Standards Assessment Report

AdvancED District Accreditation

Williston Public School District #1

Executive Summary

Vision, Mission, Beliefs

Vision

Importing Potential, Exporting Excellence

Mission:

Williston Public School District #1 creates a learning partnership of home, school, and community that promotes each individual's strengths and talents, life-long learning and personal excellence.

Belief Statements

We Believe…

Students and Learning
- o All students must be actively involved in learning.
- o Motivation is critical to learning.
- o All students develop grade specific literacy skills.
- o Thinking critically and creatively is crucial to learning.
- o Collaboration is critical to lifelong learning and student success in the 21st century.

Teachers and Teaching
- o Teachers are caring and dedicated professionals.
- o Teachers embrace change to enhance learning.
- o All students are offered a relevant curriculum and differentiated instruction.
- o Professional development provides continuous improvement.
- o Technology enhances the curriculum.
- o Research, best practice and data driven decisions direct the curriculum and programs.

Healthy Learning Communities
- o All students develop sound character, citizenship, and healthy life skills.
- o Schools are a safe environment conducive to learning.
- o Parents and community are supportive and collaborative.
- o Positive leadership is valued.
- o Success is acknowledged and celebrated.
- o Parents are provided the resources to assist their children in education .
- o Parents and community are integral and must work collaboratively to support education.
- o High expectations for all involved in the educational process.

Executive Summary

Vision, Mission, Beliefs Continued

Technology Vision Statement:

In keeping with the mission and goals of Williston Public School District #1, this district, with community support, will invest in our children's future by providing adequate tools for lifelong learning skills needed to succeed in an information-driven, global society. Students' skills will be enhanced through effective integration of technology into the K-12 curriculum. Teachers, administrators, and support staff will become more efficient and effective in facilitating and managing the learning environment by using technology as a tool.

Mission:

Williston Public School District #1 creates a learning partnership of home, school, and community that promotes each individual's strengths and talents, life-long learning and personal excellence.

Summary

Williston Public School District #1 (WPSD#1) has one comprehensive high school, one middle school, four elementary schools and a head start program. Additionally, the district also receives secondary students from a parochial elementary school and elementary rural school district.
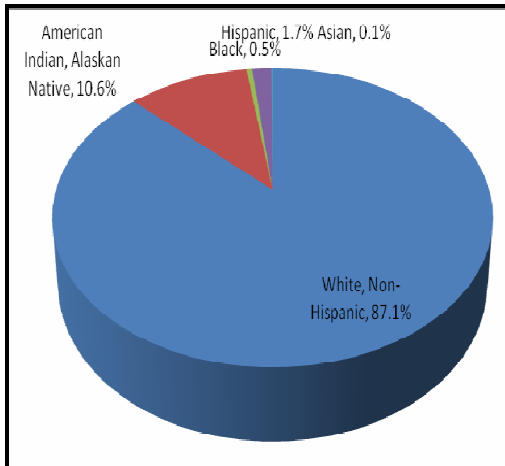
The district resources are limited and yet many of our student needs are great; for example, the average special education population is 14.8% and WPSD#1 has 17.5% with additional needs at middle school, making the special education percentage significantly higher than the state average. School improvement has been a continual process as all schools in WPSD#1 are NCA accredited. North Dakota State Assessment results are consistent with our NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), GATES and other assessments.

On February 7, 2005, our new facility for Williston Middle School opened. The community support for this school facility reflects the strong public support the community has for our schools.
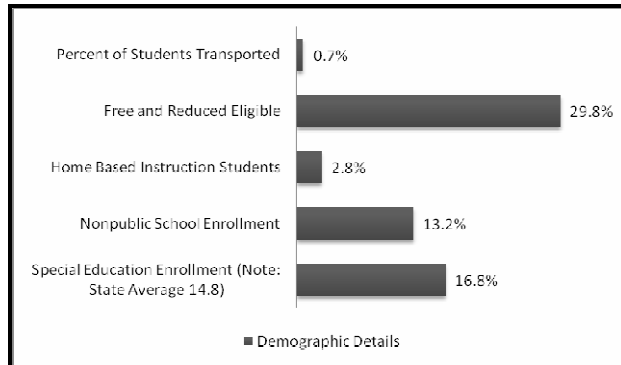
Executive Summary

Programs and Services

District Enrollment by Race

American Indian, Alaskan Native, 10.6%
Black, 0.5%
Hispanic, 1.7% Asian, 0.1%
White, Non-Hispanic, 87.1%

Additional Demographic Details

Percent of Students Transported	0.7%
Free and Reduced Eligible	29.8%
Home Based Instruction Students	2.8%
Nonpublic School Enrollment	13.2%
Special Education Enrollment (Note: State Average 14.8)	16.8%

■ Demographic Details

PROGRAMS: Note: Some programs are unavailable to our students due to finances.

Student Evaluation Plan- Yes
Full Day Kindergarten- Yes
Safe/Drug Free Schools Program- Yes
Gifted and Talented Services- No
Post-Secondary Enrollment Options- Yes
Alternative High School Program- No

RESOURCES:

2008-09 figures for the Williston School District are:

Total Revenue	$21,441,050
Local/County	$7,499,697
State	$11,513,758
Federal	$2,427,595
Other	$0
General Fund mill levy	$ 188.33
Total mill levy	$ 201.53
Taxable valuation/Pupil	$12,054
Instructional cost/Pupil	$9589
Total Cost/Pupil	$9714

Executive Summary

Demographic Information on Williston Community

Williston North Dakota is located in the northwest corner of the state. It is rather isolated, with the largest neighboring community (Minot, North Dakota) being two hours away.

Employment in the area is high, especially with the recent growth in oil related businesses. Employment in Williston is primarily found in medical, agricultural, service industry, and oil professions.

Education: The public school district serves only the city limits (although some of the rural community that surrounds Williston also attends). New School District 8 provides K-8 for the rural area outside of the city limit; however, all high school students in New School District 8 attend Williston High School. Additionally, students attending St. Joe's, an elementary parochial school located in Williston, also merge into the Williston High School population. Williston State College is a community college located in Williston, which has developed duel-credit courses with the high school.

