



North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
Title I and Special Education

TEAM NEWS

(Together Everyone Achieves More)

December 2011

Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent, 600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 201, Bismarck, ND 58505-0440

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Title I Appropriations and Mid-Year Financial Report

There have been a few new funding developments over the past several days. Reportedly, Congress has approved a funding package which includes Title I appropriations for the 2012-2013 school year. It is an unexpected surprise to have the appropriations this early as last year funding decisions were not made until spring. Many had predicted severe cuts in funding; however, Title I actually received a miniscule increase from last year. We probably won't receive our state allocation for the 2012-2013 school year until mid-January.

In addition, Congress partially reversed the cut in Title I funding made in October for this current school year. Unfortunately, the Title I allocations for the 2011-2012 school year will change again. Districts that lost funding should get some of those funds back. Once we receive our revised state allocation, Stephanie Gullickson will rerun the Title I allocations and we will share the new amounts with districts and schools.

Due to this recent development, we are postponing the due date for the Title I Mid-Year Reports. We think it would be better to determine the new Title I allocations and make budget adjustments before we begin to process Mid-Year Reports. Therefore, please do not submit a Title I Mid-Year Financial Report. All Title I authorized representatives and business managers will receive correspondence in January with Mid-Year Report information. We apologize for this inconvenience; however, as we all know, Congress can make budgetary changes at any time and we must comply with the regulations. We will continue to process Requests for Funds, so please do not let the revised Mid-Year Report due date postpone your mid-year payment requests.



Director's Report

ESEA Flexibility Waiver

by: Laurie Matzke, North Dakota Director of Title I

On December 5, 2011, the advisory group established to review the ESEA Flexibility Waiver application requirements and determine whether North Dakota should apply for a waiver met for the third time.

The discussion at the meeting centered mainly on Principle III which requires the state to develop guidelines for a principal/teacher evaluation system. The committee members seemed comfortable with the requirements outlined in Principles I and II; however, there was widespread concern with Principle III.

The committee did not come to consensus on whether to apply for a waiver at the close of the meeting on December 5, 2011. The next submission date to apply for a waiver is February 21, 2012. Should the committee seek the waiver, the application would need to be completed by the first week in February so that it could be shared with various constituency groups, as well as the public, before being submitted. If the committee chooses not to apply in February, there will be another opportunity in late summer or early fall of 2012.

The decision on whether to apply in February 2012 will determine our path for the 2012-2013 school year. If the state does not apply, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) will generate preliminary AYP reports based on the 2011-2012 state assessment results in March 2012 and our state will continue to follow the provisions outlined in the NCLB Act. There are a handful of states (Montana, California, and Texas) that have announced that they are not applying for a waiver.

If you would like to learn more about the ESEA Flexibility Waiver, the NDDPI has a dedicated website which houses information pertinent to this topic. The direct link for this new website is www.dpi.state.nd.us/ESEA/waivers.shtm. Resources are not limited to, but include:

- ESEA Committee Members
- Draft Application
- Information on Teacher and Principal Subcommittee
- NDDPI Webinar Materials
- Link to U.S. Department of Education Materials

The advisory committee meets again on January 11, 2012, to review the work of the Principle III Teacher and Principal Subcommittee and further discuss our options for applying for the waiver. We will keep personnel informed as to how the situation plays out. All North Dakota school personnel are strongly encouraged to review the material on the website so you are familiar with the waiver requirements and voice your opinion as to whether North Dakota should or should not apply.



N&D Update

2011 N&D Annual Survey

Federal law requires each state to gather the numbers of neglected and delinquent children from the facilities served within their state each year. These numbers must be reported to the Department of Public Instruction whether you choose to take part in receiving N&D allocations or not. The numbers reported directly affect the allocation distribution to our state for neglected and delinquent children. The report called the Annual Survey of Children in Institutions for N&D was officially due to the state Title I office on **December 9, 2011**. All state and local neglected and delinquent facilities are responsible for assisting their local public school district officials in collecting and reporting these numbers. If you have not completed this report, please do so as soon as possible. If you have any questions, please contact Jacki Harasym at jharasym@nd.gov or (701) 857-7770



