

# ND Part B

# FFY2016 State Performance Plan / Annual Performance Report

## Attachments

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179

### General Supervision System:

The systems that are in place to ensure that IDEA Part B requirements are met, e.g., monitoring, dispute resolution, etc.

### Explanation of the NDDPI Special Education Office

There are varying levels and offices of special education in North Dakota. This section describes each level and the respective responsibilities. The State Education Agency (SEA) in North Dakota is the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI). The following special education positions are held within the Special Education office of the ND Department of Public Instruction:

- Special Education State Director: The NDDPI employs one SEA special education director. Responsibilities include state legislative responsibilities and the supervision of NDDPI special education personnel; as well as the oversight of IDEA Regulations in the local special education units and across local special education programs and districts;
- Special Education SEA Staff: The NDDPI SEA Staff assist the Director with components of IDEA Regulations, and oversight of the local special education units, district special education programs, and special projects. Staff members hold portfolios that include specific statewide responsibilities related to disability categories, trainings, monitoring, and special education program responsibilities;
- IDEA Grant Manager: The NDDPI employs one grant manager who oversees the IDEA Part B and state special education budgets; and

### Special Education Units (SEU):

North Dakota is divided into 32 special education units. Each special education unit is responsible for the special education programs and related services in at least one and as many as eighteen school districts. Each unit has a governing board and the relationships between the units and the districts are locally determined. Additionally, each of the special education unit staff members hold local SEU positions, but are not employees of the state office. The following offices may be held within each of the local special education units:

- Special Education Unit Director: has oversight of all special education programs and unit personnel in member school districts, in partnership with NDDPI and Local Education Agency (LEA) administrative personnel within the special education unit;
- Assistant Special Education Unit Director: assists the local Special Education Unit Director with the oversight of all special education programs and unit personnel in member school districts, in partnership with NDDPI and LEA administrative personnel within the special education unit;
- Special Education Unit Coordinator: has a portfolio that contains specific unit-wide initiative and program responsibilities. Each unit coordinator is responsible for the oversight of technical assistance in each of the LEAs within the special education unit, in partnership with LEA personnel and the NDDPI.

### Local Education Agencies (LEA):

North Dakota currently has 179 local school districts. Each school district belongs to a special education unit and collaborates with the special education unit staff to ensure children with disabilities receive appropriate and individualized special education services.

### General Supervision Monitoring Overview:

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of IDEA 2004 are carried out within the state. Each educational program for children with disabilities administered within the state is included in the department's components within the annual general supervision monitoring review. Components of the general supervision system are ongoing SPP indicator monitoring; levels of determination monitoring; focused monitoring; random compliance monitoring related to student files; LEA self-assessment; dispute resolution concerns/complaints; fiscal monitoring; and 618 data.

### Statewide Case Management System:

A major component in North Dakota's general supervision system is the statewide Individualized Education Program (IEP) system, TIENET. This statewide TIENET database is a web-based student file database available via a secure site. It contains all of the components of the IEP and other forms required for students receiving special education services. This database has increased the clarity and accuracy of all student data submitted to the state.

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

The following forms are included and maintained within this electronic database and are currently used for reviewing current data and for the verifying of corrections: On at least an annual basis, the SEA updates forms and processes as necessary in the database. These updates result from field input, as well as regulatory changes that have occurred.

Assessment Plan	Integrated Written Assessment Report
Behavior Intervention Plan	Internal Monitoring Transition Req. Checklist
Building Level Support Team Intervention Plan	Joint Notice of Meeting (Part C to B)
Building Level Support Team Interview Log	Manifestation Determination Documentation
Building Level Support Team Observational Record	Meeting Notes
Building Level Support Team Request for Collaboration/Assistance	North Dakota Assistive Technology Consideration
Consent for Evaluation	Child Outcomes Summary Form
Consent for Initial Placement in Special Education	Notice of Changes to IEP Without an IEP Team Meeting
Consent to Bill Medicaid	Prior Written Notice of Special Education Action
ECSE Student Profile: Evaluation	Release of Information
Excusal of Required IEP Team Member(s)	Request to Invite Outside Agency Reps to IEP
Exit Form	Revocation of Consent for Special Education and Related Service
Extended School Year Plan	RTI Cumulative Folder
Functional Behavior Assessment	Standard Treatment Protocol Documentation Form
IEP - Transition 16-21	Student Profile: Evaluation
IEP Ages 3-5	Summary of Performance
IEP Ages 6-15	Transfer of Rights to Student
Individual Diagnostic Report	Verification of Eligibility to use NIMAS Materials
Individualized Service Program	Integrated Written Assessment Report-SLD/RTI
Notice of Meeting	Student Notice of Meeting

This database includes current data review capabilities and validation procedures to ensure compliance. This also allows NDDPI staff members and local administrators to monitor current data to ensure timely correction of noncompliance. This database increases the ease and accuracy of data input, while providing and maintaining a significant number of generated reports used for monitoring at the student, school, LEA, SEU, and state levels. Additional report topics available through this database include, but are not limited to, Assistive Technology, Extended School Year, Exit, Assessment, and Indicators 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, and 13. A wide variety of reports are also generated based on immediate need and have been used in all school districts across North Dakota since 2009.

### General Supervision Monitoring Process:

The general supervision system integrates data from multiple sources: the APR compliance and performance indicators, LEA level self-assessments, policy and procedures review, and dispute resolution data. Analysis of this data drives technical assistance provided to the LEAs by NDDPI staff. More specifically, the areas of monitoring include:

- *Fiscal Monitoring:* IDEA applications and final reports are reviewed by the NDDPI Special Education Director and Grants Manager to ensure proposed expenditures are allowable and in accordance with IDEA regulations. Processes are in place to ensure an LEA has met excess cost, non-supplanting, and maintenance of effort requirements. LEAs generally receive a fiscal desk audit at least once every five years. Supporting documentation is reviewed to ensure funds were used for allowable expenditures in alignment with the application, as well as other fiscal items such as inventory control, time and effort documentation, parentally placed set-aside and record retention.

- *Compliance Monitoring Self-Assessment:* The NDDPI has developed toolkits for districts, residential schools, and Department of Corrections to use as a self-assessment of the compliance of special education staff in conjunction to the federal regulations. These toolkits include recommendations for student level and current compliance corrective actions. As part of local responsibilities for General Supervision, Local Special Education Units (SEU) are highly encouraged to use these toolkits to sample a portion of their Unit's population of student IEP files each year.
- *Focused Monitoring:* The NDDPI uses the performance indicators 1, 3 and 5 to rank the 32 special education units in North Dakota over a period of three years. The units who fall below the state average are considered for a Focused Monitoring. Thereafter, the state identifies which units will be monitored and proceeds with the Focused Monitoring process. This process includes a complete review of district data on all indicators, formation of hypotheses (areas of FAPE, LRE, Evaluation and Eligibility and Child Find), file review and an onsite interview process with LEA staff related to performance and possible noncompliance. Following this review, each unit and district receives a report detailing areas of compliance, noncompliance, and recommendations or required corrective actions with completion timelines. Residential schools, the North Dakota School for the Deaf, and the Marmot School within the Department of Corrections are focused monitored on a five-year cycle. This process includes a review of documentation outlined in the self-assessment, individual student file reviews and an onsite visit that includes interviews with the school's administration and teaching staff. Following the onsite visit, each facility receives a report detailing areas of compliance, noncompliance, recommendations for required corrective actions and completion timelines.
- *Due Process/Mediation/Complaints:* North Dakota provides a series of options to students with disabilities who have reached the age of majority, parents of children with disabilities, and school staff to use when disagreements cannot be resolved without interventions.
- *Facilitated IEP:* A facilitated IEP meeting is an IEP meeting that includes a trained facilitator who promotes effective communication and assists the IEP team in developing an IEP. The facilitator keeps the team focused on the proper development of the IEP while addressing conflicts that arise. IEP Facilitation is not used to resolve disputes unrelated to the IEP.
- *Mediation:* Mediation offers an informal, effective way to resolve differences through a trained mediator. It may focus on issues specific to a student's educational services, or it may address communication issues that affect the working relationship of parents and educators. Mediation can help the parties collaboratively create other alternatives to their original positions. If the parties agree on solutions to the issues, those points of agreement are outlined in a Mediation Agreement.
- *Complaint Investigation:* A formal complaint is a written allegation that special education laws or regulations are not being followed by an LEA or local public agency. Unlike a due process complaint, any individual or organization may file a state complaint.
- *Due Process Complaint:* A due process complaint is a written document that initiates an impartial due process hearing regarding the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to a child with a disability. Unlike a state complaint, only a parent or an LEA may file a due process complaint.

**Identification of Noncompliance:**

In the monitoring processes, North Dakota defines a finding as a written conclusion that includes a citation of the regulation/requirement and a description of the quantitative and/or qualitative data supporting a decision of compliance or noncompliance with a specific regulation/requirement. Findings are given to the Special Education Unit as well as the student's district of residence. Notification of findings occurs as soon as possible after the NDDPI concludes that the LEA has a finding of noncompliance. The one-year correction timeline begins on the date the NDDPI notifies the school district, in writing, of the noncompliant policies and/or practices.

**Corrections of Noncompliance:**

The following steps are utilized when NDDPI staff members are verifying the Units/Districts corrections to areas of noncompliance:

1. NDDPI monitoring staff review the district submission of documents pertaining to the corrective actions such as individual student level correction of noncompliance and training dates, locations, agendas, and participation lists;
2. Follow-up review of data, other documentation, and/or interviews are conducted to ensure that the noncompliant policies, procedures, and/or practices were revised and corrected within timelines;
3. A written notification is sent to the LEA superintendent, special education unit board president, and the local special education unit director that the noncompliance was corrected as required;
4. When required, NDDPI staff members conduct on-site and/or off-site activities to verify correction of noncompliance; and,,
5. The NDDPI monitoring staff randomly verify compliance through district and student level data (when necessary) using the TIENET database. The majority of the student forms are available in the TIENET database. Throughout the year, NDDPI special education coordinators log into the database and view the student files in question. If the corrective action has not taken place as planned, the NDDPI Special Education Monitoring coordinator contacts the local special education director to discuss the timeline of the required correction. At the agreed upon date, the NDDPI Special Education Monitoring coordinator will again log into the system and verify the correction is complete. Once the corrective action is complete and the noncompliance corrected, the NDDPI Special Education Monitoring coordinator sends a "close -out" letter to the local special education unit director, special education unit board president, and LEA superintendent(s) verifying those corrections and the date of completion.

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

The NDDPI Special Education Monitoring coordinator also maintains an Excel spreadsheet which tracks all findings. This spreadsheet contains the districts who received a letter of notification and the following dates: the letters of noncompliance to LEA, the accepted corrective action plan, the completed corrective action plan, the NDDPI verification of the correction of noncompliance, and the close-out letter to the special education unit director, special education unit board president, and the LEA superintendent(s). All corrective actions must be completed as soon as possible, but no longer than one year, after receiving a letter detailing the issue of noncompliance.

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**Technical Assistance System:**

The mechanisms that the State has in place to ensure the timely delivery of high quality, evidenced based technical assistance and support to LEAs.

The NDDPI Office of Special Education is proud of its history of mutual respect, collaboration, and partnerships with local special education units and LEA personnel. Although being a rural state presents its challenges, the benefit from these collaborative efforts occurring at all levels cannot be overstated. The NDDPI Special Education Staff provide technical assistance to each of the 32 local special education units throughout the state. Each regional coordinator is assigned a region of the state through which the coordinator serves as the lead technical assistance contact for the local units. Staff members also hold portfolios that include specific statewide responsibilities related to disability categories, trainings, monitoring, and special education program responsibilities.

**NDDPI Special Education Section 619 Coordinator, NDDPI Title I, and the ND Department of Human Services (NDDHS) Collaboration:**

- Early Childhood Information Data System (ECIDS) – Stakeholders from North Dakota have been directed by the Governor to integrate early childhood data into the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) to provide evidence on the effectiveness of early childhood programs.
- Kindergarten Formative Assessment Consortium – A national consortium to support the development or enhancement of a kindergarten formative assessment (KFA) which is aligned with state early learning and development standards. These standards cover all essential domains of school readiness.
- In addition, a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) exists to formalize the collaboration between the Part B and the NDDHS Part C coordinators to continue work relating to the validity and the sharing of data between the systems to assure a smooth and timely transition for children and their families. The Section 619 Coordinator is a member of the state Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) and Executive Committee.
- Early Childhood Social Emotional Partners – Representatives from the following entities: NDDHS Children’s Behavioral Health, LSSND/Child Care Aware, NDDPI Office of Early Learning, NDDHS Child and Family Services, ND Head Start State Collaboration Officer, and the NDDPI Office of Special Education working to create improved social – emotional outcomes through the coordination of resources. This collaboration supports a statewide system of early childhood professionals utilizing evidence-based social – emotional practices in supporting young children (prenatal through age eight) and families.
- Linking C and 619 Data Topic Cohort facilitated by DaSy - The Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems – NDDHS Part C and NDDPI Office of Special Education continue to work on identifying and implementing applicable methods for linking data. The state cohort is striving to create a data culture of linking data across early childhood systems.
- North Dakota WIDA Early Years – The NDDPI Office of Early Learning, Office of Indian/Multicultural Education, and Office of Special Education has partnered with WIDA Early Years to help support North Dakota’s dual language learners, ages 2.5-5.5 years, in early care and education settings.

**NDDPI Office of Special Education and Office of Assessment Collaboration:**

The Office of Special Education and Office of Assessment work in collaboration to provide the field technical assistance on an ongoing basis for both the North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA) and North Dakota Alternate Assessment (NDAA) for students with disabilities.

North Dakota is a governing member of the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) consortium and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). A Special Education staff member manages the NDAA and provides technical assistance to special education teachers and local unit directors on changes and updates concerning these assessments. This staff member also facilitates an Alternate Assessment Advisory Group of ND teachers and administrators.

**National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard:**

The provision of accessible instructional materials in a timely manner is an essential component of making a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) available to children who, due to their disability, cannot access standard text materials. The NDDPI has adopted the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) requirements under IDEA 2004. NDDPI has provided assurances to OSEP, as part of the State’s Part B application, that students who need curriculum materials in alternate formats are provided those formats in a timely manner. North Dakota is an open territory state and is committed to assisting local education agencies in acquiring student-ready versions in a timely and cost-efficient manner. North Dakota designated the North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind (NDVS/SB) as the primary authorized user for downloading or assigning the source files from the

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC). NDVS/SB coordinates with the NIMAC, to obtain source files that can then be converted into formats that are accessible by students who are blind or have other print disabilities.

The NDDPI continues to provide technical assistance related to the NIMAS and NIMAC to state educational leaders and school personnel, and coordinate with the NIMAC. NDDPI has posted a NIMAS policy paper, flow chart with definitions, and a brochure at <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/uploads/6/NIMASPolicyPaper.pdf>.

The NDDPI has developed an online training related to NIMAS that is posted to the same website. This training explains the purpose of NIMAS, its importance to instruction, and district responsibilities in providing instructional materials in accessible formats. NDDPI continues to provide LEAs with guidance on ensuring that students will be provided accessible materials within our state's model.

### State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS):

The SLDS has been developed and is operational for all K-12 public schools. Student data is updated nightly through the vertical data upload process from PowerSchool (the student information system used by all public schools in North Dakota). Student data is augmented with information from the state automated reporting system (STARS) and interim assessment data from multiple vendors. Currently, access to data is available at multiple levels: REA (Regional Education Association), district (LEAs), school, and teacher levels, providing authenticated users with data from:

- Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), Renaissance Star and AIMSweb assessment data for districts that have signed a data release agreement.
- State assessments with growth model.
- ACT, ACT Aspire, PSAT, SAT, and Work Keys scores.
- Students enrolled in dual credit courses at post-secondary institutions.
- Post-secondary remediation data – identifying those students needing remediation (including subject area) from institutions that provide student level data to the SLDS;
- Post-secondary and workforce data to improve follow-up reporting (i.e. indicating students enrolled in post-secondary and students currently employed);
- Drop-out and graduation rates - to improve efficiency of state reporting and advance research, SLDS and NDDPI are aligning student records to identify drop-out and graduation rates; analyzing attendance and truancy data, and student historical course information including grades and AP course data.

More information about the SLDS can be found at the SLDS site (<https://slds.ndcloud.gov/SitePages/Default.aspx>).

The North Dakota State Legislature put control of the SLDS with the Information Technology Department (ITD). The legislation appointed a management committee with members from state entities, governor's office and state legislature. The management committee established multiple advisory committees with representatives from LEAs, as well as North Dakota Council of Education Leaders (NDCCEL), North Dakota LEAD Center (an information and training support center for school administrators), EduTech (Education Technology Services for North Dakota schools), NDDPI, Career and Technical Education, Education Standards and Practices Board, and ITD.

EduTech and the State Data Steward provide SLDS training. Regional and local training sessions are organized by the State Data Steward. Sessions are designed to assist schools/districts in using student data to facilitate continuous improvement for all students. Assessment data (state assessment and formative assessment data), along with other data points, are used to determine areas where students may need additional instruction. Group assessment data may indicate areas where professional development or program improvements are needed. More information can be found on the EduTech site (<http://www.edutech.nodak.edu/training/training-category/slds/>).

During the 2015 Legislative session, North Dakota established a new position, K-12 Information Systems Security Analyst, dedicated to providing guidance and assistance to school staff surrounding student data privacy and security.

As the SLDS project continued to move forward, the NDDPI Special Education staff met with Information Technology (IT) development professionals for a requirement gathering session. The development team discussed various special education data sources for creating necessary input and output content. The potential data sources identified would be the SPP/APR indicators and the eight 618 Data Table Submissions. The development team continues to work towards embedding this content in the system.

A method has been developed allowing districts to grant special education units access to student level data. The district signs a data release agreement allowing access to student data within the SLDS. When completed, the special education units are assigned permissions allowing access to student data in the SLDS.

The SLDS development team is currently working on:

- Expansion of the eTranscript program to include the state scholarship application
- Expansion of the post-secondary and workforce data

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

- Inclusion of discipline data from PowerSchool’s Incident Management Module and the School Wide Information System (SWIS). The committee members had lengthy discussions over several sessions regarding the potential for collecting office referral data that would provide more granular data analysis for improving learning for all students and particularly those students who are disruptive to the point that it interferes with their own or others learning in classroom settings;
- A pilot program to link the Department of Human Services early childhood data to the Department of Public Instructions K-12 data system for the 2016-17 school year. This program will assign state IDs to the voluntary early childhood programs.

**Departmental Website:**

The NDDPI website is a substantial part of the Department’s technical assistance to districts, schools, and families. It contains guidelines, policy papers, forms for local, district, and parent use, resources for North Dakota Multi-Tiered System of Supports (NDMTSS) and the North Dakota State Standards, assessment information, and student privacy policies and agreements. The overall design has moved from an agency-centric design to a user-centric design.

**Other:**

Annually the NDDPI sends notification of the final ND SPP/APR location on the NDDPI website via email to all local special education unit directors, the ND Pathfinder Parent Center, and the IDEA Advisory Committee members. The ND SPP/APR is posted for public viewing at <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/SchoolStaff/SpecialEd/DataandReports/> In addition to this public posting, the ND Special Education Guidelines are also available on the NDDPI Special Education website: <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/SchoolStaff/SpecialEd/SpecialEducationStateGuidelines/>.

Presentations on each of the guidelines and their requirements are also given to various stakeholder groups, state agencies, and special education staff when necessary throughout the year. NDDPI staff members develop training materials that are widely disseminated across the state. Presentations on the topic of the SPP/APR indicators, requirements, and data collection methods continue to be a frequent activity at North Dakota parent and education forums.

A secure website is also available to local Unit and District personnel for review of individual SPP/APR indicator data. To make sure that special education unit directors and LEA superintendents have ready access to the data, the NDDPI has created a web portal where they can log in and view report cards, trend reports, and detailed indicator reports for the past several years. These reports provide an overview of current and past performance as well as state-level, special education unit-level, and district-level reports on SPP/APR Indicators 1-14. Also available are detailed reports for the Parent Survey (Indicator 8) and the Post-Secondary Outcomes Survey (Indicator 14).

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**Professional Development System:**

The mechanisms the State has in place to ensure that service providers have the skills to effectively provide services that improve results for students with disabilities.

North Dakota has programs in place to ensure there are highly qualified staff in the public schools to improve results for students with disabilities. North Dakota has taken a “grow-your-own” approach to filling the shortage areas in special education and related services. Following are some of the professional development programs the State funds:

*Resident Teacher Program:*

The Special Education Resident Teacher Program seeks to attract and keep teachers in rural schools in North Dakota that have challenges recruiting and retaining teachers. The purpose is to increase the pool of endorsed and prepared special educators already licensed and admitted to graduate programs in special education. They complete a full-year internship in a school district or special education unit. The resident teachers work under the joint supervision of an experienced special educator and a university special education faculty member. Financial support for this program began in 1998 and continues to assist in meeting the special educator shortage needs in North Dakota.

*Speech-Language Pathology Scholarship:*

Due to a shortage of Speech-Language Pathologists in North Dakota public schools, seven scholarships, funded through IDEA B funds, are awarded to graduate level Speech-Language Pathologists. These scholarships fund the student’s tuition, university fees and books. For each year the student accepts the scholarship, he/she signs an agreement to work in a school district in North Dakota.

*Traineeship Scholarship:*

Each year NDDPI awards Traineeship Scholarships in priority disability areas to ND teachers who wish to pursue graduate level retraining in the field of

## **FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

special education. As part of the application, a recommendation is provided by the local Special Education Unit Director where the applicant is working. This recommendation includes information about the applicant's skills as well as the identified need of the Special Education Unit for a teacher trained in the identified area. Scholarship amounts are based on the credit hours of coursework taken during a semester. Once accepted for the Traineeship Scholarship, applicants may be funded for a maximum of three years or until they complete their endorsement, whichever comes first. There is an average of 70 scholarships given per year in nine different special education and related service areas.

### **Professional Development Collaboration:**

The NDDPI plans and provides an annual Fall Educators Conference each October. The ND Office of Special Education serves on the planning committee for this conference and sponsors several special education related sessions during the conference. The most recent annual conference had an attendance of over 900 general and special education professional from across North Dakota. The Special Education Office coordinates with the Federal Programs Office to publish a monthly newsletter, which is disseminated to the Special Education and Title field staff.

The NDDPI with support from the North Dakota Department of Human Services, Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota, and the North Dakota Home Visiting Coalition, held the fourth annual NDDPI Early Childhood Education Spring Conference. The conference not only provided an opportunity to network with early childhood professionals from across the state, the conference featured breakout sessions on topics including sensory challenges, preparing young learners, social and emotional learning, toxic stress, physical activity in early learning settings and other issues relevant to quality early childhood programs. The conference was intended for anyone with an interest in the early care and education of young children.

### **Law Conference on Students with Disabilities**

The NDDPI Office of Special Education collaborated with the state special education offices from Montana and South Dakota to organize and sponsor the second Annual Northern Plains Law Conference for Students with Disabilities. The purpose of the multi-state conference is to provide the latest information from special education legal issues, due process hearings, circuit court cases, OSEP/OCR guidance letters, and basic IDEA procedural requirements for general/special education staff, administrators, state/school district attorneys, state education department staff, related services staff, parents and other stakeholders. There were over 200 attendees from the three states to the conference in North Dakota. The third Annual Conference will be held in Montana.

#### *Universal Design for Learning (UDL):*

The NDDPI provides technical assistance and professional development focused on instructional planning incorporating UDL principles. The NDDPI continues to emphasize the UDL framework within the improvement planning model developed as the main strategy of the State Systemic Improvement Plan. NDDPI advocates the use of the UDL framework to design classroom instruction and large-scale assessments. The UDL framework and its guiding principles provide students with equal access and opportunities to learn. Reducing curriculum barriers, providing scaffolds and supports promotes deep learning, skill mastery and valid assessment of their learning. UDL is a natural component of early intervening initiatives, such as Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). More in-depth guidance and learning opportunities regarding NIMAS and UDL that is designed for general and special education teachers, are posted on the department's website at <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/SchoolStaff/SpecialEd/AccessibilityResources/>

#### *North Dakota Work Group on Improving Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP): North Dakota Behavior Coaching Initiative*

In 2016-17, NDDPI continued contractual arrangements with Dr. Rose Iovanonne, Board Certified Behavior Analyst from University of South Florida to proceed with the mentoring of the NDDPI's Prevent-Teach-Reinforce (PTR) Master Coach Cadre. The Master Coach Cadre met across the academic year to review progress with PTR cases and also finalized the PTR professional development cycle for its use in the planning model of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP).

Training efforts in the 2016-17 school year, focused specifically on identifying unit facilitators that would guide school building teams through the PTR process. Those unit facilitators were then mentored by one of the PTR Master Coaches. Trainings in the area of Advanced PTR and New Participant PTR were conducted. Dr. Iovanonne also provided an on-site modeling session for the Master Coach Cadre to observe. This modeling session involved Dr. Iovanonne guiding teachers and staff through an actual student's case.

### **Secondary Transition Trainings:**

The NDDPI hosts annual training related to the federal secondary transition requirements. The structure and specific topics included in this training are dictated by the annual Indicator 13 monitoring results. Biannually, a Secondary Transition Interagency Conference is held. This conference is sponsored by the NDDPI but planned collaboratively by the members of the State Secondary Transition Community of Practice. This collaborative conference engages all stakeholder groups involved in the secondary transition planning process.

The NDDPI Special Education Unit holds an Intensive Technical Assistance Partnership Agreement with the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition. The focus of the partnership project is to assist ND schools and ND Vocational Rehabilitation to effectively implement five Evidence Based and Promising Practices (EBPPs) that improve secondary transition services and result in positive post school outcomes for students with disabilities.

### **State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)**

The identified measurable result of the North Dakota SSIP is to increase the six year extended graduation rate of students identified with emotional

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

disturbance. The target population was identified as being students with behavioral, social/emotional, social communication and mental health needs. The scope of NDDPI's effort was defined as keeping students enrolled in school, bringing students back to school (Re-entry), and assisting students to earn a diploma. Stakeholders identified improvements in classroom instruction and in the supports that engage students in that instruction. Local special education units conducted a planning process to identify evidence based programs and practices that explicitly teach self-regulation skills and provide behavioral supports to apply those skills during instruction activities. The NDDPI supported local units with professional development regarding the planning model and process. The local units have identified evidence based and promising practices and have begun the first year of implementation of those practices. Implementation will continue with formative evaluation conducted annually.

### Regional Education Associations:

North Dakota includes eight Regional Education Associations (REAs) designated by the North Dakota State Century Code chapter 15.1-09.1-01. NDDPI has the opportunity to coordinate with each REA to assist in the facilitation of professional development for school personnel throughout a region or regions of the state. This partnership is exemplified through the North Dakota State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG).

As defined in the Century Code, a "regional education association" means a group of school districts that have entered a joint powers agreement that has been reviewed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and verified as meeting the requirements of section 15.1-09.1-02. In order to be eligible for state funding, an REA must offer the following services to its member districts:

- a. Coordination and facilitation of professional development activities for teachers and administrators employed by its member districts;
- b. Supplementation of technology b. support services;
- c. Assistance with achieving school improvement goals identified by the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
- d. Assistance with the collection, analysis, and interpretation of student achievement data; and
- e. Assistance with the expansion and enrichment of curricular offerings. Subsection 1 of the Century Code does not preclude an REA from offering additional services to its member districts.

### State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG):

The North Dakota State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) project, North Dakota Scaling Up and Implementation Science Framework (ND-SISF), recently completed the fifth and final project year. The ultimate ND SPDG goal was to create a proactive, effective, and sustainable Professional Development (PD) delivery framework, which could be duplicated locally, regionally, and statewide. The ND-SISF framework design centered on PD for North Dakota's Multi-tiered System of Support (NMTSS), however the framework can be replicated for any initiative.

To achieve this goal, work took place in multiple phases. The initial phase established Leadership Teams and a Planning Team. A SPDG director and a coordinator from North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) Special Education Unit along with the Special Education Unit Director made up the State Leadership Team, which was responsible for implementing the ND-SISF activities and providing comprehensive oversight for the entire ND-SISF project. NDDPI formed a partnership with two North Dakota Regional Education Cooperatives (REAs) creating a State Transformation Team (STT). A SPDG Advisory Committee was the third cog of the ND-SISF Leadership Team and consisted of representation from each of the following three NDDPI divisions: Educational Success & Community Support, Student Support & Innovation, and Information and Administration. The Information Technology Department (ITD) provided state support to the project. Other members of the SPDG Advisory Committee consisted of: representatives from three REAs, two administrators from Local Education Associations (LEAs) implementing NMTSS, two state parent organizations, higher education institutions, and several contracted content area experts in MTSS, RtI, and PBIS. A State Implementation & Scaling-Up Evidence-Based Practices (SISEP) consultant and program/project evaluation consultant played major roles on the Advisory Team. All team members were aggressively engaged in ND-SISF work.

During the second phase of the ND-SISF, the Planning Team conducted data and needs assessments to determine the current level of implementation of MTSS at all school levels (elementary, middle, and high school) using the SISEP Level of Implementation Assessment. Additionally, the Planning Team reviewed the existing evaluation data on prior Response to Intervention (RtI) and Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) training and looked for trends, which assisted with both indicating successes and areas that were in need of improvement. These data sources provided the basis for revisions to the training curriculum. Since competency-development at the organizational level was a key component of ND-SISF, expert consultants worked with the Planning Team throughout this phase. Piloting MTSS PD began in the spring 2013 in West Fargo Public Schools (WFPS).

The Evaluation of ND-SISF PD Framework encompassed the third phase of the project. ND-SISF evaluation consisted of formative and summative feedback for the SPDG Planning Team and the SIT on each project and performance measures. The feedback consisted of both qualitative and quantitative measures. NDDPI recognizes the importance of multiple measures and multiple methods to triangulate the data. Evaluation methods used included:

- 1) Participant reactions (attitudinal measures);
- 2) Participant Learning (knowledge measures);
- 3) Organization and support change (behavior measures, outcomes);
- 4) Participant's use of new knowledge and skill (behavior measures, outcomes); and
- 5) Student learning outcomes (student achievement outcomes).

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

Evaluation tools included Activity Reports, School-wide Information System (SWIS) Collaboration Survey, End-of-Event Surveys, Educator Self Rating Scales, annual Stakeholder Survey, Coaching Evaluation Survey, Fidelity of Implementation Measures, North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA), SPP/APR graduation, and dropout data, proficiency rates, and parent involvement. Interview and focus groups as well as participant survey evaluations were major components of the evaluation process.

### 2016-2017 Highlights

**Goal 1:** Scaling-up professional development (PD) for educators, regarding Multi-Tiered System of Supports(MTSS) that will result in improved academic and behavioral outcomes for students with disabilities at the secondary level.