Population (year 2000): 12,512.
Estimated population 2008 15,500.
Population change in the 1990s: -775 (-5.8%).
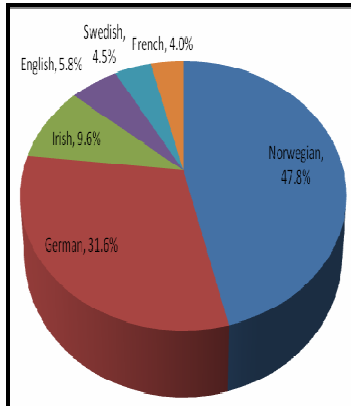
Housing: Median resident age: 42.5 years
Median household income: $29,962 (year 2000)
Median house value: $58,900 (year 2000) Note: Housing costs have risen dramatically due to the increase in oil business. Lack of housing has caused families to leave and employers unable to get new employees. When hiring teachers it is a real issue to find housing.
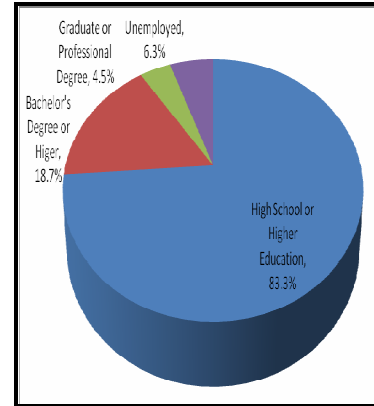

Williston Community Ethnicity

American Indian, 5.4% Other, 3.5%
White, Non-Hispanic, 92.9%
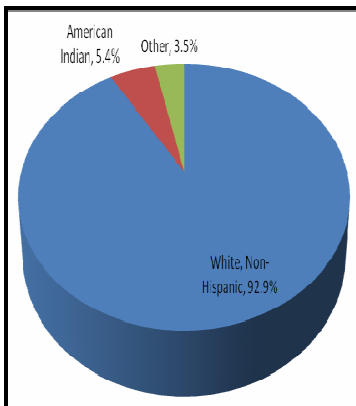
Williston Community Ancestries

Swedish, 4.5% French, 4.0%
English, 5.8%
Irish, 9.6%
Norwegian, 47.8%
German, 31.6%

Education/ Work Demographics
for Williston population
25 years and Older

Graduate or Professional Degree, 4.5%   Unemployed, 6.3%
Bachelor's Degree or Higer, 18.7%
High School or Higher Education, 83.3%

Note: low percentage of college graduates.

Annual Adequate Yearly Progress Report
North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
School Year 2007 - 2008

Modified 08/05/2008
Page 1 of 1

53-001 Williston 1 (0K-12)

Instructions on the Interpretation of the North Dakota Adequate Yearly Progress Report can be accessed at:
www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/account/AYP0708.pdf

Reading	2008 State Intermediate Goals		Math	2008 State Intermediate Goals	
	4th Grade -- 82.6%			4th Grade -- 72.9%	
	8th Grade -- 80.7%			8th Grade -- 66.7%	
	11th Grade -- 71.5%			11th Grade -- 62.1%	

Listed below are your district's scores			Listed below are your district's scores		

Reading	Achievement Goal	Achievement Result	Participation 95% Rule	Math	Achievement Goal	Achievement Result	Participation 95% Rule
Composite Score	78.04%	79.43%	99.60%	Composite Score	66.82%	83.27%	99.50%
Subgroups:				Subgroups:			
Economically disadvantaged	78.04%	77.19%	99.25%	Economically disadvantaged	66.82%	84.41%	99.25%
Ethnicity:				Ethnicity:			
White	78.04%	80.05%	99.66%	White	66.82%	84.67%	99.66%
Native American	78.04%	77.92%	98.72%	Native American	66.82%	74.03%	98.72%
Black	70.76%	80.00%	100.00%	Black	55.89%	70.00%	100.00%
Asian				Asian			
Hispanic	78.04%	64.29%	100.00%	Hispanic	66.82%	61.54%	92.86%
Other	70.76%	50.00%	90.00% i	Other			80.00% i
Students with disabilities	78.04%	78.52%	98.03%	Students with disabilities	66.82%	84.56%	98.03%
Students with limited English proficiency				Students with limited English proficiency			

District Secondary Indicator(s):	Graduation	Goal:	73.09%	Result:	73.63%
	Attendance	Goal:	93.00%	Result:	>=95.0%

Adequate Yearly Progress Category:	Met Adequate Yearly Progress

Note: An asterisk (*) marks the indicator(s) where the district did not meet adequate yearly progress. If an indicator's value is below the achievement goal but no (*) is marked, then the indicator's value is within statistical reliability. Statistics are not shown for fewer than ten students. An (i) indicates insufficient data to determine adequate yearly progress; the value results from the combining of up to three years' data.

Achievement goals are raised every three years and may vary among categories when insufficient student numbers exist and multiple-year averaging is required. All students are held to the state's challenging achievement standards.

Executive Summary

Williston Public School District #1

1201 9th Ave. NW
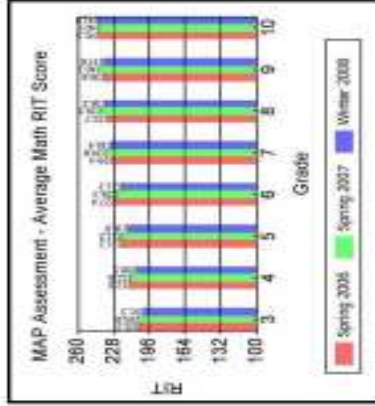P.O. Box 1407
Williston, ND 58801
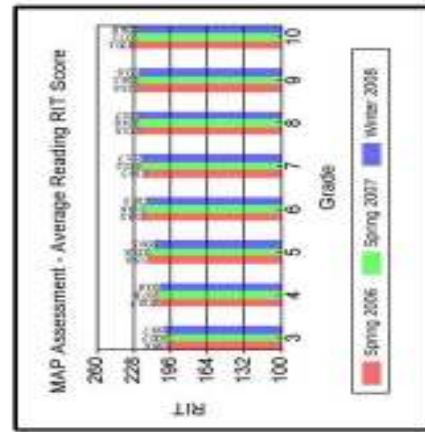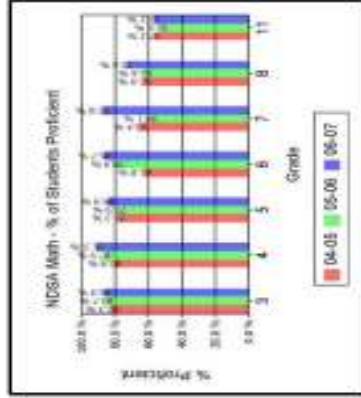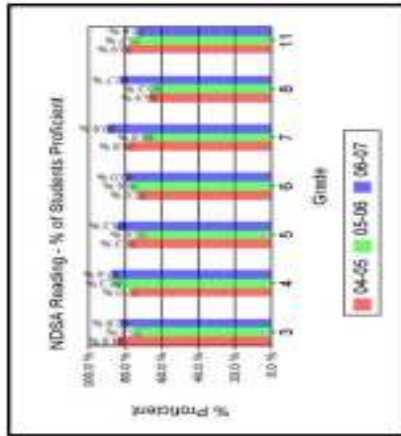(701) 572-1580

http://www.williston.k12.nd.us

VISION

Importing Potential, Exporting Excellence

MISSION

Williston Public School District #1 creates a learning partnership of home, school, and community that promotes each individual's strengths and talents, life-long learning and personal excellence.

