



To: Office of the Governor  
Clerk of the Legislature  
Education Committee of the Legislature

From: Brian L. Maher, Ed.D. *BM*

RE: Priority School Progress Report

Date: December 26, 2023

As required by Nebraska Revised Statute 79-760.07, this report provides an annual update on all schools designated as priority schools for the 2022-2023 school year. The overall report includes the name of the school, the grades included in the priority school designation, the name of the school district, the years for which the school was designated a priority school, a summary of the progress plan, and the level of progress as indicated by the measurable indicators.

The table below provides a quick snapshot of current priority schools, their grades, their corresponding district, year of initial identification, and years in status.

School	Grades	District	Initial identification	Current status
Isanti Middle School	6-8	Isanti Community Schools	December 2015	In Year 7*
Isanti Elementary School	Pre-K-5	Isanti Community Schools	June 2019	In Year 4*
Isanti High School	9-12	Isanti Community Schools	June 2019	In Year 4*

*\*In May 2021, the State Board of Education voted to exempt the 2019-20 school year in the Priority School timeline due to the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the suspension of statewide assessment and accountability classifications.*

For more information, please contact Dr. Shirley Vargas, School Transformation Officer, via phone (402-326-5371) or email ([shirley.vargas@nebraska.gov](mailto:shirley.vargas@nebraska.gov)).

## **Priority School Progress Plan**

Each Priority School under AQuESTT (A Quality Education for Today and Tomorrow), Nebraska's accountability system for public schools and districts, is required to submit a Progress Plan for approval by the State Board of Education (79-760.07 R.R.S.) The purpose of the Progress Plan is to identify goals and areas for growth and improvement; measurable indicators of progress; strategies and actions to achieve improvement; associated timelines and resources; and evidence to monitor progress. The Progress Plan will serve as the primary improvement plan for the Priority School and will also be part of the continuous improvement plan for the district in which the Priority School is located (92 NAC 10, Section 009.01B2).

The Progress Plan is organized by school improvement goals and improvement actions. Each school improvement goal is supported by a set of strategies specifically designed to achieve the goal. Additional information (e.g., school data, reports, current improvement plans, etc.) may also accompany the Progress Plan to provide rationale for improvement goals and to document progress efforts in presentations to the Nebraska State Board of Education.

## **Qualitative and Quantitative Review of Progress Plan**

Each Priority School engages in a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of its Progress Plan annually. The review is led by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) Intervention Team and in consultation with the Priority School leadership team. On the pages that follow, there is a summary of the improvement goals, connections to district-wide goals/priorities, and an assessment of progress made.

Additional quantitative data for each priority school for each year in status can be found on the [Nebraska Education Profile](#).

## **Legend**

Below is a list of acronyms or initialisms of commonly used terms in this report.

- ACT – American College Testing
- DIBELS – Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
- ELA – English Language Arts
- MAP – Measures of Academic Progress
- NSCAS – Nebraska Student Centered Assessment System
- PLC – Professional Learning Community

**Isanti Elementary School**

<b>Priority School:</b> Isanti Elementary School
<b>District:</b> Isanti Community Schools
<b>Years in Status:</b> 4 (2019-2020*; 2020-2021; 2021-2022; 2022-2023)
<b>Grades Served:</b> Pre-K - 5

**Isanti Middle School**

<b>Priority School:</b> Isanti Middle School
<b>District:</b> Isanti Community Schools
<b>Years in Status:</b> 7 (2016-2017; 2017-2018; 2018-2019; 2019-2020*; 2020-2021; 2021-2022; 2022-2023)
<b>Grades Served:</b> 6 - 8

**Isanti High School**

<b>Priority School:</b> Isanti High School
<b>District:</b> Isanti Community Schools
<b>Years in Status:</b> 4 (2019-2020*; 2020-2021; 2021-2022; 2022-2023)
<b>Grades Served:</b> 9 - 12

The following report includes a summary of the goals, alignment to overall district priorities, evolution of strategies, where appropriate, and 2022-2023 results for each priority school.

