

ESSA Implementation Committee Meeting

March 29, 2023
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
DOH Rooms 210 & 212

Facilitator: Laurie Matzke

Note Taker: Lisa Johnson

Minutes

Welcome: Laurie Matzke welcomed the group.

Updates/Overview of Day: Assistant Superintendent Matzke started the meeting with a PowerPoint presentation with an overview of topics. Below are some of the highlights:

- The United States Education Department (USED) allowed late liquidation for ESSER I funds. This won't be allowed for ESSER II and III funds.
- The Pay Teachers Act is set up to be implemented through Title I. There are problems with this because not all schools receive Title I funds.
- North Dakota received approval from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) for an apprenticeship program in December 2022.
- Currently, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) is working with Barry Dutton on registering Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) in the RAPIDS system so they will be eligible to apply for funding.
- The NDDPI is applying for the State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) grant.
- Two weeks ago, North Dakota applied for a registered principal apprenticeship. The NDDPI will use Title II funds if approved. We have had support from leadership organizations across the state for this program.
- The new apprenticeship page on the NDDPI website will go live soon.
- The committee will be making some decisions about elementary accountability.
- ESSA committee membership will be updated soon.
- The accountability release will be in August.

Presentations:

Agenda Item: Student Engagement

Presenter: Steve Snow

Discussion: Steve Snow went over the three domains of engagement. It measures three engagement types. The participation rate was 88.42%; 80 were over 95%; no district was below 50%. Steve talked about survey results. They will look at the scores through the lens of demographic data.

1,000 more 3rd through 5th graders took the survey over last year.

Agenda Item: Assessment Updates

Presenter: Stan Schauer

Topic: Assessment Window – Spring 2023

Presenter: Stan Schauer

Discussion: Stan Schauer went over the NDSA assessments. The testing window closed on May 5. The ACT window closes on March 30. Stan said they were able to have ACT provide some flexibility due to the ACT server going down. Other deadlines:

- The NDAA closes on May 5.
- The ACCESS closed on February 17.
- The NAEP is in an off year. It will be administered again in 2024.

Topic: Participation Rate

Presenters: Stan Schauer

Discussion: The feds are looking at the NAEP scores and saying learning loss is still occurring. Stan doesn't feel this is accurate because there has only been one measure since the pandemic.

Stan also talked about the availability of testing scores. Students see their scores immediately when taking the NDSA. Other states that don't use the NDSA don't receive their scores right away. Stan summarized the process we use to look at data. Assistant Superintendent Matzke made comments about how North Dakota is ahead of the game.

2021-2022 was the first-year participation rate monitoring was implemented. Automatic exceptions were fixed. Ross Roemmich is working on adding a roster to the participation rate page. Stan went over the factors playing into the participation rate. Because North Dakota runs the process, if the NDDPI feels a district was wrongly identified, we can remove that district from the list. Stan clarified that the letter is asking for communication with the district. They can look for more information if needed.

Topic: New State Assessment

Presenter: Stan Schauer

Discussion: Stan provided information about how we are giving information to the field and the process of how it is being set up. SB 2028 mandates that schools use interim testing. The NDDPI will be writing the administrative rules. Jim Upgren stated that the administrative rules need to be in effect within nine months (by about October 20), depending on when the countdown starts.

Stan said that it is the district's choice to choose the interim they would like to use. They may use the state-approved ND A+ or a test from a state-approved vendor. Data-sharing capability must be considered when choosing a test.

One committee member commented that the administrative laws should be as simple as the interim results must be able to be entered into the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS).

Agenda Item: Elementary Accountability Proposal

Presenters: Amanda Peterson/Robin Lang

Discussion: Amanda Peterson talked about the elementary school accountability system. The current system includes K-8 in the elementary accountability system. There has been discussion about the possibility of adding a climate survey to the climate section in addition to the engagement survey. The subcommittee decided that two surveys were not desirable.

Later it was suggested that attendance be added, but the committee again decided against changes. This idea was recently resurrected. A group of elementary principals met and was led by Jon Dryburgh, they determined that there are some indicators they would like to see in the culture/climate audit. The NDDPI received comments after this that if these indicators were added, it would be a checklist that would not actually provide meaningful differentiation.

The NDDPI had a small committee meet to determine how changes to the school climate profile might look. This draft was presented to the elementary principals' group. This group decided against continuing to pursue changes at this time. Additionally, Amanda thought that the suggested changes might not be able to be implemented according to the requirements of the North Dakota State ESSA Plan.

One committee member made the comment that it is very difficult to measure at an elementary level without time-consuming tasks. She questioned the purpose of the indicators. Will it help schools? She did not think that it would. She gave an example of the difficulty of enforcing attendance issues. It used to be that Child Protective Services would respond to reports of students with over 20 absences; they no longer respond to reports of excessive absences.