SCHOOLS:

Grades Served   K-12
Number of Schools   6
Elementary: Hagan, Lewis and Clark, Rickard, Wilkinson
Williston Middle School
Williston High School
School District Square Miles 14.8

Total Enrollment   2,206
5-Year Enrollment Trend   +2.3%

STAFF:

Administrative   10
Teachers   146.5
Other Licensed Staff   7.76
Support Staff   126.76

Executive Summary

District's Major Trends and/or Issues

We are a proud district with dedicated school staff, both our certified and classified staff. Staff is well integrated with the community, sharing their expertise and skills in various community roles. Schools and school staff are valued and respected by the community.

There are two (2) main issues that seem to affect all the work of our district. One is the current economic constraints of the district. Hiring of personnel at all levels, programs and services, facility upgrades, all are influenced by our economic issues. We understand school districts always want more dollars; however, our economic constraints go beyond the desire for more "luxuries." These constraints inhibit best practices and research-based programs from becoming a reality in our district, as well as, limit programs and services we feel are necessary for students. Areas of concern include, but are not limited to: course offerings, after school programming, alternative programs and supports, gifted and talented programming, and facility maintenance and upgrades.

The second issue is the lack of focused district leadership. The district has had a variety of personnel turn-over at the district office, most recently the loss of a superintendent. Instead, the district functioned under a three-person advisory team until the position could be filled. We operated without a superintendent much of this school year, with a newly hired superintendent taking office in February 2009. Although gains in student achievement have occurred, the development of a system-wide strategic plan to include curricular and instructional decisions based on data, research and best practice at all levels is necessary. In order to achieve our district and school goals, professional development focused on a district and school plan must be maintained year to year. Finally, each school has functioned independently with different school improvement models in previous years. We chose to move into a district model for school improvement because we believe a unified model would improve our communication and articulation, ultimately strengthening K-12 education for Williston.

Executive Summary

Summary of District Strengths

Our District School Improvement Leadership Team has functioned well to facilitate and maintain communication and initiate "the work" of school improvement. Four years ago this team recognized a need for data to determine both our student growth, but also our instructional programming. Today, the district utilizes both our state assessment and the NWEA/MAP so we have the means to track, predict and analyze student growth.

Our school community has and continues to be supportive of schools. Each school has parents and businesses that provide resources and man-power as needs arise. Our fundraisers and programs are well supported and/or attended by the community. Community media consistently report on educational events and activities, aiding school and community communication. Healthy Williston, Healthy Youth is a community initiative designed to strengthen these connections as well, though recent changes in leadership of the program has weakened its effectiveness. With the building of the new middle school facility utilizing a penny sales tax, a vote of confidence for our schools was displayed throughout the community.

Even with a limited budget, the district has remained committed to the development and maintenance of its facilities. Many of the buildings are in need of updating, so each summer several manageable improvement projects are undertaken. Several schools have newly created computer labs, with increased accessibility to Internet and wireless services. The construction of the middle school and a commons area at the high school have been significant additions for secondary students.

#1 Vision and Purpose

STANDARD: The system establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the system.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it commits to a purpose and direction that is shared system-wide. The leadership establishes expectations for student learning aligned with the system's vision that is supported by system and school personnel and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance and district effectiveness. The system's vision guides allocations of time and human, material, and fiscal resources.

Indicators Rubric

Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Definitions

Not Evident Little or no evidence exists
Emerging   Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of
       practice
Operational   Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and
       effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS In fulfillment of this standard, the system:	Not Evident	Emerging	Operational	Highly Functional
1.1 Establishes a vision and purpose for the system in collaboration with its stakeholders				x
1.2 Communicates the system's vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support			x	
1.3 Identifies system-wide goals and measures to advance the vision			x	
1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the system, its students, and the community			x	

1.5	Ensures that the system's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process and the strategic direction of schools, departments, and services			x	
1.6	Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate			x	

STANDARD ONE: VISION AND PURPOSE

1. What is the process for establishing and building understanding of and commitment to the vision statement among the school system and its stakeholders?

In 2003, a steering committee was established to create the district vision, mission, and belief statements. This committee composed of two teachers from each building, middle school and high school students, parents, community members, administrators and district office personnel met several days a week for three consecutive weeks until this was accomplished. The committee then met monthly to work on the school improvement process. The district vision, mission and belief statements have been reviewed annually.

During the 2006-2007 school year the district adopted the district model of AdvancED, incorporating a strategic plan based on SMART goals. A School Improvement "Vision" Sub-Committee, comprised of school and community stakeholders, met to review and revise the vision, mission and belief statements. These revisions were presented to the District School Improvement Leadership Team for review and comments, then team members presented the work to their respective schools for additional input from school stakeholders. The revised mission, vision and belief statements were presented to the school board and adopted. The vision and mission statements are visibly posted in all of the buildings.

The District School Improvement Leadership Team currently is meeting under the guidance of the middle school principal, and will continue to meet in this manner until the newly hired superintendent, joining the district in February 2009, updates district protocols and procedures.

Williston Public School District #1

Vision

Importing Potential, Exporting Excellence
Mission

**Williston Public School District #1 creates
a learning partnership of home, school, and community that promotes each individual's
strengths and talents, life-long learning, and personal excellence.**

2. What is the system's process for maintaining and using information that describes the school system, it's programs, services, and schools and their performance?

Following the state guidelines, the administration provides information about the district's programs, services and school performance (AYP, NDSA, NWEA) to all district schools in the district. Individual schools communicate this information to the community in a variety of ways, including pages on the district website, Channel 19, school newsletters, newspaper articles, pamphlets, mailings, brochures, student and parent handbooks, radio and TV spots, administrators speaking to service clubs and organizations, and PTO/council meetings to the families served.

3. How does the leadership ensure that the system's vision, purpose, and goals guide the work of the school system and its schools?

Current district and school leadership promote the system's vision, purpose and goals through staff meetings, acting committees/teams (comprised of administration and teaching staff), visual postings of the material, and educational opportunities for staff.

A current area of concern at the district level is the recent leadership change. The district's new superintendent, officially taking the position February 1, 2009, is familiarizing herself with the current strategic plan and shared vision. Her guidance in the future will help to refine the plan and vision.

4. What process is used to ensure that the vision and purpose of the school system remain current and aligned with the system's expectations in support of student learning and the effectiveness of the school system and its schools?

Seven years ago, schools within the district worked on the improvement process as individual entities, then participated in the creation of a district committee to determine a universal vision, mission, and belief statements. Four years ago, a consulting team was contracted to assist in the creation and implementation of a district strategic plan, leading the district into the district school improvement model. The following school year, the strategic plan incorporated SMART goals under the direction of the superintendent, formulizing the Williston Public School District #1 SMART Plan. Individual schools implemented school-specific SMART goals to direct efforts to reach proficiency in reading and math in accordance with NCLB. SMART goal use in schools has continued to guide student learning efforts, with each school structuring school wide, content specific, and team/committee SMART goals. This has been the focus of our district.

