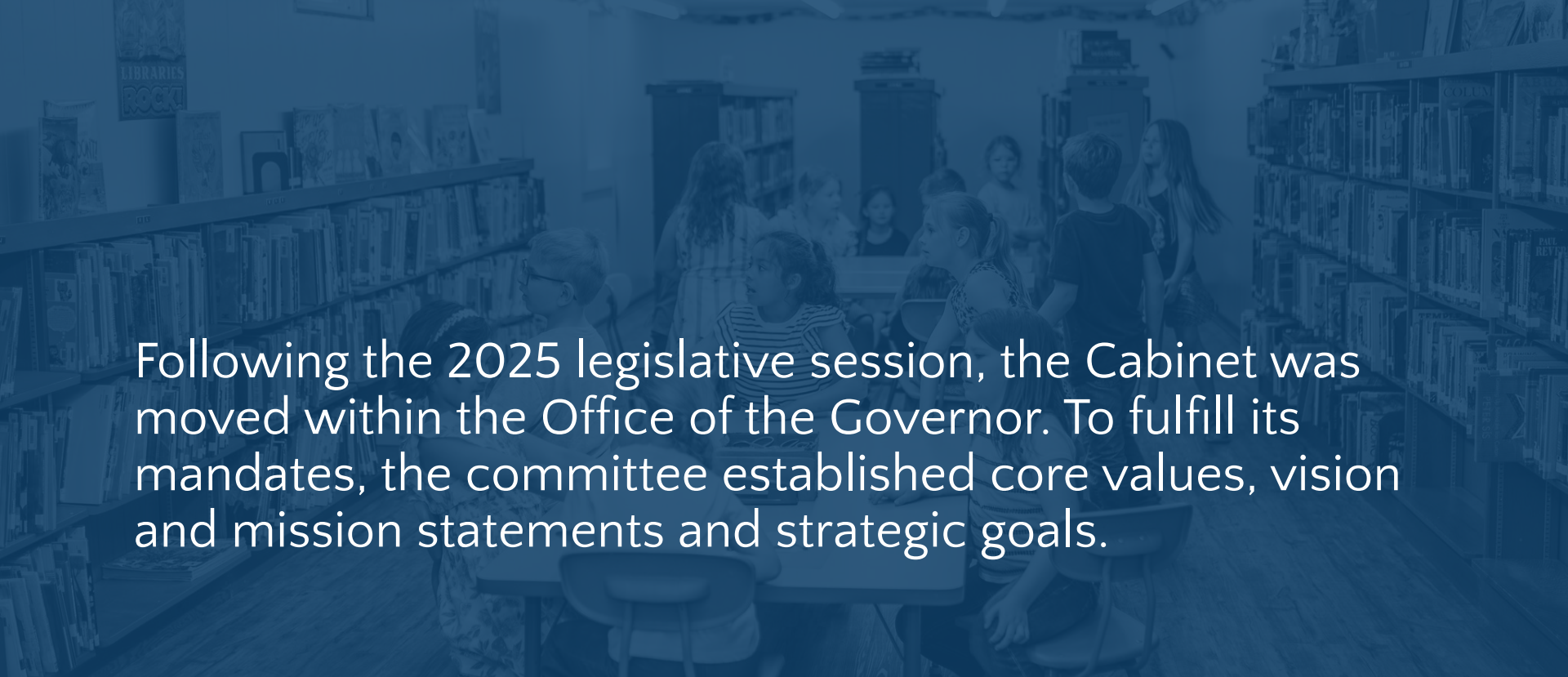




Welcome



Following the 2025 legislative session, the Cabinet was moved within the Office of the Governor. To fulfill its mandates, the committee established core values, vision and mission statements and strategic goals.

About Us

Our Vision

The North Dakota Children's Cabinet ensures that all children are prepared and successful, equipped with the skills, knowledge, and resilience to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Our Mission

The North Dakota Children's Cabinet collaborates to elevate what works and drive toward a seamless network of services and supports that meet the needs of every child and family.

Our Values



360 Communication

The Children's Cabinet will engage in open, honest and meaningful communication that leads to positive results for all children and families.



