



ConnectED

A Quarterly Publication of the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

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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.

A Familiar Workshop with a New Twist

By Laurie Matzke, Federal Title Programs Director



Each year, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (ND DPI) Federal Title Programs office sponsors a workshop for schools and districts identified for program improvement. The date for this year's Title I Program Improvement Workshop is April 28, 2014. The purpose of the training is to review the many requirements that must be adhered to when a school or district is identified for improvement. Due to reaching the 100% proficiency mark on the 12-year timeline outlined in NCLB, we are anticipating a large crowd and are, therefore, hosting the workshop at the Bismarck Civic Center.

This year, the ND DPI decided to revise the format of the workshop by having a featured speaker, as well as various breakout sessions to offer schools and districts additional choices and technical assistance on ways to increase academic achievement, assess student progress, and use data to drive instruction.

We are pleased to announce that Mr. Richard Gerver, who works closely with Sir Ken Robinson, will be our featured opening speaker. Mr. Gerver is described as one of the most inspirational leaders of his generation and will address the group regarding the new education age we live in as it relates to school improvement. This presentation will focus on the "change" that needs to occur in schools across the nation.

The ND DPI is happy to announce this workshop is a collaborative event co-sponsored by the following partners:

- ND DPI Federal Title Programs Office
- ND LEAD Center
- McREL International
- NWEA
- ND United
- AdvancED
- NSC Pearson
- CTB

Registration information for the workshop can be accessed at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/events.shtm on the ND DPI website. The department anticipates posting preliminary Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) information on the State Automated Reporting System (STARS) within the next week.

Plan to join your colleagues on April 28 to get critical information needed for meeting the program improvement requirements, as well as participate in an event that is sure to inspire all educators to continue striving for educational excellence.

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Superintendent's Corner**Developing Standards for Our Students the North Dakota Way**

There is some discussion about how we determine education standards in North Dakota. Education standards are the guideposts teachers use to determine if students have learned what they are expected to know at each grade level or in each course. Standards should not be confused with curriculum, which refers to specific lessons or resources North Dakota school districts choose in their schools.

It is important for state residents to understand how our state education standards are reviewed and adopted. Equally important is how our process differs from the processes used in other states. In most states, a five- to seven-member State Board of Education reviews proposed standards changes before approval and adoption. It is an exclusive process that does not include outreach to educators or the public. That is not the way we implement standards development and adoption in North Dakota. In North Dakota, the Department of Public Instruction communicates throughout every standards review and adoption process, inviting comments from educators and the public.

Each time we review and revise education standards in North Dakota, we go through a process that involves educators who have expertise in specific course work—English, for example. In 2010 when the new standards for English and mathematics based on Common Core were being considered in North Dakota, we assembled committees of 30 mathematics educators and 35 English language arts educators who met and conducted a thorough comparison of the previous state standards to the proposed Common Core Standards. The committees included private and public school teachers, university-level instructors, and career and technical specialists, all who had classroom experience and expertise in determining what our students need to know in these content areas. The role of each committee member included debate on the standards' merits, potential impact on our schools, and consideration of comments received from fellow educators and the public.

The review and adoption process for the most recent North Dakota standards in English and mathematics was publicized through four statewide news releases, beginning in March 2010 through May 2011, which included requests for public input before any formal approval and adoption of the standards occurred.

These committees of educators seriously considered all public comments, worked independently, and debated extensively the merits of the proposed standards based on the Common Core. In the end, these committees of educators unanimously recommended North Dakota adopt these standards. The committees believed these revised standards define the higher expectations required to prepare our students for their next steps in life, while also accurately reflecting North Dakota's needs. The standards were recommended by North Dakota educators for North Dakota students.

Superintendent's Corner, continued

The “pause” and “review” some states are now conducting on the Common Core Standards is because residents in some states feel the process was not inclusive. Those states are now conducting reviews to include educators and the public in the review and adoption of the standards, a replication of the process North Dakota spent 15 months thoroughly completing to determine our path regarding the new standards.

North Dakota has done its background work on standards and now local districts are implementing the standards according to local curriculum and policies that best represent and address their respective students' and communities' needs.

Our focus continues to be the preparation of our students for life beyond high school and getting them ready for college and careers. Our goal is to give our students the best education our state's schools can provide. We owe this to our students!



State Superintendent

Ways to Communicate About Our New Standards

We are looking for your help to share information on our North Dakota Standards. Our goal is to provide positive, accurate information that can easily be shared.

The following list is just a few ways to share factual information via social media:

1. Follow these [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) links with your Twitter and Facebook accounts.
2. When a powerful example is shared, re-tweet on Twitter, and share on Facebook, to spread the word.
3. Do you know teachers with positive stories on our new standards? We need their stories! Send them our way! Encourage them to share their story with us. We believe social media about teachers, parents, school administrators, and kids can highlight the good happening throughout our state!

If you have questions, please contact any of the following ND DPI staff:

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Tech Readiness Tool

By Steve Snow, Management Information Systems Director

(Excerpts from the EduTech Technology Readiness Tool blog post by Jody French www.edutech.nodak.edu/techreadiness/)

Beginning in mid-March, over 5,000 students statewide began field testing the new online state assessment system from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. More than 3 million students across the country are participating in the field test. Thank you for the overwhelming response from schools that expressed interest in participating in this practice run of the new online assessment system.

This field test will serve as an opportunity for districts and schools to experience the logistics of administering the new testing system, and it culminates a three-year, multi-state research and development process to ensure these assessments achieve their goals. The fully operational end-of-year assessment will be implemented statewide in the spring of 2015.

