



North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

Title I News

August 2006

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Fall Mailing Coming Soon

Within the next few weeks, Title I personnel and authorized representatives will be receiving the annual Title I fall mailing. This mailing will contain a wealth of information on issues concerning Title I. Key information includes the list of districts to be monitored during the 2006-2007 school year, *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) dissemination requirements and a handout highlighting new resources for school personnel. Be sure to review this information to stay current on Title I issues in the upcoming school year. Be on the lookout for this packet!

Are Your Teachers Highly Qualified?

According to both federal and state law, all teachers were required to meet the highly qualified staff provision as of **July 1, 2006**. The only exceptions are teachers who have an approved Rural Flexibility Endorsement or a Teaching Alternative Flexibility Endorsement (TAFE) on file with the Education Standards and Practices Board.

There are serious repercussions for districts that are found out of compliance regarding this issue, including a loss of state foundation aid dollars and placing their Title I funding in jeopardy.

If you have issues regarding any teachers who are not highly qualified for the 2006-2007 school year, please contact the Education Standards and Practices Board at (701) 328-9641 or espbinfo@nd.gov.

Title I Fall Workshop Update

As indicated in the April 2006 issue of *Title I News*, the State Title I office has set the date for its 2006 Fall Title I Workshop for **October 12-13, 2006**. Title I personnel can expect to receive information on key Title I updates, new resources, and much, much more! Additional correspondence, a tentative agenda, and registration information will be included in the upcoming fall mailing. Registration information will also be posted online at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/events.shtm on the Title I website.

Reallocated Funds Update

Many districts have inquired about the amount of Title I reallocated funds that will be available; unfortunately, at this time we do not know the amount of funds available. There are still many final financial reports not approved or pending approval for districts across the state.

Information regarding the reallocated funds status as well as, the application, will be included in the upcoming fall mailing.



Reminder – Reports Due

Please note that the State Title I office is missing several reports, monitoring information, requested policies, and other information from school districts. The missing documents were requested during the 2005-2006 school year. This information includes:

- Title I Personnel Reports
- Title I Self-Monitoring Compliance responses
- Title I Parental Involvement Policies, School Compact, and Dispute Resolution policy re-submissions
- Title I Program Improvement Plans and Applications
- Title I Targeting Information
- Title I Final Financial Reports
- Title I, Part D Final Implementation, Financial Reports, and Final Requests for Funds

If your school district is one that has not submitted the requested information, please note that recent correspondence has been sent to your school within the month of July or August 2006. Those school districts missing information will have the approval of their consolidated application placed on hold until these issues have been resolved.

Consolidated Application Reminder

The deadline for all consolidated applications is fast approaching. Applications are due **by August 25, 2006** unless your State Title I office contact person has instructed you otherwise. Applications not submitted by this date will not be eligible for federal Title funds.

If you have not begun working on your consolidated application or if you have questions or concerns regarding the issues pending on your application, please get in touch with your State Title I contact person. This list is available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/require/list.pdf.

During the National Association of State Title I Director's meeting in July, it was made very clear by the U.S. Department of Education that computers should be coded to line item 730, including those with a purchase price under \$750. This is different than information shared previously by the State Title I office. Therefore, when reviewing and approving consolidated applications and budget revisions for the 2006-2007 school year, all equipment with a value of over \$750 and all computers with a purchase price under \$750 must be coded to line item 730.

Some districts have received notification that the Title I portion of the application has been approved. Once all federal Title programs have been approved, the district will receive email correspondence from Beverly Fischer, Grants Manager for all of the federal Title programs. Please review this correspondence with great detail as it outlines key issues the district should be aware of for the upcoming school year.

Harvey Elementary School Acknowledged for their Efforts

The State Title I office would like to share the following description of Harvey Elementary School's Title I program. We believe it is an excellent example of how Title I program should supplement the school's reading program and the instruction taking place in the regular classroom. It is commendable that the school staff strive to be ahead of the classroom instruction by pre-teaching skills and vocabulary to Title I students to enhance the success they experience in the regular education classroom.

Below is the description of Harvey Elementary's Title I program provided in the 2006-2007 consolidated application:

Title I students receive services that supplement regular classroom instruction. Emphasis is placed on "pre-teaching." The "Reading Series" has a list of critical and support words for each of the stories in the basal reader. Words are introduced to students by Title I teachers prior to classroom introduction. Concentration is on the pronunciation and definition. Re-teaching and pre-teaching of math skills are also used. Title I teachers strive to be one day ahead of the regular classroom teacher. Flash cards are used and computer games also reinforce math facts. Reading/math board games and computer games are used when they reinforce the skill being taught.

