



Academic Program/Department Review

Updated: 8-22-24

Faculty Form

(To be Completed by All Programs/Departments Annually in September)

Department/Program(s):

(Note: Departments may collaborate and work collectively within related fields if they wish.)

List Department Faculty Members Involved in Completing this Review:

Jessica Thompson, Dawn Quigley

Date: (Select one)

Fall 2023-24 _____

Fall 2024-25 _____

Fall 2025-26 __x__

Please answer the following questions. See Program Review Guide: Academic for detailed instructions.

1. Accreditation (*Degree Programs Only*)

- Does your program maintain accreditation through a regional or national association?
- If yes, provide details and re-affirmation dates.

PELSB, WINHEC Accredited dates in teams

2 Opportunities, Concerns, and Needs (*All*)

- What opportunities or areas of concern are important to the future health and effectiveness of your program/department?
- What will you need to do to be successful?
- Please detail any additional budget, staffing, equipment, facility, or technology needs.

Opportunities:

The Elementary Education program has several promising opportunities to expand its reach and impact. One key opportunity is to collaborate with the Early Childhood department to support licensure pathways for early childhood educators. This partnership could attract a broader range of students and provide them with additional career options. Another opportunity is to reintroduce in-person course offerings next academic year, which would appeal to students who prefer face-to-face learning and help build a stronger campus community. Additionally, exploring future licensure

pathways—such as special education, middle school, and high school certifications—could position the program to meet evolving workforce demands and increase enrollment.

Foundations one online, one in person, looking at schedule to figure out online synchronous zoom scheduling, at least once a month

Flex course possibility, one class currently flex (Kim Peddle)

Areas of Concern:

A primary concern is the ongoing challenge of recruiting and retaining students. Sustaining the program depends on consistent enrollment and student engagement. Without a strong pipeline of students entering and completing the program, long-term viability may be at risk. Online environment vs face to face has been a discussion for our program. We have seen success in online synchronous courses and this is a possibility for future opportunities.

What We Need to Be Successful:

To ensure continued success, the program is actively aligning with PELSB standards and prioritizing recruitment strategies. These efforts include outreach, partnerships, and curriculum development that reflect both licensure requirements and student interests.

Additional Needs:

As the program grows and new licensure pathways are developed, additional resources will be necessary. This may include increased faculty staffing to support expanded course offerings, as well as potential investments in classroom technology, instructional materials, and facility upgrades to accommodate in-person instruction and specialized training needs.

3 Program Outcomes (Degree Programs Only)

- Please list your Program Learning Outcomes and indicate any updates you plan to propose this year.
- Then, using the data you gathered in the past year on how well students are meeting these outcomes, describe what you have learned and what changes you have or will make to further increase your results on these outcome measures.

Program Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

- Integrate content and pedagogical knowledge: Develop and implement strategies that reflect a deep understanding of core subjects in an elementary classroom that utilizes knowledge, learning, and critical thinking with culturally responsive approaches central to Anishinaabe and Indigenous views, and other ways of knowing.
- Reflect communication and collaboration skills: Develop reflective (oral and written) skills that connect the interrelatedness of educating the whole child by communicating positive and collaborative partnerships with students, families, and colleagues, and use insights and inspirations of learning practices through cultural norms, ideas, thoughts, and visions.
- Transform leadership: Foster a deep understanding by analyzing, reflecting, and responding to the way in which to live and walk with a strong heart, respectful and open to

new ideas and to be courageous enough to confront the accepted truths of history and society.

- Prepare Ethical Practitioners: Prepare, contribute, and practice ethical conduct that applies and complies to MN code of Ethics for Teachers and understands community and cultural needs in their role as a professional practicing teacher.
- Think and act as a data-driven decision maker: Evaluate and assess ways to integrate new ideas and perspectives with assessment and data to improve the potential to think and act with honesty and integrity as they use multiple types of assessment strategies to evaluate K-6 learners that guides student learning and development.
- Create and diversify learning environments: Create inclusive and equitable learning environments and respect the diversity within their schools, communities, and environment for the well-being of all.
- Inspire change for a generation of new knowledge: Drive, advocate, and inspire change in educational systems by expanding knowledge of the human condition and cultures, and the importance of compassion especially in relation to behavior, ideas, and values in a positive learning environment.

What we have learned based on the data:

Key assessments are collected in 8 courses throughout the education program and the final checklist is completed in student teaching. The information gathered is reviewed and discussed with the education team throughout the year and with the Education Advisory Committee to discuss the changes.

Changes we will implement: Currently all education courses are offered in the online environment, however a change to one beginning course (Foundations of Anishinaabe and American Education systems) will be offered with the opportunity to choose online or in person in order for students to feel comfortable in preparation to continue with the online coursework.

