

# North Dakota Teacher Support System Grant Program

2009  
MENTORING  
Request for Proposals

Proposals Due:  
Friday, October 9, 2009



EDUCATION  
STANDARDS  
*and* PRACTICES BOARD

Education Standards and Practices Board  
2718 Gateway Avenue, Suite 303  
Bismarck, ND 58503-0585  
(701) 328-9641 Fax (701) 328-9647  
<http://www.nd.gov/espb>

**2009 TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEM GRANT PROGRAM  
NORTH DAKOTA EDUCATION STANDARDS AND PRACTICES BOARD**

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## **2009 TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEM GRANT PROGRAM NORTH DAKOTA EDUCATION STANDARDS AND PRACTICES BOARD**

### **I. Background**

The Teacher Support System Grant Program (TSSGP) seeks to raise student achievement through strengthening the effectiveness of teachers through rigorous and relevant professional development conducted by partnerships of local school districts, regional education agencies, institutions of higher education, and the Education Standards and Practices Board. It was funded by the 61<sup>st</sup> North Dakota Legislative Assembly for the biennium beginning July 1, 2009 and ending June 30, 2011.

The North Dakota Commission on Education Improvement in its *Final Draft Report to Governor John Hoeven, and the North Dakota Interim Legislative Committee on Education Finance and the North Dakota Legislative Assembly* recommended expansion of the mentorship grant by providing \$2,300,000 to the Education Standards and Practices Board for mentorship grants to train first-year teachers that are in their first year of K-12 instruction. The Commission also recommended providing matching grant dollars to support three pilot programs to initiate model instructional coaching activities. \$500,000 should be appropriated in Year 2 to cover the state's proportionate share of the cost of hiring and placing instructional coaches.

The 61<sup>st</sup> North Dakota Legislative Assembly in House Bill 1400 appropriated \$2,300,000 to the Education Standards and Practices Board for the purpose of funding a teacher support system grant program, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2009, and ending June 30, 2011. House Bill 1400 provided authorization for ESPB to (1) employ an individual to serve as a teacher support system coordinator; (2) administer and evaluate the TSSGP; and (3) (a) select and train experienced teachers who will serve as mentors for first-year teachers and assist the first-year teachers with instructional skills development; or (b) if a district is not in need of mentors for first-year teachers, ESPB shall select and train experienced teachers who will work with school district administrators to identify the needs of non-first year teachers and through research-validated interventions and the use of proven instructional methods help non-first-year teachers address their particular needs. Services may be provided only to teachers employed by school districts and not to teachers employed by any other entity.

#### **Goals of the Teacher Support System Grant**

The goal of this grant is to support first-year teachers in the development of their instructional skills by providing them with trained mentors.

Research clearly shows that the quality of the teacher in the classroom has a great effect on student achievement. In order to become as effective as possible, every first-year teacher deserves the support of his/her principal and colleagues and, in addition, a trained mentor who works in close proximity to the new teacher, a trained mentor who works in the same content area or grade level as the new teacher (the previous two may be the same person), and the support of other beginning teachers. The Teacher Support System Grant is designed to provide these additional types of support for first-year teachers employed by school districts.

This support will include:

1. Identification of a designated on-site mentor for each first-year teacher
2. Initial and ongoing training of mentors
3. Training of principals about the program and their role in support of mentors and first-year teachers
4. A structure of support for first-year teachers with parameters and requirements
5. Provision for credit-earning opportunities for first-year teachers
6. Provision of online content-area or grade-level mentors for identified first-year teachers where needed

### **Definitions**

The North Dakota Education Association (NDEA) and ESPB collaborated and developed the following definitions based on research and best practices.

*Mentoring* --Intended to provide newcomers guidance, problem solving resources, modeling, support, and feedback—offers first-year teachers and those new to a district a professional lifeline. Mentors may also help by co-planning lessons, or co-teaching lessons, problem solving instructional, curricular, or student related dilemmas, modeling strategies, reflecting on practice, observing and giving feedback. Teacher quality is the factor that most affects student learning. Mentoring is a means of helping new teachers make that difference.

*Mentor*--The focus of a mentor is to “increase instructional skills of the novice teacher and support school wide induction activities.” The mentoring process is a one-on-one relationship that is built on trust. Areas of focus for first-year teachers in which they may need assistance: classroom management and organization, instruction, students, parents, school context, and professionalism.