In the meantime, the ND DPI is working with EduTech to take inventory of computers, operating systems, data links, and technical support in every North Dakota school to determine the level of readiness for online testing. The Technology Readiness Tool (TRT) is the software being utilized to collect this information. The ND DPI requests that every district update the TRT to ensure the proper technology is in place for administration of the online assessment. The TRT will also provide useful information to districts on planning for the test window needed to administer the assessment in 2015.

A school can see what data has been entered by logging into the tool. There are two main areas: Device Indicators and Network Indicators.

- Select Results & Indicators tab
 - Select Device Indicators (or Network Indicators)
 - Select one of your schools
This will show you the status of your school's devices (or network capability) that can be used for testing. Missing or sub-standard information will be in red.

The next step is using the reports to assess how ready your school is. A great tool within the reports is the scenario calculator. The scenario calculator will provide a "what if" scenario for Device to Test-Taker and Network Readiness of the school. The scenario calculator is only available when you are logged into the TRT.

- Select Results & Indicators tab
 - Select Overall Readiness Indicators
 - Select one of your schools
 - Select the calculator icon

Information currently loaded in the tool will appear in one column with an area to enter "what if" data. This will give schools the ability to see how changes to scenarios will affect administration of the test. Changes made in the Scenario Calculator do not change the data used to create actual reports in the TRT.

More information can be found on the EduTech blog (www.edutech.nodak.edu/techreadiness/). If a school has questions or needs help with the TRT, contact the EduTech help desk at www.edutech.nodak.edu/help/ or (800) 774-1094.



TechReadinessTool

Standards: The Basics and Strategies for Implementation

By Ryan Townsend, Academic Standards Director

I have been all over the state this year discussing the new standards in English language arts and mathematics in North Dakota. I have spoken at conferences, in-services, community clubs, public forums, and in passing with many individuals. My message the entire time has been when we put everything else aside, the standards are a grade level set of expectations that guide curriculum in local school districts, and people make education in North Dakota great. We know these grade level expectations, while focusing a teacher's scope, do not limit their creativity in instructional design.

As an educator, I know standards are important to what we do, but they are not *what* we do. There is no award given for the standard of the year. Students don't look up standards years later to thank them for all the work and love they were shown. Teachers make standards come alive; they design curriculum that makes the learning relevant and engaging. Principals, not standards, support and promote innovative instruction in their buildings. For these reasons and many more, the ND DPI has been working on strategies to support schools with implementing the standards.

Teachers need quality professional learning geared toward these expectations and instruction. Results from the survey the ND DPI sent in January indicate most teachers feel they are receiving quality professional learning opportunities now, but would like more. We are beginning to work with groups throughout North Dakota to support and provide quality professional learning opportunities. We also heard from teachers that they want access to curricular and assessment materials that are aligned to the standards so they will not have to start from scratch on each and every lesson. North Dakota is one of several states working on resource exchanges teachers can freely use to share and rate materials. So if a teacher in South Dakota uploads a resource, teachers in North Dakota would be able to download it, rate it for others, and upload any other resources they have and would like to share. Lessons will be tagged for searches, and grouped by grade level, standard, and content area.

North Dakota also created a state network of educators who are working with Smarter Balanced to create and review items for a digital resource library teachers will have access to for their assessment needs. As these standards are more rigorous than our last standards, we will also need to support teachers who work with our struggling students. We heard from ELL, special education, and alternative education teachers how they wanted to be more included in standards conversations. The ND DPI is working as close as ever to deliver information and opportunities to teachers efficiently and effectively.

I have also been a part of work on a national level to look at the publishing of textbooks and what states are expecting from these companies in light of the new standards. There are some fantastic resources available from across the country as schools work to align their materials to the new standards. All of these materials and more are available in my [Dropbox](#) on the ND DPI website.

Lastly, we want to support our schools with effective communication around our standards. Many people are unaware of North Dakota's process for reviewing and adopting standards. Many are unclear about how funding is received and how none of it is tied to our adoption of standards. The ND DPI has created resources for schools to use when communicating with patrons regarding the standards and assessments in our schools. Those resources are freely available on our website. I would also encourage anyone who has questions to email or call me at rtownsend@nd.gov or (701) 328-2629. Feel free to share my contact information with anyone who has questions.

People—not programs—in North Dakota make our schools great and among the best in the nation. I am proud to say that I work for education in North Dakota and want to thank everyone for all the work they do. It makes a difference in ways we often overlook, but we know the students we educate are tomorrow's leaders. We know there is work to be done, but it is important work that will help us best prepare students for the world they are inheriting.

Preliminary 2013-2014 AYP Reports to be Released Soon

By Laurie Matzke, Federal Title Programs Director

The preliminary 2013-2014 school and district Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) reports are being generated and will soon be posted on the department's secure State Automated Reporting System (STARS). If you do not have authority to access this report, contact your district administrator. It is imperative that school personnel review the preliminary school and district AYP reports and verify their accuracy prior to the department's release of the final AYP reports in May.

The department is also preparing the 2013-2014 AYP guidance, which presents an overview of the AYP determination process. This guidance will also specify any changes that have occurred in this year's AYP reports.

Once the final school and district AYP information has been posted to the department's website in early May, the Federal Title Programs office will send letters to all schools and districts identified for program improvement. This letter will inform schools and districts of their status and responsibilities while in program improvement. In addition, schools and districts not identified for program improvement, but failed to make AYP for one year, will receive a letter. The department will issue a statewide news release to inform the public regarding the program improvement status of schools and districts for the 2014-2015 school year.

Federal law requires all public schools and districts to disseminate AYP information to parents. **After both the school and the district AYP reports have been finalized, districts can decide whether to disseminate the AYP information to parents in the spring or wait until August.** The department requests schools *not* publish any preliminary school AYP results publicly until the official release of final AYP reports in May 2014.

