GRAD 701 Advisory Team Meeting
October 29, 2026, Virtual
2:00 – 4:00 pm

GRAD 701 Advisory Members Present: Jenna Feldman, Dorey Chaffee, Lea Kugel, Lyndsi Engstrom, Andrea Johnson, Kelli Odden, Jody Keller, Jeff Anderson, Kasi Kautz, Michelle Woodcock, Jenifer Updike, Kim Marman, Desiree Johnson, Mariam Ortiz

GRAD 701 Advisory Members Not Present: Amy Lance, Sashay Schettler, Melissa Bakke, Dr. Anthony Vandal, Collette Fleck, Jacki Harasym, Lacy Wood

Welcome & Purpose:

- Welcomed members to the Advisory and allowed team members to introduce themselves
- Introduced agenda and an overview of topics to be covered
- Reviewed NDDPI's vision of every student graduating choice ready

Implementation Drivers and Stages of Implementation

- Provided overview of National Implementation Research Network's (NIRN) and the State Implementation and Scaling-Up of Evidence Based Practices (SISEP) Implementation Driver's triangle and defined Competency Drivers, Organizational Drivers and Leadership Drivers
- Provided visual and overview of the Implementation Stages provided by NIRN and SISEP, which is like a three-legged stool. If one leg is weak, the whole thing is going to wobble or fall over. If all three of the competency drivers are strong, the stool is strong, and the system is more likely to succeed long term. GRAD 701 is moving into year 3 and more is currently being implementation than in the past. The Implementation Drivers is a fluid cycle so after reviewing and evaluating how things are going, work may move back to any earlier stage before full implementation occurs.
- This meeting will help to answer what's working? What barriers are emerging? What does the data tell us? The information obtained should help prioritize what might have to take place between now and February to strengthen implementation.

Statewide GRAD 701 Progress Overview

- Michelle shared statewide graduation data: About 80% of all students graduate within four years in North Dakota schools. When the student is put on an IEP, the percentage moves to the mid-60%. When NDDPI reports graduation rates to OSEP, at about 74%, as it relates to all students with disabilities. When the student is identified with an emotional disability, the percentage drops into the 40-some percent range. Sometimes these students need more than 4 years to

graduate, so NDDPI uses a six-year graduation rate. For students with ED, the percentage goes up to 52% when provided extra years. One of the other subgroups NDDPI pay attention to is those who are Native American students with disabilities because the graduation rate for that group is about 17%.

- NDDPI Updates:
    - GRAD701 works to increase graduation rates for all students with disabilities and is provided through OSEP as a State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG). The award is about $2.1 million over a five-year period. GRAD 701 includes Early Warning Intervention Management Systems (EWIMS), Evidence Based Practices (EBPs) and training pre-service teachers in the work. Currently there are five EBPs and two paid programs. GRAD 701 involves coaching work with Cohort schools, universal training and expansion of university work.
        - Theory of Action: provision of leadership through technical assistance, professional development, family engagement strategies, and partnerships, will prepare teachers, administrators, pre-service teachers, and families to increase their knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy to implement EWIMS and EBPs with fidelity, which in the long run will lead to increasing the six-year graduation rate for students with disabilities.
    - Last year's annual performance report was submitted, and GRAD701 is on track.
    - Lea will take over the SPDG Director work with EWIMS, Preservice Teachers and setting up meetings, Michelle will continue working with State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and EBs, Jenifer will work with family engagement partners to complete that work.
    - DDE/DPI/CREA team will meet monthly, Leadership team (CREA, NDDPI, DDE, University of Mary, Pathfinders, RMC, Early Childhood, Vocational Rehabilitation and NDDPI Indian Multicultural Office) will meet quarterly. This Advisory Team will continue to meet twice a year (October and February).
    - Current BARR Application is open. Funding will increase from a tiered approach to $60,000 each year over a three-year time span per school.
    - A lot of training has been offered over the Spring and Summer months. The GRAD 701 team learned that more people respond to the evaluations if the presenter waits to provide the PPTs and other materials until after the evaluation is complete.

