



Title I News

November 2005

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Projected Title I Funding for the 2006-2007 School Year

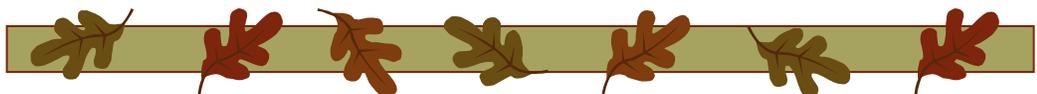
At this time, it is anticipated that there will be an across-the-board funding cut for most programs for the 2006-2007 school year due to increased federal funding needed for the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. However, the Title I program, nationally, was slated for a modest increase. Hopefully any funding cut for Title I will be minimal.

Timeline for Information to Become Available Regarding Federal Funding

- Congress typically passes the appropriations bill for the subsequent year's funding in December.
- The U.S. Department of Education typically generates an estimated state Title I allocation in January or February.
- The Department of Public Instruction then needs to determine eligibility status for Title I funding. This typically occurs in February.
- After eligibility has been determined, we can then use each district's aggregate units for funding purposes.
- In February 2006, the State Title I office will send correspondence to all Title I authorized representatives informing them of the status of their aggregate units. Each district will receive a chart comparing your last year's aggregate units to the current totals. If your aggregate units increase from the prior year, your allocation may increase if additional funds are available. If your aggregate units go down, your allocation will most likely also decrease. If the numbers do not change much, your allocation will most likely remain steady.

District: Sample					
	Census (15.5%)	Free Meals (46%)	Reduced Meals (23%)	Foster (15.5%)	Aggregate Units
2004 Data	782	1496	691	64	978.220
2005 Data	933	1724	720	64	1113.175

- The department will then generate an **estimated** federal Title allocation for each eligible district. We hope to have these amounts available by March 2006.
- Finally, the department generates and posts the **final** federal title allocations when we receive the final amounts from the U.S. Department of Education. This typically occurs in May.



Amendment to North Dakota Accountability Plan

The North Dakota State Assessment was administered to grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11 in the fall of 2005. Originally, as required under the *No Child Left Behind* Act, the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reports were to reflect grades 3-8 and grade 11 testing for the 2005-2006 school year for the first time.

However, the department submitted written correspondence to the U. S. Department of Education (USDE) on November 1, 2005, to make amendments to the North Dakota Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook.

We have requested permission to have the AYP reports reflective of grades 4, 8, and 11 again for the 2005-2006 school year. North Dakota uses up to three years of testing data to generate AYP reports. Using the fall 2005 results, we would only have two years of assessment data, testing 3-8 and 11, to generate AYP reports. By using 4, 8, and 11 for one additional year, we can continue to use up to three years to generate AYP reports.

The department has received verbal approval on this amendment. When we receive written approval, we will post the correspondence on our web site.

You can access a copy of our written correspondence requesting this amendment at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/targeted/general/reauthoriz/plan.shtm on the department's web site.

Director's Report

For my director's report this month, I thought I would focus on *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) issues currently being reviewed and addressed at the federal level. It reiterates the notion that changes are possible and that we continue to see new flexibility from the federal level.

Secretary Margaret Spellings is living up to her reputation as someone who is flexible and willing to consider issues that in the past were forbidden. It seems that barely a week goes by and a new announcement is made from her office regarding the implementation of key NCLB regulations. Secretary Spellings recently stated that as she travels around the country, she consistently hears concerns on the same issues. She pledged to address these issues in a sensible, workable way that focuses on raising student achievement.

I have summarized below the key issues that are still being discussed at the federal level:

- ✓ Better Assessing Students with Disabilities – What should we do with students in this category who do not qualify for the alternate assessment but cannot take a regular assessment?

Many states have developed modified achievement standards for students with disabilities who need additional time and intensive instruction to meet standards. Before the end of the year, the department will be releasing a regulation and a tool kit to help states develop these assessments and identify the two percent of students who fit this description.