ND-SISF demonstrated three major changes in the overall PD delivery system. First, the partnership with the REAs was the organizational unit that delivered statewide NDMTSS PD to educators. Second, regions, districts, and buildings had the organizational structure and leadership to implement PD utilizing their Leadership Teams. Finally, REAs provided support to both the District and Building Level Teams as well as coaches in order to build capacity among school personnel to foster ND-SISF sustainability. These changes reconfigured the organizational hierarchy of serving school districts with PD. Instead of NDDPI serving as the primary deliverer of PD, the REAs delivered PD and provided technical assistance to buildings, districts, and regions statewide. The shift in this organizational structure was integral to the ND-SISF PD framework.

ND-SISF Professional Development was offered through a cascading regional approach creating efficiencies by providing schools with access to expert trainers in each region while simultaneously increasing collaboration among schools with a shared focus on ND MTSS implementation. Schools could enter the implementation phase at any level. Each team works towards full implementation. The levels of implementation included:

- Exploration (knowledge building; deepening understanding of core practices and ND MTSS model and components)
- Installation (receiving training in secondary/tertiary supports and technical assistance in implementing core practices)
- Initial Implementation (integrate data management and modify systems to align for successful implementation)
- Full implementation (monitor sustainability and continuous improvement)

North Dakota REAs provided an annual statewide ND MTSS conference.

A NDMTSS Playbook offered in both a web and print version provided schools with an overview of courses offered for a 3-5 year implementation process.

The REAs created a NDMTSS website, which included all NDMTSS information and a calendar of PD trainings held across the state.

**Goal 2:** Creating and assessing a statewide system of professional development based on principles of implementation science that will result in regional delivery of high quality professional development for ND educators.

The ND-SISF Leadership Team and the Advisory Committee measured the progress and outcomes of the project using a variety of methods. The Outside Evaluator worked with ND SPDG staff and stakeholders to conduct and collect ND-SISF evaluations. The forms and tools used to collect ND-SISF evaluation data included: ND-SISF Activity Reporting, SWIS Data, Collaboration Survey, End-of Event Surveys, Perceptions of RtI Skills, Annual Stakeholder Survey, Coaching Evaluation Survey, Fidelity of Implementation Measures, North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA), and SPP/APR Data. The ND-SISF Outside Evaluator conducted a number of interviews and held focus groups with project partners gathering qualitative feedback on PD activities, the organizational and leadership drivers, and collected suggestions for changes and impacts. The focus groups consisted of school personnel implementing NDMTSS. Groups from each school provided vital implementation data. District Implementation Teams participated in a District Capacity Assessment (DCA) administered by a trained DCA facilitator. This data was used by the implementation team to assess their system's capacity to identify what parts of the system were already in place and being implemented with fidelity, what needs had to be improved, as well as what work stills needed to take place. ND-SISF project evaluations and fidelity checks were collected at multiple levels, from the teacher to the systems level, which created a comprehensive evaluation tool for the ND-SISF project and overall school improvement.

**Goal 3:** Develop a field placement program for pre-service and in-service students to observe in model MTSS sites that will result in greater knowledge and skills of pre-service students to implement high quality MTSS and communicate with parents related to MTSS.

NDDPI considered this goal to be a component of the state's overall ND-SISF PD framework. Schools implementing NDMTSS with fidelity became demonstration sites for other schools to visit where educators could learn from each other. Two schools, an elementary and a high school, not only created a visitation protocol, which included a follow-up survey to assess educator learning, they also served as field placement schools for pre-service students. Over the five-year grant, the pre-service field placement program aligned with the SPDG grew to include in-service field placement students. Because of the field placement program, pre-service undergraduate students in general and special education and in-service graduate students were better prepared to implement MTSS after graduation.

The field placement program addressed the need for parent/educator communications. A pamphlet aligned with NDMTSS work was created for parents to understand NDMTSS by the Pathfinder parent organization. Pathfinder also created an interactive voice over power point for parents and educators as another learning tool. The pamphlet and the power point are located on the Pathfinder website as well as on NDDPI and NDMTSS websites. The parent pamphlet was shared with other agencies including NDDPI, REAs, and ND school districts.

Attachments			
	File Name	Uploaded By	Uploaded Date
No APR attachments found.			

**Stakeholder Involvement:**  apply this to all Part B results indicators

The mechanism for soliciting broad stakeholder input on targets in the SPP, including revisions to targets.

The NDDPI has actively solicited broad stakeholder input on a statewide basis. In addition, the SEA members met periodically during the year to review and update the SPP indicators, targets, and activities. Through the engagement of the stakeholders in a review of the indicator trend and current APR data, recommendations were solicited for revisions to targets and methodologies. Stakeholder agencies in North Dakota include the ND IDEA Part B Advisory Committee and Part C ND Interagency Coordinating Council; the ND Early Childhood Special Education Advisory Committee; the NDMTSS State Implementation Team; the ND Secondary Transition Community of Practice Advisory Council; the Speech and Language Pathology Taskforce; the NDAA Advisory Committee; the ND Administrators in Special Education Study Council; the Autism Spectrum Disorder Task Force; and the ND Council of Educational Leaders. These stakeholder groups are comprised of members from the ND Department of Human Services (Part C); Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; ND Department of Human Services/ Children and Family Services; Developmental Disabilities; ND Pathfinder Parent Center (ND Parent Training and Information and Parent Information Resource Center); ND Division of Juvenile Services; ND Protection and Advocacy Project; ND Board for Career and Technical Education; ND Job Services; Special Education administrators; the ND Center for Persons with Disabilities; university professors; educators; parents; and students. In addition to taskforce meetings, NDDPI holds both a Spring and Fall statewide Special Education Leadership Institute with all local special education directors and coordinators in attendance. During these sessions, NDDPI staff members proposed changes, described new information pertaining to the indicators, presented technical assistance in areas of need, and collected feedback from the field. Furthermore, the ND IDEA Advisory Committee has had continuous involvement in revisions and continues to indicate general consensus in support of the ND targets and improvement activities as written in the ND SPP/APR.

Attachments			
	File Name	Uploaded By	Uploaded Date
No APR attachments found.			

**Reporting to the Public:**

How and where the State reported to the public on the FFY 2015 performance of each LEA located in the State on the targets in the SPP/APR as soon as practicable, but no later than 120 days following the State's submission of its FFY 2015 APR, as required by 34 CFR §300.602(b)(1)(i)(A); and a description of where, on its Web site, a complete copy of the State's SPP, including any revision if the State has revised the SPP that it submitted with its FFY 2015 APR in 2017, is available.

District Performance Profiles are publicly reported at the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction's website as soon as practically possible, but no later than 120 days following the State's submission of its APR: <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/report/profile>. Profiles can be viewed by selecting the specific district and school year desired. In addition, the department publicly made available a copy of its FFY 2015 SPP/APR submitted to OSEP in 2017 at its website: <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/SchoolStaff/SpecialEd/DataandReports/>.

As part of the State's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction is in the process of developing a dashboard to support accountability system and public reporting requirements. The dashboard (<https://insights.nd.gov/>) is designed to be an interactive portal to allow schools the opportunity to showcase and highlight strengths on multiple academic and nonacademic indicators, while providing transparency to the public. This continued development will impact how future performance reports for LEAs will be generated and publicly reported.

**Additional Feedback to OSEP**

In the ND LEA reports where data was missing for certain indicators, this would have meant that either the LEA did not meet the minimum n-size requirement or did not have any data for that indicator. To help distinguish between the two instances and to present such information in a way that is better interpreted by LEAs, NDDPI will be using "N/A" to denote that the LEA had no data available for that indicator and "X" to mean that the LEA had a sample size of less than 10 but not 0. A sample size of less than 10 was censored for the public report. In addition, NDDPI will be using "N\*" for "Did the District Meet the Target?" to mean **No**, but would have met the target with significant testing which would have been "Y" with the previous way NDDPI had applied significance testing. Footnotes will be revised accordingly. All these changes will be reflected in both the 2015-16 and 2016-17 LEAs public report cards.

Attachments			
	File Name	Uploaded By	Uploaded Date
No APR attachments found.			

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

### Actions required in FFY 2015 response

### OSEP Response

States were instructed to submit Phase III Year Two of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) by April 2, 2018. The State provided the required information.

In the FFY 2017 APR, the State must report FFY data for the State-identified Measurable Result (SIMR). Additionally, the State must, consistent with its evaluation plan described in Phase II, assess and report on its progress implementing the SSIP. Specifically, the State must provide: (1) a narrative or graphic representation of the principal activities; (2) measures and outcomes that were implemented since the State's last SSIP submission (i.e., April 2, 2018); and (3) a summary of the infrastructure improvement strategies and evidence-based practices that were implemented and progress toward short- and long-term outcomes that are intended to impact the SIMR.

### Required Actions

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 1: Graduation**

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator:

Percent of youth with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) graduating from high school with a regular high school diploma.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

**Historical Data**

Baseline Data: 2011

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Target ≥			70.00%	71.00%	72.00%	89.00%	89.00%	89.00%	89.00%	89.00%	89.00%
Data		80.24%	79.57%	73.08%	73.08%	73.03%	71.32%	66.74%	67.92%	69.85%	69.93%

FFY	2015
Target ≥	89.00%
Data	67.82%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target ≥	89.00%	89.00%	89.00%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

**Prepopulated Data**

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2015-16 Cohorts for Regulatory Adjusted-Cohort Graduation Rate (EDFacts file spec C151; Data group 696)	10/12/2017	<a href="#">Number of youth with IEPs graduating with a regular diploma</a>	596	
SY 2015-16 Cohorts for Regulatory Adjusted-Cohort Graduation Rate (EDFacts file spec C151; Data group 696)	10/12/2017	<a href="#">Number of youth with IEPs eligible to graduate</a>	878	null
SY 2015-16 Regulatory Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (EDFacts file spec C150; Data group 695)	10/12/2017	<a href="#">2014-15 Regulatory four-year adjusted-cohort graduation rate table</a>	67.88%	Calculate <input type="checkbox"/>

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

Number of youth with IEPs in the current year's adjusted cohort graduating with a regular diploma	Number of youth with IEPs in the current year's adjusted cohort eligible to graduate	FFY 2015 Data	FFY 2016 Target	FFY 2016 Data
596	878	67.82%	89.00%	67.88%

**Graduation Conditions**

Choose the length of Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate your state is using: 4-year ACGR

Provide a narrative that describes the conditions youth must meet in order to graduate with a regular high school diploma and, if different, the conditions that youth with IEPs must meet in order to graduate with a regular high school diploma. If there is a difference, explain.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) and the local school districts have the authority to set graduation standards, grading policies, and conditions for awarding diplomas as long as those policies do not violate the civil rights of students. The completion of a course of study prescribed under state and local requirements should result in a formal recognition of the completion of that study. Diplomas for students who receive special education services are awarded in the same manner as diplomas are awarded to students without disabilities. North Dakota School Century Code 15.1-21-02.1 includes the following requirement: Before a school district, a non-public high school, or the ND Department of Independent Study issues a

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

diploma to a student, the student must have successfully completed at least 21 units of high school course work from the minimum curriculum offerings established by North Dakota School Century Code 15.1-21-02.

Are the conditions that youth with IEPs must meet to graduate with a regular high school diploma different from the conditions noted above? No

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Effective with the FFY2010, the NDDPI incorporated a conditional, five and six-year extended adjusted cohort graduation rate rule, which includes the impact of students who take longer than four years to receive their high school graduation diploma. This five and six-year extended adjusted cohort graduation rate credits schools and districts for successfully graduating students who take longer than four years to graduate high school with a regular high school diploma. The NDDPI stipulates that it will account for the proper compilation, calculation, and reporting of any five-year and six-year extended cohort graduation rates as specified in the non-regulatory guidance, dated December 22, 2008, issued by the U. S. Department of Education. Please see attached Table1-1.

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 2: Drop Out**

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator:  
Percent of youth with IEPs dropping out of high school.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

**Historical Data**

Baseline Data: 2011

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Target ≤			13.92%	12.95%	11.98%	11.01%	19.80%	19.60%	19.50%	19.50%	19.50%
Data		13.10%	13.88%	16.69%	16.69%	19.63%	17.41%	21.68%	21.02%	19.13%	18.41%

FFY	2015
Target ≤	19.25%
Data	20.26%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target ≤	18.75%	18.00%	17.00%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

Please indicate whether you are reporting using Option 1 or Option 2.

- Option 1
- Option 2

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

Number of youth with IEPs who exited special education due to dropping out	Total number of high school students with IEPs	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
155	878	20.26%	18.75%	17.65%

Use a different calculation methodology

- Change numerator description in data table
- Change denominator description in data table

Please explain the methodology used to calculate the numbers entered above.

To calculate the drop-out rate the NDDPI uses the same methodology as it uses for the graduation rate (i.e., the four-year graduation rate follows a cohort, or a group of students, who begin as first-time 9th graders in a particular school year and who graduate with a regular high school diploma in four years or less. The cohort is "adjusted" by adding any students transferring into the cohort and by subtracting any students who transfer out, immigrate to another country, or die during the years covered by the rate).

Provide a narrative that describes what counts as dropping out for all youth.

Drop-outs are defined as students who leave school prior to graduation for reasons other than transfer to another school. Therefore, students receiving special education services that exit with a certificate of completion or have reached the age limitation of attendance are considered drop-outs. Also,

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

students choosing to exit school to attend an alternative form of education or employment training program are also factored into the drop-out total.

Is there a difference in what counts as dropping out for youth with IEPs? No

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 3B: Participation for Students with IEPs**

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments:

- A. Indicator 3A -- Reserved
- B. Participation rate for children with IEPs.
- C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level and alternate academic achievement standards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

**Historical Data**

	Group Name	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Reading	A Overall	2005	Target ≥			95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
			Data		98.10%	97.50%	96.60%	97.80%	97.62%	97.82%	97.83%	97.80%	97.17%	96.43%
Math	A Overall	2005	Target ≥			95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
			Data		98.10%	97.40%	97.90%	97.90%	98.19%	98.03%	98.08%	97.80%	97.37%	95.75%

	Group Name	FFY	2015
Reading	A Overall	Target ≥	95.00%
		Data	95.46%
Math	A Overall	Target ≥	95.00%
		Data	95.38%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

	FFY	2016	2017	2018
Reading	A ≥ Overall	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Math	A ≥ Overall	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

Would you like to use the assessment data below to automatically calculate the actual data reported in your FFY 2013 APR by the grade groups you provided on the Reporting Group Selection page? yes

Would you like the disaggregated data to be displayed in your final APR? yes

**Data Source:** SY 2016-17 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec C188; Data Group: 589) **Date:** 12/14/2017

Reading assessment participation data by grade											
Grade	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	HS
a. Children with IEPs	1260	1279	1228	1112	1057	1084	n	n	787	n	n
b. IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations	758	747	703	527	490	483			353		
c. IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations	386	417	394	454	427	462			293		
d. IEPs in alternate assessment against grade-level standards											
e. IEPs in alternate assessment against modified standards											
f. IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards	75	85	88	88	101	84			66		

# FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

Data Source: SY 2016-17 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec C185; Data Group: 588) Date: 12/14/2017

Math assessment participation data by grade											
Grade	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	HS
a. Children with IEPs	1259	1281	1228	1113	1058	1087	n	n	787	n	n
b. IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations	990	906	749	569	541	561			391		
c. IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations	151	262	348	412	376	385			250		
d. IEPs in alternate assessment against grade-level standards											
e. IEPs in alternate assessment against modified standards											
f. IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards	75	85	88	88	102	84			66		

## FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment

Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs	Number of Children with IEPs Participating	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
A Overall	7,807	7,481	95.46%	95.00%	95.82%

## FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment

Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs	Number of Children with IEPs Participating	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
A Overall	7,813	7,479	95.38%	95.00%	95.73%

## Public Reporting Information

Provide links to the page(s) where you provide public reports of assessment results.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction publicly reports on participation of students with disabilities on statewide assessment, including SEA and LEA level reports on its website at <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/report/Profile/>. The SEA and LEA assessment participation reports have been updated and now include 2016-17 school year report. Reports can be viewed by selecting the State of a specific district from the drop down menu and school year desired (2016-17). Select "Participation Rates for Students with Disabilities" from the list of items under School District Profile and Special Education Reports, assessment participation information is displayed for the year selected (2016-17). The assessment report for students with disabilities comprises students who took the North Dakota State Assessment, including those who took it with accommodation and those who took it without accommodation. In addition, included in the report are students with disabilities who took the North Dakota Alternate Assessment based on alternate achievement standards.

### Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

As part of the State's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction is in the process of developing a dashboard called ND Insights to support accountability system and public reporting requirements. The dashboard is being designed to be an interactive portal to allow schools the opportunity to showcase and highlight strengths on multiple academic and nonacademic indicators, while providing transparency to the public. The reports on the dashboard can be viewed at <https://insights.nd.gov/> by selecting school, district, or state level reports. Reports for students with disabilities can be viewed by selecting demographics from the menu where data for subgroups can be filtered. As NDDPI transitions to using the dashboard for State/District Report Cards and School Profiles, the special education office within the department continues to engage the developers about expanding the dashboard to meet the public reporting requirements on outcomes for students with disabilities, including assessment results. The final phase of the design of the ND Insights is anticipated to be completed in February 2019.

## Actions required in FFY 2015 response

none

## OSEP Response

The State did not provide a Web link demonstrating that the State reported publicly on the participation of children with disabilities on statewide assessments with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessments of nondisabled children, as required by 34 CFR §300.160(f). Specifically, the State has not reported the number of children with disabilities participating in regular assessments, and the number of those children who were provided accommodations (that did not result in an invalid score) in order to participate in those assessments at the State and school levels. The failure to publicly report as required under 34 CFR §300.160(f) is noncompliance.

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**  
**Required Actions**

Within 90 days of the receipt of the State's 2018 determination letter, the State must provide to OSEP a Web link that demonstrates that the State has reported the number of children with disabilities participating in regular assessments, and the number of those children who were provided accommodations (that did not result in an invalid score) in order to participate in those assessments at the State and school levels. In addition, OSEP reminds the State that in the FFY 2017 SPP/APR, the State must include a Web link that demonstrates compliance with 34 CFR §300.160(f) for FFY 2017.

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 3C: Proficiency for Students with IEPs**

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments:

- A. Indicator 3A -- Reserved
- B. Participation rate for children with IEPs.
- C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level and alternate academic achievement standards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

**Historical Data**

	Group Name	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Reading	A Overall	2005	Target ≥			57.80%	60.00%	78.07%	78.07%	89.13%	89.13%	89.00%	100%	100%
			Data		54.30%	61.20%	57.10%	61.07%	62.76%	58.21%	56.42%	53.95%	49.51%	18.63%
Math	A Overall	2005	Target ≥			52.50%	55.00%	67.03%	67.03%	83.57%	83.57%	83.57%	100%	100%
			Data		50.20%	56.90%	55.80%	61.91%	63.25%	58.67%	58.10%	54.87%	50.93%	13.45%

	Group Name	FFY	2015
Reading	A Overall	Target ≥	100%
		Data	21.52%
Math	A Overall	Target ≥	100%
		Data	14.74%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

	FFY	2016	2017	2018
Reading	A ≥ Overall	100%	100%	100%
Math	A ≥ Overall	100%	100%	100%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

Would you like to use the assessment data below to automatically calculate the actual data reported in your FFY 2013 APR by the grade groups you provided on the Reporting Group Selection page? yes

Would you like the disaggregated data to be displayed in your final APR? yes

**Data Source:** SY 2016-17 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec C178; Data Group: 584) **Date:** 12/14/2017

Reading proficiency data by grade											
Grade	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	HS
a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned	1219	1249	1185	1069	1018	1029	n	n	712	n	n
b. IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	189	154	155	74	75	70			55		
c. IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	55	35	36	23	27	16			30		
d. IEPs in alternate assessment against grade-level standards scored at or above proficient against grade level											

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

Reading proficiency data by grade											
Grade	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	HS
e. IEPs in alternate assessment against modified standards scored at or above proficient against grade level											
f. IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient against grade level	48	58	67	48	54	30			44		

**Data Source:** SY 2016-17 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec C175; Data Group: 583) **Date:** 12/14/2017

Math proficiency data by grade											
Grade	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	HS
a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned	1216	1253	1185	1069	1019	1030	n	n	707	n	n
b. IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	281	209	109	82	70	57			21		
c. IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	20	23	22	17	8	7			5		
d. IEPs in alternate assessment against grade-level standards scored at or above proficient against grade level											
e. IEPs in alternate assessment against modified standards scored at or above proficient against grade level											
f. IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient against grade level	23	13	30	20	13	16			18		

### FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment

Group Name	Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned	Number of Children with IEPs Proficient	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
A Overall	7,481	1,343	21.52%	100%	17.95%

#### Reasons for Group A Slippage

During the 2015-16 NDSA test administration, North Dakota was in year 2 of a rigorous coverage of academic content. Several factors may have caused the drop in reading proficiency rates. Because of the technological disruptions that marked the NDSA during the 2014-15 testing, school districts had an option to take a paper pencil-version of the NDSA or continue with electronic version for the 2015-16 school year. The paper-pencil version does not allow for the adaptability as would the electronic version of the assessment.

In line with this, ND teachers have had a lack of certainty regarding the ND standards because it was announced that ND would no longer take assessments that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards. As a result, ND rewrote English language arts and mathematic standards at the close of the 2015-16 testing year. ND would be leaving the SBAC Consortium after the 2016-17 testing year.

ND will continue to actively engage stakeholders to define what quality instruction is and the kind of professional development and technical assistance that will be needed to equip teachers with effective instructional reading practices to promote an increase in reading proficiency scores.

### FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment

Group Name	Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned	Number of Children with IEPs Proficient	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
A Overall	7,479	1,064	14.74%	100%	14.23%

### Public Reporting Information

Provide links to the page(s) where you provide public reports of assessment results.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction had previously publicly reported on the performance of students with disabilities on statewide assessment on its website at <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/report/Profile/>. However, as

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

part of the State's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction is in the process of developing a dashboard called ND Insights to support accountability system and public reporting requirements. The dashboard is designed to allow schools the opportunity to showcase and highlight strengths on multiple academic and nonacademic indicators, while providing transparency to the public. Reports on the dashboard can be viewed at <https://insights.nd.gov/> by selecting school, district, or state level reports. Assessment performance reports for students with disabilities can be viewed by selecting state and/or searching a specific district or school level report. Select Academic Progress from the list and under State Assessment, select student achievement. The Demographics menu displays data for subgroups, including IEP students. As NDDPI transitions to using the dashboard for State/District Report Cards and School Profiles, the special education office within the department continues to engage the developers about expanding the dashboard to meeting the public reporting requirements on outcomes for students with disabilities, including assessment performance. The final phase of the design of the ND Insights is anticipated to be completed in February 2019.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

**NDDPI's Feedback:**

The NDDPI has updated its public reporting information by including information on the ND Insights (dashboard) and a web link (<https://insights.nd.gov/>) where public reports on assessment results can be found.

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 4A: Suspension/Expulsion**

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Rates of suspension and expulsion:

- A. Percent of districts that have a significant discrepancy in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and
- B. Percent of districts that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A); 1412(a)(22))

**Historical Data**

Baseline Data: 2016

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Target ≤			0.97%	0.97%	0.97%	0.97%	0.97%	0.97%	0.97%	0.97%	0.97%
Data		0.97%	0.50%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

FFY	2015
Target ≤	0.97%
Data	0%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target ≤	0.97%	0.97%	0.80%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

Has the State Established a minimum n-size requirement?  Yes  No

The State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met the State-established n size. Report the number of districts excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement. 82

Number of districts that have a significant discrepancy	Number of districts that met the State's minimum n-size	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
0	97	0%	0.97%	0%

Choose one of the following comparison methodologies to determine whether significant discrepancies are occurring (34 CFR §300.170(a)):

- Compare the rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs among LEAs in the State
- The rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs in each LEA compared to the rates for nondisabled children in the same LEA

**State's definition of "significant discrepancy" and methodology**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

The NDDPI uses the “state bar” method for defining significant discrepancy. The FFY2016 (based on 2015-2016 data) state rate for suspending/expelling students with disabilities for more than 10 days is 0.14%. The NDDPI is setting the state bar as five percentage points higher than the state rate. Thus, any district that suspends or expels 5.14% or more of its students with disabilities for more than 10 days is flagged for significant discrepancy. There must be at least 30 students in the denominator of a suspension rate for it to be flagged.

Of the 179 districts, 82 were excluded because their suspension/expulsion rate had fewer than 30 enrolled students with disabilities in the denominator. Eighty(80) of these 82 had a 0% suspension/expulsion rate. In the entire state of North Dakota, 20 students with disabilities were suspended/expelled for greater than 10 days in FFY2016. Eight(8) districts had a suspension rate greater than 0%; of these 8 districts, 2 were excluded because there was not at least 30 students with disabilities enrolled at this district. Thus, when exclusions are based on only those districts with a suspension rate greater than 0%, only 2 of the 179 districts were excluded from the analyses.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

**NDDPI’s Feedback**

NDDPI has reviewed and reconciled the inconsistency between the number of districts that met the minimum n size requirement and those that did not and as a result were excluded from the calculation for this indicator. In addition, the NDDPI has revised its baseline in accordance with the change in the denominator, as required by the Measurement Table for this indicator.

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

Note: Any actions required in last year's response table that are related to correction of findings should be responded to on the "Correction of Previous Findings of Noncompliance" page of this indicator. If your State's only actions required in last year's response are related to findings of noncompliance, a text field will not be displayed on this page.

**FFY 2015 Identification of Noncompliance**

**Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices** (completed in FFY 2016 using 2015-2016 data)

Provide a description of the review of policies, procedures, and practices relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

In accordance with regulations, if district data had indicated disproportionate representation, the state would:

- Require the review and revision of polices, practices and procedures that contribute to disproportionate representation;
- Provide the state accepted plan and templates required for the required reviews; and
- Require the LEA to publicly report on the revision of policies, practices and procedures. When necessary, technical assistance is offered from the NDDPI staff. The NDDPI also contracts with a consultant who will offer the technical assistance required by school districts in reference to appropriate identification of children who require special education services.

The State DID NOT identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b)

The State DID identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b). If YES, select one of the following:

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2015**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
0	0	0	0

**OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2016, and OSEP accepts that revision.

**Required Actions**



**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 4B: Suspension/Expulsion**

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Compliance indicator: Rates of suspension and expulsion:

- A. Percent of districts that have a significant discrepancy in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and
- B. Percent of districts that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A); 1412(a)(22))

**Historical Data**

Baseline Data: 2016

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Target			0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data						0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

FFY	2015
Target	0%
Data	0%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target	0%	0%	0%

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

Has the State Established a minimum n-size requirement?  Yes  No

The State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met the State-established n size. Report the number of districts excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement. 129

Number of districts that have a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity	Number of those districts that have policies, procedures, or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements	Number of districts that met the State's minimum n-size	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
0	0	50	0%	0%	0%

All races and ethnicities were included in the review

**State's definition of "significant discrepancy" and methodology**

The NDDPI uses the "state bar" method for defining significant discrepancy. The FFY2016 (based on 2015-2016 data) state rate for suspending/expelling students with disabilities for more than 10 days is 0.14%. The NDDPI is setting the state bar as five percentage points higher than the state rate. Thus, any district that suspends or expels 5.14% or more of its students with disabilities for more than 10 days is flagged for significant discrepancy. There must be at least 30 students in the denominator of a suspension rate for it to be flagged.

Of the 179 districts, 129 were excluded because their suspension/expulsion rate had fewer than 30 enrolled students with disabilities in the denominator for any given race/ethnicity category. Forty-four(44) of these 50 had a 0% suspension/expulsion rate; the other six suspended between 1-3 students. In the entire state of North Dakota, 20 students with disabilities were suspended/expelled for greater than 10 days in FFY2016. Six districts had an overall suspension rate greater than 0%.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

**NDDPI's Feedback**

NDDPI has reviewed and reconciled the inconsistency between the number of districts that met the minimum n size requirement and those that did not and as a result were excluded from the calculation for this indicator. In addition, the NDDPI has revised its baseline in accordance with the change in the denominator, as required by the Measurement Table for this indicator.

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

Note: Any actions required in last year's response table that are related to correction of findings should be responded to on the "Correction of Previous Findings of Noncompliance" page of this indicator. If your State's only actions required in last year's response are related to findings of noncompliance, a text field will not be displayed on this page.

**FFY 2015 Identification of Noncompliance**

**Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices** (completed in FFY 2016 using 2015-2016 data)

Provide a description of the review of policies, procedures, and practices relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

In accordance with regulations, if district data had indicated disproportionate representation, the state would:

- Require the review and revision of polices, practices and procedures that contribute to disproportionate representation;
- Provide the state accepted plan and templates required for the required reviews; and
- Require the LEA to publicly report on the revision of policies, practices and procedures. When necessary, technical assistance is offered from the NDDPI staff. The NDDPI contracts with a consultant who will offer the technical assistance required by school districts in reference to appropriate identification of children who require special education services.

The State DID NOT identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b)

The State DID identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b). If YES, select one of the following:

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2015**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
0	0	0	0

**OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2016, and OSEP accepts that revision.

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 5: Education Environments (children 6-21)**

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served:

- A. Inside the regular class 80% or more of the day;
- B. Inside the regular class less than 40% of the day; and
- C. In separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

**Historical Data**

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
A	2008	Target ≥			78.50%	79.00%	79.50%	80.00%	78.00%	78.10%	78.80%	75.00%	75.10%
		Data		78.62%	77.83%	77.68%	77.17%	77.88%	78.24%	78.02%	77.61%	75.32%	74.58%
B	2008	Target ≤			3.90%	3.80%	3.70%	3.60%	4.05%	4.00%	3.90%	4.60%	4.85%
		Data		3.94%	3.59%	4.39%	4.98%	4.11%	3.96%	4.04%	4.13%	4.54%	5.11%
C	2008	Target ≤			2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
		Data		2.14%	1.79%	1.53%	1.09%	1.33%	1.40%	1.47%	1.44%	1.60%	1.66%

	FFY	2015
A	Target ≥	75.20%
	Data	74.08%
B	Target ≤	4.85%
	Data	5.33%
C	Target ≤	2.00%
	Data	1.75%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target A ≥	75.30%	76.00%	77.50%
Target B ≤	4.80%	4.80%	4.75%
Target C ≤	1.99%	1.97%	1.08%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

**Prepopulated Data**

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2016-17 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/13/2017	<a href="#">Total number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21</a>	12,395	null
SY 2016-17 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/13/2017	<a href="#">A. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day</a>	9,079	null
SY 2016-17 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/13/2017	<a href="#">B. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside the regular class less than 40% of the day</a>	705	null
SY 2016-17 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/13/2017	<a href="#">c1. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 in separate schools</a>	76	null
SY 2016-17 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/13/2017	<a href="#">c2. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 in residential facilities</a>	110	null

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2016-17 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/13/2017	<a href="#">c3. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 in homebound/hospital placements</a>	16	null

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

	Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served	Total number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
A. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day	9,079	12,395	74.08%	75.30%	73.25%
B. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside the regular class less than 40% of the day	705	12,395	5.33%	4.80%	5.69%
C. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements [c1+c2+c3]	202	12,395	1.75%	1.99%	1.63%

**Reasons for B Slippage**

FFY2016 data shows slippage on 5B from FFY2015 data. Environmental setting data was examined across the special education units in North Dakota. Special Education Units which had an increase in the number of students in regular classroom less than 40% was minimal. However, with NDDPI increased focus on students with mental and behavioral health across agencies due to ND SIMR, it is likely there will be a larger number of students that will be targeted in a less inclusive setting to receive specially designed instruction using evidence-based interventions and therapies.

