

OPS Board Agenda

Q & A

January 2026

(II.A) Goal #1 GPM Report--How is professional learning differentiated between elementary and secondary educators to address their distinct literacy demands?

In the elementary, our professional learning has been focused on the science of reading (required by ND). This includes knowledge about phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Training focuses on early intervention, progress monitoring, and the use of data to ensure all learners build strong foundational literacy skills. This is that learning to read stage. In the high school, professional learning shifts toward disciplinary literacy. Professional learning has been focused on helping learners read, write, speak, and think across and within content areas such as science, social studies, etc.... More emphasis is placed on how to help learners acquire academic vocabulary, reading and comprehending harder texts, writing, and providing strategies that support higher levels of learning across content.

While the focus differs by level, both elementary and secondary professional learning are aligned around our schoolwide goals and our guardrails.

(II.A) Goal #1 GPM Report--How is accountability for cross-curricular literacy instruction monitored and supported without overburdening staff?

We are currently trying to practice supportive, embedded, and manageable accountability so it strengthens practice without adding extra work for our staff.

Instead of adding on additional compliance measures, we are monitoring cross-curricular literacy instruction through PLC discussions, principal observation and follow-up discussions. These are opportunities to observe how literacy strategies—such as vocabulary development, text-based comprehension, and writing to learn—are being APPLIED across content areas.

Accountability is further monitored through the tracking of learner data (classroom assessments, formative checks, and summative assessments), which allows the high school staff and administration to reflect on the impact of literacy strategies on learning outcomes rather than focusing on compliance alone.

We are slowly working our way to holding literacy as a shared responsibility across content areas...and ensuring accountability will be developed at the same time.

(II.A) Goal #1 GPM Report -What differences are being found in the standards from the previous state testing to the A+? You said the expectations increased but is that in learner proficiency or are there completely new standards being introduced?

The new ND A+ assessments are aligned to newer North Dakota Content Standards that were updated recently for ELA and math. This means the test reflects revised expectations for student learning. Because the standards changed from the new A+ summative in the first year aren't directly comparable to prior NDSA results.

Our expectations have increased on STAR testing to try and achieve a higher level of predictability for the state assessment...we moved from the 50th percentile to the 65th percentile.

(II.A) Goal #1 GPM Report--With the kids that slide back and forth from urgent, intervention, on watch, and at/above - are these the same students with every testing window? Are there any patterns that you

have identified on why they tend to move back and forth as opposed to the students who typically achieve the same result each time?

We track all learners on a data wall so we can monitor movement and trends across each testing window. The learners who move most often tend to sit right on the edge of grade-level expectations. They have some of the required skills, but not enough depth or automaticity to be consistent when learning becomes more complex or when conditions change.

As academic work increases in rigor, especially in grades 2–4 for reading and 4–6 for math, small gaps from earlier grades become more visible. These learners can often keep up when tasks are skill-based, but struggle when they are asked to APPLY those skills across content.

Attendance and consistency also matter. Learners with higher absences, frequent tardies, or interrupted instruction are much more likely to slide between categories than peers who are present and engaged daily.

At the junior high and high school level, the students who bounce between urgent, intervention, on-watch, and at/above are usually the same ones each testing window. These are kids who are right on the edge of meeting expectations, they have some of the skills, but not quite enough to be steady every time. As classes get harder and the work becomes more abstract, any small gaps they have show up more depending on what the test is asking that day.

Response to intervention (RTI) is another key factor. Some students improve quickly with interventions/support, but if these change or are reduced, they often slide back. That tells us their standards/skills aren't really mastered.

Students who remain stable across testing windows typically fall into two groups: those with very strong academic foundations, and those with significant, well-identified needs who are getting consistent supports. The movement in the middle (blue) group is where we are trying to focus instruction, intervention, and MTSS efforts.

(III.K) Guardrail #1 PM Report--How does the **Wellington Engagement Index** define “love” and “challenged,” and how consistent are those definitions across grade levels?

“Love” is the extent to which the learners enjoy being in the class and “Challenged” is how hard the class is for the learner. Despite having a common definition...the interpretation by the learners is as varied as there are individuals. In the elementary, Mr. Dobitz uses Lego building as an analogy to help the kids understand how something can be hard, but you still love it. 😊

(III.K) Guardrail #1 PM Report--What targeted supports are being provided for **Grades 9–11**, where engagement appears more inconsistent?

One step we're taking is looking at new course options, so kids have more choices that interest them. The goal is to give them classes they're excited about while still providing rigor. Our educators understand the challenge of engagement and are constantly working for ways to personalize learning for learners...but at times it can be challenging...one thing can work for one learner, and it can backfire with another learner. Knowing our learners is super important and as a staff we have many, many conversations about how best to continue to improve this level of understanding.