Optimism

The Children's Cabinet will be solutions-based, adopting a can-do attitude while avoiding the impulse to admire the problem.



Accountability

The Children's Cabinet accepts clear accountability for leadership and allows all members to know their roles and responsibilities while sharing a common vision.

Strategic Goals



Goal 1

Strengthen foundational elements of the North Dakota Children's Cabinet through the development and communication of a strategic plan.



Goal 2

Define, measure and report out on the status of child well-being in North Dakota.



Goal 3

Identify and elevate promising practices to advance a seamless network of services and supports throughout North Dakota.

Implementing Goals through Subcommittees

In an effort to advance its vision, the Children's Cabinet organized its work through three subcommittees during the 2025–2026 year. Together, these subcommittees represent a cross-systems, continuum of care approach focused on improving child outcomes from early intervention through recovery and intensive support.



Strategic Planning Subcommittee

Designed to support the Cabinet to develop metrics and a road map toward defining and quantifying child well-being. The subcommittee seeks to ensure that the Cabinet stays true to its value of being solutions-based in its approach and to establish operational expectations.

Early Childhood Subcommittee

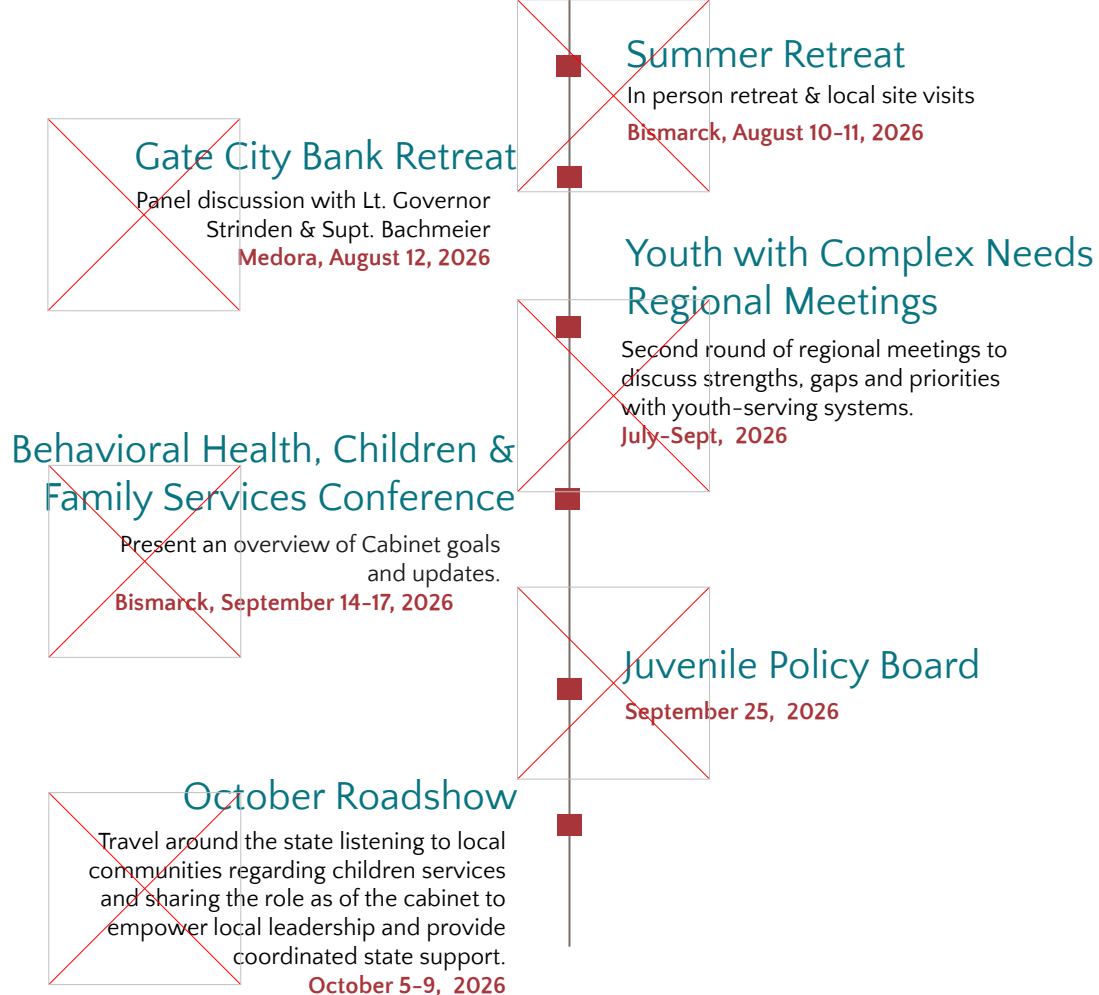
Designed to reduce disparities, support families and ensure children arrive at school ready to learn and thrive by increasing access to quality early childhood experiences and improving transitions in the system.