The NDDPI will follow up with the districts who have a high 5B rate to ensure students are being included in the regular classroom environment to the maximum extent possible. This will be carried out through the SEA focused monitoring process, as well as through individual district contacts.

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 6: Preschool Environments**

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5 attending a:

- A. Regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program; and
- B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

**Historical Data**

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
A	2011	Target ≥									29.55%	27.30%	27.30%
		Data								29.05%	30.60%	27.32%	26.43%
B	2011	Target ≤									28.27%	29.00%	28.80%
		Data								28.77%	27.53%	28.96%	32.98%

	FFY	2015
A	Target ≥	27.50%
	Data	25.20%
B	Target ≤	28.60%
	Data	32.81%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target A ≥	27.70%	28.50%	29.60%
Target B ≤	28.40%	27.60%	26.50%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

**Prepopulated Data**

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2016-17 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/13/2017	<a href="#">Total number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5</a>	2,012	null
SY 2016-17 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/13/2017	<a href="#">a1. Number of children attending a regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program</a>	495	null
SY 2016-17 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/13/2017	<a href="#">b1. Number of children attending separate special education class</a>	619	null
SY 2016-17 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/13/2017	<a href="#">b2. Number of children attending separate school</a>	39	null
SY 2016-17 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/13/2017	<a href="#">b3. Number of children attending residential facility</a>	n	null

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

	Number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5 attending	Total number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
A. A regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early	495	2,012	25.20%	27.70%	24.60%

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

	Number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5 attending	Total number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
childhood program					
B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility	661	2,012	32.81%	28.40%	32.85%

Use a different calculation methodology

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes**

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs who demonstrate improved:

- A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/ communication and early literacy); and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

**Historical Data**

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
A1	2013	Target ≥						83.50%	83.50%	83.50%	83.50%	83.50%	83.50%
		Data					83.50%	82.44%	86.20%	90.83%	90.15%	84.50%	87.57%
A2	2013	Target ≥						69.70%	69.70%	69.70%	69.70%	63.00%	63.00%
		Data					69.70%	68.00%	68.50%	72.11%	72.14%	63.16%	68.23%
B1	2013	Target ≥						84.00%	84.00%	84.00%	84.00%	84.00%	84.00%
		Data					84.00%	81.82%	86.20%	88.61%	88.78%	86.42%	87.76%
B2	2013	Target ≥						59.40%	59.40%	59.40%	59.40%	55.00%	55.00%
		Data					59.40%	63.00%	60.20%	63.00%	61.88%	55.06%	56.73%
C1	2013	Target ≥						80.50%	80.50%	80.50%	80.50%	80.50%	80.50%
		Data					80.50%	88.32%	82.70%	89.31%	89.25%	84.29%	89.47%
C2	2013	Target ≥						76.10%	76.10%	76.10%	76.10%	72.00%	72.00%
		Data					76.10%	83.00%	76.30%	78.00%	76.98%	72.20%	74.28%

	FFY	2015
A1	Target ≥	83.50%
	Data	88.01%
A2	Target ≥	63.00%
	Data	66.20%
B1	Target ≥	84.00%
	Data	90.71%
B2	Target ≥	55.00%
	Data	55.17%
C1	Target ≥	80.50%
	Data	86.78%
C2	Target ≥	72.00%
	Data	73.18%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target A1 ≥	84.00%	84.00%	84.50%
Target A2 ≥	63.50%	63.50%	64.00%
Target B1 ≥	84.50%	84.50%	85.00%
Target B2 ≥	55.50%	55.50%	56.00%
Target C1 ≥	81.00%	81.00%	81.50%
Target C2 ≥	72.50%	72.50%	73.00%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

# FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

## FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data

Number of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs assessed	753.00
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### Outcome A: Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships)

	Number of Children	Percentage of Children
a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning	1.00	0.13%
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	85.00	11.29%
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	201.00	26.69%
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	317.00	42.10%
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	149.00	19.79%

	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
A1. Of those preschool children who entered or exited the preschool program below age expectations in Outcome A, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. $(c+d)/(a+b+c+d)$	518.00	604.00	88.01%	84.00%	85.76%
A2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. $(d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)$	466.00	753.00	66.20%	63.50%	61.89%

### Reasons for A2 Slippage

The NDDPI Office of Special Education with input from the ND Early Childhood Special Education Advisory Committee as well as ND's IDEA Advisory Committee cannot specifically pinpoint the cause of slippage for Indicator 7A2. There were, however, suggested impacts that may have played a role in the slippage occurrence.

- The NDDPI staff has completed a data review pertaining to initial evaluations of children three years of age. The NDDPI's special education case management system, known as TIENET, is capable of identifying children that are and are not referrals from Part C Early Intervention. Data from 2014-2016 indicated nearly 600 children, three years of age, were screened by a Special Education Unit and were found eligible for services, but those children were not receiving Part C Early Intervention services. It has been suggested that the impact of not receiving early intervening services is impacting the needs of children whose first services received are provided in Early Childhood Special Education.
- Early Childhood professionals have brought forth concerns in regards to the severity/intensity of services that are needed to serve the current Early Childhood Special Education population. Professionals that have been in the field for a number of years reported that the intensity of services needed is a significant change from previous years. Professionals have shared that the provision of services in the area of social-emotional have risen greatly.
- Since the initial rollout in 2008, there has not been a state directed training regarding the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) process and summary forms. It has been suggested that a group of Early Childhood professionals assist the NDDPI with the task of creating a statewide ECOs training. The NDDPI Special Education office is in the process of establishing a stakeholder group to work on this task.

### Outcome B: Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication)

	Number of Children	Percentage of Children
a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning	0.00	
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	84.00	11.16%
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	272.00	36.12%
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	305.00	40.50%
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	92.00	12.22%

	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
B1. Of those preschool children who entered or exited the preschool program below age expectations in Outcome B, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. $(c+d)/(a+b+c+d)$	577.00	661.00	90.71%	84.50%	87.29%
B2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome B by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. $(d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)$	397.00	753.00	55.17%	55.50%	52.72%

### Reasons for B2 Slippage

The NDDPI Office of Special Education with input from the ND Early Childhood Special Education Advisory Committee as well as ND's IDEA

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

Advisory Committee cannot specifically pinpoint the cause of slippage for Indicator 7B2. There were, however, suggested impacts that may have played a role in the slippage occurrence.

- The NDDPI staff has completed a data review pertaining to initial evaluations of children three years of age. The NDDPI’s special education case management system, known as TIENET, is capable of identifying children that are and are not referrals from Part C Early Intervention. Data from 2014-2016 indicated nearly 600 children, three years of age, were screened by a Special Education Unit and were found eligible for services, but those children were not receiving Part C Early Intervention services. It has been suggested that the impact of not receiving early intervening services is impacting the needs of children whose first services received are provided in Early Childhood Special Education.
- Early Childhood professionals have brought forth concerns in regards to the severity/intensity of services that are needed to serve the current Early Childhood Special Education population. Professionals that have been in the field for a number of years reported that the intensity of services needed is a significant change from previous years. Professionals have shared that the provision of services in the area of social-emotional have risen greatly.
- Since the initial rollout in 2008, there has not been a state directed training regarding the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) process and summary forms. It has been suggested that a group of Early Childhood professionals assist the NDDPI with the task of creating a statewide ECOs training. The NDDPI Special Education office is in the process of establishing a stakeholder group to work on this task.

**Outcome C: Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs**

	Number of Children	Percentage of Children
a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning	2.00	0.27%
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	74.00	9.83%
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	162.00	21.51%
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	271.00	35.99%
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	244.00	32.40%

	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
C1. Of those preschool children who entered or exited the preschool program below age expectations in Outcome C, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. (c+d)/(a+b+c+d)	433.00	509.00	86.78%	81.00%	85.07%
C2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome C by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)	515.00	753.00	73.18%	72.50%	68.39%

**Reasons for C2 Slippage**

The NDDPI Office of Special Education with input from the ND Early Childhood Special Education Advisory Committee as well as ND’s IDEA Advisory Committee cannot specifically pinpoint the cause of slippage for Indicator 7C2. There were, however, suggested impacts that may have played a role in the slippage occurrence.

- The NDDPI staff has completed a data review pertaining to initial evaluations of children three years of age. The NDDPI’s special education case management system, known as TIENET, is capable of identifying children that are and are not referrals from Part C Early Intervention. Data from 2014-2016 indicated nearly 600 children, three years of age, were screened by a Special Education Unit and were found eligible for services, but those children were not receiving Part C Early Intervention services. It has been suggested that the impact of not receiving early intervening services is impacting the needs of children whose first services received are provided in Early Childhood Special Education.
- Early Childhood professionals have brought forth concerns in regards to the severity/intensity of services that are needed to serve the current Early Childhood Special Education population. Professionals that have been in the field for a number of years reported that the intensity of services needed is a significant change from previous years. Professionals have shared that the provision of services in the area of social-emotional have risen greatly.
- Since the initial rollout in 2008, there has not been a state directed training regarding the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) process and summary forms. It has been suggested that a group of Early Childhood professionals assist the NDDPI with the task of creating a statewide ECOs training. The NDDPI Special Education office is in the process of establishing a stakeholder group to work on this task.

**Does the State include in the numerator and denominator only children who received special education and related services for at least six months during the age span of three through five years?** Yes

**Was sampling used?** No

**Did you use the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO) Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process?** Yes

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

List the instruments and procedures used to gather data for this indicator.

The NDDPI Office of Special Education with support and information from the ND Early Childhood Special Education Advisory Committee, have approved seven anchor tool assessments that can be utilized to determine entry and exit Early Childhood Outcomes (ECOs) ratings. Entry ratings for the special education students that have been found eligible for special education services is scored on an ECOs Summary Form that is located on ND's special education case management system, known as, TIENET. After a student has received a minimum of six months of special education services, an exit rating for that special education student is scored on that student's ECOs Summary Form alongside of their entry score. ND's ECOs Summary Forms' raw data are compiled in an Excel document for the NDDPI Office of Special Education to report findings for the state's SPP/APR.

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 8: Parent involvement**

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

Do you use a separate data collection methodology for preschool children? No

**Historical Data**

Baseline Data: 2013

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Target ≥			86.00%	88.00%	90.00%		68.50%	68.90%	69.50%	70.55%	70.80%
Data		92.80%	95.00%	96.00%	95.10%	68.50%	71.30%	76.40%	79.30%	70.58%	68.03%

FFY	2015
Target ≥	71.00%
Data	75.84%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target ≥	71.20%	72.00%	73.10%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

Number of respondent parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities	Total number of respondent parents of children with disabilities	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
386.55	572.68	75.84%	71.20%	67.50%

The number of parents to whom the surveys were distributed.	12.02%	4766.00
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The percentage shown is the number of respondent parents divided by the number of parents to whom the survey was distributed.

**Reasons for Slippage**

As North Dakota saw our population grow with the “Oil Boom”, the Special Education Department saw an increase of many new students and parents. ND’s Child Count for 2015-16 saw an increase of over 400 children being served on IEPs. Although a survey was sent out to a representative sample, the response rate was low. It is hypothesized that the smaller the number of responses, the more difficult it is to determine if the number responding was truly representative of other parents who did not respond to the survey.

Based on the technical assistance calls the North Dakota State Special Education Office took in, it became apparent that many parents were unfamiliar with the ND special education process. They were also attempting to establish relationships with their new districts which may have impacted their responses. Likewise in the State, the protest against the installation of the Dakota Access Pipeline was occurring. This may have impacted accessibility of parents to complete the survey.

The NDDPI engaged the IDEA Advisory Committee in reviewing the survey questions. A survey workgroup was developed and had the task of breaking down each question to ensure parents not only could read them, but understand them in a manner where they would be comfortable answering. Future changes to the survey questions were recommended by the IDEA Advisory Committee.

Since the State did not report preschool children separately, discuss the procedures used to combine data from school age and preschool surveys in a manner that is valid and reliable.

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

A representative sample of PK-12 students is chosen from each special education unit in the state. Results are weighted according to population size of the special education units so that the overall state parent involvement percentage is an accurate reflection of the experiences of parents of students with disabilities age 3 to 21. Parents of students at all grade levels respond to the survey.

**The demographics of the parents responding are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services.** Yes

**Include the State's analyses of the extent to which the demographics of the parents responding are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services.**

The representativeness of the survey was assessed by examining the demographic characteristics of the students of the parents who responded to the survey to the demographic characteristics of all special education students. This comparison indicates the results are generally representative (1) by the race/ethnicity of the child; (2) by the grade level of the child; and (3) by the primary disability of the child. However, parents of white students were over-represented (89% of parent respondents indicated that their student is white, and 74% of special education students are white) and parents of Native American students were slightly under-represented (3% of parent respondents indicated that their student is Native American, and 13% of special education students are Native American). The NDDPI will continue to work with districts that are predominantly Native American to ensure that parents are being encouraged to complete the parent survey.

**Was sampling used?** Yes

**Has your previously-approved sampling plan changed?** No

**Describe the sampling methodology outlining how the design will yield valid and reliable estimates.**

OSEP approved this sampling plan on May 20, 2014.

The sampling for this collection was done at the special education unit level. Districts in North Dakota are divided into 32 special education units. A representative sample of parents was randomly selected from each of the 32 special education units. The number of parents chosen was dependent on the number of total students at a special education unit as indicated in the table below. The sample sizes selected ensured roughly similar margins of error across the different district sizes.

### Number of Students Sample Size Chosen

1-100	All
101-250	100
251-499	140
500-699	190
700-1199	280
1200-1699	370
1700+	570

For those special education units that had more than 100 students, and thus for which a sample was chosen, the population was stratified by district, grade, race/ethnicity, primary disability, and gender to ensure representativeness of the resulting sample. Even though the sampling strategy is based on special education unit instead of districts, parents from every district were included in the sample. Please note when the sampling plan was developed in 2013-14 of the 179 districts that have students with disabilities, 13% (23) of them have fewer than 10 students with disabilities, and 32% (56) of them have fewer than 20 students with disabilities. Given the very small districts and the fact that the NDDPI conducts its monitoring based on special education units instead of districts, it was logical to do the parent survey sampling based on special education units as opposed to districts. With the new sampling plan, parents from each of the 32 North Dakota special education units were mailed a survey. This allowed for each unit to receive feedback from each child's parents and ensured the state results were in fact representative of the state as a whole. When calculating the state-level results, responses were weighted by the student population size (e.g., a special education unit that has four times the number of students as another special education unit will receive four times the weight in computing overall state results). Any district within a given special education unit that had at least 10 parent respondents also received a report of results.

**Was a survey used?** Yes

**Is it a new or revised survey?** No

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

### NDDPI's Feedback/Clarification

First, NDDPI'S sample plan whereby all districts are sampled in a given year is representative of the state as a whole because it is all districts. While the sampling is done at the special education unit level, the population was stratified by district, grade, race/ethnicity, primary disability, and gender to ensure representativeness of the resulting sample. Even though the sampling strategy is based on special education unit instead of districts, parents from every district were included in the sample. Second, for any given year, NDDPI then examines the demographic characteristics of the students of the parents who responded to the survey to the demographic characteristics of students with disabilities in K-12 in the population to make sure that the parents who

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

responded are representative of the entire population. Third, for the 2016-17 survey year, note that NDDPI states that the results are generally representative (1) by the race/ethnicity of the child; (2) by the grade level of the child; and (3) by the primary disability of the child. NDDPI states that the results are generally representative by the size of the districts and the grade level. NDDPI then stated the over-representation of parents of white students. So yes, NDDPI acknowledged a slight over-representation in responses collected. That said, when examining results on the items and survey scales, there were no statistically significant differences by race/ethnicity. Thus, NDDPI is confident in the representativeness of the results of the survey to the state. NDDPI's efforts to ensure that response rate is high and data are representative include continuous engagement of the IDEA Advisory Committee in reviewing the survey questions and the data collection processes. A survey workgroup was constituted and had the task of breaking down each question to ensure parents not only could read them, but understand them in a manner where they would be comfortable answering them. The IDEA Advisory Committee has recommended future changes to the survey questions. The NDDPI continues to work with the parent organizations in the State to increase the awareness of the survey, as well as awareness of the impact of parent responses on improved parent/district collaboration on the IEP process.

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 9: Disproportionate Representation**

Monitoring Priority: Disproportionate Representation

Compliance indicator: Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(C))

**Historical Data**

Baseline Data: 2016

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Target			0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.56%	0%

FFY	2015
Target	0%
Data	0%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target	0%	0%	0%

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

Has the State Established a minimum n-size requirement?  Yes  No

The State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size. Report the number of districts totally excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement because the district did not meet the minimum n and/or cell size. 154

Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services	Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification	Number of districts that met the State's minimum n-size	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
1	0	25	0%	0%	0%

Were all races and ethnicities included in the review?  Yes  No

Define “disproportionate representation.” Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).

The NDDPI elects to use the definition of disproportionality as articulated by the National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems’ (NCCRESt) synopsis of provisions of IDEA 04 (October, 2005):

"Disproportionality refers to comparisons made between groups of students by race or ethnicity or language who are identified for special education services. Where students from particular ethnic or linguistic groups are identified either at a greater or lesser rate than all other students then that group may be said to be disproportionately represented in special education."

The NDDPI defines disproportionate representation as a Weighted Risk Ratio of 3.00 or above (considered over-representation). Risk ratios are difficult to interpret when they are based on small numbers of students (either in the racial/ethnic group or the comparison group). When risk ratios are based on small numbers, minor variations in the number of students in either the racial/ethnic group or the comparison group can produce dramatic changes in the size of the risk ratio. Thus, a Weighted Risk Ratio was determined only if there were 10 or more students in the target group and the comparison group.

For indicator 9, 179 districts were included in the analyses. Of these 179, 25 met the minimum n requirements at least one time for a Final Risk Ratio to be calculated (for each district seven risk ratios could be calculated; one for each racial/ethnic group). Please note that many districts in North Dakota have between 0-2 students with a disability of a particular race/ethnicity. Thus, very small numbers prevent reliable and meaningful risk ratios from being calculated in every district.

### FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

Describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate representation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was the result of inappropriate identification.

In accordance with regulations, if district data had indicated disproportionate representation, the state would:

- Require the review and revision of policies, practices and procedures that contribute to disproportionate representation;
- Provide the state accepted plan and templates required for the required reviews; and
- Require the LEA to publicly report on the revision of policies, practices and procedures. When necessary, technical assistance is offered from the NDDPI staff. NDDPI also contracts with a consultant who offers the technical assistance required by LEAs in reference to appropriate identification of children who require special education services.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

#### NDDPI's Feedback

NDDPI has reviewed and reconciled the inconsistency between the number of districts that met the minimum n size requirement and those that did not and as a result were excluded from the calculation for this indicator. In addition, the NDDPI has revised its baseline in accordance with the change in the denominator, as required by the Measurement Table for this indicator.

#### Actions required in FFY 2015 response

none

Note: Any actions required in last year's response table that are related to correction of findings should be responded to on the "Correction of Previous Findings of Noncompliance" page of this indicator. If your State's only actions required in last year's response are related to findings of noncompliance, a text field will not be displayed on this page.

#### Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2015

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
0	0	0	0

#### OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2016, and OSEP accepts that revision.

#### Required Actions

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**  
**Indicator 10: Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories**

Monitoring Priority: Disproportionate Representation

Compliance indicator: Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(C))

**Historical Data**

Baseline Data: 2016

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Target			0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

FFY	2015
Target	0%
Data	0%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target	0%	0%	0%

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

Has the State Established a minimum n-size requirement?  Yes  No

The State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size. Report the number of districts totally excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement because the district did not meet the minimum n and/or cell size. 165

Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories	Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification	Number of districts that met the State's minimum n-size	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
0	0	14	0%	0%	0%

Were all races and ethnicities included in the review?  Yes  No

Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).

The NDDPI elects to use the definition of disproportionality as articulated by the National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems' (NCCRESt) synopsis of provisions of IDEA 04 (October, 2005):

"Disproportionality refers to comparisons made between groups of students by race or ethnicity or language who are identified for special education services. Where students from particular ethnic or linguistic groups are identified either at a greater or lesser rate than all other students then that group may be said to be disproportionately represented in special education."

The NDDPI defines disproportionate representation as a Weighted Risk Ratio of 3.00 or above (considered over-representation). Risk ratios are difficult to interpret when they are based on small numbers of students (either in the racial/ethnic group or the comparison group). When risk ratios are based on small numbers, minor variations in the number of students in either the racial/ethnic group or the comparison group can produce dramatic changes in the size of the risk ratio. Thus, a Weighted Risk Ratio was determined only if there were 10 or more students in the target group and the comparison group.

For indicator 10, 179 districts were included in the analyses. Of these 179, 14 met the minimum n requirements at least one time for a Final Risk Ratio to be calculated (for each district 42 risk ratios could be calculated; one for each racial/ethnic group for each of six disability categories). Please note that many districts in North Dakota have between 0-2 students with a disability of a particular race/ethnicity. Thus, very small numbers prevent reliable and meaningful risk ratios from being calculated in every district.

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

Describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate overrepresentation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories was the result of inappropriate identification.

In accordance with regulations, if district data had indicated disproportionate representation, the state would:

- Require the review and revision of policies, practices and procedures that contribute to disproportionate representation;
- Provide the state accepted plan and templates required for the required reviews; and
- Require the LEA to publicly report on the revision of policies, practices and procedures. When necessary, technical assistance is offered from the NDDPI staff. NDDPI also contracts with a consultant who will offer the technical assistance required by school districts in reference to appropriate identification of children who require special education services.

 **Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**
**NDDPI's Feedback**

NDDPI has reviewed and reconciled the inconsistency between the number of districts that met the minimum n size requirement and those that did not and as a result were excluded from the calculation for this indicator. In addition, the NDDPI has revised its baseline in accordance with the change in the denominator, as required by the Measurement Table for this indicator.

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

Note: Any actions required in last year's response table that are related to correction of findings should be responded to on the "Correction of Previous Findings of Noncompliance" page of this indicator. If your State's only actions required in last year's response are related to findings of noncompliance, a text field will not be displayed on this page.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2015**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
0	0	0	0

**OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2016, and OSEP accepts that revision.

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 11: Child Find**

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Child Find

Compliance indicator: Percent of children who were evaluated within 60 days of receiving parental consent for initial evaluation or, if the State establishes a timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted, within that timeframe.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

**Historical Data**

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Target			100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data		88.09%	95.70%	98.40%	99.21%	99.73%	99.69%	99.87%	99.57%	99.55%	98.62%

FFY	2015
Target	100%
Data	99.18%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target	100%	100%	100%

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

(a) Number of children for whom parental consent to evaluate was received	(b) Number of children whose evaluations were completed within 60 days (or State-established timeline)	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
3,466	3,449	99.18%	100%	99.51%

Number of children included in (a), but not included in (b) [a-b]	17
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Account for children included in (a) but not included in (b). Indicate the range of days beyond the timeline when the evaluation was completed and any reasons for the delays.

During FFY 2016, 3466 parental consents for evaluations were received in North Dakota schools of which 3449 evaluations were completed within the 60-day timeline. The range in days delayed was between 1 and 73. The reasons for delay include case manager error and the miscalculation of the 60 day timeline. However, all evaluations were timely corrected within the one-year timeframe of notification and if the child was found eligible for services, an IEP was developed. There were no cases where a child with parental consent for an evaluation did not have the evaluation process completed.

Indicate the evaluation timeline used

- The State used the 60 day timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted.
- The State established a timeline within which the evaluation must be conducted.

What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?

- State monitoring
- State database that includes data for the entire reporting year

Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.

North Dakota has a statewide IEP Casemanagement database (TIENET). The NDDPI continues to offer trainings in accurate data input into this database and has had ongoing meetings with PowerSchool, the company that maintains this system, to ensure the accuracy component part of this report. The reports pulled from this database are used to compare the date of the parent consent for initial evaluation and date of the Integrated Written Assessment Report (IWAR) meeting. It is the consensus of the NDDPI special education staff that the date of the IWAR is an accurate reflection of the date evaluation

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

was completed and results documented.

For each of the seventeen student files where the data indicated the child was not evaluated within 60 days, the NDDPI contacted the school district responsible for the evaluation process. All seventeen occurrences of non-compliance were because of “case manager error or miscalculation errors.” The NDDPI required from each district assurance that the case manager understood the requirement that all initial evaluations must be completed within 60 days. All the seventeen children did receive an evaluation.

To further ensure compliance across the state with this indicator, the NDDPI self-assessment monitoring tool kit contains a section specifically focused on initial evaluations and the required timelines. The NDDPI has increased monitoring, verification, and training for this indicator.

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

Note: Any actions required in last year's response table that are related to correction of findings should be responded to on the "Correction of Previous Findings of Noncompliance" page of this indicator. If your State's only actions required in last year's response are related to findings of noncompliance, a text field will not be displayed on this page.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2015**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
27	27	0	0

**FFY 2015 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

*Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the regulatory requirements*

The NDDPI special education monitoring staff reviewed the current data collected using the statewide IEP Casemanagement database. All noncompliance for the FFY2015 (the 27 evaluations) were timely corrected within the one-year timeframe. The FFY2015 instances were corrected and verified before the submission of the FFY2015 APR. Each district with noncompliance in FFY2015 was (1) timely corrected within the one-year timeframe of notification and (2) is currently implementing the regulatory requirements of this indicator based on a review of updated data consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

*Describe how the State verified that each individual case of noncompliance was corrected*

The NDDPI special education monitoring staff reviewed the current data collected using the statewide IEP Casemanagement database. All noncompliance for the FFY2015 (the 27 evaluations) were timely corrected within the one-year timeframe. The FFY2015 instances were corrected and verified before the submission of the FFY2015 APR. Each district with noncompliance in FFY2015 was (1) timely corrected within the one-year timeframe of notification and (2) is currently implementing the regulatory requirements of this indicator based on a review of updated data consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

**OSEP Response**

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2016, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2016 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2017 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2016 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2017 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction. If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2016, although its FFY 2016 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2016.

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition**

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

Compliance indicator: Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

**Historical Data**

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Target			100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data		94.62%	90.09%	95.20%	98.15%	100%	98.26%	98.65%	95.09%	100%	99.17%

FFY	2015
Target	100%
Data	100%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target	100%	100%	100%

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

a. Number of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for Part B eligibility determination.	573
b. Number of those referred determined to be NOT eligible and whose eligibility was determined prior to their third birthdays.	187
c. Number of those found eligible who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.	375
d. Number of children for whom parent refusals to provide consent caused delays in evaluation or initial services or to whom exceptions under 34 CFR §300.301(d) applied.	3
e. Number of children determined to be eligible for early intervention services under Part C less than 90 days before their third birthdays.	7
f. Number of children whose parents chose to continue early intervention services beyond the child's third birthday through a State's policy under 34 CFR §303.211 or a similar State option.	0

	Numerator (c)	Denominator (a-b-d-e-f)	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3 who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays. $[c/(a-b-d-e-f)] \times 100$	375	376	100%	100%	99.73%

Number of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for eligibility determination that are not included in b, c, d, e, or f	1
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**Reasons for Slippage**

While the FFY2016 rate is lower than that in FFY2015, the decrease is due to one child who did not have eligibility determined and/or an IEP developed and implemented by the child's third birthday.

**Account for children included in (a), but not included in b, c, d, e, or f. Indicate the range of days beyond the third birthday when eligibility was determined and the IEP developed, and the reasons for the delays.**

One child who was served in Part C and referred to Part B did not have eligibility for Part B determined and/or an IEP developed and implemented by the child's third birthday. The number of days that the child's IEP was late was 15 days. Please note that NDDPI staff access the child's file on the TIENET database and verified, at the individual student level, that all requirements were complete and the child had an IEP developed and implemented as soon as possible after the child's third birthday.

**What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?**

 State monitoring

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

State database that includes data for the entire reporting year

Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.

The local special education unit (SEU) designee submits a spreadsheet to the NDDPI for each July 1 through June 30 time period. In addition, transition-specific data are collected and verified within the statewide IEP Casemanagement database by each SEU designee. During the collection period (July 1-June 30), local special education unit administrators contacted NDDPI staff members to discuss questions they had based on individual cases. To assure consistent high-quality data, NDDPI staff members completed an Indicator 12 data comparison of statewide IEP Casemanagement database Indicator 12 data with each SEUs' Indicator 12 spreadsheet and verified the TIENET report. The NDDPI staff members completed an Indicator 12 Data Comparison Report for the SEU in areas needing clarifications. Through this system of data sharing, the NDDPI collected the necessary data and calculated the percentage of children found eligible for preschool special education services who received services by their third birthday for the FFY2016.

### Actions required in FFY 2015 response

none

Note: Any actions required in last year's response table that are related to correction of findings should be responded to on the "Correction of Previous Findings of Noncompliance" page of this indicator. If your State's only actions required in last year's response are related to findings of noncompliance, a text field will not be displayed on this page.

### Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2015

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
0	0	0	0

### OSEP Response

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2016, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2016 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2017 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2016 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2017 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction. If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2016, although its FFY 2016 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2016.

### Required Actions

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 13: Secondary Transition**

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

Compliance indicator: Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

**Historical Data**

Baseline Data: 2009

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Target			100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data						74.56%	82.31%	85.26%	86.31%	98.38%	98.36%

FFY	2015
Target	100%
Data	97.90%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target	100%	100%	100%

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

Number of youth aged 16 and above with IEPs that contain each of the required components for secondary transition	Number of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
345	349	97.90%	100%	98.85%

**What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?**

- State monitoring
- State database that includes data for the entire reporting year

**Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.**

The FFY2016 Indicator 13 monitoring was completed by the NDDPI Indicator 13 State Monitoring Team. This is the fourth consecutive year the Indicator 13 monitoring was completed by this team.

