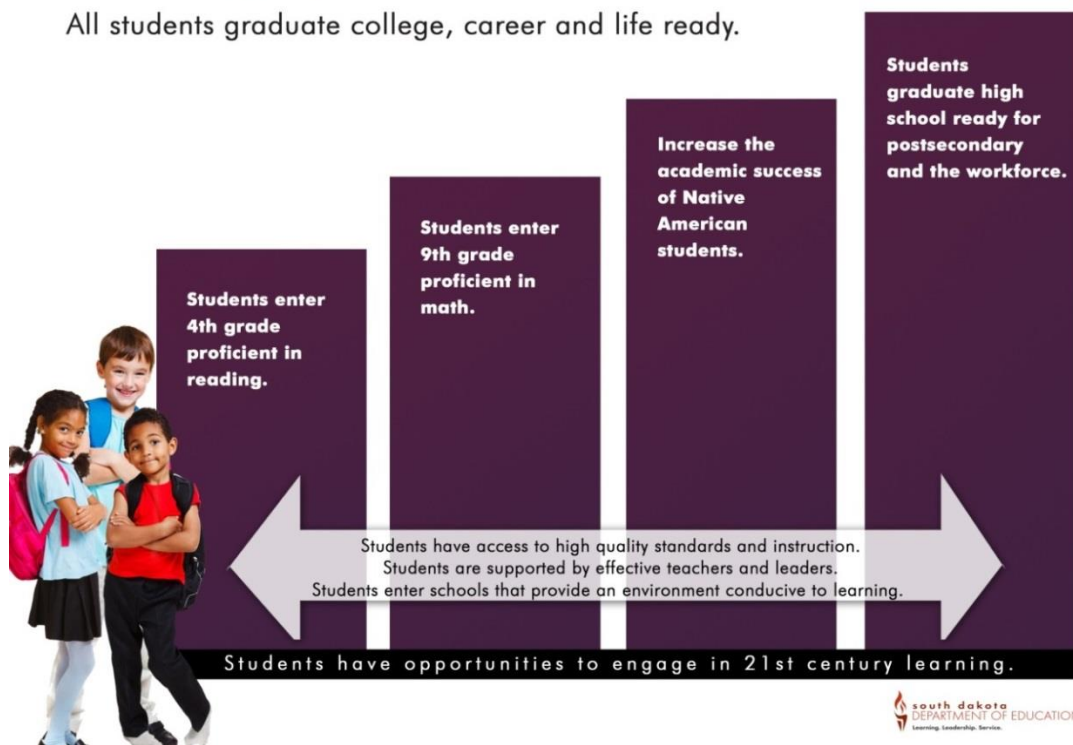# Every Student Succeeds Act
South Dakota State Plan Summary
DRAFT – May 30, 2017

What follows is a summary of South Dakota's state plan, shaped by consultation with stakeholders across the state.

South Dakota has an aspiration that all students leave the K-12 education system college, career and life ready. Attaining this aspiration is dependent upon strong partnerships with, and alignment of goals and strategies among, the higher education system and the workforce. Both the state's university system and its Workforce Development Council have adopted a goal that 65 percent of South Dakota citizens, ages 25 to 34, will hold some type of postsecondary credential by 2025. The state's four technical institutes are instrumental in preparing a skilled and nimble workforce. And the K-12 education system's aspiration of college, career and life readiness directly impacts this goal.

A set of milestones are used to measure progress towards meeting the aspiration of college, career and life readiness for all students. These are:

- Students enter 4th grade proficient in reading.
- Students enter 9th grade proficient in math.

- Native American students experience increased academic success, and the achievement gap for this subpopulation will be closed.
- Students graduate high school ready for postsecondary and the workforce.

Recognizing that students learn in different ways, at different paces, and with unique end goals in mind, South Dakota has begun to integrate principles of personalized learning and mastery of standards as an alternate approach to the traditional, Industrial Age model of learning that characterizes the K-12 system. Also recognizing that the job market increasingly demands some sort of postsecondary or industry-recognized credential, South Dakota is committed to providing multiple pathways for students to achieve and demonstrate readiness for life after high school.

