



# TEAM NEWS

(Together Everyone Achieves More)

**March 2010**

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

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## **Estimated Title I Allocations for 2010-2011 Are Available!**

The Department of Public Instruction has posted the preliminary allocations for all of the federal Title programs for the 2010-2011 school year. North Dakota's state Title I allocation decreased from 2009 by approximately \$73,000.

An email was sent to school district administrators on March 22, 2010, indicating that the estimated allocations have been calculated and are posted on the department's website at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/grants/NCLB.shtm>. School personnel must check the website for their allocations, as letters will not be mailed indicating allocation amounts.

The department typically receives final allocations in May and will recalculate Title I allocations for districts once that information is received. Please note that our state and therefore, many districts will more than likely see an even greater decrease when final allocations are calculated because the USDE used non-Census data from the prior year to generate the estimated state allocations. In addition, North Dakota had to revise our statewide per-pupil expenditure amount which will have a negative effect on our state allocation. Therefore, please prepare for a slight decrease when the final Title I allocations are released.

## **Preliminary AYP Report Update**

All North Dakota school districts should have received their 2009-2010 North Dakota Assessment data from CTB. The department is working to create an official Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) report for every school and district in the state based upon the 2009-2010 state assessment data. School personnel will be able to access their building level preliminary AYP reports confidentially during April 2010 on the State Automated Reporting System (STARS). It is imperative that schools take the opportunity to review and provide input on their AYP reports prior to their official dissemination to the public and posting on the department's website. At the completion of the review period, the department will release the preliminary district AYP reports for review.

Be on the lookout for an email from the department informing schools once the preliminary AYP reports are posted on the STARS.

## Director's Report

### More Details Emerge on the Reauthorization of ESEA

By: Laurie Matzke, North Dakota Director of Title I

More and more details are being released each week regarding a potential reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), possibly as early as late summer or early fall of 2010. "A Blueprint for Reform" regarding the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act from President Obama was released on March 13, 2010, and can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/index.html> on the USDE website. Listed below are some of the highlights:

#### What Stays:

- A strong focus on Standards – The new purpose continues to focus on the “common core standards initiative” to establish more uniform academic standards in reading and math to prepare students for college or a career.
- Annual Testing – The new proposal keeps the requirement for annual testing in reading and math in grades 3 through 8 and once in high school.
- Reporting Requirements – The new proposal keeps the requirement for disaggregating and reporting on student data for populations such as racial minorities, English-language learners, and students in special education.

#### What Changes:

- The Title I program would receive a new name and be called “College and Career Ready Students”.
- The proposal eliminates the NCLB’s 2014 deadline for bringing all students to academic proficiency and replaces it with a goal of ensuring that all students are ready for college or a career by 2020.
- It replaces the focus on teacher quality with teacher and principal effectiveness. States and districts would be required to publish, at least every two years, a performance level report card on teacher and principal effectiveness.
- Under the new plan, all or nearly all of the new federal money will go to innovation and be competitive money.
- The new proposal eliminates many of the NCLB sanctions, including the provision of offering Supplemental Educational Services (SES), when schools have not made AYP for three consecutive years.
- The ESEA reauthorization plan replaces AYP with a more comprehensive review of student performance that looks at student growth and school progress.
- The new proposal places a focus on the nation’s lowest 5% of schools by requiring them to take drastic steps to improve.

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



## **North Dakota Not Likely to Apply For Race to the Top Funds**

The federal Race to the Top grant is a competitive \$4.35 billion education reform program enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The first round of competitions that were due in January 2010 had 38 states submitting an application for Race to the Top funds. From that competition, only 16 states were selected as finalists. The second deadline to apply for Race to the Top funds is June 1, 2010.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction established a committee of educators to review the requirements for the application, where North Dakota currently stands, and make a recommendation on whether or not to proceed in applying for the funding. The group, the ARRA State Education Planning Committee, consists of approximately 30 members and convened for the first time on Monday, March 8, 2010. The committee includes representation from various stakeholder groups within the state as well as representation from the Governor's Office and the North Dakota State Legislature. The committee members spent the day reviewing the requirements for a Race to the Top application and analyzing North Dakota's capacity to comply with the requirements.

At the end of the day, it was determined that there really is not enough time for subcommittees to meet and for all the work it would take to put together a state application. However, it was decided that various subcommittees will continue to convene in future months to study the initiatives encompassed in the Race to the Top legislation, as these requirements will more than likely be a part of the Reauthorization of ESEA and continue to impact education in the future. We will keep you up to date on future meetings and the outcome of the subcommittee work to address the State Fiscal Stabilization Funds, State Improvement Grant, and Race to the Top requirements.