The individuals chosen to be part of this team were selected with the intention of strengthening the capacity in ND for consistent knowledge and training throughout the state relative to the secondary transition IDEA 2004 requirements. The team consisted of university professors who work with pre-service special education teachers, state special education personnel, and local special education program coordinators. The 2016-17 Indicator 13 State Monitoring team consisted of the same representation/role as those doing the monitoring in the previous six years. This provided for continued consistency to the monitoring process. The team continues to receive ongoing training throughout the year prior to the June monitoring session. The team is trained by the NDDPI to ensure continued understanding of the requirements of Indicator 13, competence of the Team in using the statewide TIENET database system for accessing the student files, and inter-rater reliability during the scoring process. During the FFY2016 trainings, the team reviewed the previous year's process and revised, as deemed necessary, the collection methods as well as the data report sheets given to the LEAs after the review process.

**Valid and Reliable**

The TIENET database provides access to every student special education file throughout the state. The Indicator 13 Transition Requirement Checklist has been built into the TIENET database for school, district, and state monitoring and verification needs. The State Monitoring Team accessed each student's IEP file to both review files and to accumulate the data related to the findings of Indicator 13 monitoring. The Indicator 13 Transition Requirement Checklist used by ND was adapted from the Transition Requirement Checklist developed by the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center.

Statewide representation: In June 2017, the Indicator 13 State Monitoring team met for one week and reviewed 349 student files from across the state. The objective was to review one student file from each case manager of students 16-21 who were on an IEP during FFY2016. The state representation of disability categories was calculated and used to select the appropriate disability categories to ensure statewide representation was achieved.

The file review information indicated that of the 349 files reviewed, four IEP files did not meet all of the components of the eight questions in the ND Transition Requirements Checklist. Further analysis of these data indicated that although a file may have been in compliance for a majority of the components of the Indicator 13 checklist, it did not meet the requirement of this indicator. Therefore, the target data for FFY2016 for this indicator is 98.85% as displayed in the attachment titled "Transition Requirements". The correction of non-compliance was verified through review of current student data for each record found out of compliance. 100% of the four IEP files were verified as corrected by the NDDPI Staff prior to November 30, 2017.

Do the State's policies and procedures provide that public agencies must meet these requirements at an age younger than 16?

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

Note: Any actions required in last year's response table that are related to correction of findings should be responded to on the "Correction of Previous Findings of Noncompliance" page of this indicator. If your State's only actions required in last year's response are related to findings of noncompliance, a text field will not be displayed on this page.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2015**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
8	8	0	0

**FFY 2015 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

*Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the regulatory requirements*

The NDDPI special education transition monitoring team reviewed current data using the statewide TIENET database. All noncompliance for FFY2015 was corrected and correction verified through review of each individual student file. The NDDPI verified that each district with noncompliance in FFY2015 had (1) developed and implemented IEPs in compliance with the transition requirements and (2) is currently implementing the regulatory requirements of this indicator based on a review of updated data consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02. Districts are notified through a close-out letter once corrections are verified.

*Describe how the State verified that each individual case of noncompliance was corrected*

The NDDPI special education transition monitoring team reviewed current data using the statewide TIENET database. All noncompliance for FFY2015 was corrected and correction verified through review of each individual student file. NDDPI verified that each district with noncompliance in FFY2015 had (1) developed and implemented IEPs in compliance with the transition requirements and (2) is currently implementing the regulatory requirements of this indicator based on a review of updated data consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02. Districts are notified through a Close-out letter once corrections are verified.

**OSEP Response**

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2016, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2016 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2017 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2016 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2017 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction. If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2016, although its FFY 2016 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2016.

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 14: Post-School Outcomes**

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

Results indicator: Percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were:

- A. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.
- B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.
- C. Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

**Historical Data**

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
A	2009	Target ≥							21.40%	21.70%	22.40%	29.89%	30.09%
		Data						21.40%	50.20%	43.70%	35.48%	29.89%	26.88%
B	2009	Target ≥							57.30%	57.60%	58.30%	56.52%	56.72%
		Data						57.30%	67.50%	68.00%	64.50%	56.52%	56.45%
C	2009	Target ≥							68.00%	68.30%	69.00%	80.98%	81.18%
		Data						68.00%	83.40%	83.80%	90.80%	80.98%	82.26%

	FFY	2015
A	Target ≥	30.29%
	Data	33.47%
B	Target ≥	56.92%
	Data	56.90%
C	Target ≥	81.38%
	Data	87.03%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target A ≥	30.49%	31.39%	32.39%
Target B ≥	57.12%	58.02%	59.02%
Target C ≥	81.58%	82.38%	83.48%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school	172.00
1. Number of respondent youth who enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school	50.00
2. Number of respondent youth who competitively employed within one year of leaving high school	51.00
3. Number of respondent youth enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education or competitively employed)	19.00
4. Number of respondent youth who are in some other employment within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education, some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed).	23.00

	Number of respondent youth	Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
A. Enrolled in higher education (1)	50.00	172.00	33.47%	30.49%	29.07%

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

	Number of respondent youth	Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school (1 +2)	101.00	172.00	56.90%	57.12%	58.72%
C. Enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment (1+2+3+4)	143.00	172.00	87.03%	81.58%	83.14%

**Please select the reporting option your State is using:**

- Option 1: Use the same definition as used to report in the FFY 2015 SPP/APR, i.e., competitive employment means that youth have worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment.
- Option 2: Report in alignment with the term "competitive integrated employment" and its definition, in section 7(5) of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and 34 CFR §361.5(c)(9). For the purpose of defining the rate of compensation for students working on a "part-time basis" under this category, OSEP maintains the standard of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This definition applies to military employment.

**Reasons for A Slippage**

Respondents from FFY 2015 indicated an unusually higher number of students attending higher education within one year of leaving high school than respondents from FFY 2016. Data obtained from the FFY 2013 and FFY 2014, indicated 26-30% of students had enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school. FFY 2016 response rates have reverted to a more traditional trend that occurred prior to FFY 2015.

**Was a survey used?** No

**Was sampling used?** No

**Are the response data representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school?** Yes

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

**NDDPI's Feedback/Clarification:**

First, NDDPI attempts to call all exiting students each year; so there is no sampling done which has the potential of ensuring representativeness to the state. Second, NDDPI examines the response rate by demographic characteristics to examine the representativeness. For 2016-17, the response rates were analyzed by the demographic characteristics of gender, race/ethnicity, primary disability, and type of exiter to determine if one group was more likely to respond than another group. There were no significant differences in response rates by gender, race, or disability. However, Students who dropped out (16%) were less likely to respond than students who graduated (31%). The strategies NDDPI will use to ensure that the response data are representative of all exiting students with disabilities are: in 2017-18, NDDPI will be contracting with an additional team of professionals who will be conducting targeted follow-up calls of exiters who did not respond after the initial attempt to contact them was not successful. In addition, the NDDPI will incorporate an email follow-up survey to non-respondents as well.

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 15: Resolution Sessions**

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision

Results indicator: Percent of hearing requests that went to resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session settlement agreements.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3(B)))

**Historical Data**

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Target ≥			35.00%	40.00%	45.00%	50.00%	55.00%	55.00%	55.00%		
Data		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	

FFY	2015
Target ≥	
Data	

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target ≥			

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

**Prepopulated Data**

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2016-17 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints	11/1/2017	<a href="#">3.1(a) Number resolution sessions resolved through settlement agreements</a>	n	null
SY 2016-17 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints	11/1/2017	<a href="#">3.1 Number of resolution sessions</a>	n	null

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

3.1(a) Number resolution sessions resolved through settlement agreements	3.1 Number of resolution sessions	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
0	1			0%

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

The NDDPI reported fewer than ten resolution sessions held in FFY 2016. The State is not required to provide targets until any fiscal year in which ten or more resolution sessions were held.

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

### OSEP Response

The State reported fewer than ten resolution sessions held in FFY 2016. The State is not required to provide targets until any fiscal year in which ten or more resolution sessions were held.

### Required Actions

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 16: Mediation**

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision

Results indicator: Percent of mediations held that resulted in mediation agreements.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3(B)))

**Historical Data**

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Target ≥											
Data		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

FFY	2015
Target ≥	
Data	0%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2016 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target ≥			

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

**Prepopulated Data**

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2016-17 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/1/2017	<a href="#">2.1.a.i Mediations agreements related to due process complaints</a>	n	null
SY 2016-17 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/1/2017	<a href="#">2.1.b.i Mediations agreements not related to due process complaints</a>	n	null
SY 2016-17 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/1/2017	<a href="#">2.1 Mediations held</a>	n	null

**FFY 2016 SPP/APR Data**

2.1.a.i Mediations agreements related to due process complaints	2.1.b.i Mediations agreements not related to due process complaints	2.1 Mediations held	FFY 2015 Data*	FFY 2016 Target*	FFY 2016 Data
0	0	1	0%		0%

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

The NDDPI reported fewer than ten mediations held in FFY 2016. The State is not required to provide targets until any fiscal year in which ten or more mediations were held.

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

**Actions required in FFY 2015 response**

none

**OSEP Response**

The State reported fewer than ten mediations held in FFY 2016. The State is not required to provide targets until any fiscal year in which ten or more mediations were held.

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan**

Monitoring Priority: General Supervision

Results indicator: The State's SPP/APR includes a State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) that meets the requirements set forth for this indicator.

**Reported Data**

Baseline Data: 2013

FFY	2013	2014	2015	2016
Target ≥		60.22%	60.22%	61.22%
Data	60.22%	60.42%	57.01%	70.10%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  
Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2017 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2017	2018
Target ≥	63.22%	66.72%

Key:

**Description of Measure**

As defined in federal regulation 34 C.F.R. §200.19(b) (1) (i)-(iv), the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class. Students who are entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time from a cohort that is subsequently “adjusted” by adding any students who transfer into the cohort later during the next three years and subtracting any students who transfer out, emigrate to another country, or dies during that same period. In addition to the four-year adjusted graduation rate, five-year, and six-year rates are calculated. The formula for the six-year extended adjusted cohort graduation rate is:

**Six-year extended adjusted cohort graduation rate:**

*Numerator in the five-year extended adjusted cohort graduation rate plus the number of students from the cohort who earned a regular high school diploma by the end of the extended sixth school year*

*Denominator in the five-year extended adjusted cohort graduation rate plus students who transferred in during the extended sixth school year minus students who transferred out, emigrated, or died during the extended sixth school year*

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

**Overview**

**Data Analysis**

A description of how the State identified and analyzed key data, including data from SPP/APR indicators, 618 data collections, and other available data as applicable, to: (1) select the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities, and (2) identify root causes contributing to low performance. The description must include information about how the data were disaggregated by multiple variables (e.g., LEA, region, race/ethnicity, gender, disability category, placement, etc.). As part of its data analysis, the State should also consider compliance data and whether those data present potential barriers to improvement. In addition, if the State identifies any concerns about the quality of the data, the description must include how the State will address these concerns. Finally, if additional data are needed, the description should include the methods and timelines to collect and analyze the additional data.

**Introduction to Our Data Analysis Process**

With Office of Special Education Program (OSEP) notification of the Indicator 17 requirement, the Director of the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI), Special Education Unit assigned staff responsibility and engaged all staff in defining beliefs regarding program improvement and the Results Driven Accountability (RDA) movement. Those beliefs initially served as a planning process that would result in the determination of a focus area, the measurement used to evaluate it, and the capacity of both the state and local education agencies to improve its results. The SSIP requirements were very similar to the models of improvement planning used by districts and schools within the state. The SSIP planning required, however, that it be implemented at a state level with different levels of structure, different numbers of people to serve as stakeholders or partners, with practices that would affect all units of NDDPI, and with outcomes that impact the whole state. During the use of this planning model, the political/educational climate of the State, as well as the Mission and Vision of the Department's Strategic Plan had to be at the forefront. North Dakota Century Code, Administrative Rules and the NDDPI Strategic Plan were the first sources of data considered for use in the process.

North Dakota's education system is "locally controlled" with State Century Code outlining minimum requirements, and State administrative rules allowing a great deal of variance in the design and implementation of effective procedures, practices, and programs that result in positive educational outcomes for students. The Department's Mission and Vision statements were developed around this high level of local control, and contain language that require Department staff to work in partnership with communities and schools, and to assist them in developing and implementing educational programs that result in safe, secure and successful environments for students to learn the skills to be successful adults. Working as a partner in providing assistance to local level practitioners disperses the responsibilities to a wider group of practitioners and so was viewed as an advantage, rather than a disadvantage for SSIP efforts. The Special Education staff understood, though, that local buy-in would be important to keep it as an advantage. The process for developing the SSIP would need to include a wide variety of stakeholders in its activities. Those stakeholders needed to represent all of the state's geographic regions and represent the many disciplines involved in the education of students with disabilities. The majority needed to be local level practitioners. Stakeholders also needed to evidence a high degree of collaboration with the other units of NDDPI, as well as with the statewide parent network, other State agencies, institutions of higher education and the Regional Education Associations (REAs), whose responsibility within Century Code is the coordination of program improvement activities to assist districts with improvement efforts.

After analyzing the local control issues, the Mission and Vision of NDDPI, the goals of this improvement effort and the qualities of the stakeholders that were identified to be partners in it, staff understood that the task at hand was to leverage the skills, knowledge, attitudes and resources of NDDPI, our state and local level partners, and parents. This will adjust "how" people do what they do in working with students with disabilities, not change "what" they do when working with them. North Dakota stakeholders would have greater buy-in and more willingness to do something different in their practice if they understood how education program improvement happens, specifically special education program improvement. Greater buy-in would result if they were to decide what practices should stay the same, and which should be different when improved results is the focus.

To define special education improvement, the NDDPI Special Education Unit staff developed an improvement model that started with positive post-school outcomes and used elements familiar to educators and parents to explain how to reach those positive outcomes. These elements were drawn from the performance indicators of the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR), Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) indicators used by the State in Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) improvement planning efforts, effective schools and systems change research, and from the NDDPI Special Education Unit focused monitoring process. In this monitoring process, Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), and appropriate evaluation and eligibility determinations are the primary areas of focus for consideration in the identification of LEAs with compliance issues. The model was depicted in a flow chart with fifteen elements grouped into four tiers, all specific to special education.

#### • **Improvement Model Explanation**

Moving from the bottom to the top, positive post school outcomes for students with disabilities result from students staying in school, getting a diploma and obtaining independent living and college and career readiness skills. In order to stay in school, get a diploma and obtain the necessary skills, the students and their families need to see and feel success with skills and concepts that are taught and utilized in the classroom. Success is demonstrated through positive results on State and district assessments that measure the appropriate grade and age level skills that define it. Success is also demonstrated through participation in classroom activities with grade and age level peers, and by receiving meaningful, positive feedback about their performance. In order to demonstrate positive performance in the classroom and on assessments, each student must receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). FAPE in the LRE is made up of many factors. The NDDPI staff broadly defined it with seven foundational elements: *Early Childhood Foundation, Appropriate Evaluation and Identification, Access to the General Education Curriculum and Environment, Effective Instruction, Effective Supports, Parental Involvement, and Community Involvement*. These elements, when improved, will result in an improvement in the elements of the next tier (*Increases in Measureable Performance*). Improvement in the elements of this tier will result in improvement in the elements of the next tier (*Appropriate High School Exiting*); and, improvement in that tier will result in improved post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. Thus the direction of the arrows.

A NDDPI project leadership team was established and comprised of the Director of the Special Education Unit, the program improvement liaison for the Special Education Unit, the data coordinator for the Special Education Unit, the focused monitoring coordinator from the Special Education Unit, and the Federal Programs/Special Education liaison as members. From OSEP issued guidance, as well as from conversations with the OSEP visitation team, the leadership team understood that the State identified Measureable Result (SiMR) needed to be aligned to student performance measures that were in the SPP/APR. Those performance measures of the SPP/APR that were also aligned to elements within the improvement model were those of the middle two tiers (*Increases in Measureable Performance & Appropriate High School Exiting*). The foundational elements (*FAPE in the LRE*) did not meet the definition of performance measures and were instead actionable elements defining the practices that a system would adjust or

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

change to get improved student performance results. The ending elements (*Achieved Post-School Outcomes*) met the definition, but were the furthest from the actionable elements and would not provide practitioners with enough information about the effectiveness of their practice adjustments or changes to sustain their efforts.

### Quality of Data

Members of the project leadership team met with staff from the NDDPI Management and Information Systems Unit, the data coordinator for the NDDPI Federal Programs Unit, and staff from the NDDPI Assessment and Accountability Unit to understand the data collection process and to determine the quality of the data for each element of the middle two tiers of the model. The following shows the data quality information used in the in-depth data analysis with stakeholders.

- Proficiency Rates for Assessments
  - State assessments- This data was collected after each administration of the State achievement test and was stable for the last five years (no changes made in how and when it was collected). Common standards were used to define the data set. Comprehensive data sets included the areas of language arts, mathematics and science and were readily obtained from the State's databases. Comparisons within the data sets could be made between students with disabilities and students without disabilities. NDDPI was also able to disaggregate this data for students with disabilities to gender, disability type, grade, free/reduced lunch status, English Language Learner (ELL) status, environment, and ethnicity. The quality of the data for proficiency rates on the state assessments was going to change, however, as the State moved to the electronic administration of a new State test as part of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). The State also moved to testing new standards and from fall to spring administration in the 2014-2015 school year.
  - District assessments - Consistent with ND local control policies, districts can choose whether or not to share local data with NDDPI.
- Participation Rates in Assessments
  - State assessments- These data sets were collected after each administration of the State test. They were consistent and easily obtained.
  - District assessments – These data sets were not collected by NDDPI.
- Classroom Performance Measures (Universal screeners, Benchmark assessments, Progress Monitoring measures, Office Discipline Referrals, etc.)
  - These data sets were inconsistent, district specific and not easily obtained by the State level offices.
- Graduation Rates
  - These data sets were stable for the last three years and were collected for the four year, five year, six year, and seven year cohorts of students. They were readily obtained for students with and without disabilities for comparison purposes. They could be disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, disability type, environment, free/reduced lunch status, and ELL status.
- Drop-out Rates
  - These data sets were stable for the last three years. They were readily obtained for students with and without disabilities for comparison purposes. They could be disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, disability type, environment, free/reduced lunch status, and ELL status.
- College and Career Readiness
  - Data sets were available after each annual administration of the tests and were stable for the last several years. Those tests, however, had low participation rates by students with disabilities, and no alternative testing options for students with the most significant disabilities.

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

Annually, NDDPI special education staff members use student outcome data to identify local special education units that are in need of improvement in the SPP priority areas. Using Graduation and Proficiency rates along with LRE, NDDPI special education staff rank local special education units based on data from the previous three years. The local special education units with the lowest ranking score are selected to receive a focused monitoring. NDDPI contracts with a data management consultant and a facilitator to (a) drill down into district data for students with disabilities and, (b) to determine potential areas of noncompliance that may account for the district's performance in certain areas. In addition to the focused monitoring of districts, NDDPI also conducts a state level drill down.

Participating in that data drill down are NDDPI, Special Education Unit staff, the Title 1/Special Education Liaison, the Director of the NDDPI Indian Education Unit, and an ELL program coordinator. This allows NDDPI to analyze five years of state level trend data for each SPP/APR indicator to identify weaknesses, strengths and general areas of concern. At that time, NDDPI staff also have access to data on applicable indicators for students without disabilities, homeless education data, and free and reduced lunch data.

The following areas of strength were identified in the June 2014, data drill down:

- Elementary students with disabilities were more proficient in reading on State assessments than secondary level students with disabilities. That was parallel to students without disabilities.
- Performance in mathematics was reversed, secondary students with disabilities had higher proficiency rates than elementary students, just as with students without disabilities.
- Several local units had higher graduation and lower drop-out rates for students with disabilities than for students without disabilities. These units were composed of small, rural school districts.

The following areas of concern were identified in that same drill down:

- Graduation rates for students with disabilities as compared to students without disabilities in the most recent year (69.6% vs. 87.2%), especially for Native American students with disabilities (53.6%), students who were placed in resource room settings (58.6%), disability categories of autism spectrum disorders (55.9%), intellectually disabled (41.5%), and emotionally disturbed (54.5%).
- Drop-out rates for students with disabilities in the most recent year as compared to those without (17.7% vs. 9.85%), especially for Native American students (35.7%), students with emotional disturbance (ED) (34.3%), students with disabilities placed in separate facilities (58.3%), and students with disabilities who are also eligible for free or reduced lunch (29.9%).
- Proficiency rates of students with disabilities in the most recent year as compared to students without disabilities in both reading and mathematics (reading: 44.7% vs. 76.4%; math: 47.7% vs. 78.6%). In both subject areas, students with disabilities were on a downward trend. In reading, the downward trend was most severe for students with autism, other health impairment, speech/language impairment, and specific learning disability. In mathematics, the trend was most severe for students with emotional disturbance, other health impairment, speech/language impairment, and specific learning disability. The trend was also most evident for students with disabilities in grades seven and eight, and for those students placed in separate facilities. (See trend data in the SiMR section.)

When ranked, the drill down group identified the local special education units with the strongest and the weakest performance for each indicator. There were no concentrations of lowest performing or highest performing units in certain parts of the state. There were no concerns regarding urban vs. rural units, nor units with small, medium or large populations of students with disabilities. However, there were concerns within the graduation and drop-out rates for those units that included high concentrations of Native American students with disabilities. These three units contained schools who were under the direct supervision of the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) with a large number of students transient between the public and BIE schools. There were also evaluation and eligibility concerns for those units with more transient populations of students with disabilities. These were units located in the western part of the State affected by the oil boom, as well as a few districts in the eastern part of the State affected by the influx of international immigrants.

### Infrastructure Data

Prior to the in-depth data and infrastructure analysis meetings, the NDDPI administration and Unit directors developed a list of NDDPI initiatives, areas of emphasis, activities, events, resources and processes that might have bearing on this SSIP effort. Members of the project leadership team met several times with these NDDPI leaders to explain the SSIP effort, the NDDPI improvement model and to brainstorm ideas. The resulting ideas were then discussed for relevance to this effort. Those ideas with relevance were taken to the in-depth data and infrastructure analysis meetings for consideration in selecting a SiMR and the coherent strategies that could be used to build capacity and improve the SiMR.

*Note- This data set is listed in the next component, Infrastructure Analysis.*

### Focused Data Analysis

Recognizing local decision making and local buy-in necessary to the State's SSIP efforts, the State Superintendent and State Special Education Director invited thirty five individuals to participate in an in-depth look at each of the data elements of tiers two and three of our improvement model. Participants at that in-depth data analysis meeting included NDDPI project leadership team members, NDDPI

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

administration, parent representatives, IDEA Advisory Panel members, local special education directors, local special education coordinators, local special education teachers and related service providers, North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders (education administrators), North Dakota United (teachers and public employees union), Native American educator representatives, a past student representing consumers of special education services, the director of the schools within the Department of Corrections- Juvenile Justice division, Vision Services representative, School for the Deaf representative, NDDPI Management & Information Systems Unit director, NDDPI Federal Programs Unit representative, and NDDPI Assessment & Accountability Unit director.

Each participant was sent preparatory materials prior to the meeting. Those materials identified the agenda, facilitators, and participants, and explained the purposes of the meeting. They defined roles and responsibilities and provided an explanation of the data carousel procedure that would be used at the meeting. Each participant completed a brief data analysis exercise by reviewing the demographics of students with disabilities drawn from our last three years of 618 child count data.

The meeting was facilitated by an associate director of the center for *Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE)*, previously of the *Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center*, and the program improvement liaison from the NDDPI, Special Education Unit. The first set of activities acquainted participants with the improvement model, the SSIP process, and the results of the various broad data analysis activities discussed earlier in this section (data quality, compliance data, and infrastructure data).

In the second set of activities, four criteria were used to narrow down the six performance measures of the improvement model for in-depth analysis. Participants met in groups and identified the three measures that:

- Had the most direct alignment to the performance measures of the SPP/APR,
- Had the highest quality data,
- Aligned most with present initiatives, areas of emphasis, events, resources of the NDDPI, and
- Were most meaningful and manageable to local level practitioners, families, districts and communities. "Meaningful" was defined as adding value to local outcomes for students with disabilities; and, "manageable" as the area most understood and the one with the most buy-in.

Proficiency rates on state assessments in both reading and mathematics (Indicator 3 of the SPP/APR), graduation rates (Indicator 1), and drop-out rates (Indicator 2) for students with disabilities were the measures that resulted from this narrowing down process.

In the third set of activities, the facilitators provided data reflecting the results of the last five years for each measure; and, each was disaggregated by gender, grade level, disability type, free/reduced lunch status, ELL status, environment and ethnicity. Participants were divided into four groups, so that reading proficiency could be considered separately from mathematics proficiency. Each group spent time analyzing data for an initial measure and developing statements of both strengths and weaknesses. They were rotated to another measurement's table to look at the data, consider the statements made by the other groups, and add to those statements, if needed. Each group analyzed data and developed statements for each data set. The small groups were returned to original tables and prioritized two statements to present to the large group for narrow down to one that would become the recommendation for the SiMR- "*The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction will increase the graduation rates for students identified with emotional disturbance.*" It was then sent to the ND State Superintendent for approval.

The stakeholders that identified the SiMR had a desire to use a graduation rate from a year other than the four year for each cohort of students. Special education director representatives from the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders and members of the project leadership team looked at the following data to determine the extended year that would be included in our SiMR.

**Students with a Primary Disability of ED**

**These rates are based on students who were coded as ED on their most recent child count record**

Group	4-Year	5-Year Extended	6-Year Extended
	Grad Rate	Grad Rate	Grad Rate
2009-10 Cohort (High School Start Year 2006-07)	50.00%	59.41%	64.52%
2010-11 Cohort (High School Start Year 2007-08)	48.21%	56.25%	57.66%

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

2011-12 Cohort (High School Start Year 2008-09)	55.21%	59.34%	60.22%
2012-13 Cohort (High School Start Year 2009-10)	54.55%	59.79%	
2013-14 Cohort (High School Start Year 2010-11)	57.29%		

They observed that rates for the fifth and sixth years of the same cohort were higher than the rates in the fourth year, although the trend in that difference showed a decline. The directors and the leadership team believed this difference to be significant enough to warrant the six year cohort rate for use as the measurement for the SiMR; and, that scaling up activities directed toward evidence based practices for this population would turn the decline of the trend in the difference to a positive direction.

The final SiMR statement was made after consideration of the cohort extended year that would be used to evaluate it:

***The NDDPI, in cooperation with local and state level partners, will increase the graduation rate for students identified with ED, as measured by the subgroup’s annual extended six year graduation rate.***

**Cause Analysis**

The project leadership team conducted a survey to gain understanding of the causes, as well as the solutions to the low performance in graduation rates for this population of students. They asked each participant at the in-depth data analysis meeting to choose the top three foundational elements of the improvement model (FAPE in the LRE) that they believed to be the least understood yet had the most bearing on keeping students with ED in school, bringing students back to school and assisting them in obtaining a diploma. They assigned a numeral 1, 2 or 3 to elements, with “1” being the element with the highest priority. With a response rate of 63%, the ratings were analyzed and then totaled for the three most often rated as 1, 2, or 3. Those were Effective Instruction, Effective Supports, & Parent, Student and Family Involvement. The element with the lowest total score (the highest priority) was “Effective Supports” (score of 19). The second lowest was “Effective Instruction” (score of 36), and the third lowest was “Parent, Student and Family Involvement” (score of 38).

The top two, Effective Supports and Effective Instruction, are standards in a local level planning process; and, the third, Parent/Student /Family Involvement, with the addition of Community, will be an indicator under the Effective Supports standard. This planning process is the primary strategy for the NDDPI SSIP improvement efforts. It requires local special education units to identify evidence based practices that can be implemented to improve services to these students, and thus improve graduation rates. A separate work group composed of participants from both the in-depth data and in-depth infrastructure analysis will define each standard using evidence based practices. A local system can then evaluate the implementation of those practices and determine which should be initiated, adjusted or changed so as to improve performance for its students.

NDDPI gained additional information regarding the causes of the discrepancies in the graduation rates with the completion of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT) analysis. Stakeholders identified major themes for each of these categories. The leadership team narrowed these themes to those that were believed to have the greatest effect on the low graduation rates of students identified with ED:

- Lack of resources
- Competing priorities for resources
- Understanding the needs of the target population
- Attitudes of policy makers and educators regarding the target population
- Communication amongst those concerned with the services for the target population

These are incorporated within the coherent strategies that will be used to reach targets. Involving all NDDPI Units and the State’s Regional Education Associations as partners in providing technical assistance and professional development will focus efforts to do more with the resources that can be made available. Including a large and varied group of stakeholders to decide on the area of focus, and a varied group of practitioners to define the standards, indicators, and evidence based practices that need to be implemented, broadens the understanding of the needs of this population. Broadening the understanding of the needs of the identified population and seeing efforts result in success by reaching the targets set by stakeholders, is believed to adjust attitudes. Requiring the inclusion of

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

goals in each school's continuous improvement plan will result in greater communication amongst the education community. Partnering with other private and public agencies to advocate for an increase in services for this population will result in greater communication amongst a larger community.

*Note- For further information about the results of the SWOT analysis refer to the Infrastructure Analysis component. For further explanation regarding all strategies, please see the component- Coherent Strategies.*

### Analysis of State Infrastructure to Support Improvement and Build Capacity

A description of how the State analyzed the capacity of its current infrastructure to support improvement and build capacity in LEAs to implement, scale up, and sustain the use of evidence-based practices to improve results for children with disabilities. State systems that make up its infrastructure include, at a minimum: governance, fiscal, quality standards, professional development, data, technical assistance, and accountability/monitoring. The description must include current strengths of the systems, the extent the systems are coordinated, and areas for improvement of functioning within and across the systems. The State must also identify current State-level improvement plans and initiatives, including special and general education improvement plans and initiatives, and describe the extent that these initiatives are aligned, and how they are, or could be, integrated with, the SSIP. Finally, the State should identify representatives (e.g., offices, agencies, positions, individuals, and other stakeholders) that were involved in developing Phase I of the SSIP and that will be involved in developing and implementing Phase II of the SSIP.

A thorough review of the State's infrastructure and its capacity to lead program improvement was done along with the data analysis of this first phase of the State Systemic Improvement Process (SSIP). The results were used to assist stakeholders in identifying the State identified Measureable Result (SiMR) described in the next section. Specific initiatives, events, activities and resources of the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) were then used to determine strategies and a sequence of activities that, when implemented, will make a positive change for students targeted in the SiMR.

### Broad Infrastructure Analysis

Local special education programs are administered by 31 intermediate administrative units. Each North Dakota school district must be a member of one of the units. The units range from one to nineteen member districts. The local special education unit is responsible for administrative functions outlined in their required policy and procedures plan, which must be updated annually. The responsibilities of all local units include, a) budgeting of local, state and federal funding to identify students and deliver services, b) maintaining of a high degree of procedural compliance, and c) the responsibility for special education program improvement.

Research on school improvement advocates the use of systematic and systemic approaches to improvement planning. With this in mind, the NDDPI Special Education Unit looked at the present program improvement planning efforts required of schools and districts within the State. Authority to require local schools to undergo such a process was established in North Dakota Century Code, with the model and its contents determined by the ND State Superintendent.

