



# Hillsboro Public Schools

Hillsboro, North Dakota

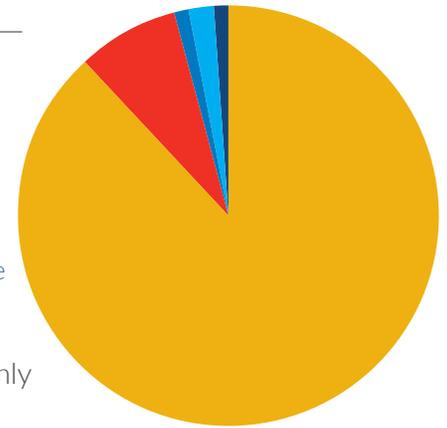
## SNAPSHOT FROM THE FIELD

Hillsboro Public Schools achieved positive, sustainable growth after committing to the High Reliability Schools™ framework.



## DEMOGRAPHICS

- 453 Students (195 high school students and 258 elementary school students)
- 25.9% Free and reduced lunch
- 10% Special education
- 3% English language learners
- 89% Caucasian
- 8.4 % Hispanic
- 1.3% African American
- 2% Asian
- 1% American Indian or Alaska Native



Hillsboro Public Schools is located in Hillsboro, North Dakota, a town of roughly 2,000. It is located halfway between Grand Forks and Fargo, North Dakota.

## CHALLENGE

Hillsboro Public Schools (HPS) was looking for a more formalized school improvement process for continuous improvement and growth. “As a staff, we always said we wanted what was best for students, but we did not necessarily put to practice what we preached,” explained Terry Baesler,

principal of Hillsboro High School. After attending the High Reliability Schools (HRS)<sup>™</sup> Summit and learning about the improvement opportunities the HRS framework provides, leaders from across the district felt that it was the perfect fit for their schools.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Staff began collectively focusing their efforts on earning certification at Level 1 of the HRS framework (Safe, Supportive, and Collaborative Culture). HRS committees were formed, which gave staff a formalized role in school initiatives, and administration and teachers worked together to develop expected behaviors for each school’s campus. Teams also took steps to restructure school handbooks and redesign school communications, resulting in effective dissemination of information to students, parents, staff, and community. “We are all speaking the same language,” explained Baesler. “This has allowed staff, students, and parents to settle into an ever-growing and expanding initiative that has improved how teachers instruct and students learn.”

After successfully earning Level 1 certification and seeing positive results across the district, staff turned their attention to earning certification at Level 2 (Effective Teaching in Every Classroom). Updated instructional models were created and shared publicly, in order to ensure all team members were on board with the school building’s goals. Principals began performing more classroom walk-throughs, and teachers performed instructional rounds for peer observation. In addition, a mentoring program was established to support beginning teachers, and all teachers began receiving professional development on standards, critical concepts, evaluations, and student engagement.

“The Hillsboro Schools are fortunate to work with quality professionals at Marzano [Resources]. The relationships that we have built with them have challenged us to be our best, so that we can do the same for our district.”

—Paula Suda, superintendent

## RESULTS

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Since implementing the HRS framework, staff have worked diligently toward HPS’s mission to lead learners to succeed in life. Teachers feel fully supported by the administration, and the impact can be seen across grade levels and subject areas. Jon Dryburgh, principal of Hillsboro Elementary School, explained, “We now have effective teaching in every classroom. It is enjoyable to walk into classrooms and see students and teachers having success.”

“Our district’s biggest accomplishment has been getting certified at Level 1 and Level 2 of the Marzano High Reliability Schools framework,” added superintendent Paula Suda, who was named North Dakota’s first female Superintendent of the Year after implementing the HRS model. “The framework has given our district a clear path for continuous improvement and growth.”



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