- ✓ Measuring Students New to the English Language – How long should recent immigrants have before being expected to take a regular assessment?

The USDE has convened a working group of researchers and educators to study how we can best measure the progress of students new to the English language.

- ✓ Growth Models – Specifically, whether to allow states to use growth models to track student progress.

On November 18, 2005, Spellings announced a pilot program where interested and qualified states can submit proposals for developing growth models that follow the principles of NCLB. She will be releasing a letter soon outlining the elements that states must meet in submitting a growth model proposal to the USDE. She acknowledged that many states may not have assessment systems or data systems in place to meet the requirements for the pilot program.

Director's Report continued on page 3.

Director's Report (continued)

- ✓ Improving High Schools – There is currently a national focus on helping high school students achieve to high standards. President Bush is proposing to fund a number of new high school initiatives. These initiatives include more testing at the high school level and some possible funding to implement high school reform strategies.

Secretary Spellings recently stated, “We’ve already seen what a difference higher standards and accountability have made for our younger students. Now we must extend those same principles to our high schools. That’s why President Bush and I are supporting high school reform that focuses on core subjects like reading, math, and science – to help more students graduate ready for college or work.”

We will continue to keep you updated in our newsletter as to changes made regarding these issues or the new flexibility outlined to meet these requirements.

Hearing on New Title I Credentials

The department has drafted an administrative rule chapter recognizing a new credential for Title I personnel; this credential is titled “Title I Coordinator Credential.” The new credential rule establishes three levels of Title I coordinator credentials, describes the duties for each level, outlines the requirements and application process, and provides for renewal.

As required by law, the department will hold a public hearing at a date to be announced (it is anticipated that the public hearing will take place sometime in early January 2006). Interested persons may attend and make comments at the public hearing or submit written comments regarding the Title I coordinator credential. After the public hearing, the Administrative Rules Committee of the Legislative Council will study the proposed rule and hold its own hearing. Details of the public hearing and comment period will be available on the DPI web site in the near future. The text of the proposed rule will also be posted on the DPI web site.

The three newly proposed Title I coordinator credentials, effective July 1, 2006, include:

- Title I Coordinator 1 – Performs job duties of coordinating a district-wide or multi-school Title I program, including development of budgets, preparation of a consolidated Title I application, training Title I staff, submitting Title I reports, and may also supervise one or more Title I teachers.
- Title I Coordinator 2 – Performs the job duties of a lead Title I teacher who participates in coordinating a Title I program.
- Title I Coordinator 3 – Performs the job duties of coordinating a schoolwide Title I program, including implementing the schoolwide plan, completing all required paperwork for the schoolwide plan, conducting parent involvement activities, facilitating professional development activities, and conducting the yearly evaluation of the schoolwide plan.

We will provide updates regarding the hearings process in the next issue of the *Title I News*.

2006 National Title I Conference

The National Title I Conference is a premiere event for individuals working within the Title I program. With nationally recognized speakers and thousands of participants, this is the ideal place to gain further knowledge about programs, policies, and great ideas pertinent to Title I.

This year's National Title I Conference, *A Galaxy of Stars*, is being held January 28-31, 2006, in Dallas, Texas. The conference has been organized around four central themes of learning and teaching, connections, policy and practice, and parent options. Additional information and registration forms for this conference can be accessed at www.titlei.org.

Parent Involvement Policy and Dispute Resolution Reminder

As stated earlier this year, the State Title I office has extended the due dates for the following items:

- **Parental Involvement Components – Due January 13, 2006**
— www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/targeted/require/parent/index.shtm
- **Dispute Resolution Policy – Due January 13, 2006**
— www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/followup.pdf

The department has received several submissions of these documents and the most common problems include:

Parental Involvement Components – If the template requires information on a program that the school/district does not have, the documents submitted have simply deleted this information. This is not acceptable. Rather, schools/districts are to leave the required information and state that the requirement is not applicable for the particular school/district.