Youth With Complex Needs Subcommittee

Committed to developing a comprehensive plan to improve collaboration/coordination and expand needed services to ensure that children/adolescents with significant behavioral or psychiatric needs and their families are being addressed.

Broadening the Base

Road Show &
Public Engagements



Broadening the Base

Road Show &
Public Engagements

ND Assoc. of Counties

October 11-13, 2026

~~ND School Board Association~~

~~Present to the NDSBA an overview of Cabinet
goals and updates~~

~~Bismarck October 9, 2026~~

ND Council for
Educational Leaders

Present at NDCEL an overview of Cabinet
goals and updates

Bismarck, October 21-23, 2026

Tribal Engagement

Date TBD

Child Well-Being Themes



Economic Stability

The conditions in which families and communities have the financial security and resources needed to support children's healthy development into young adulthood.



Education

The learning experiences and support systems that empower children to engage in their learning and acquire the knowledge and essential skills that prepare them for their adult life.



Health and Safety

The essential physical, mental, and environmental conditions that children need to grow and develop.



Family and Community

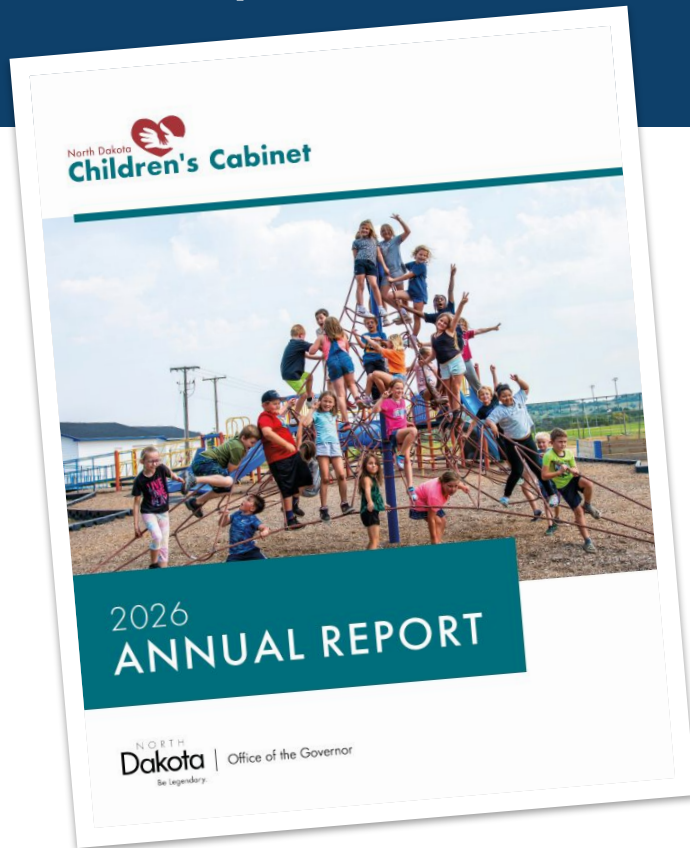
The relationships, support networks, and environments that nurture children's growth and well-being.



The Early Years

The critical period of rapid growth in which children build the foundational skills, relationships, and learning experiences that shape lifelong development.

