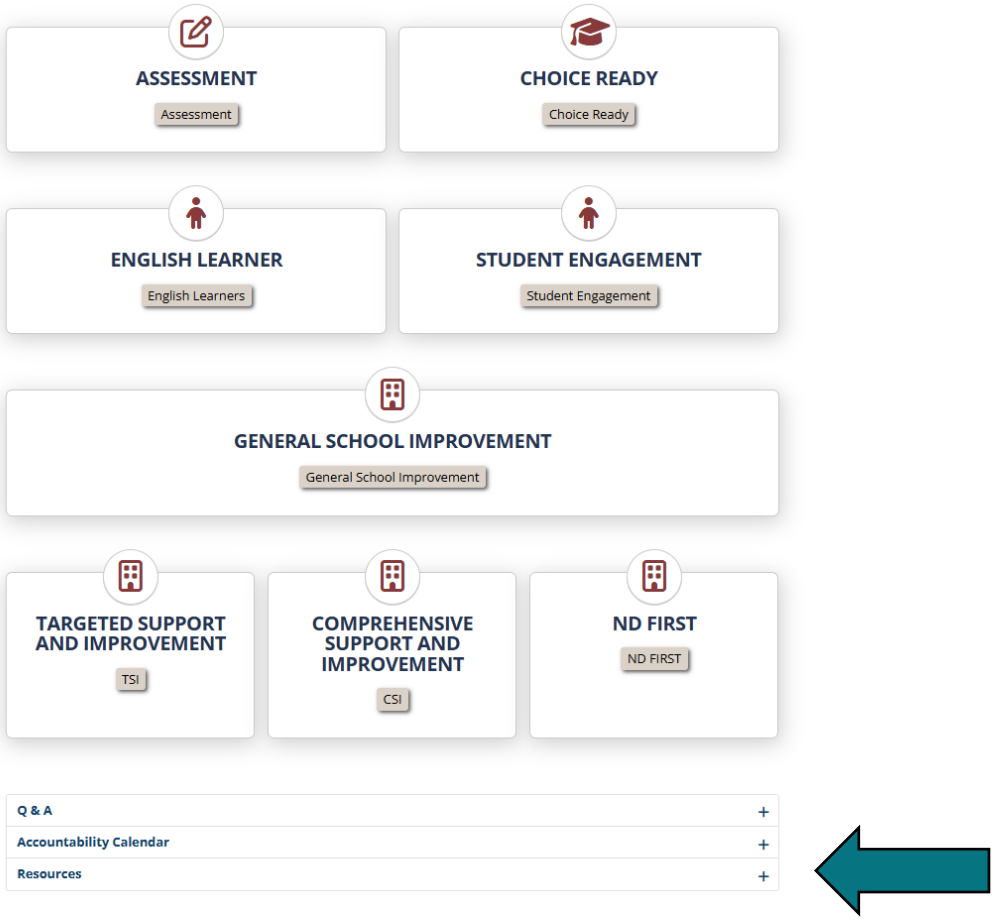
Click below for helpful accountability resources that will assist school leaders in reviewing and communicating accountability results.

https://www.nd.gov/dpi/districtsschools/essa/accountability-support-improvement



Accountability, Support, & Improvement

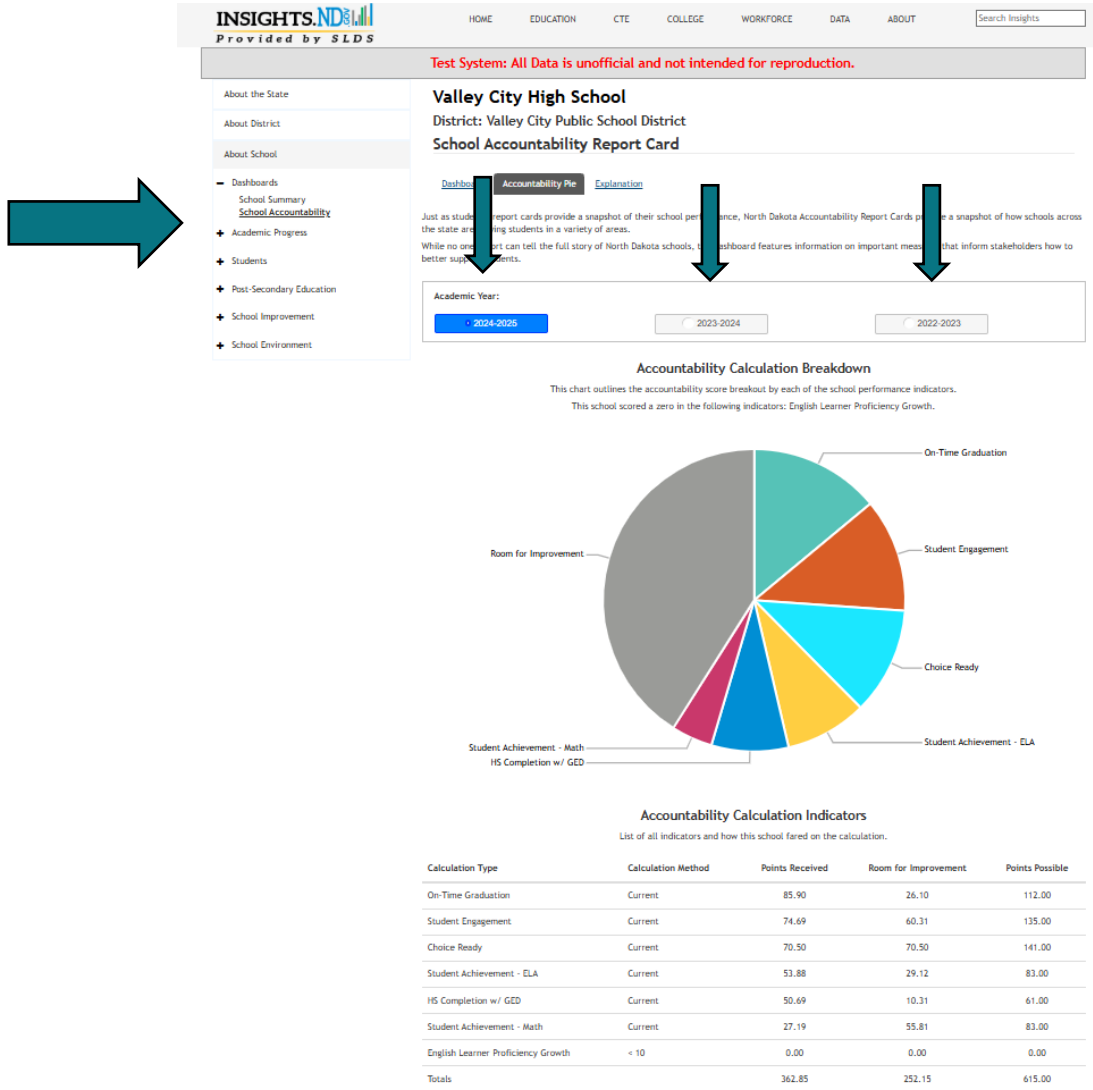
- This page includes all of the buttons to direct you to all topics included within the ND accountability system.
- The Resources tab includes helpful calculation guides, visuals, sample letters and communication tools, guidance documents, and recordings.



