

ESSA Implementation Committee Meeting

May 12, 2022
9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Teams and Pioneer Room

Facilitator: Laurie Matzke

Note Taker: Lisa Johnson

Minutes

Welcome and Updates: Superintendent Baesler gave an update on the Every Students Succeeds Act which went into effect in 2015. She discussed the needs of the students and the commitment of the committee to create a plan that would address those needs. At the time ESSA was enacted we had no idea about some of the changes to education, especially due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a committed effort to create a plan which serves our students to the best of our ability.

Assistant Superintendent Laurie Matzke welcomed the committee. She reminded in-person attendees to sign the sign-in sheet and to fill out reimbursement claims for lunch.

Overview of Day: Assistant Superintendent Matzke started the meeting with a PowerPoint presentation with an overview of topics. ESSA was enacted six and a half years ago. She commented that to her knowledge, North Dakota is the only state that has kept its ESSA committee active. She thanked committee members for their efforts and commitment. Laurie said we can either make short-term adjustments or longer-term adjustments to their State ESSER plan. Longer-term adjustments are considered an amendment to the plan and would require that the plan be opened up. She suggested caution as it might invite further scrutiny by the United States Education Department (USED).

The topics to be discussed today are:

- Addendum
- Work Group Presentations
- Choice Ready Updates
- Assessment
- Student Engagement

The NDDPI informed committee members about the Accountability Addendum when it was submitted to the USED on February 24, 2022. It received approval on April 28, 2022. This is approved for short-term changes. These include changes to the timeline for the achievement of academic goals. The other change was to the process for identification

of schools for improvement. ESSA workgroups have been meeting over the last several months on the following topics: school identification, school quality indicator, and English learners. Regarding the school quality indicator, potential changes revolve around adding a school climate survey. The idea is that this could be added to the plan without opening it up if it fits the definition of school climate because North Dakota indicated this in its original plan. This has been discussed over the last couple of years. The subcommittee has some recommendations that they will share later.

The Choice Ready has some updates. The K12 Coordination Council has created aspirational goals relating to Choice Ready. The approved aspirational goal is:

- By the 2029/30 school year, all students graduating high school with the traditional diploma will graduate Choice Ready. The Choice Ready rate will increase 5.4% each school year for 10 years to match the traditional graduation rate. (The current Choice Ready rate is 45%.)

Because North Dakota has a high graduation rate of approximately 93% to 94%, the goal is to have the Choice Ready rate match the graduation rate. The Choice Ready Subcommittee meets two to three times per year and recently considered a proposal from the field. Jeff Fastnacht and Russ Ziegler will present on this topic. Steve Muhs will present the recommended revision to the Military Pathway.

Stan Schauer will provide updates on the 2022 NDSA and the ACT and announce future assessment plans.

The results of the student engagement survey are available and will be shared by Steve Snow. Monica Blomker from Cognia will share information on the engagement survey and a newly restructured North Dakota partnership website.

Other ESSA updates are the end of the school food waivers, pandemic learning loss, and the 2022 accountability process. The school food waivers have provided free meals to all students for the last two years. There is a discussion about the USED extending the waiver again. There is also a discussion about using a different method to determine school poverty. Currently, free and reduced lunch numbers are used. North Dakota is one of seven states using free and reduced lunch numbers to measure school poverty. If an alternative method is utilized this would impact North Dakota. There has been a focus on learning loss due to the pandemic. Superintendent Baesler will be presenting the first learning loss report to the North Dakota state legislature this summer.

The school accountability process will be very important this year. The USED has been very firm that all states will run accountability on 2021-2022 school year data. North Dakota's State plan caps the number of schools that can be identified for targeted support. Federal law caps the number of schools that can be identified for comprehensive support to 5%. Laurie suspects the number of schools identified for support will remain fairly

consistent from previous years but will encompass different schools. The North Dakota school accountability reports will be released in late August of 2022. Schools will be allowed several weeks to review the reports and they will be finalized in September.

Federal funding has increased. State funding is good.

The NDDPI will send out information following the meeting. The next meeting will be in the fall of 2022 in mid-to-late September.

