

K12
COORDINATION
COUNCIL
MAXIMIZING IMPACT

2020 REPORT



REPORT TO:

North Dakota Legislative Management
North Dakota State Board of Education
North Dakota House & Senate Education Committees

WHAT'S INSIDE

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2. Introduction to the K-12 Education Coordination Council
3. Council Responsibilities & Operations
4. Strategic Vision Framework Goal Development
5. Subcommittee Operations & Council Recommendations
6. Research Findings
7. Website Recommendations
8. Draft Legislation



LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

A good education system is akin to a wood-working project. If you don't measure closely, you end up cutting multiple times or wasting boards. Things don't fit well and sometimes you have to start over. But, if you take your time and make sure that you have planned appropriately; if you are intentional about each cut and you use tools properly you can end up with a beautiful piece of furniture.

ND's Education system is full of resources, supports, agencies, and schools focused on one thing; graduating more students who are ready for the life they will lead beyond high school. Unlike a wood-working project, we can't waste any of our youth. The K12 Education Coordination Council is intended to pull together representatives from each of the cogs in the education system to find ways to increase effectiveness for our schools.

We have done this through ongoing and intentional learning, planning, and discussion regarding five main themes: youth preparedness for kindergarten, healthy behaviors, career awareness/readiness, effective personnel, and student-centered learning. The members of the council met within sub-groups to get a deep understanding of the data and initiatives that impact these five areas.

In 18 short months, the K12 Coordination Council has developed its operating procedures, prioritized its legislative requirements, outlined its course of action, and created recommendations for possible changes in the future that will impact the whole of the system in ND. You can see the results in the Annual Report you hold in your hands right now.

We recognize that the work is not over just because session is beginning. Our next steps are to develop clear target numbers for our Statewide Strategic Vision Framework outcomes that will allow us to measure how we are progressing towards graduating more students ready for life and the choices they make after high school. We are about to embark on a quest to find any duplications or gaps that exist across our agencies and help to coordinate those efforts so that we can continue to be successful.

The impacts of the distance education strategies deployed during the COVID-19 school shutdown need to be determined so best practices, barriers to instruction, and opportunities for efficiencies in distance education strategies can be identified.

In order for our Education System in ND to be the best there is, we must take our time, measure frequently, plan appropriately, and be intentional about each move that we make. After all, we don't get to start over on our youth.

2020 has tested the State's resiliency, including North Dakota's education system. It has also underlined the importance of identifying best practices and implementing improvements in a timely manner to ensure a better future. I am proud to have served as Chairman of North Dakota's first K-12 Coordination Council. I hope the following report provides valuable insights and recommendations to North Dakota's legislators and K-12 leadership.



Sincerely,

Luke Schaefer
K-12 Coordination
Council Chairman



INTRODUCTION TO THE K-12 EDUCATION COORDINATION COUNCIL

The K-12 Education Coordination Council was established through Senate Bill 2215 during the 2019 legislative session. The 18-member Council consists of legislators, executive branch leaders, and educators.



Gov. Doug Burgum
9/5/2019-8/31/2023



Kirsten Baesler
State Superintendent of Public Instruction
9/5/2019-8/31/2023



Luke Schaefer
Council Chairman, Regional Education Association Director
9/5/2019-8/31/2023



Nick Archuleta
ND United President
9/5/2019-8/31/2023



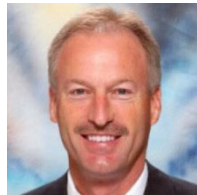
Aimee Copas
ND Council of Educational Leaders President
9/5/2019-8/31/2023



State Sen. Kyle Davison
Senate Majority Appointed



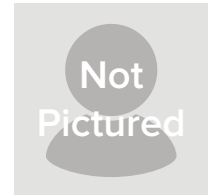
Brandt Dick
ND Small Organized Schools Board Member
9/11/2019-8/31/2023



Brian Duchscherer
State Board for Career & Technical Education
9/9/2019-8/31/2023



Jeff Fastnacht
State Board for Career & Technical Education
7/20/2020-8/31/2023



Wayne Fox
Tribal School Representative
9/5/2019-8/31/2021



Rupak Gandhi
Public School Administrator Representative
9/5/2019-8/31/2023



State Rep. Pat Heinert
House Majority Appointed



Kevin Hoherz
Public School Principal Representative
9/5/2019-8/31/2022



Philip Leitner
ND School Counselor Association
9/9/2019-6/30/2020



April Foth
ND School Counselor Association
7/1/2020-8/31/2023



State Sen. Erin Oban
House & Senate Minority Appointed



Michelle Strand
Public School Teacher Representative
9/5/2019-8/31/2023



Holly Stromsodt
ND School Boards Association President
9/19/2019-8/31/2023

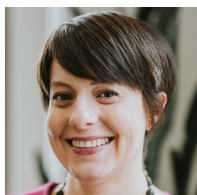


Melissa Vollmer
Special Education Unit Representative
9/5/2019-8/31/2022



Jennifer Weber
Statewide Longitudinal Data System Committee
9/5/2019-8/31/2021

KEY CONTRIBUTORS



Dr. Ellie Shockley
North Dakota University System



Wayde Sick
Career & Technical Education Director



Maria Neset
Office of the Governor Policy Advisor



Alexis Baxley
School Boards Association Executive Director



Pam Sagness
North Dakota Behavioral Health

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COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES & OPERATIONS

THE 2020-2021 K-12 EDUCATION COORDINATION COUNCIL WAS TASKED WITH THE FOLLOWING:



Identify opportunities for greater collaboration among the State of North Dakota's educational entities and stakeholders.



Review the effectiveness and efficiency of access and delivery of education services.






Evaluate education trends.





Recommend policy changes.