Insights

School Accountability Report Card

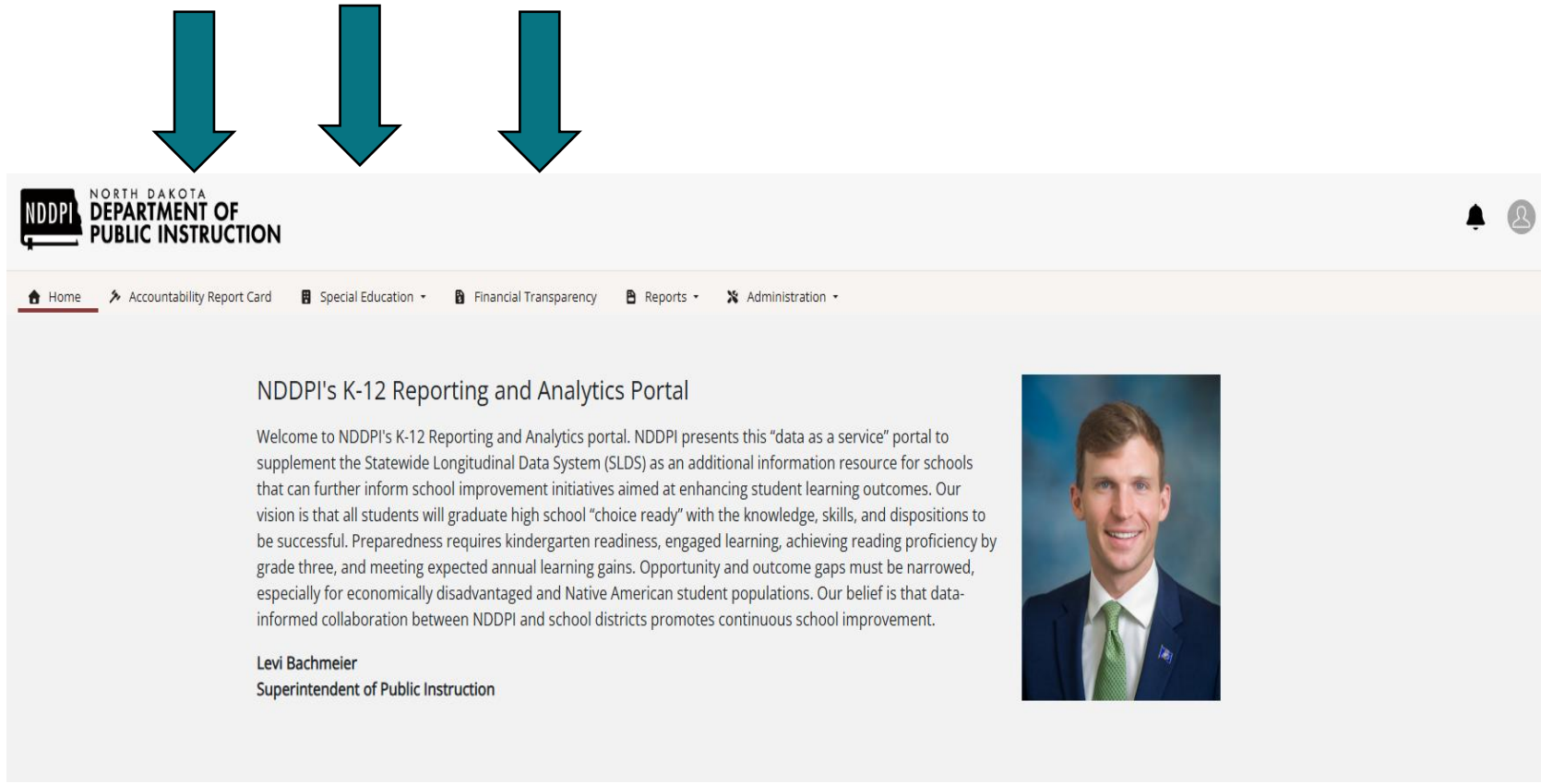
- To access the 2025-2026 School Accountability Report Card on the Insights, click on “Explore Public K-12”, “Data for Specific District or School”, and choose your school. Then, on the far left, click on “Dashboards” to open the “School Accountability” tab. From there, you can access your “Accountability Pie”, which is a visual representation of the accountability calculation breakdown.
- It is also helpful to compare to other years to note areas of improvement or need for growth.



Using the K-12 Reporting and Analytics Portal

K-12 Reporting & Analytics Portal

- STARS Login



K-12 Reporting and Analytics

How can school leaders conduct a meaningful accountability review?

*Review and understand the **School Accountability Calculation Guide** to see how points are distributed from school to school.*

*Use the step-by-step instructions in the **Accountability Data Validation User Guide** to conduct the actual review of local data.*

