



ConnectED

A Quarterly Publication of the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

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Inside this issue:

[Superintendent's Corner](#) 2

[News from Safe & Healthy Schools](#) 4

[Hunger Doesn't Take a Summer Vacation](#) 5

[With the Leadership of the TSE Unit, We are Focusing on Two Major Initiatives This Year](#) 5

[Joint Training for the North Dakota State Assessment](#) 6

[Data Walls as an Essential System for Looking at Data](#) 8

[2 ND Blue Ribbon School Presentations](#) 9

[Federal Title I Programs](#)

- Reauthorization Alexander Bill 10
- State Equity Plan Initiative 11
- Title I Eligibility for 12
- Leadership Training 14
- Early Childhood 15

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards 16

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Mission

The ND DPI will partner with schools and communities to provide a statewide system of excellent service and support to ensure a healthy school environment that fosters student success.

Professional Learning for New and Experienced Teachers

By Peg Wagner, Academic Standards Assistant Director

As Professional Learning for New and Experienced Teachers

In education today, in order to hire, as well as retain high quality educators, educational leaders can no longer rely on going to a job fair or clicking on a job service website to view a few “good looking” resumes or job applications. A well thought out strategic plan, in the areas of professional and curriculum development should be in place within each school district, for both new and experienced teachers. One must keep in mind, planning in these areas does not happen in just one year, but through a process of time, and more importantly a commitment to seeing it through. To begin this planning process, administrators and teachers alike must thoughtfully ask themselves:

- * When did I become a good teacher, and if I'm not, how do I become one?
- * Efficacy: Does our school have a plan for teachers to become more successful?
- * Acknowledgement: Do our teachers feel like their growth matters to their students and their peers?
- * Effectiveness: Are improved teaching practices leading to improved student outcomes?
- * What if PD promoted a more systemic growth, where teachers were allowed to examine and reflect their performance on a lesson, learn from a peer, or give and receive feedback from their peers, not just their administration?

Administrators around the state have become extremely resourceful as they encourage their teachers to collaborate with their peers while learning from one another. Teachers in return, are meeting together to share through grade level and content area meetings, on how lessons can be enhanced and how parents can interact with the lessons at home.

So where do schools find the time and money to allow for this type of professional development? This has been a question for many years, and continues to be at the forefront today. However, it appears creative and invested administrators and teachers are already doing some amazing things with schedules, mentoring programs, and dollars in their schools, because our students and our teachers are worth it. The real question goes back to the beginning:

Administrators: How do you help your teachers grow?

Teachers: How do you become a good teacher? If you believe you already are, how do you plan to become even better?

Strive to be the best! North Dakota kids are worth it!

Source: Laura Goe: (Great Teachers & Leaders Center)

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Superintendent's Corner

Marathoners talk about hitting the wall six miles from the finish line. In baseball, pitchers fear the “dead arm” that can happen three-quarters of the way through the season.

For educators, it's that February feeling. The winter's been long. Cold morning bus rides, frigid recess duty and the dark skies overhead when we arrive and leave work are growing tiresome. Students and teachers alike are increasingly restless for spring, sunshine and temperatures above freezing.

It's that way in the Capitol too. February 18 is day 32 of the session. Two years ago the Legislature didn't adjourn until Day 80 – the early morning hours of May 4, 2013. In

2015, the job of writing the budget won't be getting any easier. Oil prices are down, the Legislature is expecting less revenue, and the Senate and House appropriations committees are trimming Gov. Jack Dalrymple's budget recommendations.

Nevertheless, I'm optimistic. We have an early childhood education bill, SB2151, which still has \$6 million set aside for a program that could benefit 4-year-olds across North Dakota. Our diverse group of early childhood education stakeholders has come together on a consensus proposal. We have a recent study, commissioned by the Legislature itself, which shows the need and the demand for these services. We have years of research that shows, without doubt, how quality early childhood education benefits children for the rest of their lives. It gives them a better chance at becoming productive adults. Early childhood education is truly an investment in North Dakota's future.

The debate about our math and English standards reached a milestone on Feb. 11, when 89 North Dakota House members voted down a proposal to prohibit state support of our standards, severely limit the authority of the superintendent of public instruction, abolish several statewide assessments, and upend our longstanding, inclusive educator process for adopting academic content standards.

Most of the attention in that debate focused on a proposal, which was stripped out of the larger bill, to pull North Dakota out of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. That effort fell five votes short. After all the criticism that was directed at our math and English standards, not one House member that day voted against them.

I believe the debate was valuable. Those concerned with our standards were able to take their case directly to our state's policymakers. Advocates for the standards were able to educate legislators and others about how the standards were written, the extensive involvement of our teachers in reviewing them, and the improved learning they are helping to encourage in our classrooms.

