

Developing North Dakota's Consolidated State ESSA Plan

Work Structure, Roles and Responsibilities

The purpose of this document is to summarize the role of the teams contributing to and responsible for the development North Dakota's Consolidated State Plan in response to the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

ESSA Steering Committee

The purpose of this team is to provide leadership, guidance, support and oversight for the development of North Dakota's Consolidated State Plan, under the direction of the State Superintendent; to establish and manage the timeline for plan development and provide regular status updates to the State Superintendent, *ESSA Planning Committee* and the public; to understand and stay abreast of statutory changes to spending and related fiscal rules, flexibility provisions and program requirements, and advise and inform *ESSA Workgroup* recommendations; to consolidate and review the final product, and verify that all federal and state requirements are sufficiently addressed; to shepherd the plans final review, approval and submission to the U.S. Department of Education; to coordinate the statewide communication, rollout and execution of the final approved plan. The State Superintendent will appoint members of this team to lead and facilitate each of the *ESSA Workgroups*.

ESSA Planning Committee

The purpose of this comprehensive cross-stakeholder team is to advise the State Superintendent and to be active members in the development of North Dakota's Consolidated State Plan. Team members play a critical role in soliciting input from peers and constituent groups throughout the process to advise and inform the development of the plan. Collectively, this team will review and provide feedback on recommendations made by the ESSA Workgroups and provide consultation to State Superintendent on the overall design and support for the state's accountability plan. As active and contributing members in the development process, team members play a vital role in creating statewide ownership of the state's vision for education, as well as the Consolidated State Plan.

Members of this committee may also serve on ESSA Workgroups to address specific sections of the Consolidated State Plan, but this is not required. The results and recommendations from all Workgroups will be presented to this committee for consideration and feedback, and then merged into the Consolidated State Plan. The Office of the State Superintendent will facilitate this committee. The final product of this committee will be submitted to the State Superintendent for review and approval prior to submission to the U.S. Department of Education.

ESSA Workgroups

The purpose of each workgroup is to address specific sections of North Dakota's Consolidated State Plan. The workgroups will research and prepare specific components of the plan and provide information and final recommendations to the *ESSA Planning Committee* for review and consideration within established timelines. Each workgroup, under the direction of an appointed NDDPI team leader, will establish a regular meeting and work breakdown schedule to answer key questions, accomplish assigned tasks, and address specific requirements and objectives as outlined below.

Workgroup 1: Teacher and Leader Effectiveness

This group will focus on analyzing and improving how the current state initiative for educator effectiveness is aligned and supportive of the vision for the state's new consolidated plan under ESSA.

Key Questions & Scope of Work

- Where does the current state initiative strongly align with the state's vision and beliefs?
- Where are there gaps between the current state initiative and the state vision?
- What adjustments need to be made to bring the current state initiative in line with the state vision?
- What resources are needed to support these adjustments?
- What key data point(s) about teacher/leader effectiveness should be reflected in the school/system dashboard and/or report card to provide transparency and promote continuous improvement?

Supporting Educator Excellence

- Define effective educators criteria and measures under Title II, Part A.
- Review and recommend updates, if needed, to North Dakota's educator evaluation and support system.
- Review and recommend updates, if needed, to North Dakota's system of educator development, retention and advancement.
- Review and recommend updates to North Dakota's current Equity Plan.
- Review allowable use of funds and recommend strategies for improved use of funds to support the state's vision, including a state level reservation of funds.
- Review local and state reporting requirements to inform definition and data decisions.
- Determine if gaps exist between current ESSA requirements for special education teachers and current state standards.
- Recommend what the state 5 percent set-aside could be used to support:
 - a. Provide effective teacher and principal preparation and professional development related to the education of ELs which may include:
 - Assisting teachers, principals, and other educators in meeting State and local certification requirements for teaching English learners.
 - Improving teaching skills in meeting the diverse needs of English learners, including how to implement effective programs.
 - Providing effective professional development activities and other effective activities related to the education of English learners, including identifying curricula for teaching English learners.
 - Assistance identifying and implementing effective instructional programs (Including dual language models) for teaching English learners.
 - b. Review and align state and federal definitions of English Learner students.

Workgroup 2: Standards, Assessment, Accountability and Reporting

This group will focus on creating an comprehensive, coherent, and aligned system of data collection, reporting and accountability that drives continuous improvement for all students, schools and systems toward the state's vision.

Key Questions & Scope of Work

- How will the standards and assessment align with the overall vision including supporting a journey of continuous improvement?
- What key performance indicators at critical transitions are aligned with the primary goal and vision of the new state system?
- What leading and corresponding lagging indicators of student performance should be used to guide the journey of continuous improvement?
- What non-academic indicators should North Dakota use for accountability?
- Are there non-academic indicators that should be reported annually but not used for accountability?
- How should data, including accountability status, be communicated on an annual basis?
- Should we use a dashboard that sits on top of a more detailed report card (that meets the regulations of the law)? If yes, what should the dashboard communicate and how should it be communicated?
- What formula will be used to identify schools for comprehensive and targeted support and intervention?
- What indicators, academic & non-academic combined, should be included in the formula and how should they be weighted?
- Does our accountability system and data reporting recognize and encourage positive movement?

