

Planning Guidance for Districts – School Year 2025-2206

Guidance for Navigating Funding Uncertainty

To support a stable and effective launch of the upcoming school year, districts may wish to anchor their planning around the following three strategies:

1. Develop a Short-Term, High-Impact 3-Month Plan

- **Focus on the essentials:** Prioritize activities and expenditures that directly impact student learning and operational continuity. This may include staffing, professional development, and evidence-based interventions.
- **Plan with flexibility:** Design a 90-day plan that can be extended or scaled if and when funding clarity is provided.
- **Preserve high-impact programming:** Evaluate which programs have demonstrated the strongest return on investment, especially in areas such as literacy, math interventions, special education, and multilingual supports, and ensure they are maintained in the short term.

2. Assess and Strategically Leverage FY23 (SY 2023-2024) and FY24 (SY 2024-2025) Carryover Funds

- **Review unspent balances:** Conduct an internal audit of carryover amounts from prior school years across all eligible federal programs (Title I-A, II-A, III, IV-A, Transfer V).
- **Amend with intention:** Consider using these funds to bridge essential programming during the delay period. Priority should be given to services that are student-facing and time-sensitive.
- **Consult NDDPI:** If needed, please reach out to clarify deadlines, carryover limits, and amendment procedures to ensure full compliance and strategic use of funds.

3. Maximize Program Flexibilities

- **Consolidate funding:** Where appropriate, braiding or blending federal and state resources to support shared goals.
- **Utilize Title I schoolwide flexibilities:** Schools operating under a schoolwide Title I model have more flexibility in how funds are used to support all students, especially those most at risk.
- **Capitalize on allowable costs:** Review guidance on *allowable uses* for each funding stream to ensure your district is utilizing every possible flexibility within federal regulations.
- **Engage program leads:** Collaborate with federal program coordinators to align funding with district goals and optimize impact while adhering to legal frameworks.

Final Considerations

While the timeline for final allocations remains uncertain, each district's proactive planning now will ease transitions later. This moment offers an opportunity to revisit what matters most—programs *that are proven to accelerate achievement, meet student needs, and sustain educator support*.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) will provide support as funding information becomes available and will continue to provide updates, technical assistance, and planning tools. Please reach out if you have questions or for support with plan development, carryover strategy, or program alignment.

Note to Districts

The NDDPI **has not received** 2025-2026 grant awards for the following programs as they are still under review by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB):

- Title I, Part C – Migrant Education
- Title II, Part A – Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High Quality Educators
- Title III – English Language Instruction
- Title IV, Part A – Student Support and Academic Enrichment
- Title IV, Part B – 21st Century Community Learning
- Adult Education

Because North Dakota has not received these funds, NDDPI cannot distribute grants for the programs to North Dakota schools and districts. Districts may still choose to include these federal funds in their 2025-26 budget planning; however, using other local or district dollars to begin funding activities associated with these programs, in anticipation of future federal allocations, is done at the district's own risk. If North Dakota does not receive these federal grant awards, the NDDPI will be unable to reimburse districts for expenses incurred. While the timeline remains uncertain, districts are encouraged to proceed with cautious optimism and strategic planning to ensure a smooth start to the 2025–2026 school year.