- CREA Updates:
    - Internal recalibration has led to changes in roles and responsibilities
    - Working with one EWIMS school who has an external data source and trying to learn how Infinite Campus can leverage this state provided tool to get the data that is needed to do the work.
    - Strategically working as a group to find different ways to get schools to sign up for EWIMS

    - Work with BHero to provide EBP training. First semester is wrapping up where four universal EBP training courses have been provided. Will offer the same four during second semester. The courses will be open to everyone.
    - Coaching cadre shares expertise and connections around EWIMS work. Trying to get more schools recruited for the coaches to work with.

- University of Mary Updates:
    - Two courses that all preservice teachers take include early warning system indicators with students who may be struggling. Talk about how EWIMS is included in an MTSS system along with family engagement.
        - Starts with the inclusive practices course which includes two case studies and work related to what interventions might be implemented for each student.
        - Second course is a behavior course that also includes two different case studies. Students dive a little deeper in data and try to determine trends.
        - Worked with DDE to create two evaluations for the courses. This will be the first time they will be used with the courses.

- DDE Updates:
    - Evaluated 19 GRAD 701 training courses and reached about 400 attendees.
    - Completed State Capacity Assessment which shows a 10-point gain from the fall of 2025 to spring of 2026.
        - Evaluates North Dakota's capacity to support the implementation of project objectives around EWS and EBPs
        - Grad 701 leadership team rates these 24 items across 3 domains, leadership, infrastructure and resources, and communication and engagement
        - Infrastructure and resources had the largest gain, from 42 to 58 percent. Leadership went up from 50 percent to 56 and communication engagement from 44 percent to 56 percent and none of the items declined.
    - Built GRAD701 Chatbot, which will be rolled out as soon as clearance is granted from NDIT.
    - A lot of partnership work with CREA, BARR, University of Mary and soon RMC to create or revise evaluation tools to collect information to use for the annual performance report.
    - Will start collecting coaching logs this year and conducting fidelity observations at the coaching level and around the EBPs.

Public Comment

- No additional public participants or comments were added beyond those already in the meeting

Implementation Driver's Check-in Discussion

- Presented three challenges and used implementation drivers to have a discussion of what might be causing the challenges. The team then brainstormed possible things that could help overcome the challenges.
    - Challenge 1: Several districts are hesitant or not responding to join the EWIMS coaching cohort
    - Challenge 2: Low family participation during the listening sessions.
    - Challenge 3: Preservice teachers are learning GRAD 701 concepts in coursework, but inconsistent practicum alignment means we may not see how those skills are transferred to practice.
    - Responses were collected and are attached.