Adopting the AdvancED district-wide process in 2006-2007 has directed alignment of system expectations to better support student learning and effectiveness. Strategic planning has continued periodically, with planning currently guided by the District School Improvement Team. This team has representation consisting of two members of each school as well as the leading administrator from each school to ensure district consistency. In addition to this, each school's SMART goals are reviewed annually to continue goal growth and remain current with the district's strategic plan. SMART goals are used to celebrate achievements, discuss areas of improvement, and set new goals for the upcoming year.

Although our individual schools have updated their goals and action plans and remain current with the process, the current challenge is to update goals and action plans successfully at the district level.

Standards Review
#2 Governance and Leadership

STANDARD: The system provides governance and leadership that promote student performance and system effectiveness.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it has leaders who are advocates for the system's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction and allocate resources to implement curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders function with clearly defined authority and responsibility and encourage collaboration and shared responsibility for system and school improvement among stakeholders. The system's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation.

Indicators Rubric

Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

INDICATORS In fulfillment of this standard, the system operates under the jurisdiction of a governing authority that:	Not Evident	Emerging	Operational	Highly Functional
2.1 Establishes and communicates policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the system			x	
2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership authority of the administrative head of the system			x	
2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations			x	
2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board			x	
2.5 Builds public support, secures sufficient resources, and acts as a steward of the system's resources			x	
2.6 Maintains access to legal counsel to advise or obtain information about legal requirements and obligations				x
2.7 Maintains adequate insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operations				x

In fulfillment of this standard, the system has leadership that:					
2.8	Provides for systematic analysis and review of student performance and school and system effectiveness			x	
2.9	Creates and supports collaborative networks of stakeholders to support system programs			x	
2.10	Provides direction, assistance, and resources to align, support, and enhance all parts of the system in meeting organizational and student performance goals			x	
2.11	Provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership			x	
2.12	Assesses and addresses community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction		x		
2.13	Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel			x	

STANDARD TWO: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

1. What is the process for establishing, communicating, and implementing policies and procedures for the effective operation of the school system and its schools?

When a new policy is suggested to the board by the superintendent, board member, or other stakeholder, the board shall discuss the need for such a policy. In addition, the School Board Association is consulted for resources such as sample policies. If the school board deems such a need exists, the superintendent (or designee) shall be directed to draft a policy statement for presentation to the board. Adoption of a policy requires two readings.

Opportunities for public comments are available at the beginning of the board meeting when the policy is scheduled to be presented. After this first reading, the board may approve, amend or refer back for further study. Before the second reading, the approved policy shall be disseminated to staff and others who may be affected by the policy.

At the second meeting, the superintendent shall present the approved or revised proposal for the second reading. Upon approval, the superintendent is then responsible to disseminate the new policy to the board members, superintendent, superintendent's office, business manager, principals, and school libraries. The proposal is also posted on the district web site.

The revised policies are then presented to faculty and/or students. The policies are also presented in all school newsletters, the local paper, middle school orientations, freshman orientations, and in student/parent handbooks if appropriate.

This year, each school's parent/student handbooks will be reviewed and approved by the school board to ensure the board has full awareness of changes made at the school level, since the board may be called upon to interpret handbook material.

(Board Policy BFB)

2. What process does the system's leadership use to evaluate system effectiveness and its impact on student performance?

Principals develop and facilitate each school's adherence to school specific SMART goals, state standards, and AdvancED school improvement standards to provide a structure that positively impacts student performance. Evidence of student performance is obtained from NDSA, NWEA and other forms of summative assessments. After students take the assessments, principals and teachers interpret the data in order to set goals for increasing student achievement.

3. In what ways are stakeholders, including system and school staff, given opportunities to provide leadership and to contribute to the decision-making process?

In the past five years district-wide committees/teams have been established to implement and communicate the school improvement process and strategic plan. Teams consisted of interested, knowledgeable and dedicated individuals specifically chosen to align the improvement tasks at hand. For example, the District Literacy Team consisted of those K-12 individuals with an expertise in teaching and learning as it pertains to reading, writing and language arts. These teams were facilitated by the Director of Title and Federal Programs and/or the Director of Teaching and Learning, meeting monthly. With the spring 2007 loss of the Director of Teaching and Learning position, the individual facilitating this K-12 collaboration, many district teams have not been meeting on a regular basis.

At the school level, committees/teams are set up according to the specific needs of the school and the school improvement process. Some teams meet weekly, biweekly and/or monthly. Communication from district teams is shared with school staff through these school-based committees/teams and/or during staff meetings. This information flow from the district level to school levels ensures all staff has the opportunity to provide input on school and district needs.

Currently, the district school board operates on a committee system as designed by the three person advisory team guiding the district. The Finance, Curriculum and Personnel Committees, comprised of board members, administration and teachers meet monthly. In addition to this, the district has a newly formed Professional Development Committee to plan and implement a systemic professional development plan.

In the area of community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction, surveys at school and district levels have been utilized to gather information for systemic improvement.

4. What policies and processes are in place to ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation?

The implementation of IDEA regulations through a professional relationship with WilMac Special Education Unit and in compliance with federal Title Comparability Regulations drives efforts to ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students.

The Community After-School Club (CASC) began in the fall of 2006 at each of the elementary buildings. Certified tutors provide academic support to students in areas of need based on test results or teacher recommendations. The CASC program has also initiated implementation of enrichment activities. After school services at the middle and high school level are less consistent due to funds and student participation.

The district maintains a Technology Committee comprised of teachers, technology specialists, and administrators that meets monthly to steer technology integration for the district. The Technology Plan developed by this committee directs the district's cycle of upgrades, integration and training for new technologies, and provides systematic ordering procedures.

Standards Review
#3 Teaching and Learning

STANDARD: The system provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The system ensures that teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process; provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations; and give students feedback to improve their performance.

Indicators Rubric

Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

INDICATORS In fulfillment of this standard, the system:	Not Evident	Emerging	Operational	Highly Functional
3.1 Develops, articulates, and coordinates curriculum based on clearly- defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills			x	
3.2 Establishes expectations and supports student engagement in the learning process, including opportunities for students to explore application of higher order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning			x	
3.3 Ensures that system-wide curricular and instructional decisions are based on data and research at all levels		x		

3.4	Supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practice			X	
3.5	Supports a curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of each student, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity	X			
3.6	Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning	X			
3.7	Maintains articulation among and between all levels of schooling to monitor student performance and ensure readiness for future schooling or employment	X			
3.8	Supports the implementation of interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning			X	
3.9	Maintains a system-wide climate that supports student learning			X	
3.10	Ensures that curriculum is reviewed and revised at regular intervals			X	
3.11	Coordinates and ensures ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials needed for effective instruction				X

STANDARD THREE: TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. How does the system ensure the alignment and articulation of curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessments in support of the expectations for student learning?