Professional Development Workshops

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction Parent Involvement Technical Assistance program is offering professional development workshops to strengthen parent engagement in special education. Each workshop can be tailored to the needs of your community. Topics offered include:

- **Changing Perceptions:** We will discuss ways to strengthen communication with parents, techniques for defusing tense situations, and create win-win negotiations especially in the IEP process;
- **Involvement or Engagement:** Discover new ideas to go beyond just hosting parent activities to real engagement in a child's learning;
- **Family Friendly Schools:** Learn ways to be welcoming, honoring, and connected to the families in your school;
- **The Making of a Plan:** We will strategize a plan to increase family engagement using researched methods;
- **Supporting Learning At Home:** Many parents are unsure of how to help their child at home, especially if they struggle in school. This workshop will give you tools and tips for specific needs to share with parents.

For additional information, contact: Kendra Bartholomew, NDDPI Parent Involvement Technical Assistant at (701)-240-2609 or kendrab@pathfinder-nd.org. The flyer for the training can be found online at www.pathfinder-nd.org/pdf/news/ProDevelopmentFlyer.pdf

ARRA Timeline Extension Waiver

In late September 2011, the U.S. Department Education (USDE) announced that they are providing states with an opportunity to apply for a waiver to extend the period of availability for ARRA funds past September 20, 2011.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) submitted our state waiver to the USDE on October 31, 2011. We requested an extension for LEAs to spend the Title I ARRA funds through June 30, 2012. Until our state waiver has been approved, we will not be able to approve any budget revisions or process Requests for Funds for districts intending to spend the funds or make obligations past September 30, 2011.

We will notify districts and schools immediately when we receive our official approval from the USDE and provide additional guidance regarding the parameters for spending the remaining ARRA funds.

IDEA Update

Families having a child with a disability often incur expenses that are above and beyond what insurance and other funding programs will cover. To assist families with expenses not covered by insurance or other funding programs related to Assistive Technology, IPAT developed the P4P stationary bike race. IPAT hosted the first Pedaling for Possibilities (P4P) stationary bike race in February 2011. Cyclists, sponsors, contributors, and volunteers from all over the state made the event a roaring success, raising \$20,000.

A P4P review committee has developed policies and procedures for the awards process. Last August, the committee screened, reviewed, and selected the applicants to receive the first round of funding awards. Fifteen applications from cities, small towns, and farms in all regions of the state were reviewed. The applicants' ages ranged from 2 to 92. The only applications not funded were those that sought to use P4P funds to replace funds from other programs, like education or vocational rehabilitation, that are responsible for purchasing AT. The 2011 P4P funds purchased or assisted with the purchase of: vision equipment, hearing devices, vehicle modifications, and communication devices for eligible applicants.



The second P4P stationary bike race will be held on February 11, 2012, at the NDSU Wellness Center. The Bike Team packets are ready and the space is reserved – teams of riders are needed to make the day complete! Grab some friends, co-workers, exercise pals or neighbors and get ready to generate some revenue and pedal a stationary bike for prizes, a good time and a good cause. To be part of the action:

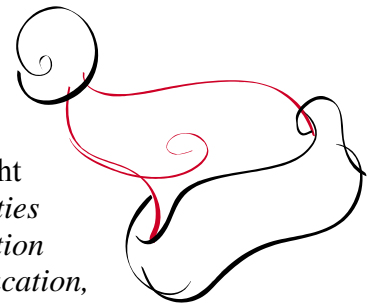
- Create a team of 10 riders, pick a captain and download all the information you need at www.ndipat.org/pedaling or call (800)-895-4728 and request a Bike Team Packet.
- Want to participate, but don't have a team, contact Jenny Davis at info@pedalingpossibilities.org or (701) 526-3454 and leave your name and contact information.

P4P is a great way to beat the winter blahs, make new friends, and support people with disabilities in their efforts to get assistive technology. Please join us on February 11, 2012, at the NDSU Wellness Center.

As a reminder, now is a great time to collect data to document the need for Extended School Year services. The coming winter break can provide important data on the recoupment period for recently learned or established skills and behaviors.