*First-year teacher*—A first-year teacher is defined as a licensed teacher in the first year of contracted teaching in a P-12 school. Because of restrictions in this law, teachers who are employed by private schools, REAs, Special Education Units and Career and Technical Education Centers are not eligible to receive services. Teachers presently participating in Resident Teacher Programs are also not eligible to be mentored as part of this grant.

*Projects*—Successful applicants, as defined under “Eligible Applicants” on page 5 below, will be referred to as “projects”. This term will be used to refer to the LEA, group of LEAs, or REA who have submitted a single application.

### **Grant Funding**

The Mentoring Requests for Proposals (RFP) **will be issued only once** during the cycle and will be due October 9, 2009. If your project is selected, you will request specific numbers and locations of mentoring partnerships for spring 2010 and for school year 2010-11. Funding will be available for the teacher support system grant projects beginning on January 1, 2010.

**Districts that apply for funding for mentors under this RFP will not be eligible to apply for funding under the coaching RFP which will be sent out in the spring of 2010 for funding for the 2010-11 school year from the Teacher Support System Grant Project.**

Applicants may submit only one proposal. **Funds will be paid on a reimbursement basis of approved costs.** ESPB will negotiate with the applicants for the final funding award balance. **The number of mentoring partnerships to be supported may be limited by the available grant funding.**

Mentors will be selected by projects and building principals with final approval by the TSSGP Coordinator. Please follow the "Guidelines for Selection of Mentors" on page 10 of this document.

TSSPG will provide funding to projects to cover **stipends** for mentors in the amounts stated below as well as to cover the **costs of travel for mentors and first-year teachers for TSSPG-approved activities** based on state-approved in-state rates. These rates can be found at <http://www.nd.gov/fiscal/accounting/rates>. Projects will be responsible for Form 1099 tax documents associated with payments to participants. Please see Appendix C for further explanation. Stipend costs will be reimbursed on a semester basis with proper documentation and travel costs can be reimbursed twice per semester.

Contributions and in-kind support are highly desirable and will be a factor in the final selection of proposals. **Payment for substitute teachers will be the responsibility of the school district.**

Selection of applications will be done by an independent panel of reviewers with final approval by the Education Standards and Practices Board.

### **Grant Schedule**

- |                                    |                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Request for Proposals announced | September 1, 2009 |
| 2. Proposal submission deadline    | October 9, 2009   |
| 3. Announcement of grant awards    | November 16, 2009 |
| 4. Project funding period begins   | January 1, 2010   |
| 5. Project funding period ends     | June 30, 2011     |

## **II. Key Features**

### **Eligible Applicants**

Applicants that will be eligible for consideration for the TSSPG funding will be a local education agency (LEA), any number of local education agencies submitting only one proposal, or a regional education agency (REA). Small districts are encouraged to join and coordinate with other school districts or their regional education agency. ESPB reserves the right to facilitate districts into partners either during the proposal process or after proposals have been received. The applying agency is agreeing to the required assurances in this document. One partner

agrees to serve as the fiscal agent and all partners agree to all requirements and assurances in this document. Successful applicants will be referred to as “projects”.

Teachers, administrators, and other LEA personnel from all partners in the project must be part of the project planning to ensure that the project will meet their needs and schedules.

If an applicant has multiple LEAs, the administrator from each participating LEA must sign the proposal application and the assurances. Any partner to a project may serve as its fiscal agent.

If a school has need for a mentor during the 2010-2011 school year and is not part of a funded project, that school should contact ESPB and their REA and attempts will be made to connect the school with a funded project.

### **Proposal Requirements**

Each application must include all requirements as stated in Section III. Proposal Procedures on page 8 below. This will include a narrative statement explaining how the LEA or group will be organized to carry out the goals of the Teacher Support System Grant, as well as completion of all application forms. Signatures from all partners are required.

### **Project Requirements**

Projects will collect documentation that all administrator, mentor, and first-year teacher requirements have been met, verify the accuracy, and retain with the project records for the evaluation and coordinator site visits. Projects will also collect receipts for all expenses including travel, verify the accuracy, and retain with the project records for the evaluation and coordinator site visits. Project fiscal agents will request reimbursement for approved costs.