I received a number of requests for comment from the media after HB 1461 was defeated. I made a point of telling them that I've heard loud and clear that there needs to be a strong effort to be even more inclusive in standards development. The Department of Public

Superintendent's Corner, continued

Instruction repeatedly solicited public comment over a number of months during that process. But we can, and will, improve our public engagement.

Support for our education funding formula remains strong. Even in a time of uncertain revenues, it appears we can look forward to \$1.9 billion in state aid to our local schools. Our lawmakers have been sticking to the governor's recommendation to raise per-student payments from the current \$9,092 to \$9,766 over two years. Revenue from our Common Schools Trust Fund has jumped more than 50 percent. The structure of the formula itself appears to have gained broad acceptance, after many years of disagreement over its particulars. This is progress.

I'm looking forward with real enthusiasm to the rest of the session. One of the many things that's great about the Legislature is that when lawmakers are in town, the Capitol is full of people. Not just lobbyists and interest groups, but North Dakotans who want to have a voice in the process and perform their civic duty. And there are students! Sometimes hundreds of them each day, by the busload. A few days ago I even had the opportunity to lead a group of juniors and seniors from Turtle Lake-Mercer High School on a tour of the DPI's Capitol offices. I loved it!

During the Legislature, I walk in the west ground floor corridor every day, and many times I feel as if I'm back in the schools, surrounded by eager faces ready to make a difference for the future. It is why I look forward to coming to work every day.

But I, too, am looking forward to May when the tulips will be blooming again!

Until next time,



Kirsten Baesler

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News from Safe & Healthy Schools

By Valerie Fischer, Safe & Healthy Schools Director &



School Emergency Operations Planning Services Still Available

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, Safe & Healthy Schools unit, applied for and received one of 25 Emergency Operations Management grants from the US Department of Education. DPI and state partners - Department of Homeland Security and ND Safety Council have trained a cadre of exemplary individuals to provide an on-site assessment, training and follow up to rural school districts and community/county partners to develop, implement and evaluate high-quality school emergency operations plans (EOPs). LEAs will not receive funding, but will receive direct on-site services through an application process.

We still have available openings for an onsite assessment and training. If interested, please contact our office at 328.2753. This is a free opportunity for you to know that your school, its grounds and buildings are as safe as possible and prepared for any crisis.

By Kate Schirado, Safe & Healthy School Coordinator

February is American Heart Month-Kate Schirado

Cardiovascular disease (CVD)—including heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure—is the number 1 killer of women and men in the United States. It is a leading cause of disability, preventing Americans from working and enjoying family activities. CVD costs the United States over \$300 billion each year, including the cost of health care services, medications, and lost productivity. During heart month, we are encouraged to do things every day to love our heart and keep it healthy. Some things we can do for a healthy heart are, monitor your blood pressure, get your cholesterol checked, eat a healthy diet, maintain a healthy weight, exercise regularly, don't smoke, and limit alcohol use. For more information on CVD and heart healthy habits, go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/HeartMonth/> & <http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/>

National Children's Dental Health Month-Kate Schirado

Each February, the American Dental Association (ADA) sponsors National Children's Dental Health Month (NCDHM) to raise awareness about the importance of oral health. Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children to get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums. For posters and handouts NCDHM: <http://www.ada.org/en/public-programs/national-childrens-dental-health-month/>

March is National Nutrition Month-Kate Schirado

National Nutrition Month is a nutrition education and information campaign created annually in March by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The campaign focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. The theme for 2015 is "Bite into a Healthy Lifestyle," which encourages everyone to adopt eating and physical activity plans that are focused on consuming fewer calories, making informed food choices and getting daily exercise in order to achieve and maintain a healthy weight, reduce the risk of chronic disease and promote overall health. For more information:

<http://www.eatright.org/nnm/#.VMkHGv3wv9o>

Hunger Doesn't Take A Summer Vacation

By Kaye Knudson, Child Nutrition Food Distribution Program Administrator

Sponsors Needed for the Summer Food Service Program



Your school may qualify to be an open feeding site by using school data or census data. In May 2014, FNS issued guidance providing Summer Food Service Program sites flexibilities to also use Census Tracts, geographical units that consist of one or more Census Block Groups (CBG) to determine area eligibility. Census Tract and DBG data are now available through the FNS Area Eligibility Mapper, which is located at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/areaeligibility>.

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the NSLP (National School Lunch Program) Seamless Summer option provide meals to students when school is not in session over the summer. Children under the age of 18 can receive a meal free of charge at participating sites.

Schools in good standing in the NSLP can be approved to operate a NSLP Seamless Summer Program. Schools have a choice of operating SFSP, NSLP Seamless Summer or extending the NSLP for students attending Summer School through June.

Non-profit organizations can serve as SFSP program sponsors and sites in low income areas. If your school doesn't want to be a sponsor, you could consider being a partner with an agency in your community to provide a space to serve meals.

To become a sponsor or sponsoring site, please call Kaye Knudson at the Child Nutrition and Food Distribution Unit at 701-328-2275 or e-mail ksknudson@nd.gov.