Key Updates:

Agenda Item: ESSA Plan Addendum

Presenter: Amanda Peterson

Discussion: The original addendum was submitted in February and the USED requested changes in April. These changes involved the schools identified for improvement. To address this, the NDDPI submitted revisions on April 5, 2022. These have since been accepted. Some of the changes involved the data used to make determinations. The first schools were identified with a limited data set. In response, the NDDPI looked at which years would we use to identify our schools. Amanda said this year will have the most complete data set for accountability reporting. When the program first started schools didn't know what the survey would encompass. The goal of the addendum was to work with the schools which have been in TSI for three years. The NDDPI has designed a more robust model of support. Schools shouldn't be surprised when the accountability report comes out.

Amanda went over the wording. The addendum has been posted, but the State plan needs to be updated to reflect the short-term changes. These will probably be included in an appendix or a note since they do not affect the State plan permanently.

Agenda Item: ESSA Workgroup Presentations

Topic: School Identification

Presenters: Amanda Peterson/Jen Fremstad/Greg Carlson

Discussion: The makeup of the schools in improvement status has fluctuated the last couple of years due to school consolidations and the fact that the process was frozen for the last two years. No one has exited the status. 2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2020-2021 numbers will determine the CSI schools. North Dakota does look at subgroups. We want them to look at the subgroups they identified and how they are doing. We want to focus on making sure that all schools are looking at their students and growth.

The one piece for CSI schools is that North Dakota will have a more rigorous intervention for a school that has been identified for CSI for a second time. The NDDPI has not yet identified the type of intervention that will be implemented. The NDDPI wants to focus on support and encouragement while at the same time making sure change is occurring. We have been very precise in the data we are reviewing. ATSI has been a concern because we don't utilize it and there is concern that the USED will push for North Dakota to

implement this. The NDDPI does not want to target all schools but would like to continue with the identification process currently being used.

School Quality Indicator – Jen Fremstad

Ms. Fremstad said that in their discussions they were cognizant of suggested changes and making sure it did not result on the plan being opened. Here are the recommendations for the school quality indicator. We focused on resources and support for identified schools and exit criteria.

Amanda Peterson gave information about these factors. She said that schools that were identified for improvement were required to go to trainings on NDMTSS, data training with EduTech, and family engagement. She said it proved difficult to hold TSI schools accountable for the implementation of the trainings due to a lack of NDDPI staff to carry out accountability. CSI schools had access to the ability to work with Ed Direction, an evidence-based coaching vendor. They worked really well with CSI schools although it was hard for the NDDPI to work with a vendor who does not know North Dakota schools. North Dakota statute regulates that REAs assist with achieving school improvement goals identified by the superintendent of public instruction. REAs are also mandated to assist with the collection, analysis, and interpretation of student achievement data. Amanda said the NDDPI plans to factor feedback from respective REA liaisons regarding a school's planning and decision-making processes into the accountability formula to determine which schools ultimately receive a TSI/CSI designation or are eligible to exit.

Beginning in '22-'23 schools will be able to use their funds to work with REAs. This will be a more fiscally responsible option than working with Ed Direction. They may, however, use other vendors but may work strictly with the REAs if they wish. The committee is hoping to create a mechanism to factor some of the feedback into the exit criteria. If these schools are making improvements in their data and also showing that they can continue sustainability efforts on their own, and are implementing plans and moving forward with their goals, the NDDPI can factor that in.

The NDDPI has created version 1.0 of a School Renewal Handbook for North Dakota Public Schools. It outlines the PDSA cycle process which allows schools to factor in exit criteria. We understand that schools that are in a one-year or three-year improvement process it is hard to make change. There are a lot of lagging indicators. The state data does not always give an accurate picture of what is happening. The PDSA process is based on improvement science. We are developing evidence-based models to show that this type of process works. It is allowable for schools to implement their own programs of improvement but the hope is that schools will blend their own programs with REAs. This is a really robust plan with a lot of school engagement.