Kudos to Harvey Elementary School!

Title I School Recognition Awards

As we all know, the NCLB Act holds states, districts, and schools accountable for student achievement; however, on the reverse side of this issue, it is also responsible for recognition of great efforts. Currently under Title I, Part A regulations, there are two recognition programs.

State Academic Achievement Award

The first award is a state administered recognition program. This program is based on State Assessment results and criteria set within each individual state as to how Title I schools will be recognized. The State of North Dakota has established criteria for this program and last spring, recognized ten schools for their efforts in student achievement. Since the 2005-2006 State Assessment information has now been publicized, there will be another round of recognized schools this fall. For additional information, please visit www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/achieve/index.shtm on the Title I website.

National Title I Distinguished Schools Award

The federal level also has a program to recognize outstanding efforts in education. This program, sponsored by the National Association of State Title I Directors (NASTID), is to honor Title I schools that have improved student achievement. Through this program, North Dakota can select one Title I school (targeted assistance or schoolwide) to receive the National Title I Distinguished Schools Award. The schools are selected for outstanding results in one of two categories: 1. exceptional student performance for two or more consecutive years or, 2. closing the achievement gap between student groups. Distinguished schools selected across the nation are recognized at the National Title I Conference. Information regarding the application for this award will be distributed in the upcoming fall mailing. Interested applicants should watch for more details in this mailing.

Notice to Title I Aides/Paraprofessionals

Effective July 1, 2006, all aides/paraprofessionals working in a program supported with Title I funds must hold a valid Paraprofessional Certificate of Completion or North Dakota Educator's Professional License to document compliance with the NCLB requirements.

Under NCLB law, aides/paraprofessionals must meet one of three requirements to be employed in a Title I program. These three include:

1. Obtain an associates degree (or higher) from an institution of higher education; or
2. Complete at least two years of study at an institution of higher education; or
3. Meet a rigorous standard of quality, which includes an assessment of reading, writing, and math. North Dakota has three assessments on our State approved list.

This requirement pertains to all Title I paid aides/paraprofessionals in a targeted assistance school. In a schoolwide program, Title I funds support all teachers and paraprofessionals.; therefore, these requirements apply to all aides/paraprofessionals with instructional duties, regardless of whether or not the position is supported with Title I funds. This includes instructional aides paid with district, Title I, special education, BIA, or other funding sources.

In the last few years, there has been some flexibility within the law to allow aides/paraprofessionals who were employed before the NCLB Act to have additional time to meet the qualifications of the law. It was also rumored that with the July 1, 2006 deadline approaching, there would be additional time offered by the USDE. This is not the case and the deadline date of July 1, 2006 stands firm.

If your school district is employing instructional aides/paraprofessionals with Title I funds and are found out of compliance, you are putting your Title I funding in jeopardy. The Department of Public Instruction State Title I office will be monitoring for compliance of this issue during the 2006-2007 school year.

If you have questions on these requirements or wish to obtain further information, please visit the Title I website at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/aides.shtm.

Director's Report

On July 25-28, 2006, I attended the annual Title I State Directors Meeting in Washington, D.C. We received direct presentations from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) staff had opportunities to visit with Title I directors from other states. States received updates on the following issues:

- Federal Programs Reauthorization

The federal programs included in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act are slated to be reauthorized again sometime between 2007-2009. The best guess at this time is that the reauthorization will occur in the spring of 2009, after the 2008 elections. The National Association of State Title I Directors (NASTID) has put together a document focusing on changes that they would like to see addressed in the reauthorization. We voted on the content of this document at our meeting. As soon as I have a final copy of the document, I will post it on the Title I website.

- 2007 National Title I Conference

The 2007 National Title I Conference will be held in Long Beach, CA on January 27 – 30, 2007. Registration information is now available at www.titlei.org.

- Title I Funding for 2007-2008

Federal funding for the 2007-2008 school year doesn't look promising. At this time, Title I is level funded. Previously supported programs, such as Reading First and Title II are slated for a slight decrease. It doesn't appear as though the President's proposed "Math Now" program will be funded for the 2007-2008 school year. There is, however, a new pool of funds in the federal budget for schools and districts identified for improvement. The final appropriations for the 2007-2008 school year are typically finalized between November and January.