Annual Report

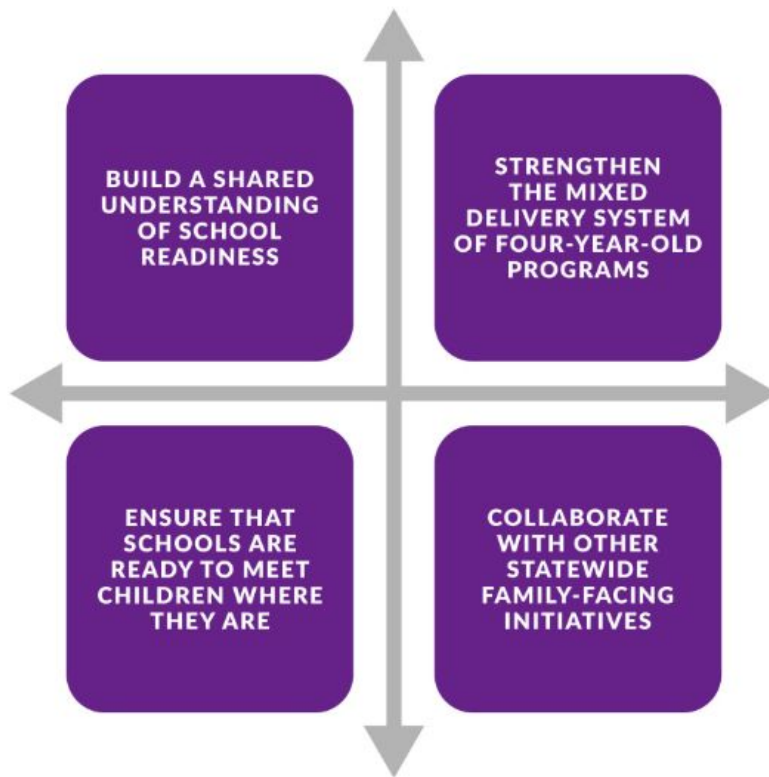


Dimensions of School Readiness

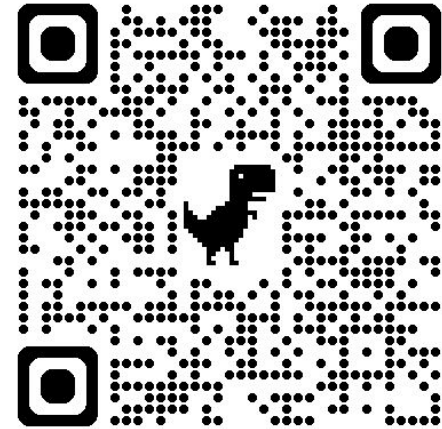
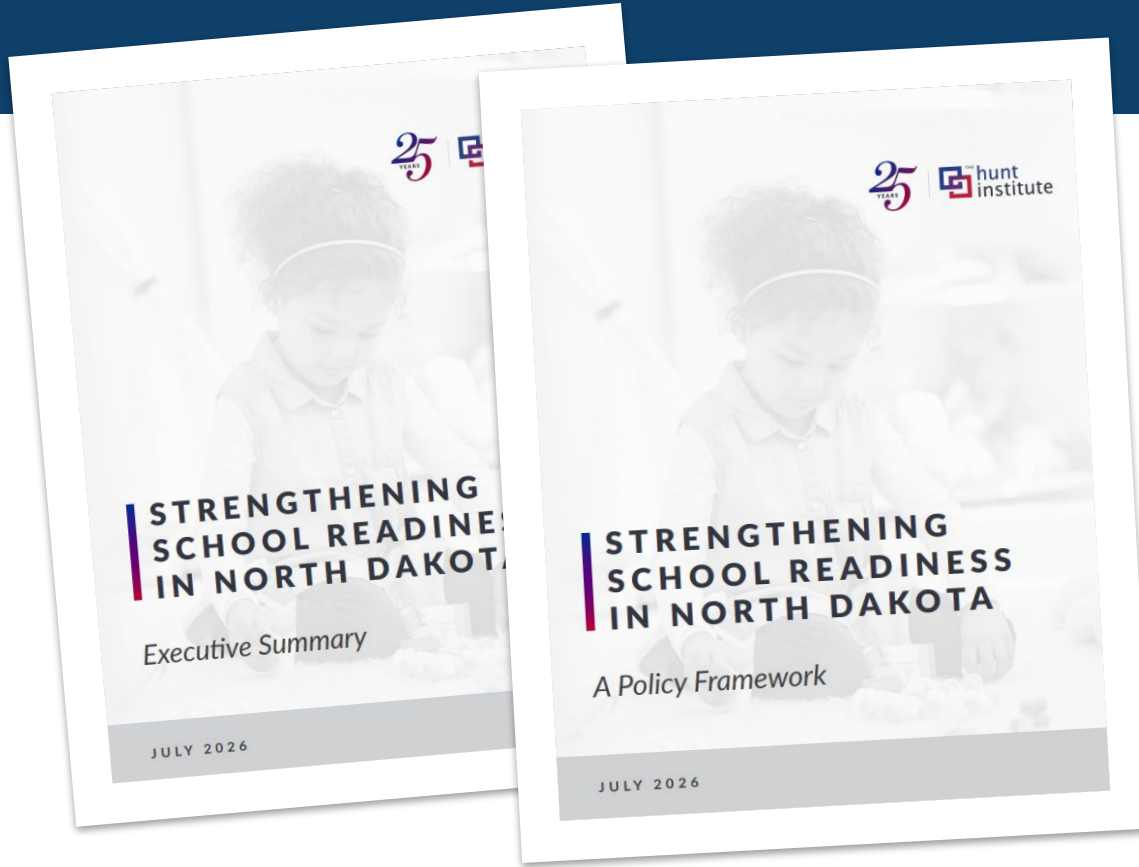
Dimensions of school readiness	Examples
Social-emotional skills	Self-regulation, self-awareness, and social awareness
Cognitive skills	Attention, memory, and problem-solving
Language and literacy	Phonological awareness, print awareness, and letter knowledge
Numeracy and scientific reasoning	Number sense, spatial awareness, and patterns
Motor development	Gross motor skills like running, and fine motor skills like holding a pencil
Physical development	Growth and balance
Activities of daily life	Self-reliant eating, bathroom use, and sleep and nutrition
Approaches to learning	Confidence, initiative, and curiosity



