

GRAD 701

Action Plan and Timeline

Key Strategies for 2025-26

State-identified Measurable Results (SiMR): The percentage of students with an Emotional Disability who graduate within 6 years will increase from 60.22% in 2013-14 to 67.63% in 2025-26.

The NDDPI has updated its State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) action plan for 2025-26. NDDPI was awarded a State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), named GRAD 701. This grant enhances SSIP efforts by providing resources to improve graduation rates for students with disabilities, particularly students with emotional disturbance (ED) and Native American students with disabilities, through professional development and technical assistance on implementing Early Warning Systems and Evidence-Based Practices. The SSIP is a subset of the SPDG in terms of the SiMR will continue to focus on students with ED. This plan is now referenced as the GRAD 701 Action Plan.

I. Key Strategies for 2025-26

A. Messaging

B. Inter- and Cross-Departmental Alignment

C. GRAD 701 Team

D. Statewide Analysis of Graduation and Support Needs for SWD

E. Expansion of EBPs and Statewide Professional Development Efforts

F. Incoming Cohort Selection, Onboarding, and Support

G. Continued Support and Monitoring of Cohort Schools

H. Family Engagement

I. Pre-Service Teacher Training

J. Chatbot

II. Key Strategies for 2025-26

A. Messaging

- The GRAD 701 Team will continue to focus on its positive messaging of how to help students who are disengaged from school.

B. Inter- and Cross-Departmental Alignment

- The GRAD 701 Team will continue to work with other DPI programs to foster a department-wide commitment towards improving graduation rates of students with disabilities, including ED.

C. GRAD 701 Team

- The GRAD 701 team will establish and coordinate the Leadership Team, Regional Implementation Team, and Advisory Group to provide guidance and support for project implementation.

D. Statewide Analysis Graduation and Support Needs for SWD

- The GRAD 701 Team will conduct statewide data collection and analysis to understand graduation outcomes and needs for students with disabilities across North Dakota.

E. Expansion of EBPs and Statewide Professional Development

- The GRAD 701 team will expand the number of NDDPI-supported EBPs and training efforts by providing educators, administrators/principals, and families across the state with access to high-quality training on EBPs, systems level change, and family engagement.

F. Incoming Cohort Selection, Onboarding, and Support

- The GRAD 701 team will identify and select new cohort schools, provide EWIMS training to selected schools, and establish coaching supports to ensure successful implementation of EWIMS and EBPs.

G. Continued Support and Monitoring of Cohort Schools

- The GRAD 701 team will provide ongoing coaching and technical assistance to existing cohort schools to address implementation challenges and ensure sustained positive impacts.

H. Family Engagement

- The GRAD 701 team will develop a comprehensive family engagement system to ensure meaningful participation of families in GRAD 701 initiatives and support of their children's education.

I. Pre-Service Teacher Training

- The GRAD 701 team will partner with higher education institutions to integrate EWIMS, EBPs, and family engagement strategies into teacher preparation programs.

J. Chatbot

- The GRAD 701 team will partner with technical experts to develop a chatbot that provides educators, administrators, and families with easy access to information about EWIMS, EBPs, and family engagement strategies.

A. Messaging

The GRAD 701 Team will continue to focus on the positive messaging of how to help students who are disengaged from school.

Activity	Timeline
1. Develop materials to promote GRAD 701 initiatives and share information on the key components of Early Warning Systems (attendance, behavior, course performance)	Ongoing
2. Present at various state-level conferences (ND Council of Educational Leaders, Transition Conference, Cognia Teacher Conference, Indian Education Summit) to promote GRAD 701 and "More Than Behavior."	Ongoing
3. Support CREA as they develop materials and host training on Evidence Based Practices and Early Warning Intervention and Monitoring Systems	Ongoing
4. Develop communication/marketing materials and distribute them to schools, families, and other stakeholders to raise awareness about EWIMS, EBPs, and Family Engagement resources and professional development	Ongoing
5. Continue to share information on the ND Educational Hub in the Educator's Edge (monthly teacher newsletter) and the NDDPI Messenger (weekly administrators' newsletter)	Ongoing
6. Share EBPs with parents; share downloadable flyer with Parent Engagement; and Parent Centers: Pathfinders, Federation of Families, Family Voices, The Arc of ND, Designer Genes	Ongoing

B. Inter- and Cross-Departmental Alignment

The GRAD 701 Team will facilitate partnerships across departments and agencies to create a coordinated support system for schools and families. The team will maintain regular communication with partners and align efforts toward common goals.

