

**TESTIMONY ON ND STATE ASSESSMENT TASK FORCE**  
**EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**February 18, 2016**  
**by Kirsten Baesler, State Superintendent**  
**328-4570**  
**Department of Public Instruction**

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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee:

My name is Kirsten Baesler and I am the State Superintendent for the Department of Public Instruction. I am here to provide information regarding the North Dakota State Assessment Task Force Progress Report.

A list of the Task Force Membership is attached to this report.

The following dates have been scheduled for the task force meetings:

- September 3, 2015
- October 6, 2015
- November 5, 2015
- December 21, 2015
- January 27, 2016
- April 1, 2016
- June 2016

**OBJECTIVES OF ASSESSMENT TASK FORCE:**

The Task Force was formed to provide input for the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction as it selects the state assessment system for North Dakota's K – 12 students. The assessment system will be selected in 2016 with implementation scheduled for the Winter/Spring of 2017. The objectives that have guided the work of the Task Force thus far are listed below.

- Develop a foundational knowledge of assessment systems and practices
- Review past and current assessment practices in North Dakota
- Study assessment practices across the country
- Develop and submit a set of assessment recommendations for the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction that will guide the formation of a Request for Proposal for a 2017 assessment system.

### **TOPICS/SPEAKERS:**

Over the course of the five Assessment Task Force meetings, a variety of speakers and educators have contributed to the discussion. The Task Force has received reports from the following educators with a strong background in assessment.

- Tonette Salazar and Julie Rowland Woods – Education Commission of the States; Focus: Review of what other states are doing for State Assessment
- Peter Zamora – Council of Chief State School Officers; Focus: ESSA Act
- Ann Ellefson, Director of Academic Support, DPI; Focus: ND School Assessment Survey
- Tony Alpert, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium; Focus: SBAC
- Barry Topol, Ed Roeber and John Olson – Assessment Solutions Group  
Focus: Providing cost and variations of Build Your Own, Buy, Hybrid Assessments
- Tommy Bice, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Alabama; Focus: Their experience with ACT Aspire as their state assessment
- Paul Leather, Deputy Commissioner, New Hampshire; Focus: Portfolio Assessments
- North Dakota Educators Panel Discussion:

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  - Dr. Lisa Feldner, Vice Chancellor, North Dakota University System
  - Michelle Bertsch, Teacher, Fargo Public Schools
  - Crystal Ridl, Teacher, Fargo Public Schools
  - Tina Pletan, Literacy Coordinator, Bismarck Public Schools
  - Cheryl Hoggarth, Instructional Coach, Northern Cass Public School
  - Tonya Hunskor, Principal, Towner Public Schools
  - Jana Gudmundson, Performance Strategist, Park River Public Schools
  - Cole Garman, State Student Cabinet Member, Mandan High School
  - Lisa Johnson, Director of Systemwide Student Entry Transfer and Retention; Focus: NDUS Admission and Placement Requirements

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

As the Task Force approaches the conclusion of its work, recommendations will be formulated in the following areas. These recommendations will form the basis of the Assessment Task Force Report to the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. The report should be filed with the Department by the end of June, 2016.

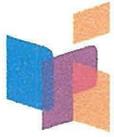
- **Grades 3 – 8 Content:** What grade levels should be addressed in the state assessment in grades 3 – 8?

- **Grades 3 – 8 Item Types:** What types of questions should be implemented to address the identified content areas? (Paper/pencil or Computer Based and Multiple Choice or constructed response)
- **High School Content:** What grade level should be tested at the High School level and what content areas should be addressed?
- **High School Assessments:** What assessment(s) should be used to test the North Dakota High School students?
- **Build/Buy/Hybrid:** Should North Dakota build its own assessment, buy an existing assessment or augment an existing assessment with North Dakota assessment items? Should cost and purpose of the state assessments be considered in this decision?

## **CONCLUSION:**

The North Dakota Assessment Task Force has had healthy discussions about the purposes of the North Dakota state assessments. There has been a wide range of opinions about the roles of the federal government and state government in the administration of assessments at the school level. The recent passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) by the United States Congress solidifies the need for state assessments at grades 3 – 8 and one high school grade. The work of the Task Force will provide the necessary guidance for the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction as it develops a balanced assessment plan for the students in North Dakota.

Thank you for your time and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.



# STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S ND State Assessment Task Force

## State Superintendent

- Kirsten Baesler, Task Force Chair

## Home Educator Association

- Jeff Hoverson, Burlington

## Business and Industry

- Jon Godfread, Designee, Bismarck
- Joseph Chiang, Tolna

## ND Council of Educational Leaders

- Aimee Copas, Bismarck
- Scott Faul, Designee, Minot

## North Dakota School Board Association

- Jennifer Wallender, Designee, Hazen

## Special Education

- Linda Hoag, Bismarck

## Assessment/Curriculum Director

- Ryan Townsend, Lincoln

## North Dakota United - Teachers

- Nick Archuleta, Designee, Bismarck
- Patty Barrette, Bismarck

## State Superintendent's Nominations

- Stacey Castleman, Parent Representative, Bismarck
- Gene Modin, Parent Representative, Mandan
- Tammy Owens, Parent Representative, Fargo
- Vanessa Anderson, Home Educator Representative, Harvey
- Brenda Goettle, Home Educator Representative, Mandan
- Jeff Lind, Board of Public School Education Representative, Mandan
- Lyn Hendry, Elementary Principal Representative, Hettinger
- Carrie Weippert, Assessment Representative, Grand Forks
- Jim Kasper, Business and Industry Representative, Fargo
- Wayne Trottier Jr, Native American Education Representative, Rugby

## University System

- Jennifer Weber, Bismarck

## ND Council of Educational Leaders Superintendent

- Cory Steiner, Arthur

## ND Council of Educational Leaders High School Principal

- Ned Clouten, Wahpeton

## ND Council of Educational Leaders Middle School Principal

- Stacy Murschel, Beulah

## ND Council of Educational Leaders Elementary School Principal

- Dave Wheeler, Grand Forks

## Nonpublic Schools

- Tracy Friesen, Bismarck

## House Education Committee

- Representative Cindy Schreiber-Beck, Chairman Designee, Wahpeton
- Representative Dennis Johnson, Devils Lake

## Senate Education Committee

- Senator Nicole Poolman, Chairman Designee
- Senator Joan Heckaman, New Rockford

## Education Technology Council

- Robert Kaspari, West Fargo
- Jody French, Horace

## NDDPI Ex Officio Members

- Gail Schauer – Teacher & School Effectiveness
- Greg Gallagher – Assessment
- Laurie Matzke – Federal Title Programs
- Ann Ellefson – Academic Support
- Gerry Teevens – Special Education