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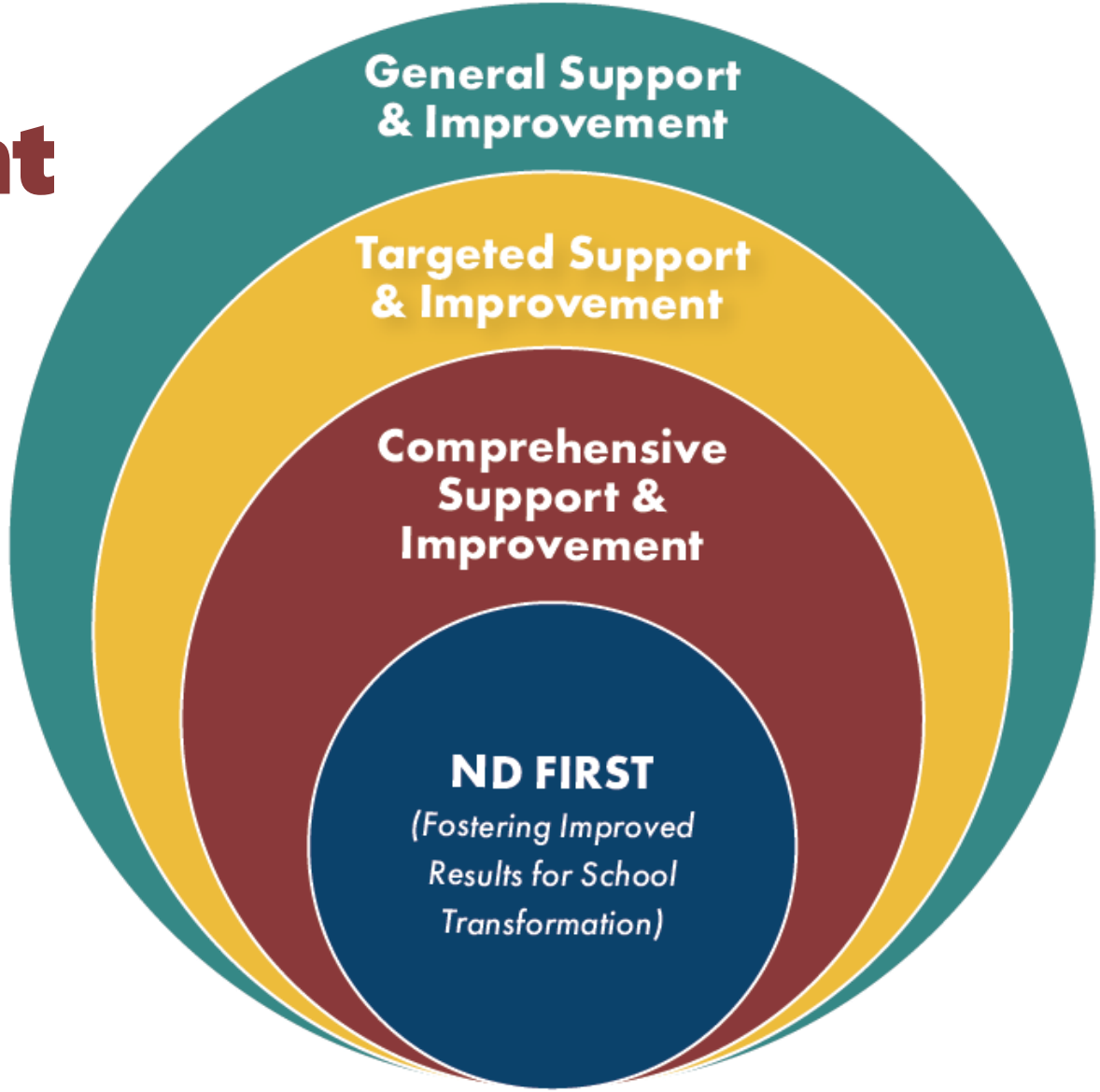
ACCOUNTABILITY DATA VALIDATION

USER GUIDE

Identification of Schools for Improvement

Continuous Improvement

- ✓ Currently, North Dakota uses Cognia statewide for approval and as a system of improvement for all public schools.
- ✓ All schools illustrate their continuous school improvement through the Strategy Map.



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ND School Improvement

Resource Compass

- North Dakota Accountability, Support, and Improvement
- State Automated Reporting System (STARS)
- Evidence-Based Programs and Practices
- Insights Dashboard
- School Renewal Guide
- Funding Your Plan

General Support: ALL ND Schools are expected to be utilizing a continuous school improvement process, currently evidenced through each school's Strategic Plan in the Cognia platform.

Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) - bottom 10%, 1-year designation

Year 1:

NDDPI...
- Offers guidance, support, and funding, including an NDREA Coaching Liaison, to each school.
- Conducts regular check-ins, requires status reports, and monitors the use of federal funding.

NDREA Coaching Liaison...
- Ensures that the school is aware of all School Renewal resources available and trains schools how to properly utilize these tools.
- Assists in reviewing accountability data, noting gaps, and ensuring they are taking measures to address areas of need.
- Supports the schools in reviewing their comprehensive needs assessment.

Identified School...
- Establishes a School Improvement Team.
- Aligns their Cognia Strategy Map to school improvement efforts.
- Selects evidence-based system frameworks and practices to implement school improvement efforts.
- Implements the School Renewal process, including PDSA cycles, to test change practices.

Exit

Year 2: (All expectations of Year 1, and the following)

NDDPI...
- Monitors the use of all federal funding streams and state expectations at an increased rate.

NDREA Coaching Liaison...
- Supports the schools in conducting a comprehensive needs assessment of the school system that includes student subgroup outcomes and low performance.
- Assists the schools in reviewing gaps identified through the accountability process and facilitates a discussion on what measures the schools are going to take to address these gaps.
- Assists the schools in reviewing their Cognia Strategy Map to ensure that it is aligned with School improvement efforts and being implemented with fidelity.

Identified School...
- Adapts, adopts, or abandons change practices based on student outcomes.

Exit

Year 3: (All expectations of Year 1 and 2, and the following)

NDDPI...
- Facilitates meetings with the school and district leaders to review system structure and provide an overview of CSI implementation.
- Recommends school board participation in the Be Legendary School Board Training Institute.

NDREA Coaching Liaison...
- Guides the School Improvement Team through the process of reviewing their comprehensive needs assessment data to address gaps identified through the accountability process.
- Conduct observations to determine School Renewal implementation and alignment of goals.
- Completes the Progress Review, alongside the school's School Improvement Team, and the corresponding Progress Review Report.

Identified School...
- Completes the Progress Review, alongside the school's School Improvement Team and the NDREA Coaching Liaison.
- Adapts, adopts, or abandons change practices based on student outcomes.

Exit

Exit and Return to General Support

Don't Exit → **Move to CSI for a 3 year designation**

Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) - bottom 5%, 3-year designation

Year 1:

NDDPI...
- Offers guidance, support, and funding, including an NDREA Coaching Liaison, to each school.
- Conducts regular check-ins, requires status reports, and monitors the use of federal funding.
- Monitors the use of all federal funding streams and state expectations at an increased rate.
- Requires school board participation in the Be Legendary School Board Training Institute.

NDREA Coaching Liaison...
- Ensures that the school is aware of all School Renewal resources available and trains schools how to properly utilize these tools.
- Facilitates a comprehensive needs assessment of the school system that includes student subgroup outcomes and low performance.
- Conducts observations to determine School Renewal implementation and alignment of goals.