## **New Employees at DPI**

The DPI Special Education Office is pleased to introduce two new employees that have joined our office in recent months. Mary McCarvel-O'Connor is the new Regional Coordinator for the Devils Lake area including the following Special Education Units: East Central, Lake Region, and Fort Totten. Mary comes to us from working most recently at the Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) in Portage, Wisconsin. She had been doing substitute teaching for four months in the Bismarck-Mandan area prior to accepting the DPI position. Mary is originally from Bismarck and has a master's degree in Education of the Deaf from Minot State University. She is picking up the following statewide portfolios: Related Services (Speech-Language, Audiology, OT, PT, Interpreters for the Deaf), Orthopedic Impairment, and Paraprofessionals. Mary's other major responsibility will be the coordinator of the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) that includes resident teachers, and IHE liaisons. This aspect of her position will also include SLP Paraprofessional Scholarships and SEA Traineeships. Expect to see Mary at the SLP Guidelines training sessions this spring. Mary's e-mail address is [moconnor@nd.gov](mailto:moconnor@nd.gov) and her telephone number is 701-328-2277.

Danielle (Dani) Woodward is the new Regional Coordinator for Southeastern ND including the following Special Education Units: Fargo, Rural Cass, South Valley, Wahpeton, and West Fargo. Danielle comes to us from Cankdeska Cikana Community Tribal College in Fort Totten where she taught classes in early childhood education. She has an undergraduate degree in elementary and early childhood education and a master's degree in SLD/ED from Moorhead State University. She has worked in the Jamestown area and in Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools in North Dakota as a special educator and also has experience as a Head Start teacher. She is picking up the following statewide portfolios: ED/Behavioral Health, Other Health Impaired, and TBI and will also be working with Nancy Skorheim on early childhood outcomes. Danielle's e-mail address is [dwoodward@nd.gov](mailto:dwoodward@nd.gov) and her telephone number is 701-328-2277.



## Monthly Featured Articles

### Preschool Curriculum

Young children's relationships, experiences, and skills during the preschool years are essential to their success later in school. For young children to reach their full potential during these early years, adults around them must provide enriched environments and experiences that promote growth and learning.

In efforts to support quality early education, many North Dakota special education units are in the process of selecting or are reviewing the quality and effectiveness of their preschool curricula. The field does not promote any one particular curriculum model and no federal entity mandates the use of any particular preschool curriculum in their publicly funded preschool programs. However, schools are considering and asking what appropriate curriculum looks like, what should children learn, and how best should they learn it.

Research indicates that there are various criteria for preschool curricula and elements to consider when selecting a curriculum. For example, is the curriculum evidence-based and effective in multiple settings, does the curriculum provide assessment that measure learning objectives, does the curriculum promote family partnerships that build meaningful communication?

Given the multitude of preschool curriculum models and factors to examine, the task of selecting an appropriate one is understandably confusing. To assist in this process, the following website provides information on the current trends in Early Childhood Education (ECE), curricula, and practices: <http://ies.ed.gov>.

An agency within the Department of Education, the Institute of Education Sciences funds research about child and family outcomes in early childhood and provides information at this website: [www.nieer.org](http://www.nieer.org).

The National Institute for Early Educational Research supports early childhood education initiatives by providing information based on research at [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org). This is a professional organization which promotes excellence in early childhood education and provides information for educators and parents, conference information, and professional development.

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### Eligibility Criteria for Speech or Language Impairment

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction-Office of Special Education will be offering trainings in March and April, 2010 to licensed Speech-Language Pathologists working in ND public schools. The trainings will review how to use and interpret the "Eligibility Criteria for Speech or Language Impairment" for the purpose of determining eligibility for special education and related services in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The trainings will consist of the background on the development of the criteria, results of the pilot study designed to assess the criteria's clarity, ease of use, and effectiveness in identifying Speech and Language impairments, and explanation and demonstration of each sub-section of the eligibility criteria (Language, Preschool Language, Articulation, Preschool Articulation, Voice, Fluency, Preschool Fluency, and Continued Eligibility).

