## ADVANCING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

# SUPPORTING DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS THROUGH THE NORTH DAKOTA STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT

JANUARY 2012

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## NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

## **VISION**

DPI will be a recognized and respected leader in providing a system of support to schools to ensure that all students have the opportunity to achieve their maximum potential and become life-long learners.

## **MISSION**

DPI will partner with schools and communities to provide a statewide system of excellent service and support to ensure a healthy school environment that fosters student success.

## **GOALS**

- 1. To coordinate comprehensive, systemic, collaborative planning which enhances educational opportunities and services for all;
- 2. To secure the human and financial resources to support a comprehensive system of educational opportunities;
- 3. To provide technical assistance, consultation, and other services which empower educational service providers; and
- 4. To foster quality education through the meaningful implementation of statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures.

## **UNIT DESCRIPTIONS**

#### COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH

The Coordinated School Health (CSH) unit promotes and supports healthy learning environments for all students. It all begins with two simple ideas: healthy students learn better and healthy youth become healthy adults. It is this statement that creates the foundation for the work we do. Families, schools and communities must all work together to ensure all students are safe and have the skills to be healthy, resourceful and engaged learners. The unit is responsible for issues as it relates to the health and safety of students and schools, such as alcohol, drugs, bullvina. tobacco. weapons. violence. crisis management, and school climate. Additionally, the unit functions under physical activity and education. nutrition, health education, the YRBS, illness, injury, and disease prevention.

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Special Education unit interprets and provides guidance, resources, and oversight to assist schools, districts, and local special education units to implement evidence-based practices which ensure all students receive a free appropriate public education. The Special Education unit administers and oversees a variety of programs and initiatives including universal design for learning, resident teacher programs, special education paraprofessionals, Response to Intervention-academics, Response to Interventionbehavior, early childhood transition, and secondary transition.

#### STANDARDS AND ACHIEVEMENT

The Standards and Achievement unit administers and oversees data that are utilized to identify both the needs of the state as well as the needs of the schools and districts. The unit manages the development and administration of the North Dakota State Assessment, and oversees adequate yearly progress (AYP), growth models, graduation rate, school and district profile reports, and comparative reports. All of these reports assist schools and districts in identifying areas of strength and needs to ensure they are on track for the progressing state established targets.

#### TEACHER AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

The Teacher and School Effectiveness unit assists K-12 schools in providing quality education. It reviews public and nonpublic schools for statutory compliance, oversees alternative course delivery, provides guidance for counseling services and 504s, administers the education improvement programs, provides guidance on professional development, provides technical assistance for dual credit, responds to questions about legality of school fees, answers questions on home education issues, administers summer school programs, manages the North Dakota Scholarship program, administers the junior ACT/ WorkKeys testing, provides nonpublic schools with criminal history record checks, approves storm waivers, monitors diploma and curricular requirements, approves school calendars, administers the issuance of the credentials for administrators, counselors and library media personnel, and assists with the Blue Ribbon and Green Ribbon schools programs.

#### TITLE I

The Title I unit provides guidance, resources, and oversight to assist schools and districts implement research proven practices which will enable "at-risk" students to meet challenging state standards. It administers and oversees a variety of programs and initiatives including: Title I Part A, Title I Program Improvement, Early Reading First, Migrant Education (Title I Part C), Neglected and Delinquent (Title I Part C), Education of Homeless Children and Youth (Title X Part C), 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (Title IV Part B), Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Initiative, Title I credentials, and Title I Aide/Paraprofessional certificates.

## NORTH DAKOTA STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT (NDSSOS)

### PURPOSE AND MISSION

The purpose of the North Dakota Statewide System of Support (NDSSOS) is to support schools and districts as they build their capacity to implement sustained and continuous school improvement strategies with fidelity. The ultimate goal is to improve teaching and learning so ALL North Dakota students can achieve their maximum potential as 21<sup>st</sup> century learners who are prepared to live and compete in a global world. The NDSSOS provides an overview of the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) available programs and resources to support district and school improvement in North Dakota.

The NDSSOS will assist to build capacity in districts and schools in the areas of leadership, curriculum and instruction, assessment, school climate and culture, and professional development/learning. The NDSSOS accomplishes this by supporting schools and districts in the following areas:

- 1. Focus on student achievement in all support efforts.
- 2. Provide resources and support to district and school leaders as they are the key to facilitating change and increasing student achievement.
- 3. Assist in developing a shared vision and make decisions that are collaborative and data driven with the leadership team and all staff.
- Provide professional learning on varied instructional strategies that accommodate all learning styles and require students to use higherorder thinking skills in all classrooms.
- 5. Align the curriculum to the North Dakota Common Core Standards, mapped across grade spans to eliminate gaps and unnecessary repetitions, and be made available to all students.
- 6. Provide multiple assessments which are frequent, rigorous and aligned to the North Dakota Common Core Standards and the North Dakota Common Core Assessment.
- 7. Provide opportunities to ensure all assessment data are analyzed and used to inform instruction.

- 8. Maximize instructional time, organizational resources, and state and federal funds for improved student achievement as facilitated by leadership team.
- 9. Develop a planning process that engages representatives from all stakeholder groups, involves collecting and analyzing data, and is evaluated effectively.
- 10. Assist in providing a learning environment that is safe, orderly, and focused on high achievement for all types of diverse learners.
- 11. Engage families and communities as active partners in student learning and ensure all students come to school ready to learn.
- 12. Provide faculty and staff with ongoing and jobembedded professional development that is aligned with a comprehensive needs assessment.
- 13. Align data with identified needs, measurable goals, and allocation of funding (activities).
- 14. Implement research-based best practices.

## **OVERVIEW**

The NDSSOS uses a model of delivery built around a framework designed to build capacity of districts and schools in their effort to meet the overall goal of increased student achievement. This includes outlining departmental supports provided in the areas of leadership, curriculum and instruction, assessment, school climate and culture, and professional development/learning, and incorporates the foundations of all schools improvement efforts. The NDSSOS manual provides a summary of the current efforts DPI has in place to support districts and schools throughout the state. The DPI strives for inclusion and implementation of evidence and research-based best practices that support student achievement in North Dakota districts and schools.

## NDSSOS ELEMENTS

COMPREHENSIVE IMPROVEMENT PROCESSES

LEADERSHIP

**CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION** 

ASSESSMENT

SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/LEARNING** 

**MONITORING PROCESSES** 

**OTHER SUPPORT ENTITIES** 

## COMPREHENSIVE IMPROVEMENT PROCESSES

#### EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT PROCESSES

The focus on school improvement in North Dakota is moving from a compliance model to a focus on assisting schools or districts to build local capacity to improve classroom instruction and student academic achievement. All schools and districts in North Dakota are required to participate in a review process that is designed to improve student achievement through a continuous cycle of improvement and is approved by the State Superintendent of the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. The approved state review processes include: AdvancEd, North Dakota Moving to Improve Learning for Everyone (NDMILE), and State Education Improvement Process (SEIP) (NDAC 67-19-01-15).

 <u>ADVANCED PROCESS</u> - AdvancED is a systems approach to embed and sustain improvement. The AdvancED Accreditation is based on a national protocol designed to build the capacity of the agency, ensure that all people, processes, departments and operations work in concert; to strengthen efforts to provide accountability to clients; to encourage growth beyond compliance; and to promote continuous improvement and not episodic events.

AdvancED Accreditation:

- Provides a research-based national protocol for education service providers committed to systemic, systematic, and sustainable continuous improvement.
- Builds the capacity of the agency and its client districts to increase student learning.
- Stimulates, supports and examines how all elements of a system work in harmony.
- Ensures all people, processes, departments and operations of the agency work in concert (focused, aligned, connected).
- Strengthens efforts to provide accountability to clients.
- Encourages growth beyond compliance to achieve excellence.
- Promotes continuous, not episodic, improvement.

Website: ncacasi.org/

 NDMILE PROCESS - The DPI, in partnership with the Center on Innovation and Improvement (CII), developed a web-based system with stateidentified key indicators. This web-based system uses indicators appropriate for all schools, including indicators developed specifically for rapid improvement, based on the CIIs research. NDMILE became fully operational in February 2010.

NDMILE provides school improvement teams opportunities to inform, coach, sustain, track, and report improvement activities. Similar to a global positioning system (GPS), NDMILE assists schools in determining where they are and helps them get to where they want to be-every child learning and every school improving. NDMILE offers multiple performance indicators of evidence-based practices at the school and classroom levels to improve student learning. The system accommodates rubrics for assessment of the indicators, assists in developing plans and tasks around the indicators, tracks dates, and lists those responsible for monitoring progress of the indicators. The NDMILE planning and coaching tool allows for flexibility to accommodate the reporting requirements for education improvement, such as accreditation, schoolwide and program improvement, through one report. NDMILE will guide improvement teams through a continuous cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, and progress tracking. The school focus will be clear, responsibilities assigned, and efforts synchronized.