Identified School...
- Establishes a School Improvement Team.
- Aligns their Cognia Strategy Map to school improvement efforts.
- Selects an evidence-based system framework and practices from an approved NDDPI menu to begin to implement the School Renewal process and meet school improvement goals.
- Ensures that the school board goes through the Be Legendary School Board Training Institute.

Year 2: (All expectations of Year 1, and the following)

NDDPI...
- Reviews implementation data to inform the next steps.

NDREA Coaching Liaison...
- Assists the School Improvement Team in reviewing their comprehensive needs assessment data.
- Supports school leadership in conducting observations to determine School Renewal implementation and alignment of goals.

Identified School...
- Meets consistently with their School Improvement Team to monitor the fidelity of implementation of school improvement plans and goals.
- Implements the School Renewal process, including PDSA cycles, to test change practices.
- Pursues full implementation of the Be Legendary School Board expectations.

Year 3: (All expectations of Years 1 and 2, and the following)

NDDPI...
- Reviews implementation data, including the Progress Review Report. to inform next steps.
- Synthesizes multiple data inputs to create a findings report that will lead to a school's sustainability expectations or inform ND FIRST.

NDREA Coaching Liaison...
- Works with school leadership to analyze needs assessment and observation data to determine next steps.
- Completes the Progress Review, alongside the school's School Improvement Team, and the corresponding Progress Review Report.

Identified School...
- Completes the Progress Review, alongside the school's School Improvement Team and the NDREA Coaching Liaison.
- Adapts, adopts, or abandons change practices based on student outcomes.

Exit and Return to General Support | **Exit to TSI Year One Support** | **Remain in CSI and move into ND FIRST**

Effective August 2025

ND FIRST

Fostering Improved Results for School Transformation

Fostering Improved Results for School Transformation (ND FIRST)

NDDPI assigns an Executive Improvement Specialist (EIS) who works with the identified school to establish a Project Charter that outlines the teams executing implementation of ND FIRST.

Collaborative Partnership Agreement (MOU) Meetings

NDDPI and partners meet with the local school and district team to develop a shared understanding of goals and expectations based on the findings report and recommendations from external school performance reviews.

Collaborative Partnership Agreement (MOU) Established.

Key Characteristics of MOU

- Aligns reporting levels with proficiency and growth
- Prioritizes transparent communication and consultation with families, stakeholders, and local communities
- Includes IDEA requirements to strengthen processes
- Deploys strategic staffing
- Recognizes local beliefs, values, and behaviors
- Includes measurement of a change management plan
- Determines local, state, and federal funding based on identified needs and designates funding for approved activities
- Continues to acknowledge, tackle, and address root cause and systemic challenges

Customized Expectations

Co-Developed in partnership with school communities after each level of review noted above is complete

*NDDPI and ND FIRST school will collectively create success metrics and goals, with the final determination made by the State Superintendent

ND FIRST Teams

Each ND FIRST school or district will have an implementation team, a research & evaluation team, and a leadership team. See more information on those teams [here].

Consistent Expectations (Enforced by NDDPI)

Initial 18 Months (Year 1 & Year 2) Identified School...

- Establishes a Project Charter that outlines the teams executing implementation of ND FIRST
- Administers and implements the ND A-PLUS formative, interim, and summative assessments
- Engages in authentic personnel management, supervision, and evaluation processes for teachers, principals, and superintendent to generate the most effective feedback to support instruction
- Implements leadership and capacity building to guarantee all leaders can meet state education goals
- Implements effective practices to support recruitment and retention of teachers, and leaders
- Completes and engages in student outcomes-driven governance model that incorporates accountability measures
- Grants NDDPI access to performance data through data sharing agreement
- Experiences increased NDDPI oversight of funding for curriculum, training, instruction, assessment, or the school calendar

Post 18-Month Evaluation (Year 3) Identified School...

- Produces outcomes-based budgeting plan approved by NDDPI
- Continues leadership mentoring as needed
- Develops and applies strategic improvement processes in line with state education goals

Collaborative Partnership Agreement (MOU) Goal Review

Key Characteristics

- Check-in conferences every 3 months
- Collaborative review of partnership agreement/MOU expectations
- Includes representation from school board, school and district leadership, and external partners
- Multi-phased process with the intent to collect, review, and discuss evidence for the purpose of determining if ND FIRST schools are tracking toward goal attainment and are on track to exit, with the final determination made by the State Superintendent

Exit and Return to General Support

Exit to TSI Year One Support

Continue ND FIRST

Identification Areas: TSI/CSI

Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI)

- Identified annually
- Any ND school (Title I or non-Title I) performing in the bottom 10-20% low-performance pool for three consecutive years
- Any school from the pool that has one or more subgroups with achievement levels below the highest performing comprehensive school based on all accountability factors within the state's accountability system
- Schools identified for three or more years become CSI

Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)

- Identified every three years (next identified in 2025)
- Lowest-performing 5% of all ND Title I schools
- Any ND high school (Title I or non-Title I) with a graduation rate below 67%
- Any school that is identified as TSI and did not meet exit criteria after three consecutive years
- Schools identified for more than one cycle are subject to more rigorous interventions, per Senate Bill 2254

TSI Exit Criteria

School is no longer underperforming based on TSI-selection criteria.

School is successful in meeting established interim goals in identified subgroups for two consecutive years and the school is exiting by making progress on its own.

Schools receiving TSI support that do not meet exit criteria after three consecutive years will be selected for CSI.

Requirements and Support

Parent/Public Notification

- ESSA §1111 requires all public-school districts to notify the parents of each child enrolled in the school regarding the performance measures outlined in the state's accountability system, including notifying families that the school was designated as Targeted or Comprehensive Support and Improvement (TSI or CSI).
- The notice regarding the information available on the Dashboard must be in an understandable, uniform format, in a language parents can understand, and accessible to the public.
- Federal law also requires each district to provide a link to Insights on its website.