Jennifer Fremstad: Jennifer said she was appreciative of the viewpoints she has received from other committee members who are aware of what is going on in the schools

regarding the TSI/CSI process. Jennifer gave a target support summary. She also talked about exit criteria. A school can exit targeted support status if it is successful in meeting its established interim goals in the identified subgroup for two consecutive years thus ensuring that a school doesn't get bumped out due to a newer low achieving school getting in, rather, the school is exiting because it is making progress on its own. Jennifer likes the interim goal because it is very personal and school driven. They are also working with REAs to get data that might look different than the data we are collecting in our ESSA plan.

Another recommendation for exit criteria is that "a school no longer meets the eligibility criteria for targeted support and improvement". Some examples would include a school's performance on ESSA school accountability measures moving them out of the overall pool of schools from which the TSI schools are determined. Luke Schaefer felt that the REAs being part of the process of moving schools forward in the improvement process is beneficial. It can allow schools to become proficient in doing the work on their own. It helps schools develop the capacity to implement the improvement work.

Amanda Peterson: Amanda talked about the draft rubric for school improvement teams. A vast majority of TSI/CSI schools do not have these types of systems in place. Helping them create these systems and holding them accountable for them is something some of these schools need. Some schools do have robust systems in place but have other challenges or subgroups which are affecting their improvement. The rubric allows the schools in collaboration with the NDDPI and REAs to look at what they have been doing and adjust to meet the school's needs. This rubric allows schools to look at where they are and where they want to go and to establish criteria to accomplish this.

Greg Carlson: Greg talked about the component within the ESSA plan about establishing long-term goals around measures. It ties back into the addendum discussion. The USED gave us the option to shift our long-term goals around assessment. Some of our current long-term goals may not be as relevant as they were when the plan started. We are using this opportunity to adjust our long-term goals for ELA and math achievement. We are adjusting them for two reasons. One is because of the pandemic and the other is because of the test change which occurred in 2017-2018 after the initial baselines were created based on the 2015-2016 performance. We are creating new baselines with 6-year long-term goals. The year-four goal will be made into the year-two goal. We are still slated to change the long-term goals after the 2023-2024 academic year. We are just bumping everything back two years. This is a good opportunity to reset the goals and make them more relevant to our schools.

Jennifer Fremstad: Jennifer went over what their committee is recommended. They didn't feel the changes they are recommending warrant opening up the State plan. The changes are solely operational, the outcome doesn't change. The other piece is the struggle with "true" data. The first data set was new and the second data set happened during the pandemic. Also, there is the concern that changes would cause the plan to be reopened

and cause other important changes to be lost. The recommendation is to make some small operational changes and then look at the data again.

Laurie made comments that states have the flexibility to make minor changes. Originally, the exit criteria were whether schools in improvement are still in the bottom 10% and whether they are meeting their long-term goals. There is flexibility in how the NDDPI does that within those two sets of criteria. The NDDPI has full flexibility in how we support our schools.

Ann Ellefson gave a report on small group discussion. The question was whether there is a sustainability plan for exited TSI/CSI schools to continue their journey outside of receiving a grant. Laurie Matzke stated the NDDPI has the power to require exiting schools to provide a sustainability plan.

Topic: School Quality Indicator

Presenters: Jim Upgren/Jerry Standifer/Jen Fremstad

Discussion: Jim Upgren gave a presentation on school climate and engagement. Climate and engagement are one piece of the accountability pie for both elementary and high school. At the elementary level, it is 30% of the accountability pie and at the high school level, it is 20% of the accountability pie. The student engagement survey results account for all of the points in this slice of the pie. Their committee is looking at recommendations for additional indicators that could be used in this piece of the pie. The objectives of the subcommittee are to discuss measures for school climate, possibly split the school climate/engagement slice of the pie into two equal slices, and only make adjustments that do not require us to open the ESSA plan. The committee's objective is very general. They wanted to receive input from the whole committee before moving forward.