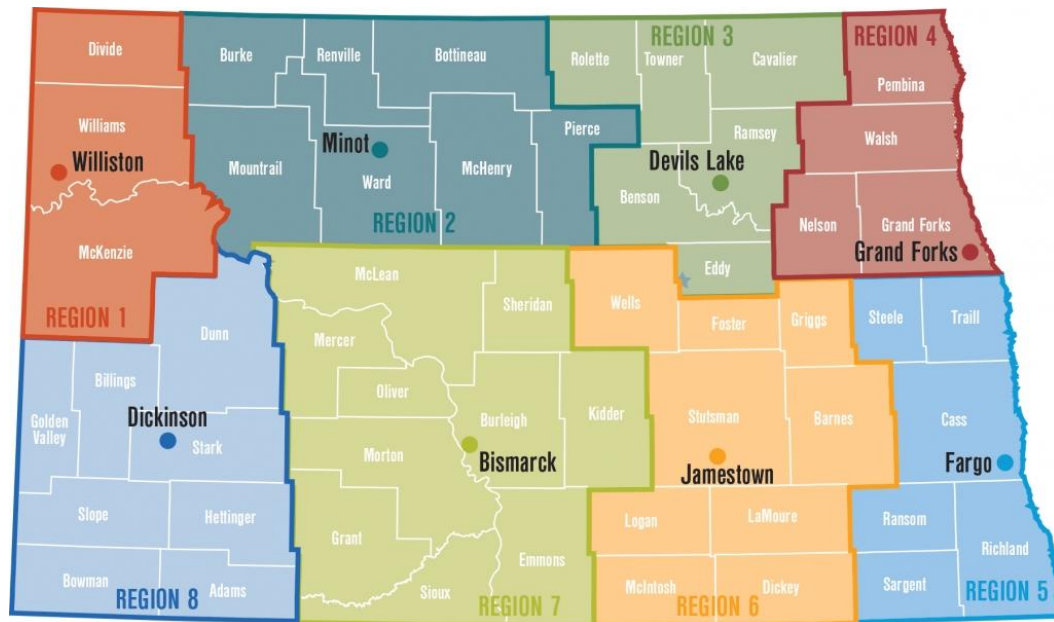
Policy Considerations



School Readiness Report



Establishing Regional *Children's Coordinating Councils*



Guiding Values

1

Child-centered,
Family-focused

2

Trauma informed,
Healing focused

3

Culturally Sensitive

4

No wrong doors

5

Cross systems
alignment to
reduce silos and
increase flexibility

6

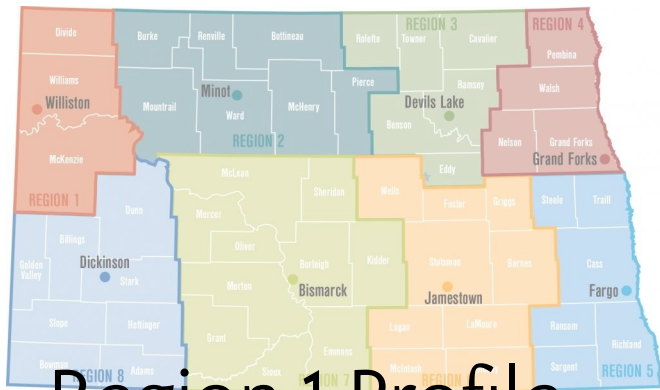
Building structures
for local problem
solving

*Locally-led, State-supported, Shared
accountability.*

Definition of Youth with Complex Needs

Youth with complex needs are individuals age 0-21 which span across multiple systems, requiring support and coordinated services. **Two or more** of the following descriptors identify youth with complex needs:

1. Multiple systems involvement (childcare, child welfare, developmental disability, education, healthcare, juvenile justice, homeless, behavioral health services).
2. Behavioral Health Conditions with or without diagnosis (examples include but not limited to youth w/mental health conditions to include depression, PTSD, anxiety, suicidal ideation, eating disorders, substance use and other addictions).