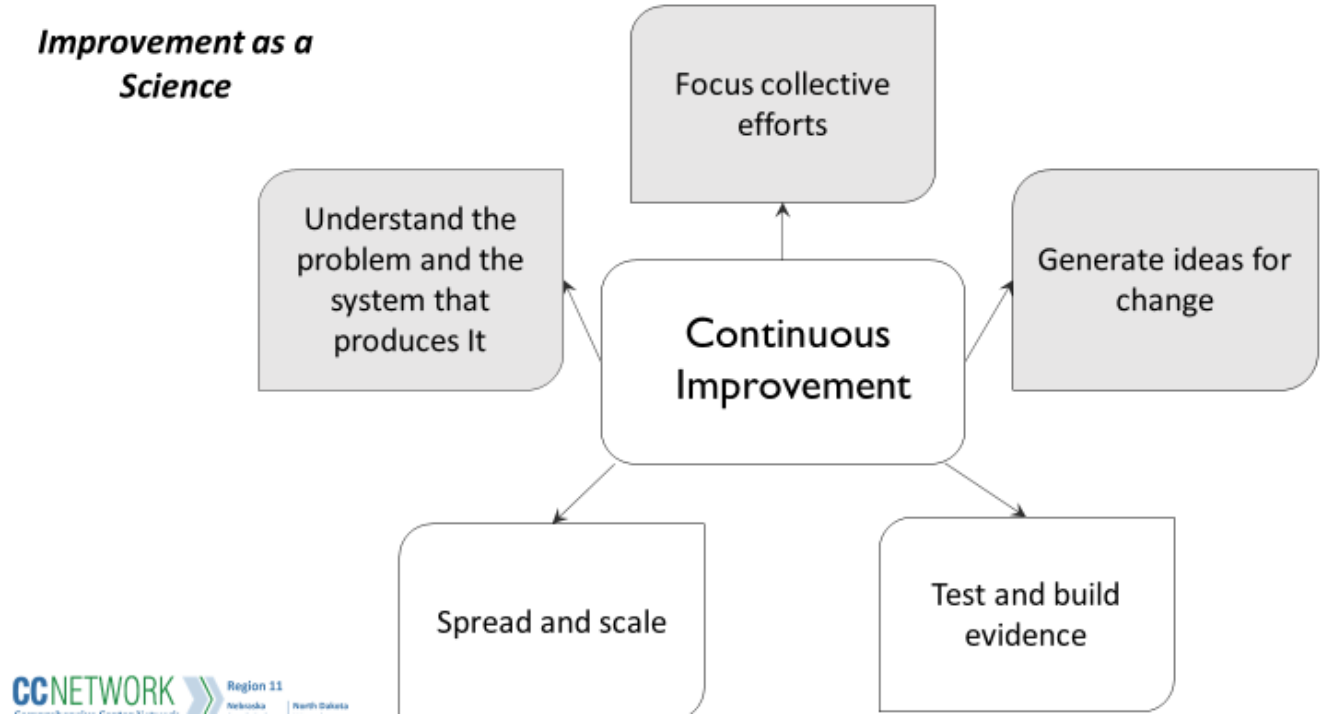
15.1-09.1-02.1. Regional education association - Services to be offered.

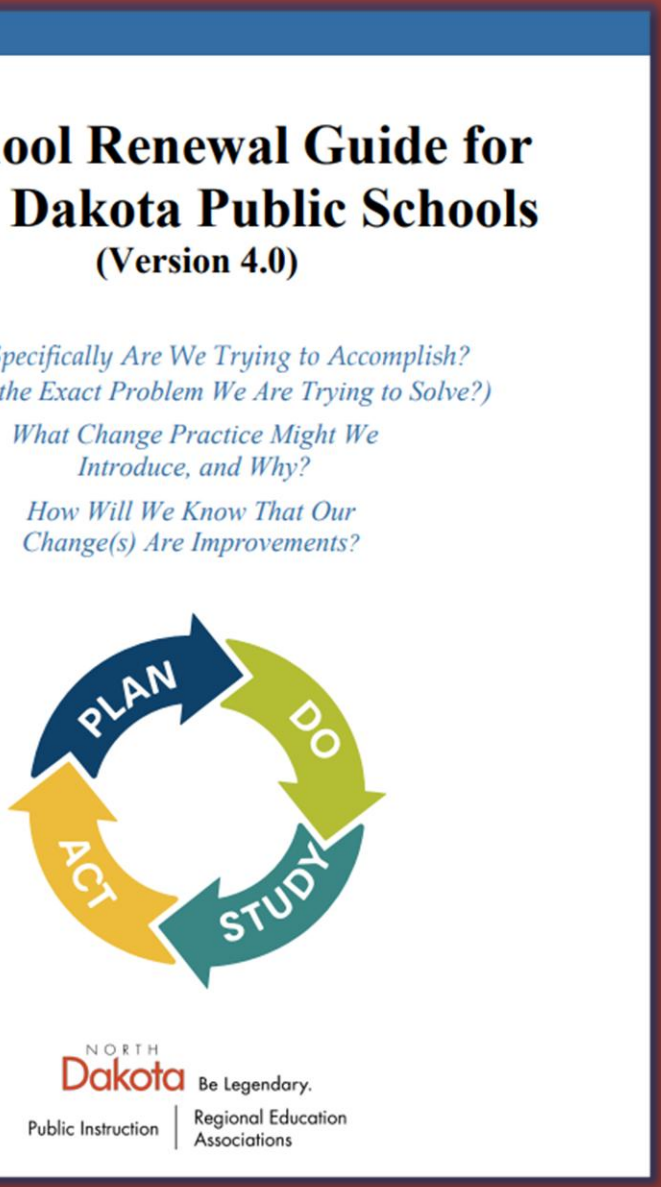
1. In order to be eligible for state funding, a regional education association must offer the following services to its member districts:
   a. Coordination and facilitation of professional development activities for teachers and administrators employed by its member districts;
   b. Supplementation of technology support services;
   c. Assistance with achieving school improvement goals identified by the superintendent of public instruction;
   d. Assistance with the collection, analysis, and interpretation of student achievement data; and
   e. Assistance with the expansion and enrichment of curricular offerings.
2. Subsection 1 does not preclude a regional education association from offering additional services.

SUPPORT FRAMEWORK

NDREA Coaching Liaisons provide support for TSI and CSI schools, specifically related to ESSA Accountability performance measures.