Dispute Resolution Policy – The policy submitted must contain three levels for the parents to take the dispute if they are not satisfied. First, the parent has the right to take the dispute to the district level. If they are not pleased with the response from the district, they may take their dispute to the state level (State Title I office). If this is still not sufficient, they may then take the dispute to the federal level (U.S. Department of Education).

Further guidance and sample templates regarding these issues are available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/targeted/require/parent/index.shtm and www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/followup.pdf.

Reading Month 2006 Coming Soon

Each year, the month of February is designated as North Dakota's Reading Month. The theme for Reading Month 2006 is "Reading Olympics." The State Title I office contracts with North Dakota teachers each year to create the Reading Month packet. This year's packet is being prepared by Tammy Strobel, Tami Kramlich, and Sandra Zahn from the Kulm Public School District.

The State Title I office is planning to mail out the packets to schools in December. All schools within the state will receive one packet to share with all school staff. The packets will be placed in an envelope, mailed generically to each school, and not addressed to anyone's attention. However, the phrase "Reading Month" will be stamped on the envelope in large red letters. Please keep watch for your packet in December. The Reading Month packet will also be on the Title I web site at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/resource/read/index.shtm.

The organizers are integrating many of the suggestions and ideas that were submitted from the 2005 Reading Month feedback sheets. If anyone has any questions or comments regarding this project, please contact Nita Wirtz, Assistant Director in the State Title I office at nwirtz@state.nd.us or at (701) 328-1876.

Title I Mid Year Financial Report Reminder

The 2005-2006 Mid Year Financial Report (SFN 7822) will be mailed to school districts the beginning of December. Please complete the report and return it to the Department of Public Instruction Title I office. The Mid Year Financial Report form is due on Tuesday, January 10, 2006. Please report all expenditures from July 1, 2005 through December 31, 2005 on the financial report. If you are planning to spend a portion or all of the 5% Teacher Quality Set Aside Funds, or any other unobligated funds, a budget revision on the ORS must be completed stating how these funds will be used.

All school districts must submit a copy of their local accounting ledger with the Mid Year Financial Report. It is imperative that local accounting ledgers match the approved budget amounts that the State Title I office has on file.

The Mid Year Financial Report (SFN 7822) is available online as a PDF document at www.dpi.state.nd.us/forms/sfn7822.pdf and in MS Word format at www.dpi.state.nd.us/forms/word/sfn7822.doc. Guidance to assist you in completing the form is also available online at www.dpi.state.nd.us/forms/instruct/instruct7822.pdf.

If you have further questions or need assistance with this form, please contact Mary Neigum, Title I Fiscal Officer, by e-mail at mneigum@state.nd.us or by phone at (701) 328-2281.

Dickinson State University's 7-12 Math Institute

Dickinson State University invites grade 7-12 math teachers, aides, Title I teachers, special educators, and administrators to participate in the university's next 7-12 Math Institute beginning December 15-16, 2005. The 7-12 Math Institute is an eight-day course, focusing on the ND Math Standards. This course is designed to look at how students learn and understand math while giving grade 7-12 math teachers an opportunity to experience a variety of math instructional strategies.

The institute will include five days of classes (December 15-16, 2005; January 26-27, 2006; and February 13, 2006) with three follow-up days during the 2006-2007 school year. The distribution of these classes over an extended period allows teachers time to work with students between each class time. The institute will be offered for three graduate workshop credits in math or in education (two credits for the first five days and an additional credit for follow-up sessions). Classes are scheduled at the West River Teacher Center in Dickinson from 8:30 am through 3:30 pm (MDT).

Class days are constructed so that the participants are involved in working through math concepts all day and at the end of the day, each participant receives packets of information, which include the daily activities, and further ideas to incorporate into classroom use. Topics covered during the five days of classes will include each of the math standards (number sense, algebraic functions, statistics and probability, geometry, measurement). The follow up days include the topics of assessment, problem-solving, fractions and/or other topics as decided by course participants.