A minimum of one day each semester must be provided for release time to both the mentor and first-year teacher for classroom visitations. Release time must also be provided for mentors and first-year teachers for training activities (initial or refresher training plus one-half day mentor seminar per semester) and for one-half day first-year teacher seminar per semester. Seminars will be offered on a regional basis. Costs for substitute teachers are the responsibility of the LEA.

The project must make available all technology tools required for participants (e.g. internet access, webcams).

All projects are required to participate in external evaluation activities. These activities may include site visits, meetings, and sharing of various forms of evaluation data. Some data will be collected by the evaluation team and shared; other data will be collected within each project and shared back with the evaluation team

### **Mentor Requirements**

Mentors will be selected by their building administrators. It is highly recommended that mentors have a minimum of three years of teaching experience and should have been teaching in their present district for a minimum of two years prior to mentoring. Mentors must be involved in ESPB training. A mentor may only mentor one first-year teacher per semester.

A two-day mentor training will be provided in Bismarck before January 1 and again during summer 2010 for those teachers not previously trained. A one-day refresher training will be

provided in Bismarck before January 1 and also during summer 2010 for previously trained mentors. Additional training will be provided during each of the three semesters in the form of regional half-day seminars and online support. Technology will be used through the TSSGP to enhance the mentor/first-year teacher training and provide technical assistance where appropriate. The TSSGP will also conduct site visits.

Both the mentor and the first-year teacher will be required to log their mentoring activities and time. **Building Administrators will collect the mentoring logs, document the accuracy, and send to the project fiscal agent** to apply for reimbursement and retain with the project records for the evaluation and coordinator site visits.

Mentors will have the potential to earn one continuing education credit through an institution of higher education in North Dakota with an approved teacher education program for their initial training. Costs associated with registration for the credit will be the responsibility of the mentor.

Required activities for mentors:

*Training:*

- New mentors--2 days initial training
- Previously trained mentors--1 day refresher training

*Per Semester:*

- Minimum of 18 hours one-on-one conferencing time with first-year teacher
- Participation in one half-day mentor seminar per semester
- Participation in online mentor support during the 2010-11 school year (minimum requirements will be established)
- Minimum of one day's worth of release time for both mentor and first-year teacher to be spent in observations (total of two days per semester substitute coverage)
- Documentation of compliance with requirements

Stipend for mentors:

The project will provide the mentor with an \$800 stipend for each semester after documentation of participation in all required activities. The amount of the stipend will be reduced if all requirements are not met.

**Building Administrator Requirements**

Administrators of buildings to which first-year teachers are assigned will be responsible for selecting and supporting the work of the mentor and first-year teacher and overseeing the success of the mentoring program within their buildings. Documentation of compliance with all mentor requirements will be collected by the building administrator and presented to the Project Fiscal Agent who will submit requests for payment to the TSSGP Coordinator.

Administrators are still responsible for all usual supervision and evaluation of the first-year teacher, as required by law and district expectations.

If the mentor/first-year teacher relationship does not appear to be effective, the building administrator should contact the TSSGP Coordinator for assistance.

Also, building administrators will be required to participate **one time** in an online or face-to-face administrator training through TSSGP. This training will take less than two hours.

Required activities for building administrators:

- Participation in one-time training activity
- Responsibility for verification of mentor participation for payment
- Oversight of success of mentoring program within their buildings.

**First-year teacher Requirements**

All first-year teachers are required to participate in the 18 hours of one-on-one conferencing sessions with their mentors and attend a half-day first-year teacher seminar each semester.

First-year teachers will have the potential to earn two continuing education credits through an institution of higher education in North Dakota with an approved teacher education program during the first semester of their involvement with the program.

Costs associated with registration for the credit will be the responsibility of the first-year teacher.

Requirements for the course may include participation in the 18 hours of one-on-one conferencing time with the assigned mentor, as well as participation in online activities with instructors and other first-year teachers.