3. Co-occurring disorder diagnosis (behavioral health issues combined with developmental disabilities, physical or intellectual disabilities).
4. Risky Behaviors (examples include but not limited to running away, self-harm, truancy, expulsion or sexualized behaviors).
5. Environmental Risks (examples include but not limited to living in poverty, homelessness, living in a home with domestic violence, and at risk of abuse and neglect).



Region 1 Profile 16,947 (Children 0-17)

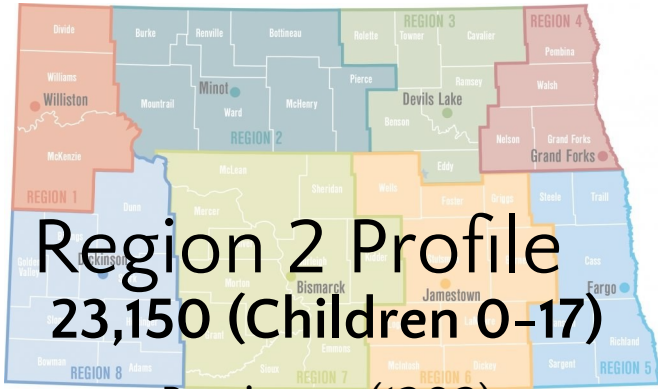
Divide (487)
McKenzie (4606)
Williams (11,854)

STRENGTHS

- Cross system collaboration in crisis.
- HB 1095 School/CPS liaison meetings have gone very well.
- NW Beh Health Clinic has developed MOUs with schools

PRIORITIES

- Develop crisis stabilization system.
- Improve parental engagement.
- Increase cross agency communication.



Region 2 Profile

23,150 (Children 0-17)

Bottineau (1303)

Burke (518)

McHenry (1219)

Mountrail (2692)

Pierce (849)

Renville (533)

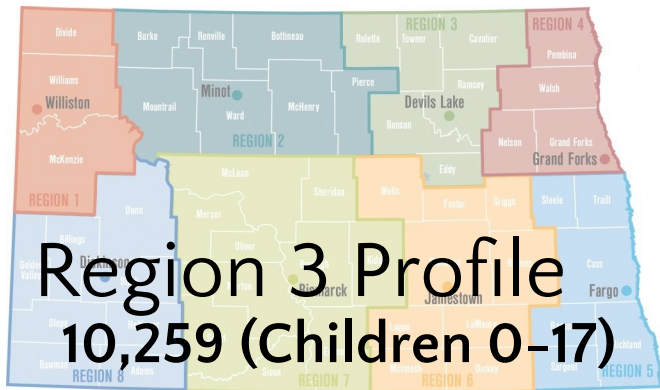
Ward (16,036)

STRENGTHS

- Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch offers 4 services in the region.
- Youthworks: crisis shelter has 6 beds.
- SROs are trained and in most schools.