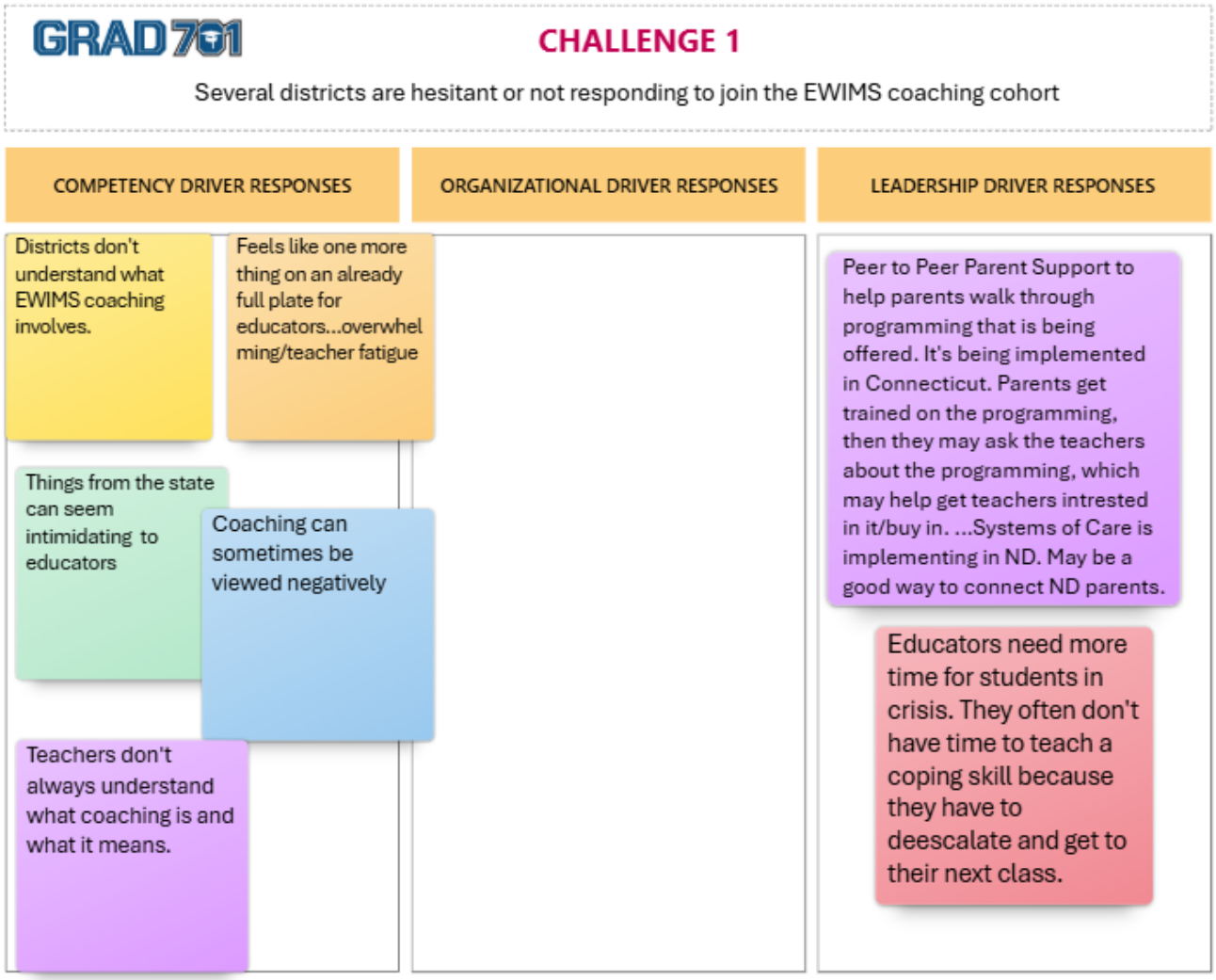
Partner Agency Updates

- Question asked if any partner agencies had any updates, and none of the partner agencies had anything to share at this time.

Next Steps, Adjourn and Next meeting

- Core team will review discussion minutes and determine what next steps should occur regarding the three challenges.
- Meeting adjourned at 3:27 PM
- Next meeting February 24, 2027, at 2:00-4:00 Central through Teams meeting.

Implementation Driver's Check-in Discussion Notes:



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CHALLENGE 2

Low family participation during the listening sessions

COMPETENCY DRIVER RESPONSES	ORGANIZATIONAL DRIVER RESPONSES	LEADERSHIP DRIVER RESPONSES
Families might have known about the listening sessions and how to access the listening sessions?		Teachers should know and understand about the event first because if a teacher doesn't know about it and isn't sharing it out to parents, it's not going to get to the parents. The parents aren't always going to go to the website/fb page for events. If parents see it the event, they may ask the teacher what it is, and if the teacher doesn't know, they may not go. How can we get that info to the teacher so the teacher can share with parents that "hey this may be beneficial."

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CHALLENGE 3

Preservice teachers are learning GRAD 701 concepts in coursework but inconsistent practicum alignment means we may not see how those skills are transferred to practice.

COMPETENCY DRIVER RESPONSES	ORGANIZATIONAL DRIVER RESPONSES	LEADERSHIP DRIVER RESPONSES
Do preservice students have opportunities to practice in authentic settings? The preservice teachers may also be limited by the schools they are going to. How well are the schools implementing what preservice teachers are learning? Will the preservice teacher be able to implement what they learned within their practicum/student teaching experience? How does the knowledge transfer from one course to another? from class to real-life?, etc.		Don't shy away from using similar terms and language. Make those correlations from MTSS , EWIMS, RTI, etc. Find a championto advocate for these system changes. Is there a district champion? Parent Liaison? Who can push this initiative forward? Are preservice teachers being allowed to sit at the table for 504, IEP, and other meetings during their practicum and student teaching experiences?