Alignment of curriculum is at different stages depending on grade level and/or content area. Major curriculum decisions have included faculty responsible for implementing the curriculum, with input from faculty responsible for curriculum directly above and below the content/grade level being considered. The Director of Teaching and Learning was previously responsible for setting curriculum meetings, facilitating grade level and content alignment conversations, and guiding curriculum selection and implementations. Elementary schools have utilized grade-level teams to investigate curriculum and standards alignment. The middle and high school have met in content area teams to address curriculum and standards alignment. Again, the absence of a

Director of Teaching and Learning has affected curriculum alignment and growth since the spring of 2007.

The middle school incorporates teaming to align and coordinate cross-curricular plans for the four student teams composing the student population. At the high school, department meetings and staffing hour to provide staff with time for standards and alignment discussions. Additionally, a 2008-09 addition to the high school curriculum is a combined American history and literature course.

During one phase of curriculum alignment, the district began the process of curriculum mapping K-12, but this process was not completed. All staff are required to adhere to relevant content standards, with various meeting formats to discuss how standards align curriculum concepts. Focus has also been ensuring the taught curriculum matches the standards curriculum and student assessments.

Professional development is used at each of the schools to address specific instructional goals, such as differentiated instruction, literacy strategies, writing models, etcetera, but currently there is not a specific comprehensive district plan for such offerings. Broad-based district co-curriculars are evident and supported. District-wide offerings do include core contents, physical education, and fine arts. Dialogue concerning school-to-school transitions, formative assessments, and other district-wide expectations are in the developmental stages in K-12.

It is clear that our district is in need of a focused, integrated teaching structure to include a written curriculum based on standards, research-based instructional strategies and formative assessment. Additionally, curriculum should be expanded to ensure diversity, struggling learner support, gifted and talented challenges, and vocational and technical learning opportunities.

2. In what ways does the system promote and support the implementation of research-based instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that facilitate achievement for all students?

We utilize the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction best practice resources provided for K-12. In addition to this, our staff participates in school selected book studies to update faculty on current research and practices. Staff at all levels attend a wide variety of professional conferences, professional development trainings, and webinars to gather additional research-based tools and strategies. The number of faculty members serving as trainers, consultants, and facilitators for varied best practices is increasing.

Often, compliance with federal mandates and specific programs such as the Title program assures the district is using research-based best practice. The district has received additional program improvement funding due to AYP scores that has supported hosting several nationally recognized educators and trainers. The innovative, research-based strategies and assessment practices introduced have given faculty additional means for increasing student achievement.

Much of our differentiated instruction focus has been targeted towards struggling students. While new instructional approaches have led to learning gains for this population, opportunities for

gifted and talented students remain very limited. Honors, Advanced Placement, and dual college credit courses are available at the high school level, but learning opportunities for high-achieving students are not available at other school levels.

3. What processes are implemented to ensure that all staff members are well-prepared to support and implement the district's expectations for student learning?

In each of the buildings, administrators are responsible for facilitating staff evaluations, SMART goals development, ensuring personnel are highly qualified, and the school improvement process progresses at the school level.

The following is a list of major professional development initiatives over the past 3 years. These are activities that were not a one-time event but occurred over several months or longer.

District Level
- SMART Goals and Strategic Planning
- School Improvement
- Participation in annual state NCA Conference
- Healthy Williston Healthy Youth- school/community initiative
- Participation in state Title conferences
- Big 6 Workshop (research skills)
- Restitution / BLST Training
- NWEA/Map Training
- Technology Utilization Training (SmartBoards, Quizdom, Document Cameras. Etc.)
- Poverty- Ruby Payne
- Introduction to 6+1
- Mentoring/New Teachers In-Service in August
- Helga Sorenson Regional In-Service in January (keynote plus teachers select a variety of breakout sessions)
- Participation in state standards and assessment work sessions
- Participation in state and national conferences
- CPR Training
- Para professional and substitute teacher sessions

Elementary Schools
- SMART Goals and Strategic Planning
- School Improvement
- Pinnacle Training (student demographics system)
- Book Studies
- Academy of Reading/Math Training
- Report Cards
- Kindergarten Training

Middle School
- SMART Goals and Strategic Planning
- School Improvement
- PowerSchool Training (student demographics system)
- Book Studies (*Turning Points, This We Believe, How to Be an Effective Teacher- The First Days of School, Improving Teaming, Advisory and Then, Breaking Ranks, I Read It But Don't Get It, Do I Really Have to Teach Reading? Adding It Up, Why Do They Act That Way?*)
- Myers Briggs, Teaming, School Teacher Leadership
- Leadership Retreats
- Academy of Reading/Math Training
- Data Retreats
- Assessment Work presented by McRel
- DMI- all math teachers
- Middles School Practices – national middle school educators
- Differentiated Instruction
- Literacy- national consultants on reading and writing, reading strategies presented by own teachers over a year
- UbD- Big Ideas, Essential Questions, Common Assessments
- Workshop Model MS/HS PLC
- Tuning Protocol- Looking at Student Work

High School
- SMART Goals and Strategic Planning
- School Improvement
- PowerSchool Training (student demographics system)
- Book Studies (*Breaking Ranks, Failure is not an Option)*
- Assessment Work presented by McRel
- DMI- all math teachers
- Workshop Model MS/HS PLC
- Dual Credit Training with Williston State College

One area of concern is the lack of an ongoing, long-term strategic plan that is regularly reviewed, revised and communicated to all staff. We believe this plan would include a focused integrated teaching and learning plan. Time to support collegial dialogue (PLC's) must be reviewed in order to promote implementation of best practices and strategies.

4. How does the system ensure that all students and staff have access to comprehensive information, instructional technology, and media services?

Under the advisement of the district technology committee, the technology plan is and reviewed, revised and implemented through monthly meetings. School administrators are responsible for ensuring all staff is in compliance with the technology plan. In addition each building has TAS (Technology Assistance Support) to assist fellow teachers with a variety of software and program questions and troubleshooting. The Technology Committee offers trainings throughout the school year based on staff interest and needs collected through yearly surveys. Staff members receiving new technologies are required to attend training on the use of those technologies prior to classroom integration. The district technology staff also maintains an extensive trouble ticket collection with technology questions/ problems and recommended solutions.

While the middle school and high school have a full time librarian that assist with technology needs for students and staff through regular trainings as needed. In addition these librarians support the use of media services and instruction technology in the classrooms. An area of concern at the elementary level is the need for additional certified librarians in the buildings as currently librarians are shared. However, one technology coordinator is utilized in the elementary schools to assist students with technology skill training.

Standards Review
#4 Documenting and Using Results

STANDARD: The system enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and system effectiveness.

Impact Statement: A school system is successful in meeting this standard when it uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly-defined performance measures. The assessment system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, identify gaps between expectations for student learning and student performance, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine interventions to improve student performance. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to system and school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, system and school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts.