PRIORITIES

- Build community/regional collaboration
- Improve crisis response
- Develop care coordination



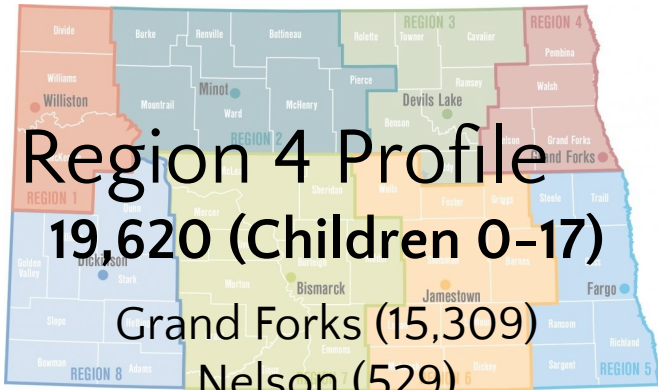
Benson (1893)
 Cavalier (793)
 Eddy (592)
 Ramsey (2742)
 Rolette (3756)
 Towner (483)

STRENGTHS

- Uspire ND early intervention
- Resource list of behavioral health services is available.
- All groups genuinely care and are creative to crisis situations.

PRIORITIES

- Behavioral crisis home supports for DD
- Care coordination
- Community collaboration



Region 4 Profile

19,620 (Children 0-17)

Grand Forks (15,309)

Nelson (529)

Pembina (1419)

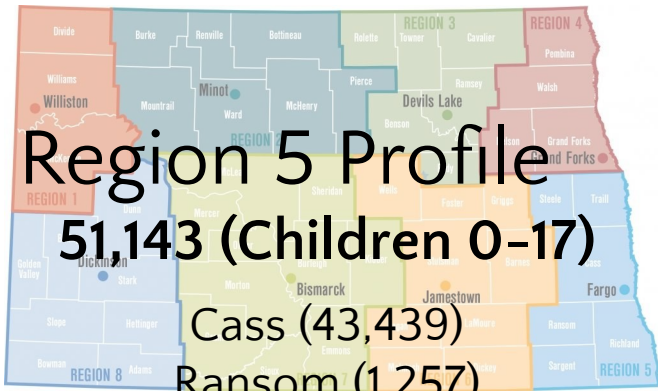
Walsh (2363)

STRENGTHS

- Culture of creativity and willingness to be flexible when needed.
- Youth assessment center:
- Community Agency Network Association

PRIORITIES

- Create opportunities for care coordination
- Increase parent accountability/family engagement.
- Increase workforce retention and training.

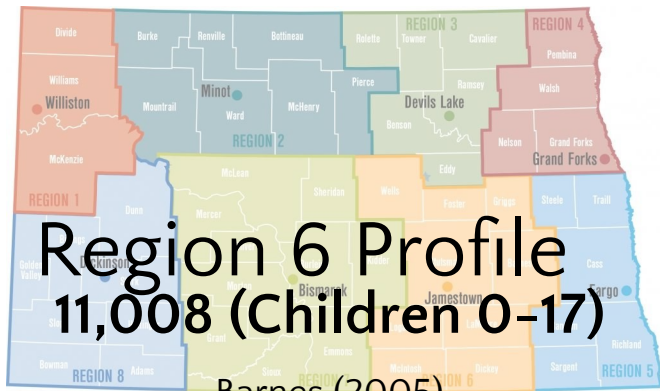


STRENGTHS

- Strong commitment by schools -- integration with families, other providers and agencies.
- A broad range of services and service providers.
- Integration of SRO/law enforcement; an approach that supports early intervention and diversion

PRIORITIES

- Develop a “no wrong doors” practice.
- Increase access to quality foster care locally.
- Develop & implement full continuation of restoration services.