- A report on the Status of the Highly Qualified Teacher Provision and Each State's Assessment System

Two key provisions that states were supposed to have complied with by July 1, 2006 are the highly qualified teacher provision and the State assessment system. The USDE has undergone peer reviews on both issues for all states to determine compliance. A report on the nation-wide status of these two key provisions was discussed at length. Many states, including North Dakota, have conditional approval status from the peer review process. As long as certain provisions are met, according to a specified time line, no sanctions will be applied. However, if all of the provisions are not attained, states are at risk of losing a portion of their State Title I funds since both provisions are required in the Title I law.

- State Monitoring of NCLB

The USDE is clearly in an ENFORCEMENT mode at this time. States received a fairly harsh presentation on state and district accountability and how we would be monitored to ensure compliance. The USDE is switching from a three-year to a two-year timeline for monitoring all states for compliance with NCLB. In addition, they have added a new fiscal component to the site visitations. The USDE has partnered with the Office of the Chief Financial Officer.

USDE staff will monitor program requirements and the Office of the Chief Financial Officer will monitor fiscal requirements, such as disbursement of Title I funds, contracts, carryover requirements, etc. North Dakota has not yet been informed as to when we will be monitored by the USDE.

- Future Initiatives

It is still rather early in the new reauthorization process to specifically pinpoint which topics or issues will be revised. However, at this time, the following four topics appear to be crucial areas that are sure to be addressed to some degree in the reauthorization process:

- Issues surrounding ELL/LEP students
 - Students with disabilities subgroup
 - High school literacy
 - Early childhood education
-

Highly Qualified Staff Provision Update

For those of you who have been following the updates in our Title I newsletter regarding the Teacher Quality provision, there has been a lot of activity over the past month.

In July 2006, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) submitted a report entitled, *The North Dakota Revised State Plan: Meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher Goal*. This fulfilled the directive of the USDE to submit evidence of a revised state plan to provide highly qualified teachers in all North Dakota schools, under the authority of Title IIA of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*.

Our report basically stated that as of July 2006, all teachers in North Dakota are highly qualified because our state law is aligned to NCLB. The only exceptions are teachers who hold a valid Rural Flexibility Endorsement or a Teaching Alternative Flexibility Endorsement (TAFE). Our report was peer reviewed by a team selected by the USDE to determine compliance the end of July 2006

On August 16, 2006, the NDDPI received a letter and a copy of the peer reviewers comments from the USDE. According to their report, North Dakota's submission has a number of serious deficiencies. The USDE wants us to provide a plan to get all teachers highly qualified. We believe a plan indicating when staff will be highly qualified is not needed because our state law required all teachers be highly qualified by July 1, 2006. The NDDPI is asking for a reconsideration of our submission.

According to the letter we received, North Dakota has until September 29, 2006, to resubmit information to document compliance with the highly qualified staff provision.

You can access a copy of the report submitted by the NDDPI, the letter we received from the USDE, and the peer reviewers' comments at www.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/hqtplans/index.html.

Monthly Featured Articles

Research Corner

By: Ann Ellefson

Another Reason Why Preschools are Important

New research from the Committee of Economic Development (CED) provides evidence that investing in high-quality early education, such as preschool programs, can impact a community's economics. Although the research done for this project focuses on the economic growth and fiscal stability for states and nations, imagine what it can do for your community. The executive summary for the report states, "investing in the education of America's youngest learners has emerged as one of the most promising ways to help strengthen the future economic and fiscal position of our states and nation."

It seems logical that the finances invested today will bring about changes for the future. Investing in high quality educational systems for our youngest learners will help them become better academically, socially, and emotionally prepared for the future. But investing in these high quality programs will do more than what was previously mentioned. The report indicates many other areas being impacted by this investment by stating, "the economy will benefit from a better prepared workforce, increased employment opportunities, stronger growth, and raising standards of living while society will benefit from less crime, enhanced schools, and children who are better prepared to participate in the democratic process."

When many schools and districts are considering implementing preschool programs, decisions are made based on how the school or district will benefit in the present time. This research supports the present benefits that preschool programs can provide, but also expands into looking at the long term effects of preschool programs.