This paradigm shift is being supported by the South Dakota Department of Education (SD DOE) and will be reflected in SD DOE's approach to accountability provisions under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). In particular, to support this shift, SD DOE will explore innovative assessment opportunities that allow schools to assess students at their level of learning, rather than the strict structure of an assigned age-based grade level. In addition, SD DOE will pursue the use of pilot schools to immerse students in engaging academic and work-based opportunities that are directly connected to a student's end goals. Participating schools will utilize a framework of career advising, early postsecondary opportunities, and work-based learning experiences that pave the way for students to make informed decisions about their postsecondary and career plans.

The state's plan under ESSA supports South Dakota's aspiration-related work by laying out an accountability system that is credible, meaningful and relies on multiple measures that contribute to a student's preparation for postsecondary education, the workforce and life. Further, the state's ESSA plan outlines a system of support focused on ongoing improvement for schools and consistent access to opportunities for students no matter where they live across South Dakota.

Listening to South Dakotans

SD DOE has a long history of engagement with it stakeholders. Recently, three success stories illustrate this ability to collaborate for the good of the state's children. All of these efforts were preceded by year-long – sometimes longer – statewide conversations.

- The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Teaching and Learning addressed teacher recruitment and retention. The task force's work resulted in a half-cent sales tax increase in 2016, with the bulk of the new revenue dedicated to teacher salaries.
- The Native American Student Achievement Advisory Council studied non-traditional approaches to educating this particular student population, resulting in legislation designed to enhance learning opportunities for students.
- SD DOE and the South Dakota Education Association joined forces to overhaul certification requirements, most of which will take effect with the 2017-18 school year.

SD DOE's engagement efforts related to ESSA built on this firmly established base and targeted a broad array of stakeholders. SD DOE approached its ESSA stakeholder engagement in three phases, with an overall purpose to prompt conversation about potential opportunities under the law and to seek input to inform development of the state plan.

- Phase I of the outreach focused on sharing information about, and gaining clearer understanding of, the new law. It included the creation of four work groups and lasted from approximately December 2015 to fall 2016.
- Using the work groups' discussions as a starting point, Phase II (fall 2016 to spring 2017) focused on sparking conversation with a much broader group of stakeholders around key decision points, and gathering ideas and input on those key points. This phase included four meetings with tribal stakeholders.
- Phase III (spring 2017 to September 2017) will encompass the official public comment period and review by the governor. The plan that follows is the result of these multiple discussions about what stakeholders want for the students of South Dakota.

Academic Standards

Undergirding South Dakota's ESSA plan is high quality standards. The South Dakota Board of Education (SD BOE) adopted the current English language arts (ELA) and mathematics standards in December 2010 and science standards in May 2015. All three sets of standards are in line with rigorous expectations necessary to prepare South Dakota students to be successful in any college or career pathway. All of the South Dakota academic standards – not just the three sets of standards described here – are regularly reviewed on a set schedule by SD BOE using a process that includes four public hearings at locations across the state. SD DOE currently is in the process of reviewing its English language arts and math standards. For more information, please visit: http://doe.sd.gov/ContentStandards/

Assessments

ESSA requires states to assess whether students are mastering the academic standards described above. Per these federal requirements, South Dakota will continue to test its students' mastery of ELA, math and science standards. A schedule of testing is shown below. Additionally, students whose first language is not English and are receiving English language services annually take an English proficiency test – called the ACCESS 2.0 – until achieving language proficiency.

Required state assessments

Grade	ELA – Smarter Balanced or MSAA*	Math – Smarter Balanced or MSAA*	Science – Dakota Science Test or Dakota Science Test Alt*
3	✓	✓	
4	✓	✓	
5	✓	✓	✓
6	✓	✓	
7	✓	✓	
8	✓	✓	✓
11	✓	✓	✓

* Denotes the assessment given to the one percent of students with the most severe cognitive disabilities.

South Dakota uses Smarter Balanced for its state assessments in ELA and math. Several years ago, the state's public university system began using Smarter Balanced results as one measure for placing students in college courses. By recognizing the validity of the state test in measuring college readiness, the university system has brought significant meaning to the test, particularly for high school juniors. A final note about assessment: With the acknowledgement that learners progress at different rates, several stakeholder groups had discussions about the appropriateness of grade-level testing. As part of its ongoing commitment to ensure meaningful assessment, SD DOE plans to continue this conversation and explore possible options for allowing schools to assess students not based on the strict structure of an assigned grade level, but rather at their level of learning.