4 Course Level Assessment (All)

- Please review your Course Level Assessment Data in Nuventive.
- Then, using the data describe what changes you plan to implement this academic year and what you hope to improve as a result.
 - Note: If you have not done so already also check to make sure that you have a plan to assess all courses within your program/department on a regular basis.

We are switching to using Watermark to collect our course level assessment data. The dept is currently undergoing training to implement watermark.

We will be transitioning this year for 2025-2026 to Watermark for the Education program to collect data. Tara has asked James for whole 4 years of program data.

5 Alignment with College Priorities (All)

- How have your program/department priorities in the last year aligned with the college's priorities listed in the Strategic Direction 2023-28 document?
- What additional work do you plan to do this year that aligns with the college's Strategic Directions?

Creating Campus-Wide Holistic Wellness Model

The Elementary Education department at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College is actively advancing the college's strategic direction to support student and staff well-being through a comprehensive wellness model. By hosting culturally grounded events like Ed Fest and integrating Anishinaabe teachings into its curriculum, the department fosters a sense of belonging and promotes mental, emotional, and cultural wellness. These efforts are complemented by campus-wide initiatives such as the Student Family Support Center, which provides child-friendly study spaces and emergency childcare assistance, and partnerships that bring mental health services directly to students. Together, these actions reflect a commitment to reducing equity gaps, enhancing student life, and building a supportive, culturally relevant network that strengthens retention and graduation outcomes.

Developing Processes to Empower Campus Community

The Elementary Education department at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College is actively supporting the strategic direction of empowering the campus community by fostering a collaborative, culturally grounded work environment. Faculty members engage in professional development through committee participation and training aligned with the college's core values, such as Gwayakwaadiziwin (integrity) and Zhawenjigewin (compassion), which are embedded in both curriculum and departmental culture. New employees benefit from onboarding resources and handbooks that clarify roles and responsibilities, while ongoing feedback mechanisms, such as faculty evaluations and shared governance through bargaining units, ensure that staff voices are heard and valued. Through these efforts, the department contributes to a more engaged and satisfied workforce, ultimately enhancing the student experience and reinforcing the college's mission and values.

Optimizing Opportunities with Community Partners

The Elementary Education department at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College is deeply engaged in optimizing opportunities with community partners by fostering strong relationships with local schools, the Fond du Lac Band, and regional employers. Through culturally responsive teacher training and placement in diverse school settings, the department ensures graduates are prepared to meet the needs of area communities and contribute meaningfully to local education systems. These efforts align with the college's mission and values, enhance graduate employability, and reflect a commitment to community-driven education and workforce development.

Broadening Supports to Enhance Financial Stability

The Elementary Education department is exploring strategic opportunities to enhance academic offerings and improve financial sustainability. One promising initiative is the potential integration with the Early Childhood department to support licensure pathways for early childhood educators. This collaboration could attract a broader student base, streamline resources, and create cross-disciplinary learning opportunities. Additionally, expanding licensure options to include areas such as special education, middle school, and high school certifications would not only meet regional workforce demands but also increase enrollment and tuition revenue. These efforts, combined with a thoughtful approach to scheduling and faculty workload, position the department to grow responsibly while maintaining high academic standards and long-term financial health.

Driving FDLTCC's Progress through Informed & Transparent Plans

The Elementary Education department at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College exemplifies the college's commitment to informed and transparent planning by actively integrating Ojibwe culture into its academic framework and contributing to campus-wide sustainability efforts. The department's curriculum is rooted in Anishinaabe values such as Gwayakwaadiziwin (integrity) and Zhawenjigewin (compassion), aligning with the Union of Cultures mission and reinforcing the college's identity. Faculty and staff participate in strategic planning processes that include updating academic program planners and contributing to broader institutional goals, such as zero-carbon initiatives and space reallocation. Through student engagement in culturally relevant coursework,

the department helps ensure that planning is inclusive, transparent, and reflective of community priorities.

Additional Work

This year, the Elementary Education department will continue advancing the college's Strategic Directions through a combination of cultural engagement, professional development, and instructional innovation. Building on the success of Ed Fest, the department will continue hosting this culturally grounded event to promote wellness, belonging, and community connection. Faculty will also participate in targeted professional development, including a reading-focused conference and LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) training, to strengthen instructional practices and support student success. Additionally, the department will engage in Watermark integration training to enhance assessment and planning processes, contributing to informed and transparent academic development across campus.