#### Website: NDMILE Advisory Committee

Included in the NDMILE process are the following planning features:

- **Technology** links each indicator to a succinct synthesis of the related research, examples, and resources.
- **Coaching Comments** feature allows an external coach to offer feedback to the team. The system maintains a thread of the dialogue between the coach and the team, and the comments can be saved or printed as a report.
- Family Engagement Tool (FET) is a five-step process by which the school team conducts a needs assessment of parent involvement, checks Title I compliance, and develops objectives for improvement. The system provides an extensive library of downloadable materials for parent involvement.
- Electronic Reporting, provided with an administrative page, allows for convenient monitoring of each district and school's progress, and allows access to electronically submitted reports. Reporting may include electronic submission of required documents to satisfy federal and state requirements, such as education improvement plans for accreditation, schoolwide plans, program improvement plans and district professional development plans.
- **Progress Tracking Report** displays progress for identified performance indicators assessed and the specific action plans.

- Built-in Documentation mechanisms provide practical ways for creating agendas, recording minutes, assigning tasks, setting timelines, allocating resources, entering coaching comments, and monitoring the degree of implementation.
- Wise Ways® is an online tool that provides easy access to current research aligned to each indicator.

#### 3. STATE EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT PROCESS -

- The SEIP has five governing standards:
- 1. Vision and Beliefs
  - How do we communicate a shared direction to improve student performance?
- 2. Leadership and Governance
  - Who are we and what are we about?
- 3. Teaching and Learning
  - How do we facilitate student academic growth?
- 4. Resources, Support, and EnvironmentHow do we support teaching and learning?
- 5. Ongoing and Continuous Improvement
  - How do we engage in ongoing improvement?

#### Website:

#### dpi.state.nd.us/approve/edimprov/ipstndrd.pdf

The external team chair for each school plays a vital role in the continuous improvement process by visiting the school at least three times during a continuous cycle and documenting areas of strength and opportunities for growth. This document is also sent to the DPI where it is reviewed and supported. The school completes an Action Plan that assists them in tracking progress toward their identified goals. Each year an annual review is completed at which time the entire staff reflects on 'what worked', 'what did not work', and 'record plans for the following school year'. These tools are efficiently used and appreciated by schools as they reflect on the unique qualities and strengths that become a guiding force in their school improvement process.

An education improvement conference is provided each fall and supported by AdvancED. The SEIP also believes in "showcasing" schools and educators who have displayed exemplary activities that drives student achievement, motivates educators, and increases stakeholder involvement. Allowing schools to participate in this manner has opened many doors for educators to network with one another, build relationships, and reinforce their profession. The SEIP joins with AdvancED every other year in providing workshops around the state. These workshops support a large audience of educators giving them additional opportunities to build supportive networks and share successful instructional strategies.

School Tear	<u>n</u>				
Year 1:	External Team Chair Visit				
	Develop an Action Plan				
	Submit an Annual Review				
Year 2:	Submit an Annual Review				
Year 2 or 3:	Arrange and Prepare for a Team Visit				
Year 3:	Submit an Annual Review				
Year 4:	Submit an Annual Review				
Year 5:	External Team Chair Visit				
	Submit an Annual Review				
External Team Chair					
Year 1:	Visit the School and File the Team Chair				
	Report				
Year 2 or 3:	Arrange a Team Visit to the School				
	File Team Visit Report				
Year 4:	Continued Support to the School				
Year 5:	ar 5: Final Team Chair Visit to School				
File Final Team Chair School Report					

#### COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH

When asking adults what they wish most for their children, the key responses given were for their children to be happy, healthy, and successful. Besides home, children spend a major portion of their lives in school. To give children the best opportunity for a happy, healthy, and successful life, schools need to take an active role in providing a healthy environment. Healthy children make better learners and better learners make stronger communities. There is an undisputed correlation between a student's health and academic achievement.

School health programs and policies are often compiled from a variety of federal, state, and local regulations, initiatives, and funding streams. The result, in many schools is a "patchwork" of policies and programs with differing standards, requirements, and populations to be served. Coordinating school health is a systematic approach accomplished by bringing together a team of individuals, interested in the health of children, who review and assess the current health policies and practices, and then develop, implement, and monitor new policies and practices.

#### Websites:

- dpi.state.nd.us/health/index.shtm
- cdc.gov/healthyyouth/cshp/case.htm

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Special Education (SE) unit is required to submit an annual performance report (APR) to the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, describing compliance and performance results for each of the districts in North Dakota. Based on the APR indicators and monitoring results, districts must submit to the SE unit an improvement plan to address the findings and to correct noncompliance issues. The plan is developed by a district team composed of the district and building administrator and the local special education unit director. The district must correct all findings of noncompliance as soon as possible; however, no later than one year from the date of notification.

The Improvement Plan includes:

- District and special education unit staff responsible;
- Activities/improvement strategies to address findings including revisions to policies, procedures, and practices; professional development, and supervision;
- Targeted recipients and projected timelines;
- Evidence of change or how district will document the change;
- Needed resources and rationale; and
- How the district will monitor progress.

#### <u>TITLE I</u>

#### PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Within three months after a school or district is identified as in need of improvement, the school and/or district must develop a plan for improvement. This plan must cover a two-year period (maximum); however, North Dakota allows for annual or biennial submissions with annual updates. The improvement plan must show evidence of consultation with parents, school and district staff and outside experts.

#### Websites:

- dpi.state.nd.us/titlel/progress/plan.shtm
- dpi.state.nd.us/titlel/progress/ndmile/ndmile.shtm

#### SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT

Only schools identified for improvement are eligible to apply for School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds. These funds are awarded on a competitive basis.

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/titlel/progress/additional.shtm

#### SCHOOLWIDE PLANNING

Title I schools with a poverty percentage of at least 40 percent have the flexibility to use their Title I funds and services by becoming Title I schoolwide. Schools choosing this option must participate in a year of planning before being eligible as Title I schoolwide.

A schoolwide program uses its Title allocation to upgrade the entire educational program of the school in order to raise academic achievement of all students at the school. No longer are students or teachers labeled as "Title I," but instead all the students and all the teachers at the school use Title I funds to improve the school's entire academic program.

## **LEADERSHIP**

#### COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH

A School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) develops and supports a coordinated school health approach to provide benefits to students, the school and the community. The SHAC can be an existing team under another health or academic name (e.g. School Health team, the School Improvement team); the SHAC is any team that reviews and addresses health issues within the school. The SHAC brings together a team, including school administrators, health education/ physical education teachers, mental health or social services staff, nutrition or food service staff, health services (school nurse), students, parents or families of students, and community members. Together the SHAC implements a systematic coordinated school health approach through health policies and practices.

The DPI Coordinated School Health staff offer ongoing technical assistance and data guidance to all educational partners.

Websites:

- dpi.state.nd.us/health/index.shtm
- cdc.gov/healthyyouth/cshp/index.htm
- <u>nchealthyschools.org/docs/schoolhealthadvisorycou</u> <u>ncil/advisorycouncilsmanual.pdf</u>

#### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER PROGRAMS

A 15-hour webinar style workshop is available annually for English Language Learner (ELL) educators to learn more about the state and federal requirements for ELL programs–North Dakota ELL Program Boot Camp. ELL educators in rural areas often feel isolated and unsure of their roles as ELL teachers, ELL directors or ELL coordinators. The ELL Boot Camp is available for educators who want to learn more about and take steps to improve their local ELL program. It also provides a network of support for new or isolated ELL educators.

#### Website: ELL Program Advisory Committee

#### MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE PARTNERSHIPS (MSP) PROGRAM

Standards and Achievement oversees the Mathematics and Science Partnerships (MSP) Program in partnership with North Dakota University System. The MSP projects are intended to enhance the capacity of local teachers to enact curricula reforms that produce higher student achievement in mathematics and science. A partnership between local school districts and institutions of higher education's science, technology, engineering, and mathematics faculty is the conduit used to read these goals.

Website: <a href="mailto:dpi.state.nd.us/titlell/infoB.shtm#1">dpi.state.nd.us/titlell/infoB.shtm#1</a>

The next request for proposals will be in October 2012.

#### NORTH DAKOTA LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The DPI manages a flow-through grant to the North Dakota Leadership in Educational Administration Development (NDLEAD) Center. The NDLEAD Center provides opportunities to administrators and school leaders to "Develop Excellence in Educational Leadership". Their mission Excellence in Educational Leadership has never been more important. The NDLEAD Center's mission is to assist schools and districts in any way to impact the learning of students in North Dakota through outstanding educational leaders.