ND School Renewal Process





School / NDREA Coaching Liaison Commitments

NORTH Dakota Be Legendary.
Public Instruction | Regional Education Associations

School Renewal Expectations for TSI/CSI Identified Schools

School Commitment	NDREA Coaching Liaison Commitment
Schools are expected to engage in direct contact time with an assigned NDREA Coaching Liaison within the school year. It is expected that schools will also set aside implementation time to meet improvement plan goals.	An assigned NDREA Coaching Liaison will spend 80-144 hours engaging directly with school leaders and teams throughout the school year, in addition to indirect time documenting progress, traveling to school sites, and supporting school teams.
Develop a school improvement team that meets regularly to establish school improvement goals and to complete action steps to meet goals.	Attends school improvement team meetings and can help leaders create strong agendas, establish project charters, and monitor progress of school improvement goals. Share improvement science tools (evidence and research-based instructional strategies) to continue to move school improvement work forward.
Analyze data, align initiatives to the school's strategic plan, and evaluate improvement efforts to ensure classroom change practices are occurring.	Using the School Renewal process, support school teams to analyze data, align initiatives, and evaluate improvement efforts to ensure classroom change practices are occurring using improvement science tools.
Leaders (principals, instructional coaches, etc.) must observe classrooms to check for the fidelity of the implementation of action items.	Support leaders in conducting classroom walkthroughs and team meetings to provide an unbiased 3rd party perspective.
Conduct evidence-based research on best practices and engage in innovative practices.	Share bright spots and/or best practices to make connections where possible.
Utilize improvement science and data-based decision-making to implement and fund school improvement efforts.	Provide leadership coaching and support school teams in making evidence-based decisions.
Use the rubric within the School Renewal Handbook to guide progress, reflect on implementation, and evaluate improvement efforts.	Assist school teams in using the rubric to document progress, reflect on implementation, and evaluate improvement efforts.
Complete school renewal action steps and status reports as requested by NDDPI to meet federal and state accountability requirements.	Act as a conduit of information between the school and the NDDPI and ensure that schools have documentation to support improvement efforts and contract requirements.

Required Regional Working Sessions



Fall: Data and Goal Development



January: Implementation Checkpoint



End-of-year: Checkpoint and Sustainability Planning



Identify a School Improvement Team

Consider a team of experts who can do the following:

- Contribute to all school improvement planning
- Participate in professional learning related to school improvement goals

Representatives from the following areas should be considered, based on needs identified:

- Principal
- Superintendent
- Business/Grants Manager
- Special Education
- General Education
- Instructional Leads
- Student/Community Stakeholders (if applicable)

Improvement Plan and Funding

SCHOOL VS. DISTRICT ROLE

- School Involvement
  - Creates a school improvement plan (outlined in the application and updated in status reports).
  - Leads and meets regularly with its school improvement team.
  - Works with the REA Coaching Liaison.
  - Aligns funding to the school needs and accountability indicators.
- District Involvement
  - Supports the school in meeting its local goals.
  - Supports the school in the funding reimbursement process.
  - Serves on the improvement team.
  - Offers flexibility based on school needs.

School Improvement Plan Requirements per Section 1003 A of Title I

Under ESEA Section 1003 A, a school is required to submit an improvement plan with specific criteria outlined.

The school improvement plan will open on November 1, 2026, and is due on November 30, 2026.

Schools set their own goals based on their needs and accountability results.

School Improvement Plan

- **Alignment and Support of Identified School**
  - Explain how the district is aligning and supporting the identified school by utilizing accountability results to support and enhance the school's individual improvement goals. Your answer should reflect areas within your school's accountability status that show the greatest need for improvement.
- **Practices and Policies**
  - Describe how the school will modify its practices and/or policies to fully and effectively implement the improvement plan.
- **School Improvement Team Development**
  - What process did you take to build a diverse school improvement team?
  - School Improvement Team Members (Name, email, role/position)
- **Student Outcomes**
  - Discuss the school's focus area and preliminary plan to impact student outcomes.

School Improvement Plan Continued…

- **Monitor and Support**
  - Describe how the LEA will effectively monitor and support the school's implementation of the improvement plan.
  - Describe how the LEA will develop an improvement plan under section 1111(d)(1) for schools receiving funds under [section 1003].
  - Describe how the LEA will monitor the implementation of the improvement plan by the school receiving the funds.
- **Identification of Resource Inequities**
  - The school/district must comply with 1111 in ESSA, which requires school districts to identify resource inequities. This includes a review of the school district and school-level budgeting within the school improvement planning process to identify possible opportunity gaps.
  - Explain the process the school/district will use to comply with this provision when allocating resources (local, state, and federal).

School Improvement Plan Continued…

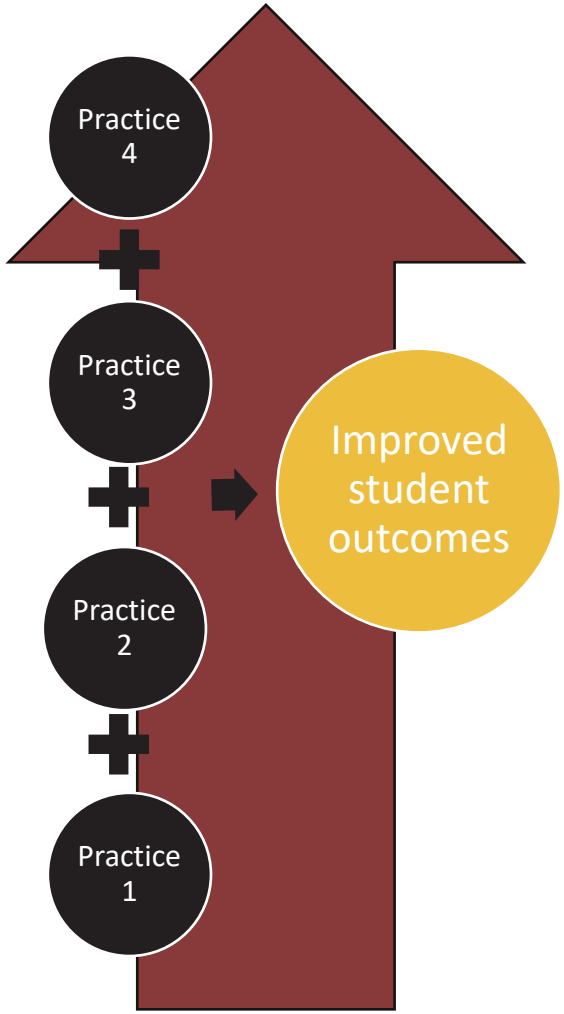
- **Alignment with Other Federal, State, and Local Resources**
  - Illustrate the alignment between the activities and interventions outlined in the plan with other federal, state, and local resources available to the school.
- **Additional Documentation (if necessary)**

Access to School Improvement Funding

- Schools have the opportunity to apply for a school improvement grant for up to $100,000.
- Funds are intended to help schools make improvements in areas that led to the selection, such as the following:
    - Professional Learning (Literacy/ELA, math, student engagement, data analysis, instructional coaching, etc.)
    - Teacher stipends for professional learning, tutoring, and school improvement meetings outside contract hours
    - Supplemental, evidence-based curriculum
    - Supplies to support improvement initiatives
- NDDPI plans to open the initial funding application in January of 2027.
- Funds will be awarded based on a rigorous review of need, allowability, and alignment to the school improvement plan.
- NDDPI will continue to open subsequent application windows, as funding allows.
- Schools set their own goals based on their needs and accountability results.
- Schools need to use evidence-based interventions and strategies.