Activity	Timeline
1. Meet with the Academic Support, Indian and Multicultural Affairs Office as the Office of Educational Improvement and Support (TSI/CSI group) to discuss how these teams can collaborate on and support the work of the SSIP/GRAD 701.	Ongoing
2. Hold quarterly NDDPI SSIP/GRAD 701 team meetings across departments, including the Accountability; Offices of Academic Support; Indian and Multicultural Affairs; School Approval and Opportunity; Educational Improvement and Supports; Early Childhood; Assessment 21st Century; and Career and Technical Education.	Ongoing
3. Expand collaboration with NDHHS, including strengthening partnerships with Behavioral Health, Medicaid, Juvenile Justice, Child and Family Services offices.	Ongoing
4. Deliver presentations about the SSIP/GRAD 701 to Human Services, Juvenile Justice, Vocational Rehabilitation, Early Childhood and Part C, school resource officers, and residential programs (cross-agency work)	Ongoing
5. Participate in the "behavioral health collaboration" group through monthly meetings with Special Education, Section 504, General Education, NDHHS Behavioral Health staff to address crisis interventions, review case studies, and coordinate behavioral health training and grant initiatives.	Ongoing
6. Participate in quarterly NDHHS Systems of Care steering committee	Ongoing
7. Implement comprehensive cross-training sessions for TSI/CSI liaisons, BARR coaches, USpireND Inclusion Coaches, Pyramid Model coaches (Head Start & early childhood), REA staff, and Vocational Rehab staff to ensure consistent support across all educational settings.	Ongoing

C. GRAD 701 Team

The GRAD 701 team will establish and coordinate the Leadership Team, Regional Implementation Team, and Advisory Group to provide guidance and support for project implementation.

Activity	Timeline
1. Establish Advisory Group and meeting schedule <ul style="list-style-type: none">• GRAD 701 team, parents, teachers, directors, CREA representative, administrator, cultural liaison• Will meet 1-2x a year	February 2026
2. Hold monthly GRAD 701 State Leadership Team meetings	Ongoing
3. Hold quarterly DDE-CREA meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Luke (Head Coach/Transformation Specialist) and REA coaches	Ongoing
4. Complete State Capacity Assessment and develop action plan	Spring 2026

D. Statewide Analysis of Graduation and Support Needs for SWD

The GRAD 701 Team will conduct statewide data collection and analysis to understand graduation outcomes and needs for students with disabilities across North Dakota.

Activity	Timeline
1. Make the PIER Tool available to units.	February 2026
2. Hold office hours to provide units with support to complete the PIER tool.	Spring 2026
3. Analyze PIER tool data from 2025-26 and write summary report.	Fall 2026
4. Publicize the PIER Tool summary report and the infographic from 2025-26 so units and key stakeholders can review the information.	November 2026
5. Conduct regression analysis of high school graduation data to determine best student-level and unit-level predictors of graduation for all students and students with disabilities	Fall 2026
6. Publicize the 2025-26 regression analysis report and the 1-page infographic so units and key stakeholders can review the information.	November 2026
7. Interview special education units/districts that are doing better than expected and those that are doing worse than expected. In essence do a “root cause” of their situation to determine what can be learned and shared with other units/districts.	April 2026
8. Administer needs assessment to special education units to collect information on training needs surrounding EWS/EBPs; analyze and report on data.	June 2026
9. Encourage all schools within all units to administer the EWS Checklist and EBP inventory. Offer support based on results.	Spring 2026

E. Expansion of EBPs and Statewide Professional Development Efforts

The GRAD 701 team will expand the number of NDDPI-supported EBPs and training efforts by providing educators, administrators/principals, and families across the state with access to high-quality training on EBPs, systems-level change, and family engagement.

Activity	Timeline
1. Identify three additional EBPs for NDDPI to support. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partner with the Office of Indian and Multicultural Affairs to identify and promote additional EBPs specifically supporting Native American students• Explore additional EBPs from national centers and ND Health and Human Services	2026-27
2. Create a training calendar and determine delivery formats (virtual and in-person) for the year's professional development activities.	Spring 2026

3. Revise and enhance training on the targeted EBPs, family engagement, and instructional leadership topic areas.	Spring 2026
4. Develop 8 learning modules for the ND Educational Hub on the 7 EWIMS components and implementation for school leaders.	February 2026
5. Develop and distribute training materials, including curriculum, handouts, and fidelity tools.	Spring 2026
6. Provide training, both in-person and virtually, to educators, school administrators, and families across the state.	Ongoing
7. Administer training evaluations and use feedback to improve future sessions.	Ongoing
8. Develop strategies to increase the use of EBPs and fidelity tools across the state	Ongoing

F. Incoming Cohort School Selection, Onboarding, and Support

The GRAD 701 team will identify and select new cohort schools, provide EWIMS training to selected schools, and establish coaching supports to ensure successful implementation of EWIMS and EBPs.