Standards & Assessment

- Review current standards to assure that the academic content are aligned with college entrance requirements and relevant Career and Technical Education (CTE) standards.
- Confirm that state assessments comply with ESSA requirements.
- Recommend whether 8th grade students in advanced math should be exempted from the 8th grade math test.
- Recommend whether NDDPI should allow a high school to substitute a nationally- recognized exam for the required assessment, and if so, by what process.
- Recommend how "Recently arrived English Learners" will participate in state assessments.
- Recommend whether auditing assessment systems (for quality and burden) should be undertaken.
- Recommend whether the State should set a cap on the amount of time devoted to assessments in each grade.
- Recommend ways that funding under ESSA can best support academic standards.
- Confirm state alternate assessment requirements within statewide accountability system, and special education certification requirements are consistent with the ESSA amendment of IDEA.
- Review notice requirements associated with students who are being alternately assessed.
- Make a recommendation regarding revising current state alternate achievement standards consistent with expanded elements and incorporate principles of universal design.
- Review and recommend edits, if appropriate, to the definition of cohort and extended graduation rates to ensure consistency with Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) eligibility age level entitlements.

Accountability System

- Recommend a system for making annual accountability determinations for all public schools/districts based on clear goals to advance continuous improvement.
- Recommend long-term goals, including measurements of interim progress:
 - For all students and each subgroup for academic achievement and graduation; and
 - For English Learner progress.
- Recommend a system to annually differentiate schools using multiple indicators (academic and non-academic)
 - Recommend how each indicator will be weighted
 - Determine how this system will be used to identify schools for comprehensive and targeted support and intervention.
- For adjusted cohort grad rate, determine method for assigning students to a school.
- Ensure that any “super” subgroups promote inclusion rather than masking certain subgroups.
- Work with the *Continuous Improvement Workgroup* to establish a clear, shared vision for the role of accountability and ensure that the formula and process for identification fits and makes sense within the statewide system of continuous improvement for all public schools/districts.
- Review the ESSA requirements and state laws that impact English Learners (ELs) and ensure they are addressed.

Dashboard & Report Card

- Recommend data points and methodology to annually report data in a manner that is rich, timely, accessible, and actionable to a range of critical stakeholders.
 - Incorporate the reporting and disaggregation of all required data to address ESSA accountability requirements.
- Recommend a state, school and district data dashboard and report card format that meets the needs of key stakeholders and ESSA requirements.
- Work with the *Continuous Improvement Workgroup* to ensure the report card is aligned with the states processes for continuous improvement.

Workgroup 3: Continuous Improvement

This group will focus on creating a statewide system of continuous improvement that includes thoughtful and aligned supports and interventions for struggling schools and systems, access to evidence-based strategies and best practices, and alignment and coordination of federal programs.

Key Questions

- What is the framework for continuous improvement?
- How will schools and districts engage the framework for continuous improvement?
- When schools and districts make expected progress how will the state respond?
- When schools and districts do not make expected progress how will the state respond?

Statewide System of Continuous Improvement

- Define the statewide system of continuous improvement
- Work with the other workgroups to ensure alignment of their elements with the continuous improvement system.
- Recommend a multi-year system of support and intervention for schools/systems identified for comprehensive and targeted improvement.
 - Include evidence-based interventions, measures of success, evaluation processes, etc.
 - Determine the process for exiting schools from the support system and supporting their sustained improvements.
- Consider how these school improvement plans/strategies will be informed by data analysis and deeper diagnostic review, stakeholder engagement, etc.
- Determine what is needed to assist districts in meeting new ESSA school and district improvement requirements.

Parent and Community Involvement

- Understand statutory requirements for parent and family engagement. Provide recommendations on how NDDPI should support district efforts to increase parent/family engagement, especially at Title I schools. Support district efforts to leverage community partners when reaching out to families.
- Identify best practices districts could use to engage families. Explore and recommend ongoing opportunities for districts to share and collaborate on these practices.
- Identify district and Title I school exemplars for parent and family engagement.
- Provide examples on effective evaluations efforts of parent and family engagement programs.
- Identify community-based organizations with access to and experience with working with the families and students of Title I schools.
- Provide districts with technical assistance on leveraging local community organizations and business efforts to increase parent and family engagement, including recruitment and management of volunteers.

Early Childhood Education

- Identify the multiple opportunities to enhance the role of early childhood programs at the state and local levels and enhance coordination and alignment of programs.
- Provide information and encouragement to school districts in how to use ESSA funds (e.g., Title I, Professional Development, Tribal) to serve children early educators in school district and community early learning centers.

- Expand state and local professional development opportunities to include early childhood providers and expand child development knowledge of principals and other school leaders. Another specific area in ESSA is cross-sector literacy professional development.

English Learners

- Identify effective systems of support for English learners (EL) to ensure they are able to attain English proficiency and meet the same challenging academic standards that all students are expected to meet.
- Recommend what the state 5 percent set-aside could be used to support:
 - c. Provide effective teacher and principal preparation and professional development related to the education of ELs which may include:
 - Assisting teachers, principals, and other educators in meeting State and local certification requirements for teaching English learners.
 - Improving teaching skills in meeting the diverse needs of English learners, including how to implement effective programs.
 - Providing effective professional development activities and other effective activities related to the education of English learners, including identifying curricula for teaching English learners.
 - Assistance identifying and implementing effective instructional programs (Including dual language models) for teaching English learners.
 - d. Review and align state and federal definitions of English Learner students.

Federal Program Alignment

- Align all ESEA/ESSA Title programs with the goal of supporting students in mastering the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college, career, and life.
- Improve teaching and learning by encouraging greater cross-program coordination, planning, and service delivery.
- Enhance the integration of programs under this ESEA/ESSA with state and local programs.