Be on the lookout for an email from the ND DPI informing schools once the preliminary AYP reports are posted on STARS. The ND DPI anticipates posting preliminary AYP reports this week.

If you have any questions on your school or district AYP reports, contact Paula Gabel at pgabel@nd.gov or (701) 328-2296.

If you have any program improvement or AYP dissemination requirements questions, contact Laurie Matzke at lmatzke@nd.gov or (701) 328-2284.

Planning Begins for the First Annual North Dakota Indian Education Summit

By Lucy Fredericks, Indian Education Director

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (ND DPI) and the North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission (NDIAC), with support from the North Central Comprehensive Center (NCCC), are sponsoring the first annual North Dakota Indian Education Summit, to be held July 22 at the State Capitol in Bismarck. The goal of this event is to create a new and ongoing mechanism for disseminating information about Native American educational issues and emerging promising practices.

This first summit will focus on integrating language and culture into curriculum and feature a keynote speaker, several breakout sessions, and a luncheon session. Drawing on lessons learned from helping South Dakota plan its annual Indian Education Summit, NCCC will serve as a partner to ND DPI staff in developing an event unique to North Dakota, including helping design break-out sessions, identifying keynote speakers, and addressing general planning issues.

For more information on the North Dakota Indian Education Summit, contact NCCC's North Dakota state liaison, [Heather Hoak](#), at (303) 632-5512 or Lucy Fredericks at lkfredericks@nd.gov or (701) 328-1718.

A Focus on Early Childhood Education

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan's Top Ten List Regarding the Expansion of High-Quality Early Learning

By Tara Bitz, ND DPI Early Childhood Education Administrator

(Adopted from Remarks of U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan to the National Governors Association February 23, 2013 www.ed.gov/news/speeches/top-ten-list-why-expansion-high-quality-early-learning-inevitable)



In remarks given to the National Governor's Association during their winter meeting, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan revealed his Top Ten List of why there is bipartisan support for the expansion of high-quality early learning over the next few years.

#10: There is much greater public awareness today of the importance of the early years to the long-term health, learning, and success of our children and our communities—and it is coupled with widespread public support for a big expansion of early learning.

#9: A powerful, bipartisan coalition of governors are funding expansions in the states—in some cases, big expansions—of high-quality early learning programs.

#8: There is a remarkably diverse and robust coalition of law enforcement officials, military leaders, clergy, CEOs, unions, parents, and others that strongly support expanding high-quality early learning opportunities.

#7: The old arguments that states should have no role in providing low- and moderate-income families with voluntary access to early learning and child care have lost force.

#6: There is a growing recognition that quality matters tremendously when it comes to early learning. No one is out advocating today that quality early learning is free babysitting. In fact, families are desperately searching for more and better information to help find the best quality programs suited for their children.

#5: For the first time, a majority of the states are now assessing the school readiness of children when they enter kindergarten.

#4: The enactment of third grade reading laws in many of your states is going to propel an expansion of high-quality early learning.

#3: America is way behind high-performing countries in our provision of early learning—and there is a growing awareness that high-quality early learning is critical to sustaining our international economic competitiveness.

#2: America is currently in the midst of an unprecedented wave of innovation and capacity-building when it comes to early learning—and a new federal-state partnership helped unleash this wave of innovation.

And finally, #1 on the Top Ten list, and this is the most important factor of all, is: *The enormous unmet need and demand for high-quality early learning. I guarantee you this unmet need and demand is not going away. In fact, it's only going to intensify. Nationally, nearly 60 percent of our nation's 4.1 million four-year olds are not enrolled in any publicly-funded preschool program.*

Assessment and Students with Individualized Education Programs

By Dr. Lynn Dodge, Special Education Coordinator

As a result of the state adopting new English/language arts and mathematics standards, North Dakota joined the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) as a governing member July 2013. This Consortium is developing an assessment aligned with the new North Dakota standards in English/language arts and mathematics. The SBAC will replace the current North Dakota Assessment for reading/language arts and mathematics during the 2014-2015 school year. The federal Department of Education no longer allows the Alternate Assessment-Modified Achievement Standards (AA-MAS, or Alt II), the 2 % exam. Starting in the 2014-2015 school year, 99% of students will be expected to take the SBAC assessment. Likewise, a new Alternate Assessment aligned to the new North Dakota standards, currently being developed by the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Consortium, will be administered to the 1% of students who were assessed previously by the North Dakota Alternate Assessment I.

The decision to eliminate the AA-MAS, Alt II (or 2% exam) was made to ensure all students had access to the new grade level standards. Ensuring that 99% of students are able to access the grade level standards will require some dramatic changes in the mindset of general and special education teachers. A student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) must become the vehicle that provides the student with access to the general education curriculum and prioritizes the learning of skills necessary to meet the grade level standards. Building teacher capacity to address the instructional needs of 99% of students should be a priority. Professional development offerings for all instructional staff might include: data analysis on students currently participating in the AA-MAS, Alt II, an introduction to the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Assessment and follow-up collaborative sessions that allow staff to develop instructional units and assessments using these principles. General and special education staff should be involved in professional development activities focused on identifying appropriate accommodations and developing a standards-based IEP. An introductory module on UDL can be found at www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced1/family/family.shtm. Information on writing standards-based IEPs can be found in the document *Transition to the North Dakota Standards in English and Mathematics Based on the Common Core State Standards* at www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced1/educators/transition.pdf. For information on writing standards-based IEPs for students who will take the new Alternate Assessment, you will find an extensive set of resources at www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced1/educators/alternate/tools/tools.shtm.

Trainings on the new North Dakota Alternate Assessment are being planned. Information will be sent to special education unit directors and district administrators when the dates for these trainings are finalized.