The State had three models that schools and districts used for continuous improvement planning- the *State Education Improvement Process* (SEIP) model, the *North Dakota Moving to Improve Learning for Everyone* (NDMILE) model, and the *AdvancED* model. SEIP, an older model developed by NDDPI, was being faded out and replaced by either NDMILE or *AdvancED*. NDMILE was a State specific amalgam of the *InDistar* model from *Academic Development Institute*, and was the preferred model of the Federal Programs Unit to meet the Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requirements. *AdvancED* was a new model, preferred by the Teacher & School Effectiveness Unit and was recently adopted for planning required within the school accreditation process. NDMILE and *AdvancED* had school level, as well as district level standards and indicators that described effective and evidence based practices, responsibilities and functions. Both models also required an evaluation of these elements as part of the needs assessment steps in their planning process. With the arrival of a new ND State Superintendent, a decision was made to allow schools and districts to use either model for planning purposes, but the continuous improvement plan resulting from either model would need to be entered into the *AdvancED, Assist Tool* system. It would be the official and only Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) required for each district and school. This one plan would outline goals and activities that would improve a system for federal ESEA Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements and State accreditation requirements. The special education programs of a school and district were involved in the planning process of either model, but there was no requirement to specifically address improvement in the special education program except if students with disabilities was a subgroup not meeting AYP targets. Both models included special education students within its standard descriptions through the use of "all students" as a term to describe the students to which the standard applied. Neither model contained variations to traditional educational practices specific to working with special education students in the general education or special education settings within its indicator statements or indicator descriptions. Special education student performance data was not a required part of either model's initial needs assessment, but did have to be used to set goals and design activities for those schools and districts whose students with disabilities did not make AYP targets.

To verify involvement and understanding of present improvement planning processes by the local special education unit and to determine the present attitudes of local special education directors in conducting improvement planning, the NDDPI Special Education Unit conducted a survey with local unit directors as the target audience. The results revealed that few knew about the planning processes used by districts and schools, but many of them used some form of data analysis to decide technical assistance and professional development efforts within their unit. Almost all were in favor of conducting a data driven improvement planning process that would result in the setting of goals, activities and targets to guide improvement. Most were also in favor of using a model that was aligned to the present processes used by schools and districts across the state. Their concerns in conducting such a process centered

Supplied with information regarding special education planning deficits of the present planning models and the strong support of local unit directors to conduct a special education specific process, the NDDPI Special Education Unit director and program improvement liaison approached NDDPI administration. They received ND State Superintendent approval for each school to include a special education specific goal within their present continuous improvement plan, regardless of the AYP status of its students with disabilities. The process to determine the goal and the activities that would be used to improve it was the responsibility of the local special education unit and it would need to be aligned to the present processes used within the State. Further discussions with the local directors led to the decision that the planning process be customizable and manageable for each unit.

NDDPI Unit directors and their staff members developed a list of DPI events, activities, processes, and resources that could potentially be used to support the special education specific local level planning effort and the local level implementation of improvement activities. They were grouped under the following State level infrastructure systems provided by the visiting state representatives of the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP):

- **Governance**- Century Code-Requires local level planning and ND State Superintendent decision regarding model and contents; Special Education units- Structure, Duties & Responsibilities; NDDPI membership on various State level Advisory Councils. Mission and Vision- "Assist and Partner" language to preserve the levels of local control; Partnerships with other agencies; Influence for legislation to change code.
- **Fiscal**- Discretionary Grant process using federal funds; Annual NDDPI budgeting process, both state and federal monies; Flow-through dollars- budgeting done annually; State Requests For Proposal & Procurement Processes
- **Quality Standards**- Present improvement planning models- NDMILE, AdvancED; North Dakota Core Standards, State Achievement Test- move to Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) & Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) alternative assessment; Improvement Model describing special education specific improvement; Universal Design for Learning principles; Teacher/Administrator Evaluation Models; Early Childhood standards; Educator licensure, Compliance/Focused Monitoring.
- **Professional Development**- Administrative conferences/workshops on improvement planning and accreditation; Special Education Directors' Leadership Conference; Annual Department of Public Instruction Fall Conference; Regional Education Associations charged with assisting districts with program improvement; Present training on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Summer Topic Workshops; Indian Education Initiative; State Personnel Development Grants- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) for Behavior & Academics; Disability and Procedural Guidelines on NDDPI Website, Team Newsletter- monthly, Title Programs and Special Education; Connect Newsletter- quarterly, Department wide; Transition Conferences; Transition Communities of Practice.
- **Data**- State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) - database for both State and districts, concerns regarding ownership; State-wide use of PowerSchool as student management system; TieNet as Statewide case management system for Special Education.
- **Technical Assistance**- National Post School Outcomes Center (NPSO) model of improvement planning, "STEPSS" (state pilot in the West Fargo local unit); Administrative conferences and workshops on improvement models-Federal Programs and Teacher & School Effectiveness Units; Special Education Directors' Leadership Conferences; State System Of Supports (SSOS)- involves all Units of NDDPI; NDDPI website- Guidance documents, Policy papers; Team Newsletter- monthly, Title Programs and Special Education; Connect Newsletter- quarterly, NDDPI.
- **Accountability/Monitoring**- Supervision authority in present improvement planning models; State Achievement Testing; Public reporting of State, District and School profiles, Special Education levels of determination; Special Education focused monitoring process- meets general supervision requirements; Schools approval process- requires local planning; Accreditation process- sets common standards; Local special education administrative units- responsibility for monitoring both compliance and improvement; Teacher/Administrator Evaluation model approval.

In addition to the activities, resources, events within the system, we separately listed the following:

- **Initiatives/Areas of Emphasis**- New Indian Education initiative; Move to SBAC and DLM assessments; Implementation of North Dakota Core Standards; Teacher/Administrator Evaluation models; State Personnel Development Grants (SPDG)- MTSS for Behavior & Academics, Universal Design for Learning emphasis.
- **Other**- Active Parent and Advocacy groups; State personnel shortages survey completed by the Center for Persons with Disabilities; Strong partnerships with Department of Human Services- Divisions of Vocational Rehabilitation and Developmental Disabilities; Strong Transition Communities of Practice; Partnership opportunities with North Dakota United (Teachers' & Public Employees Association) and North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders (Education Administrators Organization); Active and engaged Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Advisory Panel; Scholarships - application and approval through NDDPI.

The NDDPI Special Education Unit staff members considered their specific infrastructure to see what functions would currently support, and what functions would require change to support local level planning and implementation of improvement activities. Using district level standards and indicators from the NDMILE/InDistar model, the program improvement liaison adapted district level administrative standards and indicators. These indicators describe the structure and functions of a State level administrative system when the focus of such a system is program improvement:

- **Improving the local special education units within the Framework of State Support**

1. NDDPI includes statewide organizations in improvement planning, maintains regular communications with them, and

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

encourages local special education units to do the same.

2. NDDPI includes parent organizations in improvement planning, maintains regular communications with them, and encourages local special education units to do the same.
3. NDDPI assists local units to provide incentives for staff who work effectively in hard-to-fill special education positions.
4. NDDPI assists local units with technology, training, and support to meet the individualized needs for integrated data collection, reporting and analysis systems.
5. NDDPI sets statewide achievement targets for each statewide special education indicator and assists the local units in setting appropriate and realistic achievement targets for unit level improvement efforts.
6. The NDDPI office sets a unified vision for special education improvement with the participation of a broad range of stakeholders.
7. The NDDPI staff is accountable for local unit improvement and student learning outcomes.
8. NDDPI annually reallocates resources to assist in the support of local units, staff and instructional improvement.
9. NDDPI ensures that key pieces of user-friendly data are available in a timely fashion to each local unit.
10. NDDPI intervenes early with assistance when a local unit is not making adequate progress.
11. NDDPI understands that local unit leaders have reasonable autonomy to do things differently in order to succeed.

### • Taking the Change Process into Account

1. NDDPI operates with state-level and local unit level improvement teams that have a clearly defined purpose and regularly look at performance data and use that data to make decisions about improvement and professional development needs.
2. NDDPI examines existing special education improvement strategies being implemented across the state and determines their value, expanding, modifying, and culling as evidence suggests.
3. NDDPI assist local units so that improvement options chosen by each unit reflect the particular strengths and weaknesses of the unit.
4. NDDPI assists each local unit to determine whether resources are appropriate and sufficient for the unit's improvement efforts.
5. NDDPI assists each local unit so that improvement initiatives include research-based, field proven programs, practices and models.
6. NDDPI establishes a clear vision of what the program will look like when improved (Big Picture) and assists local units so that local improvement plans also include such a vision.
7. NDDPI ensures that improvement plans include "quick wins", early successes in improvement.
8. NDDPI is prepared for setbacks, resistance, and obstacles on the path to improvement.

### • Clarifying State-Local Unit Expectations

1. The local unit reports and documents its progress regularly to its Board, and also informs their NDDPI contact person.
2. NDDPI designates a contact person for each unit, and that person maintains close communications with the unit and an interest in its progress.
3. NDDPI and local unit decision makers meet at least quarterly to discuss the unit's progress.
4. NDDPI provides technical assistance to develop cohesive special education curriculum guides aligned to general education grade level standards and the evidence based practices identified for students with disabilities.
5. State level professional development based on needs of local units is built into the annual schedule by NDDPI, but units are also given support in selecting training and consultation that fit the requirements of its improvement plan and its evolving needs.
6. Professional development for support staff is considered by NDDPI and the local unit and included within the annual schedule.

A SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) using both lists, was used in the in-depth infrastructure analysis meeting and directed the listing of coherent strategies, the infrastructure elements within NDDPI that would support planning and implementation, and the design of the timeline of activities that would put that infrastructure into place.

## In-depth Infrastructure Analysis

The State identified Measureable Result (SiMR), *Increase the extended six year graduation rates of students identified with emotional disturbance*, was approved by the ND State Superintendent and was used to direct the next steps of the SSIP process. They included an in-depth look at the capacity of NDDPI to assist with local level planning and subsequent implementation of improvement activities that would focus on the implementation of evidence based practices specific to students identified with emotional disturbance.

The first step in structuring the capacity of NDDPI was to define the scope of work in regards to the SiMR. With help from our state contacts at OSEP, the leadership team defined the scope of work in improving the graduation rates of students identified with emotional disturbance to be threefold:

- Keep students in school,
- Re-entry- Bring students back to school, and
- Assist students to earn a diploma.

To assure the inclusion of a comprehensive perspective, the ND State Superintendent and State Special Education Director invited approximately forty individuals to participate in an in-depth look at the structure and systems of NDDPI. Participants at that in-depth meeting included NDDPI project leadership team members, NDDPI administration, parent representatives, IDEA Advisory Panel

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

members, local special education directors, local special education coordinators, local special education teachers and related service providers, North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders, North Dakota United, Native American educator representatives, a past student representing consumers of special education services, the director of the schools within the Department of Corrections- Juvenile Justice division, Vision Services representative, School for the Deaf representative, representatives of the Regional Education Associations (REA), a Representative from the Center for Persons with Disabilities, the university affiliated programs at Minot State University, Representatives from two other universities, an assistant director from the NDDPI State Personnel Development Grants (SPDG), NDDPI Federal Programs Unit representative, NDDPI Indian Education Unit director, NDDPI Safe and Healthy Schools Unit representative, and NDDPI Teacher and School Effectiveness Unit representative.

The meeting was facilitated by an associate director from the *Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education* center (TAESE) and the program improvement liaison of the NDDPI Special Education Unit. Pre-meeting information was sent to participants and included meeting specifics, names of participants, purposes, and an agenda. It explained their role as both representational and advisory. It also described the work load of the day as reviewing State level infrastructure elements available for use in the project, and participation in a SWOT analysis to identify which are strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the efforts of this project. Last, they were asked to bring their local level perspectives of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within the infrastructure of their local systems to include in that SWOT analysis.

Participants were divided into small groups, some with consideration of the State level infrastructure and others with consideration of the local level infrastructure. Questions guided discussion for each of the four areas of the SWOT analysis; and, each group prioritized two issues within each area. Prioritized issues of each group were put on a chart to be viewed by the large group. The facilitators then led the large group to find common issues that could be grouped together as themes. These themes were recorded for consideration by the project leadership team when identifying the strategies that would be effective for the improvement of graduation rates for students identified with emotional disturbance. The following chart lists those themes:

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Existing Program Options/Alternatives, Pockets of Excellence &amp; Best Practices</li> <li>· State support, Statewide recognition of need</li> <li>· Data Collection System</li> <li>· Existing Professional Development opportunities</li> <li>· Potential financial resources</li> <li>· Strong Local, Regional and Statewide Collaboration &amp; Partnerships</li> <li>· Present personnel knowledge and skills</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Awareness of all of the influences &amp; issues</li> <li>· Qualified Personnel- Shortage and Consistency</li> <li>· Lack of Mental Health Services in and out of schools</li> <li>· Secondary transition planning practices and Post-secondary supports for this population</li> <li>· Reactive/punitive vs. proactive/reinforcing strategy implementation, Attitudes towards this population</li> <li>· Early identification and intervention</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Promote, Replicate and sustain existing pockets of excellence and best practices, continue focus on what works in North Dakota</li> <li>· Partnerships- full scope of influences and issues, Tap shared knowledge, Reduce barriers</li> <li>· Tap REA functions and activities</li> <li>· The Time is Now</li> <li>· Tap existing Financial Resources and consider additional sources</li> <li>· Outreach from major public and private providers</li> <li>· Existing conference opportunities, Existing task force/communities of practice/work group participation, Update Disability Guidelines</li> <li>· Tap present value system of North Dakotans-Expect students to graduate, Strong sense of community</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Shortage of quality mental health services</li> <li>· Personnel- Consistency &amp; Low numbers coming out of state's preparation programs</li> <li>· Change moves slowly in ND; Blame &amp; Shame vs. Advocacy; Control issues- \$, Partnerships, "Marriage issues"; Cooperative spirit among stakeholders</li> <li>· Communication; fidelity &amp; continuity</li> <li>· Attitudes towards and Unique challenges of addressing ED population</li> <li>· Human Power at State level</li> <li>· Funding- politically based</li> <li>· Competing priorities, buy-in</li> </ul>

The project leadership team then drafted five strategies that would tap present and new infrastructure elements of NDDPI, as well as local special education units, so as to plan and focus on evidence based practices. The four strategies support a local level planning process and implementation of professional development activities resulting from that planning; and, the fifth strategy assists the NDDPI private and public agency partners in advocating for increased mental health services for students identified with mental health needs.

1. In cooperation with its partners, NDDPI will develop a local level continuous improvement planning process specific to this effort, and aligned to the present *AdvancED* model used by North Dakota schools. The goals and activities identified in this process will be entered into the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) of each school within a local Special Education unit.
2. In cooperation with other NDDPI Units, the NDDPI Special Education Unit will provide technical assistance and financial resources to assist local special education units to conduct such planning processes that result in the identification of evidence based practices to be implemented in their school programs.
3. In cooperation with its partners, NDDPI will assist and support local special education units to design and deliver quality professional development regarding evidence based practices.
4. In cooperation with other NDDPI Units, as well as its partners, the NDDPI Special Education Unit will assist local special education units to monitor progress and evaluate efforts.
5. In cooperation with its partners, NDDPI will assist other private and public agencies to promote an increase in the availability of public and private mental health services for individuals identified with mental health needs, including students identified with emotional disturbance.

Each strategy will require NDDPI to consider resources that fall under the general themes of the SWOT rubric and are presently available; those that are available, but need to be supplemented; and those that need to be developed. The following timeline provides some idea of the sequence of strategy and activity implementation, and thus the sequence of resource allocation for the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction.

November, 2014 thru March, 2015	Complete activities in Phase 1 of SSIP, Develop local planning model, Continue awareness activities, Continue discussions with local, regional and statewide partners about participation, Design training for NDDPI Special Education Unit staff to be able to assist local units with the planning process, Development of "Tools" to use in planning process
April thru September, 2015	Train NDDPI special education regional coordinators and local special education unit directors and their local unit Boards on planning model, Assist local special education units in identifying planning leadership teams, Allocate funding to assist local special education units in bringing people together to participate in planning, Continue discussions with local, regional, statewide partners
October thru December, 2015	Assist local special education units to conduct local planning processes, Monitor fidelity of implementation, Assist local special education units to write and submit local goals, activities and evaluation measures, Monitor plans/activities for evidence-based practices, Assist local special education units to disseminate these to each school within the unit, and each school to upload them into their continuous improvement plans
January thru March, 2016	Compile data and sort goals and activities into groups- 1) State specific- those most in common amongst the local special education units; & 2) Local specific- those specific to a local special education unit, Allocate funding for State level Professional Development (PD), as well as Local level Professional Development, Write and disseminate RFPs to assist NDDPI with state level activities, Assist locals in developing contracts for PD for local specific activities, Encourage involvement of local practitioners as presenters (MTSS coaches, Institutions of Higher Education (IHE), etc.), Encourage IHE's, Center for Persons with Disabilities, REAs, Parent Groups, etc. to submit proposals to conduct both state level and local level PD, Evaluate effects of first year implementation strategies
April thru May, 2016	Approve proposals submitted for RFPs that were sent out, Provide notification of approval to all proposals, Plan for PD done by NDDPI Special Education Unit, Monitor planning for PD done by approved regional and statewide partners

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

June, 2016 thru May, 2017	Continue with approval of proposals, Monitor PD initiated in the summer from previously approved proposals, Monitor planning and implementation of those PD activities newly approved, Monitor planning and implementation of local PD approved for funding, Implement PD planned for delivery by NDDPI Units. Evaluate effects of second year implementation strategies
June, 2017	Continue to monitor approved PD activities, Implement any additional NDDPI planned activities, Issue new RFPs and approve proposals for summer and following school year, Evaluate effects of third year implementation strategies

This sequence of activities will result in the implementation of a special education improvement planning process specific to students with emotional disturbance that will identify evidence based practices that NDDPI and its local and state partners will implement. Implementation of these practices will improve the assessment and classroom performance of students identified with emotional disturbance. Improvement in these areas will increase the graduation rates for this subgroup.

**State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities**

A statement of the result(s) the State intends to achieve through the implementation of the SSIP. The State-identified result(s) must be aligned to an SPP/APR indicator or a component of an SPP/APR indicator. The State-identified result(s) must be clearly based on the Data and State Infrastructure Analyses and must be a child-level outcome in contrast to a process outcome. The State may select a single result (e.g., increasing the graduation rate for children with disabilities) or a cluster of related results (e.g., increasing the graduation rate and decreasing the dropout rate for children with disabilities).

*Statement*

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, in cooperation with our local and state level partners, will increase the graduation rate for students identified with emotional disturbance, as measured by the subgroup's annual extended six year graduation rate.

*Description*

**Selection Process**

At the in-depth data analysis stakeholder meeting, facilitators led the stakeholders through a process of identifying three student performance elements of the improvement model that had: a) the best alignment to the existing indicators of the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR); b) the best alignment to existing initiatives, events, resources and activities of the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI); c) the highest quality data from which to make decisions; and, d) the most meaningful and manageable to local practitioners, families, districts and communities.

The stakeholders reached consensus on the following three priorities:

1. Proficiency Rates of students with disabilities taking the North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA), Indicator 3 of the SPP/APR;
2. Graduation Rates of students with disabilities, Indicator 1 of the SPP/APR; and,
3. Drop-Out Rates of students with disabilities, Indicator 2 of the SPP/APR.

The small stakeholder groups analyzed the trend data to look at the performance of students with disabilities by gender, ethnicity, disability type, environment, free and reduced lunch status, and grade level in each of the above mentioned performance areas. Observations about the data were written as nonjudgmental statements. These statements were then prioritized, presented to the large group of stakeholders, and a decision made regarding the high priority for the SiMR.

The tables below reference the proficiency, graduation and drop-out rates for "All Students," which includes students with and without disabilities; "Students with Disabilities;" and, "Students with Emotional Disturbance," as the SiMR subgroup.

**Table A:  
Proficiency Rates on State Assessments**

Math	2011	2012	2013
All Students	80.0%	78.6%	77.5%
Students with Disabilities	51.3%	47.7%	43.3%
Students with Emotional Disturbance	49.0%	47.9%	42.0%

**Table B:  
Proficiency Rates on State Assessments**

Reading	2011	2012	2013
All Students	76.7%	76.4%	75.9%
Students with Disabilities	47.5%	44.7%	39.3%
Students with Emotional Disturbance	51.8%	54.4%	46.6%

**Table C:  
Graduation Rates**

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
All Students	86.2%	87.0%	87.2%
Students with Disabilities	66.7%	67.9%	69.6%
Students with Emotional Disturbance	48.2%	55.2%	54.5%

**Table D:  
Drop-out Rates**

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
All Students	11.0%	10.3%	9.9%
Students with Disabilities	19.7%	17.7%	15.6%
Students with Emotional Disturbance	42.0%	35.4%	34.3%

The gaps between all students and students with disabilities in all three performance areas were of concern to stakeholders. The gaps between students with disabilities and students with emotional disturbance in graduation and drop-out rates were of most concern.

The stakeholders initially identified a decrease in drop-out rates for students with emotional disturbance as the State SiMR because of the large discrepancy between students identified with emotional disturbance and the other two categories. After consultation with OSEP, the group changed the SiMR to a more positive area of focus. A consensus on the new area of focus was reached: *to increase the graduation rate for students with emotional disturbance.*

The evidence in the data led the stakeholders to consider the use of the five, six, or seven year cohort's extended rate. Use of an extended cohort rate would more accurately reflect the positive effects of schools' present efforts on re-entry and diploma acquisition for this subgroup. The project leadership team thus asked the ND State Superintendent for approval of the graduation rate statement.

The final decision on the use of an extended year graduation rate was made by a group of five local unit special education directors, representing the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders (NDCEL), along with members of the project leadership team. The decision was made through a review of three years' worth of graduation rate data for students identified with a primary disability of emotional disturbance. The group observed that the rates for the fifth and sixth years of the same cohort were significantly higher than the rates in the fourth year, although the trend in that difference showed a decline in recent years. (See table below)

**Table E:  
Students with a Primary Disability of Emotional Disturbance (ED)  
These rates are based on students who were coded as ED on their most recent child count record**

Group	4-Year	5-Year Extended	6-Year Extended
	Grad Rate	Grad Rate	Grad Rate
2009-10 Cohort (High School Start Year 2006-07)	50.00%	59.41%	64.52%

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

2010-11 Cohort (High School Start Year 2007-08)	48.21%	56.25%	57.66%
2011-12 Cohort (High School Start Year 2008-09)	55.21%	59.34%	60.22%
2012-13 Cohort (High School Start Year 2009-10)	54.55%	59.79%	
2013-14 Cohort (High School Start Year 2010-11)	54.95%		

**Reasons for Selection/Options Considered**

Students identified with emotional disturbance as their primary disability comprise 7.4% of the total students with disabilities' population in the December, 2013 child count. The percentage increases to 12% with the addition of students with emotional disturbance as a secondary disability. Approximately, 25% of North Dakota's students with other disability categories having similar mental health, behavioral, social communication and social relationship service needs could benefit from the planning and implementation of effective practices that this SiMR will emphasize.

Using the six year rate for the baseline and targets in each of the future years of the SSIP project will place an improvement emphasis on programs at the secondary level. The present freshman class will be the cohort whose extended six year rate will be used as our last target. Requiring all levels to address the implementation of evidence based practices specific to this population represents a significant change in the local level planning process. Each school will implement evidence based practices that promote students staying in school, bringing students back to school, or assisting them to earn a diploma. An emphasis for improvement at the high school level, however, will be required for the State to meet targets for the SiMR.

Additional benefit to students with these needs will be demonstrated in the results of other indicators of our SPP/APR, especially Indicator #2, drop-out rates, and Indicator #3, proficiency on state assessments. With this population comprising approximately 25% of the students with disabilities population, the implementation of evidence based instructional and support practices specific for this population should also result in improved proficiency rates and decreased drop-out rates for our entire population of students with disabilities.

Stakeholders from parent and advocacy groups, local special education directors, coordinators, teachers, representatives of the State's teachers' union and Council of Educational Leaders reported that students with mental health, behavioral, social communication and social relationship deficits present the biggest area of concern for North Dakota's schools. In addition, parents, families, Department of Human Services- Divisions of Vocational Rehabilitation and Developmental Disabilities, and the Department of Corrections have expressed concerns regarding the aforementioned deficits when these students are at home or in the community. Those concerns are reflected in the number of current initiatives and priorities presently in the State legislative process surrounding the increase in statewide mental health services and the training of school personnel on mental health and behavioral issues.

The stakeholders considered both drop-out rates and graduation rates of students with disabilities within Native American populations for the SiMR. They believed the transiency of those Native American students enrolled in Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools, then in ND public schools, and then back to the BIE schools would jeopardize the quality of the data. The small number of districts in which the Native American populations is concentrated would limit the scope and effect size of state efforts. The inclusion of cultural differences into the definitions of the critical base elements used for local level planning, would address the unique needs of this ethnic population. Collaborating with the other divisions of NDDPI to assist and support the Department's initiative on Indian Education will promote needed improvement in these students' graduation and drop-out rates.

Stakeholders also considered increasing academic reading proficiency for students identified as learning disabled. Improvement efforts conducted through the NDDPI Federal Programs Unit, however, are addressing proficiency and with some modification could address the needs of this population. Moving to a new, electronic administered achievement test, and one administered in the spring instead of the fall, would also complicate the establishment of a baseline and thus the setting of realistic, achievable annual targets in this area.

**Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies**

An explanation of how the improvement strategies were selected, and why they are sound, logical and aligned, and will lead to a measurable improvement in the State-identified result(s). The improvement strategies should include the strategies, identified through the Data and State Infrastructure Analyses, that are needed to improve the State infrastructure and to support LEA implementation of evidence-based practices to improve the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities. The State must describe how implementation of the improvement strategies will address identified root causes for low performance and ultimately build LEA capacity

## Scope of Work and Strategies

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) will use resources to target the increase of the extended six year graduation rates for students identified with emotional disturbance, our State identified Measureable Result (SiMR). Assisting and supporting schools, districts, special education units and communities is the scope of work which aligns with the mission of NDDPI. The scope is three fold: a) to keep students in school; b) to bring students back to school (reentry); and, c) to assist these students to earn a diploma (school completion).

The project leadership team developed strategies to address the scope. The following were approved by the ND State Superintendent for inclusion in our State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP):

1. In cooperation with its partners, NDDPI will develop a local continuous improvement planning process specific to this effort, and aligned to the present *AdvancED* model used by North Dakota schools. The subsequent goals and activities would be entered into the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) of each school within a local special education unit.
2. In cooperation with other NDDPI Units, the NDDPI Special Education Unit will provide technical assistance and financial resources to assist local special education units to conduct a planning process that results in the identification of evidence based practices to be implemented in their school programs.
3. In cooperation with its partners, NDDPI will assist and support local special education units to design and deliver quality professional development regarding evidence based practices.
4. In cooperation with its partners, the NDDPI Special Education Unit will assist local special education units to monitor progress and evaluate their efforts.
5. In cooperation with its partners, NDDPI will assist other private and public agencies to promote an increase in the availability of public and private mental health services for students identified with mental health needs, including those identified with emotional disturbance.

## Strategy #1- Development of a Special Education Planning Process

Systematic and systemic improvement planning is among the characteristics of effective schools mentioned within the research. Implementing a good planning process defines present practice, sets goals for adjustment, change or implementation of additional practice, defines what to expect when that adjustment, change, or implementation is completed, monitors progress, and evaluates success of the system's efforts.

As stated in the infrastructure analysis component, continuous improvement planning by schools and districts is required in North Dakota Century Code to gain approved school status, as well as to achieve accreditation status. Continuous improvement planning has proven to increase the performance of North Dakota students on identified performance measures deemed important by the North Dakota legislature. The approval of a planning model and its contents for these improvement planning processes is a function of the ND State Superintendent's office. The ND State Superintendent's office has approved either the process described in the *North Dakota Moving to Improve Learning for Everyone* (NDMILE) model, or the process of the *AdvancED* model for implementation by schools and districts. Both use standards to describe the level of practice expected, and indicators to describe what needs to be in place to achieve that expected level of practice. Each evaluates the present implementation level of those practices, and prioritizes the adjustment, change or additional implementation of those practices.

Effective instruction and effective supports, two foundation elements of the improvement model, become the two standards for special education planning. These two special education specific standards extend two of the *AdvancED* indicators under the "Teaching and Assessing for Learning" standard: 1) 3.3, addressing student engagement in instruction, and 2) 3.12, addressing unique learning support services. The two standards also extend one indicator under the "Resources & Support Systems" standard: 4.6, addressing the support services needed to meet the social and emotional needs of the school's population.

The effective instruction standard is explained using principles and guidelines from the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework. The principles of "Engagement" and "Action & Expression" are believed to be important for students with behavioral, social/emotional, social communication and mental health needs in order to be engaged in the activities of a lesson, and to demonstrate acquisition of skills and understanding of concepts that each lesson addresses. The UDL guidelines, "Self-regulation Skills" and "Executive Function Skills," are the indicators for this standard and explain the activities that need to be in place in order for the system to meet the standard.

The effective supports standard uses a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework to describe the features of the system that need to be considered in the design and implementation of effective supports for these students. This standard has three indicators: 1) Academic Supports, 2) Behavioral Supports, and 3) Parent, Student, Family & Community Supports. The academic supports indicator uses the research from the National Center on Intensive Interventions to explain the approaches in providing intensive supports for students with complex academic needs. The behavior supports indicator uses the research behind Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) to describe the importance of teaching new skills and making changes to environments that prevent problem behaviors from occurring. The parent, student, family & community supports indicator uses the integrated "Wraparound" planning concepts to determine a broad system of supports that can be activated and assist the student to function positively in all environments.

The following standard and indicator statements provide an introduction to the North Dakota special education specific planning process that will be used in the strategy. It is an outline of the standard and indicator statements. The local special education units will be responsible for carrying out the planning process, for developing goals that will guide the improvement efforts, and for implementation of the activities that will assist the unit in reaching those goals.

**Standards & Indicators Outline**

**Standard 1: Effective Instruction**

**Statement- The unit supports Individual Education Program (IEP) teams in evaluating the self-regulation and executive function skills of students and including the explicit teaching of such skills, when appropriate, in their IEPs. The unit also supports teachers to plan and use multiple means to engage students in each lesson and multiple means for each student to demonstrate their acquisition of skills and understanding of concepts.**

**Indicators**

1.1	Individual Education Program (IEP) teams evaluate and include, when appropriate, the teaching of individualized self-regulation strategies within the IEPs of students identified with behavioral, social/emotional, social communication and mental health needs. Teachers plan and use a variety of practices to motivate students and keep them engaged in lesson activities.
1.2	Individual Education Program (IEP) teams evaluate and include, when appropriate, the teaching of individualized executive function skills within the IEPs of students identified with behavioral, social/emotional, social communication and mental health needs. Teachers plan and use a variety of practices that allow students to express their acquisition and understanding of the lesson's concepts and skills.