Another committee member commented that whatever gets put in the pie chart needs to be student-oriented because it needs to be able to be broken down. Some of the suggested indicators cannot be broken down by student.

A comment was also made that no matter the success of a school, the bottom twelve schools will still be chosen for improvement.

Amanda Peterson commented that the NDDPI has looked at that issue and made efforts to address it. She concluded by saying that changes to the elementary accountability pie will not be pursued at this time. It would be possible to revisit some of these conversations at a later date when the ESSA plan is reauthorized. Laurie Matzke thought a reauthorization would not occur until after the next election. She suggested that any proposed changes wait until after this happens.

The question was asked about how large schools feel about building plans. A representative from a large school said that the conversations they are having are that the plans are part of their continuous improvement cycle. They consider it to be another piece of data to use. It was commented that when the punitive nature of No Child Left Behind was abandoned, it was a good thing.

There was further discussion by the group regarding the improvement process and whether it is viewed as punitive or supportive. Amanda Peterson commented that the NDDPI has seen some good success stories, and it is our goal to share those success stories to have the mindset that improvement can happen and to keep making an effort.

Agenda Item: Choice Ready

Presenters: Ross Roemmich/Jim Upgren

Topic: Updated portal

Presenter: Ross Roemmich

Discussion: Ross Roemmich went over the updated portal with the Post-Secondary Ready changes and Workforce Ready changes. He also went over the Military Ready. Ross also talked about improvements. One committee member had a question about funding for the whole state to have a Choice Ready portal. One benefit of this would be to have it visible to students. It was also mentioned that it is good to tie it to the scholarship. Amanda Peterson said that if it becomes state-supported, districts might lose the option to opt-in or opt out. Ross mentioned that every district runs PowerSchool a little differently. The NDIT is working on a program to house the scholarship requirements.

Topic: Updates on scholarship

Presenter: Jim Upgren

Discussion: Jim Upgren gave an update on the North Dakota state scholarship and timeline. HB 1305 would revise the ASVAB and incorporate the new Choice Ready indicators. This would align scholarship requirements to Choice Ready. The classes of 2023 and 2024 may use either current or new requirements. The class of 2025 may only use the new requirements.

If HB 1305 passes, the required ASVAB score would lower from 85 to 50. Or students would need an ASVAB score of 31 and have completed basic training. Students would be allowed to complete basic training the summer after high school.

An amendment was made to the bill to make the scholarship more competency based. If passed, the bill would not go into effect until August 1 of the 2023-2024 school year. This amendment makes changes to the language. School credits no longer define Civil Air Patrol. Jim would recommend aligning it to Choice Ready.

Agenda Item: English Learner

Presenter: Lodee Arnold

Discussion: Lodee Arnold reviewed recommended changes to the full academic year (FAY) for the English learner population. The recommendations come from the English Learner Program Advisory Committee (ELPAC).

The current issue for FAY is how schools are represented in a count. They currently use a growth model. Each student's expected growth trajectory is calculated based on their starting English language proficiency (ELP) level. In this model, accountability is determined at the school level. ELPAC had to determine in which school students would be counted. It was decided that students would be counted in the school where they take their ACCESS test.

Lodee asked the group whether they would like to vote on the proposal or discuss other options. Several from the group indicated they would like to take the information back to their districts and present it to their principals, and they would like to postpone a vote until after they receive feedback from them.

Lodee stated that ELPAC wanted the change for accountability purposes. The trajectory plan can only be changed once North Dakota opens its ESSA plan.

Agenda Item: Title I Allocation Formula

Presenter: Amanda Peterson

Discussion: Amanda Peterson reviewed the proposed Title I allocation formula changes. Currently, the NDDPI uses the alternate poverty method. With the pandemic, a conversation started about using census data instead. This proposal was put out for

public comment. The proposed method had more winners than losers. The NDDPI received comments from 22 districts. Most comments came from those who would lose funding under the new proposal. Title I is not based on enrollment, but lunch numbers come into play. Title I is about services for poverty students.

A comparison chart was done. Twenty-nine expressed disagreement, and 4 expressed an overall agreement. We decided to continue using the alternate poverty method to determine Title I allocations.

Amanda stated that Title I cooperative agreements will no longer be honored. Local districts can still make their own agreements about services.

Agenda Item: ESEA Report Card Communication

Presenter: Amanda Peterson

Discussion: Amanda Peterson went over the ESEA report card communication. The United States Education Department (USED) reviewed North Dakota's Insights dashboard. The USED checks all states for pieces of the statute. The review findings were sent on March 12.

The findings indicated that the USED could not locate Choice Ready data disaggregated by each student subgroup on state, LEA, or school-level report cards. Also, the USED could not locate the student engagement data disaggregated by each student subgroup. Updates need to be made by May 1. The NDDPI is working with the NDIT and Otis Ed to update Insights by mid-April.

Assistant Superintendent Laurie Matzke and others made closing comments.

Meeting adjourned.