Hands-on implementation, using case scenarios, will also be used to assist participants' understanding. Each training will be held from 10 am to 4 pm. The dates of the trainings will vary according to region. A request for 4.5 CEUs has been submitted to the ND State Board of Examiners for preapproval. Each participant will be given a hardcopy of the eligibility criteria, PowerPoint training slides, and case scenarios for each rubric category. There will be several opportunities for the participants to ask questions throughout the training.

## School, Family, and Community Promising Partnership Practices

The state Title I office, in collaboration with ND PIRC, will highlight schools efforts in the area of school, family, and community partnerships by featuring their stories and accomplishments in our newsletter. There are many ways that schools across North Dakota create opportunities to reach out to all the families of the students in their care. The importance of parental involvement is to learn about research-based strategies and promising practices that support partnerships with all families. Research from *School, Family, and Community Partnerships* by J.L. Epstein, 2002 Corwin Press Inc., shows:

- Programs and practices of partnerships make a difference in how families are involved in their children's education.
- Subject specific practices involve families in ways that directly assist students' learning and success.
- Teachers who use practices of partnership are more likely to report that all parents can help their children.
- Programs are most useful to schools and families if they are customized, comprehensive, and continually improve to help meet important goals for students.

### **Family Fun Night**

Submitted by TGU (Towner and Granville)

TGU consists of three rural schools consolidated into one, which covers 1,044 square miles. This event was planned to help bring all three communities together and end the year with a bang. The evening began with a free dinner and carnival games, including Money Machine, Math Freeze, Gone Fishin', What Are Your Odds?, Book Making, and Paper Airplane. Family Fun Night ended with dancing and music from a live band. Many community groups took part in the festivities. The whole evening was full of energy and laughter.

The Family Fun night was centered on the state School Improvement Plan goals: math measurement and writing skills. This event is a culminating event for Math Month. Tracie Welk, a teacher at TGU states, "Students really learn by teaching, this is how concepts are brought to light. All activities are standards based and a celebration of learning."

Providing ongoing activities that are challenging to students and bringing parents in a positive way is a great way for learning to take place. The objective of this event is to welcome everyone and meet the diverse needs of their students. The activities during Family Fun Night are a really good way to assess the non-traditional learner and how differentiated learning plays a role in educating students. The schools at TGU come together to perform these activities and provide opportunities for students with diverse needs.

The key is finding a way to cross over and merge plans so that it makes sense in a spiraling way that all students have the opportunity to understand. TGU likes to portray a constant message to use every opportunity to address their school's action plan and goals. When planning for events and family nights, the school staff refers to the standards to see how it fits and use a timeline of events to incorporate the standards. It's all about student achievement and activities like this certainly help in getting there!

### **Family Literacy Event**

Submitted by Eastwood Elementary, West Fargo

A successful parental involvement night filled with lots of laughter, fun, and learning all began with a teacher applying for a grant through PBS. Renae Wimer, a teacher at Eastwood Elementary in West Fargo, was awarded a grant through Positive Behavior Supports (PBS). Renae stated, "We wanted to take our parent involvement to the next level this year. We thought by hosting a Family Fun Night that we could do that." Through the PBS grant award, the school was able to purchase costumes such as Curious George and the Man in the Yellow Hat which was the theme for the Family Literacy Event.



The grant award consisted of free books, \$500 cash, and much more. “Our objective for the night was to have families unite and learn some fun math and reading activities that they can take home and use. We had 17 different reading and math stations”, Renae mentioned.



The set up for the event was similar to a carnival. Families could choose the stations that they wanted to attend. Even if families didn’t attend all stations, staff and volunteers stuffed bags prior to the event that included all the supplies with directions for the stations so that families could take them home and to use. Each family also received a free meal which included pizza, teddy grahams, milk, and cookies. The support received by the enormous amount of volunteers was unbelievable. They invited mascots from colleges, football players, dance and cheer teams, the West Fargo Police Dept. DARE officer, and more.

To overcome obstacles, they offered daycare and bussing to families that wanted to attend. Eastwood Elementary has many families that are English Language Learner (ELL). In order to assist these families, they went and picked them up. As a public service partnership, they invited the West Fargo library to set up a station so that families could apply for a library card. There was another unexpected obstacle to overcome in order for this elementary school to pull off such a grand event. As all of you may know, the weather plays an important role in North Dakota during the winter. It was a concern if the winter weather conditions of snow, ice, and cold temperature were going to impact attendance. Above all odds, the turnout was amazing.



Of the 393 RSVP's that stated they were coming, 250 people attended and at least 75 volunteers helped with the event. Overall, the night was a success and discussions are already taking place for next year.

