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To: District Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, School Building Principals, Special Education Directors, and School Board Presidents

From: Laurie Matzke, Assistant Superintendent
Division of Student Support & Innovation

Date: August 30, 2021

Re: Preliminary Review of Accountability Data Prior to Public Release Memo

Under ESSA, state education departments are required to annually create an accountability report for every public school in the state. For the 2020-2021 school year, North Dakota will be releasing the public accountability reporting in accordance with the state's waiver approved by USED.

North Dakota will display the annual accountability reports on the Insights dashboard. The Insights dashboard is a public website and can be accessed from the [NDDPI homepage](https://insights.nd.gov/) or directly at <https://insights.nd.gov/>. The site allows schools and districts to showcase and highlight strengths in their buildings while providing transparency to the public on many aspects of education outcomes in North Dakota.

Today, the NDDPI, in collaboration with the North Dakota Information Technology (NDIT), the North Dakota University Systems (NDUS), and other partners is releasing preliminary accountability reports through an internal test site (<https://uat.insights.nd.gov/>) to provide school districts an opportunity to review performance results privately prior to the public release in September.

Action Needed

School and district administrators need to carefully review the data used to create the School Accountability Report. There is only a short window of time to ask questions, get clarification, or appeal data before the reports are made available to the public on Insights. Therefore, it is imperative that districts follow these steps:

- [Review School Accountability Report](#)
A draft of each school's accountability report is available on a test site so district and school personnel can review the data to ensure it is accurate before it is made public. The data will be suppressed to prevent student identification in small student groups.
- [Review School Accountability Report Guidance](#)
Guidance has been created to help explain the various elements on the School Accountability Report. This guidance will provide easy-to-understand explanations of each element within the report.

- [Review School Accountability Index Guide](#)
The Index Guide provides an in-depth overview of the technical aspects of the School Accountability Report and how points were calculated. For 2020-2021, this is being calculated as a tool for school districts to identify areas of underperformance and proactively implement school improvement strategies.
- [Review Data in SLDS Education Portal](#)
In addition to the one-page Insights School Accountability Report, school personnel are strongly encouraged to review their secured accountability data available within the SLDS education portal (Ed Portal), which provides a series of unsuppressed accountability dashboards including the Accountability Index scores, the allocation points earned versus points available, and access to a plethora of data.

We would like to highlight two features that are part of the accountability review this year:

- [Accountability Rosters](#)
To assist districts in validating their accountability data, accountability rosters are available within the Ed Portal private dashboard. These rosters contain specific accountability measures featuring student demographic and performance information along with columns noting whether students are being counted within the numerator and denominator for accountability purposes.
- [School Accountability Pie](#)
The school accountability pie visualization represents school performance on all measures within the accountability system, noting points earned for each of the indicators. The “Room for Improvement” section highlights opportunities for schools to enhance performance in measures where points were unearned. This visual provides an excellent overview of the school’s performance on the accountability indicators and is available in the Ed Portal private dashboard. The accountability pie graphic is available in private portal until the public release occurs and will then be posted on the public Insights dashboard. When you hover over each section, it provides the points earned and points possible.

To access the steps to review the School Accountability Report in the private portal and validate data, click [here](#).

Training on Accessing and Reviewing School Data

The NDDPI, in partnership with NDIT, will conduct a training via Teams on September 1, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. to go through the process of reviewing school data within the internal test site and NDSLDS for administrators new to the process or those who would like a refresher course. Access the Teams training below.

Training on School Accountability Report Release (September 1, 2021 @ 1:00 p.m.)

[Meeting Link](#)

Or call in (701) 328-0950, Conference ID: 622353169#

Appeals of Possible Data Discrepancy

If you have any questions concerning your accountability report, or if you wish to submit a formal written appeal of data discrepancy, there is a specific process to follow. The NDDPI, with support from ITD, NDUS, and other partners, has created a ticketing process to answer all questions and appeals. Click [here](#) to access the steps to follow to submit a ticket.

The NDDPI requests all questions and appeals of data discrepancy be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 21, 2021.

School Improvement

North Dakota has a school improvement framework for all public schools under ESSA. Selected schools will receive additional support as outlined in North Dakota's state ESSA plan.

The NDDPI has collaborated with partners to develop a school improvement framework that supports a process of school improvement for all schools. All public schools in North Dakota will participate in continuous improvement through the school approval process and all schools will be in the General Support category on the School Accountability Report.

The pandemic has had an impact on school support status. No new identifications are being made. Any school that was identified for Comprehensive or Targeted Support in the 2019-2020 school year remained in that status for the 2020-2021 school year and will continue in that status for the 2021-2022 school year.

Final Accountability Reports

The NDDPI will not consider any School Accountability Report final until all appeals of data accuracy are resolved for that school. The NDDPI anticipates releasing final accountability reports on Insights for public view in late September 2021.

Required Notifications

Under ESSA, all public school districts receiving federal funding are required to **notify** the parents of each enrolled child in the school regarding the performance measures outlined in the state's accountability system. A [sample parent](#) letter is available on the website. In North Dakota, the accountability system is made available on the interactive Insights Dashboard. Schools should wait to disseminate information to parents until **after the September public release**.

Federal law also requires each district to provide a link to the Dashboard on their website. If the district does not operate a website, providing the information to the public in another manner determined by the district is acceptable. A [sample website notification](#) is available on the website.

Communicating Accountability Results

It is critical for school board members and school administrators to review their School Accountability Report for accuracy and be prepared to explain their school's report to staff, parents, and the public. A template PowerPoint presentation is being provided separately for elementary versus high school, as a resource to use in explaining the School Accountability Report to their staff, parents, and community.

- [Elementary PowerPoint Template](#)
- [High School PowerPoint Template](#)

Questions

Anyone with questions on their School Accountability Report should send an email request for assistance to NDDPI (dpiaccountability@nd.gov) with the subject line, "Requesting Assistance with School Accountability Report". Confirm your status as the designated district representative, specify your questions or need for assistance, and provide your phone number and email address. The NDDPI has an established ticketing process and will answer all requests for assistance in the order received.