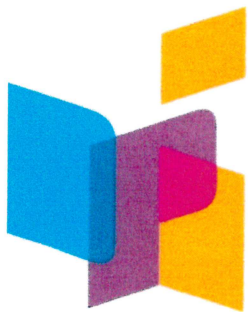


# **Accelerating Learning Recovery Feedback**



**NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

## Introduction

Feb. 17, 2021

Members of the North Dakota House Appropriations Committee Education and Environment Division,

At the start of the Legislature, you brought an important challenge to our Department of Public Instruction budget hearing. You were concerned about the pandemic's effect on student learning, and you wanted us to present a plan for addressing this.

Our NDDPI team set to work immediately, soliciting ideas and suggestions from our staff, their counterparts in other education agencies, state Legislatures, and other local and national education stakeholders, such as the Council of State School Officers and the Education Commission of the States. We crafted a comprehensive list of proposals to encourage accelerated learning, which is part of this document.

We extended a wide-ranging invitation to our North Dakota educators and stakeholders to ask for their own ideas about promoting learning recovery, and to solicit their comments about the document we had prepared. On Feb. 11, we hosted a virtual meeting, attended by about 40 stakeholders, to hear their opinions about the options presented. The large group was broken up into smaller groups, each with an NDDPI facilitator, to encourage candid discussion.

Here are important themes that we heard:

- North Dakota schools have been in session, either face-to-face or by distance/hybrid learning, through most of the pandemic. Our learning recovery issue may not be as significant as it is elsewhere.
- Our educators need flexibility in implementation. Our document suggested some mandatory steps for schools in several areas, including curricula, school calendaring, and information reporting. Meeting participants said the concepts were helpful but emphasized that one-size-fits-all mandates should be avoided.
- Sustainability. At present, there are federal education dollars available to support many of these ideas. How will programs, or the educator jobs linked to them, be continued after the federal money is exhausted?
- The need for family engagement. This concept was included in various proposals and was well received. Schools recognize the need to include families in a child's educational progress, and the benefits of supporting and encouraging families who may struggle to interact with their student's school.

We welcome the opportunity to work with the committee to refine these ideas. We are eager to listen to your opinions and any suggestions you may have.

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink that reads "Kirsten Baesler". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

North Dakota State School Superintendent Kirsten Baesler

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	2
<b>General Feedback</b>	4
<b>Access to Learning</b>	
School Calendar Adjustments	7
Summer Learning	8
High-Impact Tutoring	9
Out-of-School Time: Academic Programming	10
<b>Curricular and Structural Supports</b>	
Streamlined Local Curriculum and Instruction	11
Social Emotional Learning and Behavioral Interventions	12
Statewide Interim Assessment	13
Parent and Family Professional Learning	14
<b>Literacy</b>	
ND Educator Professional License – Reading Instruction Competency	15
State-Approved K-3 Reading Curriculum	16
Science of Reading Training for K-8 Educators	17
<b>Personnel</b>	
School Health Technician Credential	18
School Counselor Requirement	19
Targeted Class Size Reduction for K-3 Classrooms	20
Family Engagement Liaisons	21
<b>Reporting and Policy</b>	
District Learning Report and Accelerating Learning Plan	22
Student Attendance Policy	23
Distribution of ESSER Funds to Special Education Units	24
Distribution of ESSER Funds to Career and Technical Centers	25
<b>Additional Ideas</b>	26

## General Feedback

- Concerns about legislating a one-size-fits-all approach
- Options, opportunities, and ideas are welcome; requirements and mandates are not
- Many are already doing many of these ideas/topics; it is what is best for kids
- Staffing issues and concerns with recruiting and retaining arose with many of the different ideas; more people need to be recruited into education fields
- Overall, stakeholders representing large school districts expressed a strong aversion to any new regulations, and wanted this applied to every topic
- There is a concern that as new regulations are put into place, school districts are often expected to find money in the budget in the future if it is an important enough initiative; unfunded mandates are not a sound fiscal approach
- Effort and offerings to build capacity through PLC (Professional Learning Communities) work will address learning issues that arise with students, so keeping the focus on strong PLCs will increase growth vs. micromanaging each decision
- They felt heard and appreciated how the NDDPI organized the feedback process

