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“What Works”

A Resource Guide for
Schools and Districts




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The State Title I office has created this “What Works” resource guide for schools and districts to provide educators with strategies, interventions, and components used in effective educational programs. This document contains 22 one-page profiles. Each of these profiles provides an overview, research summary, and resource section on educational topics being used across the nation to improve education and raise academic achievement. The resources within this document are provided to assist schools and districts in their school improvement efforts.

Our purpose is to provide a directory of resources and then let educators decide what works for their school. These resources are not all inclusive and are meant to be ever-changing as new information becomes available. One-page profiles are included in this guide on the following topics:

-  Full-Day Kindergarten
-  A Well-trained Substitute Teacher Pool
-  Individual Learning Plan
-  Reading First Program
-  Differentiated Instruction
-  Intensive Intervention Programs
-  Strong and Effective Leadership
-  Strong Parental Involvement
-  Preschool Programs
-  Strong Attendance Policy or Plan
-  High Quality Focused Professional Development
-  Turnaround Specialists
-  Knowledge of Grade Level Expectations
-  Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessments Aligned with State Standards
-  Response to Intervention
-  High Quality and Effective Teachers
-  Supplemental Services
-  Extended Day – Extended Year Programming
-  One-on-One Tutoring
-  Use of Research Based Curriculum and Materials
-  Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching
-  Block Scheduling

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction Title I office staff, in collaboration with the North Central Comprehensive Center and some of our North Dakota School Support Team members, created this resource. We would like to acknowledge and thank the staff from the North Central Comprehensive Center, as well as Tanya Lunde Neumiller, Jean Hall, and Paula Rogers (School Support Team members) for their assistance with this project.

This document can be accessed at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/resources.shtm> on the Title I website. If you have any questions or comments, please contact the State Title I office at 1-888-605-1951.

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

Overview:

There is a great deal of research to support full-day kindergarten programs. A general trend in education suggests that more children will be attending full-day kindergarten in the years to come.

The growing number of full-day kindergarten programs is the result of a number of factors, including a greater number of single-parent and dual-income families in the workforce who need full-day programming for their young children, as well as the belief by many that full-day programs better prepare children for school.

Full-day kindergarten programs can provide children with opportunities to spend more time engaged in active, educational activities. These students are often better prepared for first grade than half-day students. Teachers that spend a full day with children have time to structure their classes with more opportunities for small group interactions. Full-day students attend school with more regularity than their half-day counterparts.

In addition to the many positive learning experiences, there are also social and behavioral benefits for children in full-day kindergarten programs. At the same time, it is important to remember that the quality of teachers and activities are just as influential on the child's development as the amount of time they are actually in the classrooms.

Research:

The State Title I office has compiled a document which provides a summary of research, articles, and resources to support full-day/every day kindergarten programs. This document is provided to demonstrate the effectiveness of early initiatives to encourage more schools and districts to implement these kinds of programs. The research listed in the document includes such topics as comparing full-day and half-day programs, cost effectiveness, achievement benefits, social benefits, etc. This document can be accessed at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/earlychild/kindergarten.pdf on the Title I website.

Resources:

- The State Title I office has developed guidance which includes information on how schools can implement a full-day kindergarten program in a Title I Targeted Assistance School, a Title I Schoolwide School, or using Reading First funds. This guidance can be accessed at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/earlychild/guidance.shtm on the Title I website.
- In October 2006, the Department of Public Instruction, through the State Title I office, surveyed all public school districts in North Dakota to gather data on kindergarten programming in the state. This survey outlines the various types and locations of public kindergarten programs, funding sources used to operate full-day kindergarten programs, readiness assessments used for kindergarten, etc. Log on to www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/earlychild/results.shtm to access a compilation of the reported schools' responses to that survey.
- The State Title I office has a new link on our website pertaining to Early Childhood Initiatives. The purpose of this website is to provide schools, districts, and other interested parties with guidance on the topic of early childhood education, which includes full-day kindergarten programming. Providing high-quality early childhood experiences can help ensure that children have the foundation to meet academic standards and experience success throughout their education process. This Early Childhood Education link can be accessed at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/earlychild/index.shtm.

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: A WELL-TRAINED SUBSTITUTE TEACHER POOL

Overview:

Each day during the school year, about 274,000 classrooms in this country are staffed by substitute teachers, according to figures provided by the Substitute Teaching Institute (STI) at the Utah State University. Utah State estimates that by the time students entering kindergarten today complete 12 years of public school, they will have spent the equivalent of one school year being taught by a substitute teacher.

Typically, substitute teachers are needed for one of three reasons: professional development opportunities for regular classroom teachers, illness, or medical or maternity leave. In today's world of high expectations for student achievement, students can not afford to lose a day of instruction when the regular classroom teacher is absent. Every day counts. Students, teachers, and administrators must find ways to ensure that quality learning continues when a substitute teacher takes over a class. To improve student performance, students need to be engaged in effective instruction every day. The expectations for effective instruction must continue on days when the regular teacher is absent. A teacher's absence can not mean a lost day of learning.

In order to ensure that quality instruction for every student in every class occurs every day, districts must develop and maintain a high quality cadre of substitute teachers and include them in the district's professional development trainings. Training of substitute teachers improves the quality of education, lowers school district liability, and reduces the number of student, parent, and faculty complaints.

Research:

Although research cites classroom management as the greatest challenge faced by substitutions (Aceto, 1995; Galvez-Martin, 1997; Nidds & McGerald, 1994; Ostapczuk, 1994), the focus of this one-page profile is the importance of maintaining high quality instruction when a substitute teacher is placed in a classroom.

Marzano (2001) reported the notion that individual teachers can have a profound effect on student learning. Wright, Horn, and Sanders (1997) research concluded that "the most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher." There is a close correlation between teacher quality and student achievement. High teacher absenteeism may negatively impact individual and classroom performance. Therefore, it is extremely important for districts to develop a cadre of highly qualified substitute teachers.

Research also demonstrates the importance of high quality professional development (Lauer, P., & Snow-Renner, R., 2005. *McREL insights: Professional development analysis*.) Therefore, it is vital that a district's cadre of substitute teachers be included in district professional development endeavors.

Finally, research supports aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment to standards. (Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning., 2005. *Keys to learning; How can we align our district's curriculum with our standards?*) Therefore, it is important for the district's cadre of substitute teachers to be included in district efforts on curriculum mapping.

Resources:

- "Ideas for Developing a High Quality Cadre of Substitute Teachers," a handout developed by the State Title I office, is available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/resources.shtm on the Title I website.
- The School Study Council of Ohio (SSCO) has designed The Ohio Center for Substitute Teachers (OCST) in response to Ohio school districts' growing need for qualified substitute teachers. The center is a clearinghouse for research and best practices. www.scco.org/ocst/index.html
- *No Substitute for Quality: What Substitute Teachers Need to Know and Do* by Margaret D. Tannenbaum. www.nea.org/teachexperience/subk030417.html
- *Not Just a Warm Body: Changing Images of the Substitute Teacher*. ERIC Digest. www.ericdigests.org/1998-1/warm.htm
- The *SubStrength Finder* is a set of 78 questions for potential substitute teacher to identify strengths and weaknesses prior to entering the classroom. <https://sti.usu.edu/subs/submastery/substrength2/>
- Status of Substitute Teachers: A State-by-State Summary (2000-01). Requirements for substitute teachers vary widely among the states. www.nea.org/substitutes/statebystate.html
- Districts who want to hire better substitute teachers, but don't have time to revamp the programs themselves can turn to outside resources, such as Kelly Educational Staffing, who currently works with 2,900 public and private schools in 45 states. www.kellyeducationalstaffing.com

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLAN

Overview:

An individual learning plan or ILP is a user (student) specific program or strategy of education or learning that takes into consideration the student's strengths and weaknesses (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia). It is a tool that allows educators to plan, monitor, manage, and evaluate student achievement by identifying student needs and applying research-based interventions based on student needs.