**Standard 2: Effective Supports**

**Statement- The special education unit supports Individual Education Program (IEP) teams in considering and implementing a wide variety of academic and behavioral supports that include the parent, student, family, and community for students with behavioral, social/emotional, social communication and mental health needs.**

**Indicators**

2.1	Individual Education Program (IEP) teams consider and implement a variety of academic supports for students with behavioral, social/emotional, social communication and/or mental health needs.
2.2	Individual Education Program (IEP) teams consider and implement a variety of behavior supports for students with behavioral, social/emotional, social communication and/or mental health needs.
2.3	Individual Education Program (IEP) teams consider and cooperatively implement a variety of supports that can be coordinated with parents, student, family and community.

The planning process begins with a needs assessment during which data is gathered to analyze current levels of implementation of effective strategies. Based on current implementation, the local leadership team will determine the priorities to adjust, change, or implement additional strategies. ND special education directors and NDDPI administration agree that the implementation of a special education specific improvement planning process needs to be aligned with one of the currently State approved school improvement models. NDDPI received approval from *AdvancED*, the designated model, to incorporate their four level implementation performance rubric in the special education planning model.

**Sample Performance Rubric**

Indicator 1.1- Self-regulation	a. Individual Education Program (IEP) teams evaluate and include, when appropriate, the teaching of individualized self-regulation strategies within the IEPs of students identified with behavioral, social/emotional, social communication and mental health needs.
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**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

	b. Teachers plan and use a variety of practices to motivate these students and keep them engaged in lesson activities.
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. IEP teams are consistent and deliberate in evaluating the need for explicit instruction of self-regulation skills. These teams consistently use this evaluation information to write IEP goals addressing needs for explicit instruction from trained staff, or transfer of the learned skills back to the classroom setting.</li> <li>a. Teachers are consistent and deliberate in planning for and using multiple means of engaging these students in the activities of the entire lesson.</li> </ul>
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. IEP teams often evaluate the need for explicit instruction of self-regulation skills for these students. IEP teams often write goals on IEPs, to be implemented by trained staff, for student acquisition of these skills, as well as for transfer to a classroom setting.</li> <li>a. Teachers often plan for and use multiple means of engaging these students in the activities of the entire lesson.</li> </ul>
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. IEP teams sometimes evaluate the need for explicit instruction of self-regulation skills and then include goals on IEPs to address needs for explicit instruction and transfer back to the classroom setting.</li> <li>a. Teachers sometimes plan for and use multiple means of engaging these students in the activities of the entire lesson.</li> </ul>
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. IEP teams rarely or never evaluate the need for explicit instruction of self-regulation skills. They rarely or never include such instruction or transfer of learned skills back to the classroom setting, as goals on students' IEPs.</li> <li>a. Teachers rarely or never plan for and use multiple means of engaging these students in the activities of the entire lesson.</li> </ul>

Surveys will be used by the local special education units to gather the perception of educators, parents, and community regarding the present implementation of evidence based practices and use by teachers. Lists of evidence based practices will be provided and are practices identified as having been effective in North Dakota schools. Below is a sample of the evidence based practices, though not exhaustive, that could be implemented for the self-regulation indicator:

**Evidence Based Practices:** Modeling, Simulations, Social Skills Training, Self-monitoring, Personal Conversations/Self-talk, Response Prompting, Procedural Prompting, Cooperative Learning, Social Communication Training, Self-questionnaire, Positive Reinforcement of Appropriate Behaviors, Charting & Self-assessment, Project Rubrics, Evaluation Rubrics, Computer-assisted Instruction, On-line Learning, Alternate Education Programs.

The North Dakota Century Code requires schools and districts, not local special education units, to conduct continuous improvement planning. The ND State Superintendent has the authority to determine the contents of school and district continuous improvement plans; and now requires each of these plans contain a goal specific to the special education program and be developed by the local special education unit. The intent of this requirement is to ensure that all schools are both informed of and participate in the goals and activities of the special education unit.

**Strategy #2- Technical Assistance and Financial Support**

The NDDPI Special Education Unit has annually distributed set-aside monies through a competitive grant process to fund the implementation of evidence based practices. A portion of these monies will now be directed to assist the local special education units in conducting the new improvement planning process.

The NDDPI Special Education Unit has six regionally assigned coordinators who are the NDDPI's liaisons to the local special education units. These coordinators will be trained on the planning model and will provide technical assistance regarding that process to ensure implementation fidelity within their region. The technical assistance that the coordinators will provide regarding implementation fidelity includes: the membership and purpose of the local leadership team; survey quality; data analyses procedures; realistic, achievable and time bound goal; and, appropriate evaluation measures.

NDDPI provides annual workshops and conferences in which planning models, program improvement, and accreditation are topics. The NDDPI Special Education Unit will present the new special education planning model and its alignment to the *AdvancED process* to gain support from administrators in districts and schools. This will allow districts and schools to assist local special education units in conducting a quality planning process. NDDPI administration supports these efforts for special education program improvement.

**Strategy #3- Assistance with Professional Development**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

The NDDPI Special Education Unit will review the goals and activities of each local special education unit's improvement plan to identify activities that are common regionally or throughout the state. NDDPI special education funding will be used to support these common professional development activities delivered on a statewide or regional basis. NDDPI will solicit proposals for professional development and training by presenters, professional development organizations, institutions of higher education and the Regional Education Associations (REAs). Activities may include building on existing initiatives and replicating evidence based practices identified and implemented in ND model sites. A priority will be placed on those activities that address the implementation of practices at the secondary level.

Activities specific to a local special education unit or group of units will need to be considered for assistance. The existing competitive grant process can be used for local special education units to access funds to assist them with implementing quality professional development focused on the implementation of evidence based practices. A funding priority will be placed on the implementation of practices for students at the high school level whose graduation performance will have the greatest effect on our SiMR targets.

**Strategy #4- Assistance with Progress Monitoring and Evaluation**

NDDPI Regional Coordinators will provide technical assistance in determining appropriate formative and summative evaluation measures during the planning process. The local special education unit will be held accountable by NDDPI to administer those measures, gather data, and analyze according to the frequency listed within their plans. Local special education unit directors will report a summary of that analysis and the resulting actions to their local unit board of directors and to the NDDPI Special Education Unit. In addition, each school will also report progress on the special education goals to their district board of directors and to other NDDPI Units. After plan development and submission, NDDPI Regional Coordinators will provide technical assistance focused on the aforementioned evaluation activities.

**Strategy #5- Promote an Increase in Availability of Public and Private Mental Health Services**

North Dakota state level partners who provide advocacy and services for students and adults with developmental disabilities identified inappropriate behaviors and inadequate social and emotional skills as significant concerns due to the lack of mental health and behavioral services. The partners include the Department of Human Services, Pathfinders parent training center, the Department of Corrections- Juvenile Services division, various private providers, and stakeholders in the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis. NDDPI, along with the public and private agencies, can promote legislation and resource allocation that increase the mental health services available to address the needs of North Dakota's citizens, especially those of students enrolled in North Dakota schools.

**Theory of Action**

A graphic illustration that shows the rationale of how implementing the coherent set of improvement strategies selected will increase the State's capacity to lead meaningful change in LEAs, and achieve improvement in the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities.

**Submitted Theory of Action:** No Theory of Action Submitted

Provide a description of the provided graphic illustration (optional)

Description of Illustration

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) theory of action is a linear design that aligns with the Department's vision and mission. It explains the flow from the primary strategy of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) to the State identified Measureable Result (SiMR). Leadership provided by NDDPI through the form of technical assistance, resource allocation, and relationship building will result in an increase in the implementation of evidence based practices necessary to improve the three components of the scope of work. Improving the three components will result in the increase of the SiMR- the extended six year graduation rates for students identified with emotional disturbance.

**Infrastructure Development**

- (a) Specify improvements that will be made to the State infrastructure to better support EIS programs and providers to implement and scale up EBPs to improve results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
- (b) Identify the steps the State will take to further align and leverage current improvement plans and other early learning initiatives and programs in the State, including Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge, Home Visiting Program, Early Head Start and others which impact infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
- (c) Identify who will be in charge of implementing the changes to infrastructure, resources needed, expected outcomes, and timelines for completing improvement efforts.
- (d) Specify how the State will involve multiple offices within the State Lead Agency, as well as other State agencies and stakeholders in the improvement of its infrastructure.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) develops and implements improvement activities that build the capacity of State and local systems to identify and implement evidence based and promising practices (EBPPs). These activities are derived from the coherent strategies and theory of action developed in Phase I of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). They focus on the technical assistance (TA), professional development (PD), and financial resources needed to identify and implement EBPPs that affect the performance of students with behavioral, social/emotional, social communication and mental health needs. Activities also include the building of partnerships to involve stakeholders in the local planning process and in statewide advocacy for an increase in services

The coherent strategies of the North Dakota SSIP utilize the authority of the State Superintendent to determine the contents of a review plan submitted annually by each school for approved school status. In Phase I, the Superintendent approved a recommendation for each plan to contain an improvement goal that addresses the implementation of practices specific to the performance improvement of the targeted student population. The local special education administrative unit and its member schools cooperatively develop the goal.

A performance planning model was recommended for use in the local goal planning process. Such a model explains actions of the system that assist in the effective implementation of identified EBPPs. The North Dakota special education goal planning model provides descriptive action statements for two standards and five indicators. It uses brief descriptions of the frameworks of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS) and Wrap-Around Planning (WRAP) to further define system actions for addressing the instructional and support needs of the targeted population.

#### **Continuous Improvement Planning Model (see attached document, *Spec Ed Model and Process Guidebook*)**

Stakeholders requested the new special education planning process align to an existing planning model. AdvancED is the school accrediting agency and its accreditation protocol includes a continuous improvement planning requirement. Although various planning models can be used to develop the review plan required for school approval, the majority of North Dakota schools use the AdvancED, "Internal Review" process and "Adaptive System of School Improvement Support Tools" (ASSIST) to develop and document the plan. The NDDPI has aligned its special education planning model to that of AdvancED for the following reasons:

- A majority of North Dakota schools use the model for continuous improvement planning and use ASSIST to document the required plan.
- The resulting plan is developed using a performance planning model.
- Using a common language to discuss system performance leads to greater commitment by staff, parents and community.
- General education administrative colleagues who use the AdvancED Internal Review process and ASSIST can provide guidance and technical assistance to enhance the process.

The NDDPI and its stakeholders developed the special education planning model with the following AdvancED approved alignment:

- The two performance standards of the special education model align with two of the AdvancED performance standards, "*Teaching and Assessing for Learning*", and, "*Resources and Support Systems*."
- The indicators of the special education model extend three AdvancED indicators addressing student engagement, as well as unique learning and social/emotional supports for students of the targeted population.
- The performance rubrics, used as evaluative criteria for identifying current and future performance, use the same format and language as the performance rubrics of the AdvancED model.

The standards, indicators and performance rubrics of the new special education model can be found in the attached model and process guidebook.

Each indicator has a list of EBPPs, as well as a list of resources, tools, interventions, and programs that have EBPPs embedded within them. These lists were cooperatively developed with stakeholders representing local special education units, the parent training center, and higher education. Lists can be found in the attached model and process guidebook.

#### **Continuous Improvement Planning Process (see attached document, *Spec Ed Model and Process Guidebook*)**

The planning process described in the guidebook uses three components common to system program improvement processes:

- **Needs Assessment-** The system evaluates its current performance on specific evaluative criteria, then identifies performance areas for improvement, as well as the expected amount of improvement.
- **Goals and Activities Setting-** Goals identify the gap between the current and the expected level of performance of the system. Activities describe what the system will do to close the gap. They include the implementation of evidence based and promising practices.
- **Evaluation-** Formative and summative evaluations are used to monitor and evaluate implementation progress, implementation fidelity, and overall success of the system's efforts.

The new planning process used by ND local special education units adds three fidelity and accountability components:

- **Leadership Team-** The leadership team guides the planning process and monitors fidelity. Broad representational membership results in greater commitment, thorough understanding, and increased use of practices resulting in improvement.
- **Dissemination-** The goals and the EBPPs identified for improvement are given to each school. Each school provides staff and constituents information regarding the EBPPs used to reach those goals.
- **Reporting Out-** Progress and success are reported by the local special education unit for each school. Each school then shares that progress and success with staff and constituents.

Each process component is customizable for local special education units. The process is cyclical to account for continuous review (Graphic- Page 19 of Guidebook). Local special education units start a planning cycle with the top component (Leadership Team), and then move clockwise through the cycle (Needs Assessment, Goals, Dissemination, Evaluation, Reporting Out). Formative, summative, and fidelity evaluations in subsequent reviews determine the component to begin the planning process for adjustment or change.

State level capacity building activities include the restructuring of the project leadership team and the NDDPI staff responsibilities regarding financial resources, data, guidance, technical assistance, and professional development. Additional activities include the building of positive partnerships within and outside the education community to advocate for an increase in collaborative services for the target student population.

The following chart outlines the restructuring activities, defines responsibilities and lines of communication, and highlights the key functions of the activities:



The following descriptions explain each element of the restructuring chart:

**Financial Resources-** Financial resources are available for local level planning, technical assistance, state/regional/local professional development, and the NDDPI staff responsibilities. Partners involved in the allocation and flow of these funds include:

- NDDPI, Administration
- NDDPI, Fiscal Management Unit
- North Dakota Regional Education Associations (REAs)
- North Dakota Parent Training Center- *Pathfinders*
- North Dakota Local Special Education Units

**Data-** Quality data is used to determine progress and evaluate success of the NDDPI efforts. Data from the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR), the annual drill down of the State's focused monitoring process, and the project Evaluation Plan assist in adjusting or modifying activities to reach targets. Partners involved in data activities include:

- NDDPI, Management Information Systems Unit
- NDDPI, Information, Communications, and Research Unit
- North Dakota Local Special Education Units
- Data Enterprises, Inc.

**Guidance-** Additional members of the leadership team for Phase II extend guidance and communication to and from the majority of the NDDPI Units. This increases the alignment, consistency and coordination of the special education planning efforts with those required for accreditation, Title I Schoolwide planning, and School Restructuring. It also increases the coordination with other NDDPI initiatives- 1) Improvement of results for Native American students, 2) Implementing North Dakota Core Standards, 3) Implementing an electronic administration of the State assessment, and 4) Using quality data for instructional and improvement decisions.

Members of the Phase II project leadership team:

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

- Director of the Special Education Unit
- Director of the Special Education Unit
- Data Coordinator of the Special Education Unit
- Regional Special Education Coordinator and Project Lead
- Director of the Academic Support Unit
- Director of the Academic Support Unit
- Director of the Indian Education/Multi-Cultural Education Unit
- Director of Safe and Healthy Schools Unit
- Director of Teacher and School Effectiveness Unit
- Director of the Federal Title Programs Unit

*Note- Additional guidance provided by the IDEA Advisory Committee and periodic collaboration with the NDDPI Units not represented on the leadership team.*

As the NDDPI enters Phase III, "Implementation", the leadership team will be adjusted to include local directors, parents, community groups and other stakeholders.

**Project Lead-** This individual coordinates the project with focus on three key functions of implementation science identified by the *Active Implementation Hub* at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill- 1) Ensure Implementation, 2) Engage the Community, and 3) Create a Conducive Environment for Implementation.

**Technical Assistance-** Technical assistance emphasizes fidelity of the planning process and fidelity of locally selected programs, strategies, tools and resources that have EBPPs embedded within them. It also emphasizes the implementation of quality professional development that addresses knowledge, skills and includes follow-up technical assistance for adequate and sustainable implementation. Partners involved with technical assistance include:

- Members of Project Leadership Team
- School and District Administrators using the AdvancED Internal Review process and ASSIST
- AdvancED, Inc.

**Professional Development-** Professional development is provided at state, regional, and local levels and is dependent upon the practices, programs, strategies, tools, and resources identified for implementation. It builds upon effective professional development activities of the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), which focuses on MTSS for academics and behavior. It initiates newly identified EBPPs and expands practices and programs proven effective in North Dakota schools. Professional development structures modify and update "train-the-trainer" models by developing cadres of statewide "coaches." These individuals train, guide, and coach local systems in providing professional development and system supports to sustain implementation. Some structures use existing local education personnel with knowledge of local commitment and available system supports to leverage a faster implementation. Others use part-time or retired education personnel, the NDDPI partners, or specific program trainers. These individuals provide beginning knowledge and skills regarding specific practices/programs and assist systems to gain greater commitment to move forward with effective implementation. Partners involved with professional development include:

- NDDPI, Teacher and School Effectiveness Unit
- NDDPI, Federal Title Programs Unit
- NDDPI, Academic Support Unit
- NDDPI, Indian Education & Multi-Cultural Unit
- NDDPI, Safe and Healthy Schools/Adult Education Unit
- AdvancED, Inc.
- North Dakota Parent Training Center- Pathfinders
- North Dakota Colleges and Universities
- North Dakota Regional Education Associations
- Directors' Study Council of the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders
- Rose Iovanonne, *Prevent Teach Reinforce* (PTR), University of South Florida
- Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education Center (TAESE)

**Advocacy-** The NDDPI Units partner with each other, with field practitioners and with other public/private entities in advocacy efforts targeting policy makers, public/private providers, and local educators to increase quality services to meet the needs of the target population. Some of those public and private entities are:

- Department of Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health
- Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the State Rehabilitation Council
- Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities
- Department of Corrections, Youth Correctional Center and the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Group
- North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD)
- Parent and Disability Organizations, including the North Dakota Parent Training Center
- North Dakota Protection and Advocacy Project
- State and Regional Transition Communities of Practice
- North Dakota Employment Learning Community

## **FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

- North Dakota Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Group
- Directors' Study Council of the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders

### **Alignment of Restructuring Activities to the SWOT Analysis of Phase I**

The restructuring activities described above address many of the themes identified in the Phase I, Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities /Threats (SWOT) analysis. The financial, data, guidance, project lead, technical assistance, and professional development activities address the following:

#### **Strengths and Opportunities:**

- Existing Professional Development Opportunities, Task Forces, Communities of Practice, Guidance Documents
- Potential Financial Resources
- Current Personnel Knowledge and Skills
- Promote, Replicate and Sustain Existing Pockets of Excellence and Best Practices, and Continue Focus on What Works in North Dakota
- Involvement of Regional Education Agencies (REAs)
- The "Time is Now"

#### **Weaknesses and Threats:**

- Qualified Personnel
- Reactive/Punitive vs. Proactive/Reinforcing Strategy Implementation
- Change Moves Slowly in ND due to Money and Control Issues
- Communication
- Competing Priorities

The advocacy activities address the following:

#### **Strengths and Opportunities:**

- State Support- Statewide Recognition of Need
- Present Value System of North Dakotans-Expect Students to Graduate; Strong Sense of Community
- Strong Statewide Collaboration Within and Outside of Education
- Existing Partnerships- Tap Shared Knowledge, Reducing Barriers
- Outreach from Major Public and Private Providers

#### **Weaknesses and Threats:**

- Awareness of All of the Influences and Issues
- Post-secondary Supports for this Population
- Shortage of Quality Mental Health Services In and Out of Schools
- Communication, especially Continuity
- Attitudes towards and Unique Challenges of Addressing this Student Population

### **Timelines**

Capacity building activities began in February, 2015. Financial resources were identified and itemized to reflect restructuring represented in the responsibility chart. Activities continued through the spring, summer, and fall with presentations to partners. Presentations were informational to generate interest and involvement in the NDDPI and local special education unit efforts. In the same time period, the NDDPI and small groups of special education directors, coordinators and university professors developed a performance model, a planning process and a planning toolkit. The model and process are described in a planning guidebook. The toolkit, planning guide, and PowerPoint presentations were posted on the NDDPI website in September, 2015. Training to conduct the process was delivered during the June and September, 2015, Leadership Conferences. Technical assistance began immediately after the June conference and is ongoing throughout the planning and implementation periods.

The initial indicators to be evaluated in the planning process were identified by local special education directors and coordinators in June, 2015. EBPPs and programs that embed these practices were then identified for initial implementation. The professional development structures for those EBPPs and programs are described in Component #2 of this Phase II narrative.

Each local special education unit established a leadership team, conducted a needs assessment, identified goals and activities, and disseminated them to each school within the unit prior to the end of January, 2016. A written summary and the goals and activities were sent to the NDDPI.

The NDDPI has identified those goals and activities that are common statewide, regionally and those that are local specific. Initial statewide and regional activities will be planned by the NDDPI and conducted during summer, 2016, and the 2016- 2017 school year. Follow-up activities will be implemented in subsequent years. Local specific activities will be planned by the local special education administrative unit and conducted during the same time period. Applications for funding of local specific activities will become available through a competitive grant process in late spring, 2016, and in the spring of each year thereafter during the term of this effort. Local

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

Education Agency (LEA) training on restructuring local resources using the key components of "Implementation Drivers" from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, is scheduled for spring, 2016.

Goal timelines are set by each unit. An annual review of the progress or success of the units' implementation efforts occurs in the fall of each year. Results determine whether the unit will adjust, change, continue, or add new practices to their implementation efforts. Outcomes of those reviews are sent to the NDDPI and each school to report out to staff and constituents. The NDDPI will include this data in its annual review of the SSIP project.

The timelines for data collection and analyses for evaluation purposes are described in component #3 of this narrative.

### Support for EIS programs and providers Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices

- (a) Specify how the State will support EIS providers in implementing the evidence-based practices that will result in changes in Lead Agency, EIS program, and EIS provider practices to achieve the SIMR(s) for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
- (b) Identify steps and specific activities needed to implement the coherent improvement strategies, including communication strategies and stakeholder involvement; how identified barriers will be addressed; who will be in charge of implementing; how the activities will be implemented with fidelity; the resources that will be used to implement them; and timelines for completion.
- (c) Specify how the State will involve multiple offices within the Lead Agency (and other State agencies such as the SEA) to support EIS providers in scaling up and sustaining the implementation of the evidence-based practices once they have been implemented with fidelity.

The purpose of restructuring activities described in Component #1 is to support LEAs in the identification and implementation of EBPPs. These activities are described in more detail in this component.

### Financial

IDEA-B discretionary funds are available to assist local special education units in conducting the initial planning process and the initial professional development activities for selected EBPPs and programs. A discretionary funding application for planning is included within the online toolkit. A competitive grant application for professional development activities has been available for several years. The new application will require the NDDPI to modify the invitation for proposals, the proposal description, the application, and the budget form to align with the implementation of selected programs and resources.

Discretionary/competitive grant funds awarded must be used to supplement and not supplant improvement efforts. Local special education units must provide justification for the use and the amounts requested. They are required to document the amounts from other sources that are dedicated to their improvement planning efforts.

### Technical Assistance (TA)

Initial technical assistance (TA) focuses on fidelity of implementation of the new planning process. A fidelity rating for each component of the planning process will provide units with feedback regarding process fidelity. Fidelity ratings direct future technical assistance for the annual reviews and the next full planning cycle. Fidelity elements are:

#### *Component- Leadership Team*

- Representation of All Important Stakeholder Groups- Unit Specific
- Active Participation

#### *Component- Needs Assessment*

- Follow the Process:
  1. Data & Evidence Process-
  2. Collect/Gather
  3. Analyze
  4. Prioritize
  5. Root Cause Analysis
  6. Summarize
  7. Evaluate Present Performance using Rubrics
  8. Determine Performance Areas for Improvement

#### *Component- Goals*

- Self-Explanatory
- AdvancED Format
- Timeline includes Activities Implemented in Summer, 2016, and/or the 2016-17 School Year.

#### *Component- Dissemination*

- Three Points:
  1. Each School within Local Unit- Expectation to Disseminate to School Staff, Families, and Community
  2. Local Unit Board and all Special Education Staff

*Component- Evaluation*

- Summative- Evaluates Success- End of Timeline
- Formative- Evaluates Progress- Within the Timeline
- Fidelity- Implementation as Intended

*Component- Reporting Out*

- Three Times:
  1. Beginning- Goals/Objectives, Strategies, Activities, Evaluations
  2. Checkpoints- Formative Evaluation at Scheduled Intervals
  3. End- Summative Evaluation Results

The NDDPI provided additional TA to stakeholders in the development of the EBPPs and resources/tools/programs lists within the performance planning model. Online searches by the NDDPI staff and the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) identified literature for review. Evidence based practices mentioned most frequently as effective instructional and support practices were included in the EBPPs list for each indicator.

The NDDPI staff facilitated a group of local special education unit directors and coordinators in the development of a vetting process to identify resources/tools/programs with embedded EBPPs for each indicator. The following evaluation rubric was used:

**Program, Developer, and Publisher- \_\_\_\_\_**

Yes/No	Criteria
Y N	1) The program has been reviewed and evaluated for standards of evidence by an organization such as “What Works Clearinghouse.”
Y N	2) If not, there is evidence that the strategy has been researched and proven effective with our target population.
Y N	3) For those with limited evidence, the program has been implemented and proven successful in North Dakota schools.
Y N	4) The program comes with descriptions of procedures and includes methods or suggestions for evaluating progress and fidelity of implementation.
Y N	<b>Approved?</b> #1 or #2 must be marked “Y”; or, #3 AND #4 must be marked “Y”.

The first two criteria are primary components of the definition of “evidence based” practices. The last two define “promising” practices and provide credence to existing North Dakota successful efforts.

The Project Technical Assistance Team will coordinate with the Project Professional Development Team to provide quality professional development that directs adequate implementation and includes follow-up supports for sustainability.

**Professional Development (PD)**

The NDDPI PD structures align with initial indicators evaluated in the local planning process - 1) self-regulation/engagement indicator for elementary and middle schools; and, 2) behavioral indicator for high schools. Local special education units evaluated Individual Education Program (IEP) teams’ current use of student-centered goals that address self-regulation skills. Each local special education unit evaluated classroom teachers’ competency levels for the implementation of practices and programs that increase classroom engagement, including the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. Local special education units evaluated an IEP teams’ current use of functional behavior assessments prior to behavioral intervention planning (FBA-BIP) for the behavioral indicator.

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

They could also evaluate the administration’s use of an early warning system that includes the consideration of data regarding behavior, social/emotional, and/or mental health concerns. PD structures include:

**Self-Regulation/Engagement/Early Warning Systems Structure**

The structure provides training and technical assistance that address initial and advanced program implementation needs, as well as the follow-up and technical assistance that will increase sustainability of the program when an effective level of implementation is reached. The structure also recognizes the need for statewide, regional and local training opportunities.

PDstructureUDL

**Adaptations to the Structure**

**Self-Regulation Skills-** PD activities addressing programs that can be used to teach self-regulation skills will result in an increase in the inclusion of self-regulation goals in students’ IEPs and the carry-over of those self-regulation skills to the classroom. The providers in the structure are program specific trainers who can provide statewide, regional, or local training, as well as work with local systems to provide technical assistance and follow-up for successful/sustainable implementation.

**Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Engagement Principle** – Districts and Regional Education Agencies (REAs) report that they have on-going professional development activities regarding UDL. UDL has also been a focus for training by the NDDPI, Special Education office and training materials are available on the NDDPI website. The NDDPI, school districts and REAs have identified trainers that deliver statewide, regional or local face-to-face or web-based trainings. The NDDPI will work with districts, local special education units and REAs to emphasize the inclusion of follow-up training and technical assistance in their professional development activities.

**Early Warning Systems-** Many North Dakota secondary schools use student performance data to identify students who are at-risk of school failure. They subsequently design appropriate interventions to decrease risk and improve school performance. Local special education units will evaluate the inclusion of behavioral, social/emotional and mental health data within those identification and intervention systems. The NDDPI will support the use of behavioral, social/emotional, or mental health measures as screening tools in the identification of at-risk students, but more importantly as diagnostic tools in the design of interventions for the target population. The Project Professional Development Team has reviewed the literature and will produce a list of measures that can be selected for use by North Dakota secondary schools. The providers in the structure are measurement specific trainers providing initial statewide, regional or locally specific training, as well as working with local systems to provide technical assistance and follow-up.

**Functional Behavioral Assessment Leading to Behavior Intervention Planning (FBA-BIP) Structure**

The NDDPI has supported the use of *Prevent Teach Reinforce* (PTR) (Dunlop, Iovannone, Kincaid, Wilson, Christiansen, Strain, English, & Sugai) for several years. The NDDPI SSIP efforts will continue that support. The Project Professional Development Team has developed a structure that results in the successful implementation of the program in a local special education unit. PTR focuses not

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

only on functional behavior assessment and behavior intervention planning, but also on the system supports needed for staff to successfully implement the planned student intervention.

The PTR structure addresses system supports and increases the likelihood of success for the statewide system implementation of PTR.



A “Master Coach Cadre” was identified with the assistance of Dr. Rose Iovannone, University of South Florida, a developer of the PTR program and trainer for North Dakota’s previous PTR implementation work. Master Coach training was conducted by Dr. Iovannone throughout the 2015-16 school year. That Master Coach Cadre and Dr. Iovannone will conduct unit facilitator and building team training beginning in summer, 2016, and extend it throughout the 2016-17 school year. The training will require each facilitator to identify a building team to guide the process and identify supports needed for successful implementation. Continual training of coaches, unit facilitators, and building teams will be required to sustain this practice.

**Other PD Activities**

**Local Level Restructuring**

In addition to the above PD structures, the Project Professional Development Team has considered a PD structure that addresses local system supports and restructuring. The State Implementation Team of the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) developed a model to scale-up the implementation of the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) strategy. The model uses implementation drivers outlined by the *Active Implementation Hub* of the *National Implementation Research Network* at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, to define the system supports and practices that will facilitate successful implementation of the MTSS strategies. The structure within the SPDG model for professional development that addresses these supports and practices is similar to the structure of FBA-BIP. It uses trained regionally-based individuals to coach local facilitators in guiding schools to adjust, change or add supports and practices to achieve successful implementation. Those trained regionally-based individuals are accessed through the North Dakota Regional Education Associations (REAs) participating on the State Implementation Team. Regionally based individuals will coach local special education unit directors and board members. The local directors and board members will guide schools to adjust, change, or add supports that will achieve successful implementation of programs identified in the improvement planning process.

**Guidelines for Students with Emotional Disturbance**

The current edition of the NDDPI guidelines has a publication date of 3/21/07 and is scheduled to be updated in fall, 2016. Participants in the guidelines work group include members of the Project Professional Development Team and representatives from local education agencies, various divisions of the Department of Human Services, State legislature, family-advocates, private providers, and North Dakota universities. Facilitation is provided through a contract with the Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education Center (TAESE).