**Parent Involvement Survey For North Dakota  
Middle School/High School Administration**

The state Title I office, in collaboration with NDPIRC, is in the process of creating a parent involvement taskforce to discuss strategies to increase parent involvement in ND Middle/High Schools. Currently, we are seeking information from administrators on present parent involvement needs, strategies that work, and parent involvement building contacts. Administrator’s in ND Middle/High Schools are being invited to participate in a survey located at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9TT8L7M>.

In order for us to create and distribute a parent involvement project to all North Dakota Middle/High Schools at the Title I/Special Education Fall Conference, please click on the above link and complete this survey by April 9, 2010.



## **What Works Clearinghouse Takes a Look at the *I CAN Learn*<sup>®</sup> Computer Based Program**

What Works Clearinghouse conducted a study examining whether the *I CAN Learn*<sup>®</sup> computer-based curriculum is more effective than traditional classroom instruction at teaching pre-algebra and algebra concepts to middle- and high-school students. The study included about 1,600 students in fifteen high schools and two middle schools in three large urban school districts.

Math classrooms in each school were randomly assigned to use either the *I CAN Learn*<sup>®</sup> program in a school computer lab or the traditional math curriculum in a regular classroom. Students' math achievement was assessed on a 30-item pre-algebra and algebra test developed for this study and on standardized statewide math tests. The study assessed the program's effectiveness by comparing the test scores of the two instruction groups at the end of the school year.

At the end of the school year, students in classrooms using *I CAN Learn*<sup>®</sup> scored higher on the assessment of pre-algebra and algebra skills than students in traditional math classrooms. The estimated effect size was 0.17, equivalent to moving a student from the 50th to 57th percentile. In one of the three study districts, students in classrooms using *I CAN Learn*<sup>®</sup> also scored higher on their standardized statewide math test.

## **Private School WebEx Training Summary**

On February 25, 2010, the North Dakota Title I office hosted a WebEx training for public school districts and the private schools that participate in their Title I programs. All of the materials, as well as a WebEx recording from the audio conference, can be found online at [www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/present.shtm](http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/present.shtm).

We believe the following documents are of utmost importance to review and have on hand when implementing a Title I private school program:

- [Title I Private School Toolkit](#)
- [USDE Toolkit - Ensuring Equitable Services to Private School Children Tool Kit](#)
- [Private School Self Monitoring Guide](#)

If you have questions on this information, please feel free to contact Ann Ellefson at [aellefson@nd.gov](mailto:aellefson@nd.gov) or (701) 328-2488.

## **Status – Title I School Improvement Grant (SIG)**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) legislation changed the process and regulations on how states must disseminate school improvement grant funds, otherwise known as SIG funds. The ARRA incorporated a requirement for states to identify low performing schools according to newly defined criteria. These schools were then categorized in Tiers I, II, and III. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction had to include the schools identified in these three tiers in our state grant application for SIG funds, which was submitted on February 22, 2010. We are still waiting for North Dakota's SIG application to be approved by the USDE.

The state Title I office has held two audio conference training sessions, one on January 21, 2010 and the other on March 16, 2010 for schools identified in Tier I and Tier II to outline this new process. The department has created a new webpage at [www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/Legislative/sig/index.shtm](http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/Legislative/sig/index.shtm) for all SIG related information.

If you have questions regarding the SIG, please contact Laurie Matzke at [lmatzke@nd.gov](mailto:lmatzke@nd.gov) or (701) 328-2284.

## **Special Education State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report**

In 2005, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) special education staff developed the North Dakota Special Education State Performance Plan (SPP). This six-year (2005-2011) plan is North Dakota's plan for improving the educational results for all children with disabilities. There are 20 very specific indicators, each with its own baseline data, measurable and rigorous annual targets, and improvement activities.

Annually since 2005, the NDDPI has collected indicator data from each of the school districts and parent surveys. Once this data are compiled and the annual report submitted to OSEP, it becomes a living document used to continuously improve activities at both the district and state levels. The indicators become a guide for districts requiring improvement. Through this process, issues of concern will decrease and positive results for students with disabilities will increase.

On January 27, 2010, the current Annual Performance Report (for the 2008-09 school year) was posted at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/reports.shtm> on the NDDPI Special Education website. The current SPP is also posted on this website. The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education (OSEP) has revised several of the 20 indicators and the new SPP will be developed and posted in February 2011. It will be this new SPP that will now guide the data collection and the overall special education practices in North Dakota.