Jerry Standifer: he reiterated they are not recommending changing the ESSA plan. The recommendation for the Elementary school quality indicators is to split the climate/engagement indicator into two equal slices; 15% for engagement and 15% for school climate. It is proposed that all other slices remain the same. For the engagement indicator, the "committed" and "compliant" results would be half of the score, and improvement on the "committed" indicator of the student engagement survey would be half. For school climate, suspension and expulsion improvement would be half and chronic absenteeism improvement would be half. The thought is that schools with a positive school culture have fewer discipline issues, fewer suspensions, and fewer students that are chronically absent. They wanted to look at changes that could be implemented at a building level and which could be feasibly done. Other considerations included whether there would be data available and whether the measures are items they are already working toward.

Jennifer Fremstad: In the subcommittee's work on the high school quality indicators, they looked at data and items they are already looking at and how they can be embedded into

the work that is already being done. The recommendation is to split the school climate/engagement indicator into two equal parts with 10% for engagement and 10% for school climate with all other slices remaining the same. Engagement will be measured by the student engagement survey using the committed and compliant results and the improvement on the committed indicator of the student engagement survey.

Under school climate, the suspension/expulsion report counts for half, and the chronic absenteeism improvement for grades 9-10 counts for half.

Ned Clooten asked a question about suspensions/expulsions. Jim Upgren stated we still need to clarify some of those items. Amanda Peterson said there are discrepancies in the suspensions/expulsions report. Amanda sees there is room for improvement on accuracy although the categories would not change. The report would stay the same but there would be more weight on helping ensure the report is done correctly by schools. This would have a large impact. Laurie Matzke reiterated that we are looking at feedback before any changes are made. There would probably need to be additional guidance for districts to ensure they are all doing the report in the same way.

Ned Clooten likes the idea of splitting the climate/engagement indicator. He did express concern that he does not want to have to consider the accountability pie when issuing suspensions. He thinks it is good that marginal suspensions will not be included in this indicator. Jeff Fastnacht asked for details on the report such as will the information be a comparison against other schools, a raw total, information about improvement over time, or a reduction in suspensions.

Russ Ziegler questioned whether this would have a negative impact on tribal schools because of chronic absenteeism and suspensions and expulsions. Laurie Matzke mentioned that someone else involved in this process expressed the thought that these issues are not as prevalent in North Dakota as they are in places like Chicago. It was questioned whether this change will shine a spotlight on our highest poverty schools and not be a fair reflection? It is good to keep these questions in mind.

Jim Upgren talked about the student engagement piece and the improvement in suspension/expulsion numbers as being the focus. We would be looking at the improvement piece. Dr. Fremstad commented we don't want to create something new or create more. Jerry Standifer worked with a researcher at UND on some of the data over the last four years for data on absenteeism for every student. Of those, how many of the absences were attributed to the students who were considered chronically absent by North Dakota measure which is anything under 90%. On average over the last four years, 38% of the absences were made up by 12.5% of the students. Attendance in 2019-2020 looked better than any other year. This was due in part to students receiving credit for attendance in March 2020. It was back to 15% last year. At the elementary level, attendance is the single most important factor in a student's success. At the high school

level, attendance is more about compliance. Jerry Standifer talked about looking at measures that have an effect on students.

Amanda Peterson gave comments about the purpose of suspension/expulsion data at the state and federal levels to identify persistently dangerous schools. When you change the purpose to accountability, this changes how we look at the data. She voiced the concern that we are looking at two different purposes. If the purpose is changed to an accountability measure we might lose state-wide level data that points toward dangerous occurrences. She likes the idea of running the model first before making a decision.

Mary McCarvel-O'Connor made comments about special education regarding suspensions/expulsions. They do look at these numbers at a special education level to see if significant disproportionality is occurring between races, special education categories, etc. She questions the reliability of the data. She does not think the solution would be to have two reports, although combining the reports has been difficult.

Amanda Peterson commented that even though we do see discrepancies in the data it does help us make state-level decisions. It helps us direct resources. There are optional reporting methods. We look at the school level, not the individual level when using data to identify persistently dangerous schools. We look at school-level data when considering accountability. This would change how it looks.

Anything that is self-reported is affected by human error. The new recommendation would include several components of self-reported indicators. This would reduce consistency. She asked committee members to consider these questions.