With the Leadership of the TSE Unit, We are Focusing on Two Major Initiatives This Year

By Sherryl Houdek, Teacher School Effectiveness Director

Desk Audits of School Districts: Contrary to what the word 'audit' conjures up in minds, the TSE Unit personnel are working collaboratively to review all school district's information that is provided to the TSE unit. The purpose is to support schools with feedback regarding their state reporting which align with the ND Assurances – including but not limited to: a review of their school calendar, teacher highly qualifications, state mandate curriculum, and a review Fire Marshall reports. This audit encompasses one TSE unit member to review each school and district, seeking to identify errors on reporting, misidentified information, and assist schools or districts for accuracy in their reports. The school corrections addressed in the audits lead to "Congratulation Letters" confirming to the districts that all ND Century Code statutes are met. We are very proud of the ND schools, as our audits are demonstrating accurate reporting! Congratulations to the school personnel working with these reports.

Another initiative is the Principal Evaluation Training (P.E.T). TSE Director Dr. Sherry Houdek, Assistant Director Gwyn Marback, Academic Standards Unit Assistant Director Peg Wagner, and Dr. Jim Stenehjem, ND LEAD Director are providing training through the local REAs. The training consists of information regarding the ND Principal Evaluation guidelines and template including the topics: Introduction, Monitoring/Data collection, Implementation, and Resources. In July the TSE Unit will begin the trainings for the ND Teacher Evaluation with the REAs as well. Grants from the TSE Unit have been provided to REAs supporting other professional development for Principal/Teacher evaluation

Joint Training for the North Dakota State Assessment

By Greg Gallagher, Assessment Director

EduTech, Measured Progress, and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction are partnering to provide a series of training opportunities to help educators statewide prepare for this spring's administration of the North Dakota State Assessment, based on the Smarter Balanced model (NDSA). These trainings will combine in-person and webinar sessions covering NDSA technology preparations, NDSA administration guidelines and practices, and instructional updates as they become available from Smarter Balanced.

Phase I: District Testing Coordinators and Technology Coordinators Preparation Training

As announced earlier, EduTech is sponsoring a series of in-person training sessions, spanning February 13 through March 10, 2015, specifically focused on the needs and duties of district technology coordinators and district testing coordinators. These sessions focus on school preparations and are not intended to address the specific needs of teachers or test proctors, which will be provided for under separate, dedicated training. These in-person training sessions require pre-registration with EduTech by going to this site: <http://www.edutech.nodak.edu/training/topic/539/>. These sessions will be recorded and placed on designated websites for ready viewing by educators statewide. The training sessions will include the following information:

A. NDSA Technology Preparations

1. Reviewing quantity, types, and set-up of testing devices approved for the NDSA;
2. Specifying types of operating systems approved and supported for the NDSA;
3. Verifying the bandwidth of a school's network connections;
4. Loading and testing the approved secure browsers on all testing devices;
5. Ensuring sufficient technology peripherals, e.g., keyboards, earbuds, printers;
6. Provisioning educators' user permissions and access to the Digital Library;
7. Reviewing technology preparation guidelines;
8. Accessing technical support through the NDSA Service Desk;
9. Addressing coordinators' technology preparation questions.

B. NDSA Test Administration Guidance and Practices

1. Explaining NDSA test scheduling parameters;
2. Reviewing critical checklists within the NDSA Test Administration Manual;
3. Identifying specific user roles at the district, school, and classroom level;
4. Explaining the pre-loading of district, school, and student information within the NDSA system and editing system information;
5. Anticipating access to the NDSA testing portal;
6. Understanding and using important NDSA guidance;
7. Accessing user support through the NDSA Service Desk;
8. Addressing coordinators' initial guidance questions.

C. Forthcoming NDSA Online and Webinar Training Opportunities

1. Accessing currently available online training and information;
2. Anticipating forthcoming specific, detailed user webinar training for coordinators and teacher/proctors from Measured Progress;
3. Overviewing critical guidance supports;
4. Accessing individualized user support from the NDSA Service Desk.

Phase 2: Online Webinar Trainings for Coordinators and Teachers/Proctors

In addition to these in-person training sessions for testing and technology coordinators, Measured Progress will conduct a series of live and recorded online webinar trainings. These online trainings will be broken into two strands: (1) a detailed review of district and school coordinators' duties and supports; and (2) a detailed review of teacher/proctor duties and

Joint Training for the North Dakota State Assessment, continued

supports directed to the actual NDSA test administration. These trainings will provide directions and best practices regarding critical components of the NDSA, and will incorporate all updates forthcoming from Smarter Balanced. We will inform you about the scheduling for these online training sessions shortly.