Evidence-Based Programs And Evidence-Based Practice





(The IRIS Center, 2015)

Evidence-Based Interventions Level

WHAT IS AN "EVIDENCE-BASED" INTERVENTION?
(from section 8101(21)(A) of the ESEA)

"...the term 'evidence-based,' when used with respect to a State, local educational agency, or school activity, means an activity, strategy, or intervention that –

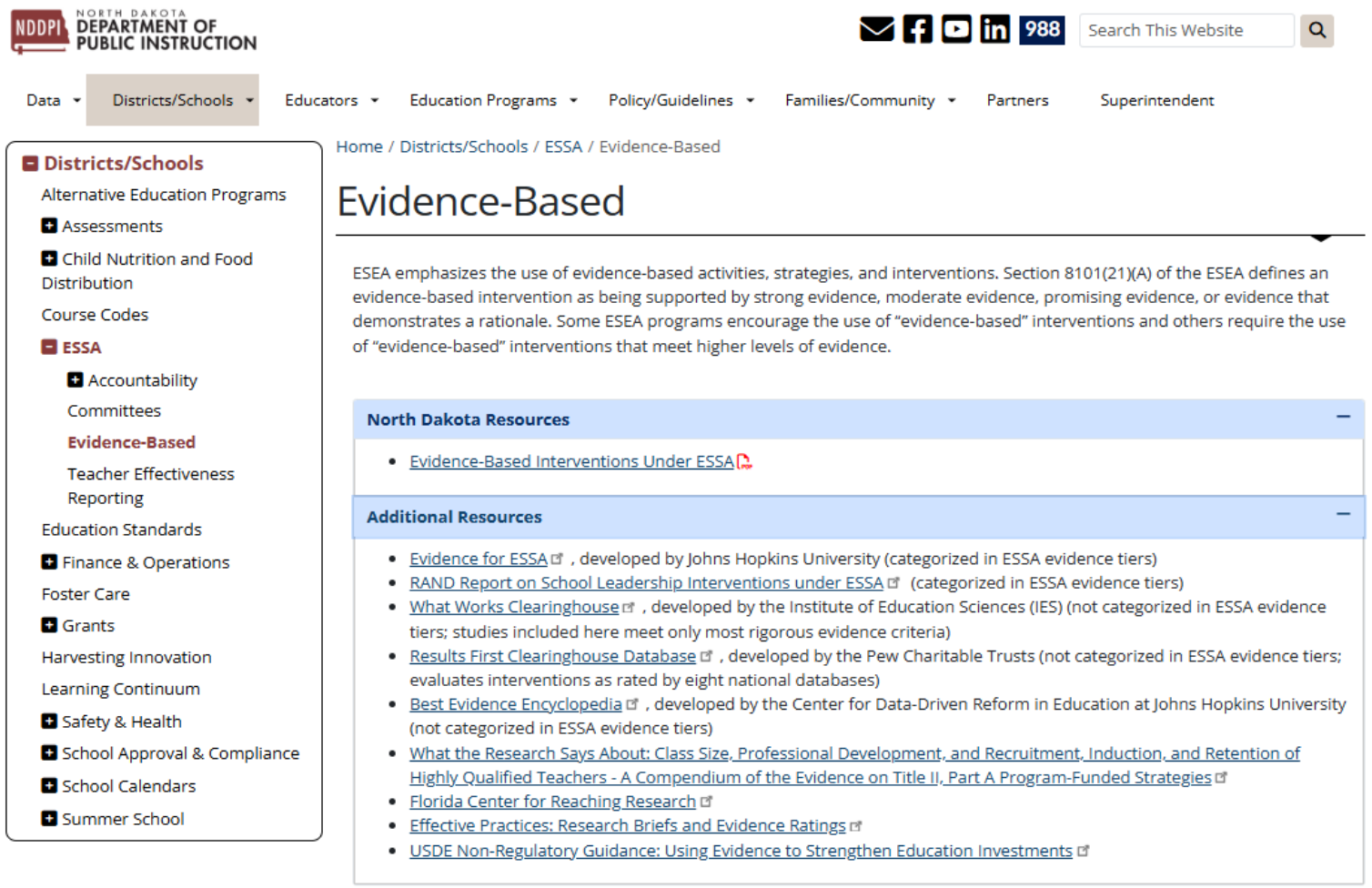
(i) demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other *relevant outcomes* based on –

- (I) *strong evidence* from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study;
- (II) *moderate evidence* from at least one well-designed and well-implemented *quasi-experimental study*; or
- (III) *promising evidence* from at least one well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; or

(ii) (I) *demonstrates a rationale* based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other *relevant outcomes*; and

(II) includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.