There is NO charge for the institute and materials as costs are being covered through a Dickinson State University grant. Substitute costs will be covered up to \$80/day (whatever your sub rate is). Mileage, meals, and motel costs would be district costs.

If you are interested in participating in Dickinson State University's 7-12 Math Institute, please contact Karen Nelson. Karen can be reached at Dickinson State University by telephone at (701) 483-2137 or by e-mail at karen.a.nelson@dsu.nodak.edu.

The Letter P.A.L.S. Program

Letter P.A.L.S. is a FREE online K-2 school-to-home reading program, which runs for 24 weeks from October to March. The Letter P.A.L.S. for the 2005-2006 school year started on October 4, however, it is not too late to join! Letter P.A.L.S. was created to provide a dynamic way to help teachers, parents, and guardians motivate children to become stronger readers.

The Letter P.A.L.S. school-to-home reading program consists of a set of 24 online Pet Shop Pen Pals weekly letters, which are delivered, one at a time, at the Letter P.A.L.S. web site. Each weekly letter is personalized with the child's name, is three pages in length, professionally written, beautifully illustrated, and reviewed by reading specialists for content and reading level.

The letters also include an additional special feature page, called "Parent Paws for Reading." It follows the third page of the letter and includes specific questions and answers for each letter. It is intended to bring the most meaning to each letter and serves as an electronic way for parents and students to notify the teacher that they read each weekly letter.

More information on the Letter P.A.L.S. program can be found online at www.letterpals.com.

Update on Flexibility Announcement on the Highly Qualified Staff Provision

On Friday, October 21, 2005, the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) posted a letter to Chief State School Officers regarding the highly qualified teacher provisions of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act and elements the USDE will use in determining if states are in compliance.

In the letter, Margaret Spellings, secretary of the USDE, indicates that if a state fails to meet the deadline for ALL teachers to become highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year, they may be given an additional year to comply with the requirement if they are implementing the law and making a good faith effort to reach the highly qualified goal as soon as possible.

Update on Flexibility Announcement on the Highly Qualified Staff Provision continued on page 6.

Update on Flexibility Announcement on the Highly Qualified Staff Provision (continued)

Log on to www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/secletter/051021.html to access a copy of Secretary Spelling's letter to Chief State School Officers.

The USDE will review data in the Consolidated State Performance Reports that are due in January 2006, as well as Title I and Title II monitoring reports, to determine if states are in compliance with the highly qualified staff provision. States that are in compliance or "making a good faith effort" can ask for a one-year extension of the highly qualified requirement.

Department of Public Instruction officials discussed this issue with Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB) members at their monthly meeting on November 8, 2005. The group discussed the many hurdles that it will have to address including:

1. North Dakota was cited on both the Title I and Title II monitoring reports during the 2004-2005 school year for being out-of-compliance with the highly qualified provision. North Dakota's system for parent notification of highly qualified requirements (school district report, etc.) was not in compliance.
2. North Dakota cannot report the information requested on the performance report because we do not have a sufficient data system in place to match classes taught to highly qualified teachers
3. North Dakota has a state law and administrative rules which mandates that all teachers must be highly qualified by July 1, 2006.

A decision was made to explore this issue to see if a sufficient case could be made to apply for a one-year extension for North Dakota teachers.

This extension would mainly help large districts. Small districts meeting the definition of "rural" can use the rural flexibility endorsement to request an additional year for staff to become highly qualified.

We will keep you updated on this matter in future issues of the *Title I News*.

Monthly Featured Articles

Research Corner

By: Ann Ellefson

**Online Assessments and
Assessment Resources**

The web sites listed below are a combination of online assessment and assessment resources for teachers to use to help measure student progress. Most of the products are free of charge and are easy to use. Enjoy!

Brain Child – www.brainchild.com – Provides free web based math and reading assessment for grades 3-8 to help track student progress.