➤ BREAKING DOWN THE TASK

-  Identify Emerging Trends
-  Statewide Strategic Vision
-  Review Current Processes to Identify Improvements

➤ DELIVERABLES

-  Restart Guidance & Recommendations
-  Annual Report
-  Proposed Legislation
-  Website Portal



2020

2020-2021 TIMELINE

> JANUARY

- January 23 Council Meeting - Onboarded Kayla Effertz Kleven as the Executive Director & timeline approved for Council work

> FEBRUARY

- Completed Tenet Leadership training
- Subcommittee Scope of Work Outlined

> MARCH

- March 26 Council Meeting - COVID-19 Response Discussed

> APRIL

- April 17 Council Meeting - COVID-19 Response Discussed
- April 30 - Feedback for the K-12 Re-Entry
- Guidance document from Council to Dept. Public Instruction

> MAY

- Timeline restructured due to COVID-19

> JUNE

- June 17 - Submitted feedback to Dept. Public Instruction on Restart Guidance document
- June 25 Council Meeting - First set of recommendations discussed from Quality Early Childhood Education, Support for Safe and Healthy Behaviors, Quality Student-Centered Instruction Committees

> JULY

- July 15 - Deadline requested by education leaders for Dept. Public Instruction to provide Restart Guidance parameters

> SEPTEMBER

- September 24 Council Meeting

> OCTOBER

- Draft legislation based upon the Council's recommendations

> NOVEMBER

- November 24 Council Meeting - Report of Education Collaboration Changes to be implemented & draft legislation to be provided to Council

> DECEMBER

- Final approval of Annual Report & proposed legislation - send to Board of Education, legislative management

2021

> JANUARY-APRIL

- Website collaboration with North Dakota Department of Commerce

> MARCH

- Council Meeting

> JUNE

- New Chairman selected

COUNCIL OPERATIONS

Full Council Meeting Structure

1. Each meeting agenda will include a consent agenda.
2. One item on the consent agenda will include subcommittee reports.
3. Subcommittee reports to be included in the meeting materials will have the following structure:
 - a. Meeting Agenda
 - b. Meeting Minutes
 - c. Recommendation Template that includes the 4 required components:
 - Current Policy
 - Data
 - Recommendation - The Chairperson will provide the recommendation only to the full committee. It is the expectation that all committee members read the full report prior to the meeting for focused and informed discussion and debate.
 - Intended Outcome

COUNCIL REVIEW POLICY

Members of the K-12 Education Coordination Council are willing to individually review and provide feedback on proposed policy or recommended guidelines; specifically the COVID-19 school re-entry guidelines.

In the event that a document is asked to be reviewed the following process and considerations will be applied:

- Once received, the document is considered a public document.
- Comments will be filtered through the Executive Director and deposited into a shared document with the receiving agency.
- The completed document will be shared with the public, as requested.

Council members will be provided a document of all comments submitted and a summary of the comments that were accepted and/or altered. This summary will be completed by the receiving agency.

ND K-12 EDUCATION COUNCIL TECHNOLOGY



Microsoft Teams
File Storage



"Poll Anywhere"
Feedback/
Discussions



Zoom Video
Calls





STRATEGIC VISIONS FRAMEWORK GOAL DEVELOPMENT

The development of a statewide strategic vision for education was the top recommendation following a strategic planning process conducted by the ND Department of the Public Instruction (NDDPI) in 2016. Based on that recommendation, the State Superintendent formed the Strategic Vision for PK12 Education Steering Committee. Utilizing an inclusive and collaborative process, NDDPI and the Committee developed a Strategic Vision Framework to define the strategic work of the department over the next five years. The work is split into five strategic themes: Quality Early Childhood Education, Support for Safe and Healthy Behaviors, Career Awareness, Exploration and Development, Quality Education Personnel, Quality Student-Centered Learning. The framework helps guide the Department's policy and financial resources. It also provides a framework for school leaders and service providers to follow that keeps processes moving in the same direction.

A significant amount of work was dedicated to creating goals in each of the strategic themes, and assistance was requested by the K-12 Coordination Council to assign further detail to the goals to make them measurable and timely. To streamline this work, Council members created subcommittees that mirrored the Strategic Framework subcommittees.

The task of assigning measurable data points and timelines to the strategic goals has proven to be challenging, and work is still to be completed in this area. North Dakota has a significant amount of data collected, however the Council experienced a learning curve to understand what data is currently available, what is not collected, and what is protected by state and federal statute. There was significant discussion about how to be respectful of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System guidelines to understand what is accessible by the Council for the purpose of informing the goals. Ultimately, it was determined that the most expeditious way to request SLDS data was via legislative request by a legislator who served on the Council. Finally, once the data was reported, it was critical to have an analyst help explain the data that was being presented. This resulted in a key conclusion to conduct any significant work in determining goals for the future of education, analysis expertise is paramount.

Later in this report, the work of each subcommittee is detailed and includes the specific Strategic Framework goals that were assigned. Research conducted to inform committees was often done simultaneously for multiple committees. Therefore, the analysis and conclusions are in its own section.

5 STRATEGIC THEMES

1. Quality Early Childhood Education
2. Support for Safe & Healthy Behaviors
3. Career Awareness, Exploration & Development
4. Quality Education Personnel
5. Quality Student-Centered Learning





SUBCOMMITTEE OPERATIONS & COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Each K-12 Education Coordination Council member is asked to serve on one subcommittee and all council members have one vote on one subcommittee. Only Coordination Council members may vote on each subcommittee. Individuals who are not on the council may be invited to be an ex-officio member on subcommittees.

Voting members and ex-officio members will be established for each subcommittee. Council members may be an ex-officio member on additional subcommittees. This must be established in advance due to the risk of having a full quorum and ensuring that the correct meeting notice is filed. If a Council member would like to attend a subcommittee to listen to the discussion, a 24 hour advance notice is requested be provided to the Council Administrative Assistant.

SUBCOMMITTEE SCOPE OF WORK

Each Subcommittee Chairperson, with consultation with the K-12 Education Coordination Council Chairperson, will determine their subcommittee's scope of work. Scope of work points will be based upon, but not limited to the Statewide Strategic Vision plan and other relevant topics within the subcommittee title. The list of work should be prioritized by the committee.

Subcommittees may have an assigned Strategic Vision Goal to work through to provide a recommendation to the full Committee addressing a benchmark number as it relates to the goal, target number goal with date, and measurement tool to be used. The full K-12 Education Coordination Council will adopt or revise the recommendations, prioritize the goals and send them to the Statewide Strategic Vision Committee.