#### Website: ndlead.org/

#### NDMILE CAPACITY BUILDERS

The NDMILE Capacity Builders assist schools in building the school's capacity so each NDMILE leadership team has the skills necessary to carry out the school improvement initiatives. The state contracted Capacity Builders:

- Assist schools/districts to improve student learning through the use of the NDMILE process.
- Work with schools/districts to foster leadership capacity.
- Assist schools in the completion of blended reporting systems for compliance.
- Assist schools with data analysis to identify areas of need.
- Collaborate with the school teams through the implementation and evaluation of NDMILE.
- Provide assistance through consultation, training, professional development, and technical assistance.
- Monitor progress through on-site visits.
- Provide timely and consistent feedback on implementation for monitoring and evaluation purposes through the use of coaching comments.

#### NDMILE TECHNICAL ASSISTANT PROVIDERS

Each NDMILE school has a DPI contact person who offers technical assistance through the NDMILE process. To ensure success for schools, the DPI is committed to providing technical assistance and support for schools as they work through the steps of the process.

Website: <u>NDMILE Capacity Builders and Department</u> <u>Technical Assistant Providers</u>

#### PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

The DPI endorsed the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Model Core Teaching Standards and the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards. The DPI encourages districts to incorporate and use these standards in guiding professional learning for teachers and administrators. The ISLLC Standards have recently been developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) in collaboration with the National Policy Board on Educational Administration (NPBEA) to help strengthen preparation programs in school leadership (Van Meter & Murphy, 1997).

There are six administrative standards. Each standard is followed by the *Knowledge* required for the standard, the *Dispositions* or attitudes manifested by the accomplishment of the standard, and *Performances* that could be observed by an administrator who is accomplished in the standard.

The CCSSO, through the InTASC, developed a set of model core teaching standards which outline what teachers should know and be able to do to ensure every K-12 learner reaches the goal of being ready to enter college or the work force in today's world. These standards outline the common principles and foundations of teaching practices that cut across all subject areas and grade levels and which are necessary to improve student achievement.

There are ten teacher standards. These standards have been grouped into four general categories to help users organize their thinking about the standards. The categories include: The Learner and Learning, Content, Instructional Practice, and Professional Responsibility. Each standard is followed by Performance, Essential Knowledge, and Critical Disposition indicators for each of the standards.

Website:

blogs.edutech.nodak.edu/professionaldevelopmentnd/

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Special Education unit offers ongoing technical assistance and data guidance. In addition, the SE unit holds a semi-annual Special Education Leadership conference. The purpose of this conference is to introduce new federal and state initiatives and monitoring plans; review the results of the APR and new requirement expectations; discuss issues or concerns, and distribute training materials for use at the school level. The partnership of Special Education, Title I, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers also hold a fall conference for all interested educators and administrators.

#### STANDARDS AND ACHIEVEMENT

The Standards and Achievement staff oversees adequate yearly progress, growth models, and graduation rate. The unit offers guidance manuals on all formulas and provides technical support in understanding these models/formulas.

#### TEACHER AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

The Teacher and School Effectiveness staff provides ongoing technical assistance in the areas of compliance, education improvement, school approval, Section 504, counseling and professional learning. The unit provides several professional development opportunities in the areas of data collection through the yearly STARS training. Administrative professional development is provided through the Annual New Administrators' Workshop, sponsored in partnership with the NDLEAD Center. Several SEIP and NDMILE workshops are held throughout the year on a regional, group or per school basis. The Education Improvement Conference is held in October and is co-sponsored with AdvancED.

#### TITLE I

The Title I staff offers ongoing technical assistance and guidance to assist administrators in administering their Title I program and the regulations outlined under the *No Child Left Behind* Act. Each school district that receives Title I funds has an assigned Title I contact person.

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/title1/conapp.shtm

#### TITLE I COMMITTEE OF PRACTITIONERS

Title I, under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, requires that each state Title I program have a Committee of Practitioners. The Committee of Practitioners must include members of the following stakeholder groups: administrators, teachers, parents, school board members, private schools, representatives from vocational/adult education, pupil services, and personnel.

The law states that it is the Committee of Practitioners role to "review before the publication of any final rule or regulation" pertaining to Title I. Committee members are asked to review and be aware of various issues in Title I, including standards development, the state assessment system, and other current issues. This also includes awareness of the following programs within Title I-Even Start Family Literacy, Homeless Children and Youth, and Migrant Education.

When selected, committee members are asked to consider serving on the team for a three-year period, to ensure consistency within the team's membership. However, agreeing to be on the team only commits member services for one year as each year the state Title I office contacts each person on the committee to verify membership for the upcoming school year.

Website: <a href="mailto:dpi.state.nd.us/title1/practitn.shtm">dpi.state.nd.us/title1/practitn.shtm</a>

### **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

#### NATIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

The National Instructional Materials and Accessibility Standards (NIMAS) is a provision in IDEA 2004 that was designed to maximize access to the general education curriculum for students who are blind or visually impaired, or who have other print disabilities. Individuals with Disabilities Education The Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) requires states to address the critical difficulty in obtaining accessible textbooks for students with print disabilities by adopting a new digital format, the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS). The NIMAS requires state education agencies (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs) to adhere to the standard.

Website: <a href="mailto:dpi.state.nd.us/speced/nimas\_brochure.pdf">dpi.state.nd.us/speced/nimas\_brochure.pdf</a>

#### NORTH DAKOTA COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Standards and Achievement is the main entity for ushering in the North Dakota Common Core Standards.

In June 2011 the DPI announced the adoption of new content standards for English language arts and mathematics. These new content standards, which define grade level expectations for what students should know and be able to do, are based on the recently released Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These standards will become effective in July 2013 and will be the basis for the state's future assessment efforts.

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/standard/content.shtm

In June 2010, following a one year development period, the National Governors' Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers released the national CCSS in English language arts and mathematics, which were developed through a national collaborative effort.

#### Website: dpi.state.nd.us/standard/common\_core.shtm

The national CCSS are products by the states and for the states and are neither mandated by or originate from the US Department of Education or any other federally sponsored effort.

Following the release of these national CCSS, the DPI convened committees of statewide educators to review, validate, provide supporting commentary, and offer a recommendation regarding the ultimate adoption of these standards. After an extensive ninemonth review by the North Dakota educators, the committee recommended unanimously the adoption of the national CCSS as the state's official content standards in English language arts and mathematics.

These standards define the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate high school and able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs.

These content standards are available to local school districts to allow for the preparation of local curricula. The state's 2005 content standards will remain effective until July 1, 2013, after which the approved 2011 CCSS will become operationally effective for the purposes of the state's accountability system. After July 1, 2013, all public school districts are expected to provide instruction based on these new CCSS. The state's academic assessments aligned to the 2005 content standards will continue to be administered through the fall 2013 test administration. Beginning with the 2014-15 academic year, the state will administer a new generation of state assessments based on the 2011 CCSS.

A section of the DPI website is devoted to resources available to assist schools in making the transition to the CCSS, including presentations, parent information, analyses of the standards, and links to additional resources for curriculum development and professional development.

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/standard/common\_core.shtm

#### NORTH DAKOTA CURRICULUM INITIATIVE

The North Dakota Curriculum Initiative (NDCI) is a long-term professional development program for North Dakota public and non-public school curriculum administrators and teachers. NDCI is funded through DPI and operated by an advisory committee.

Website: ndcurriculuminitiative.org/

#### **RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION**

Response to Intervention (RTI) is used to prevent academic failure through early intervention, frequent progress measurement, and increasingly intensive research-based instructional interventions for children who experience academic difficulty. Students who do not show a response to effective interventions may be identified with a specific learning disability and may receive special education services.

#### **UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING**

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework and set of principles designed to provide all students equal opportunities to learn. Curriculum barriers are reduced; learning is supported; students gain knowledge and skills; and their learning is validly assessed. DPI supports UDL as a natural complement to early intervening initiatives, such as RTI and RTI-B. DPI has developed two trainings on UDL for teachers as part of our online professional development series. The first UDL module provides teachers with an introduction to the foundational principles of UDL, its basis in research, and the role of technology. The DPI is coordinating a series of on-line professional development modules designed to address the needs created by a changing service delivery model for students with sensory impairments. The NIMAS and UDL modules represent one strand of this series that has universal applications for improving instructional practice for all students.

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/speced/teacher/index.shtm

#### ACT ASSESSMENT – WORKKEYS ASSESSMENT AND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The DPI oversees the statewide ACT/ WorkKeys testing for all high school juniors. Students may take either the ACT, a college preparedness test, or the WorkKeys, career readiness tests.

Students attaining requisite ACT or WorkKeys scores and satisfying established curricular and grade requirements may apply for one of two state scholarships, the North Dakota Academic Scholarship and the North Dakota Career and Technical Education Scholarship.

Website: <a href="mailto:dpi.state.nd.us/resource/act/act.shtm">dpi.state.nd.us/resource/act/act.shtm</a>

#### ELL ASSESSMENTS

The department's ELL programs office administers an annual assessment to all ELL students in the state each winter. The assessment is called ACCESS for ELLs® and is a product of the WIDA consortium.