Indicators Rubric

Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

INDICATORS In fulfillment of this standard, the system:		Not Evident	Emerging	Operational	Highly Functional
4.1	Establishes and implements a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the system's expectations for student learning, that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free			x	
4.2	Ensures that student assessment data are used to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning			x	
4.3	Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance		x		
4.4	Provides a system of communication which uses a variety of methods to report student performance and system effectiveness to all stakeholders			x	

4.5	Uses comparison and trend data from comparable school systems to evaluate student performance and system effectiveness				x
4.6	Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance that is supported by multiple sources of evidence			x	
4.7	Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations				x

STANDARD FOUR: DOCUMENTING AND USING RESULTS

1. How is the assessment system currently used throughout the school system and its schools to guide analysis of changes in student performance?

The Williston Public School District #1 uses a variety of standards-based assessment tools (NWEA, NDSA, etc.) to monitor student performance, evaluate curriculum and teach pedagogy. These assessment results are considered throughout the school year in assisting us to improve student achievement and school effectiveness.

The NWEA was adopted by the district in 2005 to provide more immediate data so that instructors could effectively analyze and adjust instruction for greater student achievement. The district's expectation is for each school to use the data to affect change in their students' achievement and give feedback to further develop instruction and assessment practices. While most staff have received NWEA training through several in-services, each school also has faculty members who have attended NWEA training in Portland. These individuals provide greater expertise to NWEA work at each school.

The state assessment (NDSA) is used as a triangulation piece for curricular reflection and revision. It, along with NWEA, AIMS web, Dibels, Star Reading, transition groups between schools, and teacher recommendations ensure students are effectively placed in classes, especially those students needing additional instructional support due to learning difficulties or advanced learning skills.

Individual schools within the district are at different levels of proficiency in analyzing and interpreting data to implement change in the instructional process and thus affect student performance. One significant advantage of using NWEA has been the ability to monitor student growth and development as they transition from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school. A district assessment goal is to purchase a data warehouse system, with appropriate training for staff, to supply additional ongoing assessment information on students throughout their K-12 education.

2. What are you doing to ensure that assessment results are timely, relevant, and communicated in a way that can be used by the system, its schools, and stakeholders to aid the performance of individual students?

The district ensures that major assessments are aligned with the state standards. Since NWEA operates with electronic input and output, results are delivered immediately upon completion of the assessment. Within twenty-four hours of assessment completion, staff have access to recent student scores as well as trend data on students' past scores. This information is shared through teacher-student conferences and also at parent-teacher conferences. During the teacher-student conferences, teachers highlight areas of strength and areas of concern in order to individualize student achievement. These results are shared at parent-teacher conferences in order to familiarize parents/guardians on the learning strengths and weaknesses of their son/daughter.

NDSA results arrive at the district in the spring, and are quickly dispersed to each of the district schools. The results are reviewed by administration and faculty members through staff/ team meetings and planning sessions. Faculty members involved in this review vary at each of the schools, and assessment information is used to help plan instruction and place students in appropriate classes for the following academic year. Copies of individual student scores are sent to parents/guardians. Additionally, each school is required to send mailings to all parents with attending students concerning the school's overall AYP scores.

Additional training in using NWEA instructional ladders and tools would further strengthen assessment use. Faculty presently have access to data and gather information from the data well, but need additional insights in how this data can be used effectively to foster differentiated instruction.

3. How are data used to understand and improve overall effectiveness of the school system and its schools?

Assessment data is used as a driving mechanism for the development of district and school SMART goals. Each year as SMART goal progress is evaluated and updated for the coming year, assessment data is considered to determine progress on the goal. If goals are successfully met, assessment projections often help update the goal's expectations. If assessments indicate the goal has not been met, discussion is held on how changes in curriculum and instruction can insure goal success for the following year.

The district's hope is that a data warehouse with provide significant trend data to further direct SMART goal development as well as classroom instruction and best practices.

4. How are staff members across the system and its schools trained to understand and use data to impact teaching and learning in the classroom?

District faculty members have been trained by NWEA trainers on various steps of the assessment program. Most staff have training on multiple steps as well as direct practice in the collection and analysis of student MAP data. Additionally, key faculty members have additional NWEA training from the program's Portland training workshop. It would greatly benefit faculty, new and veteran, if the district incorporated a more systematic, ongoing professional development plan for assessment use and application. The purchase of a data warehouse will impact the teaching and learning as teachers obtain data quickly and can easily utilize to differentiate instruction and create effective learning strategies based on data information for all students.

Standards Review
#5 Resource and Support Systems

STANDARD: The system has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose and to ensure achievement for all students.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it has sufficient human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that: enables students to achieve expectations for student learning, meets special needs, and complies with applicable regulations. The system employs and allocates staff well-qualified for their assignments. The system provides ongoing learning opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness. The system ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

Indicators Rubric

Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

INDICATORS In fulfillment of this standard, the system:	Not Evident	Emerging	Operational	Highly Functional
Human Resources				
5.1 Establishes and implements processes to recruit, employ, retain, and mentor qualified professional and support staff to fulfill assigned roles and responsibilities		X		
5.2 Establishes and implements a process to assign professional and support staff based on system needs and staff qualifications as may be required by federal and state law and regulations (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience)			X	
5.3 Establishes and implements a process to design, evaluate, and improve professional development and ensures participation by all faculty and staff			X	
5.4 Ensures that staff are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school system and to meet federal and state law and regulations, if applicable		X		

	Financial Resources				
5.5	Engages in long-range budgetary planning and annually budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement			x	
5.6	Ensures that all financial transactions are safeguarded through proper budgetary procedures and audited accounting measures			x	
	Physical Resources				
5.7	Maintains sites, facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, orderly, and healthy environment		x		
5.8	Establishes and implements written security and crisis management plans with appropriate training for stakeholders				x
5.9	Implements processes and plans for maintaining and improving sites, facilities, and equipment			x	
5.10	Provides technology infrastructure and equipment that is up-to-date and sufficient to accomplish the system's goals			x	
	Support Systems				
5.11	Provides and coordinates support services that meet the health, counseling, nutrition, safety, co-curricular, transportation, and special learning needs of all students		x		
5.12	Provides student support services coordinated with the school, home, and community			x	

STANDARD FIVE: RESOURCE AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

1. What is the school system's process for recruitment, induction, placement, development, evaluation, and retention of qualified professional and support staff across the system and its schools?

The process of recruitment and induction at WPSD #1 is done through the district office. Employment postings are listed with through North Dakota Job Service, local newspapers, the district website and contacting colleges and universities. Often recruitment is accomplished through personal contacts of district employees. Mentoring and orientation for new staff are exemplary. New hires attend a full day induction and orientation program, and are paired up with a mentor at their new school site. The mentors and mentees are provided resources and tools to be used throughout the school year, ensuring a smooth and productive year for the new hire.

Teachers are placed in assignments according to their credentials received from the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB). At this time, the district meets the necessary highly qualified requirements for both federal and state regulations. Certified staff and those identified classified staff in Title buildings are all highly qualified as specified in NCLB.