SUBCOMMITTEE OPERATIONS

- Post scheduled meetings as open meetings.
- Use Microsoft Teams for information storage and sharing.
- Record meetings if held online instead of in-person. Retain recording for 30 days for other committee members to review and for notes to be executed.

One subcommittee meeting is expected per month. Additional meetings may occur at the discretion of the Chairperson.



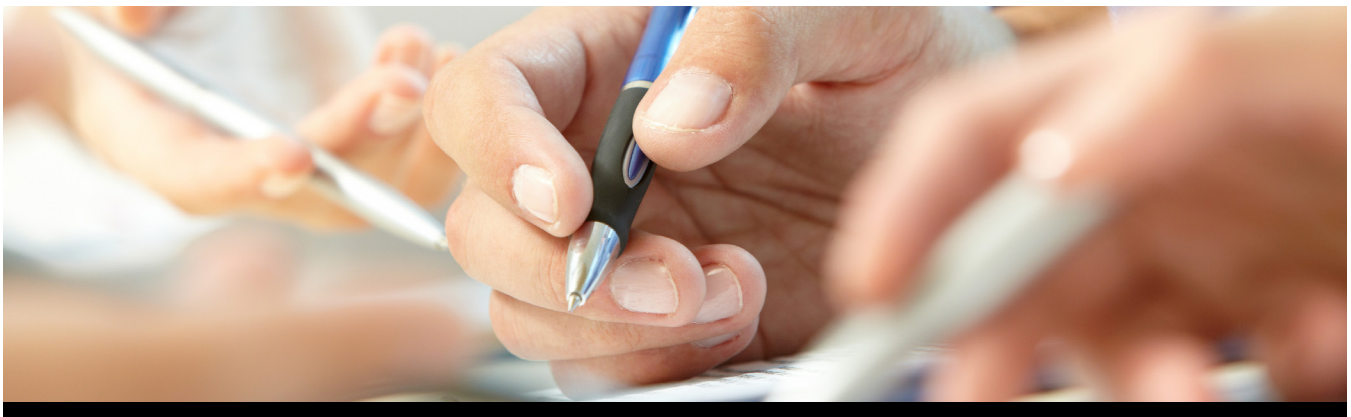
Teacher Mentoring



Competency Based Study



Legislation Support







QUALITY EDUCATION PERSONNEL SUBCOMMITTEE

Co-Chairs

- Phillip Leitner, ND School Counselor Association
- Rupak Gandhi, Public School Administrator Representative

Members

- Jen Weber, Statewide Longitudinal Data System Committee
- Aimee Copaas, ND Council of Educational Leaders
- Nick Archuleta, ND United President

Strategic Framework Goals:

- None Assigned

The Quality Education Personnel Subcommittee will:

1. Establish what occupations will be focused on in year one of subcommittee work.
 - a. Probationary status teachers
 - b. Counselors
 - c. Principals (maybe year 2)
2. Utilize data from the Teacher Evaluation Task Force to determine a standard for teacher and administrator effectiveness.
3. Create a map of North Dakota that identifies the gaps of schools that do not employ effective teachers and administrators.
 - a. Teachers: Evaluate teacher evaluations for probationary status teachers to determine identified needs of professional development.
 - b. Establish a goal of effective teachers and administrators in every school by when.
 - c. Provide recommendations on strategies to assist in obtaining this goal.
4. Identify the data that qualifies as hard to fill position by region.
5. Identify future hard to fill positions.

6. Establish a baseline and goal for teacher turnover (leaving the profession) within the first five years.
 - a. Identify strategies that contribute to teacher retention, (scholarships, etc)
 - b. Identify any correlations between professional development and teacher effectiveness and teacher retention. Identify any correlations between professional development and principal effectiveness and principal retention.

“The Quality Education Personnel subcommittee initially limited their immediate scope of work to focus on three specific occupations for year one of sub-committee work: probationary status teachers, counselors, and principals. Upon further review of statewide data and existing research, we found that ND already employs an evidence-based mentorship program that has demonstrated success in professional growth and retention, but the program continues to remain under-funded. This was exciting because the committee recognized actionable steps they can take to advocate for full funding of a proven program to better assist our greatest asset in K-12 education, which is our human capital.”



Dr. Rupak Gandhi, Ph.D.
Public School Administrator Representative

THE SCOPE & START

The members of the Quality Education Personnel realized early on in their meetings that there was a need to create focus on specific occupations within a school organization. There was an acknowledgment that it did not matter what profession they focused on, but to attack the work with focus to maximize the impact. The committee selected probationary teachers and counselors, however the time allotted only allowed for the analysis of probationary teachers. COVID-19 undoubtedly impacted all of the work of this Council, and this subcommittee was likely closest to the discussions of the immediate impacts and potential workforce challenges that may further result due to losing teachers.

THE ACTION

The members of the committee did not have a desire to create a new program, but rather learn from the existing mentoring programs that are operating to build upon and support. Dr. Ellie Schockley from the North Dakota University System provided critical data to explain the impact of the ND Teacher Support System that is administered by the Education Standards and Practices Board.

One of the key takeaways that was learned from the study was that, "...between 20 to 44% of new teachers leave the profession within their first five years of teaching (Chambers Mack et al., 2019; Ingersoll et al., 2018; Ronfeldt & McQueen, 2017)."