**Isanti Elementary School Priority School Plan – 2022 – 2023 School Year**

Goals	Alignment to District MTSS Priority Plan
<p>I. By May 2023, K – 5 students will improve reading and math achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ increase the percent of students meeting grade level expectations by 5% as measured by MAP.</li> <li>○ 80% of 3 – 5 students will meet projected growth expectations as measured by MAP.</li> <li>○ 60% of K – 3 students will be at grade level as measured by DIBELs.</li> <li>○ grades 3 – 5 increase NSCAS (state assessment) proficiencies by 3%.</li> </ul>	<p>Goal I – Literacy across content areas Goal II- Increase student achievement</p>
<p>II. By May 2023, K – 5 students increase average daily attendance for the year to 92%.</p>	<p>Goal III – Student transitions</p>

**Isanti Elementary School: Academic Goals & Strategies**

At Isanti Elementary School, school leaders worked with the Intervention Team in the 2022 – 2023 school year to build on the strategies previously named to improve student academic performance, particularly in literacy. The updated strategies are oriented toward student outcomes as evidence of success, rather than completion of action steps or inputs.

2021 – 2022 Strategies	2022 – 2023 Evolution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement instructional model with a focus on using questions, cues and prompts (guided practice) to respond to student needs.</li> <li>● Evidence: agendas from PLCs, walkthroughs, displays of work/success criteria.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support classroom teachers with the implementation of the high-quality instructional materials purchased by the school (CKLA) for core literacy through professional development, observation and feedback, and planning support.</li> <li>● Evidence: ratings of instruction, tracking student performance.</li> <li>● Support school and district leaders in realigning the school structures that will allow for coherent student experience across all tiers of instruction.</li> </ul>

**Note:** In 2022 – 2023, Isanti Community Schools participated in NSCAS Growth – the through-year state assessment for 3rd - 8th grade, and only K – 2 students participated in NWEA MAP testing. Therefore, some of the goal language is not directly comparable, and the principals worked with the Intervention Team to align the measures to the new assessment landscape for the 2023 – 2024 school year.

Goal	2022 – 2023 Results
Increase the percent of students meeting grade level expectations by 5% as measured by MAP	<p><i>In 2022 – 2023, with the change to NSCAS for 3 – 5, only K – 2 students were assessed on MAP, so the increase cannot be compared.</i></p> <p><i>13% of K – 2 students ended the year having met at least the 40th percentile on MAP, and 16% of K – 2 students met at least the 40th percentile on Math.</i></p>
80% of grades 3-5 students will meet projected growth expectations as measured by MAP	<p><i>Of K – 2 Students that participated in MAP, 61% met growth expectations in ELA, and 73% met growth expectations in Math.</i></p> <p><b>Not Yet Met:</b> For grades 3 – 5 students that participated in NSCAS, 66% of students demonstrated growth.</p>
60% of grades K-3 students will be at grade level as measured by DIBELS	<p><b>Not Yet Met:</b> (Note: All students in K – 5 were assessed on DIBELS.) 26% of K – 3 students ended the year at Benchmark or Above. 32% of all K – 5 students ended the year at Benchmark or above. This represents an increase from 14% of K – 5 students in 2022-2023.</p>
Grades 3-5 students increase NSCAS (state assessment) proficiencies by 3%	<p><b>Exceeded:</b> ELA proficiency increased from 2% to 14%, and math from 4% to 8%.</p>

### Isanti Elementary School: Attendance

Isanti Elementary School has maintained a focus on creating positive classroom environments and supporting teachers to build relationships with families in service of improving average daily attendance. The school and district team reviewed the importance of tracking and reducing the chronic absence rate and will be included in the 2023 – 2024 school year priority plan.

Implemented Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Incorporate strategies and practices around restorative practices.</li><li>● Evidence: School leader walkthroughs</li></ul>

Goal	2022 – 2023 Result
K – 5 students increase average daily attendance for the year to 92%	<b>Not Met:</b> K – 5 students Average Daily Attendance was 88.4%.