<u>**Accountability**</u>

South Dakota's accountability model is based on a series of indicators – one set for elementary and middle schools, and another set for high schools. This information is pulled together annually and reported at the school, district and state level. Prior to ESSA, South Dakota had established a 100-point scale, called the School Performance Index (SPI), featuring a series of performance indicators with differing weights. Schools earn points for the various indicators. Under ESSA, South Dakota plans to continue to use this basic model with modifications recommended by stakeholders. In accordance with federal law, academic-related indicators will receive more weight than other indicators.

School Performance Index (SPI)

Elementary and middle schools:

Indicator		Maximum Points Available	
Academic Indicators	**Student Achievement**	Math	20
		English Language Arts	20
		Total	**40**
	Academic Growth	English Language Arts – All Students	10
		Math – All Students	10
		English Language Arts – Lowest Quartile	10
		Math – Lowest Quartile	10
		Total	**40**
	English Language Proficiency		**10**
School Quality			**10**
Total			**100**

High schools:

Indicator		Maximum Points Available	
Academic Indicators	**Student Achievement**	Math	20
		English Language Arts	20
		Total	**40**
	Four-Year Cohort Graduation		**12.5**
	College and Career Readiness		**25**
	English Language Proficiency		**10**
High School Completion			**12.5**
Total			**100**

South Dakota's SPI indicators were built to answer a series of questions.

Are students meeting academic expectations, or are they on track to getting there?
To answer this question, SD DOE will look at the results of the ELA and math assessments through two different lenses: Student Achievement (proficiency) and Academic Growth (progress).

<u>Student Achievement (Proficiency)</u>
As it currently does, SD DOE will measure <u>Student Achievement</u> by examining whether students are scoring at a proficient level (Level 3 of 4) on the state assessments. A change under ESSA will be to award SPI points along a continuum – meaning schools may earn partial points for students at each level of the assessments. Scoring at Level 3 will be worth full credit, with bonus points for students who have mastered and go beyond grade-level standards (Level 4).

In awarding points, SD DOE will examine separately the performance of a school's historically underperforming students versus the performance of those historically performing at or above the average. These groups are denoted as the "Gap" and "Nongap" groups. (See below for a full explanation.) Additionally, points will be based on a school's performance over three years, rather than looking only at the most current year's performance. This helps even out the peaks and valleys that some smaller and rural schools see from year to year.

Academic Growth (Progress)
For elementary and middle schools, SD DOE also looks at the assessment results through a lens of progress. Are students meeting academic expectations, or likely to reach them within three years? Or are they making tremendous gains? This is reflected in the state's Academic Growth indicator.

SD DOE measures academic growth through the Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs) model, which is a means of predicting how a student is growing on the ELA and math assessments from year to year. (See http://doe.sd.gov/secretary/documents/0615-SGP3.pdf). Students are compared with other South Dakota students who score similarly on the assessment, which provides for a more accurate picture of how well a student is progressing academically. Schools earn SPI points based on projections for their students. Points are earned based on the growth of all students, and separately, for the 25 percent of students with the lowest assessment scores from the prior year. This double weighting of "Lowest Quartile" students will provide additional emphasis on students with the most room to grow.

How well are we serving our English learner students?
Under ESSA, states are required to have an indicator of English Language Proficiency. South Dakota has a diverse English learner (EL) population – with more than 80 different languages spoken. Adding to the complexity of the picture is that most districts have no ELs, some districts have a few, and only two of the state's 150 districts have consistent and significant populations of ELs.

The answer to this question is based on the state's goals for how long it should take an EL student to gain the language skills he or she needs. Like Student Achievement, the indicator is designed as a measure of growth along that continuum. Schools earn points based on whether their ELs are on track to meeting the state's goals for reaching language proficiency – defined as a composite score of 5.0 on the ACCESS 2.0 assessment. See below for more detail on how the individual goals are calculated.