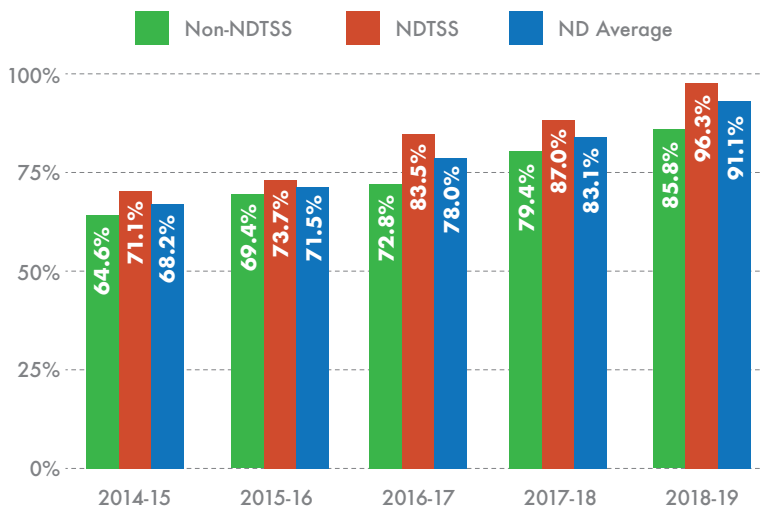
The Teacher Support System recognizes the importance of supporting new teachers through comprehensive instruction centered on a structured, effective mentoring program. With this consideration, the NDTSS conducted a five-year retention study using data from the state MISO3 Form and NDTeach to determine and compare retention rates of teachers who participated and teachers who did not participate in the TSS mentoring program during their first year of teaching.

The committee has recommended to fully fund 100% of North Dakota's first and second year teachers. This recommendation was fully accepted by the Council and drafted into legislation for consideration of the 69th Assembly.

THE SO WHAT

This committee seeks to understand the right strategies to have highly qualified and effective teachers, staff and personnel in North Dakota schools. The strategy of fully funding the teachers support system is one step in the right direction that is timely and critical to assist in the workforce challenges that exist with ND teachers. To the committee's credit, the work hasn't stopped with this recommendation. The intention is to further learn about the trends and contributing factors across the regions of North Dakota to improve upon teacher retention rates. This work is ongoing and will be insightful for recruitment and retention strategies.

ND TEACHER RETENTION



School-year	# of not mentored teachers x difference in retention rate	# of teachers
2018-19	296 x 10.5%	31
2017-18	218 x 7.6%	17
2016-17	265 x 10.7%	28
2015-16	284 x 4.3%	12
2014-15	212 x 6.5%	14
TOTAL		102

Estimated cost per teacher multiplied (\$17,000 to \$22,000) by number of teachers:

Cost: \$1,734,000 to \$2,040,000



QUALITY STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair

- State Sen. Kyle Davison, Senate Majority State Assembly

Members

- Michelle Strand, Public School Teacher Representative
- Kevin Hoherz, Public School Principal Representative

Strategic Framework Goal:

- Increase students who meet expected learning gains each year.
- Reduce the disparity in achievement for students in poverty and for Native American students.

The Quality Student-Centered Learning Subcommittee will:

1. Establish a definition for personalized learning.
2. Determine the metrics to evaluate personalized learning.
3. Identify key metrics.

“Our goal in the “Quality Student-Centered Learning” subcommittee was to improve educational outcomes for all students across all school districts in North Dakota. In order for schools to improve equity across programs, teaching quality and achievement, the subcommittee looked at key data related to student success and identified gaps in our education infrastructure.

As we move into our next level of work in 2021, we’re excited to build on our progress towards understanding what equity might mean to all schools and how personalize learning can play a role in our goal of ensuring success of all students regardless of need.



State Sen. Kyle Davison
Senate Majority Appointed

THE SCOPE & START

The Quality Student-Centered Learning Committee's strategic work began by identifying some of the key data metrics that can help tell the story of academic achievement. A laundry list of data points such as graduation rates and number of students taking AP courses were initially reviewed however it was concluded that it was imperative for this committee to take a step back and look at the topic through the lens of equity. The short term strategy to achieve this is to first increase the K-12 Council members' knowledge and awareness of equity audits using data and research.

For the purpose of this work, the committee defined "Quality Student-Centered learning" as an education system designed with focus squarely on students, where the system has unique characteristics that allows for each student to be set up for success regardless of needs.

THE ACTION

As time progressed, the committee was faced with the evolution of instruction as a result of COVID-19. There was much discussion about seat time and the delivery of online education. This rich discussion layered upon the conversation of equity resulted in a legislative recommendation to study competency-based learning initiatives implemented in school districts under innovative education programs.

The committee also concluded to internally further explore learning management platforms (Canvas, Moodle, Google Classroom, Schoology) specifically to understand the inventory of products being used. This exploration may lead to cost efficiencies for schools, but more importantly the potential for a more seamless transition when students move from school to school.

THE SO WHAT

A longer term strategy is to develop a five year plan to conduct an equity audit to determine what data and gaps that should be studied on a deeper level to better understand the issue of equity.

The additional longer term recommendation from the Quality Student-Centered Learning subcommittee is to develop policy changes that provide school districts additional flexibility for competency-based education and/or distance learning options to leverage experiences both in and outside the school building.





CAREER AWARENESS, EXPLORATION, & DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair

- Gov. Doug Burgum
- Maria Neset, Governor's Office Policy Advisor

Members

- Wayne Fox, Tribal School Representative
- Wayde Sick, State Board for Career & Technical Education Director
- Brian Duchscherer, State Board for Career & Technical Education (CTE)
- State Rep. Pat Heinert, House Majority General Assembly

Strategic Framework Goal:

- Increase students who graduate choice ready.

The Support for Career Awareness, Exploration & Development subcommittee will:

1. Identify duplication in distance education.
2. Identify cost analysis of each method of distance education.
3. Analyze the various delivery models of Career and Technical Education. Data to collect may include cost per student, cost per center.
4. Identify additional delivery models that support the delivery of CTE.
5. Explore funding models that could be used for a career academy or supporting strategies.
6. Identify the tools that evaluate the quality of distance education.
7. Identify the schools that are using dual credit and AP. Correlate those students to successful data points such as relevant college transcript and college graduation rates.

“The work of the Career Awareness, Exploration & Development Subcommittee was to build an understanding of the various layers within the current system and work toward equity in accessing high-quality work, career and life experiences. As our subcommittee dove deeper into this subject matter, we recognized the vital importance of this coordination council to ensure all North Dakota youth have the skills, knowledge, and understanding to be choice, workforce and life ready. .”