**Evaluation**

- (a) Specify how the evaluation is aligned to the theory of action and other components of the SSIP and the extent to which it includes short-term and long-term objectives to measure implementation of the SSIP and its impact on achieving measurable improvement in SIMR(s) for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
- (b) Specify how the evaluation includes stakeholders and how information from the evaluation will be disseminated to stakeholders.
- (c) Specify the methods that the State will use to collect and analyze data to evaluate implementation and outcomes of the SSIP and the progress toward achieving intended improvements in the SIMR(s).
- (d) Specify how the State will use the evaluation data to examine the effectiveness of the implementation; assess the State’s progress toward achieving intended improvements; and to make modifications to the SSIP as necessary.

**Evaluation Plan**

The NDDPI evaluation plan was developed internally to validate ownership and direct responsibility for the success of this SSIP effort.

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

Three short term objectives drive the formative evaluation of the plan. Three long term objectives drive the summative evaluation of the plan.

- Short Term Objectives:
  1. The NDDPI will annually provide adequate and appropriate financial, technical assistance, and professional development resources to increase the number and type of evidence based and promising practices successfully implemented in North Dakota (ND) schools for the SSIP target population.
  2. The NDDPI will annually provide adequate and appropriate advocacy to increase services available to the ND SSIP target population.
  3. The NDDPI will meet or exceed the annual targets (60.22%, 60.22%, 61.22%, 63.22%, and 66.72%) of Indicator 17, Six-year Extended Graduation Rate, for ND students identified as emotionally disturbed.
- Long Term Objectives:
  66. The NDDPI will meet or exceed the ending target (66.72%) of Indicator 17, Six-year Extended Graduation Rate, for students identified as emotionally disturbed.
  67. The NDDPI will increase the Indicator 1, Graduation Rate, and the Indicator 3, Academic Proficiency Rate, for all ND students with disabilities.
  68. The NDDPI will decrease the Indicator 2, Drop-out Rate, for all ND students with disabilities.

The following narrative describes the development process, the collection tools, the analyses, the schedule, and the stakeholder involvement of the evaluation plan.

### **Evaluation Plan Process:**

Improving the graduation rates of students with emotional disturbance requires an adjustment in the performance of people across the system. This adjustment focuses on the increased implementation of evidence based and promising practices (EBPPs), as well as the increase in mental health services available to the target population. The NDDPI evaluation plan will measure that implementation and availability, as well as the appropriateness and adequacy of the inputs and strategies. It will measure student performance outcomes to evaluate the student effects of the increase in EBPPs and services.

The NDDPI aligned the evaluation plan to the Phase I, Theory of Action, containing the elements mentioned above. Each element is evaluated as a formative measure of progress or a summative measure of success. The alignment of the elements with those in the Theory of Action includes:

- Inputs- Technical Assistance, Resource Allocation and Relationship Building (Partnerships).
- Strategies- Planning that results in the identification of EBPPs; Resources that are adequate for LEAs to plan for and implement EBPPs; and, Advocacy that increases the mental health services available for the target population.
- Outputs- Increase in the implementation of EBPPs and an increase in services available to the target population.
- Short Term Outcomes- An improvement in the six year extended graduation rate of students identified as having an emotional disturbance.

The increased implementation of EBPPs and services for the target population will have a positive effect on the performance of all students with disabilities in North Dakota. With clarification from Dr. Tom Fiore's presentation at the Albuquerque, Interactive Institute and the National Center for Systemic Improvement's hosted evaluation webinars, the NDDPI added a fifth element to the evaluation plan, "Long Term Outcomes."

- Long Term Outcomes- An improvement in the graduation rates, drop-out rates and proficiency rates of all students with disabilities.

Initial questions regarding the evaluation of each element were presented to the Project Teams for discussion. Discussion clarified an analysis for each element and the information needed to complete it. Collection tools were then developed. The progression is summarized below:

### **Evaluation Plan Discussion:**

- **Inputs- Questions-** Is the NDDPI providing adequate and appropriate leadership through TA, resource allocations, and partnerships? Is the NDDPI involved in a variety of advocacy activities within and outside the education community to increase mental health services? With whom and what activity? How does the NDDPI ensure implementation fidelity of evidence based practices by each local unit?

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

1. Define Adequate and Appropriate TA, Resource Allocations, and Partnerships. Definitions will drive collection instruments and methodologies.
- **Technical Assistance- Focus on Fidelity.** Use local improvement plan entries and the type and frequency of communications with the local special education units to determine process fidelity for each unit. Provide ratings as feedback to use in formative evaluation of their efforts. Use the fidelity ratings to direct future TA provided to the units. The NDDPI does not have the authority to require that a measure of implementation fidelity be included in the improvement plans of local special education units. The NDDPI can emphasize implementation fidelity of the evidence based practices and encourage the inclusion of a fidelity measure within the evaluation components of the local special education unit efforts.
- **Resource Allocation-** The infrastructure changes and activities that the NDDPI has completed and engaged in can be listed for each of the state level indicators used in the infrastructure analysis of Phase I. An analysis would determine whether those activities were enough to meet the level of performance within the indicator statement.
- **Partnerships-** What are the partnerships that the NDDPI has developed that assist in carrying out the strategies? Those partnerships need to be within and outside the education community.
- **Strategies- Questions-** Are local special education units implementing the planning process with fidelity? How will the NDDPI use information about fidelity? Are the resources committed to planning and implementation adequate to result in an increase in EBPPs and services? What are the advocacy activities that the NDDPI engages in, alone or with partners? Are the activities appropriate to increase mental health services?
  1. **Process Fidelity-** Define planning process fidelity by identifying crucial fidelity elements for each of the six process components. Then use communications log entries and information provided by locals in their improvement plan entries to rate the fidelity of each component for each unit. Listing these ratings in a spreadsheet will provide the NDDPI with a statewide perspective about fidelity and direct future technical assistance.
  2. **Resource Allocation-** Use Phase I, State Level Indicators from InDistar/Academic Development Institute, and corresponding capacity building activities to rate current status and determine priority for adjustment or change.
  3. **Advocacy-** List all advocacy activities in a log. For a baseline, list anything new since January, 2015. Activities and the advocacy results log are used to conduct a cause analysis and verify the link between activities and the increase in mental health services.
- **Outputs- Questions-** Is there an increase in the number and type of EBPPs implemented in ND schools? Is there an increase in the competency level of ND educators to implement such practices? How does the NDDPI establish a baseline for the practices? How does the NDDPI gather information about the successful implementation of practices to recommend them for replication in other units? Is there an increase in mental health services for the targeted population of students? What is the alignment of advocacy to the increase in services? Is it making a difference? Baseline for services?
  1. **EBPPs-** Initial submission of written summary, goals, objectives, strategies, and activities will provide information to establish baseline. Each unit will submit formative and summative evaluation results that can be used to identify additional successful practices.
  2. **Services-** List of advocacy activities and a list of services that are new since January, 2015. Determine alignment of the advocacy activities to the services using a cause analysis.
- **Short Term Outcomes- Question-** Is the NDDPI meeting annual targets for the SiMR?
  1. **Targets-** six year extended graduation rates for students identified with an emotional disturbance (ED). Information is provided through a contract with Data Enterprises, Inc., out of Colorado.
- **Long Term Outcomes- Questions-** Are graduation rates and achievement proficiency rates for all SWD increasing? Are drop-out rates for all SWD decreasing?
  1. The NDDPI currently looks at annual data for all students with disabilities to determine fluctuations as part of an annual focused monitoring data drill down.

### Evaluation Plan Data Collection Tools (see attached document, SSIP Collection Tools):

#### **Inputs regarding TA**

Communication Log- entries began in July, 2015, and will be ongoing throughout the term of the initial planning process. Entries will be used to determine fidelity ratings both after completing the first four and then all six steps of the initial planning process.

Improvement Plan Entries- the "Dissemination" component of the improvement planning process includes the submission of the written summary and the improvement goals, strategies, and activities to the NDDPI, Special Education office. The "Reporting Out" component includes reporting the results of formative and summative evaluation and updates of the written summary to the NDDPI. These will be used to determine fidelity ratings at each point mentioned above.

#### **Inputs regarding Resource Allocation**

Capacity Building Activities Log- resource, technical assistance, professional development, and advocacy activities are recorded in the appropriate activities column of the "Resource Allocation Rubric." They will be used to identify the current and priority status in meeting the level of performance implied within each of the state level indicators of the evaluation rubric.

#### **Inputs regarding Partnerships**

Partner Lists- the NDDPI list of partners is identified with each of the activity descriptions under the "Technical Assistance, Professional Development, and Financial Resources" section of Component #1. It includes partners within the NDDPI, as well as partners within and outside of the education profession. Partner involvement will be used to determine current and priority status ratings for the indicators in

### Strategies regarding Planning Process Fidelity

Fidelity Local Special Education Unit Feedback Form- the Project Technical Assistance Team will use the "Communication Log" and the "Improvement Plan Entries" (above) to determine the fidelity of implementation of the planning process. Each unit is provided a completed fidelity feedback form after initially completing the first four steps of the planning process. Then again at the end of the planning process before determining the process component to start the subsequent reviews.

Fidelity Ratings- the NDDPI Project Leadership Team will collect unit fidelity ratings for formative analysis on the same schedule as mentioned above to determine State fidelity averages that direct the NDDPI future technical assistance activities.

### Strategies regarding Implementation Capacity

Resource Allocation Rubric- the evaluation rubric lists the state level indicators adapted from the InDistar/Academic Development Institute's district level indicators. Aligned with each indicator are capacity building activities identified by the NDDPI Project Teams. This allows Project Teams to annually evaluate the current status of the NDDPI efforts in meeting the level of performance implied within the indicators. Then determine the priority for adjustment/modification and make recommendations to the SSIP Leadership Team for activities in subsequent years.

### Strategies regarding Advocacy

Advocacy Activity Log- Entries will be used to determine the current status for indicators in the above "Resource Allocation Rubric." It is the belief of the NDDPI staff that increasing the number and type of services available to students with behavioral, social/emotional, social communication and mental health needs will keep them in school and thus increase their graduation rates. To verify that belief and sustain the SSIP work, it is important to establish a cause/effect relationship between the NDDPI advocacy activities and an increase in mental health services available to the targeted group of students. These activities are evidence factors to be used in a cause analysis using the Advocacy Results Log (described below).

### Outputs regarding EBPPs

EBPPs Results Log- The Project Teams will use this spreadsheet to annually analyze the number and type of EBPPs; and, the competency levels of practitioners to implement them. Data from initial submissions of units' written summaries and goals, strategies and activities will provide the NDDPI leadership team with baseline data. The four point rating scale used for the competency level corresponds to the scale used in the diagnostic survey administered by the local special education units in the needs assessment component of the planning process. Submission of the units' progress checks and annual reviews will provide data to determine increases, decreases and trends. These will be used to make determinations regarding future resource allocations and annual success of the overall effort.

### Outputs regarding Services

Services Results Log- The NDDPI, Special Education Unit staff will use a results log to list various educational and treatment services initiated or expanded and made available to students with behavioral, social/emotional, social communication and mental health needs. The start date of the log is January 1, 2015, when the NDDPI began notifications regarding its State identified Measureable Result (SiMR) and the strategies to improve it. The list will be included in an annual cause analysis to provide value to the NDDPI staff for a continuation of its advocacy activities.

### Short Term Outcomes

Indicator 17 Results- The six year extended graduation rates for students with emotional disturbance will be compared annually to the target rates set in Phase I of the North Dakota SSIP. The comparison will provide formative information regarding the effects of the improvement efforts on the performance of students. The final comparison of these rates will provide summative information regarding the overall success of the North Dakota SSIP efforts.

### Long Term Outcomes

Indicator 1, 2, and 3 Results- Graduation rates, drop-out rates and academic proficiency rates of all North Dakota students with disabilities are annually analyzed for the SPP/APR. The results are analyzed as part of the State's focused monitoring process data drill down. The final comparison of these rates will provide summative information regarding the success of the ND SSIP efforts on all ND students with disabilities.

### Evaluation Plan Analyses and Schedule:

**Formative Evaluation**- The NDDPI evaluation plan includes four system performance analyses and one student performance analysis to check progress of the SSIP efforts. The questions and schedules for each analysis are listed below:

*Note- The years are calendar, rather than fiscal years.*

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR) System Performance Analyses:

- Planning Fidelity Analysis-
  - Schedule- June/July, 2016
  - Questions- Which components had the lowest and highest fidelity? What is the statewide overall fidelity rating? How can these results be used to direct future TA regarding planning process fidelity?
- Activity Priority Analysis-
  - Schedule- May, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019
  - Questions- Which indicators have the lowest and highest priority for modifications in the NDDPI activities that build capacity? Which of the highest priority indicators will be chosen for capacity building activity modifications in the next year? What are those modifications in activities? What do those modifications mean to the NDDPI structures already in place? How will those modifications be sequenced for implementation in the next year?
- Advocacy Cause Analysis-
  - Schedule- July/August, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019
  - Questions- What services are new and available to the target population? What services are expanded and available to the target population? What are the contributing factors for each increased or expanded service in the advocacy results log? Are the NDDPI activities listed in the advocacy activity log included in those contributing factors? Should similar activities be used to influence an increase or expansion of services over the next year? Do new activities need to be added to influence an increase in services over the next year?
- EBPPs Results Analysis-
  - Schedule- June/July, 2017, 2018, 2019
  - Questions- Is there an increase in the number of practices/programs used in North Dakota schools? Is there an increase in the types of practices/programs (self-regulation, executive functioning, academic supports, behavioral supports, parent/student/family/community supports)? Is there an increase in the competency level of staff to implement the practices/programs?

### Student performance Analysis:

- Indicator 17 Results Analysis-
  - Schedule- June/July/August, 2017, 2018
  - Questions- What is the six year extended graduation rate for students identified with emotional disabilities for the past year? Are the results at, above or below the target? Review the recommendations for modifications. Are the recommendations sufficient to reach the target in the next year? If not, what modifications are needed?

**Summative Evaluation-** The NDDPI evaluation plan includes two student performance analyses to determine the success of the SSIP efforts.

### Student Performance Analyses:

- Indicator 17 Results Analysis-
  - Schedule- June/July/August, 2019
  - Questions- Was the final student performance target met? If so, how will the NDDPI and its partners celebrate? If not, what are the contributing factors to low student performance? How can those factors be mitigated in the next improvement cycle?
- Indicators 1, 2, and 3 Results Analysis-
  - Schedule- June/July/August, 2019
  - Questions- Were the results for all students with disabilities for Indicator 1 and 3 above 2015 results? If so, can the implementation of EBPPs by local units be a contributing factor? Were the results for all students with disabilities for Indicator 2 below 2015 results? If so, can the implementation of EBPPs by local units be a contributing factor?

### Evaluation Plan Logic Model

The resulting evaluation logic model (Please see attached document, *SSIP Evaluation Logic Model*) visually represents the NDDPI SSIP evaluation plan. It includes the general elements of the Theory of Action, the corresponding North Dakota elements, the collection tools used to gather the information necessary to evaluate each component, and the pathways of influence and information.

### Evaluation Plan Stakeholder Involvement:

**Data Collection:** The NDDPI Project Teams are responsible to enter data into the collection tools. The local special education unit directors are responsible for submission of the written summary and the goals, strategies and activities to the NDDPI. They are also responsible for the submission of any updates.

**Analyses:** The Phase II Project Leadership Team will conduct analyses scheduled for 2016. This team will be reconfigured for Phase III to include representatives from the NDDPI Units, the Director's Study Council of the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders, the IDEA Advisory Committee, and Parent organizations. The Phase III Project Leadership Team will conduct analyses scheduled for 2017, 2018, and 2019. They will also produce recommendations that will be vetted through the IDEA Advisory Committee before decisions regarding adjustments and changes are made by the NDDPI, Special Education Director and the NDDPI, Administration. Members of the IDEA Advisory Committee include representatives from parents, the parent training center, individuals with disabilities/self-advocates, Protection and Advocacy, North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders, Directors' Study Council, and various State agencies.

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

**Results:** Each member of the Phase III Leadership Team and the IDEA Advisory Committee serve as representatives from State agencies or constituency groups. Members are responsible to communicate results to the agencies and groups that they represent. The NDDPI, Special Education Unit staff will provide summary materials and assistance. The Unit staff will include result summaries at the annual fall Directors' Leadership Conference. Summary articles will be included in the NDDPI, Federal Programs and Special Education monthly, TEAM News, and the Superintendent's quarterly, ConnectEd. Results will also be reported in the annual SPP/APR posted on the NDDPI website. Questions and concerns will be directed to the NDDPI, Special Education Director or the Project Lead.

### Technical Assistance and Support

Describe the support the State needs to develop and implement an effective SSIP. Areas to consider include: Infrastructure development; Support for EIS programs and providers implementation of EBP; Evaluation; and Stakeholder involvement in Phase II.

#### Additional Component- Technical Assistance (TA) and Support

The NDDPI has received support and TA for the development of its SSIP from the IDEA Data Center (IDC), the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI), the Regional Education Laboratories (REL), the Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education Center (TAESE), and the National Post-School Outcomes Center (NPSO), now incorporated into the National Technical Assistance Center for Transition (NTACT). Additional resources, support, and TA were provided through participation at an IDC Interactive Institute, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Leadership Conferences, OSEP monthly TA calls, and NCSI hosted TA calls.

The NDDPI will continue to access resources and seek TA from OSEP, IDC, and NCSI throughout the implementation of the SSIP. A particular area of focus will increase the communications to and from the constituencies of the representatives of the Phase III Leadership Team and IDEA Advisory Committee. Another area of focus will increase the emphasis on EBPP/program implementation fidelity. TA through a grant awarded from NTACT will focus on the development and implementation of cooperative transition instructional activities and the development of work-based learning sites in rural and small communities. The TA aligns with our SSIP efforts by increasing services available and improving the engagement of the target population in transition and work-based learning opportunities. TA regarding the statewide implementation of *Prevent Teach Reinforce* will be provided by Dr. Rose Iovannone, program developer.

#### Phase III submissions should include:

- Data-based justifications for any changes in implementation activities.
- Data to support that the State is on the right path, if no adjustments are being proposed.
- Descriptions of how stakeholders have been involved, including in decision-making.

#### A. Summary of Phase 3

1. Theory of action or logic model for the SSIP, including the SiMR.
2. The coherent improvement strategies or principle activities employed during the year, including infrastructure improvement strategies.
3. The specific evidence-based practices that have been implemented to date.
4. Brief overview of the year's evaluation activities, measures, and outcomes.
5. Highlights of changes to implementation and improvement strategies.

#### Introduction to Phase III

The North Dakota State identified Measureable Result (SiMR) is an increase in the extended six-year graduation rate for students identified as having an emotional disturbance. The State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) efforts to increase graduation rates target students with behavioral, social/emotional, social communication and mental health needs.

The NDDPI Theory of Action directs technical assistance, professional development, financial, staff time and relationship-building resources to local level identification and effective implementation of evidence based and promising practices. The outcomes of the successful implementation of these practices will keep the targeted group of students in school, provide incentives to come back to school, assist them to earn a diploma, and graduate. (See previous attachment titled, **SSIPtheoryofaction**.)

The NDDPI implementation plan contains five coherent strategies that direct specific NDDPI resources to local special education units:

1. In cooperation with its partners, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) will develop a local continuous improvement planning process specific to this effort, and aligned to the present *AdvancED* model used by North Dakota schools. The goals and activities identified in this process must be entered into the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) of each school within a local special education unit to reach full school approval status through the State Superintendent's office.
2. In cooperation with other NDDPI offices, the NDDPI Special Education office will provide technical assistance and financial resources to assist local special education units to conduct a planning process. The process results in the identification of evidence-based practices implemented in their schools.
3. In cooperation with its partners, the NDDPI will assist and support local special education units to design and deliver quality professional development that implements the identified evidence based practices and programs.

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

4. In cooperation with its partners, the NDDPI Special Education office will assist local special education units to monitor progress and evaluate their implementation efforts.
5. In cooperation with its partners, NDDPI will promote an increase in the availability of public and private mental health services for students identified with mental health needs, including those identified with emotional disturbance.

Strategy #1 (continuous improvement planning model) and strategy #2 (planning process that results in identification of evidence-based practices) are completed. Strategy #3 (deliver quality professional development) is partially completed and has on-going activities moving into subsequent years of local implementation of EBPPs. Strategy #4 (monitor progress and evaluate success) is ongoing with initial technical assistance (TA) of the NDDPI focused on local formative evaluation of implementation fidelity and system performance. The NDDPI has been and will continue to be very active with its partners in promoting the increase in youth mental health services of strategy #5 (advocate with partners for an increase in mental health services).

The NDDPI conducted four formative evaluations scheduled at the end of the 2015-2016 school year as part of its evaluation plan. The first three analyzed the effectiveness of the NDDPI technical assistance, professional development, financial, time and relationship building resources of the first year. The fourth analyzed whether the efforts were effective in meeting the annual SiMR target. Below are the schedules and questions of these analyses:

- Planning Fidelity Analysis-
  - Schedule- June/July, 2016
  - Questions- Which components had the lowest and highest fidelity? What is the statewide overall fidelity rating? How can these results be used to direct future TA regarding planning process fidelity?
- Activity Priority Analysis-
  - Schedule- May/June, 2016
  - Questions- Which indicators have the lowest and highest priority for modifications in state activities? Which of the highest priority indicators will be chosen for capacity building activity modifications in the next year? What are those modifications in activities? What do those modifications mean to the NDDPI structures already in place?
- Advocacy Cause Analysis-
  - Schedule- July/August, 2016
  - Questions- What services are new and available to the target population? What services are expanded and available to the target population? Are there links back to the advocacy activities? Should similar activities be used to influence an increase or expansion of services over the next year? Do new activities need to be added to influence an increase in services over the next year?
- Indicator 17 Results Analysis-
  - Schedule- August/September, 2016
  - Questions- What is the six year extended graduation rate for students identified with emotional disabilities for the past year? Are the results at, above or below the target? Review the recommendations for adjustments. Are the recommendations sufficient to reach the target in the next year? If not, what additional ones are needed?

The results of the first two analyses redirected NDDPI technical assistance, financial, time and professional development resources to ensure effective first year local implementation of EBPPs. The "Advocacy Cause Analysis" identified the value of the NDDPI advocacy efforts and directed continuing advocacy activities. The "Indicator 17 Results Analysis" provided affirmation that the NDDPI implementation plan was effective.

**Phase III, Year 2 Updates are in the attached narrative (Titled, SSIP Phase III Year 2 Final Narrative) which follows the OSEP's outline.**

### B. Progress in Implementing the SSIP

1. Description of the State's SSIP implementation progress: (a) Description of extent to which the State has carried out its planned activities with fidelity—what has been accomplished, what milestones have been met, and whether the intended timeline has been followed and (b) Intended outputs that have been accomplished as a result of the implementation activities.
2. Stakeholder involvement in SSIP implementation: (a) How stakeholders have been informed of the ongoing implementation of the SSIP and (b) How stakeholders have had a voice and been involved in decision-making regarding the ongoing implementation of the SSIP.

### Strategy Implementation Progress

**Strategy #1- In cooperation with its partners, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) will develop a local continuous improvement planning process specific to this effort, and aligned to the present AdvancED model used by North Dakota schools. The goals and activities identified in this process must be entered into the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) of each school within a local special education unit to reach full school approval status through the State Superintendent's office.**

The NDDPI and some of its partners (Local special education directors, local special education coordinators, parents, universities, AdvancED, and other NDDPI offices) completed the planning model and process in the summer of 2015 (see previous attachment, titled, **spcedmodelandprocessguidebook**). The model aligned with that of AdvancED and extended two of its standards and three indicators for the target population. These AdvancED indicators addressed effective instruction and the implementation of effective academic and emotional supports to increase classroom engagement and improve school climate (proposed alternative measures in the North Dakota Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) application).

The special education planning model contained two standards and five indicators. The first standard addressed an improvement in instruction for the target student population. It used the engagement principle of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) breaking

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

instruction into self-regulation and executive function indicators. The second standard addressed specific supports to increase classroom engagement of the target population. Its indicators broke apart support into academic, behavioral and parent/community wrap-around supports.

A work group of local special education directors and coordinators, with facilitation from NDDPI, identified two of the five indicators of the planning model for local units to gather diagnostic information for the initial needs assessment. The first indicator was from the instructional improvement standard. It addresses the need for Individual Education Plan (IEP) teams to consider the explicit instruction of self-regulation skills. The second indicator was from the supports standard. It addresses the need for IEP teams to consider positive behavioral supports for these students. The director and coordinator group also developed sample collection tools used to gather diagnostic information for these two indicators as part of the needs assessment.

The thirty-one local special education units, each directed by a local improvement leadership team, completed the first four components of the planning process. They each developed two goals, one for instructional strategies and one for support strategies. These goals addressed the implementation of EBPPs in the 2016-2017 school year. School administrators entered those goals, along with a written summary of the planning process, into their school's continuous improvement plan using the AdvancED planning tool. The goals and the summary were then available to the public. With those entries, all schools reached full school approval status for the 2016-2017 school year.

The NDDPI provided leadership through communications with the regional and state offices of AdvancED, negotiating approval to extend indicators and use the AdvancED format of the AdvancED performance rubrics. The NDDPI facilitated meetings, wrote and edited drafts, and published and copied the guidebook. The NDDPI also posted the model and presentations on their website for reference.

**Strategy #2- In cooperation with other NDDPI offices, the NDDPI Special Education office will provide technical assistance and financial resources to assist local special education units to conduct a planning process. The process results in the identification of evidence-based practices implemented in their schools.**

The local special education units conducted the first four components of the planning process:

- Leadership team to provide guidance and support through the process,
- Needs assessment to gather data about current performance,
- Goals that identify the practices and programs selected for implementation and the activities that compose the implementation plan, and
- Disseminate goals and a written summary to each school and to the NDDPI special education office.

They identified over twenty EBPPs to plan implementation activities. The following chart shows the regional breakout of the most common:

### Evidence-based & Promising Practices/Programs (EBPPs)

	<u>Central</u>	<u>East</u>
<u>West</u>		
Dickinson, Northern Plains, Southwest, West River, Wilmac	Bismarck, Burleigh Co., East Central, Emmons Co., Fort Totten, Lonetree, Morton/Sioux, Oliver/Mercer, Peace Garden, Souris Valley, Minot, So. Cntrl. Prairie, Standing Rock, Turtle Mtn.	Fargo, Grand Forks, G/S/T, James River, Jamestown, Lake Region, Pembina, Rural Cass, Sheyenne Valley, So. Valley, Upper Valley, Wahpeton, West Fargo
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Zones of Regulation</li><li>• FBA-BIP or PTR</li><li>• Social Skills Training</li><li>• EWS/MTSS- diagnostic info re: Social/Emotional strengths &amp; deficits</li><li>• Nurtured Heart</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Zones of Regulation</li><li>• FBA-BIP or PTR</li><li>• Social Skills Training</li><li>• Nurtured Heart</li><li>• Use of Community Collaborative Groups &amp; School PLC's</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Zones of Regulation- (Leah Kuypers)</li><li>• FBA-BIP- Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) prior to Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP)</li><li>• PTR- <i>Prevent Teach Reinforce</i>, an FBA-BIP model (Dr. Rose Iovannone)</li><li>• Social Skills Training- various instructional programs that teach the acquisition and application of positive social skills. (Michelle Garcia Winner, Dr. Ross Greene, Dr. Jed Baker)</li><li>• <i>Nurtured Heart</i>- (Dr. Howard Glasser)</li><li>• EWS/MTSS- Gathering diagnostic information about students' social/emotional strengths and weaknesses as part of a system's Early Warning System/Multi-Tiered System of Supports model.</li><li>• PLC's- Professional Learning Communities</li></ul>	

The NDDPI provided technical assistance at two Leadership conferences, articles in monthly NDDPI publications and communications with individual local special education units. Some technical assistance regarding use of the AdvancED tool was provided by the North Dakota AdvancED office. Administrators familiar with the AdvancED model and serving on the local special education units'

## **FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

improvement leadership teams provided additional technical assistance. The NDDPI also provided financial opportunity through a competitive grant process. Five local special education units submitted proposals and were funded totalling \$30,000.00.

### **Strategy #3- In cooperation with its partners, the NDDPI will assist and support local special education units to design and deliver quality professional development that implements the identified evidence based practices and programs.**

Quality professional development characteristics were derived from the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality policy brief titled "High Quality Professional Development for All Teachers: Effectively Allocating Resources", February 2011.

- Alignment with school goals, state and district standards and other professional learning activities. This includes supporting continual professional communications with others.
- Focus on core content and modeling of teaching strategies for the content. This includes putting teacher supports such as instructional coaching in place.
- Inclusion of opportunities for active learning of new teaching strategies. This includes practicing what is learned, conducting demonstrations, group discussions, and reviewing student learning with others.
- Provision of opportunities for collaboration among teachers.
- Inclusion of embedded follow-up and continuous feedback. These support the sustained change expected in teacher practice.

The following NDDPI activities align with these characteristics:

The SSIP activities of each local special education unit align with its schools' state accreditation and school improvement strategies that increase engagement of students. Student engagement is now an alternative measure of the North Dakota Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) application. Many EBPPs are part of schools' early warning systems and multi-tiered system of supports, practices of many schools within the state. Units have grouped together with other units and Regional Education Associations (REAs) to facilitate professional communication.

A work group composed of the NDDPI SSIP Project Professional Development Team, Dr. Rose Iovannone (program developer), and representative local special education directors have defined the communication and coaching structures for implementation of the PTR model of FBA-BIP. They have set-up and begun delivery of professional development targeting the roles and responsibilities of master coaches, unit facilitators and building teams. The master coach cadre will provide ongoing training and support to unit facilitators. Unit facilitators will guide building level teams, assist in formative evaluation, including implementation fidelity, and assist in providing teacher supports. Building level teams conduct functional behavior assessments and behavior intervention plans.

The NDDPI SSIP Project Professional Development Team and representatives of parents, Department of Human Services- Divisions of Behavior Health and Developmental Disabilities, universities, private mental health providers, local special education practitioners and NDDPI staff are designing state-wide training to address the writing of student centered self-regulation and executive functioning acquisition and application goals. The goals direct instructional practice. The same work group will produce lists of self-regulation, executive functioning and social/emotional skill assessment tools that identify student strengths and weaknesses. IEP teams and problem solving teams of a school's MTSS model consider these individual diagnostic characteristics when designing appropriate instructional and behavioral interventions. The local special education units will need to purchase assessment tools and provide training on administration and use of results. This could be a barrier for some local special education units, so the NDDPI will provide financial assistance.

The local special education Directors' Study Council of the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders (NDCEL) set up statewide *Zones of Regulation* trainings for the 2016-2017 school year. The Council and individual local special education units worked with *Zones* trainers to design training for groups of local units at initial implementation, as well as for groups of units needing more advanced implementation training. The NDDPI Project Finance Team committed to funding the trainings. The Council and the NDDPI SSIP Project Professional Development Team encouraged the setup of communication and coaching structures within and amongst units.

