

**North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent
600 E. Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 201
Bismarck, ND 58505-0440**

Title I Updates

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Six Types of Parental Involvement

The North Dakota State Parental Information Resource Center (NDPIRC) and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, Title I office have collaboratively joined the National Network of Partnership Schools. Due to this partnership, all North Dakota schools receiving Title I funds are required to reach out to parents using Dr. Joyce Epstein's six types of parental involvement framework which includes:

- Parenting
- Communicating
- Learning at Home
- Volunteering
- Decision Making
- Collaborating with Community

During the summer of 2008, NDPIRC contracted with ten North Dakota educators to create a Parent Involvement Toolkit. This toolkit is filled with resources and samples for how school personnel can involve parents in each of the six areas. We would like to commend the ten exemplary educators who helped to create this resource for North Dakota school personnel. During the 2008 Title I Fall Conference, every Title I building is receiving one Parent Involvement Toolkit binder to share among all staff in the building.

Title I personnel need to document that they are communicating and collaborating with parents using all six types of parent involvement.

Title I Reallocated Funds

If your district is planning to apply for Title I reallocated funds, please note the following important details:

- Reallocated Title I funds are available to school districts that would like to add on to their Title I program, but need additional funds to accomplish their plan.
- The funds must supplement your current Title I budget. Any expense that has already been obligated cannot be requested with reallocated funds.

- School districts with any unobligated funds are not eligible to apply for reallocated funds. If you have unobligated funds, you must use those dollars first before requesting additional Title I funding.
- To apply for reallocated funds, please complete a budget revision on the STARS. There is a box to check indicating that the budget revision is to request reallocated funds.
- In section B, you will need to provide a detailed description of your request. There are sample forms available on the Title I website at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/reallocated.pdf.
- You must submit your budget revision via the STARS. No hard copy budget revisions will be accepted.
- Budget revisions for reallocated funds are due **October 15, 2008**.
- We have approximately \$150,000 available for reallocation. This is significantly less than last year.
- Bear in mind, the average reallocated funds grant award during 2007-2008 was \$5,000.
- Since the funds are limited, it is a good possibility that only first priority applications will be approved, with the exception of the Title I Fall Conference travel and registration expenses.
- First priority considerations would be increasing teacher time, adding summer school, adding a before or after school program, and other activities relating to direct services to children.
- Every attempt will be made to fund all applications that meet first priority criteria. Second priority applications will be approved only if funds are available.
- Second priority considerations would include salary and benefits for aides/paraprofessionals, travel expenses with the exception of the Title I Fall Conference, materials, supplies, and equipment.
- We hope to have all applications for reallocated funds awarded by the end of October 2008. Activities requested with Title I reallocated funds should plan to begin no earlier than November 3, 2008.
- Reallocated funds are intended for districts with limited Title I allocations, not districts who carry over a large amount of Title I funds each year.
- All reallocated funds must be expended during the 2008-2009 school year. If these funds are not expended when you submit your final financial report, they will be deducted from the amount you are allowed to carry over for the 2009-2010 school year.

Key Title I Resources

There are three key Title I resources that all Title I teachers, coordinators, and authorized representatives should be accessing on a monthly basis. These three resources include:

- Title I Newsletter – <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/nwsltrs/index.shtm>
- Monthly Research and Resources Report (RRR) – <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/RRR.shtm>
- Title I Website – <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/index.shtm>

Reviewing these three resources on a monthly basis will ensure that staff are kept apprised on important Title I initiatives both within our state and on a national level.

Title I and RTI

Title I and Response to Intervention (RTI) are both educational initiatives aimed at identifying struggling students and providing them with research-based interventions in order to help them achieve grade level proficiency. Because both approaches focus on identifying at-risk students and providing them with the instruction that they need in order to get them level with their peers, it only makes sense to coordinate these two initiatives. However, Title I targeted assistance programs, in

particular, have some specific Title I regulations that must be followed. Schools coordinating Title I and RTI need to ensure that the Title I rules are adhered to.

To date, there is no specific U.S. Department of Education guidance available on the topic of coordinating Title I programs in an RTI model. The department has been working over the past year to develop guidance on Title I and RTI. This guidance is expected to be released sometime before the February 2009 National Title I Convention.

School personnel coordinating these two initiatives should be able to ensure compliance with the nine identified items using the attached checklist.

Title I Reminders

- **Title I Time/Effort Logs and Documentation of Time** – Federal law requires all employees including teachers, paraprofessionals, and other staff that are paid with federal funds to document the time and effort they spend within that program. The portion of the federally paid salary should be reflective of the time and effort the individual has put forth for that federal program. North Dakota received a citation on this issue during the USDE monitoring process in May 2008.

