AQuESTT: Statewide System of Support

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Lane Carr
Objectives

• Learn about AQuESTT classifications and designations
• Discern the difference between continuous and school improvement
• Develop an understanding of the statewide system of supports
• Engage in some tools for improvement
Mission:
To lead and support the preparation of all Nebraskans for learning, earning, and living.

Goal:
Ensure all Nebraskans, regardless of background or circumstances, have equitable access to opportunities for success.

Goal:
Increase the number of Nebraskans who are ready for success in postsecondary education, career, and civic life.

Goal:
Ensure the education system, including the Nebraska Department of Education, are taking charge of their roles and responsibilities to provide leadership and enhance school support systems in the state.
Educational equity means all students have meaningful access to the educational resources they need at the right moment, at the right level, and with the right intensity to not only reach high expectations for learning, but also to discover and explore their passions and make meaningful connections within the context of their postsecondary interests, careers, and civic lives.
Educational equity means all students have meaningful access to the educational resources they need at the right moment, at the right level, and with the right intensity to not only reach high expectations for learning, but also to discover and explore their passions and make meaningful connections within the context of their postsecondary interests, careers, and civic lives.
We believe:

- ...in the value of work already taking place in schools.
- ...all schools can improve.
- ...demography is not destiny.
- ...school improvement is fundamentally about equity.
AQuESTT Tenets
Status (Percent Proficient): 4, 3, 2, 1

For more information on classification, visit www.aquestt.com/resources and select “2017-18 Classification Rules”
Classifications

- Excellent: 15% (150)
- Great: 44% (443)
- Good: 39% (386)
- Needs Improvement: 13% (131)
**Comprehensive Support & Improvement (CSI)**
- Lowest 5% of Title I schools
- High schools with grad rates below 67%
- Consistently low-performing student group

**Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI)**
- Consistently low-performing student group

*Beginning in 2019, any school with consistently low-performing subgroup may not be classified as Excellent*

**Priority Schools**
Among the lowest performing schools AND demonstrate the greatest need to implement and sustain school improvement efforts
Student Groups for Targeted Support and Improvement

- Black/African American
- Latinx/Hispanic
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Two or More Races
- White
- Economically Disadvantaged
- English Learners
- Students with Disabilities
Nebraska Education Profile

- nep.education.ne.gov
- One-stop shop for education data
- Compare Feature
- Data Downloads
Key Messages

Highlights
- Very few, small tweaks to AQuESTT system this year
- Earlier timelines
- Enhancements to streamline the EBA process
- Data available on Nebraska Education Profile
- Targeted Support and Improvement Designation

AQuESTT
- AQuESTT Classification provides an easy way to illustrate the overall performance of a school and considers the broader educational experiences and success of each student.
- AQuESTT Classification combines performance on several indicators grouped by tenet to provide schools and districts with an overall descriptive classification of Excellent, Great, Good, or Needs Improvement.
- Schools and districts will receive their AQuESTT Classification on October 9, 2019. Schools eligible for an Evidence-based Analysis (EBA) adjustment will receive their final AQuESTT Classification on November 27. All other schools may consider their October 9 Classification final.

Data and Designation
- The majority of Nebraska education data for the 2019-2020 school year will be released to the public on October 9, 2019 and will be located on the Nebraska Education Profile (NEP).
- Schools and districts can preview most data elements on September 25, 2019, ahead of the public release, through the NEP Secure Portal.
- Beginning in 2019, NDE will strengthen support to schools with lower performing student groups. Schools may be designated for Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), a cohort of schools that will intentionally focus on intensive strategies to reach student groups.
- A thorough progress review of current Priority Schools and determination of additional Priority School(s) support will begin in October 2019 with official designation from the State Board of Education in early 2020.

Nebraska Education Profile (NEP)
- The NEP is a web tool designed and developed by the Nebraska Department of Education, presenting Nebraska assessment and accountability data in multiple ways to help administrators and educators make data-informed decisions.
- The NEP provides information and data about Nebraska public schools and student performance.
- NEP School and District Snapshots provide a quick, evidence view of a school or district’s performance and provide data on other measures not used in classification.
- NEP Full Data Profiles provide in-depth data views of a school or district, including data-relevant items.
- The NEP Compare feature allows users to see how well a school or district is serving its students compared to similarly situated schools or districts.