This tool is commonly used in schools by educators as well as by supervisors in the business world. An ILP is often used by the employee to assess individual accomplishments and/or needs in essential knowledge, skill, and abilities.

The idea behind an ILP is that the needs of individual students are different, and thus, must be addressed differently (one size does not fit all). An ILP typically looks at student strengths and weaknesses, sets individual goals, outlines research based interventions to attain goals, assigns the individual responsible, sets a timeline, and finally, evaluates progress attained. An ILP reflects a change in current practice in order to improve the academic achievement of a student.

ILPs are commonly used in programs for learning-disabled students, students of limited English proficiency, and Title I students. However, some states and districts have taken it a step further and required the use of ILPs for all students who are not proficient. In Washington State, individual learning plans are required for students who were not successful on any or all of the content areas of the Washington Assessment for Student Learning during the previous school year. Other districts require teachers to generate ILPs for all students who score more than six months below grade level on a uniform district or state test.

An ILP can be a powerful tool for individualizing instruction, promoting a team approach, and collaborative effort in teaching (i.e., teacher, resource staff, and parents all working together to help the student) and subsequently raising the academic achievement of at-risk students.

Research:

Research shows that teachers can provide more individual attention and instruction to students as needed when there is a documentable process in place to give students individual attention. Teachers must increasingly become more knowledgeable about the needs of their students and become greater advocates for each student's individual learning needs.

There is research to support both differentiating instruction (Tomlinson, C., 2000) and individualizing instruction (Coulter, G., 2004) as methods of raising achievement. An ILP can be a valuable tool for educators to use in differentiating and individualizing instruction to help schools attain the ultimate goal of raising student achievement.

Resources:

- Individual Learning Plan – www.det.act.gov.au/services/word/ACTGuidelinesSampleForms.doc. This is a document that provides many templates and sample forms to assist schools in preparing for and participating in the ILP process.
- An electronic ILP product from Learning Points Associates, along with a set of frequently asked questions, can be accessed at www.learningpt.org/downloads/e-ILPfaq.pdf or by calling 800-252-0283.
- An in-depth sample ILP in a multitude of subjects can be accessed at www.ideafamilies.org/members/forms/docs/k8forms.k8_ilp.pdf.
- An ILP for Limited English Proficient Students can be accessed at www.doe.state.in.us/lmmp/pdf/ilp.pdf
- Other ILP templates can be accessed at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/resources.shtm> on the Title I website.

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: READING FIRST PROGRAM

Overview:

The Reading First Program was established by the *No Child Left Behind* Act and signed into law by on January 8, 2002. Reading First is a federal grant program in which states and districts are awarded grants to apply scientifically based reading research into their classroom to ensure that all students know how to read well by the end of third grade. There are many schools across the national and in North Dakota that opt to implement a Reading First program even without federal Reading First funds.

Reading First programs implement specific components into their school's reading initiative with intensity and commitment. These Reading First components include assuring a strong leadership through the principal and a reading coach; selecting and implementing a core reading program that is based on scientifically based reading research for a 90-minute block of time with fidelity; providing an additional 30 minutes of reading instruction for at-risk students; administering valid and reliable assessments for screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based instruction; and providing intensive on-going professional development for teachers.

Research:

The research base behind Reading First is broken into five areas (Armbruster, et. Al., 2003).

1. **Phonemic Awareness** helps children learn to read and spell. It is most effective when students are taught phoneme manipulation using letters of the alphabet and when instruction focuses on one or two types of manipulation.
2. **Phonics Instruction** is more effective when it is systematic than non-systematic instruction. Systematic phonics instruction significantly improves word recognition and spelling, as well as children's reading comprehension.
3. **Fluency** is improved by repeated and monitored oral reading. No evidence is available showing if silent, independent reading with minimal guidance and feedback improves fluency.
4. Some **vocabulary** must be taught directly even though the meaning of most words is learned indirectly through everyday experience.
5. **Text Comprehension** can be improved through instruction using specific comprehension strategies. There are six strategies which have a scientific base for improving comprehension - monitoring comprehension; using graphic and semantic organizers; answering questions; generating questions; recognizing story structure; and summarizing.

Resources:

- ABT Associates, Inc. (2006) *Reading First Evaluation: Interim Report*. Cambridge, MA.: U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved April 12, 2007, from www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content_storage_01/0000000b/80/34/8a/44.pdf
- Armbruster, C.C., Lehr, F. & Osborn, J. (2003). *Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read*. Washington, DC: Partnership for Reading. Retrieved April 12, 2007 from www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/PFRbooklet.pdf
- National Reading Panel. Retrieved April 12, 2007, from www.nationalreadingpanel.org/Publications/subgroups.htm
- North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. Reading First Program. Retrieved April 12, 2007, from www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/reading/index.shtm
- U.S. Department of Education. Reading First: Purpose. Retrieved April 12, 2007, from www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/index.html

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

Overview:

Everyone learns differently and each student brings different needs into the classroom. Differentiated instruction is matching instruction to meet the different needs of individual students and help each student reach their potential. Providing quality differentiated instruction is challenging. Instruction must be powerful enough to reach both the high performing students and the at-risk students.

Assessment results are crucial in making decisions on differentiated instruction. Before determining how to differentiate instruction, the teacher must know each individual student's needs. Using the assessment results, decisions can be made to determine the best way to provide whole group instruction, how small group instruction will be implemented, and which students will be provided additional instruction.

Providing professional development for school staff is essential. Professional development is available through several sources. For more information on professional development sources, start with the resources listed below.

Research:

While it may be difficult to find empirical evidence to support differentiated instruction, there is a plethora of testimony from teachers indicating differentiated instruction does work (NCAC).

The number of ways to provide differentiated instruction is countless. There is no quick and easy answer for what works best. A differentiated classroom should be proactive, result-driven, qualitative, and student-centered. It is best to use a mix of whole group, small group, and individual instruction.

Tomlinson discusses the uses of differences in text, differences in support for students, differences in expectations for learning outcomes, differences in student abilities, differences in student interests, differences in curriculum tasks. The Florida Center for Reading Research suggests changing the size of each group; the number of days per week each group receives additional instruction; the number of minutes per day; and the type of lesson structure, content, and level of the lesson.

Tilton provides many suggestions on ways to differentiate. When choosing a strategy or technique for the classroom, make sure it is highly practical for the general classroom; results-driven; attuned to student readiness, level, and learning style; and time-efficient for the teacher.

Resources:

- Florida Center for Reading Research. *Differentiated Reading Instruction: Small Group Alternative Lesson Structures for All Students*. Retrieved on April 18, 2007, from www.fcrr.org/assessment/pdf/smallGroupAlternativeLessonStructures.pdf
- National Center on Accessing The General Curriculum (NCAC). *Differentiated Instruction*. Retrieved on April 18, 2007, from www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_diffinstruc.html
- Tilton, Linda (2006) *The Teacher's Toolbox for Differentiating Instruction*. Covington Cove Publications. Shorewood, MN. Phone 952-470-0297. Website www.LindaTilton.com.
- Tomlinson, C.A. (2000) *Differentiation of Instruction in Elementary Grades*. ERIC Digest. ERIC Document Reproduction No. ED443572. www.caroltomlinson.com/

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WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: INTENSIVE INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

Overview:

Since the IASA Education Act of the late 90s, intervention strategies and models of intervention have inundated the educational system. Each model and program offer strategies and methods of increasing achievement and learning. Some models of intervention focus on specific subject areas, some on particular aspects of learning, some focus on environmental issues, and others attempt to cover it all.