Districts that have fully funded federal personnel must also submit an assurance documenting that staff have worked solely for the one particular federal program. The individual and their supervisor must both sign the assurance. This assurance must be completed at least twice each school year. The easiest way to comply with this regulation is to have two signed assurances for all staff:

1. July 1 to December 31 and
2. January 1 to June 30.

Template for Assurance of Time	
From _____ to _____, _____	
(Start Date)	(End Date) (Employee Name)
spent _____ of his/her time on Title I, Part A instructional activities as evidenced	
(FTE)	
by the enclosed schedule.	
_____	_____
Employee Signature	Date
_____	_____
Supervisor Signature	Date

- **Local Accounting Ledgers** – The Title I amounts listed on your local accounting ledger must match those on file as approved in the state Title I office. When you do an electronic budget revision on the STARS, you need to revise your local accounting ledger as well.

During our monitoring process, we have found that the business manager's summary reports quite do not correspond with the amounts identified on the consolidated application or most recent budget revision.

- **District/School Report Cards** – All public school districts must inform parents and community members of the district/school report cards (on the department's website, it is called the "School Plant Profile") and provide an opportunity for individuals to review these reports. The Department of Public Instruction has prepared report cards on the academic achievement of students at the

state, district, and school building level for parents and the public.

Most monitoring submissions include an explanation of the AYP reports for the submission of district/school report cards. There is still confusion regarding the fact that these are two different documents. The report cards are available and posted on the department's website at www.dpi.state.nd.us. On the left side of the screen, click on "Resources," then click on "School District Profile." A sample letter of information to send home to parents can be found on the Title I website at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/targeted/general/reauthoriz/notification.shtm. From here, click on "Sample District Level Notification," scroll down and click on "Sample Letter to Parents – Notification of School District Profile."

- **Contracts** – Object code 300 in the fiscal accounting process is labeled as Purchased Professional and Technical Services. If funds are being used to purchase a service and will be listed in object code 300, the school district must have a contract with the vendor. The contract should, at a minimum, include:
 - A. scope of services,
 - B. duration of the contract,
 - C. method and amount of payment, and
 - D. be executed by both parties.

If you are paying a vendor with federal funds, it is crucial to have a contract or agreement with that vendor which shows exactly how the funds will be used in order to demonstrate that the services are appropriate for the program. A document that sets forth the specific goods and services being purchased with your federal funds proves to auditors and the U.S. Department of Education your intentions for spending federal funds.

Title I Funding for 2009-2010

At this time, it is anticipated that there will be level funding for Title I programs for the 2009-2010 school year.

- Timeline for Information to Become Available Regarding Federal Funding.
 - Congress typically passes the appropriations bill for the subsequent year's funding in December and then states receive their estimated state Title I allocation at the National Title I Convention in January or February. However, this year, the allocation process is going to be significantly delayed.

Congress passed and sent to the president a massive continuing resolution bill that rolled together 12 appropriations bills to fund the government for FY 2009 from October 1st to March 6th. Almost everything was left at last year's levels. The new president and congress probably won't address the funding issue for 2009-2010 until the continuing resolution expiration date of March 6, 2009.

- In February of each year, the Department of Public Instruction determines eligibility status for Title I funding.

Eligibility for a Title I grant requires a district to have a minimum Formula Count of TEN. The Formula Count must exceed 2% of the district's age 5 through 17 population. The Formula Count is a weighted unit consisting of 15.5% of the census poor count, 15.5% of the foster child count, 46% of the eligible free meal count, and 23% of the eligible reduced meal count.

The Census Poor Count is the count of children ages 5-17 who were reported below poverty on the updated federal census. The foster child count is a count of children ages 5-17 living in

foster homes during October 2008. The free meal count is a count of children eligible for free meals. The reduced meal count is a count of children eligible for reduced meal prices. A child must have an approved free or reduced meal application on file at their school district office in October 2008 to be counted. The department's Child Nutrition and Food Distribution unit verifies the free and reduced meal counts. If your total weighted unit drops below ten, the district does not meet the eligibility requirement and your subsequent year's Title I grant would be zero.

Several administrators have questioned the accuracy of the census poor count listed for their district. The state Title I office receives a chart showing the census poor count for every district in the state each January. We have been informed that there is no way to change these numbers. The numbers on the chart are final. Keep in mind that the census data is always a few years behind. Income year 2006 data will be used to calculate the 2009-2010 Title I allocations.

- After eligibility has been determined, we can then use each district's aggregate units for funding purposes.

In February 2009, the state Title I office will send correspondence to all Title I authorized representatives and inform them of the status of their aggregate units. Each district will receive a chart comparing their last year's aggregate units to the current totals. If their aggregate units increase from the prior year, their allocation will probably increase. If their aggregate units go down, their allocation will most likely also decrease. If the numbers do not change much, their allocation will most likely remain steady.

District: Sample					
	Census (15.5%)	Free Meals (46%)	Reduced Meals (23%)	Foster (15.5%)	Aggregate Units
2007 Data	782	1496	691	64	978.220
2008 Data	933	1724	720	64	1113.175

- The department hopes to have **estimated** federal Title allocations available by April 2009. The department will post, on our website, **estimated** federal Title I program allocations for school districts. To access this allocation information, log on to www.dpi.state.nd.us/grants/allocap.shtm. No written correspondence is mailed to school districts regarding estimated federal Title allocations.