Activity	Timeline
1. Select and assign coaches to cohort schools	Spring 2026
2. Establish a Community of Practice for cohort schools to meet at least twice a year	Spring 2026
3. Schedule and deliver initial trainings to cohort schools, including school implementation team and administrative training	Spring 2026
4. Administer training evaluations, analyze data, and share reports	Ongoing
5. Administer EWS Checklist and EBP Inventory in fall to Cohort 1 schools.	Fall 2026
6. Administer EWS Checklist and EBP Inventory in spring to Cohort 1 schools.	Spring 2026
7. Establish tools and process for collecting student-level EBP fidelity data; collect observational EBP fidelity data from 20% of participating teachers	Spring 2026
8. Observe EWIMS team trainings and complete HQPD	Spring 2026
9. Administer capacity assessments in fall to school teams and develop action plans	Fall 2026
10. Administer capacity assessments in spring to school teams and develop action plans	Spring 2027
11. Administer stakeholder survey and interview project stakeholders (e.g., school implementation team members, teachers, principals, and families) to gather information on participants experiences, the skills they have learned and implemented, perceived impacts, implementation challenges and successes, and suggestions for improvement.	Spring 2027

G. Continued Support and Monitoring of Cohort Schools

The GRAD 701 team will provide ongoing coaching and technical assistance to existing cohort schools to address implementation challenges and ensure sustained positive impacts.

Activity	Timeline
1. Conduct intake interview and paperwork for cohort schools and their coaches to determine level of support.	Fall 2026
2. Deliver targeted, ongoing EWIMS and EBP coaching support to existing cohort schools based on their specific needs and implementation progress.	Ongoing
3. Administer the EWS Checklist and EBP Inventory in spring to Cohort 4 schools. Analyze data; determine PD/TA needs.	Spring 2026
4. Conduct follow-up survey and interviews with cohort schools to assess sustained practices and implementation challenges to inform development of formal sustainability plans.	Spring 2026

H. Family Engagement

The GRAD 701 team will begin to develop a comprehensive family engagement system to ensure meaningful participation of families in SSIP/GRAD 701 initiatives and support of their children's education.

Activity	Timeline
1. Recruit families with diverse perspectives for GRAD 701 Advisory Team	Spring 2026
2. Plan outreach strategies for families, including Native American families	Spring 2026
3. Analyze data from statewide family listening sessions, create report, and share insights with stakeholders	Spring 2026
4. Create request for proposal to develop three new resources and webinars for families based on feedback from listening sessions	2026-27
5. Create two trainings for families to enhance their knowledge and skills in support EWIMS and EBPs	2026-27
6. Develop communication strategies for families to promote resources and trainings	2026-27

I. Pre-Service Teacher Training

The GRAD 701 team will partner with higher education institutions to integrate EWIMS, EBPs, and family engagement strategies into teacher preparation programs. The University of Mary will lead this effort with curriculum development and case studies, with plans to expand to additional universities including tribal colleges.

Activity	Timeline
1. Implement curriculum at the University of Mary for all education majors.	Fall 2026
2. Administer course evaluations, evaluate data, and share reports to inform improvements to the course curriculum	Spring 2027
3. Investigate expanding to additional universities, including Mayville State University and tribal colleges	2026-27

J. Chatbot

The GRAD 701 team will partner with technical experts to develop a chatbot that provides educators, administrators, and families with easy access to information about EWIMS, EBPs, and family engagement strategies.

Activity	Timeline
1. Convene meeting to discuss chatbot development, including primary purpose and audience.	Spring 2026
2. Establish partnerships with ND government agencies and technical experts for chatbot/natural language processing development	Spring 2026
3. Select appropriate technology platform and establish technical specifications for the chatbot development	Spring 2026
4. Develop and test chatbot with stakeholder input	2026-27
5. Deploy chatbot and monitor usage; maintain and update system based on user feedback	2027-28 2028-29