ATTENTION: Last October was the final administration of all sections of the Alternate Assessment II. Teachers and administrators should be aware that the only options for Science Assessment in fall 2014 will be the North Dakota Alternate Assessment (NDAA) and the North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA).

For further information, contact Lynn Dodge at ldodge@nd.gov or (701) 328-2277.

Home Education Continues to be a Growing Trend

By Gwyn Marback, Teacher and School Effectiveness Assistant Director

As I field calls from my office, I can say without a doubt, 80% of the calls are regarding home education. The growing numbers of calls are generated from the western part of the state as the oil field population continues to expand. A number of the calls I receive are from parents who want to be assured they are following state laws outlined in the North Dakota Century Code (NDCC). They are dedicated to educating their children and are exceptionally prepared. These parents are generally devoted to meeting their child's needs and, in the end, producing well-educated students who are equipped to face the world of college and career.

Sections of the NDCC, regarding Home Education, can be ambiguous while generating a number of calls requiring interpretation of the law. Interpreting the law is complex. It spawns varying opinions, detailed word definitions, and more importantly "intent." But, at the end of the day, it all comes down to this: If a parent holds a high school diploma or a GED, and files the Statement to Home Educate (SFN 16909) every year with their local school district, they are solely the only person that educates the child. If local districts have a concern regarding the quality of instruction of the home educated child, their only recourse is to file educational neglect with social services. Thus, the school district is not held liable for any damages resulting from a parent's failure or neglect to educate the child.

With that said, what can administrators do to protect the educational integrity of ALL students in their districts? A few suggestions:

- Follow state laws regarding home education.
- Appoint a home education coordinator.
- Keep records of all home educated students. Set up a file similar to a cumulative file and review each file at least once a year to assure all documents required by law are up to date.
- If you have a large home education population, communicate with parents through a district home education handbook. This handbook can be used to outline home education laws, parent responsibilities, resources to obtain curriculum, district graduation requirements, and policies for the issuance of a diploma to a home educated student. The public school home education coordinator contact information can also be provided.
- Contact and refer home education parents to the [North Dakota Home Education Association](#) for possible networking opportunities and additional resources.

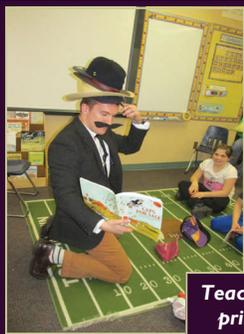
The ND DPI supports families who choose to home educate their children. It is the obligation of the local school district to oversee home education as outlined in the NDCC. This responsibility is given to districts to assure all North Dakota students receive a quality education.

For further information and assistance on home education issues, contact Gwyn Marback at gkmarback@nd.gov or (701) 328-2295.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has created and made available a [Home Education Frequently Asked Questions](#) document to provide assistance to parents and schools in understanding North Dakota Century Code as it relates to Home Education.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD: Showcasing Education at its Best!

Prairie Public's Family Literacy Event Grant Recipients



Teachers and principals read books to children and families



Eastwood Elementary School—West Fargo Public School District

Simultaneous activities were available for Eastwood Elementary children and families including: reading stations where teachers and principals (dressed as book characters) read selected books to the children and families; PBS character, Wordgirl, greeted children and families and provided a book for each student; family activities were held in the gym; supper was provided; PAKRAT (People and Kids Reading A lot Together) program was explained and demonstrated; online learning applications were demonstrated and bookmark information was shared on how to access these; and transportation was provided for new-to-country families.

Information was also provided for parents about our programming at Eastwood. We had a room at each grade level where the parents and children stopped to hear about activities they could do at home and how to pick Good Fit books for their children. Students were also able to choose a book.



Wordgirl with National Honor Society students from West Fargo High School who came to help with the Family Literacy Event

Valley-Edinburg Elementary School

"Celebration of Readers Night" was held on March 4. The students read books, made display boards of their favorite books, and were encouraged to dress up like a storybook character. Some of the teachers and staff also dressed up.

"Clifford the Big Red Dog" made a guest appearance and was a big hit! We were able to provide fun prizes, stickers, tattoos, and free books to all children in attendance, as well as to decorate and provide snacks for everyone.

The Tongue River Mason Lodge donated bikes to be given away as prizes for the students as a reward for all their hard work reading. The students earned tickets for every book they read. The tickets were placed in a box for the bike drawing and eight bikes were given away.

The student's families and other community members were invited to attend and we had over 300 people in attendance. It was truly a great, fun and exciting night for our students, families, and community.



A visit from Clifford the Big Red Dog added to the Celebration of Readers Night, where students displayed story boards and dressed like a storybook character



Over 300 people attended the event. It was truly a great, fun exciting night for students, family and community



NEWS FROM THE FIELD: Showcasing Education at its Best!

Cannon Ball Elementary School—Solen Public School District

The Family Literacy Event started off with “LEGO Mania” which involved creating a LEGO character and then writing about their character. Then students and parents played sight word “Bingo for Books.” The last event was “Books Come Alive” where many fourth grade students read poetry with acting, the first graders did the play “The Little Red Hen,” and the kindergarten class acted out the story “Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed.”

The main attraction was an appearance by Mama and Papa Berenstein Bear. Prairie Public Service provided the students with an iPad station, a free book, and other educational material. The families went home with books for their home library as well as a sample LEGO kit to continue creating and writing.

Thank you to PBS, LEGO education, and a private school from Maine for their support of our Family Literacy Event!



Creating and writing about a Lego character, sight word Bingo for Books, poetry acting, and plays were all part of the Family Literacy Event that included a visit from Mama and Papa Berenstein Bear



Congratulations to Prairie Public's 2014 Share A Story Family Literacy Event grant and partial grant recipient schools!