### **Book Giveaway for Title I Schools**

In response to President Obama's "United We Serve" campaign, Young Adult author Barry Hoffman is donating the first 10,000 copies of his latest book, *Curse of the Shamra*, to schools and other educational institutions nationwide, with a focus on advancing literacy among the underprivileged.

Hoffman taught in the Philadelphia Public Schools for 30 years. So far, copies of the book have been donated to thousands of young readers in classrooms, homeless shelters, Native American reservations, libraries and individual homes in low-income areas across the country.

*Curse of the Shamra* is an epic fantasy aimed predominantly at young women, as the story follows 15-year-old Dara on her rise to being the leader of the Shamra's resistance after their utopian society is invaded and their people enslaved. The book is best suited for students between grades 5 and 10.

To request evaluation copies or classroom sets of *Curse of the Shamra*, contact Barry Hoffman directly at [info@gauntletpress.com](mailto:info@gauntletpress.com).

### **2010 Summer Symposium Update**

The Department of Public Instruction is excited to announce the 2010 Summer Symposium scheduled for June 17-24, 2010 at the Bismarck State College in Bismarck, ND. We again have a great line-up of topics and presenters that you will not want to miss. There will be a registration fee of \$50 per participant per training and anticipate offering the trainings for one credit per training.

More information will be available soon on the topics and descriptions of the trainings on the DPI website at [www.dpi.state.nd.us/events.shtm](http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/events.shtm). Registration forms will be available on this website in mid-April.



## IDEA Updates

The first of the on-line modules, The National Instructional Materials Standard (NIMAS), is complete and ready for viewing. This module provides information on NIMAS, accessible materials, and the qualification process for obtaining accessible materials. Please review the information at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/>. Keep your eye out for the first Universal Design for Learning Module next month.

Important releases this month:

- The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies and Science and Mathematics were released early this month. The developers of these standards addressed how they should apply to students with disabilities. A public comment period on these standards will be open until April 2, 2010. Please take time to review these standards at <http://www.corestandards.org/>.
- The US Department of Education released the draft of the National Educational Technology Plan on March 5, 2010. The document, *Transforming American Education: Learning Powered by Technology*, can be found at [www.ed.gov/technology](http://www.ed.gov/technology).

These two documents have important implications for teachers of students with disabilities because they provide important insights into the 21<sup>st</sup> century definitions of learning, assessment, teaching and the components of the general education curriculum.

### **Don't forget the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Assistive Technology Expo – April 15, 2010**

Do you or someone you know have difficulty communicating, learning, working, remembering, or performing everyday tasks? Assistive Technology (AT) can help and the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Assistive Technology Expo is the place to learn about it. Make plans to attend on April 15, 2010, at the Ramada Plaza Suites in Fargo, North Dakota. The day includes a morning of presentations by various professionals in the field of AT. The registration fee is \$30 for these sessions and includes lunch. Scholarships are available to individuals with disabilities on a first-come, first serve basis. From 11:00am – 6:00pm, the AT Expo Exhibit Hall will be **free and open to the public**. Over 60 vendors and service organizations are expected to be present.

For further information, visit [www.atexpo.org](http://www.atexpo.org) or contact Daphne Meyers at 1-877-760-2939, 701-235-2330, or [daphne@atexpo.org](mailto:daphne@atexpo.org).

### **North Dakota Moving to Improve Learning for Everyone (NDMILE)**

NDMILE is a web-based system that is being implemented by the Department of Public Instruction for schools to use to inform, coach, sustain, track, and report improvement activities. The NDMILE has indicators of evidence-based practices at the school and classroom levels to improve student learning. NDMILE is a tool that will guide improvement teams through a continuous cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, and progress tracking through research-based indicators.



The department invited about 40 schools to participate in initial NDMILE trainings that were held February 23-24, 2010. Schools were selected based on various criteria, some of which included their status as schoolwide planning or at risk of being identified for program improvement. Approximately 35 schools have agreed to participate in this project. It is the department's intent to offer the NDMILE to other schools in the future.

If you have questions regarding the NDMILE, please contact Lois Myran, NDMILE Project Director, at [lmyran@nd.gov](mailto:lmyran@nd.gov) or (701) 328-2629.

## Upcoming Events

### × 2010 Targeting Audio Conference

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

### × Kids Are Worth It RTI/PBS Conference

Conference featuring Barbara Coloroso on April 19 - 20, 2010. For more information and registration, go to [www.colorosoconference.com](http://www.colorosoconference.com).