Comprehensive programs consist of facets like research model instructional practices and steps needed to ensure that the instructional innovations are effectively adopted in the classroom.

With the conception of *No Child Left Behind*, models and strategies of intervention attempted to hone the findings of earlier intervention models. The real attempt was to find what factors worked and what factors did not show significant gains.

Research:

Dr. Joseph K. Torgeson has conducted and analyzed a wide variety of research on reading intervention. His analysis concluded that early intervention is the best technique, and for those intermediate elementary grades and higher, the key to success lies in the amount of time spent on reading practice using strategies of early prevention more explicitly and intensively taught. Those districts/schools looking at adopting a curricula or intervention should pay close attention to the outcome measures used to analyze the nature of the program. The gaps that still remain after the curricula or intervention has taken place will indicate what portion of the students will be affected by the intervention and how they will be affected.

It is no surprise that motivation is a key link to achievement and may be a reason why research models have greater success with lower grade levels. As indicated by Block et al., (2002) through the work of Eccles and Midgley (1989) and Harter (1990), "motivation research indicates that students in kindergarten are the most motivated and those in high school are the least motivated" (page 7, introduction). As part of the motivational process, activities to reward improvement and emphasize effort should be included, according to Block et al., (2002).

There are certain items common to effective interventions including: early intervention; significant instruction increase; instruction in an explicit, systematic manner with practice and review; skillful instruction that is guided; and motivation. School leaders who are part of this process, according to the Center of Instruction (2007), can assist the intervention effectiveness by: offering motivation; making a system of student identification readily available; providing monitoring of intervention through consistent assessment; making time for, and enforcing regular team meetings; making intervention adjustments as needed based on student progress; provide enough personnel to staff the intervention efforts; providing programs and materials; as well as training to support" (page 6).

Resources:

- Block, C., Gambrel, L., & Pressley, M. (Eds.) (2002). *Improving comprehension instruction: Rethinking research, theory and classroom practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Torgesen, J. (2004). Lessons learned from research on interventions for students who have difficulty learning to read. In McCardle & Chhabra (Eds.), *The Voice of Evidence in Reading Research*, pp.355-382. PA: Paul H. Brooks Publishing Co.
- Torgesen, J. (2006). What we know about the impact of intensive interventions with older students. Retrieved on 4/3/2007 from Center for Instruction Florida.
- Center on Instruction. (2007). A principal's guide to intensive reading interventions for struggling readers in early elementary schools. Retrieved on 4/3/2007 from www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Principals%20guide%20to%20intervention.pdf
- Florida Center for Reading Research. www.fcrr.org/
- What Works Clearinghouse. www.whatworks.ed.gov. (Includes a section that provides ratings of early intervention reading programs)

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: STRONG AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Overview:

In today's educational society where student achievement is a large focus, strong leadership to spearhead such initiatives is a vital commodity; certain leadership traits have proven as effective means. Research of the 1990s educational leadership has attempted to identify these leadership traits. In some cases, leadership is being analyzed as a primary strategy in school reform.

The guiding principles or standards in which school issues are approached incorporate ideas of optimal educational leaders. These standards include: facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community; advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth; ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment; collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs and mobilizing community resources; acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context." Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996. (pages 10-20).

According to Cotton (2003), key components of strong leadership have been associated with high student achievement. Furthermore, strong leadership traits have been positively related to student achievement, attitudes, and social behavior.

Research:

Waters and Grubb (2004), through their *Leading Schools: Distinguishing the Essential from the Important*, indicate their "factor analysis identifies seven leadership responsibilities positively correlated with leading changes with second-order implications: change agent; flexibility; ideals and beliefs; intellectual stimulation; knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment; monitor and evaluate; and optimizers" (page 5).

Hargreaves and Fink (2003) note the importance of sustained leadership principles as a key to success. The principles include: sustaining learning; making success ongoing; incorporating other leaders; addressing social justice issues; developing resources from other people and material; developing the environment in diversity and capacity; and consistent and ongoing environmental engagement. Hargreaves et al., (2003) notes, "if change is to matter, spread, and last, sustainable leadership must be a fundamental priority of the systems in which leaders do their work" (page 10).

According to the Council of Chief State School Officers Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium *Standards for School Leaders (1996)*, leadership within the school is multifold. Traits of effective school leaders incorporate aspects of "strong education belief; ideas based on learning, teaching, and school improvement; being a moral agent and social advocate for their served children and the community; and individuals who can make strong connections with other people, value and care for other individuals, and members of the education community" (page 5).

Waters and Grubb (2004) have indicated that a key finding of their analysis of educational leadership indicates that the "order" and "magnitude" of change within the present school structure can impact how teachers perceive their leader's performance.

Resources:

- Cotton, K. (2003). *Principals and student achievement: What the research says*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Fullan, M. (2005). *Leadership and sustainability: Systems thinking in action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Green, R. (2003). *Practicing the art of leadership*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Hargreaves, A. & Fink, D. (2004). The seven principles of sustainable leadership. *Educational Leadership*, 61 (7), 8-13.
- Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium. (1996). *Standards for school leaders*. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers.
- Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., McNulty, B. (2003). *School leadership that works*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Waters, T., & Grubb, S. (2004). *Leading schools: Distinguishing the essential from the important*. Denver, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: STRONG PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Overview:

A critical dimension of effective schooling is parental involvement. Research has shown conclusively that parental involvement at home in their children's education improves student achievement. Furthermore, when parents are involved at school, their children go farther in school.

Parental involvement became a major educational issue in the 1980s due to an increasing concern about the quality of education in this country. States began taking a greater role in monitoring and maintaining academic standards. Communities became ever more watchful of the expense of public education. Local schools districts became concerned about continuing to provide high-quality teachers and services while resources were dwindling. And parents wanted an assurance that their children would receive adequate preparation to lead rewarding adult lives.

Parent involvement is a valuable, yet largely untapped, resource for schools struggling to provide state-of-the art instruction with diminishing funds. It is a way to instill pride and interest in schooling, increase student achievement, and enhance a sense of community and commitment.