Joint Coordination of Training and Support

EduTech, Measured Progress, and the Department of Public Instruction have been working together to provide a seamless system of training and support for all schools regarding the administration of the NDSA. Together, we have worked to incorporate all the best guidance and updated practices that have been forthcoming from the Smarter Balanced Consortium. Additionally, North Dakota has been collaborating with the states of Nevada and Montana, who share a common Smarter Balanced assessment vendor in Measured Progress, to incorporate the best insights and efforts of all three states, building efficiencies and improving the overall quality of test preparations and administration.

This year marks the first year of the administration of the NDSA, based on the Smarter Balanced model. We are clearly cutting new ground here, and the development and setting up of our new assessment model has proceeded at a rapid pace. Behind us are the contributions of the nation's most reputable assessment companies, who have all contributed to the design and flow of our NDSA. With our commitment to provide for a unified training and support system, we will work to make this first-time administration of the NDSA as trouble-free, efficient, and supportive to you as possible.

We look forward to communicating with you again as we move forward together.

Data Walls as an Essential System for Looking at Data

By Brenda Oas, Special Education Assistant Director

Interview with Erin Lacina, Northeast Education Services Cooperative's Succeed 2020 Project Director
Interviewer, Brenda Oas, ND State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) Project Director, ND DPI Special Education

Question: Erin, why did the Northeast Education Services Cooperative (NESC) move to training regional schools in use of Data Walls?

Answer: We've noticed district needs with managing multiple data systems and data sets. Schools don't always have a way to look at the wide array of data points available to them. They have had questions about how to prioritize. They often ask, "What do we value more?" "What do we put the most weight on?" because the data varies from report to report. What the Data Wall offers is one giant picture based on a comprehensive data set. The process teaches how to put reports together without losing important information. In the end, the school or district comes out with one picture and a ranking of priorities. It is a report on the entire student body and a rationale for where to put the greatest emphasis in planning activities to address needs.

Question: What are data walls? How do you describe the concept to schools?

Answer: I see Data Walls as a sense-making process. The data wall provides a look at individual assessments in correlation to additional "at-risk" indicators. A data wall can clearly show students as being at the top of the overall needs list. In reality, you put the information all together in one scale and you ask questions like, "*How do we prevent kids from falling into this category?*" So, it can be future-oriented as well as looking back at recently collected data or looking back longitudinally (e.g., over five years of data).

Question: Where do data walls fit in a school improvement process?

Answer: Data Walls fit at all stages of school improvement for our schools. At the beginning of the cycle, you ask questions like, "*What do the data tell us about what needs more work? What do the data tell us about where we are coming up with less than hoped for performance?*" The Data Wall can be used in all phases of the formative assessment cycle as it relates to the school improvement plan.

Question: How did the NESC schools start the process that led to Data Walls training for each district in the NESC region?

Answer: We started in the Fall of 2013 with region-wide training and a Professional Learning Community (PLC) on individual assessments. In our case, we started with NWEA MAP because all of the school districts were using it. This was a whole new level of analysis for the school personnel in getting a new, deeper picture of their schools' data that was a K-12 picture. This evolved into training on the Data Walls process. Once we moved to the Data Walls process, we shifted to early-out sessions with each district. There is a Data Walls process for breaking down the data and determining, "*Which big questions can we answer with our data?*" We also asked questions like, "*Who needs more time and attention based on this data?*" That discussion would result in going back and forth and taking the time needed to work through questions that arose. We would work on issues such as *system effectiveness*. An example might be, what do these data tell us about the system effectiveness of a part of the curriculum or about the system effectiveness in managing problematic behaviors?

Question: What is the process in bringing new personnel who join the district into the Data Wall process?

Answer: Because the process is a not a "touch once" process, but an ongoing review of the issues, new personnel become a part of that review process through the school-level work. Those 4 early out sessions for each district during the school year bring new staff into the learning of the process regarding how data are approached, analyzed, and applied. A schoolwide data wall equals a schoolwide approach that engages all staff. New teachers come into a culture where this is the norm and the message is "*the kids belong to all of us collectively.*"

Question: If a ND school district office/school administrator has questions about the Data Wall process or wants more information about the steps, who should they contact?

Answer: Erin Lacina, NESC Succeed 2020 Project Director, 701-662-7650, erin.lacina@nescnd.org

2 ND Blue Ribbon School Presentations

By Lucy Fredericks, Indian Education Director



Sweetwater Elementary School National Blue Ribbon Award Program



Superintendent Baesler, Teachers from Manvel Elementary School and Lucy Fredericks Manvel Elementary School—ND Blue Ribbon School



Manvel Elementary School—ND Blue Ribbon School Plaque Presentation Superintendent Baesler presents DPI ND Blue Ribbon School Plaque to Principal Mary Sorvig, Manvel School



Sweetwater Elementary School National Blue Ribbon Award Program

Federal Title Program Articles

By Laurie Matzke, Federal Title Programs Director

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
Kirsten Baesler, State Superintendent
600 East Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 201, Bismarck, ND 58505-0440

Reauthorization Buzz

Most educators are aware that No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is significantly past due to be reauthorized. Enacted in 2002, if the law ran its normal course, it should have been reauthorized in 2007/2008. However, Congress has been divided on how to fix or improve upon the current law, therefore, it has been stalled for the past seven years.