Annual Testing Website:

dpi.state.nd.us/bilingul/standards/index.shtm

Test Administrator Training and Screening Assessment Website:

dpi.state.nd.us/bilingul/tech/identification\_screening.pdf

#### NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

North Dakota participates in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which is the largest national representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. Assessments are conducted periodically in mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, and US history. Since NAEP assessments are administered uniformly using the same sets of test booklets across the nation, NAEP results serve as a common metric for all states and selected urban districts. The assessment stays essentially the same from year to year, with only carefully documented changes. This permits NAEP to provide a clear picture of student academic progress over time.

NAEP provides results on subject-matter achievement, instructional experiences, and school environment for populations of students (e.g., all fourth-graders) and groups within those populations (e.g., female students, Hispanic students). NAEP does not provide scores for individual students or schools, although state NAEP can report results by selected large urban districts. NAEP results are based on representative <u>samples</u> of students at grades 4, 8, and 12 for the main assessments, or samples of students at ages 9, 13, or 17 years for the <u>long-term trend assessments</u>. These grades and ages were chosen because they represent critical junctures in academic achievement.

Website: <u>nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/</u>

#### NORTH DAKOTA STATE ASSESSMENT

The DPI administers a comprehensive assessment system that measures and reports individual and school student achievement results against the state's academic content standards. The assessment is administered annually to all North Dakota public school students in grades 3-8 and grade 11. The DPI compiles various reports from these results to assist educators and school administrators in increasing student academic achievement.

The North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA) is given every fall to students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11, as required by the federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) legislation. Students in grades 4, 8, and grade 11 are assessed on state grade level standards in mathematics, reading, English language arts and science.

#### **Growth Reports**

The Student Growth Projection Report tracks the progress students make toward proficiency and advanced proficiency in reading and mathematics on the North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA) annually and across years. Each of these student reports identifies:

- an individual student's achievement level for a given year
- projected target
- minimal projected annual gain
- historical data

Individual student growth reports will be prepared for students who participated in the NDSA in grades 3 through 8 and 11. Students' growth projections will not be generated for students who do not have a current reading or mathematics score.

The current student growth model was created after consultation with national technical experts and a review of valuable elements found in other effective growth models used in other states. The state's growth-to-standard model calculates every student's growth based on the most recent two years of test data to determine if that growth is sufficient for a student to meet or exceed proficiency within three years. Additionally, the state's growth model measures each student's current rate of growth against the student's peers statewide within their respective achievement level. The model measures historical trends, projects future growth needs, and aids in interpreting each student's growth pattern. This tool provides critical information to help schools build instructional plans to aid individual students at risk for learning setbacks.

#### Module 1: What is Growth?

**Module 2:** Reading the Growth Projection Report **Module 3:** Reading the Student Growth Roster Report **Module 4:** North Dakota Growth Model

Module 5: Description and Use of Scales

Website:

dpi.state.nd.us/testing/assess/growth\_projection\_report s.shtm

#### North Dakota State Assessment Test Coordinator's Manual

The Standards and Achievement unit assists with the development and funds the North Dakota State Assessment Test Coordinator's Manual. The Manual is published by CTB/McGraw-Hill, a subsidiary of the McGraw-Hill Companies. The Manual is published yearly and provides information on dates for the testing program, contact information, information on security and confidentiality as well as other essential information.

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/testing/assess/manual.pdf

#### NORTH DAKOTA STATE ASSESSMENT (ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT 1 AND 2)

There are two Alternative Assessments available in North Dakota. The North Dakota Alternative Assessment 1 (NDAA 1) is intended for students with severe cognitive disabilities who will be assessed against alternate achievement standards. It includes teacher selected items and prescribed anchor items that require data on student performance and secondary indicators based on best practices for students with severe disabilities. The North Dakota Alternative Assessment 2 (NDAA 2) is intended for students with persistent learning difficulties who will be assessed at grade level against modified achievement standards.

Alternative Assessments are provided for youth on Individual Education Plans, and no accommodation should be used unless it is documented in the student's Individual Education Plan and used during general instruction. The NDAA 1 uses no accommodations as this test is, by its very nature, an accommodation. Accommodations are allowed on the NDAA 2.

#### 1. NDAA 1 Criteria

- The student's cognitive ability and adaptive behavior prevent completion of part or all of the general education curriculum; AND
- The student requires extensive, frequent, and individualized instruction in multiple settings in order to maintain or generalize skills necessary

to function in school, at home, in the community, and during recreation/leisure and vocational activities; AND

• The student's curriculum is so individualized that neither the general assessment nor the NDAA 2 will reflect what the student is being taught.

#### 2. NDAA 2 Criteria

- The student has persistent learning difficulties that prohibit him/her from making grade-level academic achievement in the time frame covered by the annual IEP; AND
- The student participates in the general education curriculum with ongoing supports and services from special education; AND
- The student's curriculum is so individualized that the general assessment will not reflect what the student is being taught (even with accommodations).

#### SCHOOL HEALTH INDEX

Coordinated School Health highly recommends utilizing the School Health Index (SHI) as a means to evaluate and improve school and health policy and programs. The SHI is a self-assessment and planning tool for schools to improve health and safety policies and programs. It's easy to use, completely confidential, and free through the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This tool will help staff identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school's policies and programs for promoting health and safety; develop an action plan for improving student health and safety; and involve teachers, parents, students, and the community in improving school policies, programs and services.

Websites:

- cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/shi/introduction.htm
- cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/SHI/index.htm
- School Health Profiles (dpi.state.nd.us/health/educprof/index.shtm)
- The Youth Risk Behavior Survey
  (dpi.state.nd.us/health/YRBS/index.shtm)
- The School Health Policies and Practices Summary (<u>cdc.gov/healthyyouth/shpps/)</u>
- The Annual Suspension, Expulsion, and Truancy (SET) Reports
  - (<u>dpi.state.nd.us/health/SDFSC/what.shtm</u> under "Data Reports")

### SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special Education uses the following processes to determine areas of need:

- Data collected annually through State Performance Indicators are used to determine:
  - District level needs; and
  - $\circ$   $\,$  Focus monitoring sites  $\,$
- Data collected through Self Assessment Monitoring

#### Results are shared in:

- North Dakota Special Education Annual Performance Report;
- District level special education performance reports, and
- DPI Collaborative Desk Audits.

#### STANDARDS AND ACHIEVEMENT

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is the state's measure of student achievement against state academic content standards. It establishes the minimum level of proficiency that states, school districts, and schools must attain each year. In identifying AYP, the *No Child Left Behind Act* requires that the state, school districts and individual schools measure not only overall student achievement, but also how particular subgroups of students are measured separately who are traditionally at a high risk of being left behind.

Desk Audits are conducted every fall when 40 plus districts are selected for Accountability Review. The decision to select a district is based on a number of factors:

- 1) Cycle of review.
- 2) If the district did not meet the 100% for highly qualified educators.
- 3) If a district had a number of compliance issues in early audits.
- 4) If a district is brought to attention through concern of a particular practice.

#### NORTH DAKOTA COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The DPI is in the process of developing a Comprehensive Needs Assessment that will meet the requirements for all federal and state programs for all units within the DPI. This Comprehensive Needs Assessment will allow schools to develop one (1) Needs Assessment based on their district data and reduce duplicate reporting. This needs assessment tool will provide a comprehensive evaluation of the strengths and needs of the school or district and will assist schools in determining how they can build on their strengths and areas of need in order to improve teaching and learning at their site. The committee will continue to revise and develop the Comprehensive Needs Assessment.

Title II federal regulation requires a needs assessment to be completed in order to receive funding. Standards and Achievement encourages that the needs assessment is comprehensive, focusing on a number of areas, including student achievement, curriculum and instruction, professional development, school culture and climate, family and community involvement, and school context and organization.

Area of Focus	Questions for Review
Student Achievement	How well are our students attaining challenging academic standards established by the state and district? Are there areas in the data that determine where our school/district is strong or has needs? What is our highest achieving group? What is our lowest achieving group? Why are they highest/lowest? Are there trends in the multiple year data? How is progress measured? Is there clarity of goals?
Curriculum and Instruction	What are teachers and administrators doing to ensure that teaching methods are up-to-date and the curriculum reflects state, local, and national content standards? What opportunities are there on the job to improve instruction and the curriculum, raise expectations of staff and secure top quality instructional materials?
Professional Development	Are there on-the-job opportunities for teachers to participate in meaningful professional development? Is the professional development aligned with needs of the school/district and longitudinal data? Do teachers select the professional development opportunities available to them? What topics attract the largest groups of educators? Who participates? Wha follow-up takes place? Are there evaluations? Do school committees and decision making bodies make it easy fo teachers, parents, paraprofessionals, support staff and students to be heard and, in turn, for all groups to be part or solutions to identify problems? Is data used to drive professional development? Are professional development opportunities tracked to provide data/insight?
School Culture and Climate	Does the school/district recognize students and staff? What is the number and percentage of referrals and in what areas? What are the shared beliefs and attitudes of the school/district? Are school grounds safe? Are school grounds welcoming? Are the missions and visions displayed for all to see? Are there signs to offices clearly marked for guests? Is there a crisis management plan in place? Does the school have practice drills and debriefing sessions? Does the school/district use data to assess needs of students? Are student attendance patterns analyzed? Are student suspensions and expulsion patterns analyzed? Do staff work collegially? Are there high expectations for both adults and students?
Family and Community Involvement	In what ways are parents and the community involved in meaningful activities that support students' learning? How are parents and the community involved in school decisions? Are health and human services personnel available to suppor students and encourage healthy family relationships? If families speak languages other than English, are school messages communicated in those languages? Do services for families include students with disabilities, both physical and educational? Can parents develop their own parenting skills or gain access to other educational opportunities through the school? What does the school offer to assist families/parents?
School Context and Organization	How large are classes? Is adequate time devoted to subjects in which students perform poorly? Do teachers have a voice in decision making and school policies? What role do teachers have in deciding what assessments will be used? Do teachers have time to work together to plan lessons and assess? Do teachers have mentors?