Research :

Research shows that the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to:

- Create a home environment that encourages learning
- Express high (but not unrealistic) expectations for their children's achievement and future careers
- Become involved in their children's education at school and in the community. www.nea.org/parents/research-parents.html

Schools that undertake and support strong comprehensive parental involvement efforts are more likely to produce students who perform better than identical schools that do not involve parents. Schools that have strong linkages with and respond to the needs of the communities they serve have students who perform better than schools that don't. Children who have parents who help them at home and stay in touch with the school do better academically than children of similar aptitude and family background whose parents are not involved. The inescapable fact is that consistent high levels of student success are more likely to occur with long-term comprehensive parental involvement in schools. www.cde.ca.gov/be/ms/po/policy89-01-sep1994.asp

Resources:

- Section 1118: Parental Involvement www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA/sec1118.html
- Parent Involvement California State Board of Education www.cde.ca.gov/be/ms/po/policy89-01-sep1994.asp
- Parent Involvement in School www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/3/cu6.html
- What Research Says About Parent Involvement in Children's Education *In Relation to Academic Achievement* www.michigan.gov/documents/Final_Parent_Involvement_Fact_Sheet_14732_7.pdf
- Getting Involved in Your Child's Education www.nea.org/parents/index.html
- North Dakota Department of Public Instruction Title I Website. www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/targeted/require/parent/index.shtm

STATE TITLE I OFFICE

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

Overview:

Across the nation, school districts are working on many fronts to ensure that no child is left behind and that all children reach academic proficiency. However, many educators are discovering that reform efforts in K–12 educational systems are sometimes too little, too late. By the time some children reach kindergarten, they are already far behind their peers in skills and measures of school readiness. These educational gaps tend to be much more difficult and costly to close as children advance through elementary, middle, and high school. This realization has led many states to try to get it right from the start by expanding their financial investments in pre-kindergarten services, with a goal to better prepare young children for school success. With public schools facing heightened accountability requirements, preschool has emerged as an important strategy to promote school readiness and close achievement gaps in elementary school and beyond. Currently, 38 states provide some type of state-funded public preschool programs, yet only 20 of the 38 states providing public preschool programs require their lead teachers to hold a baccalaureate degree.

There is a growing emphasis by many in Congress and President Bush for investment in a national preschool program. Advocates of preschool programs stress the importance of an investment in “human capital” as a source for economic growth throughout the country as the nation transitions to a post-industrial, knowledge-based economy. Economic benefits include lowered rates of teenage pregnancy, dramatically lower rates of criminal activity, greater commitment to marriage, and higher earnings and property wealth.

Research:

Research concludes that well-designed educational programs for young, economically disadvantaged children can clearly affect their lives for the better, both during their school years and beyond. These programs also enhance the development of other children, particularly the handicapped. Economic analyses indicate that providing such programs is an excellent investment in the future of our society (Barnett and Escobar, 1987). A report issued by states that fund preschool programs convey the following results:

- Increased receptive vocabulary scores
- Increased children’s math scores
- Increased children’s print awareness scores
- Found no significant effects of children’s phonological awareness
- Children’s participation in a quality learning preschool program created the framework for adult success
- The lifetime economic benefits to the preschool program participants, their families, and the community far outweigh the economic cost of their high-quality, preschool program

Resources:

- The State Title I office has developed guidance on how schools can implement a pre-school program using Title I funds. www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/earlychild/index.shtml
- Preschool Education: A Concept Whose Time Has Come www.naesp.org/ContentLoad.do?contentId=1665
- Early Reading First www.ed.gov/programs/earlyreading/index.html
- North Dakota Head Start www.nd.gov/humanservices/services/childfamily/headstart/ Head Start and Early Head Start are comprehensive child development programs, serving children from birth to age five, expectant mothers and families.
- Literacy Initiative Extends to Babies www.jacksonville.com/tu-online/stories/121806/met_6848939.shtml
- Good Start, Grow Smart - The Bush Administration’s Early Childhood Initiative. www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/earlychildhood/toc.html
- National Center for Early Development and Learning www.fpg.unc.edu/~nced/
- Teaching Our Youngest - A Guide for Preschool Teachers and Child Care and Family Providers - U.S. Department of Education. www.ed.gov/teachers/how/early/teachingouryoungest/index.html
- Using Individually Appropriate Instruction in Preschool - International Reading Association. www.reading.org/publications/bbv/books/bk535/abstracts/bk535-2-Venn.html
- New Position Statement Responds to Early Literacy Pressures - International Reading Association. www.reading.org/publications/reading_today/samples/RTY-0504-position.html

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: STRONG ATTENDANCE POLICY OR PLAN

Overview:

Most schools face problems of excessive absenteeism. Many of these schools have an attendance policy; however, with the day-to-day challenges faced by the schools, enforcing this policy may fall by the wayside. In Virginia it was estimated that if schools were to reduce excessive absenteeism by 25%, 22,000 additional students would be able to score above the national average on standardized tests (Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy, 1997). Focusing on increasing attendance and reducing truancy could have a huge impact on the achievement levels of students and the school as a whole.

Starr (2002) reports that a survey reported in *Student Truancy*, "students most often cited boredom and loss of interest in school, irrelevant courses, suspensions, and bad relationships with teachers as the major factors in their decision to skip school." Starr also states that "other studies indicate that habitual truants are struggling academically, do not have friends who attend school regularly, see no reason for attending school, and report feeling socially isolated in school. Most commonly, from the student's perspective, the immediate cause of truancy lies within the school."

As you can see, the issue of poor attendance is compounded with other problems. When addressing attendance and creating policies, schools must also recognize and address the additional issues that are present.

Research:

It seems logical that the more often a child attends school, the better he or she performs, but now we have research to prove this concept. The Minneapolis Public Schools website states that "Students who attend school between 85 and 100 percent of the time pass the state tests in reading and math at much higher rates than students who attend school less than 85 percent of the time."

It also seems logical that as school truancy increases for a student, the risk of student dropout increases. Much of the current research on this issue focuses on student dropouts and graduation rates rather than on student attendance (Sheldon, S., 2002). The research that has been done on this issue indicate that schools must address student attendance issues early on in education (Sheldon, S., 2002).

Westchester Institute for Human Services Research, Inc. (2004) indicated "absenteeism for reasons other than illness increases with each grade, starting in grade 8." However, a strong attendance policy alone will not resolve student truancy problems. Schools must take approaches that not only address attendance, but provide early interventions, targeted interventions, and increase the parent's and student's relationship with the school. (Westchester Institute for Human Services Research, Inc., 2004).

Resources:

- National Center for School Engagement. This website provides resources concerning school attendance, attachment, and achievement – the 3 A's. www.schoolengagement.org
- Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. (2004). Increasing Student Attendance: Strategies from Research and Practice. Available from www.nwrel.org/request/2004june/Attendance.pdf
- Sheldon, S. (2002). *Present and Accounted For: Improving Student Attendance Through Family and Community Involvement*. The Journal of Education Research. Available from www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb3507/is_200205/ai_n8304495
- Starr, L. (2002). *Tackling Teen Truancy*. Education World. Available from www.education-world.com/a_issues/issues300.shtml
- *10 Things a School Can Do to Improve Attendance*. www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/progress/resource.shtml

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: HIGH QUALITY FOCUSED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Overview:

The *No Child Left Behind Act* (Section 9101) defines professional development. This section indicates that professional development includes activities that:

- Improve and increase teachers' knowledge of the academic subjects the teachers teach,
- Are high quality, sustained, intensive and classroom focused, and
- Positively impact classroom instruction and teacher performance, to name a few.

It also goes on to say that professional development does not consist of one-day events or short-term workshops and conferences.

The Education Commission of the States website on professional development addresses the fact that professional development allows teachers to keep up with the ever-changing issues in education. Teachers need professional development to:

- Understand state standards and incorporate these standards with student learning in the classroom,
- Become familiar with new methods of teaching and the ways students learn,
- Use materials and equipment, such as computers, to supplement the classroom instruction, and
- Adapt their teaching to best meet the needs of students.

Research:

While there is little solid research on high-quality professional development, there is a general consensus that effective professional development is marked by the following characteristics:

- Focuses on the intersection of subject content and pedagogy
- Includes opportunities for practices, research, and reflection
- Is embedded into a teacher's job
- Takes place during the regular school schedule
- Is sustained over time
- Includes and fosters elements of collegiality and collaboration among all teaching staff and administration.