We are hearing a lot of buzz that a reauthorization may occur soon. We've heard that the goal is to get a bill to the president by April 2015. Now that both the federal House and the Senate are controlled by the same party, there is a sense that more consensus exists and both groups can agree on the components of a new federal education law. However, Congress still has to be concerned about crafting a bill that the president will sign.

The bill getting the most buzz at this time is Senator Lamar Alexander's (R-TN) bill. Listed below is a summary of the Alexander bill which includes the positive components of the bill, two items of concern, and then some changes that are interesting to note.

We will continue to track this federal legislation carefully and will keep school personnel apprised as changes occur.

Alexander Bill		
Positive	Concerns	Interesting to Note
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Much less federal intrusion, increased flexibility ◆ Eliminates current AYP and 100% proficiency timeline ◆ Eliminates sanctions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SES ○ School choice option ○ No corrective action ◆ Schoolwide – eliminates 40% requirement – all schools may request ◆ Paraprofessional and HQT requirements eliminated ◆ Teacher/Principal evaluation – optional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Eliminates several programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 21st CCLC ○ Title II B Math/Science Partnership ◆ Makes Title I funding portable – follow the child (However, current language indicates the state <u>may</u> request this new option.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mentions transferability option, but not REAP ◆ Still a requirement to identify schools for improvement; however, much more flexibility is provided ◆ Eliminates option for districts to fund class size reduction teachers under Title II ◆ Replaces SIG, 1003A, and 1003G with a flat 8% set-aside for School Improvement ◆ Gives states a variety of options regarding the assessment of students

Federal Title Program Articles , continued



State Equity Plan Initiative

In July 2014, Secretary Duncan announced an Excellent Educators for All initiative designed to move America toward the day when every student in every public school is taught by excellent educators. As part of the initiative, consistent with section 1111(b)(8)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), each State Educational Agency (SEA) must submit to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) a state plan to ensure equitable access to excellent educators that ensures “poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers.”

The plans are due to the USDE on June 1, 2015. The USDE has provided a number of tools to help states with this initiative including:

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Data Files
Each state’s data file includes (1) data from the 2011-2012 Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC); (2) school level student poverty rates; (3) Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) data; and (4) a geographic cost of living adjustor. The CRDC data include comprehensive school- and district-level data, disaggregated by race, sex, disability, and limited English proficiency status, reported by districts to the USDE. Metrics include, among other things: teacher experience; teacher absenteeism; teacher certification; access to preschool and rigorous course work, including science, mathematics, and Advanced Placement courses; and school expenditures. The USDE is also sending supporting documentation, including a data dictionary and codebook, to facilitate use of the data files.
- Educator Equity Profiles
- Webinars
- Equitable Access Support Network

The ND DPI has established a State Equity Initiative Planning Committee to help with the development of the state plan. The committee met in December and will have a second meeting on February 19, 2015. An open meeting notice was distributed and anyone interested is welcome to attend.

A website has been created to post and share documents pertaining to this equity initiative. Log on to www.dpi.state.nd.us/titleII/excellence.shtm to access a variety of information including documents from the USDE, North Dakota data, and meeting information. Once a draft of the plan has been created, it will also be posted at this site.

Questions regarding the State Equity Plan initiative can be directed to any of the following ND DPI Staff.

Federal Title Program Articles, continued



NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Title I Eligibility for 2015-2016

In January/February of each year, the ND DPI determines eligibility status for Title I funding for the subsequent school year.

Eligibility for a Title I grant requires a district to have a minimum formula count of ten. The formula count must exceed 2% of the district's age 5-17 population. The formula count is a weighted unit consisting of 15.5% of the census poor count, 15.5% of the foster child count, 46% of the eligible free meal count, and 23% of the eligible reduced meal count.

The census poor count is the count of children ages 5-17 who were reported below poverty on the updated federal census. The foster child count is a count of children ages 5-17 living in foster homes during October 2014. The free meal count is a count of children eligible for free meals. The reduced meal count is a count of children eligible for reduced meal prices. A child must have an approved free or reduced meal application on file at their school district office in October 2014 to be counted. The department's Child Nutrition and Food Distribution unit verifies the free and reduced meal counts. If the total weighted unit drops below ten, the district does not meet the eligibility requirement and the subsequent year's Title I grant would be zero.

Each December or January, the USDE sends the ND DPI a chart showing the updated census count for each district in the state. In the past, we were told that there was no disputing the census numbers. However, the USDE now allows districts to review the information and provides an opportunity for districts who believe there may be an error in the data to challenge the data.

