

TEAM NEWS

(Together Everyone Achieves More)

February 2010

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

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2009 Title I Distinguished School

Hagan Elementary School in the Williston Public School District was named the recipient of the 2009-2010 Title I Distinguished Schools Award for the state of North Dakota. Each year, the National Association of State Title I Directors sponsors the Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program. Schools are selected for outstanding results in one of two categories:

1. Exceptional student performance for two or more consecutive years.
2. Closing the achievement gap between student groups.

Hagan Elementary School was selected by the North Dakota Title I Committee of Practitioners for their exceptional student performance for two or more consecutive years. They received a certificate and a grant award for \$15,000. Hagan Elementary School was honored at the National Title I Convention in Washington, DC in January 2010.



Title I Director, Laurie Matzke, presents Darla Ratzak and Marilee Lillibridge from Hagan Elementary School with the Title I Distinguished School Award.



Director's Report

Draft Reauthorization/2011 Budget Proposal Released

By: Laurie Matzke, North Dakota Director of Title I

On February 1, 2010, President Obama released the FY 2011 budget proposal. The budget proposal is built around the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization. In fact, the proposal would require the passage of a reauthorized bill before the funds could be appropriated because much of the requested funding is for new programs. Many question whether it is realistic to think that the ESEA could be reauthorized so quickly. So, we wait and see what Congress thinks of the budget proposal. Listed below are some highlights of the potential changes in the budget proposal:

- The Title I program would receive a new name and be called “College and Career Ready Students”.
- The proposal consolidates 38 programs into 11 funding streams and eliminates many programs.
- The proposal eliminates the NCLB’s 2014 deadline for bringing all students to academic proficiency.
- The ESEA reauthorization plan replaces AYP with a more comprehensive review of student performance that looks at student growth and school progress.
- The proposal creates a new accountability system that divides schools into more categories and offers rewards and recognition to schools that are succeeding rather than taking a punitive approach.
- With regard to early childhood programs, the President’s budget proposal creates record-setting increases for childcare.
- The budget proposal focuses all new money on competitive grants rather than formula grants.
- The proposed budget would also include a substantial boost for the Title I School Improvement Grants, a program that helps districts target interventions to schools struggling to meet the goals of the ESEA law.
- The proposal includes funds for Effective Teachers and Leaders Grants, which would provide formula grants aimed at helping districts recruit, prepare, reward, support, and retain highly effective teachers.

We will keep school personnel updated on the progress of the reauthorization process and 2011 budget proposal in future issues of this monthly newsletter.

Success in School Reform

The University of Chicago Press recently published a new book entitled *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago*. Many in North Dakota would say, “Chicago! We are nothing like Chicago!” However, the messages provided throughout the book are very applicable to any school striving to make changes. It even applies to schools in North Dakota.

In the book, five key elements of school reform are outlined, including:

- Strong Leadership – Principals and administration must be strategic, focused on instruction, inclusive of others in their work, and be effective as managers
- Open Arms – Staff must embrace a welcoming attitude and openness to form relationships with parents and the community.

- Professional Capacity – Commitment to develop the professional capacity and professional growth focused on improving teaching and learning.
- Safe Schools – An atmosphere that provides a safe, welcoming, orderly, stimulating and nurturing network for support for students and staff.
- Instructional Guidance – Strong instructional guidance regarding the curriculum’s organization and the schools’ academic goals, as well as accessible materials for instruction.

Although the research indicated that each of the above elements can individually be linked to improvement, schools that demonstrated substantial growth were strong in all five of the areas listed. The authors believe that if even one of the above elements is missing or weak, the school is very unlikely to improve. To substantially create systems change and entire school reform, all five elements must be embraced and implemented with fidelity.

This information has been adapted from

www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/01/27/19ccsr.h29.html?tkn=SPPFdRmCHUCk0SA3p51XnZxhfnB7lSAI%2F0Ht&print=1 and www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/078007.html.

