

**Department of Public Instruction  
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### **Literacy Initiative Overview**

On December 16, 2009, President Obama signed into law the spending bill for the 2010-2011 school year. The legislation appropriates new funds to create a comprehensive literacy program serving students from birth through grade 12. This new program is meant to replace the Reading First program, which has been eliminated. Some highlights of the new program include:

- \$250 million was appropriated for literacy grant programs to provide effective literacy instruction for children in preschool through grade 12.
- From the total allocation, \$10 million is reserved for a state formula grant program to support a State Literacy Team with expertise in literacy development. The team will be required to develop a comprehensive state literacy plan. Each state will receive at minimum \$150,000 for the State Literacy Team.
- From the total allocation, \$235 million is reserved for competitive state grants. States must subgrant at least 95% of their grants to local educational agencies or other nonprofit providers of early childhood education.
- State educational agencies may reserve up to 5% for state leadership activities, including technical assistance and training, data collection, reporting, and administration.
- Subgrantees will be local educational agencies, except that grants for “early literacy” services may also be made to other nonprofit providers of early childhood education that partner with a public or private nonprofit organization or agency with a demonstrated record of effectiveness in improving the early literacy development of children from birth through kindergarten.
- Grant recipients must use the following guidelines when spending the funds:
  - At least 15% for children birth through age 5;
  - At least 40% for children from kindergarten through grade 5; and
  - At least 40% for students in middle and high school, with an equitable distribution between the two grade ranges.
- Funding may be used for professional development, screening and assessment, targeted interventions for students reading below grade level, and other research-based methods of improving classroom instruction and practice.

The state Title I office will provide additional information as we receive updates from the USDE. A new webpage has been created to share and disseminate information regarding this literacy initiative. All information pertinent to this grant can be accessed at [www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/index.shtm](http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/index.shtm) on the department’s website.