The following North Dakota schools have already hosted or will be hosting upcoming literacy events:



- Eastwood Elementary, West Fargo, ND
- Northridge Elementary, Bismarck, ND
- Valley-Edinburg Elementary, Hoople, ND
- Flasher Public Schools, Flasher, ND
- Horace Mann Elementary, Fargo, ND
- Burlington-Des Lacs Elementary, Burlington, ND
- Standing Rock Elementary, Fort Yates, ND
- Central Elementary, Wahpeton, ND
- Cannon Ball Elementary, Cannon Ball, ND
- Park River Elementary, Park River, ND
- Max Public School, Max, ND
- Ely Elementary, Rugby, ND

News from Safe & Healthy Schools

By Valerie Fischer, Safe & Healthy Schools Director



Students & Concussions

When a cartoon character gets bonked on the head, stars appear and float in a silly circle. It may be funny to see in a cartoon, but it's not so funny when it happens for real. Seeing stars, feeling 'goofy' or dazed, or falling unconscious after getting hit in the head are all symptoms of a type of brain injury called a concussion. Sports, accidents, and falls are a large cause of concussions in children. Concussions are mild brain injuries and can be detrimental to a child's ability to learn at an appropriate developmental pace or at all. It is important for teachers and coaches to be aware of difficulties students may have when returning to school after a head injury. Often following a brain injury, students may appear inattentive, hyperactive, exhibit communication/comprehension difficulties, and demonstrate challenging behaviors.

The North Dakota Brain Injury Network (NDBIN) is a new program based at the University of North Dakota and funded by the Department of Human Services. Resource facilitators are available across the state to help survivors of brain injury gain access to services and navigate the service system. Professional staff can help provide students and families with information about prevention, diagnosis, and what to expect after a brain injury. For more information, go to <http://ruralhealth.und.edu/projects/brain-injury-network>.

Check Out the New Design on Parents LEAD!

Parents LEAD (Listen, Educate, Ask, Discuss) is an underage drinking prevention program designed to provide resources and information to parents to engage in age-appropriate, ongoing discussions with their children to prevent underage drinking and other risk behaviors. This redesign sought to provide comprehensive age-appropriate – from toddler to young adult – information, tips, tools, and resources to parents on how to talk to their child about serious subjects such as alcohol use, using drugs, and other high-risk behaviors like impaired driving. This resource can be found at www.parentslead.org/



National Take-Back Initiative

National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, scheduled for April 26, 2014, aims to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposing of prescription drugs, while also educating the general public about the potential for abuse of prescription medications. For more information, go to www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/. For Take Back Program Locations in North Dakota, visit www.ag.nd.gov/PDrugs/TakeBackProgram.htm.

CPR/AED Training Reimbursement

If your school district has not yet provided training to students in CPR/AED this year, please consider this opportunity. Your district may qualify to receive up to a 75% reimbursement if training is completed by June 30, 2014. Summer may be just the time to plan this training. Check out the requirements at www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/new/facts2013.shtm.

News from Safe & Healthy Schools, continued

Skin Cancer Awareness

- Sun Safety

Spring is right around the corner and with that comes warmer weather, more sunshine, and more time outdoors; however, sun safety is never out of season. The sun's harmful UV rays reach the earth's surface on sunny, cloudy, and hazy days and those rays can reflect off of water, sand, ice, and snow. Did you know that having one, severe sunburn doubles your risk of developing skin cancer and that skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the United States and is being diagnosed at younger ages? Prevention is the key to keeping sunburn and skin cancer from happening in the first place. Here are some tips for practicing sun safe behaviors:

- Use at least one ounce of sunscreen during every application.
- Apply sunscreen 15-30 minutes **before** sun exposure or going outdoors.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours; more often if sweating or playing in water.
- The sun's rays are the strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. so seek shade during these times when possible.

- Indoor Tanning

As spring arrives, many youth and adults seek indoor tanning in preparation for prom, spring activities, and wardrobe transitions. Avoid indoor tanning beds and booths. The UV rays from these machines greatly increase the risk of developing skin cancer.

The World Health Organization has classified tanning beds and other sources of ultraviolet radiation as definite causes of cancer, stating that tanning beds are carcinogenic to humans. The International Agency for Research on Cancer states that people younger than 30 years of age who use tanning machines increase their risk of skin cancer by 75 percent.

Skin Cancer Awareness Resources for Teachers, Parents and Coaches:

www.ndcancercoalition.org/?id=86&page=Skin+Cancer+Awareness

www.ndcancercoalition.org/image/cache/Coaches_Be_Sun_Savvy_Manual_updated_9.11.12.pdf

America's PrepareAthon!

Despite an increase in weather-related disasters, nearly 70% of Americans have not participated in a preparedness drill or exercise, aside from a fire drill in the past two years (2012 FEMA National Survey). Schools and communities that are prepared recover more quickly when everyone works together.

America's PrepareAthon! is a campaign launched by Ready, a national public service FREE advertising initiative created by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to increase school and community emergency preparedness at the grassroots level.

The first of two nationwide America's PrepareAthon! National Day of Action is April 30, 2014. Events and activities will be held across the country twice a year to organize school and community days of action and encourage teams and individuals to discuss, practice, and train for relevant hazards.

America's PrepareAthon! has excellent and free "Playbook" resources for schools to engage in planning and can be accessed on the ND DPI website at www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/new/new.shtm.

RECOGNITION

The ND DPI proudly recognizes exemplary North Dakota educators, students, and schools

Student Readiness Award Recipient: Sam Lim

Sam Lim of Fargo North High School was announced as the winner of the Student Readiness Award as part of the ACT's College and Career Readiness Campaign.