The district has implemented a modified model by Charlotte Danielson for teacher evaluations. Administrators focus on specific district selected benchmarks in all four domains for the current school year with each teacher through a pre-assessment meeting. A similar debriefing meeting between each teacher and administrator is conducted following a formal in-class observation. A rubric guides and aligns the evaluation documentation process. These evaluations have been standardized throughout the district.

Due to the current economic situation and housing shortage in the Williston area, the district struggles to recruit and retain quality certified and classified staff.

2. How does the leadership ensure that the allocation of financial resources is supportive of the school system's vision, programs, services, and its plans for continuous improvement?

At the district level, federal dollars are available to buildings based on eligibility. The district provides each principal a per-pupil allocation for their building budget. This allocation is all inclusive for building maintenance, supplies, professional development, technology improvements, library and teacher resources, travel, and building upgrades.

An ongoing concern is the perception that there is no district financial plan or structure to ensure that facilities will be systematically upgraded, textbooks will be replaced and updated effectively and professional development will be financed. The current district office administration is attempting to address these shortfalls.

3. How does the school system ensure, support, and monitor the provision of resource and support services that meet the needs of all students?

WilMac Special Educational Unit provides services for our students with unique educational challenges. In addition, CASC, our after school program at the elementary level, assists students with both academic and social skills. After school tutoring is also provided at the middle school and high school as funds allow, though these sessions are typically poorly attended by students.

While each building is able to provide counseling services, historically, due to the financial constraints of the district, we have lacked support in the areas of juvenile services (SRO), family services, and nursing. Secondary counselors are able to provide academic and career counseling services. Currently, external psychological counseling is provided on-site according to a regular schedule.

Funds and resources are also needed to provide teaching staff for additional course offerings. In recent years, the number of credits required for graduation has increased at a state as well as a

district level, so there is need for additional classes in order to provide students with adequate course offerings to meet these credit requirements.

Standards Review
#6 Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

STANDARD: The system fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it has the understanding, commitment, and support of stakeholders. System and school personnel seek opportunities for collaboration and shared leadership among stakeholders to help students learn and advance improvement efforts.

Indicators Rubric

Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

INDICATORS In fulfillment of this standard, the system:	Not Evident	Emerging	Operational	Highly Functional
6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning			x	
6.2 Uses system-wide strategies to listen to and communicate with stakeholders			x	
6.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the system				x
6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders			x	
6.5 Provides information that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders			x	

STANDARD SIX: COMMUNCATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

1. How does the school system's leadership ensure that the system and its schools are responsive to community expectations and stakeholders satisfaction?

Our schools have obtained information and feedback regarding our community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction in the following ways: stakeholder surveys, open school board meetings, media communication, monthly newsletters, parent/teacher conferences, channel 19, various

media spots, service groups and organization presentations with question answer sessions, and parent committees.

Our open door policy at the district office and in all schools allows stakeholders the opportunity to express their concerns at any time during school hours as well as extended hours during school activities and events.

2. What avenues are used to communicate information to stakeholders about the effectiveness of the school system and its schools, including the sharing of student performance results?

The district shares information about school effectiveness and student performance through:
- Parental phone calls
- Notes sent home
- Various media sources
- School newsletters
- School websites
- School board meetings
- School board minutes published in local newspaper
- Channel 19 – the district cable TV channel
- Parental emails
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Parent/student handbooks
- Student orientation
- Distribution of district-wide and school-wide AYP reports

3. How does the school system ensure, support, and monitor the provision of resource and support services that meet the needs of all students.

The size of our school district provides an advantage in that, compared to districts with larger student populations; we are able to make every attempt to ensure that no student "falls through the cracks." The school system provides multiple avenues to support the needs of all students:
- Guidance Counselors
- Career Counselors
- Special Education Services
- JAG (Job's for America's Graduates- program for at-risk students)
- Tutors
- Choices Coordinators
- After School Activities Coordinator
- Community Resources

Standards Review
#7 Commitment to Continuous Improvement

STANDARD: The system establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns the functions of the system with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are sustained and the system and its schools demonstrate progress in improving student performance. New improvement efforts are informed by the results of earlier efforts through analysis of student performance, system effectiveness, and assessment of the improvement process.

Indicators Rubric

Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

INDICATORS In fulfillment of this standard, the system:	Not Evident	Emerging	Operational	Highly Functional
7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results)			x	
7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement			x	
7.3 Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement is aligned with the system's vision and expectations for student learning			x	
7.4 Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement includes a focus on increasing learning for all students and closing gaps between current and expected student performance levels			x	
7.5 Provides research-based professional development for system and school personnel to help them achieve improvement goals			x	
7.6 Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders			x	

7.7	Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement			x	
7.8	Allocates and protects time for planning and engaging in continuous improvement efforts system-wide		x		
7.9	Provides direction and assistance to its schools and operational units to support their continuous improvement efforts			x	

STANDARD SEVEN: COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

1. Describe the process for continuous improvement used by the school system and its schools and the impact of this process on the student learning and system effectiveness.

The school improvement process guided the development of the district vision, mission and belief statements. SMART goals were developed and implemented to structure the process for the district model of continuous improvement. Each school created their own SMART goals, aligned with school district goals, utilizing data and input from stakeholders. These goals are reviewed and updated annually by school staff.

Utilizing a cycle of continuous improvement, schools examine data, adjust instructional process, and provide professional development. While this feedback cycle is not as systematic as we would like, the utilization of both formative and summative assessments provides direction for strategic planning. The current cycle focuses district work on the identification of educational weaknesses in each district school as well as opportunities to identify and celebrate areas of strength for each school. Further training and work in the district unified model for school improvement will further assist the district in aligning teaching and learning practices.

2. What process is used to ensure that the improvement goals reflect student learning needs and are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school system and its schools?

Under the direction of school administrators, each school's improvement plan and SMART goal progress is focused to increase learning for all students and close gaps between current and expected learning goals. This is accomplished in various ways at the schools through teaming/ staffing hours, staff/department meetings, early dismissals with district-wide in-services, and committee/team work.

The district struggles with system-wide allocation and protection of teacher time dedicated to school improvement processes. Faculty members need scheduled time to gather and examine collected data to evaluate and improve instruction and student learning. Additional professional development opportunities, with time for planning and implementation of strategies, for staff at all K-12 levels would also strengthen continuous school improvement.

3. What process is used to ensure that system and school personnel are provided professional development and technical assistance to implement interventions and achieve improvement goals?

While professional development goals and structures vary, each school engages in professional development regularly. Professional development is aligned to the school improvement process and district/school SMART goals, and utilizes data analysis.

The district Technology Committee creates and monitors a five-year technology plan that drives technology integration and improvements for the district. Each year specific technology trainings are offered for all school personnel based on technology needs identified in yearly staff surveys. Technical assistance is offered through resources such as WilMac, TAS members, Title personnel, district computer specialists, the district trouble ticket database, and school-wide training opportunities.