IDEA Update

This month’s IDEA Update will provide you with additional information on the Assistive Technology (AT) Expo to be held in Fargo on **April 15, 2010**. The Pre-Conference Workshop on April 14 will be led by Mark Coppin from the Anne Carlsen Center. He will be presenting on the use of the iPod Touch as an Assistive Technology Tool. The number of applications for the iPhone and iPod Touch that can benefit persons with disabilities is growing. Mark will provide a hands-on demonstration of the potential uses of the applications available with these devices. Please consider spending a day with Mark to explore the uses of these devices with anyone you know that might benefit from these applications.

Please take time to review the list of workshops that will take place on April 15 at www.atexpo.org. Some of the important events that will take place at the Expo include: education sessions on funding for AT, AT equipment, literacy supports, support group tables, a self-advocacy workshop, and a free Orthopedic screening clinic provided by the Shriners Hospital.

The most recent *Bookshare* newsletter contained some interesting items for those who have students currently using *Bookshare* or who may be considering it:

- A new project funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is working on transforming open textbooks into accessible formats. Open content books are free online texts that may not be fully accessible to persons with print disabilities.
- Full text search capabilities allow searches to be conducted using key words or phrases in addition to title and author. The search capability will produce fast results from every single book in the library.
- New publishers of supplemental materials for K-12, university presses, and educational publishers have signed up with *Bookshare*.
- A list of professional development workshops on how to use *Bookshare* and assistive reading tools to use with students with print disabilities.

To find out more information on any of these topics, please visit <http://www.benetech.org/index.shtml>.

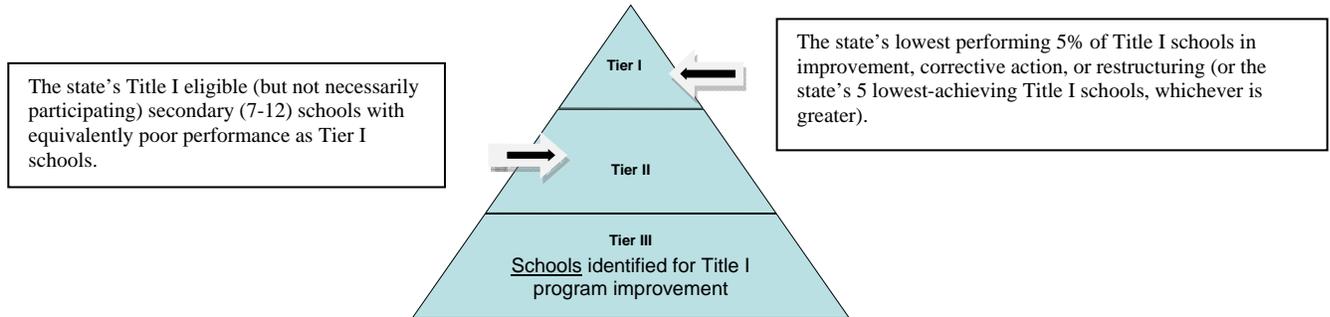


School Improvement Grant

On February 17, 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was signed into law by President Obama. This legislation created an unprecedented opportunity to improve teaching and learning for at-risk students. Record setting funding was appropriated for schools to implement innovative practices through various grant opportunities, some of which include:

- State Fiscal Stabilization
- Race to the Top
- School Improvement Grants (SIG)

Within each of these grants, the US Department of Education (USDE) aligned a requirement for states to identify low performing schools. These schools were then categorized in Tiers I, II, and III. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction must include the schools identified in these three tiers in their grant applications for these funds.



States are required to identify schools in categories of Tiers I, II, and III that would be eligible for the SIG funds. Schools in Tiers I and II who apply for these school improvement funds are required to implement one of the four models in their schools. Schools in Tier III who apply for these school improvement funds do not have to implement one of the four models.

Turnaround Model

Replace principal and at least 50% of the staff, adopt new governance, and implement a new or revised instructional program.

Restart Model

Close the school and restart it under the management of a charter school operator, a charter management organization (CMO), or an educational management organization (EMO). A restart school must admit, within the grades it serves, any former student who wishes to attend.