(Education Commission of the States, 2007)

Resources:

- Embedded Professional Development: Strategies and Resources for Implementation is available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/present/0405regprodev.pdf
- Hassell, E. (1999). *Learning from the best: A toolkit for schools and districts based on the National Awards Program for Model Professional Development*. Available from www.learningpt.org/pdfs/pd/lftb.pdf
- Lauer, P., & Snow-Renner, R. (2005). *McREL insights: Professional development analysis*. Denver, CO: Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL). Available at www.mcrel.org/PDF/ProfessionalDevelopment/5051IR_Prof_dvlpmt_analysis.pdf
- Center on Instruction. (2006). *Tips for Designing a High Quality Professional Development Program: Building a Community of Reading Experts in Elementary Schools*. Available from www.centeroninstruction.org/files/PDTips.pdf
- National Staff Development Council. The NSDC is committed to ensuring success for all students through staff development and school improvement. Their goal is that all teachers in all schools will experience high-quality professional learning as part of their daily work. www.nsd.org/index.cfm

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: TURNAROUND SPECIALISTS

Overview:

The state of Virginia has created a program it calls the “Virginia School Turnaround Specialist Program.” Its purpose is, “...to deliver an executive education program specifically designed for the needs of a cadre of experts who are charged with ‘turning around’ consistently low-performing schools...”^{*} The idea is that they will develop a pool of school administrators, trained in principles of effective business and education management, to turn around schools that are not meeting AYP requirements.

The program runs for two years and includes requirements that the participant’s school must make AYP or reduce failure in reading or math by 10% after one year. After two years, the participant’s school must make AYP. If a participant attends all required trainings and meets the additional AYP criteria listed above, he/she is issued a Turnaround Specialist credential.

The four required trainings include:

1. District Leadership Conference – A two-day residential program focused on ensuring that the Turnaround Specialist is provided with support necessary for turnaround.
2. Executive Education Residential Programs – These are two summer-long programs with coursework focused on effective turnaround management in both education and business.
3. Cohort Retreats – In January of each year, Turnaround Specialists invite a cohort of school-based personnel to attend these two-day retreats that focus on best practices and identifying and solving challenges.
4. District Meeting Retreats – Local strategic retreats held with a district team, including the district superintendent, which focus on sustaining improvements.

Participants are also assigned a mentor or “peer coach” to help guide their decisions at the school level as they participate in the program.

Research:

The program utilizes research in effective management of both schools and business in turning around low performing schools/businesses.

Resources:

Information about the Virginia Turnaround Specialist Program is available at the Virginia’s Department of Education website at www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/OCP/vstsp.html

An online pod cast interview with three principals who participated in the Turnaround Specialist program and then were sent in to low-achieving schools and expected to make academic achievement after one year is available at www.pbs.org/merrow.

^{*} This quote, as well as the description of the program above, is taken from the “Virginia School Turnaround Specialist Program: A Component of Teacher Retention & Support” downloaded from the Internet on April 19, 2007 at www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/OCP/vstsp.html.

STATE TITLE I OFFICE

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: KNOWLEDGE OF GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

Overview:

The alignment of curriculum, instruction and assessment has been a primary focus of school improvement efforts since the passage of *No Child Left Behind*. More recently, many states have taken standard implementation one step further, identifying specific grade level expectations for content areas at each grade level.

With so many different terms utilized in the standards-based world, it might help to clarify this way:

- Content standards are the goals for learning (the outcome—where we want students to be)
- Benchmarks provide us with specific descriptions of knowledge and skills needed at various points in the school system
- Performance standards tell us what that learning will look like
- Grade level expectations specifically identify what skills and knowledge are needed at each specific grade level in order for a student to meet the content and performance standards

While benchmarks are sometimes written with the same specificity of a grade level expectation, often they may be written in more general terms. If they are written with specificity, they are essentially a grade level expectation. At the same time, many benchmarks are written to identify achievement at the end of certain grade spans rather than at each grade level.

Grade level expectations are specific benchmarks identified for each grade level. Quality grade level expectations are aligned vertically, from one grade to the next. They identify the specific skills and strategies all students need, at each grade level, to reach proficiency on the state standards. They allow teachers to know, specifically, what content and knowledge is expected at each grade level and design curriculum and instruction accordingly.

Research:

The research that supports the expansion of standards and benchmarks into grade level expectations aligns to Robert Marzano's identification in *What Works in Schools* published, by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, of a "guaranteed and viable curriculum" as the most important thing a school can do to raise academic achievement. If a school is serious about providing students with a guaranteed and viable curriculum, then teachers need to understand the specific expectations for students at their grade level and teach to these expectations. By working to identify grade level expectations at the local school level, school districts better "guarantee" that teachers know the content that they must deliver, which if delivered assures that students are on track to achieve on assessments aligned to these standards.

Marzano, R.J. (2003). *What works in schools: Translating research into Action*. Alexandria VA: ASCD.

Resources:

- The state of Washington has developed an "Online Grade Level Resources" tool to help teachers teach to its grade level expectations. www.k12.wa.us/Ealrs/
- McREL has developed a document to provide guidance to local school districts who want to develop or revise standards and benchmarks. www.mcrel.org/PDF/Standards/5011TG_TechnicalGuide.pdf
- The document "Weaving Standards Into Learning" provides a good overview of the various standards, grade level expectations, etc. terminology, clarifying differences and suggesting ways to take standards into the classroom. www.prel.org/products/ms_re_/weaving.pdf
- The summer 2006 *Changing Schools* newsletter article from McREL offers a specific process to "unpack" standards and identify grade level expectations as a first step in providing a "guaranteed and viable curriculum." www.mcrel.org/pdf/ChangingSchools
- The State Title I office contracted with seven North Dakota teachers to develop a one-page list of the grade level expectations for specific grades. In addition, they developed a test to go along with the grade level expectations. www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/resource/select/index.shtm

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENTS ALIGNED WITH STATE STANDARDS

Overview:

If schools are measured based on their students' achievement toward identified state standards, then schools must ensure that they have the components in place to best enable their students to meet these standards. If we expect students to meet these standards, then the **curriculum** (what we are teaching), the **instruction** (how it is taught) and the **assessment** (how we measure growth and modify instruction) must be based on these standards. Since AYP is based on a school's score in relation to these standards, it is clear that curriculum, instruction, and assessments must be in alignment to help students reach these standards.

Over the past few years, many schools have been aligning curriculum to standards and developing standards-based curriculum documents. Through tools like MAP testing and the North Dakota State Assessment, schools are utilizing assessments aligned to standards to help inform their curriculum. More recently, schools and staff are learning about and implementing Differentiated Instruction, a style of teaching that requires teachers to identify the varying needs of students in the classroom and then teach to various student needs in order that all students may reach high academic standards. It is important for schools to recognize that all of these components – standards-aligned curriculum, differentiated instruction, and assessment – poise the school to provide students with the skills necessary to meet high academic standards. When each of these key components is aligned, schools have a greater likelihood of impacting student achievement.

Research:

McREL recently (2005) conducted a research synthesis to identify the evidence that aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment does indeed improve academic performance. This research is summarized in a document entitled *McREL Insights - Standards-based Education: Putting Research into Practice*, available to download at: www.mcrel.org/PDF/Standards/50511R_Standards_synthesis.pdf

Resources:

- Standards have been a major focus of the work of McREL, and a variety of tools, research documents, and information are available on their website at www.mcrel.org/topics/Standards/.
- The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) has developed a systemic model for school improvement that focuses much effort on aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment to standards. A summary of their work and findings is available at www.sedl.org/rel/resources/ws-report-summary04.pdf.
- The North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) has tools available regarding alignment of curriculum, instruction and assessment. www.ncrel.org/sdrs
- The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has state standards and benchmark information available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/perform/index.shtm

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

Overview:

Response to Intervention (RTI) is the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying student response data to important educational decisions. RTI can be applied to decisions in general, remedial and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction/intervention guided by student outcome data.