## Survey Results





**2. Please provide any additional observations, ideas, or comments that you may or may not have been able to provide at the feedback session.**

ID	Responses
1	QR code works fine!
2	This was a great activity! I appreciated the time to talk about these important topics.
3	This was a great process. I truly felt heard. I would recommend doing this with other initiatives, also. You already know how careful a mandate with no funding has to be approached. I think every idea had merit and there are ways to scaffold this and make many of these ideas a reality.
4	Very useful afternoon. Sorry I had to occupy all of Amanda's afternoon but glad I got to share and take part. We can always do school better and there are many interesting ideas shared today. I learned a lot from reading through these documents and sharing with Amanda and learning from her as well.
5	Some mandates are difficult to realistically achieve. I love the idea of hiring more staff for support, but finding quality people is challenging. I also have concerns about the sustainability of some of these ideas. I would like to see a counselor-student ratio specifically for 6th-8th grade middle schools.
6	The Calendar adjustments should be a local decision based on local impacts of learning loss and local data assessment.
7	I appreciate this activity and DPI engaging educators with this conversation. I was definitely questioning the purpose of this meeting ahead of time but very much enjoyed the discussion, etc. with others in our small group and found this to be very beneficial. I would encourage DPI to "NOT" shy away from calling some of this work what it is...addressing "Learning Loss" and not sugar-coating it with "Accelerating Learning Recovery".
8	Great Ideas but too many mandates, especially without appropriate funding, are inadequate and typically fail. Perhaps: "less done well... is better than more done poorly".
9	Sustainability is very important. Good ideas but how do we sustain some of this? Is the legislator going to fund this moving forward?
10	I would like to see k-3 class size reduction expanded to k-8.
11	I feel as if a one-size-fits-all approach will be difficult for school districts. The challenge will be to have state guidelines for recovery services but allowing district autonomy in what they

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ID	Responses
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looks like. I would like to see a learning recovery proposal more geared toward large scale parameters/guidelines for districts to work within.

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 12 | I believe we need to take time to examine data before the Legislature makes any changes or mandates to our instructional processes. What is ultimately selected and used to drive this accelerated learning recovery should be sustainable and impactful even after the pandemic is over and additional funding has dried up. |
|----|---|
- 

**3. Provide additional ideas not represented in the options provided at the feedback session. If you'd rather provide this information via email, please don't hesitate to send to [amandapeterson@nd.gov](mailto:amandapeterson@nd.gov). Anything sent prior to Friday, February 12th @ 5:00pm will be included in the information presented to the 67th Legislative Assembly.**

ID	Responses
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|---|--|
| 1 | Please delete my response! ;)  |
| 2 | Partnerships with therapy providers. We have counselors and an excellent pathway for social/emotional learning. We don't have access to providers and school counselors are NOT therapists.  |
| 3 | Counselor requirements has merit but the availability of qualified counselor candidates is the first hurdle that should be addressed. Could funds be allocated to increasing counselor training programs at ND Universities. We need more high quality candidates before we can increase LEA requirements. |
| 4 | Title: School District Action: NDDPI Action: Legislative Action: ESSER Funding Uses: Grade Levels: Additional Information:   |
| 5 | Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.   |
| 6 | Allow the EESER II funds to be distributed to the districts. Our district will be adding an 1.5 interventionist to our FTE to work with all grade levels.  |
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## **Proposal Title: School Calendar Adjustments**