6 Student Success Data Review (All)

- **Please review the data on your Program/Departmental Fact Sheet(s).**
- **Then, share your thoughts on how effective your program/department is in meeting your program/department goals in enrollment, retention, graduation, employment, diversity, and/or other measures you value.**
- **Finally, describe your plans to address concerns or guide improvements.**

The Elementary Education program at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College has demonstrated meaningful growth and impact across several key performance areas. Enrollment has increased significantly over the past five years, with unduplicated headcount rising from 10 in FY2020 to a peak of 49 in FY2023, and maintaining a strong presence with 44 students in FY2024. Subject FYE has also grown steadily, reaching 10.2 in FY2024—a 34.2% increase from the previous year—indicating higher credit loads and deeper student engagement. Credit completion rates have improved consistently, climbing from 58% in FY2020 to 84% in FY2024, reflecting strong academic performance and student persistence.

The program has made strides in diversity, with Native American student representation increasing from 10% in FY2020 to 39% in FY2024, aligning with the college's mission and strategic goals. Gender diversity remains limited, with 93% of students identifying as female in FY2024, but the program serves a balanced mix of traditional and non-traditional students (52% and 48%, respectively). Graduation data shows a slight dip in AS degree completions in FY2024, but the introduction of the BS degree—with three graduates—marks a promising expansion. Employment outcomes for AS graduates have been strong in previous years, with 100% employment reported for the classes of 2019–2021.

To address areas of concern and guide future improvements, the program plans to continue aligning with PELSB standards, enhance recruitment efforts, and explore new licensure pathways such as early childhood, special education, and secondary education. Offering more in-person or synchronous courses and strengthening partnerships with local schools and tribal communities will also support retention and engagement. As the program grows, additional faculty and resources may be needed to sustain quality instruction and meet evolving student needs.

7 Commitment to Excellence/Professional Development (All)

- Please describe how your department/program demonstrates a commitment to academic excellence.
- Also, include information on professional development work that faculty within your department/program have completed in the past year and/or plan to complete this academic year.

Commitment to Academic Excellence:

The Elementary Education department at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College demonstrates a strong commitment to academic excellence through its culturally responsive curriculum, alignment with state licensure standards, and continuous improvement in student outcomes. The department has significantly increased its credit completion rate, from 58% in FY2020 to 84% in FY2024, reflecting high levels of student engagement and instructional quality. Faculty maintain rigorous academic standards while integrating Indigenous knowledge and practices, fostering both intellectual growth and cultural relevance. The program's expansion to include a Bachelor of Science degree and its alignment with PELSB requirements further underscore its dedication to preparing highly qualified educators. Ongoing efforts to diversify licensure pathways, offer flexible course formats, and support student success through advising and mentorship continue to elevate the department's academic impact.

Professional Development:

Jess Thompson: Training for 2025-2026: LETRS Training, MAACTE Conference
Dawn Quigley: Training for 2025-2026: Reading League Conference, MAACTE Conference

8 Curriculum Updates/Staying Current

- Please describe any curriculum updates you have made in the past year and any you are considering making this academic year to stay current with industry changes in your academic discipline.
- Also, please check to confirm that your course outlines on the webpage are all active, in the proper format and have updated learning outcomes.

SEP standards are being changed and updated to latest 2023, and reading standards are being updated during a state-wide PELSB reading audit and implemented into reading courses.

Upper levels need to be updated in 2025-2026 year.

9 Career Information/Transfer Opportunities (All)

- Please describe the career information relevant to your discipline and how you share it with students.

The Elementary Education program at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College actively shares relevant career information with students to help them make informed decisions about their

professional pathways. With over 90 teaching openings projected annually in northeast Minnesota through 2030 and a median salary exceeding \$60,000 per year, students are made aware of the strong demand and financial viability of careers in education. This information is primarily shared through the program's website, where students can access up-to-date labor market data, salary expectations, and employment trends. Additionally, career insights are integrated into recruitment efforts, advising sessions, and classroom discussions to ensure students understand the diverse opportunities available—including roles in administration, instructional coordination, and early childhood education. By emphasizing high-demand skills such as teaching, communication, classroom management, and lesson planning, the program equips students with the tools they need to succeed in a competitive and evolving educational landscape.

10 Transfer Pathways/Articulation Agreements (All)

- **Please list any transfer pathways or articulation agreements that exist your program/department and describe how you share this information with students in your discipline.**
 - *Note: When listing the agreement list the expiration/renewal date (if any).*

University of MN Morris Articulation Agreement, shared on EL Ed website page

11 Program/Departmental Engagement (All)

- **How does your program/department engage with students outside of classes?**
- **How does your program/department interact with other departments or members of the college community?**

How do you connect outside of the college with the Fond du Lac Reservation, industry groups, other institutions of higher education, non-profits, etc.?
- **What feedback have you received as a result of your various engagement activities and how have you used this feedback to guide changes in your program/department?**

The Elementary Education program at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College engages with students outside of the classroom through a variety of meaningful activities designed to foster connection, support, and professional growth. Faculty maintain regular office hours and host Zoom-based study sessions to provide academic assistance and mentorship. Students also participate in Lunch and Learn events, which offer informal opportunities to explore educational topics and build community. The Education Club serves as a hub for student leadership and engagement, organizing volunteer opportunities and peer support. Additionally, students are encouraged to participate in campus-wide events such as Indigenous Peoples Day and EdFest, which celebrate cultural identity and promote wellness through interactive workshops and community gatherings.