Public law 108-446, Sec. 613(f) states the following: Early Intervening Services – Services provided to students who have not been identified as needing special education or related services but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in a general education environment.

RTI is at the forefront of methods being utilized as a process to help raise the academic achievement of at-risk students.

Research:

There is currently an abundance of research available to support the various components of an RTI model, such as the need for data-based decision making, a tiered delivery approach for services, and continuous progress monitoring. In addition, research supports the implementation of effective early intervention strategies.

- Lyon, G. Reid Lyon and Jack Fletcher. (2001) Early Warning System. The authors describe three factors that led to a dramatic increase in children identified with LD. The authors make a case for implementing effective early intervention programs. www.hoover.org/publications/ednext/3389276.html
- The National Research Center on Learning Disabilities (NRCLD) – Response to Intervention (RTI) has gained momentum as a means of determining learning disabilities in school-age students. NRCLD has undertaken a number of activities examining RTI best practices and offer the results at www.nrclد.org.
- The National Center for Learning Disabilities – provides information to parents, professionals and individuals with learning disabilities, promotes research and programs to foster effective learning, and advocates for policies to protect and strengthen educational rights and opportunities. www.ld.org.

Resources:

- The North Dakota State Special Education office has a RTI link on their website with a wealth of information pertaining to RTI. www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/personnel/index.shtm
- A North Dakota Department of Public Instruction Statewide RTI Leadership team created a document entitled “RTI in a Unified North Dakota Educational System” providing a North Dakota overview of RTI. www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/personnel/RTI.pdf
- RTI PowerPoint Presentations. www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/personnel/PPPRes.shtm
- RTI Resources. www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/personnel/resources.shtm
- A Parent’s Guide to Response to Intervention (K-12) – NCLD has written a Parent’s Guide to Response to Intervention to provide an overview of the RTI process, describe how it is implemented in schools and offer questions that parents can ask. www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/personnel/parent.shtm
- Information on Title I and RTI is available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/personnel/TitleRTI.shtm
- The National Research Center on Learning Disabilities has undertaken a number of activities investigating Response-to-Intervention as a component of SLD assessment and determination procedures. www.nrclد.org/research/rti.shtml

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: HIGH QUALITY AND EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

Overview:

No Child Left Behind defines “highly qualified teachers” as those who have: 1) a bachelor’s degree, 2) full state certification or licensure, and 3) prove that they know each subject they teach. There is no doubt that meeting the state preparation requirements is important. However, “highly qualified” does NOT necessarily mean “high quality.” Madeline Hunter (1976) contends that teacher quality/competence is based on what a teacher does, not what a teacher is.

The National Association of Elementary School Principals’ publication *Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do (2001)* stated that “effective principals do whatever is in their power to ensure that every classroom in the school has a certified, qualified, effective teacher.” In a study of high-performing, high poverty schools by Samuel Casey Carter (2000), the author reported that “whatever else needs to happen to improve academic outcomes, teacher quality has to improve first.”

To be effective, teachers must know both their subject matter and how to teach it to diverse learners. The road to high quality teaching and learning includes providing support and learning opportunities that teachers and staff need to improve instruction. Professional development must “be focused on high-quality instruction and student work, happen in real time, in school and be more team based” (NAESP, 2001. p. 41).

Research:

Marzano (2001) reported that the notion that individual teachers can have a profound effect on student learning even in schools that are relatively ineffective, was first noticed in the 1970s when researchers began to examine effective teaching practices. More recently, researcher William Sanders and his colleagues noted that the individual classroom teacher has even more of an effect on student achievement than originally thought (Marzano, 2001). After analyzing achievement scores of more than 100,000 students from hundreds of schools, Wright, Horn, and Sanders (1997) concluded that “the most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher. In addition, the results show a wide variation in effectiveness among teachers. If the teacher is ineffective, students under the teacher’s tutelage will show inadequate progress...” (p. 63).

A report from researcher Dr. William Sanders indicated that students who have several effective teachers in a row make dramatic gains in achievement, while those who have even two consecutive ineffective teachers lose significant ground from which they may never recover. For example, children who achieve at similar levels in the second grade may be separated by as many as 50 percentile points three years later, depending on the quality of the teachers they had. The difference is even more acute for poor children.

Resources:

- Title I School Support Team: a free resource for North Dakota educators working to implement and/or improve Title I programs. Information is available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/resources.shtm. Click on School Support Team.
- There are many resources available at www.ascd.org. ASCD, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, holds conferences, provides training, and produces publications on a variety of educational topics and provides research information on educational issues.
- Marzano, R.J., Pickering, D.J., & Pollock, J.E. (2001). *Classroom instruction that works: Research based strategies for increasing student achievement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- *Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do*. Created by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (2001).

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICES

Overview:

Low-income families can enroll their child in supplemental educational services if their child attends a Title I school that has failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for three or more years. The term “supplemental educational services” refers to free extra academic help, such as tutoring or remedial help, that is provided to students in subjects such as reading, language arts, and math. The extra help can be provided before or after school, on weekends, or in the summer. The services are free to qualified students.

Districts must make a list available to parents of state-approved supplemental educational services providers in the local area and must let parents choose the provider that will best meet the educational needs of their child.

Providers of supplemental educational services may include nonprofit entities, for-profit entities, local educational agencies, public schools, private schools, public or private institutions of higher education, and faith-based organizations. Entities that would like to be included on the list of eligible providers must contact their state education agency and meet the criteria established by the state to be considered for the list of eligible providers.

Research:

The focus of NCLB and supplemental services is to improve student academic achievement through the use of proven approaches delivered by state approved supplemental service providers. The State Title I office has compiled a document that provides an overview and guidance related to supplemental educational services including, but not limited to: new requirements and allowable activities; eligibility; state-approved supplemental service providers; and suggestions and ideas for increasing supplemental service program effectiveness. This information can be accessed at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/targeted/general/supsvcs.shtm.

Resources:

- The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction provides guidance and step-by-step directions for implementing the supplemental services provision at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/targeted/general/supsvcs.shtm. A list of state approved supplemental service providers is also available at this site.
- The U.S. Department of Education provides several resources related to supplemental services at www.nclb.gov. In particular, the following site provides information and innovations for creating strong supplemental educational services programs: www.ed.gov/admins/comm/supsvcs/sesprograms/report.html.
- Read about what high-quality education research says about out-of-school-time programs at www.mcrel.org/newsroom/hottopics.asp.
- National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education. (2003). *Supplemental Educational Services for Schools Identified as Low Performing*. www.ncpie.org/nclbaction/supp_edu_services.html.

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: EXTENDED DAY – EXTENDED YEAR PROGRAMMING

Overview:

Extended day – extended year learning time can be defined in a number of ways. For instance, extended day can mean adding time to the regular school day like Edwin Loe Elementary School in New Town did two years ago. The school board added 30 minutes to the regular teaching and learning day to allow additional time for a 30 minute intervention period whereby all students would benefit. However, extended day programs are usually defined as “after school” programs that provide tutoring services. Extended year programs may be adding days to the calendar to extend the regular school year for all students, but usually means “summer school.”