By working collaboratively and focusing on AQuESTT’s six tenets, we can help enhance the education system, positively impact our children and schools, and create a better Nebraska.

nep.education.ne.gov | aquestt.com
Contact: nep.education.ne.gov/contact.html

bit.ly/2019nep
Timelines

Below are key dates for the release of Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow (AQuESTT) and Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS) data. Published data elements can be found on the Nebraska Education Profile (NEP), the Nebraska Department of Education's one-stop education data website.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 5, 2019</td>
<td>Printed NSCAS Alternate Individual Student Reports (ISRs) delivered to districts</td>
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<td>August 12-20, 2019</td>
<td>NSCAS District Preliminary Data Clean-up Window</td>
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<td>August 30, 2019</td>
<td>Printed NSCAS ACT Individual Student Reports (ISRs) delivered to districts</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 25, 2019</td>
<td>Assessment Performance, Attendance, Participation, Demographics, and AQuESTT Raw Classification data published to the NEP Secure Portal (district view only, not public), district data validity verification</td>
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<td>September 27, 2019</td>
<td>Notification of Evidence-based Analysis (EBA) adjustment-eligible schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 9, 2019</td>
<td>Full Data Profile and Snapshot published on NEP with AQuESTT Classification and Assessment data (full public view)</td>
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<td>October 14, 2019</td>
<td>Evidence-based Analysis (EBA) evidence due to NDE (for adjustment eligible schools)</td>
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<td>October 15 - November 1, 2019</td>
<td>Review of Evidence-based Analysis (EBA) evidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 21-25, 2019</td>
<td>Printed NSCAS General Individual Student Reports (ISRs) delivered to districts</td>
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<td>November 27, 2019</td>
<td>Final AQuESTT Classifications, including EBA adjustments, published on the NEP</td>
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From Classification and Designation to Support
Continuous Improvement

Any school or instructional-improvement process that unfolds progressively, that does not have a fixed or predetermined end point, and that is sustained over extended periods of time. The concept also encompasses the general belief that improvement is not something that starts and stops, but it’s something that requires an organizational or professional commitment to an ongoing process of learning, self-reflection, adaptation, and growth.

http://edglossary.org/continuous-improvement/

School Improvement

Dramatic and comprehensive intervention in low-performing schools. Involves turnaround leadership, culture shift, instructional transformation, and talent development.

Continuous vs. School Improvement

Headache = Symptom/signal for improvement (ex. test scores)

Doctor = Needs assessment/Root cause analysis

High blood pressure = Diagnosis / identification of areas of focus

Eating Healthy, Brushing your Teeth, Exercising = Continuous improvement
School Improvement Requires Differing Levels of Support

School Improvement Beliefs:
● All schools can improve
● School improvement is fundamentally about equity

There must be a concerted effort to improve our lowest performing schools, so that we can achieve the aspirational measures of success, as outlined in the State Board’s Strategic Vision and Direction.

https://nebraskagovernmentvision.com/about/
Defining a Statewide System of Support

- Recall your classroom teaching experience
- Think about one of your students and what made their learning unique
  - How did you **differentiate** supports and tailor your teaching to meet their needs?
  - How did you **intensify** your approach to ensure that student’s success?
  - How did your **focus** change when you discovered that student wasn’t learning or needed additional supports?
- How did you elevate the students who were excelling?

Think - Pair - Share
Statewide System of Supports

**Focus** - Prioritize the highest leverage areas (leadership, instruction, culture, talent) to school improvement using the Four Domains of Rapid School Improvement

**Differentiate** - Consider the different needs of schools and adjust supports based on those needs

**Intensify** - Frequency of current supports increase
Four Domains of Rapid School Improvement
Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)

Priority Schools

Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI)

Addt’l Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI)

All Schools (Excellent, Great, Good, and Needs Improvement)

Schools identified to receive additional support to improve

- Intensification
- Differentiation
- Focus
Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)

Priority Schools

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Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI)

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All Schools (Excellent, Great, Good, and Needs Improvement)

- General, universal supports (Ex. NEMaterials Matter, content area standards, accreditation and CIP)
- Tools (Ex. NEP, Frameworks)
- Technical assistance (Ex. English learner supports, NE Help Desk)
Example Support

**NEBRASKA EVERY DAY COUNTS!**

Each year in Nebraska, almost 35,000 students are chronically absent. This absenteeism disproportionately affects students of color, students with disabilities, English learners, and economically disadvantaged students. There are many steps educators can take to address chronic absence within their schools.

**How does Nebraska define chronic absenteeism?**

A student is chronically absent when they miss 10% of their time in membership. Examples:
- Blake is enrolled in his school for 50 days and misses 5. He is chronically absent.
- Mona misses 18 days of school out of her district’s 175. She is chronically absent.
- Cora misses 3 days of her 120 enrolled days. She is not chronically absent.

**How is chronic absence different from truancy?**

- **Truancy**
  - Counts only unexcused absences.
  - Emphasizes compliance with school rules.
  - Relies on legal and administrative solutions.

- **Chronic Absence**
  - Counts all absences: excused, unexcused, and suspensions.
  - Emphasizes academic impact of missed days.
  - Uses community-based, positive strategies.