**Isanti Middle and High Schools Priority School Plan – 2022 – 2023 School Year**

Goals	Alignment to District MTSS Priority Plan
I. By May 2023, 80% of students in grades 6 – 10 will improve their overall achievement as measured by projected growth on MAP Tests in Reading and Math.	Goal I – Literacy across content areas Goal II- Increase student achievement
II. By May 2023, average daily attendance will increase for grades 6-12 students to 88% or better. A. MS, 6 – 8 students, will increase from 90% to 93%. B. HS, 9 – 12 students, will increase from 82% to 85%. C. Reduce chronic absenteeism by 5%.	Goal II – Increase student achievement Goal III – Student transitions
III. By May 2023, 80% of students grades 6 – 12 will continue to be on track to graduate. A. MS students receiving D’s and F’s is 10% or lower. B. HS graduation rate will be at 80% or higher.	Goal III – Student transitions

**Isanti Middle School: Academic Goals & Strategies**

Isanti Middle School teachers participated in whole-group professional development regarding the importance of grade appropriate assignments and strong instruction. In 2022 – 2023, Isanti Middle School had not yet adopted High Quality Instructional Materials in ELA or Math.

<b>Implemented Strategies</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement formative assessment through gradual release model to inform instruction for whole group and small group instruction.</li> </ul>

<b>Goals</b>	<b>2022 – 2023 Results</b>
80% of grades 6-10 students will improve their overall achievement as measured by projected growth on MAP Tests in Reading and Math	<p><b>Not Met:</b> In 2022 – 2023, with the change to NSCAS Growth, 6-8 grade students did not take MAP. 50% of students demonstrated growth on NSCAS Growth.</p> <p>NSCAS performance for 6th-8th grade was 9% proficient in ELA (increased from 6% in 21-22). No students demonstrated proficiency in Math.</p>

80% of students grades 6 – 12 will continue to be on track to graduate. I. MS students receiving D's and F's is 10% or lower.	<b>Not Met:</b> 32% of 6 – 8 grade students had D's or F's in core classes.
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### Isanti Middle School: Attendance

Isanti Middle School continued to focus on improving the average daily attendance of students through relationship building and restorative practices.

<b>Implemented Strategies</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Incorporate strategies and practices around restorative practices.</li> <li>● Evidence: School leader walkthroughs</li> </ul>

<b>Goals</b>	<b>2022 – 2023 Results</b>
MS, grades 6 – 8, will increase from 90% to 93%	<b>Not Met:</b> Grades 6 – 8 Average Daily Attendance was 82.9%.
Reduce chronic absenteeism by 5%	<b>Not Met:</b> 6 – 8 Chronic absenteeism increased from 62% to 80%.



## Isanti High School: Academic Goals & Strategies

In addition to Priority School status, Isanti high school was also designated for Comprehensive Support and Improvement. Educators worked together to craft an updated vision for school improvement and strategies to achieve academic excellence in future years.

<b>Strategies</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement formative assessment through gradual release model to inform instruction for whole group and small group instruction.</li> </ul>

<b>Goals</b>	<b>2022 – 2023 Results</b>
80% of grades 6 – 10 students will improve their overall achievement as measured by projected growth on MAP Tests in Reading and Math	In 2022 – 2023, with the change to NSCAS, high school students took the ACT. No students yet demonstrated the proficient benchmarks on ACT.
HS graduation rate will be at 80% or higher	<b>Met:</b> 94% (16/17 students) met requirements for graduation.

## Isanti High School: Attendance

Isanti High School continued to focus on improving the average daily attendance of students through relationship building and restorative practices. Additionally, a focus on Dakota Language and Instruction for all high school students is designed to increase student engagement and instructional relevance.

<b>Strategies</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Incorporate strategies and practices around restorative practices.</li> <li>● Evidence: School leader walkthroughs</li> </ul>

<b>Goal</b>	<b>2022 – 2023 Result</b>
HS, grades 9 – 12, will increase from 82% to 85%	<b>Not Met:</b> Grades 9 – 12 Average Daily Attendance was 68.5%.
Reduce chronic absenteeism by 5%	<b>Not Met:</b> Grades 9 – 12 chronic absenteeism increased from 87% to 100%.