In addition to providing supervision, after school and extended school day programs are now being seen as a means of improving academic achievement. Funding for the programs has been available through Title I, 21st Century grants, Program Improvement funds, and local district funds, to name a few. Adequate funding for many schools, however, remains an issue.

Quality programs should provide safe, engaging environments that expand learning outside the regular school day or year. According to the Education Commission of the States (ECS), common elements of quality programs include:

- Goal setting, strong management and sustainability
- Qualified after-school staff
- Effective partnerships
- Strong involvement of families
- Enriched learning opportunities
- Evaluation of progress and effectiveness

For maximum effectiveness of extended programs, assessment information must be used to ensure that individual student needs are diagnosed and addressed.

Research:

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head state departments of education. Since 1998, the CCSSO has been actively engaged in research and development activities to gain knowledge about high quality extended learning and development opportunities in order to build state capacity in the implementation and maintenance of such programs. For more information, visit www.ccsso.org. The State Title I office also has extensive information on this topic at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1.

Resources:

- The Education Commission of the States (ECS) is an interstate compact created in 1965 to improve public education by facilitating the exchange of information, ideas, and experiences among state policy makers and education leaders. Visit www.ecs.org for information on “Programs and Practices” and “Selected Research and Readings” about extended day programs.
- The Finance Project is an independent nonprofit research, consulting, technical assistance and training firm that specializes in helping leaders plan and implement financing and sustainability strategies for initiatives that benefit children, families, and communities. Visit www.financeproject.org to review their 2005 Strategy Brief on *Using NCLB Funds to Support Extended Learning Time: Opportunities for Afterschool Programs*.
- The State Title I website has information and ideas to help schools implement successful extended day – extended year programs. Visit www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1. Under General Information, access Title I A-Z Index.

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: ONE-ON-ONE TUTORING

Overview:

The McREL Research brief titled *The Effectiveness of Out-of-School Time Strategies in Assisting Low-Achieving Students in Reading and Mathematics: A Research Synthesis* key findings is as follows: Out-of-school time (OST) strategies that provide one-on-one tutoring for low-achieving or at-risk students have strong positive effects on student achievement in reading.

The Effectiveness of Out-Of-School Time Strategies in Assisting Low-Achieving Students in Reading and Mathematics: A Research Synthesis analyzed 56 studies conducted since 1984; each met high standards for rigor in exploring the impact of OST strategies. Researchers found reading gains for students in kindergarten through second grade and for high school students. One-on-one tutoring brought the greatest reading gains. Education and Learning (McREL)

www.afterschoolalliance.org/advocate/PDFS/Issue_4-15_FINAL.pdf

Overall, the largest positive effect size (.50, a gain of 19 percentile points) occurred for the reading strategies that used one-on-one tutoring. In summary, these findings suggest that certain program features can result in even higher positive effects of OST on student achievement. Authors: Lauer, P. A., Akiba, M., Wilkerson, S. B., Apthorp, H. S., Snow, D., & Martin-Glenn, M. (2004). *The effectiveness of out-of-school-time strategies in assisting low-achieving students in reading and mathematics: A research synthesis* (Updated ed.). Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

www.mcrel.org/Newsroom/hottopicOutOfSchoolTime.asp

Strong theoretical backing was used in the design of the tutoring programs analyzed by Mantzicopoulos, Morrison, Stone, and Setrakian (1992). Each treatment was a series of methods driven by differing reading theories, and the authors reported that the purposive aim of the tutoring program gave the effort needed support. Similarly, Matz (1989) describes stages of intervention influenced by a variety of common methodologies, and Johnson (1987) describes tutoring sessions influenced by direct instruction. In each of these studies, a strong purposive implementation in the program being studied led to increased achievement.

One study also tied program success to thorough, specific tutor training and continued program monitoring. Morris, Tyner, and Perney (2000) describe Early Steps, an early intervention reading program similar to Reading Recovery (a large-scale methodology) in terms of its careful tutor training and the formative evaluation of the tutoring sessions throughout program implementation. Most prevalent in this group of studies is the conclusion that tutoring is characterized by thorough and frequent diagnostic and prescriptive interchanges between tutor and tutee. McCarthy et al., (1995) conducted a thorough study of a program adapted from an approach used in Reading Recovery. Four credentialed tutors were trained by the lead researcher to promote reading fluency and phonological awareness prior to program implementation. At the heart of the tutoring program, however, were the weekly meetings throughout the intervention between the researchers and the tutors in which the pedagogical training continued. In these sessions, the students' performances were used to guide the tutors in their approaches to instruction. Matz (1989) described smaller and more frequent diagnoses in his successful experience in tutoring a young reader by means of a series of informal evaluations that prompted individualized approaches in his teaching. Whether formal or informal, it is apparent in these studies, as well as others, that the diagnostic-prescriptive function of the tutor is essential to taking full advantage of one-on-one instruction. The existence of this complex interaction in tutoring programs encouraged Johnson (1987) to suggest more careful consideration of the diagnostic-prescriptive process in program design.

Research:

Research in regard to the intervening of reading instruction to students who do not respond to the research based classroom instruction can be found at: www.nrcl.org/symposium2003/fuchs/fuchs1.html. O'Connor (2000) implemented four increasingly intensive levels of beginning reading interventions to kindergartners. Intervention at the first level was an evidence-based, whole-class; phonological awareness program conducted by general education teachers. Unresponsive students then received one-to-one tutoring from teaching assistants. Children who remained unresponsive received small-group instruction from their teachers at the beginning of first grade. Finally, still unresponsive first-graders received one-to-one tutoring from a researcher. The proportion of non-responders decreased with each level of intervention. O'Connor's findings suggest that some poor readers benefit from evidence-based classroom instruction, whereas others require more intensive, individualized instruction.

McREL Research Finds Out-of-School Programs in 56 Schools Boost Achievement

A quantitative analysis of 56 studies of after-school and summer programs found these programs have a small, though statistically significant positive impact on student achievement in reading and mathematics.

www.mcrel.org/newsroom/OSTsynthesis.asp

Resources:

- Classroom strategies for helping low-achieving students meet standards
www.mcrel.org/Newsroom/hottopicStrategies.asp#tutor

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: USE OF RESEARCH BASED CURRICULUM AND MATERIALS

Overview:

Scientifically Based Research (SBR)

The basis behind SBR is that some schools have been implementing lessons, materials, and curriculum that have been proven ineffective. In response to this, the federal government has addressed this issue through the *No Child Left Behind* Act (NCLB). NCLB requires that instructional materials or programs used in schools must be based on scientifically based research. What is Scientifically Based Research? When an instructional program or practice is based on scientifically based research, there must be consistent and reliable evidence that the particular program or practice has been proven effective. www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/springwkshp/research.pdf

Research Based Components of Effective Reading Programs

Scientifically based reading research has identified five essential components of effective reading instruction. To ensure that children learn to read well, explicit and systematic instruction must be provided in these five areas: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary Development, Fluency and Text Comprehension. Source: US Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. *Guidance for the Reading First Program*. www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/legislation.html

Below is the list of core reading programs that has been approved for the North Dakota Reading First schools. Remember that this list is NOT an all-inclusive list. School districts can choose other programs as long as the districts provide evidence that the program selected meets the Reading First criteria by filling out and submitting "A Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis" by Simmons and Kame'enui (information on this document can be found above).

Reading First Approved Core Program and Supplemental List

The list from the State of Washington has been adopted for the North Dakota Reading First programs. The Washington list can be found at [ftp://ftp.alsde.edu/documents/90/Appendix C - State of Washington List.doc](ftp://ftp.alsde.edu/documents/90/Appendix_C_-_State_of_Washington_List.doc).