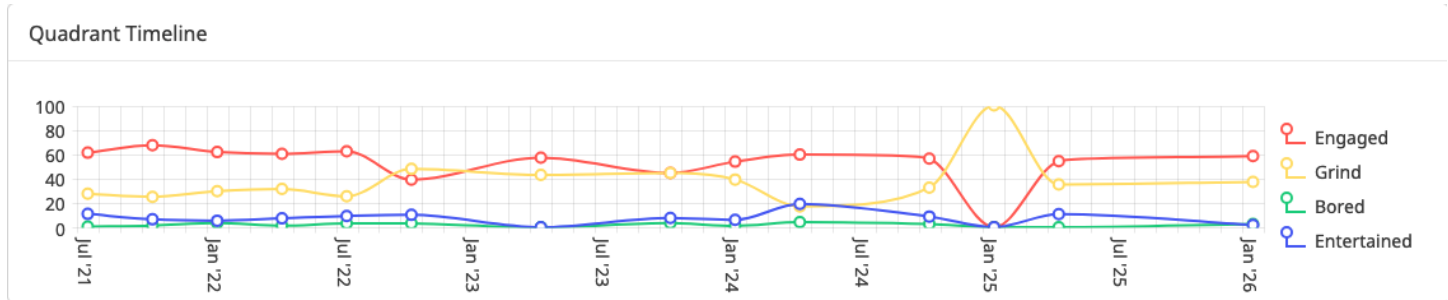
(III.K) Guardrail #1 PM Report--How are principals using grade-level engagement data to **support educators** where engagement is notably low?

Principals are using engagement data similarly to how they are using the data from our goals...they are focused on providing support to help educators improve versus using it as purely evaluative. The first step in helping educators grow is to share their data with them...and we need to do a better job with this. We gather data and then often times that data is left behind as other things take our attention away. Our educators are reflective professionals and seeing data that is concerning spurs personal

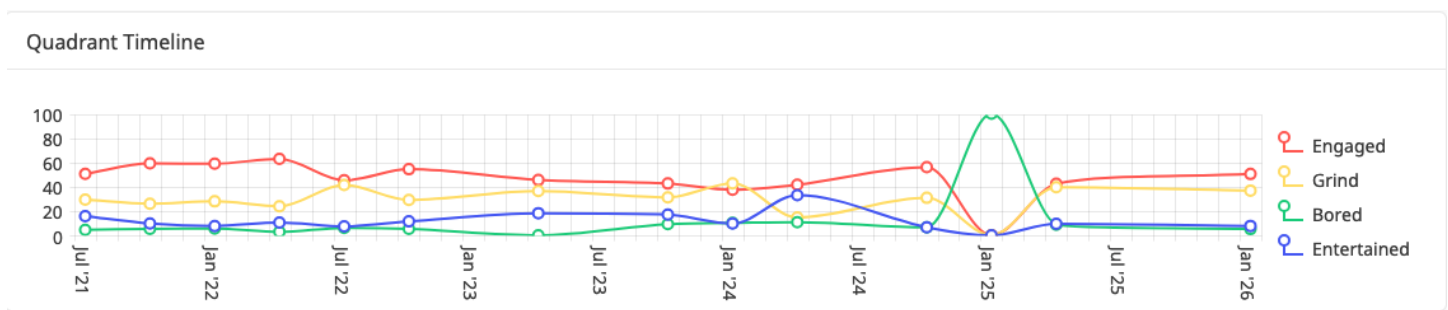
drive to make changes. No educator wants to see that learners are not engaged in their class. So, as admins, we need to do better in sharing data from our Wellington surveys.

If data would be particularly low in a class, principals would hold coaching meetings to better understand contributing factors. This could include examining instructional strategies, lesson design, pacing, and opportunities for learner voice and choice....all of our personalized learning tenets. By working together and focusing on improvement, hopefully data from subsequent survey windows would show growth in engagement.

Importantly, engagement data should be reviewed **over time** to monitor progress and adjust supports. I pulled up two historical reports to show data in math and reading engagement over time in the high school.



Math



Reading

(III.K) Guardrail #1 PM Report--In regard to the number of learners who completed the OPS Engagement survey, can this be made a requirement to be completed during a class?

It absolutely can be. The elementary has the learners complete it in that fashion. In the high school I have always had it as an option, but in order to increase the number of participants, that could absolutely be an opportunity! Learners are required to do the Wellington Survey in class...so that has full participation.

(IV.B) Superintendent's Report-- DPI 2026-2027 State Aid--Do you think the reduction in State Aid should be communicated to the public somehow, this reduction makes a Referendum even more important for OPS to address the facilities challenges?

Absolutely. The \$200,000 anticipated shortfall is key to share out with all stakeholders. Our miscellaneous funds will need to be used to cover day-to-day expenses to overcome this deficit...leaving little to no extra funds to use for future facilities fixes.

(V.A) Project Development Agreement--Have you contacted other districts who have utilized ESG's services? If so, what kind of results did they see?

I have spoken to another district in ND that has used them for a couple of projects. Their guidance is that they do "really good" work and will help the district. When it comes time to possibly start a "project", we

will need to enter into negotiations of fees, and I will contact this same school to share their experience. I had someone that has experience at the department of energy look over the agreement and they gave their approval...but again gave the advice to ensure that we negotiate carefully the fee for any future projects.

(V.A) Project Development Agreement--Will ESG have a role in the project when we are successful in passing a referendum?

They absolutely can and that is a next step decision for the board....along with determining the fee that they would charge.

(V.A) Project Development Agreement--I would like this moved into the Items for Discussion and Possible Action section of the Agenda.

I will move it to that portion of the meeting. It will now be item V.A.