

# ND A-PLUS (ND A+)

North Dakota Academic Progression of Learning and Understanding of Students

## Introduction and General Information

Office of Assessment  
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# How we got here...

- Relentless pursuit of better data to serve educators, students, families and education decisionmakers.
  - Connected assessment system
    - Interim to standards, interim to summative, summative to standards
  - A new push for all to better understand use and purpose of larger grain size assessments (what/where is data, analyzing, using to improve learning, etc.)
- Two large scale processes have been significant:
  - Interim Assessment Study
    - Full study available to be shared if interested
    - Recommendation called for an optional “state-provided” interim assessment
    - Legislative standing on recommendation covered later in presentation
  - Updating of Math and ELA State Content Standards
    - Currently ongoing and triggers large-scale changes to statewide summative assessment

# How we got here...(continued)

- Research and searching for new methods to assess (of and for) student learning is constantly ongoing. Other state models were considered and monitored before ND A+ “started”.
- Applying what has been learned with models, knowing a large-scale change was going to be due with the NDSA, and the state-provided interim recommendation all culminated to “start” the ND A+ work.
- A model was selected, called “modified Alaska model”, and presented to NDDPI executive leadership. (presentation available upon request)
- State procurement calls for an RFP to select a partnering vendor, so that was naturally the next step. (RFP is public and available)

# RFP Process

June 2022	RFP issued on 6-30-22
July 2022	RFP reissued with amendments and responses to questions/clarifications on 7-18-22 (current and final form)
August 2022	Proposals were due 8-12-22 from vendors Review team assembled
September 2022	Preliminary final scores due 9-14-22 Vendor demonstrations week of 9-19-22 Final scores due 9-23-22
January 2023	Contract Executed on 1-9-23 First meeting with Pearson 1-20-23
February 2023	Kick-off meeting scheduled for 2-3-23

# RFP Review Team

- Leslie Bieber – Superintendent, Alexander Public Schools
- Noelle Green – Principal, Watford City Middle School
- Dr. Robert Grosz – Assistant Administrator, Fargo Public Schools
- Dr. Perry Just – Curriculum Director, Mandan Public Schools
- Lisa Klabunde – Secondary Principal, Wilton Public Schools
- Amanda Peterson – NDDPI
- Jerry Standifer – Principal, Harwood Elementary School
- Michelle Woodcock – NDDPI
- Stanley Schauer –NDDPI

# What is ND A+

- Goal of the RFP is to create a partnership with a vendor that is best suited to deliver ND A+ and provide quality customer/technical support.

- **Connected System**

ND A+ is an assessment system that consists of a statewide summative assessment that measures annual grade-level student academic achievement in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science, and optional, state-provided (no cost) interim assessments connected to the summative that focus on measuring in-year growth in reading and mathematics

- Both connected to each other AND the state content standards.
- Both online and computer adaptive.

- **Assessment Literacy**

A strong focus on assessment literacy and helping all better understand how to access assessment data, analyze and apply findings, and increase understanding of assessment use and purpose. This was written into scope of RFP.

# ND A+ Administration

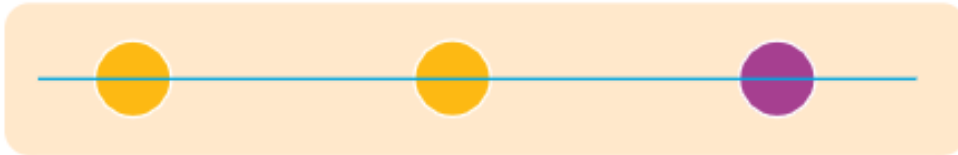
## ND A+ summative-assessed grade levels (grades 3-8 & grade 10):

- Opt-in, no cost ND A+ interim assessments in reading and mathematics administered in Fall and Winter in grades 3 through 8 and grade 10
- ND A+ summative assessment administered in grades 3 through 8 and grade 10 for ELA and mathematics, and grades 4, 8, and 10 for science

Fall

Winter

Spring



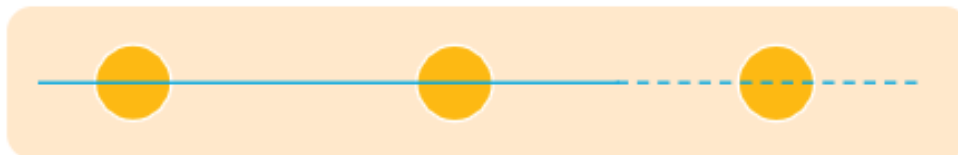
## ND A+ interim assessments in non-summative grade levels (grades K-2 & grade 9):

- Opt-in, no cost ND A+ interim assessments in reading and mathematics made available for Fall, Winter, and Spring administrations, with two administrations required

Fall

Winter

Spring



- ND A+ interims starting in school year 2023-2024
- ND A+ summative administered beginning Spring 2025.