Barnes (2005)

Dickey (1207)

Foster (713)

Griggs (440)

Kidder (552)

Logan (443) LaMoure (966) McIntosh
(497) Stutsman (4185)

STRENGTHS

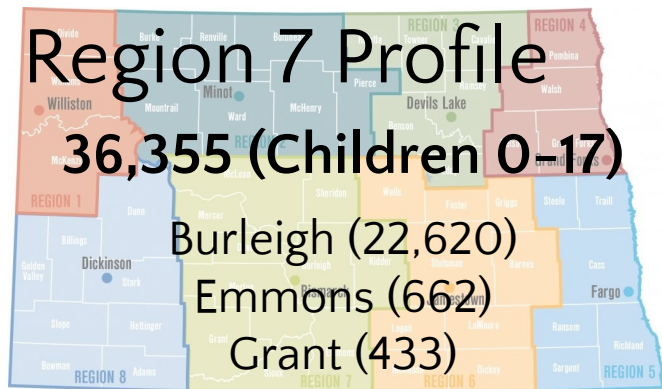
- Early Intervention Anne Carlson
- Strong cross system collaboration/meeting monthly
- Natural/spontaneous cross system teams during crisis.

PRIORITIES

- Care coordination & wrap around services
- Building support for foster care services.
- Educational barriers for JJ involved youth.

Region 7 Profile

36,355 (Children 0-17)



Burleigh (22,620)

Emmons (662)

Grant (433)

Kidder (552)

McLean (2069)

Mercer (1957)

Morton (8102)

Oliver (435)

Sheridan (275)

Sioux (1207)

STRENGTHS

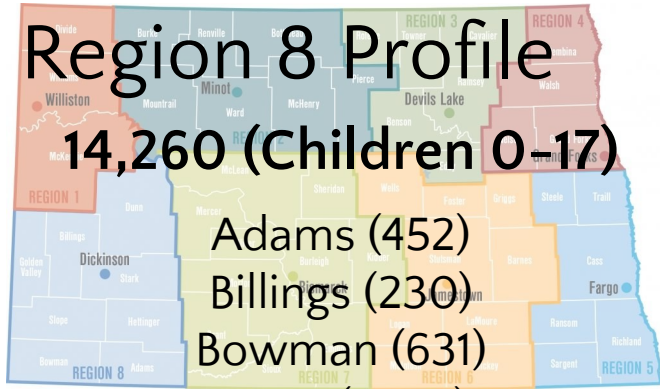
- Out of the box thinking for local challenges.
- A broad range of services providers to include home based care.
- Everyone knows each other and everyone is accessible.

PRIORITIES

- Improve intensive care coordination.
- Development of complex needs waiver.
- Increase the access & use of assessment beds as prevention tool.

Region 8 Profile

14,260 (Children 0-17)



Adams (452)

Billings (230)

Bowman (631)

Dunn (1060)

Golden Valley (445)

Hettinger (549)

Stark (8827)

Slope (109)

STRENGTHS

- All agencies are willing to help in a crisis.
- Certified behavioral health clinic model is being embraced by community.
- Sunrise Youth Bureau is effective crisis response for children with complex needs.

PRIORITIES

- Crisis stabilization continuum.
- Multi-agency alignment of services.
- Review DD eligibility

What have we learned?

Need to *SLOW DOWN* to rebuild trust.

Culture before policy.

- Some people didn't know each other.
- Lack of connection and trust between state teams and local systems.
- Substantial funding structure re-design.
- Layers of systems change in the last decade has magnified siloed systems, service deserts, inadequate coordination and confusion on eligibility.
- Multiple groups working on similar efforts across various parts of the state, government – duplication and lack of coordination.

Policy Considerations

- ✓ Governance & reporting structure of governmental youth serving associations and committees
- ✓ Adoption of a school readiness check
- ✓ Regional Children's Coordinating Councils
- ✓ Moving CHINs within Child Welfare in NDCC



Contact us.