Maria Neset
Office of the Governor
Policy Advisor

THE SCOPE & START

Like many other committees, the work of the Career Awareness, Exploration & Development committee began with creating a list of data points to support the work. Some of these included: graduation rate, rate for CTE concentrators, Native American graduation rate for CTE concentrators, freshman retention rate, number of students enrolled in CTE courses, and demand of students for CTE courses (number of students/schools looking for additional programs).

The initial goals were to look at the changes, results and impacts from the Center for Distance Education being moved to CTE, to create a visual to explain where students go in the first semester and the second semester after college, and finally seek to understand why the students drop out or move to another school the second semester.

The committee also discussed concepts such as career academies and reforming the CTE funding formula. It was clear that there is no shortage of data or topics to discuss in this category, but rather a challenge to prioritize the first steps and actions.

THE ACTION

This committee embodies the true intent of the Council's legislative language to find opportunities for collaboration and remove duplication. However, discussion of first actions were ultimately altered by the timely strains of COVID-19. It was determined to take a hard look at how the CTE agency can shift resources, and react to the current needs of schools. Below are deliverables, barriers, opportunities and priorities agreed upon for the state agency:

1. Career & Technical Education Agency will develop and coordinate career exploration opportunities such as the RU Ready program, Golden Path, Be More Colorful for all students.
 - Consideration of current resources for hybrid and limited exposure school settings.
2. Career & Technical Education Agency will build out guidance for internship, apprenticeship, co-ops, and work experience requirements into high school. Liability and credits awarded must be addressed.
3. The Career and Technical Education agency is charged with facilitating course access for all distance education K-12 through dual credit and AP. Consolidate and centralize all distance/virtual education under the department of Career and

Technical Education.

- Barriers: CTE Centers and CDE mission. Prices are different between the 2 entities. Quality perceptions of the entities. Product loyalty.
- Opportunities: Vacant FTE in CTE to guide the system. Dual Credit could be addressed by this position. High quality coursework and consistency will be achieved with one agency with oversight.

THE SO WHAT

The coordinated effort to support pathways for students to earn credit outside of the classroom is not policy that can be legislated. To achieve results takes coordination and communication between the private and public sectors, including multiple state agencies. This, coupled with the growing demand for the coordination and access of online education and the desire to improve upon a funding formula creates a long list of reform that will demand and require leadership, difficult decisions, cooperation and technical assistance.





SAFE & HEALTHY BEHAVIORS SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair

- Sen. Erin Oban, House and Senate Minority General Assembly

Members

- Melissa Vollmer, Special Education Unit Representative
- Brandt Dick, ND Small and Organized Schools Board Member
- April Foth, ND School Counselor Association

Strategic Framework Goal:

- Increase students who engage in learning.

The Support for Safe & Healthy Behaviors subcommittee will:

1. Identify the measurement tools that are being used to determine healthy schools.
2. Identify the measurement tools that are being used to determine healthy students.
3. Determine the current resources available for schools, specifically school counselors.
 - a. Understand how many schools are applying for Medicaid Reimbursement
 - b. Understand current successes and challenges with the process for Medicaid Reimbursement
4. Determine the current access to the resources available for schools, specifically school counselors.
5. Understand if schools/personnel have appropriate training to use the resources.
6. Catalog the differences between the role of a counselor and DHS? What roles are shared? What are the roadblocks?
7. Determine the records are helpful and potentially harmful to follow the child throughout their academic experience.

8. Evaluate in a data driven way if the newly implemented academic time account is supporting the student as it relates to behavioral health needs.

“Our goal as the “Safe and Healthy Behaviors” Subcommittee was to get a deeper understanding of the many facets to and current data sources in determining what makes a district, school, its educators and students “safe and healthy.” Our analysis pointed to a strong correlation between student academic achievement and student engagement and the importance of appropriate physical, behavioral, and social/emotional supports in improving student outcomes. We will continue to assess the many ways those needs are being met across our school districts, identify any barriers that exist, and determine how the state can or should assist in ensuring our schools and students are safe and healthy.”



Sen. Erin Oban
House and Senate Minority
General Assembly

THE SCOPE & START

The work of combining behavioral health and education is complicated, requires many players but has a common and paramount goal of healthy students. The committee took its first, and difficult steps to understand the data that exists today. Specifically that task included analyzing the definition and data collection tools to not only understand their methodology, but to determine if they were sufficient and collecting an accurate snapshot of students behaviors. Dr. Ellie Shockely from the North Dakota University System served as a critical guide for the work of navigating this data and leading the committee to not only understand the obvious, but key takeaway that students' behavioral health is correlated to academic achievement, but to find new strands of contributing factors to inform the committee's work.

THE ACTION

Once the committee was familiarized on a high level with the data, it was quickly identified that WestEd/CCSSO is also conducting a data analysis that will inform this work. It was determined to be duplicative to continue much further independently and to wait for these results.

The committee shifted its exploration to understand the work of the Simle Middle School pilot. Representatives from Sanford Health, Simle Middle School Principal Russ Riehl, and ND Behavioral Health Director Pam Sagness created time to educate this committee to understand on a deeper level the components of this pilot and the critical keys to success. The committee was seeking to understand the consequential policy elements and the results of the exploration were unexpected as the recommendation is not to find more behavioral health specialists to place directly in schools, but to first educate the entire school on the social and emotional competencies. The Department of Human Services has created a "playbook" to start the schools' process to be eligible for the pilot. It was a key takeaway for the committee members that this is not a "program" but rather a system that needs training and local leadership. The work of the pilot has concluded that for safe and healthy students to thrive, social and emotional skills can not solely be taught or addressed by only a school counselor. This is a school-wide shift and culture change.

The committee went further to understand more of what social and emotional competencies mean and what the next steps can be. Below is the continued work and direction of this committee.

Insights of public education's responsibility of social and emotional learning:

1. Crosswalk between Social and Emotional competencies and employability skills (national)
Using this theory, Regional Education Associations are leading a working group to crosswalk North Dakota SEL goals with ND Career Ready practices with the intended goal of creating a seal/certificate/badge that can be placed on diplomas.
 - This concept has been executed by DPI without legislation. (the seal of biliteracy) Can this same process be replicated? If so, what is needed? If not, then what?
2. Are there opportunities to better understand that SEL skills are "North Dakota Values" and create connections for schools and parents who want more resources? --What are they?
 - How do we encourage collaboration and support these efforts beyond the school? (families, communities, business & industry)

THE SO WHAT

This committee recommends continuation and support of the Simle Middle School pilot system.