Our department collaborates closely with other areas of the college through shared committee work, cross-departmental initiatives, and joint programming. These partnerships strengthen our curriculum and ensure alignment with institutional goals, particularly in areas such as student support, cultural responsiveness, and academic success.

Beyond the college, we maintain strong connections with the Fond du Lac Reservation, local school districts, and community organizations. Our advisory board, composed of community members and education professionals, provides valuable insight into workforce needs and program

relevance. Faculty regularly visit schools during student teaching placements and field observations, fostering relationships with educators and ensuring our students are well-supported in their clinical experiences.

Feedback from students and community partners has been instrumental in shaping our program. For example, requests for more in-person learning options and expanded licensure pathways have led us to explore course format changes and potential program growth. We use this feedback to guide continuous improvement, ensuring our program remains responsive, inclusive, and aligned with the needs of our students and the broader educational community.



Academic Program/Department Review

Updated: 8-22-24

Dean Response Form

Department/Program(s): Elementary Education Program

Dean Completing the Form: Sara Montgomery

Date: Sept. 2025

1. Overall Response to Program Review

The Elementary Education program demonstrates strong mission alignment, cultural integration, and a clear commitment to student success. The review reflects a thoughtful use of data, a culturally grounded curriculum, and a forward-looking vision that responds to workforce demand and institutional priorities. Enrollment growth, improved credit completion rates, and expanded degree offerings (including the BS degree) indicate a healthy and evolving program. Faculty engagement, community partnerships, and responsiveness to student feedback further support the program's positive trajectory.

2. Response to any opportunities or areas of concern that were identified including budget, staffing, equipment, facility, or technology needs program goals and alignment as well with college strategic priorities.

The opportunities identified—particularly collaboration with Early Childhood Education, expansion of licensure pathways, and increased flexibility in course delivery—are well aligned with both workforce needs and the college’s Strategic Directions. These initiatives have the potential to strengthen enrollment pipelines, enhance financial sustainability, and increase student access.

Concerns regarding recruitment and retention are valid and appropriately acknowledged. The department’s proactive strategies, including outreach, alignment with PELSB standards, and exploration of in-person and synchronous course formats, are appropriate and supported. Continued monitoring of enrollment trends and student persistence will be important as these changes are implemented.

As licensure options and delivery modalities expand, additional faculty capacity and instructional resources may become necessary. These needs align with institutional planning processes and should be considered in future budget and staffing discussions to ensure instructional quality and program sustainability.

3. Feedback regarding assessment and curriculum work and planning.

The transition from Nuventive to Watermark represents an important step toward strengthening assessment consistency, data access, and long-term program analysis. The department’s engagement in Watermark training and plans to integrate multiple years of program data reflect a strong commitment to informed, evidence-based improvement.

Curriculum updates related to SEP standards and PELSB reading requirements demonstrate responsiveness to state-level changes and accreditation expectations. The planned updates to upper-level coursework in 2025–2026 are appropriate and should further strengthen program coherence and rigor.

4. Feedback regarding internal and external engagement.

The Elementary Education program shows exemplary internal and external engagement. Faculty collaboration across departments, participation in campus committees, and integration with student support services contribute to a strong academic and cultural environment. Engagement with local school districts, the Fond du Lac Reservation, advisory board members, and community partners enhance clinical experiences and ensures program relevance.

Student engagement beyond the classroom—through the Education Club, EdFest, cultural events, and mentoring—supports retention, belonging, and professional identity development. Feedback from students and partners is clearly influencing program decisions, particularly in course format and licensure expansion.

5. Discuss and areas for improvement or possible ideas the department might want to consider.

- Continue developing recruitment strategies with an emphasis on expanding awareness of new licensure pathways.
- Monitor the balance between online, synchronous, and in-person offerings to best support student success and engagement.
- Continue evaluating faculty workload and resource needs as enrollment and program offerings grow.
- Explore strategies to address gender diversity within the program while maintaining strong equity and inclusion practices.

6. Share any special accolades for the department.

The Elementary Education faculty are commended for their culturally responsive pedagogy, dedication to student success, and leadership in aligning curriculum with Indigenous knowledge systems and state licensure standards. The significant improvement in credit completion rates, growth in Native American student representation, and successful launch of the BS degree are notable achievements. Faculty commitment to professional development and continuous improvement reflects positively on the department and the institution as a whole.