Title I Monitoring Projects for 2008-2009

Listed below are the various monitoring initiatives that will be conducted in the Title I office during the 2008-2009 school year.

- **Title I Self-Monitoring** – In order for state Title I program staff to successfully monitor the amount of schools that are required, we have created a self-monitoring guide for both Title I schoolwide schools and targeted assistance schools. Thirty-eight districts have been selected to participate in the self-monitoring process during the 2008-2009 school year. A list of those being monitored this year and the Title I office staff person responsible can be found at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/targeted/resource/monitor/assign.pdf>. If you are one of the thirty-eight districts selected to participate in the self-monitoring process, you will receive

written correspondence from the state Title I office within the next few weeks. The due date for schools to submit the paperwork for the self-monitoring process will be in late November.

- **Program Improvement** – Districts and schools that have been identified for program improvement have very specific requirements that must be addressed each year. Due to these many requirements, the fact that North Dakota was cited as out of compliance on several program improvement requirements, and that the New Title I regulations may go into effect immediately, the state Title I office will be monitoring schools in districts in program improvement sometime during the 2008-2009 school year.
- **Aide/Paraprofessional Requirements** – Staff in the state Title I office will be monitoring and reviewing the PER02 report for compliance with the Title I aide/paraprofessional requirements during the 2008-2009 school year.

Summary of U.S. Department of Education Title I Monitoring Visit

The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) visited North Dakota on May 5-9, 2008 to monitor the Department of Public Instruction's implementation of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act. The programs within NCLB that were monitored included Title I – Part A, Title I – Part D (Neglected and Delinquent), Title I – Part B (Even Start), and Title X – Part C (McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth). The USDE monitoring team consisted of six individuals. In addition to evaluating the state Title programs, the monitoring team visited several North Dakota schools and programs to gather information on the state's implementation of NCLB. North Dakota had eleven citations all together. The three citations that apply to most schools include:

Title I

- Timely AYP Notification
 - Under the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act, all districts and schools are required to send correspondence to the parents of each child enrolled in the district and/or school regarding its Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status. The notice to parents should be written in an understandable format and, when applicable, in a language that parents can understand. Federal law mandates that this notification take place in a timely manner.
 - *For schools/districts identified for program improvement, this notice must take place prior to the first day of school.*
 - *For schools/districts NOT identified for program improvement, this notice must take place at the start of the school year (i.e., as part of the welcome back letter or August newsletter).*

Parental Involvement Set-Aside

- Parents must agree to the manner in which districts are spending the 1% set-aside for parental involvement.

Time and Effort Logs

- Documentation of time and effort must be maintained and reflective of the services rendered. Title I paid personnel are restricted to Title I responsibilities, even in a schoolwide program.

Title I Reports

There are three reports that districts must submit to the Title I office each school year. These reports include:

- Title I Mid Year Financial Report (SFN 7822) – Due January
- Title I Final Financial Report (SFN 7822) – Due July
- Title I Personnel Report (SFN 7357) – Due July

Miscellaneous Title I Issues

- **Title I Coordinator Credentials**

Within the next two weeks, participants of this conference who signed the attendance sheets and hold a Title I coordinator credential will receive a certificate in the mail. This certificate can be used to renew your Title I coordinator credential.

- **Reading Month/Math Month**

Due to time constraints, difficulty in finding interested educators, limited funding, and conflicting computer systems, the state Title I office has decided to suspend sponsoring the development of the Reading and Math Month packets for the 2008-2009 school year.

- **2009 Legislative Session**

The 2009 Legislative Session officially starts in January 2009. In an effort to keep school personnel up-to-date on proposed legislation, we will be creating a link on the Title I homepage to summarize legislative happenings. School personnel will be able to access a copy of the proposed education-related bills, obtain information on how to contact legislators, link to other sources of information, and access a weekly narrative summary of what is happening during the Legislative Session. The significant budget surplus will make for a very exciting Legislative Session in 2009.

- **Title I Staff Changes**

The state Title I office is dealing with a lot of changes both within the department and in our own unit.

We regrettably say goodbye to Ann Ellefson, who has taken the assistant director position with the Approval and Accreditation unit in the department.

Stefanie Two Crow, who has been our Homeless Children and Youth coordinator since July, has accepted the position of Schoolwide administrator. Stefanie has prior experience working with Schoolwide programs, which will make the transition easier for both the department and school personnel.

The Homeless Children and Youth program coordinator position that Stefanie vacated is currently being advertised and we hope to fill the position this month.

Within the next few weeks, the department will be advertising for a new assistant director position for Title I/Special Education. This person will be housed in the Title I unit on the 9th floor of the Capitol building. This position will work toward bridging the work of both Title I and Special Education to deliver more coordinated professional development and technical assistance to North Dakota school personnel. This position will work to sponsor joint Title I/Special Education professional development trainings, generate a monthly Title I/Special Education newsletter, and coordinate the school improvement requirements for both programs. Additional information regarding this position will be posted on the department's website within the next several weeks.