### **III. Proposal Procedures**

**Proposals must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on October 9. We will accept only hard copies (no faxes). Please mail to:**

Laurie Stenehjem  
Teacher Support System Grant Program Coordinator  
Education Standards and Practices Board  
2718 Gateway Avenue, Suite 303  
Bismarck ND 58503-0585

**Applications must adhere to the following format:**

1. Application Cover Sheet(s)
2. Project Narrative  
The proposal must explain the district or partnership's governance structure regarding decision-making, communication, and fiscal responsibilities. Explain how project activities will be monitored over the course of the grant. Explain how communications will occur between project personnel and participants during the

school year, and how follow-up support will be documented. Also describe any in-kind support you will offer.

### 3. Signature Sheet

Signatures from project coordinator, fiscal agent, and from each partner LEA in the project must be on this sheet. Signatures represent agreement with all assurances in this document.

### **Applicant Questions**

Questions should be directed to Laurie Stenehjem, TSSGP Coordinator at ESPB. Inquiries may be transmitted via email to: [lstenehj@nd.gov](mailto:lstenehj@nd.gov) or by phone at 701-328-9644. From September 5-21, please direct questions to Janet Welk at [jwelk@nd.gov](mailto:jwelk@nd.gov) or by phone at 701-328-9646. Potential applicants will be able to view the answers to frequently asked questions at [www.nd.gov/espb](http://www.nd.gov/espb).

## **IV. Selection of Proposals**

Following staff review for eligibility and compliance with application requirements, an external review committee will make recommendations for final approval by the Education Standards and Practices Board.

Proposals that are late, incomplete, or submitted by ineligible partnerships may be disqualified.

# Guidelines for Selection of Mentors

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The selection of the mentor for a new teacher is an important task for the building administrator. Please consider the recommendations below as you think about who might provide the best support for your beginning teachers.

*Interestingly, the best classroom teacher does not necessarily make the best mentor!*

## Key Criteria

- Each mentor should work with only one beginning teacher.
- Close proximity is very important. Mentors and beginning teachers should be in the same building if at all possible.
- The more closely the job descriptions of the two are aligned, the better... i.e. same grade level, same content area.

## Qualities of a Good Mentor

James B. Rowley

The Good Mentor is....

- committed to the role of mentoring
- accepting of the beginning teacher
- skilled at providing instructional support
- effective in different interpersonal contexts
- a model of a continuous learner
- communicates hope and optimism

## Critical Selection Criteria

Janet Gless and Ellen Moir of the New Teacher Center

- Strong interpersonal skills
- Credibility with peers and administrators
- A demonstrated curiosity and eagerness to learn
- Respect for multiple perspectives
- Outstanding instructional practice

# Teacher Support System Grant Requirements

## PROJECT Requirements

Collect documentation that requirements have been met and for travel expenses, make payments for these and request reimbursement from the TSSGP.

Provide for release time for program activities as stated in RFP.

Provide substitute coverage.

Provide access to necessary technology tools for program activities.

Participate in evaluation activities.

## BUILDING ADMINISTRATOR Requirements

Participate one time in TSSGP's administrator training session

Select mentors

Support mentor and first-year teacher

Oversee the success of the program in their building.

Collect documentation of all requirements and present to project.

Participate in evaluation activities.

## MENTOR Requirements

Participate in TSSGP training activities

Minimum 18 hours one-on-one conferencing time with first-year teacher

Participate in one-half day Mentor Seminar

Participation in online mentor support (2010-11)

Minimum one full day spent on observations of/by/with first-year teacher

Participate in evaluation activities.

Documentation of compliance with requirements

Stipend for mentors: \$800 per semester

## FIRST-YEAR TEACHER Requirements

Participate in 18 hours of one-on-one conferencing time with mentor

Minimum one full day spent on observations of/by/with mentor

Participate in one-half day First-year Teacher Seminar

Possibility of earning continuing education credits for participation (costs of registration are teacher's responsibility)

Documentation of compliance with requirements

Participate in evaluation activities



**NORTH DAKOTA EDUCATION STANDARDS AND PRACTICES BOARD  
2009-2011 TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEM MENTORING GRANT PROGRAM**

**GRANT APPLICATION COVER PAGE**

**PROJECT TITLE** \_\_\_\_\_

**PROJECT COORDINATOR** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**PROJECT FISCAL AGENT** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS**

**Number of mentor/first-year teachers required for Spring Semester 2010** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of students impacted in Spring of 2010** \_\_\_\_\_

**Estimated Number of mentor/first-year teachers for School Year 2010-11** \_\_\_\_\_

**Estimated Number of Students Impacted in School Year 2010-11** \_\_\_\_\_

**Submit completed application to: Laurie Stenehjem**  
**Teacher Support System Grant Program Coordinator**  
Education Standards and Practices Board  
2718 Gateway Avenue, Suite 303  
Bismarck ND 58503-058

ESPB does not advocate, permit, nor practice discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, or disability as required by various state and federal laws.