### **Feedback**

- Beneficial to students; less chance of learning loss during summer activities
- Day care needs would be taken care of
- Targeting students makes sense; not necessarily needed for all kids
- Extending the *day* is the way to meet needs of students rather than extending the *year*
- Year-round school can be impactful for kids
- Stakeholders feel this should be optional and not mandatory
- Some districts have been face-to-face most of the time and have seen little learning loss and/or have students who have adjusted well to different learning models
- Districts would like to have the autonomy/flexibility to address their own needs
- Seems contrary to personalized learning

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Extra costs for additional learning time; concerned about funding beyond ESSER
- Staffing concerns
  - Teacher contracts: language, contracted number of days, and garnering teacher support regarding changes
- No consequences for students who do not follow attendance policies
- Little interest in extending the current school year; maybe in a future year due to a high level of burnout for teachers/staff/students so extension would prove difficult
- Districts adopted a calendar early on – extending may be difficult for community
- Many facilities do not have temperature control
- This could have a negative impact on administrators
  - They do not get the breaks that students and staff receive with year-round or extended year
- Concern of pitting schools against one another

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- Set amount of time or concrete number?
- Where would this NDDPI action be published?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Alternative hours for activities
- Saturday school with possibility of non-certified staff helping
- Longer school day with four days instead of five
- Adjust school time to allow for tutoring



## **Proposal Title: Summer Learning**

### **Feedback**

- Remedial language needs to be removed to open this up for all students; potentially allows SEL learning for all students too
  - Others felt this should only address remedial and at-risk students
- Similar to Bismarck's Camp Ed program which is being expanded or migrant programs
- Currently using for credit recovery but this is difficult during summer months
- Some districts already offer these opportunities both in enrichment and intervention formats at all levels
- Need to be systemically designed based on local needs
- Need to meet parents where they are (physically)
- Might not be needed at the high school level or overhauled
  - Typically, if a student fails a course, they need to retake the entire course
  - Flexibility is needed to teach/reteach only missed/failed areas in the course

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- ND's culture of "summers off" will have to be addressed with community members to avoid problems of attendance with children more fluid in multiple homes and summer vacations
- Needs to include additional supports like counseling, food services, and transportation
- Staffing shortage exists for core teachers; may need to look at utilizing specialists, paras, or open up language on licensing to allow teachers to teach all courses
- Funding beyond ESSER funds
- Parents may not choose to enroll students or kids may not come if this is voluntary
- No consequences for students who do not follow attendance policies
- Student perception, participation, and motivation – students might not take part because they are average or above average
- Staff and students need summer for a mental health break and to recharge

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- How can this avoid looking like only a daycare option for families?
- Is the legislature willing and planning to put up the money to fund?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Pay teachers a one-time bonus for summer school
- Adjust time requirements
- Pathway of competencies and credit recovery; look for gaps and fill in, supplement with classroom work; concentrate on key learnings; add social studies and science
- Offer final assessment/diagnostic for a summer course and teach what's missing to get to passing the post test

Consider immersion trips: 24-hour trips to engage students in the learning experience



## **Proposal Title: High-Impact Tutoring**

### **Feedback**

- Strong support as this is personalized, targeted, and already happening through MTSS work at some schools
- Extended day tutoring would make a great impact and may get rid of summer school need

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Finding qualified staff and training time
- Finding time during the day for students within their schedules
- Hard to motivate; student must volunteer and be willing to do it

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- Clarity around requirements – funding, materials and curriculum, time requirements, additional staffing, etc.
- Teachers need to discuss this in PLC's: "what do you do if a student doesn't get it?"