Schools will earn partial credit for students who have taken the ACCESS 2.0 and continue to progress, and full credit for students on track with the state's exiting timeline. Students who exit early will result in bonus points. Establishing a continuum of points will recognize schools for their work to help ELs participate fully in the classroom with their peers as quickly as possible.

Are schools providing a quality experience for students?
School Quality is a new measure of performance required under ESSA. SD DOE plans to have different indicators for this measure at the elementary/middle school level versus the high school level.
Elementary and middle schools: At the elementary and middle school levels, the School Quality indicator remains under construction. For the present time, SD DOE will use a measure of attendance for this indicator; schools will earn points based on how many of their students meet the target mark of attending school at least 90 percent of the time.

Based on stakeholder feedback, SD DOE will explore the idea of establishing an indicator around the concept of safe and healthy schools, or positive school climate. One idea that surfaced was possible

incorporation of cultural heritage and, in particular, use of the Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings (OSEUs). The OSEUs are core concepts considered essential to understanding and teaching of Lakota, Dakota and Nakota history and culture. Recognizing that a safe and healthy school indicator can be difficult to measure, SD DOE will take additional time to research and pilot any proposed indicators, in order to ensure validity and reliability across the state's diverse school systems.

High schools: At the high school level, the School Quality indicator will be a measure of College and Career Readiness (CCR). In today's world, some sort of postsecondary or industry-based credential is critical to laying a foundation for future success. While CCR is an indicator under the current model, it will be expanded under ESSA – recognizing the many opportunities the state and local school districts are providing to students to prepare them for postsecondary and the workforce, including South Dakota's state-funded low-cost dual credit program. With SD DOE's plan, students demonstrate whether they are ready for that next step after high school by meeting assessment and coursework benchmarks:

o   Has the student demonstrated readiness through an assessment? Students can check this box by scoring at a level sufficient to enter into credit-bearing courses on the ACT, the Smarter Balanced assessment, or by completing state-approved remedial work in both English and math. Students can also show they are ready by earning the National Career Readiness Certificate (silver level or above), which measures workplace skills.

o   Has the student completed college or career coursework? Students can also show readiness by becoming a Career and Technical Education Concentrator (earning two credits in an approved CTE program), completing two CTE courses or capstone experiences, or successfully completing a dual credit, concurrent credit or Advanced Placement course or exam.

Under this umbrella of CCR, SD DOE also plans to pilot a framework of career advising, early postsecondary opportunities, and work-based learning experiences that pave the way for students to make informed decisions about their postsecondary and career plans.

Schools will earn full credit for each graduate who meets both the assessment and coursework benchmark as described above and half credit for any graduate who meets *either* option.

Are high school students completing?
SD DOE's plan answers this question in two ways. Are students graduating within the traditional four years of high school? And are students completing – either graduating or earning a high school equivalency – before they turn 21, regardless of the number of years it takes?

Each indicator is measured separately but afforded equal weight in the SPI; schools earn a percentage of points based on the percent of their students meeting the mark. The four-year measure is required by federal law. It measures those who graduate in four years as a percentage of all those who started 9th grade the same year. Those who take longer to graduate and those who drop out count against the rate.

Recognizing that this four-year rate is not the end of the story, SD DOE will also incorporate a broader measure of all students who cross the finish line, however that may look (e.g., five years to complete, earning high school equivalency). Utilizing both rates – a Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate and a High School Completion Rate fulfills federal accountability provisions, while also recognizing the work many high schools are doing to get all students across the finish line.

For which students should a school be held accountable?

Although SD DOE will *report* on the performance of all students in a school, district and state, schools have the most ability to influence the performance of the students they have the longest. Therefore, only students who have attended a school continuously from October 1 through May 1 will be considered for *accountability* purposes.

How will student privacy be protected?

SD DOE will only report publicly on a student group with 10 or more members; this is referred to as an "n size." Using a small n size is the best way to ensure that most schools, not simply large ones, are held accountable. Research has also demonstrated that an n size of 10 is sufficient to protect student privacy.

Which student groups are reported?

SD DOE will report the performance of, and base accountability decisions on, the following federally recognized student groups, or subgroups.