## **NORTH DAKOTA EDUCATION STANDARDS AND PRACTICES BOARD 2009-2011 TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEM MENTORING GRANT PROGRAM**

### **PROJECT NARRATIVE**

Explain the district or partnership's governance structure regarding decision-making, communication, and fiscal responsibilities. Explain how project activities will be monitored over the course of the grant. Explain how communications will occur between project personnel and participants during the school year, and how follow-up support will be documented. Also describe any in-kind support you will offer. Please attach up to one additional page if needed.



**NORTH DAKOTA EDUCATION STANDARDS AND PRACTICES BOARD  
2009-2011 TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEM MENTORING GRANT PROGRAM**

**SIGNATURES OF AUTHORIZING OFFICIALS**

I hereby certify that the information contained in this proposal is correct to the best of my knowledge and I agree to all of the requirements as stated in this document, including those in Appendices A and B and C.

Project Coordinator Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Project Fiscal Agent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

LEA	Name	Title	Signature	Phone

ESPB does not advocate, permit, nor practice discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, or disability as required by various state and federal laws.

**APPENDIX A**  
**2009 TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEM GRANT PROGRAM**  
**Education Standards and Practices Board**

**Statement of Assurances**

The following will be made a part of award documents resulting from this RFP.

- A. The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive this grant.
- B. The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant.
- C. The program will operate in compliance with all applicable state laws, regulations, policies and administrative rules.
- D. Requests for reimbursement will be submitted to the Education Standards and Practices Board by the dates and in the formats specified.
- E. The applicant shall participate in the statewide program evaluation to be conducted independently by ESPB. The applicant shall work with the External Evaluator designated by ESPB to share data and information about student performance, curriculum design, and such processes as requested by the External Evaluator for the purpose of measuring the impact of this grant.
- F. The applicant shall obtain the written approval of the ESPB prior to any modification of the program budget. The ESPB reserves the right not to reimburse the project for expenses which have not been approved.
- G. The applicant agrees to maintain program and financial records relating to this grant for a period of three years from the program ending date, and gives the ESPB or the State Auditors, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the grant.
- H. In all publications, press releases and other documents describing this program, the applicant will cite the support of the "Teacher Support System Grant Program, Education Standards and Practices Board."
- I. The applicant agrees to provide ESPB with other reasonable requests for information, if necessary.
- J. The applicant has adopted as its policy to support the nondiscrimination agreements and warranties required under North Dakota law.

**APPENDIX B**  
**2009 TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEM GRANT PROGRAM**  
**Education Standards and Practices Board**

**Conditions of Request for Proposals**

**Accepted by Applicants**

**1. Acceptance or Rejection by the State**

ESPB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals submitted for consideration.

**2. Grant Agreement**

Organizations selected for an award will enter into a Grant Agreement with ESPB to implement the grant project.

**3. Ownership of Proposals**

All proposals in response to this RFP are to be the sole property of ESPB and subject to the Open Records Laws of North Dakota.

**4. Amending or Cancelling Requests**

ESPB reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP prior to the due date and time, if it is in the best interest of the agency and the State.

**5. State's Clerical Errors in Awards**

ESPB reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards resulting from its clerical errors.

**6. Changes to Proposal**

No additions or changes to the original proposal will be allowed after submittal. While changes are not permitted, clarification at the request of the agency may be required at the **institution's/organization's expense.**

**APPENDIX C**  
**2009 TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEM GRANT PROGRAM**  
**Education Standards and Practices Board**

**Information on Filing Tax Form 1099**

Projects will be responsible for sending Form 1099 tax documents to payees, to IRS, and to ND State Tax Commissioner for payments to participants for services during each calendar year totaling \$600 or more. Form 1099-MISC is required for payments to nonemployees and independent contractors for services, stipends, etc., unless the payee is incorporated. The due date for getting these 1099s out to the participants is January 31st of the following year.