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Mentor Center has been very effective in Grand Forks (using GEARS funding)
- Could be done in a virtual academy as staff can be stretched thin; state could buy into and assign students; a blended approach that partners with an outside entity or program
- A lot of schools are operating in MTSS structure; look at extending MTSS II and III services throughout the summer
- Use college and high school students to tutor elementary and middle school students; used already in some school districts as Avid tutors.
  - This could also benefit high school and college students who are looking into a career in education

## **Proposal Title: Out-of-School Time: Academic Programming**

### **Feedback**

- Good for socialization
- Peer mentoring is a positive
- Allows for catch up and growth if aligned with daily instruction
- Can prevent learning loss in summer if aligned to standards
- Recovery in a fun and supportive environment is a plus
- Love the idea of learning taking place in a space outside of school such as the YMCA or another facility
- Great to provide access, but any language around this being a requirement is unwelcome
- Current after-school programs could and should be designed with an academic focus

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Finding qualified staff and teachers willing to be off site is difficult
- Transportation (especially in rural areas) is a barrier
- Food arrangements are a challenge
- Funding beyond ESSER
- Could conflict with current programs or activities in which kids are involved
- No consequences exist for students who do not follow attendance policies

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- Clarity is needed as to how this is different from the 21st CCLC program or from other summer school options
- How do we address students who need this support who are also in other activities?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Utilize high school students that are interested in a junior education training program; this may encourage students to go into a teaching profession
- Analyze data to determine need and effectiveness district by district
- Add transportation and snacks/meals to this option for families

## **Proposal Title: Streamlined Local Curriculum and Instruction**

### **Feedback**

- Intent is positive; know what we are teaching; higher degree of equity; good practice
- Perception that this is easier for larger districts
  - REAs would be called upon to provide support
  - Concern from larger districts that this would not benefit them as many have already gone through this process; there is a feeling that they are being “punished” for already having done the work
- Some schools are already doing this and working through this
- Teachers need professional development to support them and want more in the areas of science and social studies as they have had so much on reading and math
- Likes the term priority vs. power standards
- Don’t need to use standards-based grading to find value in this work

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Time to do the work; there should be no time limit for subject areas
- Staffing concerns – who is going to lead them through this process?
  - Funding for training beyond ESSER funds
- Pressure of assessment tied to funding
- Teachers and leaders need to do this on their own to find its value

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- Clarification needed: Which standards are priority and who determines what the power/priority standards are? Would some standards be seen as not a priority and need to be removed? How is this different from what they already do on standards?  
Are we differentiating between what is in standards and what needs to be included?
- Why aren’t K-8 standards already in law?
- Contradictory – superintendent must be given the authority by the legislators
- Is inconsistency across the state driving this initiative?
- Would there be less autonomy because it ties the state assessment to power standard development?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Look at what standards were possibly missed during covid-19 to move forward to develop scope and sequence
- Create the framework but allow autonomy for school districts
- The power is in districts going through and developing these standards

## **Proposal Title: Social and Emotional Learning and Behavioral Interventions**

### **Feedback**

- Covid-19 has really impacted this area
- This should be a priority with a focus on prevention
- Needs to address the important issue of mental health
- Many districts are currently doing this, and others should be required to do this
- Telehealth has been helpful
- SEL state network is beginning to make progress and provides excellent professional development

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Additional reporting wastes time
- Time is also a barrier to fit into the school day
- Funding with ESSER money being a one-time payment; funding will be needed beyond ESSER
- Having it legislatively mandated
- Resources are needed for next steps
- Specialists, counselors, and psychologists are challenging positions to fill
- It is already a struggle to get people connected to the appropriate medical services or resources they need
- Data on effectiveness is difficult to obtain regarding SEL
- States shouldn't require an SEL curriculum

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- How would we verify this? What does accountability look like?
- What are the degree/education requirements for the behavioral health coordinator?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- More SEL Training options; train throughout the year and not just once; train ALL staff; entice teachers to take the trainings
- Would like to see a vetted list of state-approved options (including the process for getting new items vetted and added) or a bank of training modules available on this topic for professional development
- Trainings already exist at the state level
- Entice more folks to get into this field; Licensure rules make it difficult to transfer in from out-of-state
- Access to more intensive resources is a barrier, especially in rural districts
- Connecting school counselor to this work is essential
- Add statewide telehealth options
- Add anti-drug topics