All activities allocated in the consolidated report should be linked to data and prioritized needs. No Child Left Behind and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 both call for transparency as well as measurability. If funding is allocated it needs to be based on a needs assessment which is driven by An example of linking data is provided: various data elements (subjective/objective). Standards and Achievement also encourages that all activities (consolidated report) are linked to a measurable goal in order to assess the progress of the activity.

Examples of Linking Key Elements							
Supporting Data	Prioritized Need	Measurable Goal	Allocation of Funding				
100% of both educators and parents feel that the district does not have current technology (educator and parental surveys). Standards. Equipment inventory. There has been a 5% increase in	For students and educators to have access to current technology.	Five new types of computers will be purchased by September 2011. Discipline infractions for	Integrated Activity: Enhance/acquire technology to improve student achievement. Description: Five new computers will be purchased to ensure that students and educators have access to current technology. Integrated Activity: Develop and				
the number of discipline infractions for bullying (discipline infractions). There has been a 4% increase in the number of reports specific to bullying (police reports). There has been a 17% increase in the numbers of referrals to the counselor's office in regards to bullying (office referrals).	bullying to decrease in the district.	bullying will decrease by 2% by May 2010-11 as compared to the number of infractions from the previous 2009- 10 school year.	improve character education programs. Description: Bring in speaker to focus on the issues of bullying and how to combat it.				
The disaggregate population of students with disabilities (IEP) have not met the State established goals in reading for the last five school years (AYP). The disaggregate population of students with disabilities has experienced gradual decline in reading achievement in the past five school years (longitudinal data).	To increase reading proficiency in the disaggregate population of students with disabilities (IEP).	Proficiency in reading for the disaggregate population of students with disabilities will increase 3% on the 2011-2012 NDSA as compared to the previous year's results.	Integrated Activity: Professional development to improve the knowledge of teachers and paraprofessionals in core subject areas. Description: Educators to be sent to reading recovery conference. One of the break-out sessions focuses on increasing reading proficiency of students with disabilities.				
Survey demonstrates that 57% of high school students have tried alcohol (YRBS). Alcohol violations have increased in the last three years for both middle school and high school students (police incident reports).	To decrease the number of alcohol policy violations.	The number of alcohol violations of middle and high school students will decrease 5% by May 2012 compared to the previous year's results.	Integrate Activity: Age appropriate/ developmentally-based drug, alcohol, tobacco, violence, bullying/harassment prevention programs or curriculum. Description: Project Northland will be implemented in both middle and high school to target the utilization of alcohol.				
The State established goals in reading for the disaggregate population of students with disabilities have not been achieved in the last three school years (AYP).	To increase reading proficiency in the disaggregate population of students with disabilities.	The disaggregate population of students with disabilities will increase reading proficiency by 5% on the 2010-11 NDSA compared to the 2009- 10 results.	Two educators will attend a national conference in using differentiated instruction to assist student's achievement.				

#### **COMPARATIVE SCHOOL AND DISTRICT REPORTS**

The Comparative School and District Reports (CSDR) individual school and district araphs actual achievement rates in reading and mathematics on the compared state assessments to the state's intermediate achievement goals according to the established rules for adequate yearly progress. The CSDR graphs a school's or district's comparative standing in reading and mathematics in the aggregate and disaggregated population by certain subgroups; student attendance rates in elementary and middle schools; and student graduation rates in high schools.

If a school or district has any data group with an N value of less than ten (<10) no report will be generated for the particular subgroup.

The CSDRs are generated from data collected and rules established that govern annual AYP.

#### **GRADUATION RATE**

Graduation rate is a key component of federal Title I *No Child Left Behind Act* accountability provisions for states, school districts, and schools. Since the 2005-06 school year, the state has been reporting graduation, retention, and dropout rates within cohorts, in the aggregate and disaggregated population by subgroups for all high schools, districts, and the state as provided within Section 1111 of *No Child Left Behind Act* and the state's accountability workbook. In 2009-10, the state established its new graduation rate goals at 89% and began using this rate in the 2010-11 school year as the basis for calculating the four-year adjusted cohort rate, disaggregated by subgroups, for all school, district and state profile reports.

#### SCHOOL AND DISTRICT PROFILE

The Standards and Achievement unit completes the school and district profile. This report generates a great deal of information for schools and districts. The DPI, as well as federal regulations, encourage that decisions are data driven. These data elements include:

- Average daily attendance
- Graduation rate
- AYP
- School assessment for a particular year
- School assessment over time
- Benchmarks overtime

Districts and schools are encouraged to utilize this data to improve student achievement.

Table 2 Example of A Comparative School Report



## SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE

A school's culture is one of the most difficult to describe and yet one of the most important elements in its success or failure in educating its students. It refers to the "feel" of a school and can vary from school to school within the same district. The culture and climate of a school can be affected by factors from disciplinary problems and classroom rowdiness to educator pessimism or student apathy. Culture and climate; however, can nearly be described as the sum of all perceptions and emotions attached to the school, both good and bad, held by students, faculty, administrators, parents, and the community at large.

School climate is a significant element in discussions regarding improving academic performance and school reform. Research shows that schools perceived as being positive, safe, and nurturing environments focused on student learning do better than schools that lack this climate, regardless of available technology, teacher training and other more obvious factors. A caring school climate is associated with higher grades, engagement, attendance. expectations and aspirations, a sense of scholastic competence, fewer school suspensions, on-time progression through grades, higher self-esteem and self-concept, less anxiety, and less depression, loneliness and substance abuse.

The benefits of creating a positive learning environment, a culture of inquiry and thought, and a climate of passion and excitement are obvious; a school having such characteristics will be a place that students enjoy coming to everyday, an institution for which parents will be grateful and work to support, and a source of pride for the community in general. Advocating an improved school culture is easy, logical, and in some ways, obvious.

#### **BULLYING PREVENTION**

Every school district in North Dakota must develop and implement a bullying policy by July 1, 2012. The district policy must be developed in conjunction with parents, district employees, volunteers, students, school district administrators and law enforcement, as well as domestic violence/sexual assault organizations. The policy must be explained to and discussed with students, must be filed with the DPI, must be reviewed and revised as necessary with amendments filed with DPI, and must be published in student and employee handbooks.

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/health/index.shtm

#### **RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION-BEHAVIOR**

The Response to Intervention-Behavior (RTI-B) is a framework that ensures all students have access to effective and appropriately implemented behavioral interventions. RTI-B is not curriculum, intervention, or practice. It is a decision making framework that guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based behavioral practices for improving behavioral outcomes for all students.

Websites:

- <u>ndrti.com</u>
- rti4success.org
  - (National Center for Response to Intervention)

#### YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) was developed in 1990 by the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor priority health risk behaviors that contribute markedly to the leading causes of death, disability and social problems among youth and adults in the United States. The YRBS was designed to monitor trends and compare state health risk behaviors to national health risk behaviors and is intended for use to plan, evaluate, and improve school and community programs.

North Dakota began participating in the YRBS in 1995. Students in grades 7-12 are surveyed in the spring of odd years. The survey is voluntary and completely anonymous. The six priority health risk behaviors often established during childhood and early adolescence and resulting in unintentional injuries include tobacco use, dietary behaviors, physical activity, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behaviors/STDs/HIV/AIDS/ unintended pregnancies, and violence/injury.

Websites:

- <u>dpi.state.nd.us/health/YRBS/index.shtm</u>
- cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/LEARNING

#### **INDICATORS IN ACTION**

Indicators in Action is a professional learning resource produced by the Center on Innovation and Improvement. This resource provides an explanation of indicators of effective practices. Video clips of principals, teachers and teams show what the indicators of effective practices look like in a classroom setting when they are actually "in action". This resource uses the NDMILE indicators in the video clips; however, the "Indicators in Action" would be an appropriate professional learning opportunity for faculty and team meetings or other workshops dealing with school improvement initiatives.