Some special education local units worked together or with their REAs to set up various levels of *Nurtured Heart* and various levels and types of social skills instruction training. Others worked together to set up training on the use of community collaborative groups and regional or local PLC's. Paying for the extra time and travel to these group meetings will be a barrier to the small and very rural local special education units. The NDDPI will continue to provide some financial assistance.

The NDDPI SSIP Project Finance Team continued a competitive grant process that provides financial assistance to local units for the delivery of professional development activities. Proposals also requested funds for the development of communication and coaching structures. All proposals submitted for the 2016-2017 school year received funding. Funding totaled \$245,000.00.

### **Strategy #4- In cooperation with its partners, the NDDPI Special Education office will assist local special education units to monitor progress and evaluate their implementation efforts.**

The NDDPI SSIP efforts once again leveraged the authority of the State Superintendent to require the contents of a review plan for school approval. With input from the NDDPI SSIP Phase II Leadership Team and local special education unit directors, the State Superintendent approved the following recommendation:

- Each local special education unit will develop and implement formative evaluation. Each unit will send a summary of the results and the adjustments made in the plan to each school to include in their continuous improvement plan, as well as to the NDDPI, by August 2017. The NDDPI submission will provide assurance of meeting the requirement for the school approval process in the

The NDDPI SSIP Project Technical Assistance Team identified two formative measures for local special education unit implementation: 1) practice or program fidelity, and 2) system performance. Both measures identify growth in teachers' application of the practice or program. The local units report the results of both measures and any adjustments to their implementation plans in the State Superintendent required written summary. The NDDPI will use the reported growth to identify local units who may be struggling with effective implementation. Follow-up communications will identify needed supports. The NDDPI will assist with resources.

The NDDPI will focus technical assistance on the development, administration and use of fidelity rating profiles. The NDDPI will also adjust the file checklist and teacher application survey. They will measure growth in application of the practice or program from current performance levels identified in the original needs assessment. Results will provide local special education units the necessary feedback to define adjustments for the next year's efforts.

**Strategy #5- In cooperation with its partners, NDDPI will promote an increase in the availability of public and private mental health services for students identified with mental health needs, including those identified with emotional disturbance.**

There exists a high degree of collaboration among North Dakota public and private agencies and the NDDPI. For this SSIP effort, that collaboration directs resources to the complex issues surrounding youth mental health services. The NDDPI conducted formative evaluation to determine the effects of advocacy efforts. They surveyed NDDPI staff and identified activities that included advocacy for increases in mental health services. They also identified partners involved in those activities. The Team then surveyed staff and NDDPI partners (DHS, Private providers, parents, local special education coordinators) to identify increases in mental health services. A cause analysis determined the links between the activities and the increase in services. The evaluation results, analysis and the adjustments to future activities of the staff are contained in the next section.

**Phase III, Year 2 Updates are in the attached narrative (Titled, SSIP Phase III Year 2 Final Narrative) which follows the OSEP's outline.**

### C. Data on Implementation and Outcomes

1. How the State monitored and measured outputs to assess the effectiveness of the implementation plan: (a) How evaluation measures align with the theory of action, (b) Data sources for each key measure, (c) Description of baseline data for key measures, (d) Data collection procedures and associated timelines, (e) [If applicable] Sampling procedures, (f) [If appropriate] Planned data comparisons, and (g) How data management and data analysis procedures allow for assessment of progress toward achieving intended improvements
2. How the State has demonstrated progress and made modifications to the SSIP as necessary: (a) How the State has reviewed key data that provide evidence regarding progress toward achieving intended improvements to infrastructure and the SiMR, (b) Evidence of change to baseline data for key measures, (c) How data support changes that have been made to implementation and improvement strategies, (d) How data are informing next steps in the SSIP implementation, and (e) How data support planned modifications to intended outcomes (including the SiMR)—rationale or justification for the changes or how data support that the SSIP is on the right path
3. Stakeholder involvement in the SSIP evaluation: (a) How stakeholders have been informed of the ongoing evaluation of the SSIP and (b) How stakeholders have had a voice and been involved in decision-making regarding the ongoing evaluation of the SSIP

### NDDPI Formative Evaluations and Resulting Actions

The NDDPI conducted formative evaluations in the summer of 2016. The evaluations determined the adequacy of the NDDPI inputs to build local special education unit capacity for successful initial implementation of EBPPs and initiate or expand youth mental health services. One evaluated whether NDDPI and local special education unit efforts were adequate to meet the annual SiMR student performance target. Recommendations for adjustments in NDDPI efforts for the 2016-2017 year were outcomes of these evaluations.

The first formative measure to evaluate the NDDPI inputs of the theory of action, specifically the technical assistance regarding fidelity, was a measure of local special education units' level of implementation fidelity of the planning process. The planning model is a six component process with the first 4 components (Leadership Team, Needs Assessment, Goals, Dissemination) conducted in the first year of a five year cycle, and the next two components (Evaluation and Reporting) occurring each year thereafter. The NDDPI used the breakdown and weighting of fidelity components that were identified in the *Fidelity Local Special Education Unit Feedback Form* (see previous attachment titled, **SSIPcollectiontools**). Written summaries provided by local special education units and follow-up communications were also used to rate each unit's implementation fidelity of the first four components of the planning process. Each component was rated using a four-point scale. The elements of each component's fidelity rating and their weight are in the lower cells of the form. The NDDPI entered ratings into the feedback form and then sent the form to each local special education unit for review. The NDDPI listed statewide ratings as averages of the units' ratings. The NDDPI SSIP Phase II Leadership Team used these statewide averages in their analysis.

Statewide results- averages of the unit scores:

- Component #1 (Leadership Team) - Fidelity Rating- 3.0
- Component #2 (Needs Assessment) - Fidelity Rating- 4.0
- Component #3 (Goals) - Fidelity Rating- 4.0
- Component #4 (Dissemination) - Fidelity Rating- 3.5
- Overall fidelity rating for the first four components- 3.6

Analysis Questions- Which components had the lowest and highest fidelity? What is the statewide overall fidelity rating? How can these results be used to direct future TA regarding planning process fidelity?

- Needs Assessment and Goals were the components with the highest ratings. Each local unit conducted a thorough needs assessment and used the diagnostic information to develop improvement targets. Goal statements were written as action statements, understandable to staff and constituents, were appropriately written in the AdvancED format, and the activities listed

## FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

were to be completed within the 5-year improvement cycle.

- Leadership Team was the component with the lowest rating. A few local units did not involve available important stakeholders. Urban or close to urban special education units needed to include greater numbers and types of agency representatives and community providers than those in rural settings. Some local units did not have leadership team members actively engaged in the process. Active engagement was defined as having responsibilities disbursed amongst all team members with committees and subcommittees doing the work and reporting to the larger team.
- State average of "3.6" for overall fidelity reflects not only the technical assistance efforts of the NDDPI, but the value in aligning the special education planning model to the AdvancED model. Most local special education directors were not familiar with a planning model for program improvement. Principals, superintendents, and other administrators serving on the local units' board of directors and improvement leadership teams were familiar with the planning model of AdvancED. They provided additional technical assistance to the special education unit.

### Actions:

The NDDPI shared this analysis with the IDEA Advisory Committee and with other NDDPI staff. Their input directed the adjustment of NDDPI technical assistance, professional development, and financial resources.

### Recommendations:

- The NDDPI Special Education office include these results and suggestions for improvement in their annual Leadership Conferences. Suggestions should be provided for increasing the participation of parents and community members, as well as to more actively engage team members.
- The Project Technical Assistance Team make contact with those units with low fidelity ratings and encourage them to add to or change the membership of their improvement leadership teams as they move into implementation of the selected EBPPs.

The NDDPI has acted on both recommendations. The NDDPI Special Education office provided the unit fidelity ratings and state averages to participants at the June 2016, Leadership Conference. Follow-up with suggestions for improvement was provided at the September 2016, Leadership Conference. For most units, the ratings were cause for celebration. For some, they were cause for reflection and led to individual consultations with NDDPI SSIP Project Technical Assistance Team members.

An "Activity Priority Analysis" was the second formative evaluation conducted by the NDDPI. It measured the adequacy of NDDPI technical assistance, professional development, and financial inputs of the theory of action. The NDDPI SSIP Phase II Leadership Team used the, *Resource Allocation Rubric*, (see previous attachment titled, **ssipcollectiontools**) to list the NDDPI activities allocated to build local special education unit capacity. The NDDPI SSIP Phase II Leadership Team then rated the adequacy status in setting up local units for success. Those with the lowest adequacy ratings were prioritized for adjustment or change.

A three-point scale was used for both a status rating and a priority rating.

*Status Ratings: The current NDDPI performance status that assists local units to build capacity for initial implementation the next year. Questions to ask- Did the activities set-up the NDDPI and local units for success with the implementation of EBPPs. Was there an activity that we should have done to increase the likelihood of success?*

*Rating of 1- Adjustments/Additions of activities are needed for effective local implementation.*

*Rating of 2- Adjustments/Additions of activities may be needed for effective local implementation.*

*Rating of 3- Activities are sufficient for effective local implementation and do not require a priority rating.*

*Priority Ratings- For those with a 1 or 2 status rating: The priority for NDDPI adjustment or change to assist local special education units with effective implementation. Questions to ask- Which areas with a 1 or 2 status rating would have the highest priority to adjust, change or add activities for locals to achieve success in implementing EBPPs?*

*Rating of 1- Highest priority for adjustment/addition of activities.*

*Rating of 2- Medium priority for adjustment/addition of activities.*

*Rating of 3- Low priority for adjustment/addition of activities.*

The priority ratings were then used to answer the analysis questions:

### Analysis Questions:

- Which indicators have the lowest and highest priority for modifications in state activities?
- Which of the highest priority indicators will be chosen for capacity building activity modifications in the next year?
- What are those modifications in activities?
- What do those modifications mean to the NDDPI structures already in place?

## Results of the Question Analyses

Highest priority:

Indicators with priority ratings of 1 or 2.

- The NDDPI includes parent and community organizations in improvement planning, maintains regular communications with them, and encourages local special education units to do the same.
- The NDDPI assists local units with technology, training, and support to meet the individualized needs for integrated data collection, reporting and analysis systems.
- The NDDPI intervenes early with assistance when a local unit is not making adequate progress.
- The NDDPI operates with state-level and local unit level improvement teams that have a clearly defined purpose, regularly look at performance data and use that data to make decisions about improvement and professional development needs.

Lowest priority:

Indicators that were above the status average of “2.6”:

- The NDDPI sets a unified vision for special education improvement with the participation of a broad range of stakeholders.
- The NDDPI understands that local unit leaders have reasonable autonomy to do things differently in order to succeed.
- State level professional development based on needs of local units is built into the annual schedule by NDDPI, but local units are also given support in selecting training and consultation that fits the requirements of their improvement plans and their evolving needs.
- The NDDPI sets statewide achievement targets for the SiMR and assists the local units in setting appropriate and realistic achievement targets for unit level improvement efforts.

Further probing of the NDDPI SSIP Phase II Leadership Team, a comparison of the strengths to the priority results, and the consideration of the fidelity results from the first formative evaluation narrowed concerns for each of the four indicators identified as priorities. Specific concerns:

- Maintaining regular communications with parent and community organizations.
- Assisting local units with data collection and analysis systems as they move forward with implementation.
- Intervening early with assistance.
- Improvement teams having a clearly defined purpose.

Actions:

With more clearly defined concerns, the NDDPI Special Education Project Team received input from the NDDPI SSIP Phase II Leadership Team, the IDEA Advisory Committee, the liaisons with the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI), and the IDEA Data Center (IDC). Input received allowed for adjustments and additions to the activities that assist local units with effective implementation. The following chart lists those activities:

State Level Indicator Weakness	NDDPI Activities
The NDDPI includes parent and community organizations in improvement planning, maintains regular <b>communications</b> with them, and encourages local units to do the same.	<p>Improve frequency and type of communications from NDDPI to each stakeholder group, Leadership Team &amp; IDEA Advisory Committee. (Infographics)</p> <p>Assist members of the guidance groups to communicate effectively with their constituencies and bring their constituencies’ perspectives back to NDDPI. (<i>Leading by Convening</i> worksheet, develop communication structures, use Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) planning committee’s “report back” strategy at each meeting.)</p>
The NDDPI assists local units with technology, training, and support to meet the individualized needs for integrated <b>data collection</b> , reporting, and <b>analysis systems</b> .	<p>Focus on System Performance- Formative Evaluation of their efforts.</p> <p>· Fidelity Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-Report or Observation (Fidelity)</li> </ul>

Practice Profiles for Zones, Nurtured Heart & PTR)

. Increase in actual application of practice or program

- Specific Checklists and Surveys

Emphasize term of project- 5 Yrs. - and authority to gather formative data 1x per year for continuous improvement planning.

The NDDPI intervenes **early** with assistance when a local unit is not making adequate progress.

Increase communications regarding local progress during each implementation year using questionnaires and surveys.

Provide clear progress reporting templates for units to report formative data to NDDPI.

Clarify the purpose for each stakeholder group.

The NDDPI operates with state-level and local unit level improvement teams that have a **clearly defined purpose**, regularly look at performance data and use that data to make decisions about improvement and professional development needs.

Clarify roles/responsibilities as “representational” and “advisory”. ( *Leading by Convening* worksheet, State Supt’s “Call to Action” memo)

Define commitment/work load of members. (*Leading by Convening* worksheet)

These activities are the responsibility of the NDDPI SSIP Project Lead and the NDDPI SSIP Project Teams (Finance, Data, Technical Assistance, Professional Development, and Advocacy) during the second year of implementation. The NDDPI will continue to seek technical assistance from the NCSI, the IDC and recommendations from its IDEA Advisory Committee to develop and implement these activities.

An “Advocacy Cause Analysis” was the third formative measure to evaluate NDDPI inputs from the theory of action. It measured the value of the NDDPI relationship-building resources for increasing the mental health services available to youth. The NDDPI Project Data Team surveyed various NDDPI offices, including those that were members of the NDDPI SSIP Project Phase II Leadership Team. They listed NDDPI activities that included advocacy for an increase in youth mental health services. Then identified the stakeholder groups that were involved in the activity. Results were totaled in the, *Advocacy Activity Log*, collection tool. Log and totals are listed below:

Dates	NDDPI Activity	ND Educators	ND Ed. Admin.	DHS- BH	ND Legislature	NDDPI	DHS- DD	DHS- VR	DOC-DJS	Private MH Providers	Parents	Other
Fall 2014-Summer 2016	37 activities	31	31	17	8	37	11	6	8	16	26	23

ND Educators- Teachers, Counselors, Support Staff

ND Ed. Admin. - Principals, Superintendents, Directors of Special Education, Curriculum Directors, Asst. Principals, Asst. Superintendents, etc.

DHS-BH- Department of Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health

ND Legislature- Individual Legislators, Legislative Committees, Legislative Council, etc.

NDDPI- Other offices within the Department of Public Instruction

DHS- VR- Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

DOC- DJS- Department of Corrections, Division of Juvenile Services

Private Mental Health Providers- Community Private Providers, Provider Organizations, etc.

Other- Protection and Advocacy, Medical Institutions, Consumers, etc.

The thirty-seven activities included NDDPI sponsored presentations, legislative committee testimony, grant opportunities, and trainings; participation in statewide councils, advisory groups, task forces, and a transition community of practice; newsletters; and participation in conferences and trainings of other agencies. The other columns of the chart show the involvement of partners. Those groups with the highest amount of involvement are the offices of the NDDPI, ND educators, ND education administrators, parents, others, Department of Human Services-Behavioral Health, and private mental health providers.

The NDDPI SSIP Project Data Team then surveyed NDDPI staff and stakeholder group representatives involved in the advocacy activities. The survey asked them to identify initiated or expanded youth mental health services. A literature review and communications with representatives from the North Dakota Department of Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health, defined youth mental health services for survey participants:

Youth Mental Health Services- The prevention, intervention and treatment of youth mental health disorders. They include awareness, identification, evaluation, referral, therapy, counseling, rehabilitation, case management, crisis intervention, service coordination, employment, independent living, community inclusion, residential treatment, and substance abuse services.

The survey results were entered into the **Advocacy Results Log**, (see previous attachment titled, **SSIPcollectiontools**).

#### Services Summary:

1. Awareness of youth mental health issues in general
2. Awareness of the need for more youth mental health services
3. Educational services- identification, referral, supports, instruction, IEP social/emotional goals, positive behavioral supports, accommodations, evaluation, related services, school counseling, medication issues, food service issues, substance abuse issues
4. Collaboration of agencies, parents, communities
5. Awareness regarding the number of students, the disability types with mental health primary or comorbid diagnoses
6. Awareness of appropriate medication therapies
7. Use of educational school-wide programs with a cognitive behavioral therapy base
8. Increased use of cognitive behavioral strategies in educational interventions and clinical treatments for youth
9. Awareness of students in juvenile justice with mental health diagnoses and their need for specific services
10. Renewed emphasis on treatment services for youth with substance abuse issues
11. Awareness and inclusion of historical and situational trauma in identification and subsequent interventions, supports and treatment of youth
12. New medications to treat mental health disorders
13. *Unmasking Brain Injury*- Mental health therapeutic activity of ND Brain Injury Network
14. Consideration of providing case management and clinical counseling services in schools by independent practitioners
15. Greater number of school staff certified in Youth Mental Health First Aid
16. Renewal/sustaining of proactive and de-escalation programs
17. Increase in school screening for self-harm/suicide ideation
18. Clarification across the state of community agencies providing services, contact information and other resources available
19. Use of a common language
20. Increase in family engagement
21. Increase in number of agency funded grant opportunities to support employment of individuals with mental health needs

The NDDPI Special Education Office staff used the results of both surveys and a cause analysis to answer the analysis questions. The cause analysis looked at the PowerPoints, articles, testimony, and advisory group meeting minutes for reference to the lack of youth mental health services and then possible solutions.

Analysis Questions- What services are new and available to the target population? What services are expanded and available to the target population? Are there links back to the advocacy activities? Should similar activities be used to influence an increase or expansion of services over the next year? Do new activities need to be added to influence an increase in services over the next year?

#### Results of the Question Analyses:

- Four of the identified services were listed as initiated (12, 13, 14, 19), fifteen as expanded (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21) and two as both initiated and expanded (3, 4). There were more expanded services than initiated services; and, included some from all three main descriptors in the definition- prevention, intervention and treatment.
- The cause analysis tied each initiation or expansion of services to one or more of the NDDPI activities. It is noted that those

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

surveyed were members of the NDDPI staff or partners collaborating with the NDDPI. Many were participants in both the activity and service surveys, and due to thier bias, tended to report services that were the result of their collaborative efforts. Nonetheless, this cause analysis identified the value of their efforts to increase the number and types of mental health services available to North Dakota youth.

**Actions:**

- The NDDPI will continue to sponsor presentations, testimony, grant opportunities and trainings; participate in statewide councils, advocacy groups, task forces and communities of practice; publish newsletters; and participate in other agency conferences, presentations and trainings. The NDDPI will build positive relationships with new partners and sustain the relationships with existing partners.
- The number and type of advocacy activities will undoubtedly change as the NDDPI and local special education units move further into implementation of EBPPs. North Dakota should continue to see an increase in youth mental health services because of those activities.

**Stakeholder Involvement**

The progress and evaluation sections mention various stakeholders and stakeholder groups that were involved in the first year of implementation. These stakeholders participated in work groups, provided input, participated in surveys, and assisted with communications. Communications to and from stakeholders were via email, phone conferencing or face-to-face meetings. The NDDPI relied on the IDEA Advisory Committee and the NDDPI SSIP Phase II Leadership Team as the primary groups to provide initial implementation guidance and recommendations for adjustment to the NDDPI implementation plan. The IDEA Advisory Committee met quarterly. The Phase II Leadership Team met quarterly until the spring of 2016, and then met more frequently to complete the system formative evaluation and provide results to the IDEA Advisory Committee to make recommendations. Membership of these two groups:

- IDEA Advisory Committee- Parents, Consumers, Special Education Directors, Educational Administrators, Special Education Teachers, Related Service Personnel, Protection and Advocacy, Department of Human Services- various Divisions, and NDDPI staff.
- NDDPI Phase II Leadership Team- Office of Special Education, Office of Support and Innovation, Office of Safe and Healthy Schools, Office of Federal Title Programs, and Office of School Approval and Opportunity.

As the NDDPI moves into another year of implementation, a larger and broader representative leadership team will assist the NDDPI in the second year evaluation of implementation progress. This new NDDPI SSIP Leadership Team will conduct the planned formative evaluations and summarize results. They will submit results to the IDEA Advisory Committee to make recommendations for adjustments moving into the third year of implementation and assist the NDDPI to coordinate local efforts to increase engagement of the targeted group of students to improve subgroup performance under the proposed North Dakota ESSA plan. Participants will include staff from the NDDPI Offices of Special Education, Safe and Healthy Schools, Federal Title Programs, Support and Innovation, representatives from the IDEA Advisory Committee, the Director’s Study Council, parent groups, the North Dakota REAs and North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders (NDCEL).

**Phase III, Year 2 Updates are in the attached narrative (Titled, SSIP Phase III Year 2 Final Narrative) which follows the OSEP's outline.**

**D. Data Quality Issues: Data limitations that affected reports of progress in implementing the SSIP and achieving the SIMR**

1. Concern or limitations related to the quality or quantity of the data used to report progress or results
2. Implications for assessing progress or results
3. Plans for improving data quality

At the end of the second year of implementation, the local special education units are required to measure implementation fidelity of at least one EBPP implemented in their unit. The NDDPI will assist them to develop fidelity profiles that serve as a teaching tool, as well as a rating tool to gather baseline data regarding fidelity. The local special education units would like to use either a self-report or an observational methodology to collect fidelity ratings. The North Dakota liaisons from the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) discussed the problems with collecting reliable self-report data. The largest is controlling for teacher self-bias, resulting in an inflated fidelity rating. With fidelity being such an important factor for implementation success, the NDDPI SSIP Technical Assistance Team will direct the local units to collect fidelity data using the observational methodology. Local units will be encouraged to have one of the following with observational knowledge of teacher implementation of the program or practice to rate fidelity using the developed profile templates: a building level administrator, a grade level leader, a local special education unit director/coordinator. The local unit’s leadership team will use the ratings to decide adjustments to the local special education unit’s implementation plan to increase fidelity. The local unit will report both the rating results and the adjustments to the implementation plan to the NDDPI in the required written summary. The NDDPI SSIP Phase III Leadership Team and the IDEA Advisory Committee can then use the results to make adjustment recommendations for fidelity in the state implementation plan.

**Phase III, Year 2 Updates are in the attached narrative (Titled, SSIP Phase III Year 2 Final Narrative) which follows the OSEP's outline.**

**E. Progress Toward Achieving Intended Improvements**

1. Infrastructure changes that support SSIP initiatives, including how system changes support achievement of the SIMR, sustainability, and scale-up
2. Evidence that SSIP’s evidence-based practices are being carried out with fidelity and having the desired effects
3. Outcomes regarding progress toward short-term and long-term objectives that are necessary steps toward achieving the SIMR

The final formative evaluation conducted at the end of the first year of implementation was the “Indicator 17 Results Analysis”. Consistent with the process for consideration of the other sixteen Part B indicators, the NDDPI Special Education Office presented the annual six-year extended graduation rates for students identified with emotional disturbance and the annual target to the IDEA Advisory Committee. Also included was the cohort’s four-year graduation rate. The Committee conducted the analysis.

**Analysis Questions:**

What is the six year extended graduation rate for students identified with emotional disabilities for the past year?

Are the results at, above or below the target?

Review the recommendations for adjustments. Are the recommendations sufficient to reach the target in the next year?

If not, what additional ones are needed?

**Results of Question Analyses:**

- The extended six-year rate of the past year (students in the 2013-14 Cohort- high school start year 2010-11) is 57.01%.
- This is below the target of 60.22%.
- Additional observation- It is also 6.05 percentage points higher than the cohort’s four-year graduation rate of 50.96%. This increase reinforces the local districts’ continual efforts to keep students identified with emotional disabilities in school and assist them to earn a diploma.

This 2015 data shows NDDPI did not meet SiMR target. The effects of the SSIP efforts, however, would only be seen with those students in this cohort who re-entered school or continued in school beyond their 4-year graduation timeline. The effects of the scope of the SSIP work are reflected in the 6.05% increase in students who graduated. This “Indicator 17 Results Analysis” indicates that the NDDPI is below target, but on the right track with its SSIP implementation plan.

**Actions:**

- The IDEA Advisory Committee reviewed the recommendations for NDDPI activity adjustment resulting from the other formative measures, but did not provide additional recommendations for adjustments because of this analysis.

**Explanation of Slippage:**

The 6-year graduation rate for students with an Emotional Disability (ED) decreased by over three percentage points (3.41%). A further examination of the data, however, showed three more students graduated than in the previous year cohort. Even though there was an increase in the number of students with ED who graduated, compared to the previous year, the cohort size also increased by 11 students. Again, the special education units that had very small cohort sizes were more likely to experience decreased or low graduation rates, which also affected the state rate.

**Actions:**

NDDPI will follow up with additional communication to identify turn-around technical assistance needs in the special education units that saw a decrease or had very low graduation rates.

Phase III, Year 2 Updates are in the attached narrative (Titled, SSIP Phase III Year 2 Final Narrative) which follows the OSEP’s outline.

**F. Plans for Next Year**

1. Additional activities to be implemented next year, with timeline
2. Planned evaluation activities including data collection, measures, and expected outcomes
3. Anticipated barriers and steps to address those barriers
4. The State describes any needs for additional support and/or technical assistance

The NDDPI will continue to provide financial, technical assistance, professional development, and advocacy resources using the responsibility structure identified in Phase II- Project Leader, and Project Financial, Data, Technical Assistance, Professional Development and Advocacy Teams. The new NDDPI SSIP Leadership Team will assist with second year evaluations and the IDEA Advisory Committee will provide recommendations for adjustment.

**Second Year Evaluations:**

- A local “Planning Fidelity Analysis” that will add fidelity ratings for the last two components of the planning model- Evaluation and Reporting Out.
- A second year “Activity Priority Analysis”
- A second year “Advocacy Cause Analysis”
- An “Evidence-Based and Promising Practices Results Analysis” that measures the number and types of EBPPs implemented at the local level.
- An annual “Indicator 17 Results Analysis”

## **FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

The NDDPI SSIP Project Data Team will assist with data collection, compilation of results and analyses facilitation.

The Project Leader and Project Teams will clearly identify the purpose and workload of each stakeholder group assisting with implementation. Each group leader will use communication structures that explain how information will flow to and from constituencies of group members and incorporate ideas from *Leading by Convening* and the North Dakota planning process for the ESSA application.

Strategies three, four, and five adjustments:

### **Strategy #3- In cooperation with its partners, the NDDPI will assist and support local special education units to design and deliver quality professional development that implements the identified evidence based practices.**

- - The NDDPI training for the statewide implementation of Prevent Teach Reinforce (PTR) to conduct functional behavioral assessment prior to behavior intervention planning will continue. The established coaching and communication structures will support implementation of this practice.
  - The NDDPI SSIP Project Professional Development Team will finalize training for writing quality self-regulation and executive functioning goals. The training modules will be available to educational and clinical practitioners through electronic or face-to-face formats.
  - The NDDPI SSIP Project Professional Development Team will disseminate lists of vetted self-regulation, executive functioning and social/emotional assessment tools. Local special education units will decide on purchases and set up professional development to train staff on administration and use of results.
  - The NDDPI SSIP Project Professional Development Team will continue to encourage the use of unit wide coaching models in the continued implementation of EBPPs.
  - The NDDPI SSIP Project Financial Team will continue its grant funding focused on community collaboratives, area or regional PLC's, local assessment purchase and training, and assisting special education units whose formative evaluation results show little progress in implementing and sustaining EBPPs.

### **Strategy #4- In cooperation with its partners, the NDDPI Special Education Office will assist local special education units to monitor progress and evaluate their implementation efforts.**

- - The NDDPI SSIP Project Technical Assistance Team will communicate with local special education units regarding implementation fidelity of the continuous improvement planning process, in particular the Leadership Team, Evaluation and Reporting components.
  - The NDDPI SSIP Project Technical Assistance Team will assist local special education units in the development of fidelity profiles. The template of each fidelity profile is a teaching tool to inform staff about the important fidelity components of the identified programs and practices. It also is a collection tool for formative evaluation. Work groups of directors, coordinators, key program users, and the developer will complete the profile template for the three most common programs or practices identified through the planning process- Prevent Teach Reinforce (PTR), Zones of Regulation and Nurtured Heart.
  - The NDDPI SSIP Project Technical Assistance Team will assist local special education units to adjust the initial needs assessment surveys and student file checklists. These collection tools will gather data regarding staff application of an identified practice or program. The adjustments will list only the practice or program that the unit selected for implementation. Local Leadership Teams will use the data collected to determine growth, or lack of, in application of the practice or program. Those results will determine adjustments in local implementation plans.
  - The NDDPI SSIP Project Technical Assistance Team will increase communications with local special education units to determine whether a particular district is struggling with implementation. The Team and local unit director can then determine "turn around" needs and direct resources to assist the unit.
  - The NDDPI SSIP Project Lead will assist local special education units to complete the written summary and send it to each school to enter into their continuous improvement plans using the AdvancED tools. The school can then meet the requirement and reach full school approval status. The NDDPI Special Education Office must also receive a copy. A written summary template will standardize the format and allow the new leadership team to collect quality data for analysis.

### **Strategy #5- In cooperation with its partners, NDDPI will promote an increase in the availability of public and private mental health services for students identified with mental health needs, including those identified with emotional disturbance.**

- The NDDPI will continue its partner advocacy activities regarding the increase of mental health services available to youth. The NDDPI strives to engage new partners in those activities.

#### **Need for Technical Assistance, Additional Supports:**

The NDDPI will continue to seek technical assistance regarding submission of next year's narrative from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The NDDPI will also continue to contact the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) and the IDEA Data Center (IDC) for technical assistance with fidelity evaluation, maintenance of the quality of data collected for formative evaluation at both the State and local levels, and engagement of stakeholders and group participants. The NDDPI will continue to receive intensive technical assistance from the National Technical Assistance Center for Transition (NTACT) in regards to the implementation of evidence based transition practices that will keep students in school and assist them to meet post-secondary transition goals.

**Phase III, Year 2 Updates are in the attached narrative (Titled, SSIP Phase III Year 2 Final Narrative) which follows the OSEP's outline.**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

**FFY 2016 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)  
Certify and Submit your SPP/APR**

I certify that I am the Chief State School Officer of the State, or his or her designee, and that the State's submission of its IDEA Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report is accurate.

**Selected:** Designated by the Chief State School Officer to certify

Name and title of the individual certifying the accuracy of the State's submission of its IDEA Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report.

Name: Gerry Teevens

Title: Director of Special Education

Email: gteevens@nd.gov

Phone: 701-328-2277