### × 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 Parent Involvement Conference

Registration is open for the 2010 Parent Involvement Conference hosted by the Pathfinder Parent Center. Go to <http://www.pathfinder-nd.org> for more information and to register.

### × 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](http://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](http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/events.shtm).

## Title I To Do List

### Administrators

- Monitor expenditures and submit a budget revision to allow for changes that arise during the school year.
- Participate in the annual Title I review meeting.

### Teachers

- Conduct the annual assessment of Parent Involvement, typically a survey.
- Conduct an annual Title I review meeting to evaluate Title I program effectiveness.  
Send home information to Title I parents on how they can support their child's education at home and at school.
- Send home information to Title I parents on how they can support their child's education at home and school.



**Title I Staff**

Office Fax (701) 328-4770

Toll Free (888) 605-1951

**Laurie Matzke, Director**Email: [lmatzke@nd.gov](mailto:lmatzke@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2284

**Gail Schauer**, Assistant Director  
Reading First and Early Reading FirstEmail: [gschauer@nd.gov](mailto:gschauer@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2285

**Jacki Harasym**, Assistant Director  
Title I/Special Education/N&D ProgramEmail: [jharasym@nd.gov](mailto:jharasym@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-1876

**Missy Mahin**

Administrative Assistant

Email: [mmmahin@nd.gov](mailto:mmmahin@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2254

**Patty Carmichael**

Administrative Assistant

Email: [pcarmichael@nd.gov](mailto:pcarmichael@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-3264

**Stefanie Two Crow**, Assistant Director  
Schoolwide ProgramsEmail: [sttwocrow@nd.gov](mailto:sttwocrow@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2292

**Tara Bitz**

Program Administrator

Homeless Program

Email: [tbitz@nd.gov](mailto:tbitz@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-4646

**Teresa Glass**

Administrative Assistant

Email: [teglass@nd.gov](mailto:teglass@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-1640

**Lauri Nord**

Administrative Assistant

Email: [lnord@nd.gov](mailto:lnord@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2282

**Ann Ellefson**, Assistant Director  
Private School ProgramsEmail: [aellefson@nd.gov](mailto:aellefson@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2488

**Dale Patrick**, Assistant DirectorEven Start and 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Learning Communities

Email: [dpatrick@nd.gov](mailto:dpatrick@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-1644

**Sandy Peterson**

Program Administrator

Migrant Education and Title I Credentials

Email: [smpeterson@nd.gov](mailto:smpeterson@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2170

**Mary Neigum**

Fiscal Officer

Email: [mneigum@nd.gov](mailto:mneigum@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2281

**Special Education Staff**

Office Fax (701) 328-4149

TDD (701) 328-4920

**Bob Rutten, Director**Email: [brutten@nd.gov](mailto:brutten@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2277

**Brenda Oas**

Assistant Director

Email: [boas@nd.gov](mailto:boas@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2277

**Dr. Lynn Dodge**

Special Education Coordinator

Email: [ldodge@nd.gov](mailto:ldodge@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-4564

**Gerry Teevens**

Special Education Coordinator

Email: [gteevens@nd.gov](mailto:gteevens@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2277

**Michelle Souther**

Office Manager

Email: [msouther@nd.gov](mailto:msouther@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2652

**Dr. Alison Dollar**

Special Education Coordinator

Email: [adollar@nd.gov](mailto:adollar@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2277

**Kathy Smith**

IDEA B Grants Manager

Email: [kasmith@nd.gov](mailto:kasmith@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2615

**Danielle Woodward**

Special Education Coordinator

Email: [dwoodward@nd.gov](mailto:dwoodward@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2714

**Darla Van Vleet**

Administrative Assistant/Receptionist

Email: [dvanvleet@nd.gov](mailto:dvanvleet@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2277

**Dr. D. Guy McDonald**

Special Education Coordinator

Email: [dgmcdonald@nd.gov](mailto:dgmcdonald@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2277

**Nancy Skorheim**

Special Education Coordinator

Email: [nskorheim@nd.gov](mailto:nskorheim@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-2277

**Mary McCarvel-O'Connor**

Special Education Coordinator

Email: [mocconnor@nd.gov](mailto:mocconnor@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-4560

**Colleen Schneider**

Administrative Assistant

Email: [cischneider@nd.gov](mailto:cischneider@nd.gov)

Phone: (701) 328-3217