

NAVARRO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Subject: **Moving from Ascender Student to Skyward Qmlativ SIS**

Date: January 21, 2026

Administrator Responsible/Position: Jason Rhame, Director of Technology

A. Purpose of Agenda Item:

☐ Information Only

☒ Action Needed

☐ Receive Input

B. Authority for This Action:

☒ Local Policy

☐ Law or Rule

☐ N/A

C. Priority, Goal, or Need Addressed:

☒ Strategic Plan

☒ District/Campus
Improvement
Plan

☐ Other

Priorities

☐ **Priority 1:** Recruiting, Hiring, Coaching, and Retaining High Quality Teachers and Staff to Support Student Outcomes.

☒ **Priority 2:** Maximizing Academic Performance.

☒ **Priority 3:** Maximizing Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricular Opportunities, Performance, and Engagement.

☐ **Priority 4:** Planning, Preparing, and Maintaining Facilities and Environments for Learning.

☐ **Priority 5:** Obtaining and Maintaining Top Rated District Recognition

Board Goals for 2023-2028

☒ **Goal 1*:** The percent of 3rd grade students that score meets grade level or above on STAAR Reading will increase from 49% to 60% by June 2024, 65% for 2024-2025, 70% for 2025-2026, 75% for 2026-2027, 80% for 2027-2028. **(HB3 Required Goal)**

☒ **Goal 2*:** Increased overall student performance in mathematics to 85% Meets Standard by 2028. The percent of 3rd grade students that score meets grade level or above on STAAR Math will increase from 53% to 65% by June 2024, 70% for 2024-2025, 75% for 2025-2026, 80% for 2026-2027, 85% for 2027-2028. **(HB3 Required Goal)**

☒ **Goal 3*:** The percentage of graduates that meet the criteria for CCMR will increase from 72% to 88% by August 2024 and increase to 95% by 2028. **(HB3 Required Goal)**

D.

Summary: **Transitioning the district's student information services to Skyward Qmlativ at the conclusion of the 2025–2026 school year represents a strategic "best-of-breed" modernization that prioritizes the classroom and family experience without disrupting established financial operations. By maintaining Ascender for Business and HR**

functions while migrating student data to Qmlativ’s modern SQL-based architecture, the district can deliver a mobile-first interface for parents and a highly intuitive "Power Grading" environment for teachers. This move addresses current limitations in data visualization and integration, providing educators with real-time analytics and a superior toolset that automates administrative tasks and strengthens the connection between the school and the community.

Background Information:

The district is at a critical juncture regarding its data management. We currently utilize Ascender for both Student and Business operations. While our financial infrastructure remains stable, our student information capabilities have not kept pace with our 300-student-per-year growth. This proposal recommends migrating our student-facing operations to Skyward Qmlativ while keeping financial operations on Ascender. This "Best-of-Breed" strategy delivers a modern, mobile-first experience for our growing community while achieving a full return on investment (ROI) by Year 5.

2. Comparative Analysis & Enrollment Impact

Feature Category	Ascender Student (Current)	Skyward Qmlativ (Proposed)
Price Scaling	Per-Student: Cost rises ~\$13.62 with every new student enrolled.	Inflation-Based: Annual fees scale with CPI (~3%), not population.
Support Needs	Requires paid "Support Days" (\$1,100/day) for core updates.	Standard support and hosting included in annual licensing.
Mobile Access	Web-responsive only; often difficult for parents on-the-go.	Native App: Push notifications for grades and attendance.
Teacher Workflow	Legacy, tab-heavy navigation; manual grade entry.	Google Classroom Sync: Native grade-export to save teachers time.

3. Financial Analysis: The Path to ROI

Under the current Ascender model, our costs grow linearly with our enrollment. At our current growth rate of 300 students per year, our student software expenses will exceed \$84,000 annually by 2033. By transitioning to Skyward Qmlativ, we lock in a more stable cost structure.

Total Project Costs:

- One-Time Implementation: \$139,140 (Setup & Licensing)
 - Recurring Annual Cost: \$28,845 (License & Cloud Hosting)
-

The 8-Year Outlook:

While Year 1 requires an investment, the annual savings in Year 2 (\$28,000+) continue to grow alongside our enrollment. By the end of an 8-year cycle, the district will have avoided \$129,000+ in cumulative software costs compared to maintaining the status quo, all while providing a significantly more powerful toolset to our educators.

Vetting and Discussion:

The recommendation to transition to Skyward Qmlativ is the result of a rigorous, multi-month vetting process involving a diverse cross-section of district leadership, including the PEIMS Coordinator, Principals, Registrars, and the Elementary School Nurse. This stakeholder group conducted a comprehensive "gap analysis" of our current platform, holding several targeted sessions with Skyward to ensure their solutions directly addressed our existing operational limitations. We also spoke with several districts that utilize Skyward Qmlativ SIS and Ascender Financial successfully.

Through these collaborative evaluations, the team identified significant opportunities for improvement in account automation, grading workflows, and real-time data visualization. Following extensive deliberation and hands-on demonstrations, the committee reached a unanimous consensus: Skyward Qmlativ is a robust, future-ready platform capable of meeting our district's complex needs and modernizing our administrative and instructional operations through its built-in API with writeback capabilities.

Empowering the District through Technical Autonomy

Transitioning to Skyward Qmlativ will fundamentally empower our district by enhancing local data control and significantly reducing our reliance on external support from ESC Region 20 for software integrations. Unlike legacy systems that require complex "middle-man" bridges, Skyward's modern, open API architecture allows our internal team to deploy and manage educational resources with greater agility.

A primary driver of this efficiency is the OneRoster API integration with Google Classroom, which creates a seamless link between the digital classroom and our official records. This "Grade Pass-Back" technology allows teachers to sync grades directly from Google Classroom to the Skyward gradebook with a single click. By eliminating the need for manual double-entry, we not only save hundreds of hours in teacher labor but also virtually eliminate human error in the grading process. Furthermore, by optimizing these digital workflows, the district will realize a measurable reduction in printing costs as we move toward a truly paperless instructional environment.

This purchase will be made through the Education Service Center Region 19 Allied States purchasing cooperative. The district will join this cooperative at no cost.

E. Comments Received:

☒ LT

☐ DEIC

☒ Other

All agenda items are reviewed by the Superintendent's Leadership Team.

F.

**Administrative
Recommendation:**

**I recommend the board approve the purchase of
Skyward Qmlativ at the proposed price of
\$167,985.00.**

G. Fiscal Impact and Cost:

Amount: \$167,985.00

☒ Budget

☐ Grant/Special
Funds

☐ Other

☐ Bond

H.

**Exhibits: Skyward ROI Estimates
Skyward Integration Timeline-Proposed**

**I. Action: “I move to approve/disapprove/postpone the purchase of Skyward Qmlativ
SIS at the proposed price of \$165,469.00.”**

Motion by: _____

Second by: _____

FOR: J. Frederick, D. Gilliam, L. Gosch, D. Reinhard, M. Sartain, C. Scheib, B. Stephenson

AGAINST: J. Frederick, D. Gilliam, L. Gosch, D. Reinhard, M. Sartain, C. Scheib, B. Stephenson

ABSTAIN: J. Frederick, D. Gilliam, L. Gosch, D. Reinhard, M. Sartain, C. Scheib, B. Stephenson

MOTION CARRIED/DENIED/POSTPONED