White/Caucasian	Students with Disabilities*
Hispanic/Latino*	English Learners*
Black/African American*	Economically Disadvantaged*
American Indian/Alaska Native*	
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	
Asian	
Two or More Races	

SD DOE also will report – for informational purposes only – on Homeless, Migrant, Foster and Military-Connected students, as well as by gender.

In addition to the above accountability subgroups, SD DOE also uses the "super subgroups" of Gap and Nongap. The Gap group includes those student subgroups that have historically under-performed on the state assessments compared to their peers (noted above with an asterisk). Since South Dakota has an abundance of small schools – many with fewer than 10 students in a subgroup – the use of the super subgroup shines the spotlight on these students and improves transparency in public reporting.

What Rigorous Goals Has the State Established?

Student Achievement and Graduation

SD DOE is working with partners to align meaningful, rigorous, long-term goals and interim targets with the ultimate aspiration of ensuring all students leave the state's K-12 system college, career and life ready, as described earlier. SD DOE will continue to work towards setting appropriate interim accountability goals related to those aspirational goals. At the most basic level, SD DOE will set a trajectory for where it wants the educational system to be in 13 years, when the fall 2017 cohort of kindergarteners is ready to leave the educational system in 2030-31.

These goals are aspirational in nature and are directly aligned to the state's goals such that in 2030-31, it is the goal that:

- 100 percent of 8th graders will show proficiency on the statewide summative mathematics assessment, regardless of subpopulation membership.
- 100 percent of 3rd graders will demonstrate proficiency on the statewide summative English language arts assessment, regardless of subpopulation membership.

- 100 percent of students will be on track to exit English learner status on time.
- 100 percent of students will graduate on time.
- There will no longer be an achievement gap as measured by graduation or proficiency rates for our Native American student population.

Over the course of the 2017-18 year, in-depth reviews of historical data and projections will be used to validate the process to ensure that goals are meaningful and are not just arbitrary numbers. Inherent in the design will be a system of continuous improvement for all students and all schools.

English Language Proficiency
In addition to aligning the state's English language proficiency goals with the above strategic goals, SD DOE also will set individual student-level goals. SD DOE and a team of experts examined the state's data to arrive at a matrix of targets for how long an EL student should receive English language services. The targets below represent a balance of how the data played out for the average of how many years students need to exit and the social goal of how long students should be in the program.

First ACCESS 2.0 Score	Years to Exit after First ACCESS
Level 1	5
Level 2	5
Level 3	4
Level 4	3

SD DOE acknowledges that English language growth is uneven – many students make great gains the first year or two, only to taper off as they approach proficiency. That trajectory will look different for every student. As a result, SD DOE will set interim targets that expect equally spaced growth. However, those interim targets are not reset every year – the trajectory is plotted out and set at the first ACCESS 2.0 assessment. Therefore, if a student makes significant gains the first year but slows in year two, the model is flexible enough to accommodate that pattern. This goal and target rubric also forms the backbone of the English Language Proficiency indicator, as detailed above.

Supporting Schools
ESSA requires states to use their accountability systems to identify schools in need of additional supports to improve student performance. SD DOE identifies schools for this purpose based on their performance on the SPI.

Called "Comprehensive Support schools" under ESSA, these schools are given supports for a minimum of four years of support based on the performance of all students in a school, specifically:
- Any Title I school performing in the bottom five percent of the SPI
- Any public high school with a graduation rate less than 67 percent
- Any Title I school identified as Targeted Support under #1 below not exiting within four years.

Called "Targeted Support schools" under ESSA, these schools are designated for at least two years of support based on the performance of particular student groups per the below:
1. Any school with a subgroup or its Gap group (as defined above) performing no better on any indicator than the best performance by a Comprehensive Support school over three years.
2. Any school with a subgroup performing disproportionately below the performance of the all students group at a school for three consecutive years.

These criteria will capture those schools in need of additional supports to educate particular groups of students. Using a multi-year lens protects against anomalies and instead identifies systemic flagging performance of student groups.

After the minimum period of designation, in general, schools can exit support status, if they no longer meet the definition of a Comprehensive or Targeted Support school and can show improvement over the period of designation, including in the areas of highest need.