The committee also brought a recommendation to support local planning grants to assist school districts in providing guidance to understand their data, and determining goals for district/building implementation of social and emotional learning. These grants may also include readiness facilitators.

This preparatory work is observed as the critical and required step in being ready to implement the pilot system. It is suggested that some school districts may not implement the full pilot system but find extreme value in doing only the preparatory work. Connecting with a trusted guide to conduct a deep dive into data, culture and strategies to address behavioral health is often the request of many schools. This idea had strong discussion and support of the full council but it was determined to continue by discussion only.



QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair

- Kirsten Baesler, State Superintendent for Public Instruction

Members

- Holly Stromsodt, ND School Boards Association President
- Alexis Baxley, ND School Boards Association President

Ex-Officio Members

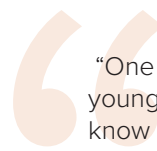
- Tara Fuhrer, ND Department of Public Instruction
- Jessica Thomassen, ND Department of Human Services

Strategic Framework Goals

1. Increase students who enter kindergarten prepared to learn;
2. Increase students who demonstrate reading proficiency in 3rd grade.

The Quality Early Childhood Education subcommittee will:

1. Identify the measurement tools that are being used to determine kindergarten readiness.
2. Analyze the current data to reveal trends and gaps.
3. Provide recommendations that support schools and parents prepare students for kindergarten.
4. Understand reading proficiencies by grade and by region and identify regions to further analyze.



“One of the keys to educating our youngest North Dakota students is to know their knowledge and skills when they begin kindergarten. This knowledge is essential for our teachers to tailor their instruction to each student. It will help to target resources to accomplish our goal of making all our third-grade students proficient in reading and math. Why is this important? Because a third grader who is proficient in reading and math is likely to be proficient as an adult.”



Kirsten Baesler
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

THE SCOPE & START

The Quality Early Education Subcommittee was very intentional in determining their scope of work. The legislation was specific to address the coordination of Kindergarten through grade twelve and not the activities of pre-school and earlier.

The Strategic Vision Framework goals that were assigned to this group were: 1) “Increase students who enter kindergarten prepared to learn; 2) Increase students who demonstrate reading proficiency in 3rd grade.” These goal assignments made it easy to determine the place to start their analysis process was to review the baseline learning (numeracy and literacy) levels as students enter into Kindergarten. The members of the committee prioritized this focus as they determined it’s imperative that Kindergarten teachers are able to meet students where they are on the first day of school.

Initial research determined that in 2011, legislation was enacted to allow school districts to conduct readiness testing and formative assessments of incoming kindergarten students. Diving into the existing data sets since 2011, revealed that there has not been significant data into the Statewide Longitudinal Data System since 2013. In 2017, a statewide kindergarten readiness assessment was created through a multi-state partnership and the ND Department of Public Instruction. This is a voluntary assessment that was piloted by several ND schools but is not currently being used by schools.

There is no known reason at this point for the lack of data reporting of early childhood assessment information. It was determined that because so much has changed since 2013, the data set that exists will not provide an adequate benchmark and a new baseline was needed.

However, before a new baseline could be established, it was concluded that the committee, through the assistance of the Department of Public Instruction, would conduct a statewide inventory of all Kindergarten Readiness assessments to understand the current landscape. The data will be analyzed for common themes, best practices, common assessments administered and the use of the assessments. In addition, the survey will seek to understand what the barriers are of using the existing assessment created by DPI. Suggested theories hypothesized the lack of use are due to the cost of training, lack of awareness, and perceptions of the use of the data.

THE ACTION

The committee developed a survey with the leadership and assistance of Dr. Ellie Schockley from the North Dakota University System. This survey is currently being administered with results expected by early 2021.

THE SO WHAT

In conclusion, this committee has been charged with improving kindergarten readiness and improving reading scores K-3. This enormous task requires a breakdown of many contributing factors but before the strategies, best practices and key partners can be identified, the data needs to be clear. The weakest link is understanding where students’ learning (numeracy and literacy) levels are at as they enter into Kindergarten. To be clear, there are no expectations of students having any baseline reading knowledge as they enter into Kindergarten; but rather the intent is to make it easy for the instruction to adapt to where students are at. Once the results of understanding what assessments are being used, the ultimate impact this committee wishes to make is to:

1. Understand the statewide proficiency levels of students entering into Kindergarten to inform local instruction;
2. Provide data to inform teachers to provide precision learning to students in grades K-3;
3. Inform school board members on where to invest;
4. Inform decisions for professional development.





RESEARCH FINDINGS

Council committees met with Dr. Ellie Shockley, an institutional researcher with the North Dakota University System who focuses mainly on K-12 data and research requests. Dr. Shockley reviewed existing research findings and generated a few new analyses as well. Following are summaries out the key findings and insights the Council has gained through these inquiries.

KINDERGARTEN ASSESSMENT: WHAT DO WE KNOW AND WHAT CAN WE LEARN?

Dr. Shockley’s first investigation into which assessments are commonly used to support kindergarten instruction involved reviewing districts’ interim assessments. However, no recent kindergarten assessment data were available in the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). In the past, Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessments were commonly used. Achievement Improvement Monitoring System (AIMS) Web assessments were occasionally used with kindergarteners as well.

Because the information in SLDS was limited, Dr. Shockley consulted with Bonnie Weisz, DPI’s Assistant Director of Assessment to learn of other commonly used assessments that support kindergarten instruction. Through those conversations and continuing conversations with Council members and DPI staff who support the Council’s work, a survey was ultimately developed and administered to kindergarten teachers, principals, and superintendents around the state. This survey, currently in progress and not yet analyzed, poses the following questions:

- (Q1/2) When it comes to planning instruction for new kindergarteners in your school / district, what tools are used by kindergarten teachers to determine how to plan instruction and address individual needs?
- (Q3/4) Regarding these tools used by kindergarten teachers, how readily available and accessible / useful and desirable do you think they are?
- Q5 to the right (based upon preliminary info-gathering on kindergarten assessments):

Survey Results are expected in 2021.