Close/Consolidate Model

Closing the school and enrolling the students who attended the school in other, higher-performing schools in the LEA.

Transformation Model

1. Develop teacher and leader effectiveness
2. Comprehensive instructional programs using student achievement data
3. Extend learning time and create community-oriented schools
4. Provide operating flexibility and intensive support

The department must have our state SIG funding application ready to submit to the USDE by Monday, February 22, 2010. If you would like to review North Dakota's state application, it will be available at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/Legislative/sig/index.shtm> on the department's website after Monday.

Education is what survives when what has been
learned has been forgotten.
B. F. Skinner

NDDPI Informational Papers Updated

A few years ago, the ND Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI), Office of Special Education, brought together two groups of professionals with expertise in the area of vision impairment and hearing impairment. These professionals met to discuss topics relating to the education of students with vision and hearing impairments in ND public schools. In addition, input was gained from professionals throughout ND who provided services for students with a vision and/or hearing loss and their families.

In an effort to provide guidance for several of the areas discussed at the meetings, the Informational Papers, *Students with Visual Impairments in North Dakota Schools* and *Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students in North Dakota Schools*, were developed. The purpose of the documents was to provide updated guidance to families, professionals, and others who provide quality services for students with a vision loss and/or hearing loss in ND schools.

This year, the Informational Papers were revised to include updates in the area of vision and hearing impairment as well as regulation updates relating to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004 (IDEA 2004). The updated Informational Papers can be located on the NDDPI website at:

- <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/guide/policy/infopapr.pdf> and
 - <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/guide/policy/1004paper.pdf>
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Title I Eligibility Process and Funding for the 2010-2011 School Year

On December 16, 2009, President Obama signed into law the spending bill for the 2010-2011 school year. This bill does not factor in the stimulus funds under ARRA. The bill level-funds Title I, Part A grants. In early February of each year, the Department of Public Instruction determines eligibility status for Title I funding for the subsequent school year. The state Title I office recently sent correspondence to all Title I authorized representatives informing them of the status of their aggregate units.

Each district received a chart comparing their last year's aggregate units to the current totals. If their aggregate units increase from the prior year, their allocation may increase if we receive more Title I funds as a state. If their aggregate units go down, their allocation will most likely also decrease. If the numbers do not change much, their allocation will most likely remain steady. If you are a Title I authorized representative and did not receive this information, please contact the state Title I office.

WebEx: Private School Requirements

On Thursday, February 25, 2010, the North Dakota Title I office will host a WebEx training for public school districts and private schools that participate in their Title I programs. A registration form is available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/events.shtm on the Title I website.



Monthly Featured Articles

Super Friend in Need

by Michelle Murphy, Kindergarten Teacher, Peter Boe Jr. Elementary School, Mayville, ND

A few years ago, I had a class that had some serious issues with getting along with one another. Daily behaviors consisted of bossiness, tattling, pushing, hitting, and the list goes on. I know that many teachers, especially teachers of young children, can relate. So I set out on a journey to try to find a way to help my little angels learn what it means to be courteous to one another.

I enlisted the help of our school counselor, Eric Nygaard, who found on the Internet a delightful social story called “Super Friend”. He busied himself with preparing class copies of the story, and enlarging the icons to use as a visual reminder to the children about the steps to being a super friend. He and I worked diligently that year reading, re-reading, teaching, and re-teaching those six “simple” steps. By the end of the year, some of the children had started to use the language and were able to use it in the proper context as well. But I knew that stories and words were not going to be enough.

The next fall I visited with our superintendent’s wife (their son was going to be in my class) about my idea for actually creating Super Friend in the flesh. She graciously volunteered her husband, our superintendent. So I approached Mr. Bradner, informing him that his wife had volunteered him to help Mr. Nygaard, myself, and my classroom aide in creating this “super hero” of sorts. Needless to say, he was up for the challenge. So I handed him and Mr. Nygaard the cape we had made, a white baseball cap, and a copy of the social story and sent them on their way. What ensued, only pictures can truly capture – the creation of Super Friend (L) and Stanley Fairplay (R).