School Improvement Efforts
Following designation as described, SD DOE's school improvement process is a continuous process of support. This process will begin with performance of an audit, or needs assessment, that considers factors such as curriculum, assessment, family engagement, school culture/climate, data use, leadership, and fiscal resources. Based on the audit's results, together with their district and SD DOE, schools will write plans to address the identified needs to improve student outcomes.

Schools identified for Comprehensive Support will further work with a support professional to help implement the plan through evidence-based strategies. Schools identified at both levels will check in regularly with stakeholders and SD DOE on their progress.

SD DOE will use federal funds set aside to support these schools to fund the school support experts and provide grants to conduct the needs assessment and help implement school plans. SD DOE will evaluate the use of funds and effectiveness of interventions by requiring schools to dig into their data annually, thereby providing an opportunity to adjust course if needed.

If the above supports are insufficient to meet the needs of a Comprehensive Support school, and that school fails to exit designation after four years, such schools will be required to re-evaluate and revise their school improvement plans by working with their support professional to conduct another needs assessment during the fifth year of designation.

In thinking through the process of school improvement, a contradiction emerged between the extensive supports a Comprehensive Support school receives during its four years of designation and the lack of supports upon exiting. To address this, in their final year of designation, schools will build a three-year sustainability plan. Designing this plan while still surrounded by external supports should help to ensure permanence of the school's strategies and mitigate regression.

Serving the Most Vulnerable

English Learners
Every school with an English Learner student (EL) must ensure that it is meeting the needs of that student. Through a standard identification process, students in need of English language services are identified. SD DOE provides opportunities and support for districts that may be struggling to meet the needs of their ELs. This support will continue under the ESSA state plan.

Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness
Under federal law, children and youth experiencing homelessness have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as other children and youth. SD DOE will continue to work with and provide resources to contacts at the district level to identify and address the needs of these students, in particular ensuring immediate enrollment.

Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk
Districts must provide education for all students within their borders, including those who are in special programs for neglected and delinquent youth. SD DOE assists these learners by funding support programs, with particular emphasis on youth at-risk of further involvement in the justice system. SD DOE also funds programs that emphasize immediate return to the classroom and that support coordinators who assist in ensuring students are in appropriate classes, attending those classes, and given opportunity for success after high school. This support will continue under ESSA.

Children in Foster Care
New under ESSA, school districts and Child Protection Services are required to work together to provide transportation options to ensure educational stability for students in foster care.

After School Educational Opportunities
SD DOE awards federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants to groups providing educational and recreational activities for families and students served by schools most in need – those designated as Comprehensive or Targeted Support, recently exited that status, or on the cusp of designation; or 40 percent or more of students at the school receive free and reduced lunches. Priority is given to programs that demonstrate alignment to the state's aspiration, so as to focus efforts across the system.

Supporting Effective Instruction
SD DOE is committed to offering supports for educators and administrators to further develop their knowledge and skills and improve achievement for all students. SD DOE will use funds under Title II, Part A (a section under ESSA designed to support teachers) to further SD DOE's aspiration work. Funds will be used to help principals become more effective, help teachers implement content standards, and help schools better use data to inform instruction and decision making, including by using the state's Student Longitudinal Data System (SLDS).

Specific to schools with high pockets of poverty, the majority of schools identified as being high poverty schools and high minority schools are either on an American Indian reservation or serve a large percentage of American Indian students. To help teachers and administrators better serve the students in these schools, SD DOE will use funds to help teachers address the cultural needs of students through implementation of the Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings and Standards and through the WoLakota mentoring program. For more information, visit http://www.wolakotaproject.org.

SD DOE also understands the importance of collaborating with colleges and universities to improve the skills of teachers and administrators. SD DOE has a strong relationship with the South Dakota Board of Regents and the deans of education from Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) to ensure expectations for new teachers and principals are met. To this end, SD DOE partners with IHEs to:
- Offer graduate-level coursework designed to increase educators' data use skills;
- Improve preparation programs, including piloting a new experience-based principal preparation program;
- Ensure alignment between the education preparation requirements for Native American Studies to the state-adopted Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings and Standards;
- Support struggling readers, including those with dyslexia;
- Continually collaborate to ensure IHEs are abreast and involved in SD DOE-led initiatives.