The chart with the updated census poor count that will be used to determine the Title I allocations for the 2015-2016 school year and memorandum from the USDE can be accessed on the ND DPI website at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/Legislative/funding. The USDE memo contains the email and phone number to use if you would like to challenge your district's census data. Please note the deadline to challenge an error is March 17, 2015. Please notify your Federal Title Programs contact person if you intend to challenge the census data.

After eligibility has been determined, we can then use each district's aggregate units for funding purposes.

As soon as the eligibility process is complete, the Federal Title Programs office will send correspondence to all Title I authorized representatives informing them of the status of their district's aggregate units. Each district will receive a chart comparing last year's aggregate units to the current totals. If the aggregate units increase from the prior year, the allocation may increase if we receive more Title I funds as a state. If the aggregate units decrease, the allocation will most likely also decrease. If the numbers do not change much, the allocation will likely remain fairly steady, as long as the state's allocation also remains steady.

In the example below the district may receive an increase as the aggregate units went up. Please watch for this information to be sent electronically in the upcoming week.

Federal Title Program Articles, continued

District: Sample					
	Census (15.5%)	Free Meals (46%)	Reduced Meals (23%)	Foster (15.5%)	Aggregate Units
2013 Data	782	1496	691	64	978.220
2014 Data	933	1724	720	64	1113.175

» Save the Date «

North Dakota Department
of Public Instruction
Federal Title Programs Office
Early Childhood Education Conference

April 24, 2015



Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck North Dakota

Registration Available Soon

www.dpi.state.nd.us/EarlyChildhoodEduc/index.shtm

THE PRUDENTIAL SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY AWARDS

Honoring Outstanding Community Service by Young Americans

February 10, 2015

The Honorable Kristen Baesler
State Superintendent
North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Department 201
Bismarck, ND 58505-0440

Dear State Superintendent Baesler:

We thought you'd like to know that several students from North Dakota are among a select group of young Americans being named today as the nation's top youth volunteers for 2015, in the 20th annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. This is an extraordinary honor; more than 30,000 young people across the country participated in this year's program.

Nichole Hanzel of Killdeer and Lauren Knoll of Fargo have been selected as North Dakota's top youth volunteers for this year. As State Honorees, each will receive a \$1,000 award, an engraved silver medallion, and a trip to Washington, D.C., May 2-5 for the program's national recognition events. Two other students from North Dakota have been named Distinguished Finalists and will receive bronze medallions at local ceremonies.

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, created in 1995 by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), are designed to emphasize the importance our nation places on service to others, and to encourage all young Americans to contribute to their communities.

Enclosed is the news release being issued today to announce these awards, plus more information on your honorees and how to contact them. We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to extend your congratulations and encouragement. You may want to consider honoring these young students with an official proclamation (suggested language is enclosed).

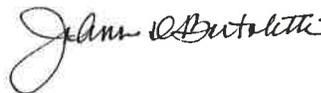
During the May events in Washington, a distinguished National Selection Committee will name ten National Honorees who will receive additional \$5,000 awards, gold medallions, crystal trophies, and \$5,000 grants from The Prudential Foundation for charitable organizations of their choice. Your State Honorees are among those being considered for these national awards. If you would like additional information, please call (973) 802-4568, write to us at spirit@prudential.com, or visit spirit.prudential.com.

Congratulations for having such outstanding young people in North Dakota.

Sincerely,



John Strangfeld
Chairman and CEO
Prudential Financial



JoAnn Bartoletti
Executive Director
NASSP



THE PRUDENTIAL SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY AWARDS

Honoring Outstanding Community Service by Young Americans

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 10, 2015

Contact: Harold Banks, Prudential Financial
(973) 802-8974 or (973) 216-4833
harold.banks@prudential.com

NORTH DAKOTA'S TOP TWO YOUTH VOLUNTEERS SELECTED IN 20th ANNUAL NATIONAL AWARDS PROGRAM

**Killdeer and Fargo students earn \$1,000 awards,
engraved medallions and trip to nation's capital**

Honors also bestowed on youth volunteers in Bismarck and Wyndmere

BISMARCK, N.D. – Nichole Hanzel, 18, of Killdeer and Lauren Knoll, 13, of Fargo today were named North Dakota's top two youth volunteers of 2015 by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program honoring young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism. Nichole was nominated by Killdeer High School in Killdeer, and Lauren was nominated by Park Christian School in Moorhead. The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, now in its 20th year, is conducted by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

Nichole, a senior at Killdeer High School, created a youth cadet program for a local ambulance service to raise money for emergency medical care in her small but booming town, to assist at the ambulance squad's station house, and to give junior high and high school students a chance to learn about emergency medicine. Two years ago, Nichole moved from a place where there were almost a thousand students in her class to a small town in North Dakota where there were only 30 students her age. "I was very much against the move," said Nichole. "But I've always been taught that when I feel sorry for myself, I should do something for someone else." When she learned that the Killdeer Area Ambulance Service was desperate for more volunteers to handle a sharp increase in calls due to the area's oil boom, she started taking EMT classes with her parents. But she wanted to do more, and began thinking of other ways she could help while getting other young people involved as well.