This year, Super Friend (Mr. Bradner) and Stanley Fairplay (Mr. Nygaard) made their second appearance to help teach and encourage children to follow the six steps to being a SUPER FRIEND! It has proven to be engaging, hilarious, and highly effective.

For more information about this strategy, contact Michelle (Shelly) Murphy by email at Michelle.Murphy.1@sendit.nodak.edu.

Social Emotional Foundations of Early Learning Training for Early Childhood Personnel

Examples of Classroom Strategies in Use in Two ND Programs

The Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) is a national resource center funded by the Office of Head Start and Child Care Bureau for disseminating research and evidence-based practices to early childhood programs across the country. In August and November, CSEFEL trainers provided sessions in Minot and Fargo for 126 North Dakota teachers and consultants representing early childhood programs. The group included representatives from public school early childhood programs and services, Head Start programs, Head Start’s Mental Health Consultants, and representatives from Child Care Resource and Referral. The training was made available through a joint project between the ND Head Start Collaboration Office and ND Department of Public Instruction.

The training provided an overview of the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Young Children, ages 3-5. This pyramid is similar, but not identical, to the pyramid models used in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Response to Intervention (RTI) which are in use across the nation and in many North Dakota schools.

The CSEFEL pyramid approach focuses on prevention of challenging behavior, direct teaching of social emotional skills, and a problem solving approach for severe behavior. The four modules of the program include:

Module 1: Building Relationships and Creating Supportive Environments

Module 2: Social Emotional Teaching Strategies

Module 3: Individualized Intensive Interventions: Determining the Meaning of Challenging Behavior

Module 4: Administrative Supports and Processes Needed to Adopt and Sustain the Pyramid Model

Teachers who attended the training were very positive about the things they learned, and especially appreciated the many practical ideas that were shared. In the next article, Shelley Murphy, a kindergarten teacher in Mayville and Courtney Rust, a mental health intern, who works with Leola Dahl, a head start teacher in Fargo, share strategies for developing specific social emotional skills that were presented at the training and describe how they are implementing them in ND classrooms.

For more information about CSEFEL's pyramid approach and training, contact Linda Jenkins by email at Linda.jenkins@gfschools.org or visit the CSEFEL website at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/>.

Using the Solution Kit to Teach Young Children Problem Solving Skills

After attending the first CSEFEL training, staff at Southeast North Dakota Community Action Agency (SENDCAA) wanted to incorporate the Solution Kit intervention into our Head Start classrooms. We adapted the intervention to make it appropriate for both our Early Head Start and Head Start children. We also wanted to use photographs of real children.

Solutions we included for our Early Head Start children are more individualistic, such as "I have to go potty," "I'm hungry," or "I'm sleepy." Solutions for our Head Start children help them get along with other children. Solutions include "share," "say please stop," and "ignore or walk away." We also added photos of basic emotions (i.e., happy, sad, angry, and scared) that the teacher can use to help the child understand how another child may feel during disputes. We made two sets of solution cards for each classroom, a square set that the teacher can keep in a Solution Kit, and a round set that comes on a portable bracelet so that the teacher has ready access to the kit when needed. See the photos with this article for pictures of the two sets of solution cards.

The idea is that when a problem arises, the teacher assists the child in choosing a solution that the child feels fits the situation. Because the child leads the solution making process, he/she is supported in feeling empowered to solve his/her own problems. When the same problem arises again, the hope is that the child will feel competent to apply the best solution to the problem.

For more information about use of this strategy in the classroom, contact Leola Daul, Head Start Teacher, at SENDCAA via email at LeolaD@sendcaa.org.