The North Dakota State Reading First Team has worked very hard to determine other core comprehensive reading programs to add to the "approved list." The list below includes the programs on the Washington list and the additional programs identified by the Reading First Team. www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/reading/coreprg.pdf

Research:

Planning and Evaluation Tool for Effective Schoolwide Reading Programs*

Spring 2000, Edward J. Kame'enui, Ph.D., Deborah C. Simmons, Ph.D., Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement, College of Education, University of Oregon.

www3.educ.kent.edu/EFSS/programs/SPED/pdfs/PlanningandEvalToolforEffectiveSchoolwideReadingPrograms.pdf

U.S. Department of Education Scientifically Based Research and Proven Methods.

www.ed.gov/nclb/methods/whatworks/research/index.html?exp=0

ND DPI Research Based Documentation Tool. Key research strategies and findings that are supported by research.

www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/targeted/general/reauthoriz/researchtool.pdf

Resources:

- **Noteworthy Perspectives: Classroom Strategies for Helping At-Risk Students**

This issue of Noteworthy provides guidance to administrators and teachers on the use of classroom strategies to help at-risk students meet standards. Author, McREL staff member David Snow. www.mcrel.org/topics/products/152/

- **McREL Keys to Learning Resource. How can we support the most effective implementation of the curriculum?**
www.mcrel.org/keystolearning/Default.aspx?tabid=2195
- **SBRR Teacher Tools** www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/resource/SBRR.pdf
- **Helping At-Risk Students Meet Standards: A Synthesis of Evidence-Based Classroom Practices** (ED475904)
www.eric.ed.gov

State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: FREQUENT MONITORING OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

Overview:

Frequent monitoring of learning and teaching is a steady cycle of different assessments used to identify students who need help. More support and instruction time is provided, either during the school day or outside normal school hours, to students who need more instruction. Teaching is adjusted based on frequent monitoring of student progress and needs. Assessment results are used to focus and improve instructional programs. (Snow, D. 2003)

Teachers, in turn, need to place a strong emphasis on using assessment results to determine students' progress toward learning critical content and make instructional decisions on student assessment results. Monitoring also helps teachers focus on important core goals, monitor progress, and provide remedial assistance. (McCollum, 1995; Mortimore et al., 1989).

Monitoring refers both to the articulation of academic goals at the school level and the monitoring of progress toward those goals. Implicit in this variable is the collection of data on students' academic achievement and the use of that data to determine whether academic goals have been met. To monitor progress relative to academic goals, one must have access to student achievement data. (Robert J. Marzano) [www.helpptoachieve.org/ Documents/attachment-196.pdf](http://www.helpptoachieve.org/Documents/attachment-196.pdf)

Regular Assessing – Frequent monitoring of students

- ◆ Do a needs assessment
- ◆ Look at past test data
- ◆ Where do you need to focus?
- ◆ What subgroup is lowest?
- ◆ Make sure test material is covered by the State assessment data
- ◆ Do all teachers know what material needs to be covered?
- ◆ Regular assessment takes place to focus instruction
- ◆ Students' needs are individualized and based on ongoing measurements of student progress
- ◆ Catch students early who are having problems

A compilation of ideas, resources, and tools to help schools implement effective practices.

www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/resource/resourceguide.pdf

Research:

The Effects of Frequent Curriculum-based Measurement and Evaluation on Pedagogy, Student Achievement, and Student Awareness of Learning, Lynn S. Fuchs, Stanley L. Deno, Phyllis K. Mirkin, American Educational Research Journal, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Summer, 1984), pp. 449-460, doi:10.2307/1162454

Abstract: This study examined the educational effects of repeated curriculum-based measurement and evaluation. Thirty-nine special educators, each having three to four pupils in the study, were randomly assigned to a repeated curriculum-based measurement/evaluation (experimental) treatment or a conventional special education evaluation (contrast) treatment. Over the 18-week implementation, pedagogical decisions were surveyed twice; instructional structure was observed and measured three times; students' knowledge about their learning was assessed during a final interview; and reading achievement was tested before and after treatment. Analyses of covariance revealed that experimental teachers effected greater student achievement. Additional analyses indicated that (a) experimental teachers' decisions reflected greater realism about and responsiveness to student progress, (b) their instructional structure demonstrated greater increases, and (c) their students were more aware of goals and progress.

Resources:

- **Critical Elements of Reading Assessment – Elementary School**
In order to implement an effective reading program, schools should have a coordinated plan for using screening, progress monitoring, diagnostics and outcome measures to guide instruction and to conduct program evaluation.
www.fcrr.org/assessmentReadingFirstCriticalElements.htm
- **McREL. What Works in Schools.** www.mcrel.org/SuccessInSight/Default.aspx?tabid=2376
- CAST Universal Design. *Curriculum-Based Evaluations* by Tracey Hall, Ph.D., Senior Research Scientist, NCAC, and Missy Mengel, RA www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_curriculumbe.html

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State Title I Office

WHAT WORKS

STRATEGY: BLOCK SCHEDULING

Overview:

Block scheduling organizes the day into fewer, but longer, class periods to allow flexibility for instructional activities. Generally, block scheduling is introduced at junior and high school levels. The expressed goal of block scheduling programs is improved student academic performance. Some other rewards of these programs are heightened student and teacher morale, encouragement for the use of innovative teaching methods that address multiple learning styles, and an improved atmosphere on campus. Block scheduling is one of the primary indicators of major restructuring within a district (Cawelti, 1994).

Some of the more popular block scheduling models are 4 X 4 Block, A/B Block, and the Trimester Plan. A brief explanation of each model follows.

- The 4 X 4 Block typically divides the school day into four 90-minute periods with time added for lunch and passing between periods. Each class lasts one semester. Teachers are responsible for teaching three classes each semester and have one class for planning. Students enroll in four classes in the first semester and four new classes in the second semester.
- The A/B Block is also called an alternate day plan which organizes each day into four 90-minute periods with a total of eight classes meeting over two consecutive days ("A Day" and "B Day").
- The Trimester Plan organizes the school year into three segments of approximately 60 days each. Students take two or three core courses each trimester, completing six to nine credits per year. (LAB, 1998)

Research:

The research related to block scheduling in schools examines: 1) Student achievement, 2) School climate, and 3) Teacher methodology. Findings include the following:

- **Student Achievement.** Findings from studies on the effects of block scheduling on student achievement test scores and grade point averages are inconsistent. For example, research indicates that some students' scores increased under block scheduling, while some students' scores increased on the traditional schedule (Zepeda & Mayers, 2006).
- **School Climate.** Research findings are more consistent with regard to the effects of block scheduling on school climate. Results show that student and teacher attendance is improved, that the teacher/student relationship is improved substantially, and that hall disruption and major and minor disciplinary issues are decreased substantially under block scheduling (Stader, 2001).
- **Teacher Methodology.** Studies reveal that when teachers adapted to the new schedule and sought to incorporate new and engaging learning activities, the variety of teaching strategies substantially increased. These practices allowed students to work more collaboratively and cooperatively, fostered critical thinking, and encompassed more varied learning styles (Stader, 2001).

Resources:

- LAB, Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory at Brown University. (1998). *Block Scheduling: Innovations with Time*. Providence, RI: Author.
- Zepeda, S. & Mayers, R. S. (2006). An analysis of research on block scheduling. *Review of Educational Research*, 76(1), 137-170.
- Stader, D. L., (2001). Block scheduling in small high schools: Perceptions from the field. *Rural Educator*, 22(3), 37-41.