The CASTLE Toolkit – www.le.ac.uk/castle – CASTLE stands for Computer Assited Teaching and Learning. This toolkit allows teachers to develop web-based interactive quizzes.

Discovery School Quiz Center – <http://school.discovery.com/quizcenter/quizcenter.html> – This is a web-based program that allows teachers to create, administer, and grade quizzes through the use of online services. This program is friendly even for those with novice computer experience.

Hot Potatoes – <http://hotpot.uvic.ca> – This program allows teachers to create six types of assessments (interactive multiple-choice, short-answer, jumbled-sentence, crossword, matching/ordering, and gap-fill exercises). This product is free for those that work for publicly funded non-profit-making educational institutions, who make their pages available on the web.

Web Assign – www.webassign.net – This program is a commercial online assignment, homework, and grading management and feedback system for educators. A free trial is available; however, there are fees for extended memberships.

Research Corner continued on page 7.

Research Corner (continued)

Web Author – <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/plc/larrc/webauthor.html> – This program provides free templates for an array of quiz, self-assessments, cloze, and other assessment activities and exercises; automatically creates source code scripts; no web hosting (user has to copy scripts to own web site).

Rubi Star – <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php> – This program provides teachers with a resource to help create rubrics for classroom use. Rubrics are scoring tools that outline the criteria for a particular piece of work. Rubrics allow students to be aware of the various requirements for the corresponding grade of points awarded.

Quiz Star – <http://quizstar.4teachers.org> – This program helps teachers create quizzes for students to use for review including multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. Teachers can activate and deactivate quizzes so they are available to students only on certain dates.

Easy Test Maker – <http://www.easytestmaker.com> – This is a free online test generator to help teachers create quizzes and tests. Teachers can create multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, matching, short answer, and true and false questions all on the same test. This program also allows teachers to insert instructions and divide your test into multiple sections. Another feature of this program allows teachers to print a master answer sheet for the test or quiz.

Quiz Builder – <http://ils.unc.edu/balus/oit/quizv2> – This is a cost-free, very easy to use tool for building simple quizzes with selected- or constructed-response items. One down side to this program is that it is rather dated in comparison to the rest of the programs listed on this page.

Reading Corner

By: Nita Wirtz

The New Year is Right Around the “Corner”

Ready to give your classroom a boost into the new year? It is never too early to start planning for your big new year classroom debut. Your kids will love the look of coming back to a new fresh look. For steps involved in creating a new (literately) looking classroom, read on!

The Reading is Fundamental web site lists several areas for sprucing up your classroom. It includes information on a book and writing areas, as well as other general ideas.

Making a book area in your classroom is easy and can include these very basic ideas. First, provide a well-lit spot to house at least four children simultaneously. Then use a fun rug, table, chairs, and other comfortable child size furniture. Materials such as posters, photos, props like puppets and stuffed animals can be included. Be sure to keep a variety of books and enough for several choices for each child. Display books at eye level, face out, and in an easily navigated way (by color, or theme, level series, author, or some other way) for attraction purposes. A tape player for talking books also adds an appealing touch.

A writing area, right beside your reading area, adds another literacy touch to the classroom. Again, keep in mind the spot, size, and furnishing using the tips above. Find several writing supplies include different paper, blank books, notepapers, chalkboards, markers, chalk, pencils, crayons, magnetic letters, and other letters. Also, keep other assembling supplies like recycled mail, coupons, child-appropriate magazines, staplers, hole punches, yarn, cardboard, computer stationary, greeting cards, stamps, stickers, a typewriter or any other ideas that come to mind. The more colorful and organized the more inviting to students.

