

## U.S. Department of Education Pilot Projects

Secretary Margaret Spellings has voiced her concerns regarding the delayed reauthorization process for *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB). She believes that changes need to occur now to better enable states and districts to meet the NCLB goals. She is exercising the authority provided to her and is implementing additional flexibility through a multitude of pilot projects so that changes can occur while we wait for NCLB to officially be reauthorized.

**Teacher Quality Fund** – In June 2007, the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) released information on a \$99 million Teacher Incentive Fund. This fund supports grants and other activities that help selected schools and districts recognize and reward good teachers in high-poverty schools that do a great job for their students, schools, and nation.

Is North Dakota participating in this pilot? No

**Limited English Proficient (LEP) Partnership** – The LEP Partnership is a USDE initiative to improve assessments of English language proficiency, reading, and mathematics for LEP students. On December 17, 2007, a formal letter was sent by Deputy Secretary Simon inviting chief state school officers to undertake an independent and voluntary self-directed review of their state's English language proficiency standards and assessments using the Framework on High-Quality English Language Proficiency Standards and Assessments. This partnership provides technical assistance and support to states to develop models and options that: support improved accommodations for LEP students; develop high-quality native language assessments; develop valid, simplified forms of content assessment for LEP students; and explore dual assessment to measure reading content and English language proficiency.

Is North Dakota participating in this pilot? Yes

**Flexibility for Students with Disabilities** – On October 9, 2007 a press release by the USDE initiated a partnership with state special education programs. This partnership awarded more than \$14 million in grants to help states meet requirements for students with disabilities under NCLB and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The funds are used to develop: modified academic achievement standards; alternate academic achievement standards; state assessments based on modified or alternate academic achievement standards; clear and appropriate guidelines for Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams; and training on those guidelines for IEP teams.

Is North Dakota participating in this pilot? Yes

**Districts in Need of Improvement** – On July 26, 2006, Deputy Secretary Simon announced the expansion of two pilot projects designed to help struggling K-12 students. The first pilot project allows for districts in need of improvement to be providers of tutoring. The second pilot project will allow districts to offer tutoring ahead of schedule to students in schools in year one of program improvement status.

Is North Dakota participating in this pilot? No

**Growth Model** – On December 7, 2007, Secretary Spellings announced that the Department was accepting applications to implement growth model pilots. A growth model is a way for states that are raising achievement and following the bright-line principles of NCLB to strengthen accountability. Models must meet seven core principles. Currently nine states have approved growth model proposals: North Carolina, Tennessee, Delaware, Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, Ohio, Alaska, and Arizona.

Is North Dakota participating in this pilot? No. A letter of interest was submitted by North Dakota. The request was denied because our actual application was not submitted by the due date.

**Differentiated Consequences** – In March 2008, the USDE announced they would select up to ten states to implement differentiated accountability to allow states to distinguish between those schools in improvement that are just missing the mark by one indicator verses those that need significant reform. Participating states must commit to build their capacity for school reform; take the most significant actions for lowest-performing schools, including the addressing of teacher effectiveness; and use data to determine the method for differentiation and categories of intervention.

Is North Dakota Participating in this Pilot? Pending. North Dakota did submit an application to the USDE on May 5, 2008, to participate in the Differentiated Accountability Pilot Project. Our request is pending.