Website: indistar.org/Action/

#### NDMILE WEBEX TRAINING SERIES

A series of webinars is available for schools using the NDMILE. These sessions are designed as a review for schools on how to accomplish each of the six steps in the NDMILE.

Topics include:

- Registering the school, overview of the NDMILE and timelines
- Assessing indicators and using the Wise Ways<sup>®</sup>
- Resources, reports and documenting meeting agendas and minutes
- Developing plans and tasks that move schools forward
- Coaching comments and giving effective feedback
- Monitoring and reviewing school plans

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/resource/NDMILE.shtm

#### NORTH DAKOTA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ LEARNING PLAN

Each district must annually submit a copy of the district professional develop plan and review document through the NDMILE district site. Districts receive feedback on their plan which they can then incorporate into their plan if the district believes the review comments will strengthen the professional learning in their district. The professional development plan was developed using the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning and the plans are also tightly aligned to the education improvement process of the district.

A team approach is to be used in developing the plan and program recommendations. The district professional development committee will annually utilize a data-driven approach to analyze student data and determine district and school professional development/learning needs. Components of the professional development/learning plan include:

- The district's vision and mission for professional development.
- Identification and analysis process used by the district when examining the data to determine professional development goals. Identification of the goals selected to increase student learning and the alignment of that goal to a professional development goal to assist teachers in developing an understanding and increase the skill level that will impact the teaching in classrooms and achievement of students. Activities, timelines and participation are also aligned and recorded.
- The district's plan for induction and mentoring of new teachers.
- The district's plan for developing a collaborative culture to meet the professional development goals of the district.
- The district's plan for differentiating professional development to address the varied needs of staff, depending on career state, educational background, content or grade level.
- The district's plan for how professional development activities will support each educator's ability to differentiate instruction to address the unique needs of all students.
- The district's plan for how school leaders will facilitate and participate in the development and implementation of professional development.
- The district's plan for utilizing its resources of time, finances, and personnel to support professional development activities

#### Website:

dpi.state.nd.us/resource/professionaldevelopment.shtm

#### NORTH DAKOTA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ LEARNING WEBSITE

The North Dakota Professional Development/Learning website is a resource for educators to:

- Communicate with other educators and share ideas for professional learning.
- Browse a list of professional learning opportunities held in North Dakota.
- View the work of the Professional Development Advisory Committee.

#### Website

blogs.edutech.nodak.edu/professionaldevelop mentnd/

#### NORTH DAKOTA STATE TEACHER SUPPORT PROGRAM

The DPI manages a flow through grant to the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB) for the North Dakota State Teacher Support Program. This program provides administrator and mentor training to support first-year teachers in the state. This structured program for all participants includes online classes, seminars, stipends, flip video camera and pays for mileage and substitutes for program activities.

#### Website:

nd.gov/espb/profdev/Mentoring/Program%20Structure %202011-12%20Color.pdf

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION MENTORING PROGRAM

The North Dakota Teacher Mentoring Program was created to increase special educator retention and promote professional growth and development through intensive assistance and guidance to new staff. Website: dpi.state.nd.us/speced/general/recruit.shtm

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION RESIDENT TEACHER PROGRAM

DPI continues to support ongoing personnel development projects in collaboration with three state university programs, to increase the number of qualified special educators across the state. This has been achieved through the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) and the increased support to the mentoring model, Resident Teacher Program, in pre-service teacher preparation programs. In May 2010, 25 educational strategists graduated from the three funded universities. Of those 25 graduates, 18 (72%) are employed in North Dakota schools.

Websites:

- education.und.edu/teaching-and-learning/spedrtp.cfm
- <u>http://www.minotstateu.edu/cdse/sped/RTP/about.</u> <u>htm</u>

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SUPPORT

As part of the focused monitoring follow-up, the local special education unit director will work with the DPI special education coordinator to determine what technical assistance specific to the priority areas is necessary for completion of the corrective action plan. Technical assistance may be available from DPI staff, university staff, local contractors, and regional technical assistance agencies.

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION TRAINEESHIP SCHOLARSHIP

Each year, DPI awards Traineeship Scholarships in priority disabilities areas to North Dakota teachers who wish to pursue graduate level retraining in the field of special education. As part of the application, a recommendation is completed by the SE unit director where the applicant is working. This recommendation includes information about the applicant's skills as well as identified needs in the SE unit to have a teacher trained in the identified area. Scholarship amounts are based on the credit hours of coursework taken during a semester. After an applicant has been accepted for the Traineeship Scholarship, the applicant may be funded for a maximum of three (3) years or until they complete their endorsement (whichever comes first). The number of Traineeship Scholarships given in fall 2009, spring 2010, and summer 2010 totaled 97 in 8 endorsement areas.

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/speced/teacher/trainee/index.shtm

#### SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP

Due to a shortage of speech-language pathologists in North Dakota, four scholarships are given to graduate level speech-language pathologists at two North Dakota universities funded through the State Personnel Development Grant. The scholarships fund the student's tuition and books. For each year the student accepts the scholarship, he/she signs an agreement to work in a rural school district in North Dakota. In May 2010, four speech-language pathologists graduated from the two universities. All four of the speech-language pathologists are employed in rural school districts in North Dakota. To inquire about this scholarship, please contact DPI-Special Education Office at 328-2277.

#### STANDARDS BASED EDUCATION SERIES

The Standards Based Education Series (SBE) addresses the critical issues facing educators as districts transition to teaching with the Common Core Standards. The series addresses the following questions:

- Why do schools need to change in order to address the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners, prepare students to compete in a global market, and become players in the continued economic development of North Dakota?
- How to understand a framework of the Common Core Standards and the components of a standards-based teaching and learning cycle.
- What are research-based, best-practice instructional strategies that engage students and assist teachers in implementing Common Core Standards?
- What are effective assessment practices and will the new re-designed assessments impact those practices? What are research-based formative and summative assessment practices?
- Why are common assessment strategies powerful and how can assessment practices be used to improve instructional practices and student achievement?
- What are the research-based, best-practice strategies in effective practices around intervention for students who need extensions or remediation and the role of feedback, grading, and reporting in a standards-based classroom?

Website:

blogs.edutech.nodak.edu/professionaldevelopmentnd/

#### STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning has been endorsed by the DPI to shape practices in professional learning. The standards assist the state, districts, and schools in guiding the learning, facilitation, implementation, and evaluation of professional learning. The standards help to bring a clear and consistent focus in developing continuous professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students.

Website: <a href="https://www.uestimation.org/standards/index.cfm">www.uestimation.org/standards/index.cfm</a>

#### TITLE I SPONSORED EVENTS

The state Title I office sponsors multiple conferences each year that provide support to administrators, teachers, coaches, and others involved in providing professional development within their schools. These events include, but are not limited to, the Title I program improvement workshop, fall conference, math summer training, reading summer training, and annual schoolwide planning trainings. Numerous other trainings, via conference call or WebEx, are offered each year to share and disseminate information statewide. These conferences have expanded in recent years and reflect a collaborative effort between multiple units in the DPI.

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/title1/events.shtm

#### TITLE I WEBEX TRAINING SESSIONS

To further expand the number of training opportunities available to Title I personnel, the state Title I office is planning a series of WebEx trainings on relevant Title I issues. Currently, the US Department of Education (USDE) uses this form of training for state departments of education and it is very beneficial. The trainings are short (1 hour), easy to access, and participants don't have to be away from their building.

These WebEx training sessions are open to everyone and span a variety of topics including Title I programming, fiscal responsibilities, preschool programming, federal requirements, etc.

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/title1/present.shtm

## **MONITORING PROCESSES**

#### COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH

Upon request, the CSH staff can assist districts in their education improvement processes as it relates to health and safety. This could include, depending on availability, onsite support, reviewing policies, conducting an environmental/climate survey, and/or determining other needs.

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION

Each year, the SE staff members meet to prepare the fall focused monitoring schedule. Prior to this planning meeting, data reports are prepared by DPI's contracted statistician. The data reports compile information from a variety of special education data sources and assist with the brainstorming at the beginning of each focused monitoring planning meeting. During this meeting, the SE staff examines district performance on a variety of state performance plan indicators and compares that performance to corresponding state and target rates. Some comparison areas include:

- Overall identification rate for students with disabilities;
- Demographic information for identified students;
- Related service types;
- Statewide assessment proficiency and participation;
- Least restrictive environment data;
- Exit information; and/or
- District results on other indicators of the State Performance Plan.

During this spring focused monitoring data review, areas in which district data vary significantly from state data are examined more closely. For example, a district may have a higher rate of students placed in self-contained environments when compared to the state rate. This would lead the team to further examine the characteristics of students in these self-contained settings.

The team would review the data in more detail and consider the following:

- Grade levels of students in self-contained settings;
- Disability categories of these students;
- Proficiency rates for these students;
- Self-assessment results (when available);
- Related services received by students in selfcontained settings; and
- Possible correlation between restrictive placements and discipline incidents.