One committee member asked, "What are positive indicators that contribute to a positive school climate that we can or already do measure; not just measuring less bad things, but more good things". No comments.

"Our group talked about separating engagement and climate. We were okay with the decision, but to keep our survey, we discussed apathy and validity of the survey." No comments.

Laurie Matzke suggested committee members think about these topics and share them with others in their peer groups. We will do a follow-up survey. This conversation will continue at the fall meeting.

Topic: English Learners

Presenter: Lodee Arnold

Discussion: Lodee Arnold presented some of the changes at the last meeting. These have been reviewed again at the EL Advisory Committee. The recommendations that they have officially approved will be reviewed today.

The exit criteria and procedures recommendations include changing the composite level proficiency level from 5.0 to 4.5 overall. Some of the data reviewed by ELPAC was shared

with the committee. The WIDA Composite Proficiency level is currently 5.0. We are comparing them to English-only students. In looking at the scores, the 5.0 holds our EL students to a higher level than our English-only students. The committee also looked at what other states are doing. If we move the level to 4.5 we are more in line with what other states are doing.

Lodee called for a vote to approve changing the level from 5.0 to 4.5. Laurie asked for clarification about whether this change would require a change to the State plan. Lodee indicated it would not. Someone asked if the subdomains would change. Lodee said they would stay at 3.5. This vote only involves a change to the composite. This was approved.

The next item is the NDSA which is including an option for students who are proficient at NDSA but did not reach the 4.5 or 5.0 composite score. The recommendation is if the student is proficient in the NDSA, has a 4.0 composite and 3.5 in each domain, and has the approval of the language support team (consisting of the classroom teacher, the EL teacher, an administrator, and a parent) the student would be able to exit the program.

The other option is a lower speaking domain. The ELPAC committee is looking at another option that encompasses a composite proficiency level (CPL) with lower speaking score. The requirement would be a 4.5 composite and 3.5 in the domains of listening, reading, and writing, and approval of the language support team.

There are two new criteria. One is missing domain score due to a disability and the other one is significant cognitive disability. For the missing domain score due to a disability, if the student is unable to participate in one or two domains of the ACCESS assessment due to a disability, the student could exit the program if they have a 3.5 composite score in the completed domains or a 4.5 composite score using the minimum 3.5 in place of the missing score. For a student with a significant cognitive disability, they could exit the program if they have a P2 composite on the ALT ACCESS for two consecutive years and have the approval of the language support team.

One committee member questioned whether a student received a little over 3.5 in the domains they took and they received a 3.5 in the domains they are missing and whether they would reach the exit criteria. Other options considered were using the average. Data can be pulled on both of these scenarios to determine which would be the best. Another question was whether we could exclude the domains not being tested. Lodee indicated this couldn't be done because the weights of the domains are different and this would skew the results.

Lodee called for a vote on the lower speaking score, NDSA, and significant disability. A vote was held off on the missing domain score due to a disability due to the group requesting further discussion and consideration. Laurie Matzke asked whether the ELPAC had reviewed and recommended these changes. Lodee indicated they had. These changes were approved by the committee.

The student long-term goal will remain unchanged regarding proficiency levels and the years to attain but the reclassifications options will change. Approval is needed for student long-term goal to include additional options for attaining proficiency (to exit the program). A vote was conducted. Committee members approved the change.

There is also a proposed change to the state/school long-term goal. Currently, the calculation includes newcomers in the count. The current formula is the number of ELs exited divided by the number of ELs tested. The proposed formula is the number of ELs exited divided by the number of ELs who were expected to exit at that time, based on their interim goals. Approval was granted by the group to change the school/state long-term goals to include only students expected to exit the EL program.

The goal with the most recommended change is the student interim progress goal. The wording will change to measure annual ELP growth. The same growth model, growth to target, will be used. The proposed goal will also target allowing the trajectories to be recalculated if they fall below that line. They are also suggesting the implementation of a point system that allows for non-growth years. Lodee provided some examples. In the new trajectory calculation, the trajectory line will start from the current score to the goals. The trajectory will only be recalculated for students whose score trajectory is below the trajectory line. The goal year will not change. This change was approved.