The North Dakota College and Career Readiness Awards were presented on February 19, 2014, in the Brynhild Haugland Room of the State Capitol, announced State Superintendent of Public Instruction Kirsten Baesler. North Dakota collaborated with ACT, Inc. to celebrate the state's progress toward the goal of college- and career-readiness for all students.

"Our College and Career Readiness Award recipients epitomize the best North Dakota has to offer," Baesler said. "I wish each of our recipients the best as they are considered by ACT, Inc. for overall recognition."



North Dakota presented one award in each category. The winners are: Sam Lim, Fargo North High School, Student Readiness; HESS, Inc., Workplace Success (employer); North Dakota State College of Science, Career Preparedness (community college); and Carrington High School College and Career Transition (high school). Criteria in each category reflect the student's or the entity's focus on the college and career readiness process. Together, the four awards reflect elements that help a young person successfully make the journey from high school to career: academic and community service excellence; successfully preparing students for their next steps after high school; ensuring students have the knowledge and skills to enter the workforce; and providing professional growth activities in the workplace and encouraging community service.

The 2014 College and Career Readiness Campaign awards program is a means to recognize a student and also three other entities that embody or advance North Dakota's commitment to preparing students for success. The state's award winners will now be considered by ACT, Inc. for overall recognition.

North Dakota will nominate its recipients for overall honors. An ACT, Inc., committee will select one national recipient in each of the four categories; national award recipients will be recognized at the ACT National Gala on College and Career Readiness in Washington, DC, on June 3. In addition to North Dakota, seven states are participating in the 2014 campaign: Alabama, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Montana, North Carolina, and Wisconsin.

North Dakota Students Selected for United States Senate Youth Program

Senators John Hoeven and Heidi Heitkamp announced the names of the two North Dakota students who were selected as delegates to the 52nd annual United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) that was held March 8 – 15, 2014, in Washington, D.C. The USSYP is sponsored by the U.S. Senate and fully funded by The Hearst Foundation. Bethany Berntson of Valley City and Tyler Toepke-Floyd of Wishek were chosen from across North Dakota to be part of the group of 104 student delegates attending the program's 52nd annual Washington Week. Bethany Berntson attends Valley City Junior-Senior High School and serves as her class president and as a Student Council representative. She is a student representative to the North Dakota Association of Student Councils, a National Merit Scholar semifinalist, a ND Farmer's Union Distinguished Student, and the Voice of Democracy Regional Runner-up. She received the National Forensics League Rank of Outstanding Distinction and is a ND Leadership Seminar Outstanding Student Leader. She is the chair of school food drives, a speaker at Kiwanis and Optimist Clubs, and her Church Youth Group's secretary-treasurer.

Tyler Toepke-Floyd attends Wishek High School and serves as a Student Council representative. Recognized Most Outstanding Group Leader at the North Dakota Leadership Seminar, he was also a finalist at the International Science and Engineering Fair in 2012 and 2013. He received a Bronze Ranking at the International World Sustainable Project Olympiad. Tyler participates in Acalympics, band, drama, speech, FFA, FBLA, and the North Dakota Governor's School. He volunteers for local charities and has taken mission trips to the Bahamas and Colorado.

Alternates chosen to the 2014 program were Noah Germolus of Century High School in Bismarck and Jacob Stibbe of Fargo North High School in Fargo.

The overall mission of the program is to help instill within each class of USSYP student delegates more profound knowledge of the American political process and a lifelong commitment to public service. In addition to participation in Washington Week, The Hearst Foundation provides each of the 104 student delegates with a \$5,000 undergraduate college scholarship with encouragement to continue coursework in government, history, and public affairs.

The Chief Educational Officer in each state selects the delegates after nomination by teachers and principals. This year's delegates were designated by Kirsten Baesler, Superintendent of Public Instruction. For general information about the USSYP, please contact North Dakota's state coordinator, Patricia A. Laubach, at plaubach@nd.gov or (701) 328-4525.

North Dakota State Honorees for the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards

Congratulations to Joanna Larson, 17, of New Rockford-Sheyenne High School, New Rockford and Heidi Deplazes, 12, of Shanley High-Sullivan Middle School, Fargo who were named the North Dakota State Honorees by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program honoring students in grades 5-12 for outstanding volunteer service. The awards program, now in its 19th year, is conducted by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

North Dakota's Distinguished Finalists included Hannah Alto, 18, of North Star Public School, Cando and Morgan Uriell, 18, of Lakota High School, Lakota.

Each of the 102 State Honorees will receive \$1,000, an engraved silver medallion, and an all-expense-paid trip in early May to Washington, D.C. for four days of national recognition events. On May 5, ten of the State Honorees – five middle level and five high school students – will be named America's top youth volunteers of 2014. 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. Learn more about each State Honoree and Distinguished Finalist at <http://spirit.prudential.com>.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

By Linda Schloer, Child Nutrition & Food Distribution Director

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) application for the 2014-2015 school year is online at www.dpi.state.nd.us/child/new/index.shtm. Funding is available for “elementary” students – those enrolled in grades K-8.

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program is geared toward elementary schools with the highest proportion of free and reduced price enrollment, especially those at 50 percent and higher. A total of \$1,783,350 was allocated to 175 schools for the 2013-2014 school year, providing fresh fruit and vegetable snacks to 35,667 students.