## **Proposal Title: Statewide Interim Assessment**

### **Feedback**

- Love that science is included
- Ability to provide professional development and help those that do not have resources to dig through the data to help drive instruction
- Data would be included in the Statewide Longitudinal Data System
- Interim assessments are more helpful to NDDPI to make comparisons and not as useful to districts
- There is already enough testing and assessments
- Test-created anxiety and students being labeled is an issue in school districts and may be contributing to SEL issues
- A state-funded interim assessment would be a huge benefit as this is costly for districts

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Negative feel from the stakeholders on assessment topic as this would take away local control
- Not a fan of recreating the wheel and aligning a new interim assessment to standards; many assessments are already aligned to state standards
- Ratio of testing time to teaching and learning time is too great
- Administration would be costly; what is the benefit related to the cost?
- Effective date of 2023 is too far away to be effective for this work
- Hard to determine validity

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- What do we gain by one assessment? Does one fit all?
- Would it look like the NDSA?
- How are we measuring growth?
- Would this be required or an option? If mandatory, how do we make this actionable? What would we do differently with this data than we already do? How would it align to internal student benchmarks?
- The state already reduced assessments by allowing ACT, then this is adding an additional assessment– is this a contradiction?
- What would be the timeline for implementation?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Develop a formula for how the data will be used and include in-year growth
- Give autonomy for schools to use what interim assessment works in their school district

## **Proposal Title: Parent and Family Professional Learning**

### **Feedback**

- Very positively received and noted as an important piece of this plan
- Districts feel that it's good to increase family engagement to promote parent/family involvement to help bridge the gap between teachers, students, and families
- Expressed teacher and school appreciation from at home and virtual learning
  - Creates multiple points of contact to help and assist students
- Grafton has a family engagement coordinator and it makes a big difference
- Living Tree was good professional development

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Staffing
- Understating what is positive family involvement and when to conduct engagement activities
- Funding could be an issue beyond ESSER
- Struggle of getting to the parents that need to be engaged
  - Especially difficult to engage parents at the secondary level
  - Small populations attend and participate but most often the ones who need it most are not attending
- Parents already have full plates without adding this on; aren't usually as engaged in the nuts and bolts of school operations

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- Instead of grant-funded should this be state-funded?
- How do you get parents to attend who need to attend?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Remove parent-teacher conferences from code and instead of doing traditional parent-teacher conferences conduct a more continuous engagement process or broaden conferences to add professional learning
- Include varying topics and informational pieces that interest parents and benefit students
- Offer both virtual and in-person options

## **Proposal Title: ND Educator Professional License – Reading Instruction Competency**

### **Feedback**

- Accountability check that teachers are equipped to teach literacy should be standard across the spectrum- educators are not getting enough skilled training
- Love the preservice part; this should be preservice or an additional endorsement or credential
- In favor of common professional development for all teachers trained in reading/literacy
  - Career and Tech teachers, high school teachers don't always have literacy training, so some training might help them, as well
- Not in favor of a skilled assessment – don't like asking a licensed teacher to pass another exam to keep or maintain their license
- Not the best route to having Essential Reading Skills taught in teacher prep

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- More difficult to recruit and retain teachers
- Teacher push-back
- Time for teachers to take the training and complete the testing
- Differences in length of license due dates
- Funding now and in the future if this is made a requirement

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- Is this already part of elementary education?
- Are colleges going to be required to have a uniform curriculum?
- How effective has this been in other states?
- What happens if a current teacher doesn't pass the test?
- Is this why Title teachers exist?
- Why limit it to K-3?
- Where will they get the training? What is the cost to teachers, to districts?
- How does this roll out? Who establishes the design of the required assessment?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Instead of a test, require coursework and/or professional development
- Don't hold to just K-3, but extend to upper levels as well
- Spell out the details for training requirements
- Offer virtual options and/or use the two-day conference days in October for training