How Do You Really Feel About Your Students' Parents?

When college students select special education as a major, they typically picture themselves working closely with children and youth who have disabilities. That's only right since the primary purpose of special education is to *"ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living."* IDEA 300.1(a)



Do you know the second purpose of the federal special education law?

It's *"to ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and their parents are protected."* IDEA 300.1(b).

Whether or not a college special education major fully realizes it at the beginning of her/his studies, working with parents is a required and essential part of being a special educator.

This emphasis on working with parents in the IDEA is partially a reflection of the past exclusion of parents in the decisions regarding their children's education. Now the law expects every school to be responsible for taking positive steps to include parents.

But there are more reasons for actively including parents than just because the law requires it. Research clearly shows that meaningful parent involvement directly relates to improved student achievement. If you want your students to do better in school, make sure their parents are working with you.

Whether you're a new special educator or a mid-to-late career experienced professional, it's helpful to do an honest appraisal of your philosophy regarding working with parents. The *National Center on Special Education Accountability Monitoring* in collaboration with the *Future of School Psychology Task Force on Family School Partnerships* recommends that you ask yourself these questions:

- What role do I believe the parents should play on the team? Observer? Provider of information? Decision maker? As a team, decide how you will involve the parents in decision-making.
- Do I believe that the parents are equal partners with me in the education of the child?
- Am I aware of cultural or language differences that might make the parent uncomfortable? If the answer is "no," the parent will pick up on it! As you expand your repertoire of parent friendly practices---*minimizing jargon, making sure that there's a comfortable environment for IEP meetings, using an LCD projector if making document changes, etc.* ---you'll feel increasingly at ease working more closely with moms and dads. They'll feel more comfortable working more closely with you, too. It's clearly a win-win opportunity, especially for the students first entered special education profession to serve in the first place.

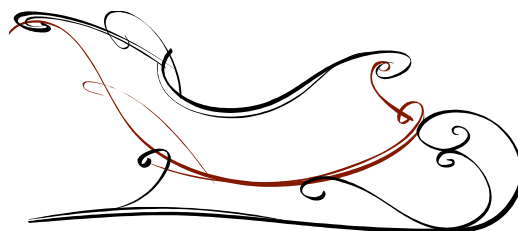


Department of Public Instruction Website Change

Please note that the Department of Public Instruction has revised our website. The list of top 10 pages is no longer available. To get to the new website go to www.dpi.state.nd.us/ and follow the instructions below to get to our Title I webpage:

- ✓ Click on Programs and Services from the left hand list
- ✓ A list of programs and services will drop down for selection
- ✓ Select Title I Program located toward the bottom of this list
- ✓ Select the desired information on the Title I page

It is the goal of Title I to provide you with important information and resources. We are constantly updating our webpage to include current Title I information and updates. Please check our page often. If you have questions, please contact our office at (701)328-2254 or toll free at (888) 605-1951.



Monthly Featured Articles

Building Child-Parent Interactions Into Homework Lowers Stress, Boosts Learning

Homework is a source of stress and tension in many families. One study found that 29% of parents reported that homework was a “major source of stress” at home. In a recent study in the *Journal of Advanced Academics*, researcher Frances Landis Van Voorhis says that teachers can reduce some of the tension and stress surrounding homework and also improve students' attitudes toward homework by making an interaction between a child and parent or family member part of the student's assignment.

She reports that homework interactions between an adult and child not only give family members guidance in how to help their children, but also increase student achievement based on state assessment results. Under a program called Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS) developed by the researcher, students were assigned homework that featured an adult-child interaction at least once a week. The interactions could involve an experiment, discussion, survey or interview.

For example, in a middle school science activity, the homework was for the student to examine a chart of physical, social, emotional and intellectual changes and record the changes he or she has observed in life. The student and family partner then discussed questions like, “Which changes are you happy about and which changes are you least happy about?”

For each activity, students and families were instructed on the point at which an interaction was to occur and the roles the student and family partner were to play. All TIPS activities include 4 components:

- 1) letter to family partner;
- 2) a student-led interaction;
- 3) home-to-school communication; and
- 4) parent/guardian signature.