The point system will give students different values for the different ways they might grow or not grow and then additional points if they exit early. The first example will include all EL students; currently, only students who have been in the program for two years. The new point system will provide different weights for testing students based on factors such as whether they are returning or new students and whether their growth is on target or not. Participating students will be given credit in the point system regardless of the student's score. Examples were given.

The calculation will be based on a percentage. The number of ELs in each category will be included in the calculation. The percentage of EL students in each category will be calculated and considered in the calculation. This will affect the point value for each category. This will even out smaller and larger districts. Students out of the test window will not be included in these calculations. It was asked how many times the trajectory would be calculated. Lodee said they would continue to recalculate until the exit year, but not beyond. One committee member asked if it would be better to use a line of best fit rather than starting at the recent low point. Lodee said they will review that option. The committee voted to approve the student interim growth measure to be calculated using the point system.

The next item would change the state/school interim progress goal to have every school be individualized based on their scores in the first year. That would be the starting point and the goal would be for EL learners to demonstrate ELP growth of a minimum of 2%

each year. This change would allow the measure to be individualized for each school. The committee voted to approve this change.

Agenda Item: Choice Ready

Presenters: Jeff Fastnacht/Russ Ziegler

Discussion: Jeff Fastnacht and Russ Ziegler provided an update on the work happening in the Choice Ready subcommittee. Russ Ziegler stated that the subcommittee met recently and talked about a recommendation to incorporate a two-year college or technical school into the Choice Ready framework; it is currently geared toward a four-year degree. Another suggestion discussed was the possibility of moving the essential skills into one of the Choice Ready components. The essential skills relate to organizational and other soft skills and students who don't do well in college often are lacking in these skills. The Choice Ready chart doesn't currently have any measurable indicators for soft and organizational skills. The subcommittee also discussed the fact that there are duplicates in the different pathways which could lead to assumptions that the CTE path includes the Workforce Ready path.

Jeff Fastnacht reiterated that a student meeting the Choice Ready criteria is not a guarantee of success. It is just an indicator. Some other topics discussed were as follows:

- Adding a second academic pathway for community colleges/certificate training
- Adding additional indicators
- Making essential skills its own section with post-secondary, workforce, and military

The recommendation of the subcommittee on these items was to look at the data for a couple of years and make changes to indicators based on the data. They do not recommend making changes to the chart at this time because of the alignment of the new North Dakota Scholarship with Choice Ready. Changes would result in a conflict with what the legislature has done with the scholarship.

Topic: 2022 JROTC Choice Ready Brief

Presenter: Steve Muhs

Discussion: Colonel Steve Muhs, the senior aerospace science instructor for the Air Force JROTC program for the Fargo Public Schools District. He made a proposal about including the JROTC program into the military-ready pathway of the Choice Ready program. Mr. Muhs presented background information about the JROTC program. It is a Title 10 USC Congressionally mandated program. The law requires a three-year program, but most schools have four-year programs in the 8-12 grade levels. North Dakota has four units. The goals of the program are to promote citizenship, develop leadership and critical/creative thinking, teach effective communication, etc. It also involves teamwork development and promotions of math, science, and technology.

JROTC does not require a service obligation, it does not recruit for the armed forces, or conduct combat skills training. Less than 10% of JROTC students ever enter the military service.

The benefits include members continuing onto a military career will receive an advanced rank upon completing basic training. Other benefits are eligibility for college scholarships, college ROTC course validation, and service academy nominations. The quality indicators include JROTC members having higher attendance rates, GPAs, graduation rates, and lower disciplinary problems and dropout rates.

Col. Muhs shared information about the distribution of JROTC units. There are units around the world.