Nichole proposed forming a youth cadet chapter to the ambulance director, who loved the idea. Her plan was then announced at school during halftime at a home football game, and several students came forward to

NORTH DAKOTA'S TOP YOUTH VOLUNTEERS SELECTED/Page Two

join. Nichole's cadets, who now number about a dozen, began by selling first-aid kits and checking blood pressure at a Christmas craft bazaar in exchange for donations. Members also have gone door-to-door soliciting funds to buy supplies for the ambulance squad. In addition, the cadets help out at the ambulance station by washing the vehicles, stocking supplies and serving meals at board meetings. "I can't begin to describe how much I have grown personally," said Nichole, who is now a licensed EMT. "It has certainly changed my outlook on living in a small town in North Dakota."

Lauren, a seventh-grader at Park Christian School, has been volunteering once a month for the past nine years at a local homeless center, preparing and serving meals, and visiting with the homeless. She also has participated in several community service events sponsored by her church, school, the Salvation Army and a local animal shelter. Lauren was encouraged to volunteer by her mother, who also started serving her community when she was very young. One day Lauren's brother came home from school and said he needed to find a community service project for a class assignment. Their mother made some calls and discovered a shelter that needed help for Thanksgiving. "We decided that we wanted to do this every month," said Lauren. "It is important for me to do this because I need a constant reminder of my blessings and to take the spotlight off of me and put it onto others."

Each month, Lauren, along with her grandmother, mother and two brothers, goes to the shelter to prepare a meal for people in need. She cuts up vegetables to make salads and vegetable trays, helps prepare and cook a main course, slices fruit, pours drinks and arranges trays of desserts. She then sits down and visits with the people who come to eat. "When I see their faces light up after receiving a warm meal or a big hug, it makes my heart soar," said Lauren. "I love volunteering because I love planting that seed of hope in hearts that seem to be running low."

As State Honorees, Nichole and Lauren each will receive \$1,000, an engraved silver medallion and an all-expense-paid trip in early May to Washington, D.C., where they will join the top two honorees from each of the other states and the District of Columbia for four days of national recognition events. During the trip, 10 students will be named America's top youth volunteers of 2015.

Distinguished Finalists

The program judges also recognized two other North Dakota students as Distinguished Finalists for their impressive community service activities. Each will receive an engraved bronze medallion.

These are North Dakota's Distinguished Finalists for 2015:

Lauryn Hinckley, 15, of Bismarck, N.D., a freshman at Century High School, has collected thousands of pounds of peanut butter, jelly and snacks, and \$1,537 in cash donations, over the past four years to support

the “Backpacks for Kids” program, for which she and other volunteers pack 500 backpacks twice monthly with food for people in need. Lauryn has participated in a number of other projects over the years to combat hunger, and is currently volunteering to pick up and deliver excess food from local grocery stores to organizations that feed the hungry.

Emily Lothspeich, 17, of Wyndmere, N.D., a senior at Wyndmere High School, is in the process of planning a community garden that will, when finished, provide produce for families in need in and around her community. Emily, who is developing this plan with her Future Farmers of America advisor and fellow club members, created the idea while attending the FFA’s Washington Leadership Conference, where she was tasked with implementing a “Living to Serve” plan.

“Prudential is honored to celebrate the contributions of these remarkable young volunteers,” said Prudential Chairman and CEO John Strangfeld. “By shining a spotlight on the difference they’ve made in their communities, we hope others are inspired to volunteer, too.”

“These students have not only improved their communities through their exemplary volunteer service, but also set a fine example for their peers,” said JoAnn Bartoletti, executive director of NASSP. “Each of their stories is proof of the impact one young person can have when they decide to make a difference.”

About The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards represents the United States’ largest youth recognition program based solely on volunteer service. All public and private middle level and high schools in the country, as well as all Girl Scout councils, county 4-H organizations, American Red Cross chapters, YMCAs and HandsOn Network affiliates, were eligible to select a student or member for a local Prudential Spirit of Community Award. These Local Honorees were then reviewed by an independent judging panel, which selected State Honorees and Distinguished Finalists based on criteria including personal initiative, effort, impact and personal growth.

While in Washington, D.C., the 102 State Honorees – one middle level and one high school student from each state and the District of Columbia – will tour the capital’s landmarks, meet top youth volunteers from other parts of the world, attend a gala awards ceremony at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History, and visit their congressional representatives on Capitol Hill. On May 4, 10 of the State Honorees – five middle level and five high school students – will be named America’s top youth volunteers of 2015. These National Honorees will receive additional \$5,000 awards, gold medallions, crystal trophies and \$5,000 grants from The Prudential Foundation for nonprofit charitable organizations of their choice.