Be ready in the new year to debut your new additions by talking the areas up and giving time for their use. Highlighting a book(s) each week and giving a brief review is a sure way to fire your kids up for research. Having kids do book reviews and writing about it are sure ways to take advantage of both spaces. Letting kids catch you reading and share their thoughts are also great ideas for integration. Do not forget that by including recorded books, you are teaching fluency to your kids through listening as well. Remember reading comes in all shapes and sizes so do not forget non-traditional reading ideas like newspaper, road signs, menus, cereal boxes, and other ideas with writing. Take advantage anywhere and everywhere you can. Happy creating for season greetings!

Reference: Reading Is Fundamental. (2005). Retrieved on 8/25/2005 from www.rif.org.

Math Corner**By: Flo Hilzendeger****Algebra in the Elementary?**

Many students struggle with algebra through no fault of their own. After all, algebra has its own distinctive language and a unique set of rules. Therefore, for most of the twentieth century, the study of algebra has been reserved for students entering high school. It was considered too abstract for elementary grade students.

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) recommends that algebra must be seen as a way of thinking and reasoning about relationships that should begin as early as preschool and grow in complexity through high school. In response to the recommendation, most school districts began requiring students to enroll in Algebra I no later than grade nine. However, schools did not include algebra as a major content strand at the elementary level. Many districts were unable to make the transition from instructional programs focusing on arithmetic thinking to those that required abstract algebraic reasoning (Greenes and Findell, 1999).

Studies indicate that elementary students can readily begin to recognize, compare, and analyze patterns in sounds, shapes and numbers. As students continue through the grades, they are able to make generalizations about geometric patterns, graphs, words, and symbolic rules. The work that begins in the early grades will become the foundation of later algebraic expressions. Reasoning algebraically is essential to the study of other domains of mathematics including geometry, probability, measurement, and data analyses. It is also required in the sciences, social sciences, and arts. While the focus of teaching algebra has always been on the older student, today's theory is to begin with younger students and focus on the "Big Ideas" of algebra and on reasoning algebraically (Greenes 1999). The "Big Ideas" for students in the elementary grades include:

- Variables, representing unknowns, quantities, and generalizing properties
- Patterns and functions
- Proportions and proportional reasoning

Recent studies indicate that students at the primary level show great interest in solving algebraic problems because they like the mystery of working with the unknowns. Many students actually thought using letters for variables was much simpler than drawing geometric shapes. What was truly astounding was that 15 to 20 percent of students at the primary level and 22 to 27 percent of students at the intermediate level could reason algebraically without preliminary instruction (Dobrynina, 2001). Obviously, students are ready to explore algebraic concepts and skills at a much earlier age than once thought.

The teacher's role is to solidify the student's understanding of the big ideas of algebra and that activities for students require them to describe their thinking, document their solution steps, and provide rationales for their solution approaches (Greenes, 1999).

Reading First Corner**By: Gail Schauer****Daily Reading**

As with anything, the more a person practices a skill, the better they become at it, whether it is music, football, or dancing. Reading is no different. There is a direct correlation between the amount of time a student spends reading and that student's overall achievement level. Because of this, many teachers provide time for all students to read independently, sometimes called DEAR (Drop Everything And Read), Sustained Silent Reading, or free-time reading.

However, this correlation between the time a student spends reading and a student's achievement does not prove (nor does it disprove) that if a student reads more, he will be a better reader. Is a student a better reader because he reads more often, or does he read more often because he is a better reader? Simply providing more time for a student to read is not likely to increase his reading skills or achievement. Direct, explicit instruction is necessary and crucial. Students who are struggling avoid reading and yet are the ones that need more practice.

Reading Corner continued on page 9.



Reading Corner (continued)

The best way to improve reading fluency and overall reading achievement is to provide repeated and monitored oral reading. Some ways to incorporate daily reading into the 90 minutes of reading instruction include:

- Student-adult reading. Have students read one-on-one with a teacher, parent, classroom aide, or a tutor.
- Choral reading. Have students read together in a small group or with another student. Make sure each student has the same text.
- Tape-assisted reading. Students read along with a fluent reader on an audiotape. Make sure the book is at the students' independent reading level and that the tape is at about 80-100 words per minute.
- Partner reading. Have students partner read, each takes a turn reading. It is also helpful to have two students re-read the same material to increase their fluency.



