

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

TITLE I FAST FACT SERIES

Issue: Using Title I Funds for Professional Development

What is Professional Development?

The *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act, Section 9101, defines professional development; as including activities that

- improve and increase teachers' knowledge of the academic subjects they teach,
- are high quality, sustained, intensive and classroom focused, and
- positively impact classroom instruction and teacher performance.

High Quality Professional Development

DOES:

- ▶ Involve multiple sessions over time, moving beyond one-day or short-term conferences.
- ▶ Align to school initiatives and standards.
- ▶ Address job-related skills aimed at impacting student performance.
- ▶ Include job-embedded learning opportunities such as collaborative teams, study groups, data analysis, and other sustained learning opportunities.
- ▶ Originate from various sources: school, district, university, professional organizations, online courses, independent study, etc.

DOES NOT:

- ▶ Involve only one-day conferences.
- ▶ Include a mix of different professional development activities individualized for each staff member.

How can schools use Title I funds to support Professional Development?

- Schoolwide Programs – In a schoolwide Title I program, professional development should be the cornerstone of the school's reform initiatives. Schoolwide Title I funds can be used to pay for professional development for all staff. The professional development must be related to the schoolwide goals outlined in the schoolwide plan.
- Targeted Assistance Programs – Targeted assistance Title I programs can use Title I funding to pay for any professional development for Title I teachers.

In addition, Section 1115(C)(1)(F) of NCLB states that schools may use Title I funds to provide professional development for teachers, principals, and paraprofessionals who work with children participating in the Title I targeted assistance program. This professional development must meet the following requirements:

- The professional development must be focused on helping at-risk students.
- The cost of the training must be reasonable.
- The teachers, principals, and paraprofessionals participating must be reflective of the grades and services provided by the Title I program. For instance, if a school serves Title I students in grades K-2, then only teachers in grades K-2 could participate in the professional development.
- All professional development expenditures must be detailed and approved in the district's consolidated application or budget revision before they are implemented.

When determining whether or not Title I funds can be used to fund a whole school professional development activity, review each of the above items. If the professional development is not exclusively focused on helping at-risk students or is extremely expensive, then it would be more appropriate to do a cost share between programs. School districts receive Title II funding specifically for professional development purposes. The district could calculate the number of children receiving Title I services versus those not participating in Title I and share the professional development costs accordingly.

If you have questions regarding this issue, please contact:

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