Another support resource provided by Special Education is the IDEA-B advisory committee, located at: <u>North Dakota IDEA-B Advisory Committee</u>.

#### STANDARDS AND ACHIEVEMENT

The audit completed through Standards and Achievement review data on the particular district. The data reviewed includes financial, comparative, and longitudinal. Districts can receive commendations and recommendations, as well as compliance issues. If there are compliance issues, the district needs to attend to the compliance issue at hand. The audit will be 'closed out' once the compliance issue has been addressed. If the district has numerous compliance issues the district will be reviewed the following year to ensure they are focusing on what needs to be addressed. Numerous individuals are involved in assisting to ensure items are addressed: financial, ELL, special education, as well as standards and achievement.

- 1. Activities from the previous years' consolidated application.
- 2. Needs Assessment
  - a. The needs assessment should utilize a number of data sources.
  - b. The needs assessment should ensure needs are identified through the data.
  - c. Once needs are identified measurable goals should be implemented.
  - d. The needs assessment should be the basis for decisions (including activities or allocation of funds).
- 3. Integration of Programs
  - a. Examine who was involved in the process.
  - b. Encourage parents, educators, administrators and school board members become involved.
  - c. Encourage the needs assessment is the basis of funding decisions.
- 4. Professional Development
- 5. Supplement, Not Supplant
- 6. Financial Responsibilities
- 7. Title II Part A
  - a. Ensure spending guidelines are followed.
  - b. Funding should be based on the needs assessment. Any activity (allocation of funding) should link back to the needs assessment.
- 8. Measurable goals should be implemented to ensure districts can track progress (accountability and measurability).Title II Part D
  - a. Ensure spending guidelines are followed.
  - b. 25% in professional development should be allocated.
  - c. Funding should be based on needs assessment. Any activity (allocation of funding) should link back to the needs assessment.
  - d. Measurable goals should be implemented to ensure districts can track progress and collectively understand the outcome (accountability and measurability).
- 9. REAP
  - a. See Title II Part A and Title II Part D.

### 10. Exemplary Programs

- 11. English Language Learners
  - a. Ensure the state ELL law is followed.
  - b. Ensure there is a process in place in STARS that has a system for identification, as well as a plan to ensure all ELL students are included in the various tests provided (ACCESS, NDSA, MAP).

#### TEACHER AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

The Teacher and School Effectiveness unit collects the annual school and LEA compliance reports to assure all schools are meeting NDCC for school approval. The data from the fall MISO3, MISO1, MISO2, PERO2 reports and school calendar are analyzed for compliance and technical assistance is provided in areas of need.

#### TITLE I MONITORING

The state Title I office conducts a variety of monitoring projects throughout a given school year.

• Title I Self-Monitoring – Each school year approximately 40 districts are selected to participate in the self-monitoring process. Some additional districts receive an on-site visit.

Website:

dpi.state.nd.us/title1/targeted/resources/monitor/ind ex.shtm

When a district is identified as being monitored, the districts can expect to receive detailed correspondence from the state Title I office outlining monitoring directions, the review process, due dates, etc. It is important that the correspondence from the Title I office is reviewed prior to preparing or submitting district monitoring information.

#### <u>Monitoring</u>

- Program Improvement Districts and schools that have been identified for program improvement must address specific requirements each year. Some monitoring of schools and districts in program improvement is conducted each year particularly with regards to the supplemental educational services (SES) process.
- Aide/Paraprofessional Requirements Each year staff in the state Title I office will be monitoring and reviewing the PER02 report for compliance with the Title I aide/paraprofessional requirements.
- Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Schools will be randomly selected to submit correspondence and supporting documentation of their AYP notification disseminated to parents.
- Parents' Right to Know Clause Schools will be randomly selected to submit documentation of the information they have disseminated to parents to meet the Parents' Right to Know requirements.

#### TITLE III MONITORING PROCESS

The state Title III office is required by federal law to monitor local Title III programs to ensure compliance with procedures and regulations. The North Dakota ELL Programs Monitoring Tool is currently under development with the help and guidance of the North Central Comprehensive Center and the North Dakota ELL Program Advisory Committee. The tool will be piloted in January of 2012 and will be available online in the spring of 2012. Districts who are not on the rotation for monitoring for the upcoming year may want to use the monitoring tool as a self assessment and evaluation of their local ELL program.

## **OTHER SUPPORT ENTITIES**

#### **BUENO-EAC**

The Equity Assistance Center (EAC) was first established in 1978. There are 10 Regional Equity Assistance Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education under Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. These ten regional centers provide assistance to public schools in the areas of race, gender, and national origin to promote equal educational opportunities.

To assist state departments of education and Local Education Agencies in Region VIII in creating more equitable school experiences and teaching practices.

Upon request, we provide leadership training, professional development and technical assistance in gender, race, national origin and school climate. We also provide services aimed at reducing the overrepresentation of minority students in special education, increasing the underrepresentation of minority students in gifted programs and improving the quality of programs for English Language Learners.

Website: buenoeac.org/index.html

#### CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is one of the major operating components of the North Dakota Department of Health and North Dakota Department of Human Services. The DPI receives competitive grant funds from CDC to implement the Coordinated School Health program. The CDC's mission is to collaborate to create the expertise, information, and tools that people and communities need to protect their health through health promotion, prevention of disease, injury and disability, and preparedness for new health threats.

Website: cdc.gov/

#### **CENTER ON INNOVATION & IMPROVEMENT**

The Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII) works alongside regional comprehensive centers to identify the challenges facing state education departments. CII then calls upon its Scientific Council to synthesize the relevant research and generate ideas to meet the challenges and solve problems. However, researchbased concepts are not enough. CII's technical advisors and staff, with loads of experience in schools, districts, and state and federal education departments, pass the good ideas through the sieve of common sense, converting them into practical applications to place in the hands of the state agencies. Getting the desired results means sticking with the work, and CII maintains strong consulting and problem-solving support for the regional centers and the states. Indistar™, CII's web-based planning and coaching tool for district and school improvement, along with CII-developed training and materials, is now being used in several states with support from their regional comprehensive centers.

Website: centerii.org/

#### MID-CONTINENT REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY

The Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL) was founded as a nonprofit, nonpartisan education research "laboratory" where knowledge about what works in education would be turned into practical guidance for educators. Experienced education researchers and consultants work together to provide educators with research-based, practical guidance on the issues and challenges facing K-16 education. McREL staff creates and delivers sophisticated data analyses; rigorous scientific studies; high-quality, field-tested products and services; and insightful reports, articles, books, and tools.

Website: mcrel.org/

#### MOUNTAIN PLAINS REGIONAL RESOURCE CENTER

The Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (MPRRC) provides technical assistance to state education agencies in developing quality programs and services for children with disabilities. The MPRRC identifies and analyzes persisting problems that interfere with the provision of special education services. It links state education agencies experiencing similar problems, assists them in developing solutions, and supports them in their efforts to adopt new technologies and practices.

Website: rrcprogram.org/

#### NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC) strengthens state and local service systems to ensure that children with disabilities (birth through 5 years) and their families receive and benefit from high-quality, evidence-based, culturally appropriate and family-centered supports and services.

Website: nectac.org/

#### NATIONAL SECONDARY TRANSITION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

The National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC) ensures full implementation of IDEA and helps youth with disabilities and their families achieve desired postschool outcomes. NSTTAC helps states build capacity to support and improve transition planning, services, and outcomes for youth with disabilities and disseminate information and provide technical assistance on scientifically-based research practices with an emphasis on building and sustaining state-level infrastructures of support and district-level demonstrations of effective transition methods for youth with disabilities.

Website: nsttac.org/

#### NORTH CENTRAL COMPREHENSIVE CENTER

The North Central Comprehensive Center (NCCC) is a US Department of Education-funded program that provides research-based services to state education agencies in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota to implement US Department of Education initiatives and requirements. The NCCC is one of 16 regional centers serving as an outreach arm of the US Department of Education. The mission of the NCCC is to help states within our region increase their capacity to support schools and districts in meeting the requirements of NCLB and other federal programs.

#### Website: mcrel.org/nccc/

#### NORTH DAKOTA STATE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM

The state is almost ready to roll out some of the K12 data from the North Dakota State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). Currently, the state is able to pull some of the student data from PowerSchool on a nightly basis without impacting the schools or increasing reporting burden. In addition, the state is adding the NDSA and building capacity to add other assessment data so the districts will see a more complete picture of their student's performance. The SLDS design team is also working to include external data from the National Student Clearinghouse (college enrollment information) and immunization records.