NORTH DAKOTA'S TOP YOUTH VOLUNTEERS SELECTED/Page Four

Since the program began in 1995, more than 100,000 young volunteers have been honored at the local, state and national level. The program also is conducted by Prudential subsidiaries in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Ireland, India and China. In addition to granting its own awards, The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program also distributes President's Volunteer Service Awards to qualifying Local Honorees on behalf of President Barack Obama.

For information on all of this year's Prudential Spirit of Community State Honorees and Distinguished Finalists, visit <http://spirit.prudential.com> or www.nassp.org/spirit.

About NASSP

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) is the leading organization of and voice for middle level and high school principals, assistant principals, and school leaders from across the United States and 35 countries around the world. The association connects and engages school leaders through advocacy, research, education, and student programs. NASSP advocates on behalf of all school leaders to ensure the success of each student and strengthens school leadership practices through the design and delivery of high quality professional learning experiences. Reflecting its long-standing commitment to student leadership development, NASSP administers the National Honor Society, National Junior Honor Society, National Elementary Honor Society, and National Association of Student Councils. For more information about NASSP, located in Reston, VA, visit www.nassp.org.

About Prudential Financial

Prudential Financial, Inc. (NYSE: PRU), a financial services leader, has operations in the United States, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. Prudential's diverse and talented employees are committed to helping individual and institutional customers grow and protect their wealth through a variety of products and services, including life insurance, annuities, retirement-related services, mutual funds and investment management. In the U.S., Prudential's iconic Rock symbol has stood for strength, stability, expertise and innovation for more than a century. For more information, please visit www.news.prudential.com.

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Editors: For full-color pictures of the Spirit of Community Awards program logo and medallions, click here: <http://bit.ly/Xi4oFW>

***The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards
2015 State Honorees and Distinguished Finalists
From North Dakota***

State Honorees:

Nichole Hanzel, 18
425 Carlos Drive
Killdeer, ND 58640
Tel: (801) 574-6237
Nominated by Killdeer High School

Nichole created a youth cadet program for a local ambulance service to raise money for emergency medical care in her small but booming town, to assist at the ambulance squad's station house, and to give junior high and high school students a chance to learn about emergency medicine.

Lauren Knoll, 13
1519 31st Avenue South
Fargo, ND 58103
Tel: (701) 235-8921
Nominated by Park Christian School

Lauren has been volunteering once a month for the past nine years at a local homeless center, preparing and serving meals, and visiting with the homeless.

Distinguished Finalists:

Lauryn Hinckley, 15
2421 Sierra Circle
Bismarck, ND 58503
Tel: (701) 223-9099
Nominated by Century High School

Lauryn has collected thousands of pounds of peanut butter, jelly and snacks, and \$1,537 in cash donations, over the past four years to support the "Backpacks for Kids" program, for which she and other volunteers pack 500 backpacks twice monthly with food for people in need.

Emily Lothspeich, 17
6720 County Road 29
Wyndmere, ND 58081
Tel: (701) 439-2017
Nominated by Wyndmere High School

Emily is in the process of planning a community garden that will, when finished, provide produce for families in need in and around her community.

***For further information, please visit <http://spirit.prudential.com>,
call (973) 802-4568,
or write to spirit@prudential.com***

Sample language for a State Commendation

However effective government may be in serving the needs of its citizens, the soul of our state and its vitality as a place to live and work ultimately depend on the relationship of families, friends and neighbors. Strengthening those bonds is not as much in the hands of institutions or governments as it is in the hearts of our citizens – especially those who volunteer to help people of all ages, races and religions cope with illness, overcome hardships and barriers, adjust to social changes, and fulfill their potential. These volunteers are the unrecognized, unsung heroes of our society.

Two such heroes in our state are (honoree name) of (city) and (honoree name) of (city), who were recently named (state)'s top youth volunteers in The 2015 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program conducted by Prudential Financial and the National Association of Secondary School Principals to honor outstanding community service by young people.

Mr./Ms. _____ was honored for ... *(see enclosed press release for project information)*

Mr./Ms. _____ was recognized for ... *(see enclosed press release for project information)*

Given the challenges we face today, it is vital that we encourage and support the kind of selfless contributions that these young people have made. People of all ages need to think more about how we, as individual citizens, can work together at the local level to ensure the health and vitality of our towns and neighborhoods. Young volunteers like Mr./Ms. _____ and Mr./Ms. _____ are inspiring examples to all of us, and are among our brightest hopes for a better tomorrow.

I heartily applaud Mr./Ms. _____ and Mr./Ms. _____ for their initiative in seeking to make their communities and our state a better place to live, and for the positive impact they have had on the lives of others. They have demonstrated a level of commitment and accomplishment that is truly extraordinary in today's world, and deserve our sincere admiration and respect. Their actions show that young Americans can – and do – play important roles in their communities, and that America's community spirit continues to hold tremendous promise for the future.

As governor of (state) and on behalf of our entire state, I commend Mr./Ms. _____ and Mr./Ms. _____, and extend sincere congratulations on their accomplishments.