Reasons for including the JROTC as one of the military ready criteria include:

- Citizenship is the key mission of the JROTC
- Physical fitness is a key component of JROTC
- JROTC encompasses many of the essential skills such as community service, extra-curricular activities, and co-curricular activities
- Enlistment rank advancement

They worded their proposal in such a way as to not put schools without a JROTC program at a disadvantage. The proposed changes would only add one indicator to the physically fit section of the military ready section. Currently, the military-ready components are as follows. The proposed change is the last bullet which would be to complete two or more years of JROTC:

- Complete a four-year rolling plan, ASVAB score of 31 or greater (as determined by branch)
- Quality Citizenship (no expulsions/suspensions)
- Physically fit, and complete one additional indicator below:
 - Complete two or more additional indicators from the post-secondary or workforce options
 - Complete two or more years of JROTC

Laurie Matzke said the subcommittee was in favor of this change. They would like the input of the whole committee. Mike McHugh suggested the possibility of also having the Civil Air Patrol included. The committee voted to accept the proposed changes to the Choice Ready framework. These adjustments will be made to the Choice Ready framework and will be sent out to committee members and posted on the NDDPI website.

Agenda Item: Assessment

Presenter: Stan Schauer

Discussion: Stan Schauer gave an update on assessment topics. During the 2021-2022 statewide assessment window, about 55,800 students were assessed in ELA, 55,900 in math, and 25,800 in science. With all the tests considered, it was a total of 192,950 individual test events started and completed. In early results, math and ELA are promising

as far as meeting or exceeding the 95% participation rate. The participation rate in science might be close.

For next year's testing, the NDDPI is suggesting schools complete a student roster cleanup before testing to avoid a rush at the end. Also, we would like to complete uploads of accommodations throughout the year to prevent schools from having to do manual entry of that information. We also need to communicate about the centralized reporting system where the data is immediately made available. The NDDPI is working with EduTech to make this part of the NDSA training next year. He also plans to create a short video to share in the *Weekly Blast*.

This is the first year that all North Dakota students were not required to take the ACT. It was also the first year the ACT was taken online. 5,100 ND juniors took the ACT. He is continuing to work with ACT to promote the ability to use iPads for ACT testing. We want to create clarity in the field between ACT district testing and ACT state testing.

If a high school chooses to use the ACT for accountability still needs to use the NDSA test for the science portion in 10th grade. Stan reached out to districts with a low participation rate. He will look at it again after data cleanup. The low participation rates could be due to the use of ACT for accountability purposes.

The NAEP testing was completed for the first time in three years. There is usually a two-year gap instead of a three-year gap. There was also a lack of test administrators. The test window was extended to account for this. This test is given to students in grades 3-8 in math and reading. There will be a new online platform to input tests which will make the process much smoother.

3,407 students completed the ACCESS test. A one-week extension was granted due to bad weather. Noncompletion of data validation by some districts led to some students not receiving critical information. This information is important for reporting and fiscal reasons. It provides a weighted amount in the funding formula.

NDAA testing went better this year due to schools meeting in person. Alignment guidance is important in schools picking the correct testlets. Alignment with TIDENET will benefit the NDSA and the NDAA.

Federal peer review for the NDSA and ACT in math and ELA was submitted in 2018. Additional evidence was submitted in 2020. There were still a few more areas that needed further evidence or adjustments. These elements will be addressed in a resubmission in June 2022. This will also address our move to Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT). The first submission of science (NDSA) was last year.

Laurie Matzke asked Stan whether every state gave their state assessment this year. Stan said he believe they did. He wasn't sure if it was their full assessment or a modified version. Amanda Peterson asked what would happen if our state did not meet testing

participation rates. Stan said we are required to report on that and provide justification about why we did not meet the participation rates. Some of this information is retrieved through non-participation codes. Stan said there aren't many consequences if this isn't met.

The interim assessment study does not have the direct impact of some of the other assessments on accountability. Last legislative session, the language for the interim assessment study was removed from the century code and a study was mandated. A committee of five members was formed. A determination needed to be made on the future of interim assessment to determine whether it should be a local or statewide system. The committee unofficially recommended having a state-provided interim assessment. They would have the option of using the state-provided interim assessment or utilizing one from an approved list. The alternative recommendation would be for the state to have an approved list of assessment vendors. This is the most commonly used method throughout the nation.