The SLDS design team is utilizing a pilot group to help refine reports produced from the system. The pilot group consists of 10 district representatives from 6 different districts. The reports consist of student level enrollments, attendance, courses and grades. There are also reports on the NDSA, ACT, transportation, and district financials. The pilot districts are refining the reports to make the data more understandable and usable for district and school level staff. They are working to make the source of the data clear and precise since an 'apples to apples' comparison of data consistency across districts is a main objective. The design team is working closely with EduTech to make necessary changes to the data loaded in PowerSchool and make updates to their training program to help ensure data uniformity across districts. The recent letter from the DPI defining the required attendance categories will also help to further align data for that 'apples to apples' comparisons. Currently, the development team is further refining the security roles to provide SLDS access beyond the current district level down to the school level users. They are paying close attention to recent state legislation and changes to FERPA to ensure they comply with security requirements while still allowing the flow of information.

If your district or school would like to be included in the next phase of portal expansion or include your interim assessment data in the SLDS, contact the DPI at dpi.state.nd.us/resource/NDSLEDS.shtm.

#### OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

The mission of the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation through vigorous enforcement of civil rights.

It serves student populations facing discrimination and the advocates and institutions promoting systemic solutions to civil rights problems. An important responsibility is resolving complaints of discrimination. Agency-initiated cases, typically called compliance reviews, permit OCR to target resources on compliance problems that appear particularly acute. OCR also provides technical assistance to help institutions achieve voluntary compliance with the civil rights laws that OCR enforces. An important part of OCR's technical assistance is partnerships designed to develop creative approaches to preventing and addressing discrimination.

Website: ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html

#### PATHFINDER PARENT CENTER

The Pathfinder Parent Center is a statewide non-profit organization. It was started in 1987 by a small group of ND families. These parents received a grant from the US Department of Education to become ND's statewide parent training and information center. Today the center serves over 2,000 parents of children that are at-risk due to learning challenges or have disabilities (age birth to 26).

Website: North Dakota Pathfinder Parent Center

#### **REGIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS**

The DPI works collaboratively with the eight Regional Education Associations (REAs) to provide support to school districts in the state, many of which are included in the support section. Over 90% of North Dakota school districts belong to one of the eight REAs.

Website: ndrea.org/index.html

All REAs have a common core of high quality programs and services in the following areas:

• **Professional Development**: REAS are leaders and models in coordinating, facilitating, and marketing high quality professional development opportunities to schools in partnership with organizations such as DPI, ESPB, North Dakota University System, North Dakota LEAD Center, Teacher Learning Centers, and schools.

- Technology and Technology Support: REAs fill gaps for schools that lack the human and financial resources to adequately meet their technology support needs. REAs help schools to meet their technology and technology support needs by supporting (not replacing) local technology coordinators.
- Data Systems: REAs help schools to effectively collect, analyze, and interpret student achievement data. REAs help schools to effectively use data to monitor and measure student achievement and make decisions to appropriately adjust instruction to increase student achievement.
- School Improvement: REAs support the Department of Public Instruction by helping schools to develop, implement, monitor, and measure their school improvement goals.
- Curriculum Enrichment: REAs facilitate the expansion and enrichment of the curriculum in schools (particularly rural schools) through online, ITV, hybrid, or other innovative approaches. Systems are in place that allow students to take courses of particular interest that are not offered in their respective REA, however, are offered in another REA in the state.

#### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR EXCELLENCE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) provides for a variety of services such as event planning, training, and education-focused consultation. TAESE is the organization that administers the MPRRC, the TASK12 education interpreter training and certification program, the national Dispute Resolution Consortium, and a variety of other state and federal contracts and technical assistance agreements.

#### Website: taese.org/cms/

#### TITLE I SCHOOL SUPPORT TEAM

A statewide School Support Team has been developed for North Dakota. Members of the School Support Team are comprised of distinguished educators regionally located throughout North Dakota. Members of the School Support Team are required to stay educated and current on the Title I programs and issues. The members provide in-depth technical assistance to schools on a variety of relevant educational issues.

Website:

dpi.state.nd.us/title1/resource/support/index.shtm

#### TITLE I STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT CONSULTANT TEAM

The state Title I office has established a list of consultants, known as the Statewide System of Support (SSOS) Consultant Team, who can assist districts and schools with planning and implementing school improvement activities. Team members provide indepth technical assistance to schools on a variety of relevant educational issues.

Website:

dpi.state.nd.us/title1/resource/support/SSOS.shtm

## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix A: Appendix B: ٠
- ٠
- Additional Resources Academy of Pacesetting States

## APPENDIX A ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

#### MONTHLY RESEARCH REPORT

The state Title I office generates and distributes a monthly report which summarizes newly released research/resources on educational issues relevant to North Dakota schools. The monthly Research/Resource Report (RRR) is disseminated electronically to all principals, administrators, and Title I teachers and staff.

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/title1/RRR.shtm

#### TEAM NEWS

The state Title I office and state Special Education office collaboratively generate and distribute a monthly newsletter that summarizes key educational issues across North Dakota. This monthly newsletter is disseminated electronically to all principals, administrators, and Title I teachers and staff.

Website: <a href="https://dpi.state.nd.us/title1/nwsltrs/index.shtm">dpi.state.nd.us/title1/nwsltrs/index.shtm</a>

#### NORTH CENTRAL COMPREHENSIVE CENTER (NCCC)

The DPI requested assistance from the North Central Comprehensive Center (NCCC) at McREL in highlighting and documenting seven schools in the state of North Dakota that have made substantial improvement in their student achievement scores. Interviews with seven school administrators were conducted by the NCCC to gather information on the specific strategies each school employed to improve student achievement. A summary capturing the most important processes and initiatives was created for each school. All seven summaries were compiled into one document and shared statewide to disseminate effective practices.

#### Website: mcrel.org/nccc

#### "WHAT WORKS" RESOURCE GUIDE

The state Title I office created a "What Works" resource guide for schools and districts to provide educators with strategies, interventions, and components used in effective educational programs. This document contains 22 one-page profiles. Each profile provides an overview, research summary, and resource section on educational topics being used across the nation to improve education and raise academic achievement. The resources within this document are provided to assist schools and districts in their school improvement efforts.

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/title1/index.shtm

#### NORTH DAKOTA LOCAL SPECIAL EDUCATION UNITS

North Dakota is divided into 31 Local Special Education Units (SEUs). Each SEU has a special education director and an administrative team. The SEUs work is in partnership with the DPI SE staff and the LEA administration and staff.

Website: dpi.state.nd.us/speced/general/directory.pdf

## APPENDIX B ACADEMY OF PACESETTING STATES

North Dakota was invited to become a Pacesetting state by the CII. Pacesetting states provide support to each other by assisting in building critical skills for leading a change process and by building sustainable school improvement processes. One of the first steps in the process of becoming a Pacesetting state was to develop a statewide system of support document. The NDSSOS manual was developed to identify the support systems DPI has in place across all department units.

#### Website: centerii.org/academy/

#### ACADEMY OF PACESETTING STATES

The Academy of Pacesetting States (APS) provides:

- 1. A learning community for state teams from states intent upon leading the way to rapid improvement of districts and schools.
- 2. Training, consultation, and support to enable states to reach their goals for a high quality SSOS that builds local capacity to initiate and sustain rapid improvement that brings all classrooms to an optimal level of performance.
- 3. Training, consultation, and support for state teams to develop skilled experts in three critical areas:
  - System leaders who administer the SSOS and coordinate its components.
  - Change agents who understand effective operational practices and the dynamics of change in an educational setting.
  - Instructional specialists who understand effective classroom instruction and how it can be cultivated in district and school systems to reach a critical mass of instructional excellence.

Member States of the APS take action to:

- 1. Share talents and experiences with other states, the Academy faculty, and partners.
- 2. Develop and achieve bold plans of action to:
  - Elevate the effectiveness of the SSOS.
  - Build local capacity to initiate and sustain rapid improvement that brings all classrooms to an optimal level of performance.
  - Create strong programs of change agents and instructional specialists to serve as catalytic teams to rapidly improve districts and schools that show substantial effects in classroom instruction and student learning.

#### PACESETTER CODE

A pacesetter traces every action to its impact on a student in a classroom, acts with courage, proceeds with urgency, focuses on essentials, accepts no excuses, embraces candor, builds webs of trust, and holds adults to high standards of performance.

The core principles of the APS are:

- **Student learning** is the beginning point in designing and providing a statewide system of support.
- The **instructional core** of teacher, student, and content is critical for student learning and school improvement.
- The **school culture** of candor, quality, collegiality, and productivity supports the instructional core.
- The **principal** is the key to advancing a school culture of candor, quality, collegiality, and productivity.
- The **district** provides a framework of support and expectation for continuous school improvement.
- Incentives, opportunity, and capacity building are the levels of change applied by a SSOS.
- Leadership, change agency, and instructional expertise are coherently utilized in a statewide system of support.
- Change requires courage, leadership, and relentless pursuit of high levels of performance by adults.
- Indicators of effective practice, candidly assessed, planned, and monitored, provide guideposts for continuous improvement.
- Human capital, trust, and mutual respect from the necessary foundation for school improvement.