Here is what schools have to say about this program, along with some great nutrition education activities:

- We made fruit kabobs on a very warm day; students loved the nice cool treat. We cooked corn on the cob, what a hit!!!
- Kids love the local farmer’s watermelon. Cucumbers, tomatoes, lemon cucumbers, carrots, and turnips, which were grown in the school garden, were also served during the month of September.
- We absolutely love the fresh fruits and vegetables that our school has been receiving due to the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable grant! I truly believe that we have been healthier because of it!
- Stutsman County Family Nutrition Program provided nutrition education to our schools. All schools received a FFVP binder so all materials would be accessible to their class. The FFVP theme for the year is THE TWO BITE CLUB developed to introduce myPlate to the students. Lincoln school hosted Family Bingo night. An education display was setup as an activity to introduce parents to the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. All schools continue the Two Bite Club where students who take two bites of the fresh fruit and vegetables receive a punch on a card. When the card is filled up, they receive a star on a circle that is posted on the wall in the cafeteria. Each month a drawing is held for those students who are on the Wall of Fame. The January lessons provided to the classrooms focused on fruits and physical activities. January trivia featured the following: potato, mango, radish, and grapes. The parent website provided parents with a newsletter recipe on mangos and at-home family activities.
- The parents have access to the FFVP website located on the Jamestown Public Schools home page. The parents receive a newsletter, recipes, and at home family activities. The schools received a complete set of curriculum, Pick a Better Snack, and activity lessons.
- November Trivia clues were about tomatoes, broccoli, and pomegranates. The parent connection website included a newsletter to empower the family to eat more fruits and vegetables and to increase activity. Featured recipe was sweet potatoes. The at-home family activity included Bingo cards with suggestions for seasonal physical activities, snack ideas for fruits and vegetables, and tips for selection and storage.
- We did a week of wearing the colors of the fruits and vegetables we had for snack. We ordered some special things like sugar snap peas, mangos, etc., for the week. Over the intercom each morning, we talked about the vitamins and minerals each fruit and vegetable provided.

Achievement Levels Descriptors for Smarter Balanced State Assessments

By Rob Bauer, North Dakota State Assessment Coordinator



Achievement level descriptors (ALDs) define what students know and can do based on their performance within the North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA) in the various content areas. Students who score at or within a particular level of achievement possess the bulk of the abilities described at that level and generally have mastered the skills described in the achievement levels.

Whereas our current set of four achievement levels on the NDSA consist of Novice, Partially Proficient, Proficient, and Advanced, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) has established the following four levels of achievement for the assessment to be administered in the spring of 2015:

- 1: Minimal Command
- 2: Partial Command
- 3: Sufficient Command (Proficiency)**
- 4: Deep Command

Our accountability goals will define Level 3 (Sufficient Command) as the minimum target level of achievement to attain for our students in North Dakota. This level will also be an indicator of readiness for College and Careers for students in grade 11. For a detailed explanation of the student outcomes established for each grade and achievement level, SBAC has created two comprehensive Achievement Level Descriptor documents that may be downloaded from the following links:

English language arts/Literacy ALDs

www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Smarter-Balanced-ELA-Literacy-ALDs.pdf

Mathematics ALDs

www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Smarter-Balanced-Math-ALDs.pdf

If you have any questions, contact Rob Bauer at rgbauer@nd.gov or (701) 328-2224.

Research Corner

Quality Matters for Preschool

A [new report](#) from Oxford University reviews the evidence on early childhood education and care for children under three and finds that developmental benefits will only be achieved if children are able to attend *good-quality* preschool. The findings, which draw on research from the UK, US, and Australia on both center-based care and home-based care provided by professionals, identify four key dimensions of good-quality pedagogy for all children under three:

- Stable relationships and interactions with sensitive and responsive adults
- A focus on play-based activities and routines which allow children to take the lead in their own learning
- Support for communication and language
- Opportunities to move and be physically active

The report provides recommendations for policy and practice, which focus in particular on helping children from poorer backgrounds overcome early disadvantage. Several of these relate to the "quality" of staff. For example, recommendations include increasing pay rates contingent upon improved qualifications, and ensuring that practitioners have access to continuing professional development. The authors also recommend retaining an overall ratio of 1:4 for group-care settings and 1:3 for home settings, working to ensure a good social mix in early years settings so that lower-income children mix with other children, and having an appropriate physical environment (e.g., stimulating and appropriate resources; space for eating, sleeping, and physical activity; and small group sizes appropriate for age/stage).

Going to College Still Pays Off

[This report](#) from the Pew Research Center explores the current value of going to college. Findings are based on a nationally representative Pew Research Center survey of 2,002 adults, including 630 young adults aged 25-32. The survey captured the views of today's adults toward their education, their job, and their experiences in the workforce. To measure how the economic outcomes of young adults compare with those of other generations at a comparable age, the Pew Research Center analyzed economic data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

According to the report, on virtually every measure of economic well-being and career attainment -- from personal earnings to job satisfaction to the share employed full time -- young college graduates are outperforming their peers with less education. In addition, when today's young adults are compared with previous generations, the disparity in economic outcomes between college graduates and those with a high school diploma or less formal schooling has never been greater in the modern era.

Predictors of Postsecondary Success

Which student skills, behaviors, and other characteristics predict future academic and workplace success? To find out, the College and Career Readiness and Success Center at American Institutes of Research completed [a review of research](#) that included over 80 studies on the topic. According to their report, factors that predict future academic and workplace success include:

- Early childhood: While there are no studies that identify early childhood indicators of postsecondary success, academic and social adjustment are indicators of postsecondary readiness.
- Elementary school: Again, there are not specific predictors of postsecondary success. However, predictors of future academic success include achieving literacy by third grade and social competence.
- Middle school: There are more indicators in middle school, including school stability, low absenteeism, meeting or exceeding exam benchmarks, and social-emotional proficiency.
- High school: Because of the breadth of research in this area, there are multiple factors in high school that predict or contribute to postsecondary success, including meeting national assessment and college preparatory benchmarks, maintaining a 3.0+ GPA, and participating in senior year transition programs.