Two-way communication was encouraged between home and school. Families were encouraged to share comments and observations with teachers about whether their child understood the homework, whether he or she enjoyed the activity, and whether the parent gained information about the student's classwork.

Participating in the study were 36 teachers (19 intervention, 17 controls) and 575 students in four elementary schools (K-5) and five middle schools (6-8). The teachers taught elementary mathematics, middle school language arts and middle school science. Some 57% of students in the study received free or reduced-price meals and 51% were male. The majority of students (52%) were African American, 42% were White, and 6% were Hispanic. One-third of the samples of students were in TIPS for two years, one-third was in TIPS for one year, and one-third was control.

Depending on subject and grade level, TIPS students returned between 72% and 91% of TIPS activities and families signed between 55% and 83% of TIPS assignments. Students receiving free and reduced-price meals tended to turn in significantly fewer TIPS than those not receiving meals.

There were no differences in the amount of time students spent on homework, but students using TIPS for two years earned significantly higher standardized test scores than controls, according to the study. About 68% of students in both TIPS and control groups reported 15-20 minutes of homework on the subjects, while 16%-20% reported 30-40 minutes per night.

The TIPS intervention included a one-week professional development program for teachers during the summer. TIPS teachers wrote a letter to the families of students during the summer program explaining the weekly TIPS assignment and the expectation for a family member to participate in the assignment with the student. Teachers of TIPS students gave one TIPS assignment weekly for a total of 30 TIPS activities each year.

Sustained use of TIPS was associated with gains in student standardized achievement, but not report card grades, the researcher reports. TIPS assignments related directly to the district's curriculum standards, which were addressed in the high-stakes tests, the researcher writes.

Another reason for the improved performance of two-year TIPS students on the state assessment is that during the summer professional development program, teachers thought about homework as a vehicle to strengthen their teaching practice and increase students' discussions with their family around content standards.

Suggestions for Teachers:

The researcher had the following suggestions for teachers who want to incorporate interactions between child and family partner in homework assignments:

Identify the interactive components of the assignment first. Teachers should think carefully about how the skill or objective of the assignment may be highlighted in an interaction before writing the actual assignment.

Don't expect the family partner to teach school skills. The family partner serves as an assistant, not a teacher. All parents, regardless of formal education, should be able to participate.

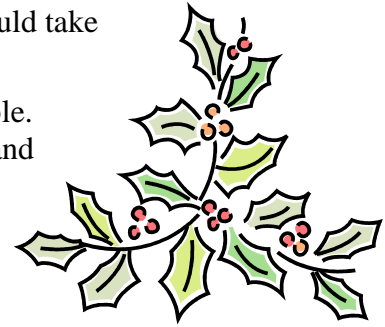
Clearly identify student and family roles. The directions of the assignment should be clear to students. It should be easy for them to tell at what point they need to ask for family involvement.

Link skills and objectives to the real world. Both students and parents report enjoying the process of making such links.

Don't lose sight of the objective of the assignment. Because interactive assignments should take about 15-30 minutes, it's important for students to zero in on the assignment's objective.

Pretest and edit the assignment. Teachers should do a run-through to make sure it's doable. Think of the average student and parent and consider if the questions are absolutely clear and the student and family roles clear.

Vary the types of interactions. Not all activities should ask students to interview a family partner. Different interactions include games or demonstrations or collecting reactions or ideas.



North Dakota State Literacy Initiative

On December 16, 2009, President Obama signed into law the spending bill for the 2010-2011 school year. The legislation appropriated 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. From the total allocation, \$10 million was reserved for a state formula grant program to support a State Literacy Team with expertise in literacy development. Each team was required to develop a comprehensive state literacy plan to serve students from birth through grade 12.

The North Dakota Literacy State Team has completed the State Comprehensive Literacy Plan. A copy of the plan can be accessed on the department's website at: www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/initiative/plan.pdf.

The plan has been written as a framework with the intention to continue as a working document in which resources and information can be added to further assist educators in high-quality literacy instruction. It has been designed on a continuum so educators can establish where their entity "fits" in each essential element. They can then determine the next steps toward improvement or sustainability. The literacy plan can be used as is or as a guideline to assist organizations in creating their own specific plan.