Stan gave an overview of NDDPI's plan to do statewide assessments differently. We plan on altering how we administer statewide summative tests. It would potentially change from a yearly assessment to a series of assessments. Rather than proficiency being the primary objective, the focus would be to provide schools with better instructional data. This model is usually called a through-year academic summative assessment. It is allowable by federal law. The main benefits of using this tool would be more detailed and timely feedback for schools and gives us a tool to measure n-year student growth. Having this at the accountability level would give us a tool to alter how we look at growth in accountability and how we look at growth as a state. Also, it could possibly eliminate a testing event therefore saving time.

Kirsten Baesler commented on the proposal. She commented on the fact that the NDSA is often not aligned. The NDDPI has heard that consistently from Cognia visits. This is a primary driver for the proposed change. Another incentive is the reduction in testing events. She said that more states are looking at assessments as a way to inform instruction rather than a ranking tool. North Dakota and a couple of other states are leading the pack on this initiative.

Stan stated that an assessment can usually only do one or two things. Flipping the purpose of assessments to be more useful is the goal. The schools would like to see more instructional data. The estimated launch date is 2024/2025. If the utility and perception of the NDSA can be improved, it will be worthwhile.

Stan submitted a grant proposal to help pay for some of these initiatives. Kirsten Baesler gave an overview of the grant. It is a competitive grant. She requested that Stan write about what North Dakota is doing rather than changing our goals to fit the grant. One assessment cannot do all things. States can design an assessment that is informative and helpful to students. Stan gave an overview of the process used in the new

assessment project. Research and internal conversations were conducted. There was also a survey disseminated to all licensed teachers in the state to collect feedback. North Dakota is updating math and ELA standards which will result in an updated assessment. The next step will be a request for proposal (RFP).

Agenda Item: Student Engagement

Presenters: Steve Snow/Monica Blomker

Discussion: Steve Snow presented information on the Cognia survey which encompasses three domains of engagement including behavioral, cognitive, and emotional. Points will be given for “committed” and partial points will be given for “compliant”. The state participation rate was approximately 88%.

Cognia did a good job of providing assistance on their website for administering the survey. Steve shared 2021-2022 data by elementary, middle school, and high school. There was an increase in “committed” for the elementary. Overall, there was not much change.

Monica Blomker presented information about the Cognia website. She highlighted some of the available resources. Cognia would like to support using student engagement as a means to drive continuous improvement. By understanding student responses, educators can determine and implement instructional strategies that improve student achievement. Monica highlighted the sections “Understanding and Using Survey Results” and “Research and Additional Resources”. The score interpretation guide provides definitions for the different levels of engagement. There is also a quick guide that talks about student engagement. She also outlined additional resources. Many of these resources were built as a response to feedback from the field. She invited committee members to provide additional feedback to Cognia as needed.

Agenda Item: Future: Next Steps

Presenter: Laurie Matzke

Discussion: Laurie Matzke stated the NDDPI is looking at possibly holding Choice Ready workshops again in the fall but is waiting for data to make a decision. Also, there is a proposal in place to give Choice Ready grants again this year. If they are provided, the grants will be much more targeted to needs based on Choice Ready scores.

Kirsten Baesler asked whether the committee had any suggestions for talking points in preparation for what needs to be done over the summer. Kirsten also talked about the ESEA conference. Many presentations were from schools that were in TSI/CSI. Some schools were identified because only 60% of their students were proficient in math and 68% of their students were proficient in reading. These percentages are higher than those in North Dakota. She talked about the North Dakota state average needing improvement. Collectively, the state ESSA team has a responsibility to be honest about the issues our state’s schools are facing. Over half of North Dakota’s students are below the bar in reading and math. What do we do for the schools which are continually identified for improvement? North Dakota is limited in the levers we have available to us to effect

change. We need to challenge ourselves to think about ways to take bold action.

Agenda Item: Questions & Answers

Presenter: Kirsten Baesler

Discussion: One committee member asked whether it is time to remove the “T” from SET (suspensions, expulsions, and truancy). Truancy is in PowerSchool, is it time to eliminate one of these elements of reporting? This will be investigated over the summer and brought back to the larger group at the next meeting. Kirsten Baesler encouraged committee members to reach out to any NDDPI staff with any questions or ideas. She thanked them for their participation.