

**TESTIMONY ON ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS
EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Friday, July 22, 2016

by Kirsten Baesler, State Superintendent

701-328-4570

Department of Public Instruction

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee:

My name is Kirsten Baesler and I am the Superintendent for the Department of Public Instruction. I am here to update you on the periodic revision currently occurring to revise and improve the state's academic content standards in the subjects of math and English language arts.

This spring the State accepted applications from North Dakota teachers across the state and established two content committees, one for English language arts and one for mathematics. These two committees are reviewing the current North Dakota standards in math and English based on the Common core, studying the implementation of the current academic content standards in each content area and are drafting revisions to update and improve the structure and content of these standards for the purpose of establishing new North Dakota academic content standards in math and English.

Committee members are assigned to one of four grade-level strands for each content area: Kindergarten – grade 2, grades 3-5, grades 6-8, and grades 9-12. Each committee consists of licensed and practicing educators representing various education areas and specialties including: general education, special education, early childhood education, higher education, English learners, and career and technical education.

NDDPI's professional staff provide support and act as facilitators of the process. Attached is a list of the committee members' names, North Dakota schools they are associated with and their positions.

Final approval of the new standards will occur, as specified in NDCC § 15.1-02-04.3. This will result in the adoption of new unique North Dakota math and English Language Arts standards that will hold our students to consistent high expectations that encourage excellence at all levels of education.

The writing process for the new math and English standards will be completed in early 2017.

Implementation of these new standards will begin in our North Dakota classrooms in the fall of 2017.

Because state law requires that our North Dakota State Assessment be aligned to current North Dakota standards, North Dakota will initiate the RFP process for a state test in the spring of 2017 – as soon as possible after our new state standards in math and English are adopted. This test will be administered to our students in the spring of 2018 and will be aligned to the math and English standards that were used by our teachers during the 2017-2018 school year.

The timeline of events thus far and expected events are as follows:

On May 3rd I announced that North Dakota teachers will rewrite the North Dakota math and English content standards and the applications for the writing and review committees were released May 6, 2016. The applications for the writing committee were due June 1 and the applications for the review committee were due June 14.

North Dakota's English language arts and mathematics content standards development committee met June 22-24. This first meeting occurred exactly 6 years to the day that the last update to North Dakota math and English standards began. Committee members adopted and agreed upon a guiding process of review to ensure valid development of the new standards. The committee worked in small groups by subject area and grade span reviewing current standards and document changes.

The standards writing committee will be meeting July 28-29 in Bismarck to complete the first draft.

The first draft of the new math and English standards will be released for public comment. Additionally a review committee comprised of state business leaders, community leaders and general public who submitted applications to the state will meet in Bismarck in August to formally review the standards in each content area.

Once public comment has been collected and the review committee has met to provide feedback, the two teacher writing committees will reconvene in Bismarck to work on a second draft of each academic content standards. This process will be repeated to review the second draft. A third and possibly final draft of the standards is anticipated to be written by the teachers writing committees in February 2017.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony and I would be happy to answer any questions, you or the committee may have.