Each spring a team of teachers and administrators meet and create a SMART goal for professional development in the district based on professional development needs. The initial foundation for a comprehensive professional development plan has been started, however the completion and implementation of that plan needs to be a focus of the district.

Once again, with the lack of district office personnel our professional development lacks focus, consistent planning, and implementation.

4. How does the leadership ensure that the improvement plan is implemented, monitored, achieved, and communication to stakeholders?

The District School Improvement Leadership Team meets regularly to facilitate the school improvement plan. This team is responsible for disseminating information from the district meeting and sharing it with their respective schools. Reporting back recommendations from the schools at the district meetings helps further align the efforts.

School administrators oversee the implementation of the improvement plan at each school and work with various teams in their buildings. These teams are responsible for facilitating the development of school improvement action plans based on the district SMART goals. Each year, these school-specific SMART goals are reviewed and updated according to yearly goal progress.

The district shares information about school effectiveness and student performance by:
- Parental phone calls
- Notes sent home
- Various media sources
- School newsletters
- School websites
- School board meetings
- School board minutes published in local newspaper
- Channel 19 – the district cable TV channel
- Parental emails
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Parent/student handbooks
- Student orientation
- Distribution of district-wide and school-wide AYP reports

Description of the School System's Methods for Quality Assurance

Our district has a system with procedures and protocols in place to monitor the district's improvement process as well as provide feedback and communicate results.

Each of our six (6) schools has a School Improvement Team that consists of a variety of stakeholders, which includes teachers, classified staff, administrator(s), students, parents, and community/business members and leaders as is appropriate for each school building. These school teams are charged with the duty of monitoring and providing feedback on the improvement processes and procedures. The teams communicate with all stakeholders in an ongoing manner to assure that goals are developed, monitored, and amended, as well as, all seven (7) standards are met. Artifacts and evidence are collected during the process at the schools.

In turn, each of the schools selects two (2) members plus the administrator from the School Improvement Team as a representative on the District School Improvement Leadership Team. This district team has had various protocols over the past five (5) years. Leadership from the district office directs the work of the team, which has met at least once each month, occasionally two (2) or three (3) times a month during the school year, to discuss, in depth, the seven (7) standards. Utilizing the AdvancED school improvement rubrics, this district team discussed their perspective school rubric indicators and assisted in compiling the included standards rubrics. Team members were charged with relaying district planning back to the schools, and collect feedback on the information discussed. The team continues the work of documenting and providing input from each school. New information, as well as the continuous discussion from each school, has been reported back to the District School Improvement Leadership Team. Then, completing the cycle, team members share information from these district meetings back to individual schools.

Occasionally members for the district team also volunteered to serve on various standard sub-committees as needed to continue the work, such as updating the district vision, mission, and

belief statements. These members once again provided the feedback loop of information back to the district team, returning decision information back to the schools.

It has been the responsibility of each building principal to provide the leadership required for continuous improvement efforts in our district. The School Improvement Teams are responsible for meeting school improvement standards in each building. In the past, the Director of Teaching and Learning oversaw the standards from a district perspective. However, in this school year of transition while securing a superintendent, the middle school principal has facilitated the process. The District Improvement Leadership Team, composed of each building principal (and assistant principals in MS and HS) and 2 teachers from each building (except in the MS which has an additional teacher due to the principals district role), will meet at the beginning of the year; end of the school year, as well as three (3) times during the year to monitor the school improvement process.

Analysis of data begins at the end of each school year to set the focus for summer programs, complete scheduling for the middle and high schools, and provide valuable student information in preparation for the coming school year. This data is also used when making class selections at the secondary level for students who need academic support by placement in specific course designed to assist in skill reinforcement and/or mastery. Achievement data is utilized throughout the school year to make changes in instructional strategies in classrooms and/or for individual student strategy adjustments.

Communication of results to all stakeholders is accomplished through a variety of means at each school. Written communication is provided through AYP letters, school newsletters and school communication to parents and students. Data is shared via presentations at school meeting such as orientations and back-to-school programming. Finally, school data is shared though parent/student conferences and meetings.

Lastly, a team of individuals representing each school in the district attend the state sponsored School Improvement Conference each year in October. This allows the district to remain current as well as strengthen our school improvement efforts. Upon returning, the information is shared

in the individual schools as well as at the Distinct School Improvement Leadership Team meetings.

Conclusion

Focus Questions

1. What major trends, themes, or areas of focus emerge that cut across all seven standards?

- We need to be more consistent with obtaining input and feedback from all stakeholders, especially those of our students and parent and or business community. We are effective at getting a variety of information "out" to stakeholders but information and feedback formally "coming in" is limited.
- Although gains in student achievement have occurred, the development of a system-wide strategic plan to include curricular and instructional decisions based on data, research and best practice at all levels is necessary.
- In order to achieve our district and school goals, professional development that is focused to district and school plans must be maintained year to year.
- Due to financial constraints, we are limited to programs and services we feel are necessary for students. Areas of concern include but are not limited to: course offerings, after school programming, alternative programs and supports, and gifted and talented programming.

2. What are WPSD#1 greatest strengths?

- Our District School Improvement Leadership Team has functioned well to facilitate and maintain communication, and have successfully directed "the work" of school improvement.
- The district utilizes both our state assessment and NWEA/MAP to collect data, track, predict and analyze student growth.
- Each school has successfully functioned with independent school improvement plans in the past, offering unique and valuable teaching and learning strengths to the district. The shift to a unified model allows schools to share insights on their strengths, providing district-wide tools for school improvement growth.
- Technology integration has proven a great teaching and learning tool for the district, and electronic means of collecting and analyzing data will continue to strengthen school improvement designs.
- The Williston community greatly supports the efforts of the school district, ensuring quality education development and growth continues.

3. What are WPSD#1 greatest challenges?

- Although gains in student achievement have occurred, the development of a system-wide strategic plan to include curricular and instructional decisions based on data, research and best practice at all levels is necessary.
- In order to achieve our district and school goals, professional development that is focused to district and school plans must be maintained year to year. Time can always be a challenge, however to determine a more effective way to allocate time for staff to dialogue and obtain professional development to increase academic schools for our students. We believe as the adults in the district learn and grow, so will our students.
- To work with data that can be analyzed and utilized by principals and classroom teachers we need to purchase and be trained in data warehouse utilization.
- We lack support for students in many areas due in part to financial constraints. Creative avenues need to be identified to better provide these student services. Areas of concern include, but are not limited to: juvenile services, school nurses, and family services.

4. How will insights from self-assessment inform and enhance quality assurance and continuous improvement efforts?

- SMART Goals review, assessment, and updating drives schools in their planning. SMART Goals are used at different levels to keep district improvement efforts consistent.
- Student assessments, including NWEA/MAP and NWEA, indicate instructional success and help identify learning gaps.
- Faculty members have completed technology need surveys and an online technology assessment (up to 2007) to help identify technology training needs.
- The district utilizes both our state assessment and NWEA/MAP to collect data, track, predict and analyze student growth.