The new initiative presents an exciting challenge to address literacy within the state in a comprehensive manner. Most prior literacy initiatives pertained exclusively to early childhood or elementary-aged children. This new initiative presents an opportunity to explore research-based literacy initiatives from birth through grade 12.

A webpage has been created to share and disseminate information regarding this literacy initiative. All information pertinent to the literacy initiative can be accessed at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/initiative/initiative.shtm on the department's website.

2012 Title I Sponsored WebEx Trainings

Training Topic	Presenter	Date
Title I and Title III Coordination	Lodee Arnold	January 18, 2012
Targeted Assistance Programs	Ann Ellefson	February 15, 2012
After School Programs	Josh Sharp	February 21, 2012
NDMILE	Stephanie Two Crow	March 2012
Working with Homeless Students	Jacki Harasym	March 20, 2012
Preschool and Title I	Tara Bitz	April 2012
Federal Updates	Laurie Matzke	May 2012

As our WebEx training series resumes, we will begin with the first training on Title I and Title III Coordination scheduled for January 18, 2012. Registration information for the Title I and Title III Coordination WebEx will be available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/events.shtm on the Title I website by the first week in January 2012.

2010-2011 School District Profile Notification

The state Title I office would like to inform you of the release of the 2010-2011 School District Profiles (also known as School District Report Cards).

Information includes statewide school plant performance data and statewide district performance data, as well as information on the district's assessment, demographics, and the statewide district performance summary.

This serves as a prime opportunity to remind school districts that they are required to inform parents that this information is available to them. A sample letter regarding this requirement is available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/targeted/general/reauthoriz/district.shtm. Most districts choose to inform parents of the availability of this information through their school newsletter. Remember, in addition to providing a website address for the document, you must also inform parents as to how they can review a written copy made available by the district (i.e., copy in the school office, library, etc.).



Upcoming Events

- × **2012 National Title I Conference: Soaring to Excellence**
January 21–24, 2012 in Seattle, WA
 Registration can be found at www.nationaltitleiassociation.org/page/T12Conference
- × **Title I & Title III Coordination WebEx**
January 11, 2012
 Registration information will be posted as details are available
- × **NDRA Spring Reading Conference**
April 19–21, 2012 in Dickinson, ND
 Discovering Literacy on the Western Edge hosted by the Badlands Reading Council
 For more information, go to www.ndreadon.com/
- × **NCTM 2012 Annual Meeting**
April 25–28, 2012 in Philadelphia, PA
 More information will be posted as details are available
- × **2012 Parent Involvement Conference**
April 26–28, 2012 in Fargo, ND
 More information will be posted as details are available
- × **IRA 57th Annual Convention**
April 29–May 3, 2012 in Chicago, IL
 For more information, go to www.reading.org



Title I To Do List

Administrators

- Send notice on 2010-2011 School-District Profile.
- Request reimbursement of expenditures on a RFF form.
- Monitor expenditures and submit budget revisions to allow for changes.

Targeted Assistance Teachers

- Communicate supplemental instruction to support classroom to parents.
- Maintain portfolios for Title I students.
- Report assessment results to parents using Title I Progress Report.
- Send home information on how parents can support their child's education.

Schoolwide Teams

- Conduct regularly scheduled team meetings and study group sessions – research and discuss schoolwide reform strategies and effective practices (document agendas and minutes).
- Align professional development with goals, objectives, and reform strategies.
- Ensure ongoing documentation of 10 schoolwide components for monitoring purposes.
- NDMILE – Review NDMILE WebEx Series available on NDMILE website.
- NDMILE – Review coaching comments and review or revise indicators assessed and planned as necessary.
- NDMILE – Assess, Plan, and Monitor School Plan according to "Crosswalk of NCLB Schoolwide Plan Components and NDMILE KEY Indicators".
- NDMILE – Continue to address questions in the Title I Schoolwide Supplemental Report.
- NDMILE – Record planning team agenda and minutes in NDMILE tool.
- NDMILE – Next submission due date is Jan. 31, 2012.

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