Reading Comprehension

As we look to research to inform our instruction on comprehension, it is evident that there are limited studies on this topic. The studies that are available look at the instruction itself, the main idea, drawing conclusions, distinguishing fact from opinion, comparing and contrasting, predicting, self-questioning, comprehension monitoring, and summarizing. There are, however, very few studies on how comprehension instruction should be introduced, how it should be taught, how teachers ensure that students will internalize and use these strategies, or the pacing of the strategies. We need to provide enough opportunity for our students to become independent readers with strong comprehension skills. Past studies reveal that research recommendations on how to teach these strategies and skills are not always followed within core reading programs.

A recent study by Dewitz, Jones, and Leahy (2009) conducted a curriculum analysis of comprehension instruction in the five most widely used core reading programs; Harcourt Trophies, Scott Foresman Reading, McGraw-Hill Reading, Houghton Mifflin Reading, and Open Court Reading. This study analyzed the guided practice offered within each program, how the release of responsibility shifted from teacher to student, and the spacing and timing of instruction.

Their conclusion was that each of the core reading programs had several shortcomings that may undermine their effectiveness. The core reading programs provided comprehension skills and strategies that were wide, but not terribly deep. They did not provide enough practice to ensure a skill would be learned. Finally, they did not provide sufficient support or scaffolding to assist students in using the skills and strategies on their own.

In most classrooms, the core reading programs are the basis to provide methods and content of reading instruction. As educators, we know that there is no perfect core reading program that fits all students and that each reading program has flaws. However, as we follow our core reading program, we can improve on what they do not provide; more thorough instruction, model with more examples, provide more guided practice, and alter the scope and sequence to ensure that we offer our students all the opportunities they need to learn the skills and strategies. This is where good teacher judgment and innovation is necessary.

Resource: Dewitz, P., Jones, J., Leahy, S. (2009). Comprehension Strategy Instruction in Core Reading Programs. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 44(2), pp 102-126.



Upcoming Events

× 2010 Private School WebEx Training

All private schools, please mark your calendars for the 2010 Private School WebEx Training, being held on Thursday, February 25, 2010.

× Response to Intervention (RTI) Year 1 Schools, Training Day #3

Western ND: Seven Seas, Mandan on February 28, 2010

Eastern ND: Grand Forks Education Center on March 1, 2010

× 2010 Targeting Audio Conference

Please mark your calendars now for the 2010 Targeting Audio Conference, being held on Tuesday, March 30, 2010.

× 2010 Program Improvement Workshop

The 2010 Title I Program Improvement Workshop will be held on Wednesday, April 21, 2010. This meeting is specifically for those schools and districts that have been identified for program improvement through not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). We will keep you posted on the progress of this event in future issues of this newsletter.

× 2010-2011 Schoolwide Planning Workshop #1

The 2010-2011 Schoolwide Planning Workshop #1 will be held on Wednesday, May 5, 2010 in Bismarck. Information will be available in the spring of 2010 at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/events.shtm.

× 2010 Summer Symposium

Please mark your calendars for the 2010 Summer Symposium, being held on June 17-24, 2010 in Bismarck. Details for this excellent opportunity for professional development are still being finalized. Information will be available in the spring of 2010 at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/events.shtm.

× 2010 Title I/Special Education Fall Conference

Dates have been set for October 6-8, 2010 for the 2010 Title I/Special Education Fall Conference at the Bismarck Civic Center. Please save the date for this conference as we are always striving to find ways to meet the needs of all schools in North Dakota. Your feedback from the last Fall Conference was a great way to begin planning for a better and more improved Title I/Special Education Fall Conference in 2010. Information will be available in the fall of 2010 at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/events.shtm.

Title I To Do List

Administrators

- Submit Request for Funds (SFN 14660) to the state Title I office to receive reimbursement for Title I expenditures.
- Disseminate information on the school and district report cards (profiles) to parents and community.
- Monitor expenditures and submit a budget revision to allow for changes that arise during the school year.

Teachers

- Communicate with classroom teachers about what supplemental instruction is needed to support classroom instruction.
- Maintain portfolios for all Title I students.
- Send parents information on how they can influence their child's education at home and school.
- Report assessment results to parents using Title I Progress Reports.

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