

## Innovative Education Program Planning Proposal Guidance

The search and implementation of an Innovative Education Program is an individual journey for each school; each must go on their own journey down the path. There is no one way to implement an Innovative Education Program. The North Dakota Legislature and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) recognize that innovative programs may look different in individual schools. Many factors contribute to the decision regarding the direction of a school's individual Innovative Education Program journey.

The state's purpose for creating an Innovative Education Program is to allow individual schools to have individualized missions, goals, and objectives through a comprehensive plan that helps meet the unique needs of their students.

Through [North Dakota Century Code \(NDCC\) 15.1-06-08.2](#), the NDDPI is authorized to approve schools' implementation of innovative education to improve students' educational performance. The initial approval of a school's Innovative Education Program Planning Proposal is for one year. During this time, the school will develop a comprehensive implementation plan and work with NDDPI to ensure the long-term viability of the proposal.

The NDDPI may approve the planning proposal, reject the planning proposal, or work with the submitting school to modify the planning proposal. After the initial year of planning, the school may submit a comprehensive Innovative Education Implementation Application, which may be approved for a period of up to five years.

### **Key Elements for the Innovative Education Program Planning Proposal:**

1. **Rationale and Vision:** Schools should undertake a comprehensive visioning and planning process to articulate how they will implement high-quality innovative learning across the school. In this section, justify the school's reasoning for wanting to implement an innovative education plan.

Rationale could include having the school or district create a "profile of a graduate". This provides a vision and "the why" for embarking on implementing new, innovative approaches to learning. Cite research, evidence-based, or best practice information aligning the innovative practice to the program.

Provide information on how the innovative approaches are expected to:

- A. Improve the delivery of education;
- B. Improve the administration of education;
- C. Provide increased educational opportunities for students; or
- D. Improve the academic success of students.

2. Stakeholder Engagement: Describe the process of planning the Innovative Education Program, including details on the planning committee and stakeholders involved. Stakeholders should include, but are not limited to, district and building leaders, teachers and teacher leaders, students and parents, school board members, community and business leaders, and institutions of higher education where appropriate.
3. Public School District Board Approval and Non-Public School Governing Board: For planning purposes, assure district board or governing board members were involved. The school board or governing board must approve the plan. Minutes from the school board or governing board meetings must indicate a review of the plan and approval to implement the plan. Include documentation of commitment from stakeholders (i.e., letters of support, survey results, meeting minutes).
4. Professional Development: Establish a professional development plan aligned to the Innovative Education Program.

Over the course of the next year, districts in the planning stage will need to research, explore, and plan their Innovative Education Program. Schools are encouraged to begin conversations on the topics, strategies, and innovative approaches that will be addressed in the Innovative Education Implementation Application. Please reference the department's guidance, NDCC 15.1-06-08.2, and NDAC 67-19-03 regarding the requirements of the Implementation Application.

Due Date: Schools are encouraged to submit an Innovative Education Program Planning Proposal by November 1 each year to assure sufficient time to plan and be prepared for implementation the following year. Schools may submit proposals throughout the school year with the expectation that the school will take a year to plan.

Proposal Process: There is no official state form to utilize for the proposal. Schools may submit a detailed proposal outlining the Key Elements above. Proposals may be submitted to:

Office of School Approval & Opportunity  
600 E. Boulevard Avenue  
Bismarck, ND 58505  
Phone: (701) 328-4571  
Email: [dpischoolapproval@nd.gov](mailto:dpischoolapproval@nd.gov)