Exciting New Career Opportunity

By Laurie Matzke, Federal Title Programs Director

Are you looking for an exciting new career change? The Federal Title Programs office currently has a vacancy for an assistant director. This position will administer the ELL/Bilingual program for the State of North Dakota. This position offers the following benefits:



- Administering a program supported by both federal and state funding, with the opportunity to develop policy and guidance for a sub population of students greatly in need of support.
- Travel opportunities to attend national conventions and professional development relating to ELL programming.
- Satisfaction of expanding on a growing program due to the increasingly diverse population of our state.

This position is administered in the Federal Title Programs office. Significant support is available to align programming with the other federal Title programs and assist in the tracking of funding.

If you are interested, a job announcement (Job ID 3000434) is posted at www.nd.gov/hrms/jobs/ on the HRMS vacancy listings. The deadline to apply for this position is April 18, 2014.



Connect More

Click on the links below to connect to other newsletters published by the ND DPI:

21st Century Community Learning Centers

[North Dakota AFTERSCHOOL Update](#)

Child Nutrition & Food Distribution

[Directions Newsletter](#)

[Roundup Newsletter](#)

Title I and Special Education

[TEAM News](#)

Math and Science Partnership

[Title II, Part B—Mathematics and Science Partnership Program](#)

[Quarterly Newsletter](#)

North Dakota State Library

[Flickertail Newsletter](#)

[Discovery Newsletter](#)



May 2014

Utilizing the Pre-kindergarten Standards to Enhance Teaching Practices

May 2, 2014

Sleep Inn & Suites—Minot, ND

[Registration](#)

Pre-kindergarten Standards: A Resource for Leveled Learners and Assessment

May 9, 2014

Kelly Inn—Bismarck, ND

Registration is closed for this session

June 2014

2014 Reading Summer Institute

June 2-3, 2014

Ramada—Bismarck, ND

[Registration](#)

Roughrider Health Promotion Conference

June 3-6, 2014

Medora, ND

[Registration](#)

4th Annual ND RTI Conference

June 16-18, 2014

Holiday Inn—Fargo, ND

For more information, contact Darlene Pullen at (701) 857-4467 or Kim Pepin at (701) 446-3178

NDCEL Summer Conference

June 18-20, 2014

Erik Ramstad Middle School—Minot, ND

Registration information will be available at www.ndcel.org

2014 Math Summer Institute

June 23-24, 2014

Ramkota Hotel—Bismarck, ND

[Registration](#)

July 2014

School Administrators' Workshop

July 21-23, 2014

BSC Campus, National Energy Center—Bismarck, ND

Registration information will be available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/events.shtm

2014 North Dakota Indian Education Summit

July 22, 2014

State Capitol, Brynhild Haugland Room—Bismarck, ND

For more information, contact Lucy Fredericks at lkfredericks@nd.gov or (701) 328-1718

Questions and Answers

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction is committed to providing clear and transparent information to its constituents. Our concluding newsletter article features questions received from the field, along with the department's response or position on the topic.

Q. Now that we have reached 100% proficiency on the 12-year timeline, how does the ND DPI plan to proceed?

- A. It is a well known fact that the federal reauthorization of the ESEA is significantly overdue, and there seems to be no movement in sight. Even so, the ND DPI has no regrets about withdrawing the ESEA Flexibility Waiver, as it appears waiver states are struggling to meet the additional requirements. The ND DPI's approach to reaching the 100% proficiency mark is to focus our efforts on continuous school improvement and downplay the sanctions outlined in the NCLB Act. Striving for continuous improvement is what should drive our efforts. Within our school improvement efforts, schools and districts write an improvement plan, offer after school tutoring to students in need, and look at restructuring options when current efforts are not effective. These actions are required under NCLB, but are actions that we would implement anyway under any school improvement process.

Q. What resources or guidance exists to help schools with school climate issues?

- A. School climate includes those critical common elements that influence student outcomes by establishing norms and expectations for behavior which create a positive culture for learning and academic growth. School climate refers to the quality and character of school life and is based on patterns of students', parents', and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures. How students feel about being in school shapes learning and student development. Peer-reviewed educational research consistently demonstrates that a positive school climate is associated with academic achievement, effective risk prevention efforts, and positive youth development.

School and classroom climate assessments address three overarching conceptual dimensions: relationships, personal growth, and system maintenance and change. Assessments can include formal or informal assessments or student and parent focus groups. Attention to school climate - physical, social, and academic dimension - results in improved student behavioral and emotional functioning (school connectedness, social and emotional learning) and, in turn, increase academic motivation and achievement. For a listing of school climate assessments, refer to www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/new/sch_climate.shtm.

To help districts address school climate in concert with school improvement efforts, the U.S. Department of Education will announce LEA school climate transformation grants on April 30, 2014, which are due June 13, 2014; 110 grants with an average award of \$201,000 will be granted.

Q. How will the results of the field testing for the Smarter Balanced assessment be used?

- A. The results of the Smarter Balanced field testing will be used in the following ways:
- **Quality Assurance:** The field test results will be used to evaluate the performance of more than 20,000 assessment questions and performance tasks as well as the overall performance of the online testing system. The field test will show which questions work well and which ones need to be improved so that they contribute to a fair and accurate assessment of student achievement.
 - **Achievement Standards:** Data from the field test will allow Smarter Balanced to set preliminary achievement standards in the summer 2014. These achievement standards will indicate whether or not students are on track to achieve college and career readiness in English and mathematics.
 - **Test Administration:** For member states, the field test provides an opportunity to make sure technology systems and administration logistics are ready for implementation of the assessment system in the 2014-2015 school year.

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