

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

TITLE I FAST FACT SERIES

Issue: Do I need a reading/math credential if my school is Title I schoolwide?

The answer to this question is “it depends.”

Yes, you need a Title I credential if...

as a schoolwide school, your school has designed a comprehensive plan for improvement that includes providing extra assistance to students who are struggling academically. Any teacher who has been assigned the position of providing extra assistance will need a reading and/or a math credential.

The following are examples of schoolwide positions that would need a credential:

- Teacher pulling students out of the classroom who need extra help
- Teacher providing tutoring to teacher-identified struggling students during the regular school day
- Teachers whose only duty at any time during the day is to provide extra academic assistance to struggling students,
- Reading/math coach
- ESL Title I teacher (may also hold a bilingual endorsement in lieu of a Title I credential)
- Coordinator who is responsible for the entire reading program at the school, which includes coordinating teacher planning for low-achieving students

Essentially, any individual paid with Title I funds and providing direct services to students must hold the appropriate credential.

If your schoolwide plan includes such positions, these teachers should attend the Title I sponsored events to stay current on Title I regulations and best practices.

No, you don't need a Title I credential if...

the schoolwide program does not have positions in which specific teachers are assigned duties of helping only low achieving or academically struggling students.

The following are examples of schoolwide positions that would not necessarily need a credential:

- After school teacher
- Summer school teacher
- Data coordinator
- Class-size reduction teacher
- Curriculum coordinator
- Homeless liaison
- Social worker/counselor
- Nurse
- Parent coordinator

Schoolwide programs are encouraged to design programs that better meet the needs of their schools and their students. Therefore, traditional Title I roles may be eliminated and staff may be hired specifically to provide other types of services including coordinating parental involvement events, managing school improvement and professional development efforts, or other roles that the school believes may improve the academic achievement of all students at the school. These staff, regardless of whether or not they are paid with Title I funds, would not need to have a Title I math or reading credential.

In summary...

although a schoolwide program may eliminate the traditional role of a Title I teacher, the point of schoolwide programming is still to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students. The idea is that it may be possible to meet the needs of these students through what might be considered non-traditional or innovative programming. Some schoolwide schools have met the needs of all students by reducing class size, hiring professional teaching coaches to improve all teachers' instructional methods, or hiring a parental involvement coordinator who increases parental involvement. Successful schoolwide programming requires looking at the needs of the students at your school and devising a program that best meets their needs, with or without traditional, pull out, supplemental instruction.

The main factor in determining if a teacher needs a Title I credential is not whether he/she works in a targeted assistance program. Rather, the main factor is the position he/she fills at the school. If a teacher is providing academic assistance primarily to struggling or academically challenged students, then he or she, regardless of whether or not the school is schoolwide or targeted assistance, does need a Title I credential.

If you have questions regarding this issue, please contact:

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