



Systems to Support Every Student, Every Day

Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow
A QuESTT for Nebraska

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Since 1953, the State Board of Education has been the policy-making, planning, and evaluative body for Nebraska public schools (Neb. Rev. Stat. Section 79-301-(2)). While the Nebraska Legislature has over the past 60 years set forth numerous additional duties, the State Board of Education continues to be responsible for policy, planning, and evaluation systems for each of those prescribed duties to ensure that Nebraska public schools are the best they can be. Nebraska State Board Policy G19, *Standards, Assessment, and Accountability (SAA) Belief Statements* and LB 438, *The Quality Education and Accountability Act*, lays the foundation for the *Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow: A QuESTT for Nebraska!*

Building an accountability system is literally the least we can do. Building a system that supports every student, every day, is far more than the minimum required by law. A QuESTT is a journey over time, shaped in collaboration with stakeholders.

The State Board of Education believes that the opportunity to integrate components of accountability, assessment, accreditation, career education, and data into a system of school improvement and support is imperative for the good of Nebraska students and critical for Nebraska to build a vibrant and economically successful future. The State Board of Education's goal is to establish a vision for accountability; but, more importantly, a vision for a quality education system for Nebraska's generations to come.

The State Board of Education believes that Nebraska citizens -- through the Constitution, the Nebraska Legislature, the State Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education, and other policy makers -- are responsible for the total design of this education system. While acknowledging that this education system will be influenced by others including federal government, other state leaders, and local policy makers, the State Board of Education is convinced that successful implementation of this system will be dependent on and driven by local boards of education, administrators, teachers, parents, communities, and students. This belief requires that we listen well, communicate better, and engage leaders and stakeholders across the state. We have an opportunity. We start this journey with a charge given us: Build a quality accountability system that is meaningful.

A QuESTT for Nebraska to Lead!

The drivers for the development of this system include fairness, sensitivity to change, transparency, support for school and district improvement as well as student achievement, multiple indicators derived from key tenets of successful schools and districts, incorporation of trend data, and a system grounded in student growth and success.

A QuESTT embodies the framework of the new Nebraska system of quality and accountability. This system exceeds statutory requirements and aligns some regulatory requirements under the umbrella of quality, accountability, and school improvement. The new quality and accountability system is designed around the following tenets: College and Career Readiness; Assessment; Positive Partnerships, Relationships, and Student Success; Educator Effectiveness; Transitions; and Educational Opportunities and Access. A QuESTT also aligns with the state accreditation of school districts and serves as a blueprint for continuous improvement for each school and school district in Nebraska.

A QuESTT begins with Nebraska schools and districts being classified annually into one of four performance areas: Excellent, Great, Good, Needs Improvement/Priority. Schools and districts classified as *Excellent* and *Great* will be recognized by the State Board of Education. Any school or district classified as *Needs Improvement* will submit to the Nebraska Department of Education an action plan outlining the steps underway to ensure improvement. The three schools most in need of assistance to improve will be designated *Priority Schools*. Priority schools will work with a Nebraska Department of Education team to create an intervention plan. The Priority School intervention plan will be submitted to and approved by the State Board of Education.

A QuESTT components based on the following tenets will be implemented over time in collaboration with stakeholders.

Tenet #1 College & Career Ready

The State Board of Education believes every student shall be prepared to pursue postsecondary educational opportunities and career goals upon completion of secondary education.

- Areas of Focus
 - Rigorous College and Career Ready Standards for All Content Areas
 - Technological and Digital Readiness
 - Support for Career Awareness and Career/College Goals

Tenet #2 Assessment

The State Board of Education believes the results of multiple assessments--national, state, and classroom-based--should measure student achievement of college and career ready standards, and be used as an integral part of the instructional process.

- Areas of Focus
 - Individualized/Adaptive Assessment
 - Classroom-Based Assessment
 - State Assessment
 - National/International Assessment

Tenet #3 Positive Partnerships, Relationships & Student Success

The State Board of Education believes student engagement through positive partnerships and relationships is fundamental to successful schools and districts. The State Board supports schools and districts in implementing best practices in student, parent/family, and community engagement to enhance educational experiences and opportunities.

- Areas of Focus
 - Individualized or Personalized Learning Plans
 - Attendance and Participation
 - Parent/Family Engagement
 - Community and support services

Tenet #4 Educator Effectiveness

The State Board of Education believes students should be surrounded by effective educators throughout every learning experience, and every school and district should develop effective teachers and leaders who establish a culture of success.

- Areas of Focus
 - Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Framework
 - Professional Development
 - School Leadership Supports
 - Effective Local Policy Makers and Superintendents

Tenet #5 Transitions

The State Board of Education believes quality educational systems focus on supports for students transitioning between grade levels, programs, schools, districts, and ultimately, college and career.

- Areas of Focus
 - Early Childhood-Elementary
 - Elementary-Middle School
 - Middle School-High School
 - High School-Post High School

Tenet # 6 Educational Opportunities and Access

The State Board of Education believes every student should have access to coordinated and comprehensive instructional opportunities to be prepared for learning, earning, and living.

- Areas of Focus
 - Early Childhood Education
 - Expanded Learning Opportunities
 - Comprehensive Learning Opportunities
 - Blended Learning Opportunities
 - Dual Credit/AP Opportunities

