

ESSA Implementation Committee Meeting

March 9, 2021
8:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
[Zoom](#)

Facilitator: Laurie Matzke

Note taker: Lisa Johnson

Minutes

Welcome: Superintendent Baesler welcomed the group and made introductory remarks. Superintendent Baesler stated that the goal of ESSA is to ensure equity of opportunity for the students of North Dakota. The work the ESSA Implementation Committee does is to advance the interests of our students. Our decisions impact our schools and community. The committee needs to decide what will serve our students best.

Assistant Superintendent Laurie Matzke gave an overview of today's discussion topics which include: assessment updates, accountability waiver, Choice Ready updates, student engagement, and financial transparency.

Agenda Item: NDSA/ACT Updates

Presenter: Stan Schauer

Discussion: Very few states did a remote option for testing. North Dakota considered and executed on a remote option, although none of the North Dakota schools have elected to use it. This option will still be available if needed. A report was given regarding in-person testing and what some of the schools are doing. North Dakota is in a good position regarding assessment.

Agenda Item: High School Science State Assessment

Presenter: Stan Schauer

Discussion: Stan also provided an update on the testing process. 59 districts will be using the ACT test for accountability. SB 2141 was discussed and how it affects testing. NAEP was postponed for the year. There will be a study conducted and administered to schools who were selected for NAEP testing. If ACT is used for high school accountability, the NDSA high school science test would still need to be administered. This option would need to be approved by the USED. A formal decision needs to be made regarding utilizing this option.

Agenda Item: USED Accountability Waiver

Presenter: Laurie Matzke

Discussion: Laurie Matzke gave a synopsis of the December ESSA meeting. Flexibility would be provided by the accountability addendum. A skip-year process will be used. At the time of this meeting, no response has been received from the United States Education Department (USED). Further clarification is needed from the USED depending on whether North Dakota decides to apply for the waiver. Laurie Matzke gave an update on North Dakota's place in the national landscape. 100% of North Dakota districts plan to administer the NDSA in person. The USED invited states to apply for the accountability waiver. Laurie gave clarification on the difference between an invitation to apply versus state driven waivers. State driven waivers are more difficult to approve. When the USED invites states to apply, it is likely to be approved. There were differences in the accountability requirements from school year 2019-2020 to school year 2020-2021. The main difference is the 95% participation rate rule. There is less flexibility on the report card requirement for school year 2020-2021. The only waiver specified for accountability is report card information. There is no waiver for assessment.

Agenda Item: CSI/TSI Considerations

Presenter: Amanda Peterson

Discussion: Regarding accountability, all data will be collected. Amanda Peterson discussed the December addendum. The USED has allowed TSI/CSI schools to be offered flexibility. The regular schedule will be resumed in the fall of 2022. The question is whether to use this flexibility for TSI schools or identify a new cohort based on 2020-2021 data collected. This would be tied to the accountability waiver. TSI schools would be frozen or identified with available data.

Pros and cons were discussed. Some schools have put in the work and are doing well and don't want to stay in TSI status. Some districts could use the additional support and would benefit from staying in TSI status. Luke Schaefer asked what the requirements would be for schools in targeted improvement. It was observed that many options are offered, but not many requirements. It was suggested that more requirements be instated. Offering fewer options was also suggested.

Amanda Peterson stated the DPI has been soliciting feedback on this issue. The current main issue is identification of TSI schools. Superintendent Baesler stated the main focus needs to be what is best for our students.

Laurie Matzke led a discussion on the accountability waiver. The 95% participation rate was discussed. If North Dakota applies for the waiver, the 95% participation rate will not apply. If North Dakota does not apply for the waiver, the state would have to provide justification if the participation rate falls below 95%.

Report card provisions were discussed. Even if North Dakota does the waiver, the state will still have data.

There was further discussion and questions regarding the waiver process. The 95% participation rate was a key concern surrounding the decision. Also, whether the state can still participate in the addendum. Luke Schaefer asked what the consequences would be if the state does not achieve the 95% participation rate. Stan thought a written justification would be all that would be needed, but he wasn't certain. Laurie Matzke concurred. She stated that funding would not be withheld. Laurie Matzke sees the overarching issue is whether to freeze TSI schools. If the decision is to freeze TSI schools, she feels the best option would be to apply for the waiver.

Stan suggested we focus on the components within the waiver rather than focusing on yes or no on the waiver. Laurie agreed that we vote on whether or not to freeze TSI schools.

Agenda Item: Choice Ready Process for Spring 2021

Presenter: Laurie Matzke

Discussion: The Choice Ready report will be due. All but seven districts had a Choice Ready coordinator. A reminder will be sent out soon. The report is due June 30. The results will not be used to select schools for improvement.

Agenda Item: Choice Ready Grant Opportunity

Presenter: Laurie Matzke

Discussion: High school principals will be the lead on Choice Ready grants. The DPI will share ideas with them on this. The grant period is April 2021 – June 30, 2022.

Agenda Item: Overview of SB 2289

Presenter: Jim Upgren

Discussion: Senate bill 2289 deals with aligning the state scholarship to Choice Ready requirements. This would create the "North Dakota Scholarship". It would align the requirements to Choice Ready; it would not ensure that all students would receive the scholarship. Just being Choice Ready does not necessarily mean that a student meets all of the scholarship requirements. There would be additional rigor for the scholarship. A 3.0 GPA would be required for all academic pathways. Scores of 24 on the ACT or 1180 on the SAT would also be required. It would also require two additional indicators in addition to the ACT score.

Workforce Ready would require 24 on the ACT or 5 or higher on WorkKeys; 4 credits CTE, 2 in same plan of study. If passed, the classes of 2022, 2023, and 2024 would be

able to use either of the scholarship requirements. Starting in 2025 only the new scholarship requirements would be used.

Agenda Item: WBL Guide

Presenter: Wayde Sick

Discussion: Wayde provided a work-based learning update. Communication has recently been sent out to clarify the components of the secondary program quality indicator. Definitions and examples of work-based learning experiences were also provided. 2020-2021 data will be collected through the Choice Ready Ed portal, using the Choice Ready Framework. Starting in the 2021-2022 school year, documentation will be collected for CTE concentrators. Wayde provided a timeline for work-based learning rollout. Work-based Learning Guidance would include definitions, sustained interactions, simulated work-based learning, data collection, examples, and sample documents and forms.

Agenda Item: Student Engagement

Presenter: Steve Snow

Discussion: The Student Engagement Survey has been completed. Preliminary results indicate a drop in participation. Cognitive dropped to 41%. In the Emotional category, the grade 3-5 group was the most committed. The response rate was approximately 86%. 150 schools had a 95% or higher response rate.

Agenda Item: Financial Transparency

Presenter: Ross Roemmich

Discussion: Project phases were described. There are four phases to the project. Defining user requirements and data collection design are some of the elements.

Agenda Item: Questions & Answers

Presenter: Laurie Matzke

Discussion: Laurie Matzke indicated that schools which are awarded Choice Ready grants will have over a year to utilize the funds. There was discussion about the student engagement survey and whether the results can be tied to the learning method students were utilizing during the pandemic. There were comments relating to potentially shifting vendors for the student engagement survey.