## **Proposal Title: State-Approved K-3 Reading Curriculum**

### **Feedback**

- Schools will find true PLC's (Professional Learning Communities) are more valuable
  - The first four questions are all about the ability to adjust
  - If you want to have the flexibility to meet individual student needs, you don't want to bind schools to a minimum number of curriculum choices
- Good to use vetted curriculum but school districts should be able to vet and decide and should not be required to choose from a list
- Small schools don't have curriculum directors and would support this
- Love the science of reading aspect

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Many concerns of curriculum being written into century code and the loss of local control to choose curriculum/make decisions
- Too much state/higher ed involvement
- Concern with the amount of money already invested in programs
- There is a perception that this is not needed as current curriculum is working well
- Concern with focus on curriculum rather than teaching and reading standards and best practices
- Tough if needed to go out of the box with differentiation, need to be inclusive
- Need to be scientifically researched and vetted

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- Why not K-12 to expand beyond younger years?
- What data is out there? Is there a metric that supports a state curriculum?
- Is this built on tier one instruction?
- What does using local and federal funds for professional development really mean?
- How would schools be held accountable to using vetted curriculum?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Keep curriculum at local level but assist school districts with the process of how to vet curriculum so they can determine instead of deciding on which ones are "vetted"
- Teams should be driven by teachers; State should not get involved
- Professional development is needed to help teachers master the art and science of being a teacher
- Extra time to do this with funding for more professional development time to work in PLCs
- Focus on depth
- Allow a waiver that if a school already has implemented something great and it is working, they can keep it and not have to change
- Should mandated number of literacy instruction minutes instead of mandated curriculum



## **Proposal Title: Science of Reading Training for K-8 Educators**

### **Feedback**

- Positive comments on addressing more than K-3
- Not all teachers know how to teach reading
- Science of reading is a good tool for teachers
- Personalized professional development is needed for educators
- Suggesting only K-5 (6-8 should look different)
- Feel there will be push back on a mandate for the science of reading
- More appropriate than the reading instruction competency for licensure
- Trainings need to occur when teachers can participate
  - Often these are offered during the school day and there is a lack of subs

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Time – there are only so many professional development days
- Funding and sustainability once ESSER dollars are gone
- Requirement vs. optional
- Also need to consider if staff is interested in attending trainings
- Travel expenses, sub coverage, and stipends are all additional costs that are incurred if this is done during the daytime

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- Clarity in certification process
- Clarity needed between foundation of reading and science of reading

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Compromise – reading specialists funded at K-5 and 6-8 level
- Remove requirement; time and funds need to be tied to the requirement
- Remove professional development participation for renewal but preservice is okay
- Rotate years of mandated training – SEL training one year, and reading training the next
- Make it more direct – if you're teaching ANY reading, this is a requirement
- Collaborate with REAs to design and deliver
- Cross-curricular options for other content areas
- Provide training in the two days conference in October for teachers or through virtual options and provide for K-12 teachers, not just K-8
- Add on Dyslexia and other reading disability guidance/training

## **Proposal Title: School Health Technician Credential**

### **Feedback**

- Positive and legitimate concept and approach
- An extra resource is always beneficial and would take pressure off a school secretary
- This would be a great use of ESSER dollars, especially for mental health during this crisis
- Social worker would make more sense than a School Health Technician.