Resources:

- The Economic Promise of Investing in High-Quality Preschool – www.ced.org/docs/report/report_prek_econpromise.pdf

Reading First Corner

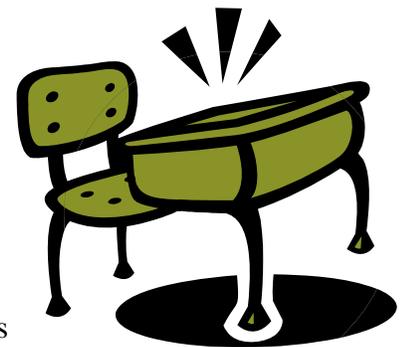
By: Gail Schauer

The 90-Minute Block of Reading Instruction



The Title I newsletter has previously published articles about the 90-minute block of reading instruction as it is one of the basic and key components of the Reading First program. Since there are several new Reading First schools starting their program this year, it seems appropriate to review the 90-minute block. All Reading First schools must set aside a block of at least 90-minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction every day in the regular classrooms in grades K-3. Many Reading First schools set aside 120-minutes every day for reading instruction. All schools, even those not receiving Reading First funds, are highly encouraged to follow the Reading First model.

1. Choose the core reading program carefully. It is the primary instructional tool that teachers use to teach children to learn to read and ensure they reach reading levels that meet or exceed grade-level standards.
2. Use the core reading program with fidelity. If it is based on scientifically-based reading research, it will be laid out thoughtfully and carefully to cover all the essential reading components that a student needs to learn to read. A teacher's time is precious and the program is already there. Why re-invent the wheel?
3. Minimize interruptions during the 90-minute reading block. When planning assemblies, taking lunch count or attendance, scheduling recess, music, or pull out programs, do all these activities outside of the reading block.
4. Start the 90-minute block of time once all students are settled and ready to learn. If there is recess or music before the 90-minutes of reading instruction, the students will need sufficient time to take off their coats and boots or take out their reading books. Schedule in and allow time for the students to get ready for instruction before beginning the 90-minute block.
5. Schedule an additional 30 minutes or more a day, above and beyond the 90-minute block, for students that are considered at-risk. Students with the greatest needs must be provided with additional instructional time to accelerate their progress.
6. Have a program or plan of action for the additional 30 minutes of reading instruction. Again, make sure the 30 minutes start after the students get to their spots and settle in. This instructional time is required to provide struggling students with the extra help they need.
7. Consider the students instructional levels. Targeted instruction can occur within the 90-minute reading block. Instructional time is not maximized by requiring students to participate in activities (such as whole group instruction) that are not at their skill level and do not meet their instructional needs. The key point is to ensure that students are provided with instruction that meets their identified needs and to ensure that students with the greatest needs are provided with additional instructional time to accelerate their progress in meeting benchmarks and reaching proficiency levels.
8. Consider using supplemental and intervention activities found in the core reading program. Core reading programs have a wealth of additional activities for struggling students that provide intensive instruction. When planning for struggling students, look through the core reading program as well as into other supplemental and intervention programs.



For more information, check out the new document titled *Guidance on the 90-Minute Block of Reading Instruction* that has been added to the North Dakota Reading First website at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/reading/index.shtm.

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Literacy Activities for September

- **Library Card Sign-Up Month** – September is Library Card Sign-Up Month, sponsored by the American Library Association. This program was launched in 1987. The observance of this month brings national attention to using the local library as a source of lifetime learning. Visit www.ala.org/ala/pio/otherinit/card/librarycard.htm for more information.
- **International Literacy Day (September 8, 2006)** – International Literacy Day is sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. With nearly 775 million people over the age of 15 who are illiterate, of whom two-thirds are women, this observance highlights the importance of literacy worldwide. Visit <http://portal.unesco.org> and click on "Education" for more information.
- **Banned Books Week (September 23-30, 2006)** – Banned Books Week, an annual celebration of the freedom to read, is observed the last week of September. Each year, librarians, booksellers, teachers, and countless others take this opportunity to highlight the importance of intellectual freedom and remind us not to take this precious democratic freedom for granted. For more information, please visit www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbooksweek/bannedbooksweek.htm.

Upcoming Events

33rd Plains Regional International Reading Association (IRA) Conference

The Nebraska Reading Association and the IRA, offering exceptional professional development for reading educators, co-sponsor this conference.

- October 4-7, 2006 in Omaha, Nebraska

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

Title I Fall Workshop

The State Title I office is sponsoring a fall workshop for Title I personnel.

- October 12-13, 2006 in Mandan, North Dakota

Information will be available fall 2006 at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/events.shtm.

NDEA 2006 Instructional Conference

Make your plans NOW to attend the 2006 NDEA Instructional Conference scheduled for Bismarck Oct. 18-20. The General Session and exhibits will be held at the Civic Center with sectionals scheduled at Bismarck Public Schools.

- October 18-20, 2006 in Bismarck, North Dakota

Information is available at www.ndea.org.

