



NEWS RELEASE

For additional information, please contact David Jespersen by phone (402-471-4537) or email (david.jespersen@nebraska.gov)

DECEMBER 21, 2018

NEBRASKA SCHOOLS SHOW GROWTH, IMPROVEMENT ON ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

Accountability results released today showed that public schools are growing and improving in multiple measures.

Accountability for a Quality Education System Today and Tomorrow, or AQuESTT, allows schools to focus on educational equity for their students, ensuring all students across backgrounds and circumstances have access and opportunities for success. AQuESTT annually classifies schools and districts as excellent, great, good, or needs improvement.

A breakdown of preliminary classification indicated that 141 or 12.70 percent of schools were classified excellent, 427 or 38.47 percent were great, 386 or 34.77 percent were good, and 156 or 14.05 percent were designated as in need of improvement.

105 schools are eligible for an upward adjustment to their classification through the Evidence-based Analysis (EBA), a survey used to determine practices, policies, and procedures in place aligned to the six AQuESTT tenets of Positive Partnerships, Relationships, and Success; Transitions; Educational Opportunities and Access; College, Career, and Civic Readiness; Assessment; and Educator Effectiveness. To be eligible, schools must have one of the top total EBA scores in their classification level. All eligible schools were required to submit evidence to a panel for review and determination.

Schools can also receive credit for growth and improvement within the tenets. The initial findings showed:

- 89 or 8.02 percent of schools received credit for chronic absenteeism reduction or progress towards English learner proficiency in the Educational Opportunities and Access tenet
- 90 or 8.11 percent of schools received credit for growth, improvement, non-proficiency reduction, science proficiency, or science improvement in the Assessment tenet

Nebraska provides support in different ways to better target funds and resources to schools that need to improve. Three schools in the needs improvement classification have been designated as priority schools and received professional development, coaching, and new instructional materials. Those schools are Schuyler Central High School in Schuyler; Loup County Elementary School in Taylor; and, Santee Middle School in Niobrara.

In addition to priority school support, 27 schools were recently named Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI). Schools with this designation are performing in the lowest five percent of Title I schools or have a graduation rate of 67 percent or below. Schools with consistently underperforming sub-groups, such as economically

disadvantaged or English learners, may be named Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) schools in 2019.

“We are committed to ensuring all students have equitable access and opportunities,” said Matthew L. Blomstedt, Commissioner of Education. “This includes the resources and support they need at the right time, the right level, and with the right intensity to reach our high expectations for learning.”

Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS) results were also released today. NSCAS English Language Arts (ELA) and NSCAS Mathematics, rigorous assessments with high expectations for college and career readiness, were given in grades three through eight, and the NSCAS Science assessment was given in grades five and eight. Nebraska students continue to show growth and improvement across grade levels. More than half of students are meeting or exceeding expectations in math, ELA, and science. The NSCAS ACT is given to all Nebraska juniors statewide and 50 percent or more are on track or meeting ACT benchmarks.

The results of classification and assessment data can be found on the Nebraska Education Profile (NEP). School and district snapshots provide a quick look at accountability performance while full data profiles provide deeper information and include all *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*-required components. Comparisons can also be made of schools and districts to similar peers in the state.

Detailed information on the AQuESTT system is available at aquestt.com.

The AQuESTT report on the classification of schools and districts and assessment results are available at: nep.education.ne.gov.

####

David Jespersen
Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Education
402-471-4537
david.jespersen@nebraska.gov
@NDE_News