The above information has been adapted from Put Reading First – The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read, page 27-28.

As educators, we need to nurture the habit of daily reading and provide students with many opportunities to read throughout the day. We need to encourage independent reading; however, we must remember that this independent reading time should not replace direct reading instruction.

Test Your Fluency Knowledge:

1. True or False There is a close relationship between fluency and reading comprehension. Students who scored higher on measures of fluency also scored higher on measures of comprehension.
2. Students should read and re-read a text a certain number of times or until a certain level of fluency is reached. How many times of re-reading is usually sufficient for most students?

Two Times	Three Times	Four Times	Five Times
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3. Does round-robin reading in itself increase fluency?
4. Can silent, independent reading in the classroom be a part of the 90 minutes of reading instruction in a Reading First school?
5. Why is fluency so important in teaching a student to read?
6. When a student practices reading orally and re-reading a text, what level of reading material should be used?

Independent Level Text	Instructional Level Text	Frustration Level Text
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7. Independent reading level is a level where students have about what percent of success?

80% success	90% success	95% success
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Answers for this test can be found on page 10 of *Title I News* and can be found in *Put Reading First – The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read*. This book can be read online or obtained free of charge at <http://www.edpubs.org/webstore/Content/search.asp>.



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Upcoming Events

Schoolwide Planning Meeting #2

This meeting is specifically for those schools participating in the 2005-2006 schoolwide planning year. Attendance at this meeting is required for those schools planning to become schoolwide for the 2006-2007 school year.

■ January 17, 2006 in Bismarck, North Dakota

Information will be available online at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/events.shtm.

National Title I Conference – A Galaxy of Stars

The National Title I Conference is the premiere event for individuals working within the Title I program. With nationally recognized speakers and more than 3,000 colleagues with whom to compare notes, this is the ideal place to further your knowledge about programs, policies, and great ideas.

■ January 28-31, 2006 in Dallas, Texas

Information is available online at www.titlei.org.

North Dakota Teachers of Math Conference

■ March 30-April 1, 2006 in Bismarck, North Dakota

Information is available from Sue Forster at sue_forster@educ8.org.

North Dakota Reading Association (NDRA) Conference

The 2006 NDRA Conference, *Lighting the Fire for Literacy*, will feature events such as guest authors, story telling, exhibitors and more. The conference is geared toward educators with a particular interest in reading.

■ April 20-22, 2006 in Fargo, North Dakota

Information is available online at <http://ndreadon.utma.com/intro.htm>.

International Reading Association (IRA) Convention

The IRA's 51st annual convention, *Great Teachers Inspire the World*, will inspire you with hot topics and outstanding speakers. Some topics include teaching preschoolers and beginning readers, teaching reading to English language learners, using literature and providing access to books, developing teacher expertise for reading instruction, and preventing and overcoming reading difficulties as well as many more. This convention is for teachers, administrators, and life long learners with a particular interest in reading instruction.

■ April 30–May 4, 2006 in Chicago, Illinois

Information is available online at www.reading.org/association/meetings/annual.html.

Answers to Reading Corner – “Test Your Knowledge” (found on page 9)

1. True
2. Four times of re-reading is usually sufficient for most students.
3. No, probably because a student only reads a small portion of the text and they only read it once.

4. No. Research has not yet proven whether silent independent reading increases reading achievement. Although **silent independent reading** has its place and can increase fluency and reading achievement, it **cannot be a part of the 90-minutes of reading instruction**. The 90 minutes of reading instruction must be direct instruction in reading. The silent independent reading must be done outside of the 90 minutes.
5. When a student reads fluently, it frees the student to understand what they read.
6. Independent reading level – when practicing reading and re-reading text, the student should be able to decode easily.
7. An independent reading level is where a student has about 95% success.