5. When it comes to kindergarten assessments, which of the following are being used in your school / district? Select all that apply.

- KEA (state-provided Kindergarten Entry Assessment)
- KFA (state-provided Kindergarten Formative Assessment)
- ACCESS (WIDA)
- AIMS / AIMSweb / AIMSwebPLUS
- AVMR assessments (Add-Vantage)
- Brigance
- DIBELS
- Dolch Sight Words
- Easy CBM
- F&P Benchmark Assessment
- FAST (Fastbridge assessment)
- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement
- MAP / NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association)
- Observation / Running Records
- Reading Recovery Observation Study
- STAR (Renaissance assessment)
- Other:
- Not Sure

SCHOOL PERSONNEL RETENTION: WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Dr. Shockley reviewed extensive school personnel retention work conducted by herself or by ESPB staff. Major take-aways were that rural communities are particularly vulnerable to teacher turnover. While such communities can and do experience better teacher retention as a direct result of the Teacher Shortage Loan Forgiveness Program, a much larger intervention would be required to improve retention of teaching-licensed personnel in extremely rural environments.

Other findings are that teacher retention, turnover, and shortages do vary by content area. However, shortages have been severe enough across diverse areas, and this prompted ESPB to designate all areas of teaching as a critical need or shortage area. Detailed findings from DPI's Teacher Shortage Areas reporting are described in with the following research blog entry: [NDUS.edu/2020/01/15/teacher-shortage](https://ndus.edu/2020/01/15/teacher-shortage)

Additionally, NDUS research blog entries focused on surveys of newer teachers -- [NDUS.edu/2019/11/12/predicting-teacher-retention](https://ndus.edu/2019/11/12/predicting-teacher-retention) -- and on evaluating the state's Loan Forgiveness Program -- [NDUS.edu/2020/04/08/nd-teacher-loan-forgiveness](https://ndus.edu/2020/04/08/nd-teacher-loan-forgiveness) -- provide concrete statistics on personnel retention rates and shortages. All of this data-driven reporting can be used in the setting of concrete teacher retention goals and/or shortage relief goals.

For instance, the Loan Forgiveness Evaluation entry states, **“teachers in moderately rural environments are retained 86.1% of the time. Meanwhile, teachers with loan forgiveness are retained 95.3% of the time.”** What does this finding ultimately mean? In brief, if you provided loan forgiveness to twenty teachers in moderately rural schools, you'd still have nineteen of them around the following year. That is two more teachers than the seventeen you'd have if you'd not offered loan forgiveness to any of them. Ultimately, loan forgiveness is a promising method of increasing teacher retention in the right environments. While teacher turnover remains a difficult-to-solve challenge in our extremely rural communities, loan forgiveness does bring relief to our moderately rural communities.”

Dr. Shockley's research is ongoing and new reports are expected in 2021.

Dr. Shockley's research is ongoing and new reports are expected in 2021.



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: HOW DO THESE OUTCOMES RELATE?

As commissioned by the Council, Dr. Shockley conducted research on student engagement and student achievement. Data were available at the school-level. Correlational analyses of school-level engagement - across emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions - were conducted with school-level proficiency - across English language arts, math, and science ND State Assessment results. Linear mixed modeling (a statistical technique for analyzing several correlations simultaneously) revealed that behavioral engagement did all the heavy lifting, so to speak, when it came to accounting for school-level proficiency levels. Although all forms of engagement do correlate with all forms of achievement in the expected direction, behavioral engagement is distinctly predictive of

proficiency in all three academic domains. Ultimately, schools with behaviorally engaged children have higher achievement in English, math, and science. Interventions focused on behavioral engagement may have the most promise when it comes to fostering school achievement in the broadest sense.

What exactly is behavioral engagement? Dr. Greg Carlson, also an institutional researcher with the NDUS, has shared with the Council that behavioral engagement in a construct as measured in the Student Engagement Survey developed and administered by Cognia, formerly AdvancED. The Insights.ND.gov explanation section may be the most succinct description: “Behavioral Engagement – A student’s observable actions or participation while at school that is investigated through a student’s positive conduct, effort and participation (e.g., participation in extracurricular activities, attendance and work habits).”





WEBSITE RECOMMENDATIONS

Senate Bill 2215 directed the Council to “Establish a one - stop communication and information hub to provide the public and interested parties with seamless access to state entities that deliver education services and programs.” This was discussed at a full Council meeting where Effertz Kleven presented a mock-up of a website that could serve this purpose.

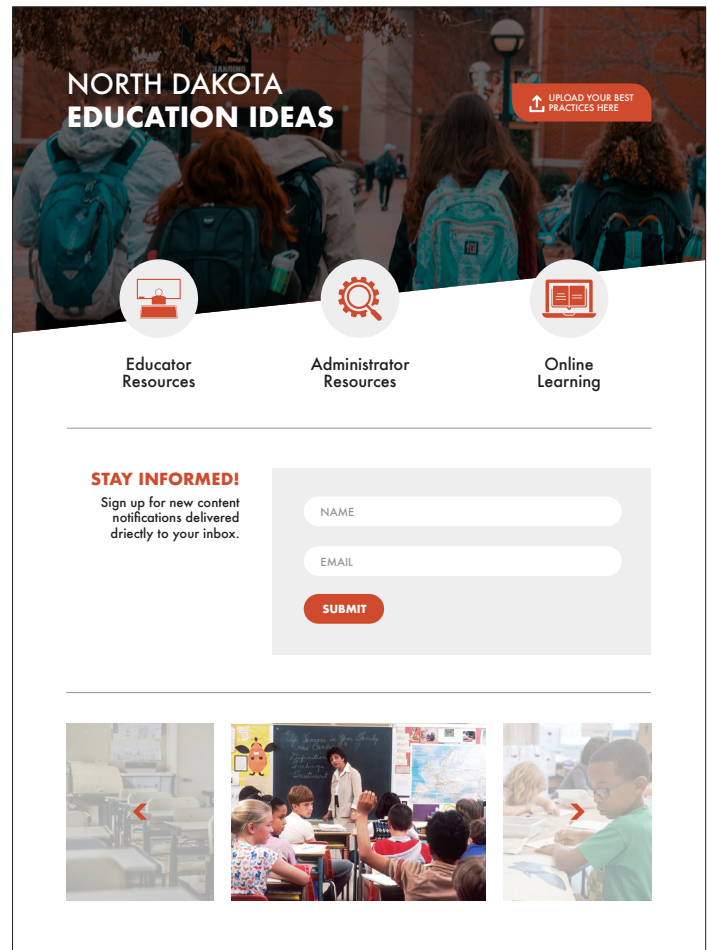
A great deal of discussion was held about the vision of the website/portal and also what would be a duplication of what exists today. It was determined that there were two goals individuals had in mind with the vision of this project: 1) Making it easier for North Dakota parents and prospective North Dakota parents to find education resources; and 2) a host for best practices to be submitted and shared among individuals in the education field.

INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL PARENTS/ PROSPECTIVE NORTH DAKOTANS

There was a strong sentiment that information should be easier for parents and/or new North Dakotans to locate. The North Dakota Department of Commerce has developed two pages on their websites of Find the Good Life and Experience ND websites that lists educational resources and provides opportunity for additional resources to be added. Partnership with the North Dakota Department of Commerce will be explored to determine the opportunities to bolster the information available.

SHARING OF EDUCATION RESOURCES

The Council expressed a great desire to not replicate the good work that has already been done across the state by education organizations and agencies. While there is exceptional opportunity to allow for new ideas to have a light shined upon them and create expanded positive impact, there were concerns that content would not be submitted in a timely manner in addition to the cost and management time to produce the site. It was recommended to review this legislative charge in the 2021 Session to modify this Council task.





DRAFT LEGISLATION

21.0255.01000

Sixty-seventh
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

BILL NO.

Introduced by

Representative Heinert

Senators Davison, Oban

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact sections 15.1-18.2-05 and 15.1-18.2-06 of the North
2 Dakota Century Code, relating to the expansion of the teacher support program to provide
3 mentoring to all first- and second-year teachers in the state; and to provide an appropriation.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 15.1-18.2-05 of the North Dakota Century Code is
6 amended and reenacted as follows:

7 **15.1-18.2-05. Teacher support program - Establishment.**

8 The education standards and practices board shall:

- 9 1. Establish and administer a teacher support program;
- 10 2. Employ ~~an individual~~individuals to serve as a teacher support program
11 ~~coordinator~~coordinators;
- 12 3. a. Select and train experienced teachers who will serve as mentors for
13 ~~first-year~~first- and second-year teachers and assist the ~~first-year~~first- and
14 second-year teachers with instructional skills development; or
15 b. If a school district or other employing entity listed in section 15.1-18.2-07 is not in
16 need of mentors for its ~~first-year~~first- or second-year teachers, select and train
17 experienced teachers who will work with school district administrators and
18 administrators from the other employing entities to identify the needs of the
19 ~~non-first-year~~ teachers with more than two years teaching experience and help
20 the ~~non-first-year~~ teachers address their particular needs through the use of:
21 (1) Research-validated interventions; and
22 (2) Proven instructional methods.

23 **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 15.1-18.2-06 of the North Dakota Century Code is
24 amended and reenacted as follows:

1 **15.1-18.2-06. Teacher support program - Availability of services.**

- 2 1. The education standards and practices board may use any moneys it receives for the
3 teacher support program to provide staff compensation, training, evaluation, and
4 stipends for mentors and experienced teachers who assist ~~first-year and non-first-year~~
5 teachers participating in the program, and to pay for any other administrative
6 expenses resulting from the program; provided, however, ~~that~~ the board may not
7 expend more than five percent of the moneys for administrative purposes.
- 8 2. Any funds provided by the department of public instruction to the education standards
9 and practices board for the teacher support program first must be used to provide
10 support to first-year teachers, if any, participating in the program, and any remaining
11 funds must be used to provide support for second-year teachers, if any, participating in
12 the program, except as provided in subsection 3 of section 15.1-18.2-05.

13 **SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION.** There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general
14 fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$3,000,000, or so much of the
15 sum as may be necessary, to the department of public instruction for the purpose of providing a
16 grant to the education standards and practices board to administer and expand the teacher
17 support program to provide support for all first- and second-year teachers in the state, for the
18 biennium beginning July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2023. The funds appropriated are in
19 addition to funds provided in the department of public instruction's base budget, for a total
20 appropriation of \$5,000,000, for the department to grant to the education standards and
21 practices board to administer the program, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2021, and ending
22 June 30, 2023.

21.0256.02000

Sixty-seventh
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

BILL NO.

Introduced by

Representative Heinert

Senators Davison, Oban

1 An Act to provide for a legislative management study of competency-based learning initiatives
2 implemented in school districts under innovative education programs.

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

4 **SECTION 1. LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT STUDY - INNOVATIVE EDUCATION**

5 **PROGRAMS - WAIVERS - COMPETENCY-BASED LEARNING INITIATIVES.**

- 6 1. During the 2021-22 interim, the legislative management shall study competency-based
7 learning and schools participating in innovative education programs. The study may
8 include a review of:
- 9 a. The progress of schools and districts in the state which have received waivers
10 under section 15.1-06-08.1 to participate in innovative education programs under
11 section 15.1-06-08.2;
 - 12 b. Waivers to participate in innovative education programs that incorporate
13 competency-based learning initiatives also to include any schools who engage in
14 innovative education programs; and
 - 15 c. The schools and districts that have received waivers to participate in innovative
16 education programs, the contents of the implemented innovative education
17 programs, best practices, and whether the competency-based learning initiatives
18 implemented under the innovative education programs can be duplicated and
19 expanded for implementation statewide.
- 20 2. The legislative management shall report its findings and recommendations, together
21 with any legislation required to implement the recommendations, to the sixty-eighth
22 legislative assembly.





K12
COORDINATION
COUNCIL
MAXIMIZING IMPACT