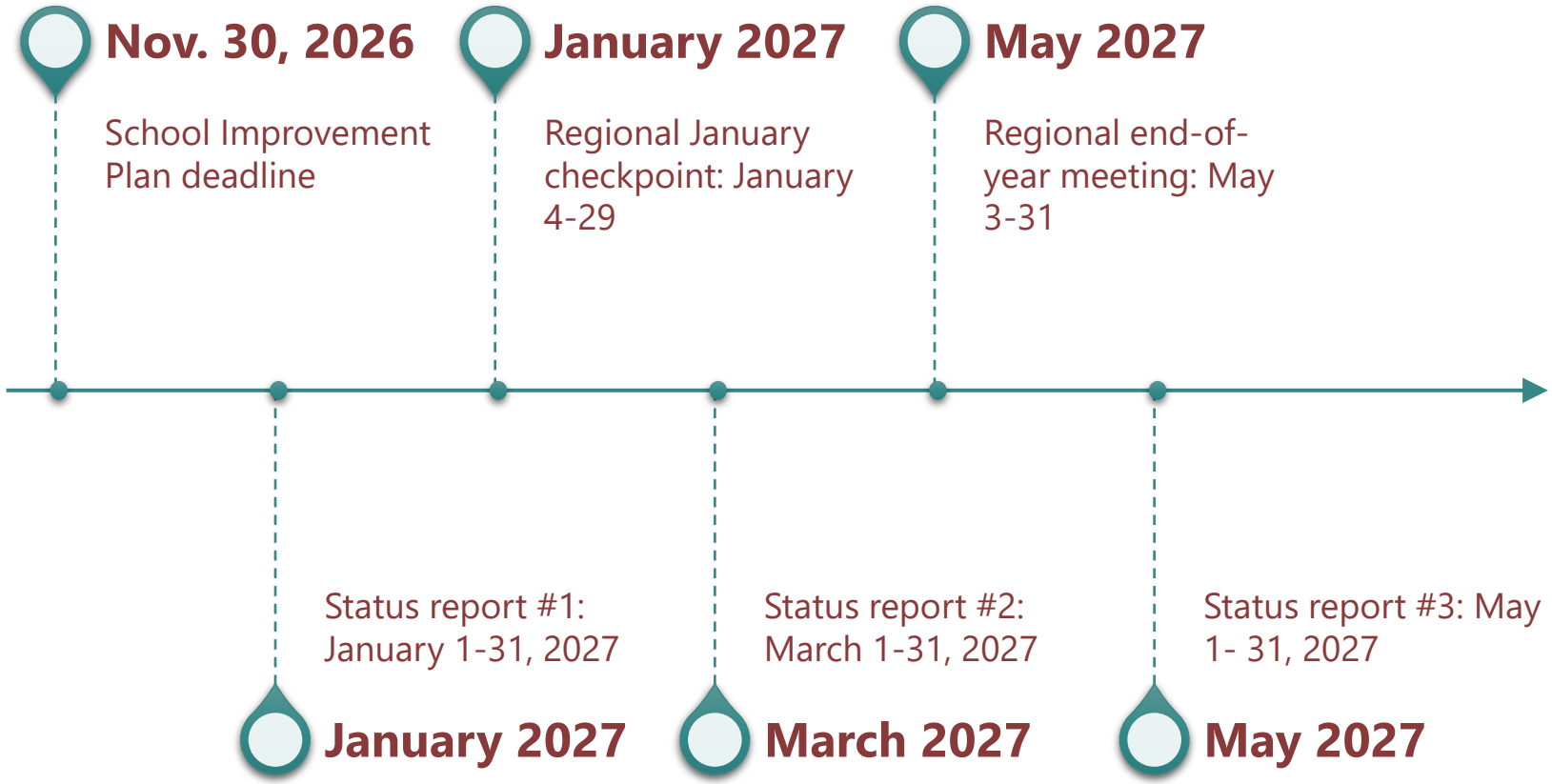
Evidence-Based Practices Under ESSA



Resource Allocation Review

- A State must periodically conduct a resource allocation review to support school improvement in each school identified as TSI or CSI. NDDPI has discretion in meeting this requirement, and we have decided to implement this review through the status reports in WebGrants.
- Districts must be able to outline efforts to identify and address local resource (both financial and non-financial) inequities.
    - Additionally, districts should reevaluate their current allocation process and reflect on whether or not they are allocating resources to the identified school in an appropriate manner to meet their school improvement needs.
    - In simple terms, districts can't "take away" any resources when a school is identified, even if it receives additional grant funds.

Important Dates

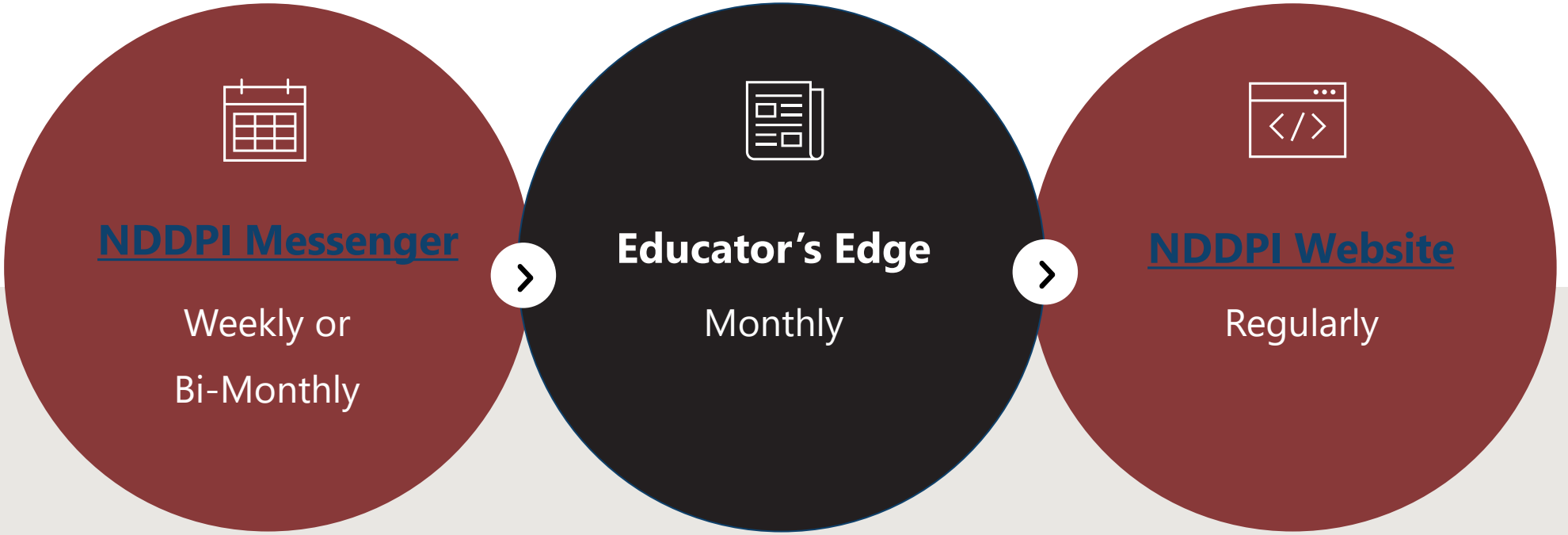


ESSA Law and Guidance

- ✓ Dictates application/school improvement plan requirements
- ✓ Statutory Information can be found here: https://www2.ed.gov/documents/essa-act-of-1965.pdf
    - School improvement law can be found on pages 9-15, Section 1003a

How do you keep up?

SUBSCRIBE AND READ NDDPI NEWSLETTERS AND MEMOS



Reach out if you'd like an NDDPI school visit to showcase your improvement efforts!

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