**What resources are available to help me accurately record and report students who are chronically absent?**

We know each student situation is unique. The NDE provides guidance around this topic. Search the NDE website at education.ne.gov for:
- Rule 21 Uniform System of Accounting
- ADVISER: Who Reports What
- ADVISER: Data Elements

When in doubt, contact the Nebraska Department of Education Help Desk for guidance. They can be reached at ADVISERHelp@Education.Nebraska.Us or 888.285.0596.

**INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

**Why absenteeism matters:**

- Absenteeism in the first month of school can predict poor attendance throughout the school year. Half the students who miss 2 to 4 days in September go on to miss nearly a month of school.
- Absenteeism and its ill effects start early. One in 10 kindergarten and first grade students are chronically absent.
- Poor attendance can influence whether children read proficiently by the end of third grade or are held back.

**By 6th grade, chronic absence becomes a leading indicator that a student will drop out of high school.**

Research shows that missing 10 percent of the school year, or about 18 days in most school districts, negatively affects a student’s academic performance. That’s just two days a month and that’s known as chronic absence.

- Students who live in communities with high levels of poverty are four times more likely to be chronically absent than others, often for reasons beyond their control—such as unstable housing, unreliable transportation, and lack of access to healthcare.
- When students improve their attendance rates, they improve their academic prospects and chances for graduating.
- Attendance improves when schools engage students and parents in positive ways and when schools provide mentors for chronically absent students.

**INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS**

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Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)

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All Schools (Excellent, Great, Good, and Needs Improvement)

- Needs Assessment Tool
- Root cause analysis
- Equity Institute
- Leading for Equity Module
Leading for Equity in our Schools
Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)

Priority Schools

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All Schools (Excellent, Great, Good, and Needs Improvement)

- Monthly meetings
- Regional convenings
- Root cause analysis
- Draft SMART goals
- Nebraska Leadership and Learning Network (NLLN)
- Technical assistance
- Needs Assessment Tool
Example Support

Overview of the NDE Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) Tool

This document includes an OVERVIEW, ADMINISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS tab, SCRAMBLER tab (optional), SELECT TIMES tab (optional), INTRODUCTION tab, RESULTS tab, and Glossary tab.

1. Introduction
   1.1 What is the purpose of the CNA?
   1.2 How can school leaders use the CNA? How long will it take?
   1.3 How is the CNA organized?

*Click a topic above to automatically jump to information on that topic.*

1. Introduction

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) developed the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) tool based on quality education practices for student success. Because the tool aligns to ASCEND, it identifies the expected education practices under each of the six standards and the areas of focus supporting each standard. When implemented fully, these practices are intended to help your school achieve the following ASCEND Long-term outcomes.

Long-term Outcomes for ASCEND:
- Create a community and mission of learning
- Develop a comprehensive plan for building school culture and climate throughout the district
- Develop a personalized, collaborative, and student-centered plan
- Develop school vision, mission, and values

School leaders and staff can tailor the CNA to their specific needs and use it to support long-term initiatives. The CNA provides a tool for aligning school-level initiatives with the overall ASCEND framework.

2. What is the purpose of the CNA?

The purpose of this tool is to help school leaders assess current practice, determine their areas of strength, and identify their priority needs for improvement. The tool allows school leaders to identify areas for improvement, set goals, and develop a comprehensive plan for building school culture and climate.

The CNA includes a series of questions and activities that can be used to assess school-wide needs and priorities. It provides a framework for school leaders to develop a plan for implementing strategies and interventions, as well as for tracking progress over time.

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STEP 5: Complete Rubric

To complete the rubric for these domains, provide your rating for each dimension by clicking in the corresponding dropdown box in the Rubric tab. These values will be automatically calculated. When you've completed the rubric, your Supporting Evidence columns will be populated with evidence aligned to the CNA. If you have other evidence to add, click the Evidence tab and type these remarks in the space below.

Long-Term Outcomes:
- Student, family, and community engagement enhances educational experiences and opportunities.
- Long-term outcomes:
  - Develop a community and mission of learning
  - Develop a sustainable, personalized, collaborative, and student-centered plan
  - Develop school vision, mission, and values

Dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Rule Each Dimension</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Area of Focus School Culture and Climate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision and mission of learning</td>
<td>School leaders develop a vision and mission that is a clear and coherent statement of values that guides all school decisions.</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>School leaders have developed a vision and mission that is shared among students, teachers, and staff. The school’s vision and mission align with the district’s vision and mission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School culture and climate plan</td>
<td>School leaders develop a comprehensive plan for building school culture and climate throughout the district.</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>School leaders and staff are implementing a comprehensive plan for building school culture and climate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and security plan</td>
<td>School leaders will ensure school policies and practices support the safety and security of students, teachers, and staff.</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>School leaders have developed policies and practices that support school safety and security.</td>
</tr>
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Supporting Evidence:
- Evidence of student voice and input
- Evidence of family and community engagement
- Evidence of school-wide initiatives
- Evidence of student and staff satisfaction