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Liability
- Difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff
- Might create a clinical setting; logistical issues in buildings, especially smaller districts
- Funding after ESSER money runs out
- A credential can complicate utilizing people in the community

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- What does training look like and who would provide? Would the structure be created through the department of health?
- What does credential mean? Is it a two-year degree? What are the benefits of a credential?
- What type of liability exists?
- Would they always have to be in the building?
- What are we doing currently that would change with this, besides having someone credentialed?
- How does telehealth or e-services fall into this?
- Is this going to be state requirement?
- What if schools have already made arrangements with nurses who are certified in another country or place?
- How can we simplify the process for schools, especially smaller school districts?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Add diabetics to the list of training ideas
- Partner with local health system
- This could be a shared position, using REAs
- List out the responsibilities
- Assurances from the legislature that if it works, and we can show that it does, they support a transition out of ESSER funds and into other funds to support continuation
- Require hiring a certified RN
- Provide medication training

## **Proposal Title: School Counselor Requirement**

### **Feedback**

- Many supportive comments on this option
- Mental health needs are important and are an immediate priority to respond to this crisis
- Like laying out the roles of counselors to allow more time to concentrate on the main duties of a counselor
- List of duties is thorough; limiting the other duties could make the job more enticing
- Glad to see educator background taken off for counselor certificate
- Have this counselor already – but not meeting ratio
  - Some existing buildings are already outside or higher than the ratio

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Academic career counselor and an actual counselor do have two separate jobs
- Recruitment is an area as there are already staffing shortages in this area
- Cost
- Description of duties is too prohibitive, and lines are easily blurred
- Counselors are in demand already across the state

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- Is there funding tied to this? Would this funding be sustained?
- What does the future pool look like? Can we broaden pathways to credentials? What backgrounds could qualify?
- Is there wiggle room at all with the ratios?
- Is CTE/career advisor required?
- Is this necessary for K-6?
- Why would we need to clarify the role?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Relaxing requirements for plan of study so that educators can be enrolled in a program, and not have to have three courses completed
- Include the funding mechanisms, as the need would significantly increase if the ratios were passed
- Parcel out the pieces, such as career advisor, to other staff
- Push more funding to higher ed to increase counselor services
- Demographics vs. ratio funding
- Give autonomy and flexibility to school districts on the requirements/duties
  - Smaller districts have less personnel, so all have to pitch in to help with other duties
- Look at the student/counselor ratio in a school district to determine duties

## **Proposal Title: Targeted Class Size Reduction for K-3 Classrooms**

### **Feedback**

- Very positive responses as it helps with recruiting and retaining teachers
  - Smaller class sizes would give teachers more time to connect and differentiate instruction, which leads to better instruction and reduced behavior issues
- Intent of the idea is solid, but 19 students is way too many, especially in kindergarten
  - Some districts have lower standards, like 15:1
- Research exists that small class size impacts student learning and should be encouraged
  - Especially in grades K-2, but also in grade three
- With virtual learning, there was decreased class size
  - Hybrid was good and instruction was different
- Funding should be able to be used for classroom space

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Class space
- Staffing
- Finding and hiring teachers with more than five years of experience
  - Professional jealousy/division among staff with “highest-quality teachers” language
  - Limits younger teachers who are often the most coachable and excited to try new approaches
  - May need to shift veteran teachers to something else and it might be a better fit for younger teachers
- Long-term sustainability of funding
- Unpredictability in student transiency

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- Will ADM be increased?
- What is meant by “disadvantaged backgrounds”?
- Define highest quality teachers

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Infrastructure funding
- Relax the kindergarten endorsement
- Use additional paras instead of splitting a class
- Change the district action by taking out “their most” in “their most qualified teachers”
  - Assign qualified teachers to those classrooms and provide the means
- Change “higher-quality” to “a licensed” teacher



## **Proposal Title: Family Engagement Liaisons**

### **Feedback**

- Positive feedback for increasing family engagement, especially if there a state curriculum and plan
- This is a bridge builder between home and school
- Schools need to be more intentional with parents; Love the building relationship focus
- Less threatening to have this person plan family events with meals and support kids together
  - Better received and trusted than a social worker
- Some see this as the role of principals and superintendents, especially in smaller districts/communities

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Consistent funding, beyond ESSER to aid in recruitment and retainment
- Some family liaison duties may overlap with school counselor
- Finding the right people to do this with the skills to make connections
- Need networking ability for sharing ideas and support through coaching
- One per school is a lot