# Why is ND A+ different/innovative

- Connected or comprehensive assessment systems have been around for a long time, especially in theory and discussion.
- Typical state model:
  - Smaller grain assessments (for learning) being controlled locally.
  - Interim assessments are typically locally decided, vendor produced, and an out of the box assessment. Some states provide a vendor produced interim assessment as well.
  - Summative assessment (of learning) is connected to standards and highly valid/reliable (meeting federal peer review requirements which are available upon request).
- ND A+ creates and provides interim assessments with items that align to and measure skills/knowledge within ND content standards. Also, aligns with summative to produce a predictive score (ideally all on same scale, similar item pool, same system).
- Essentially, “ND’ize” interim assessments to connect to the summative assessment and standards and allow a school to administer both for a complete comprehensive/connected system.



# Communication of ND A+

- A one-pager describing ND A+ was share by NDDPI (available upon request)
- Information was sent out via NDDPI in the Weekly Blast, Educator Edge, and Monthly Newsletter
- Information went out to vendors via the state procurement process
- Presented to ESSA State Planning Committee
- NDCEL presentations - today and a similar presentation to superintendents and elementary principals
- More presentations and communications to come as the work progresses

 NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

OFFICE OF ASSESSMENT  
DIVISION OF STUDENT SUPPORT & INNOVATION

North Dakota Academic Progression of Learning and Understanding of Students  
ND A+

**WHAT?** ND A+ is an assessment system, replacing the current ND State Assessment (NDSA), that connects:  
A statewide *summative assessment* that measures annual grade-level student academic achievement in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science, and two optional, state-provided (no cost) *interim assessments* connected to the summative that focus on measuring in-year growth in reading and mathematics

**WHO?** **ND A+ summative-assessed grade levels (grades 3-8 & grade 10):**  
● Opt-in, no cost ND A+ interim assessments in reading and mathematics administered in Fall and Winter in grades 3 through 8 and grade 10  
● ND A+ summative assessment administered in grades 3 through 8 and grade 10 for ELA and mathematics, and grades 4, 8, and 10 for science

Fall Winter Spring

**ND A+ interim assessments in non-summative grade levels (grades K-2 & grade 9):**  
● Opt-in, no cost ND A+ interim assessments in reading and mathematics made available for Fall, Winter, and Spring administrations, with two administrations required

Fall Winter Spring

**WHEN?** 2022-2023 2023-2024 2024-2025  
Current version of NDSA continues ND A+ summative begins  
ND A+ state-provided interims begin

**WHY?**

1. To better serve our students, educators, and families by creating a connected assessment system that offers school districts state-provided interims in reading and mathematics that are connected to the state's academic content standards and the ND A+ summative assessment.
2. Support educators in strengthening their understanding of the role assessment plays in improving student learning.
3. North Dakota K-12 academic content standards in ELA and mathematics are currently being updated. The ND A+ will be aligned to these new standards.

# Timeline

2022-2023

2023-2024

2024-2025

Current version of NDSA continues

ND A+ summative begins

ND A+ state-provided interims begin

# Next Steps

- We are in the very beginning of the work on ND A+.
  - Pearson won the competition set forth by the RFP and is the selected vendor to assist us with ND A+. Contract details were just finalized.
  - The standards for Math and ELA are well into development as the committees have been meeting for months now and are nearing a final product.
  - The process and work from this point forward require heavy participation from committees and teams of ND educators and content experts.
    - Standards development, Blueprint development and approval, item pool content and bias, item alignment, Achievement Level Descriptors creation (Policy, Range, Threshold, Reporting), alignment between item pool, blueprint, and standards, Standard setting/cut score development, ongoing item content/bias reviews, assessment literacy curriculum, other committees and teams as needed.
  - Immediate focus, once the standards are complete, will be to work on alignment of interim item pool. This requires educators from across the state and will most likely be virtual due to time. This process is on-going, and we anticipate better alignment in year 2 of the interims.

# Future of ACT (for state accountability) in ND

- Will continue being a locally selected, nationally recognized assessment option until 2024-2025 school year.
- ESSA Title 1b calls for each state assessment to go through a rigorous assessment peer review process. ND will be re-starting this process due to having new content standards and a new state assessment.
- NDDPI has decided to not pursue the ability to use ACT as a HS academic achievement assessment.
- The time and funding needed to have the ACT pass peer review is extraordinary. Very few states, that we are currently aware of, have the ACT as an option. It is either the state assessment or it is not used.
- Without a rarely granted waiver, if ND wanted to pursue this option, there would be a gap of at least 2 administrations (most likely 3 – Spring 2025, 2026, and 2027) before the ACT would be approved for use. A Spring 2027 would be best case, but unlikely, scenario.

# SB 2028

- Interim assessment bill that stemmed from the interim assessment study and committee recommendation.
- Requires at least two interim assessment administrations, in math and reading, for grades K-10.
- Creates two paths to complete this:
  - 1. State-provided interim assessment
    - ND A+ Interims would be the state provided
  - 2. State-approved interim assessment
    - NDDPI would write administrative rules for approved list
- Passed 47-0 out of Senate and will be on House side after crossover.