A Rubric is a tool that provides a score for each dimension, ranging from 1 to 4, with 4 representing the highest level of achievement. Each dimension is assessed and rated based on the evidence provided in the Supporting Evidence columns. The scores of evidence entered in this column are examples. If you have other evidence to add, click the Evidence tab and type these remarks in the space below.
Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)

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Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI)  Addt’l Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI)

All Schools (Excellent, Great, Good, and Needs Improvement)

- Intervention Team
- On-site consultants
- Implementation support
- Differentiated supports (board, instructional coaching, etc.)
Example Support

Diagnostic review
- Comprehensive
- Led by external team
- Highlights success and opportunities for improvement

2019-2020
- Priority School Progress Plans
From a System of Support to Skills and Strategies
Understanding the Problem Better

To better tailor supports, the schools we serve and the NDE must understand potential root causes for their problems. This is true for all schools across all levels of supports.

To engage in a root cause analysis we will...

- Identify a learner-centered problem.
- Discuss the Ladder of Inference.
- Engage in a root cause analysis through either a Five Whys Protocol or a Fishbone Diagram.
- Share ways the root cause analysis changed our thinking.
From a Learner-Centered Problem to a Problem of Practice

Priority Area
This year our instructional focus is about ensuring students are postsecondary and career ready.

Learner-Centered Problem
After triangulating data, we notice students are not meeting benchmark in mathematics as measured by the ACT.

Problem of Practice
After a root cause analysis, we realized that students are not meeting benchmarks because our school team has not been providing appropriate opportunities for rigorous learning in mathematics.
Identify a Learner-Centered Problem

Using the data at your fingertips, and the knowledge of your students and school, identify a priority area and a learner-centered problem.

Think - Pair - Share
“This dog is skeptical about the other players!”

“This dog is pretty confident.”

“This dog is a cheater!”
These dogs are cheaters. I can't trust dogs, so I probably won't have one as a pet.

The last time I played poker, my friends used non-verbal cues to cheat.

I see it's a poker game and one dog is holding a card in his paw.

Going “up the ladder”
The Ladder of Inference

I take actions based on my beliefs
I adopt beliefs about the world
I draw conclusions
I make assumptions based on the meanings I added
I add meanings [Cultural and Personal]
I select “Data” from what I observe
Observable “data” and experiences

Action
Beliefs
Conclusions
Assumptions
Meanings
Select
Observe

Reflexive Loop

“...Illustrates how we impose our own inferences on data and even select data that reinforce our beliefs”
(Campbell-Jones et. al, 2009)
I take actions based on my beliefs

I adopt beliefs about the world

I draw conclusions

I make assumptions based on the meanings I added

I add meanings [Cultural and Personal]

I select “Data” from what I observe

Observable “data” and experiences

Action

Beliefs

Conclusions

Assumptions

Meanings

Select

Observe

Going “down the ladder”
**Problem:** In our middle school (6-8th grade), a large percentage of our students have consistently struggled to meet proficiency benchmarks in math based on multiple sources of data.

| Symptom: 95% of all students fall below proficiency on NSCAS (on-track and CCR benchmark). | Symptom: While 95% of students are below proficiency, even greater gaps exist between students with disabilities and students without disabilities. | Symptom: During fall testing, 70% of all students show a decrease in RIT scores as shown on MAP math interim assessment. |
**Problem:** In our middle school (6-8th grade), a large percentage of our students have consistently struggled to meet proficiency benchmarks in math based on multiple sources of data.

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- Skipping whyss can lead to potential misdiagnosis
- What data is informing each why?
- Is the root cause within your control?
Root Cause Analysis

5 Whys for Root Cause Analysis (RCA)

Problem
Why 1?
Why 2?
Why 3?
Why 4?
Why 5?

Fishbone Diagram

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<th>Effect</th>
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Perform a Root Cause Analysis

- Use the Five Whys Protocol or Fishbone Diagram
- Identify a potential root cause
- Share with a partner
Discussion

- What did this process reveal to you?
- How did this process help you see the problem differently?
- How does having a deeper understanding of potential root causes help you identify targeted interventions?
Additional Resources

- Protocols:
  - National School Reform Faculty
    https://nsrfharmony.org/protocols/
  - School Reform Initiative
    https://www.schoolreforminitiative.org/protocols/

- Data tools/briefs/resources:
  - Data Quality Campaign
    https://dataqualitycampaign.org/resources/

- Root Cause Analysis
  - Toyota Welding Robot 5-why → 17-why
  - Magnolia Consulting, Fishbone Diagram
    https://magnoliacconsulting.org/tools/