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- Defined roles and responsibilities
- What would be the qualifications and/or education requirements?
- How to implement and keep position
- Would this be a mandate or requirement?
- How do you get this to work on the reservation?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Could this be a regional position, shared between REAs or districts
- Bigger districts could prioritize where to allocate liaisons
- Parameters for which schools might need this and which schools don't need it
  - Provide flexibility
- Do not move qualified staff out of the classrooms into positions like this when there is already a staff shortage
- Utilize this person to monitor truancy and grade concerns to develop relationships with families
- Videos of professional development for those interested

## **Proposal Title: District Learning Report and Accelerating Learning Plan**

### **Feedback**

- Many concerns with this data already being shared with NDDPI in multiple reports
  - This will create overlapping information, adding another report to prepare on top of already too many reports
- Accountability is fine, but if there is no follow-up it seems unnecessary

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Not able to do it with fidelity
- Time and resources to complete

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- How useful is this data to the state?
- Formative assessments are good, but aside from a pandemic year with state assessment, how would this be different?
- Is this another layer of reporting to the state?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Make it an easy format or build into an existing report
- Many comments on linking this to the Cognia School improvement process
- Maybe move Cognia date from May 1 to August 1
- Do it at the end of the year when people are planning for the following year
- Simplify the process to delegate to the district
- Specify the testing program

## **Proposal Title: Student Attendance Policy**

### **Feedback**

- All want better attendance; the premise of the ideas are good
- Districts need more direction and “teeth” to attendance policies
- Naïve to think an attendance plan will change the behaviors of those with poor attendance
- Already embedded in current NDMTSS – B structures
  - Schools are already developing attendance plans for those who drop below 90%
- Current truancy laws provide very little support
  - Court system is slow, and they don’t always act with haste and thoroughness
  - Sometimes we do what we can, but the legal system doesn’t help

### **Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- A weekly plan seems like a big lift
- Staffing available in smaller districts might be more limited to follow up and be consistent
  - Staff is needed to monitor the plans of the students
- Time is needed to develop these evidence-based strategies

### **Questions/Clarity Needed**

- What if students still don’t come to school?
- Who will do this work?
- We already have our own attendance policies and approaches. How is this different?
- How do we count virtual learning? How is attendance defined?
- Who develops the plans? How are the plans monitored?

### **Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Defined procedures need to be developed by the school districts
- Set of at-risk criteria – attendance, grades, behavior
- Require every district to have an MTSS framework
- Be less specific to allow districts the autonomy to make these decisions locally

**Proposal Title: Distribution of ESSER II Funds to Special Education Units**

**Feedback**

- SEUs should be included
  - This benefits schools because they receive services from SEUs
- Support is needed but a different breakdown should be considered
- Providing additional help needs to remain a local control decision
  - They could opt to put funds toward Special Education

**Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- There are different configurations to special education approaches
  - Some units hire their educators, some districts do, so an equal distribution is not necessarily equal

**Questions/Clarity Needed**

- Would this be above and beyond current payments made to Special Education?

**Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Need to break allocation down based on population



**Proposal Title: Distribution of ESSER II Funds to Career and Technical Programs**

**Feedback**

- This is a great idea; funding opportunities would be welcome
- Some centers are really stretched for money because the virtual demand includes extra mobile unit costs
- Communities are looking to build centers, and academies

**Potential Challenges/Barriers**

- Each center is set up a little differently so funding may be more critical to some centers than others

**Questions/Clarity Needed**

- How can middle school CTE programs be included to transition students effectively into CTE programs or CTCs?

**Suggested Ideas and Edits**

- Need to look at other options for CTEs

## **Additional Ideas**

- System building through quality PLC implementation and support, which includes addressing time constraints and professional development necessary to move the needle
- Strengthen telehealth and tele counseling supports
- Create mentor academies