



ConnectED

A Quarterly Publication of the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

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www.dpi.state.nd.us

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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.

ND DPI and AdvancED Roll Out New Accreditation Process

By Matt Strinden, Teacher and School Effectiveness Director and Ann Ellefson, Federal Title Programs Assistant Director

As the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (ND DPI) works with the field and AdvancED personnel to roll out statewide accreditation throughout the 2013-2014 school year, we would like to highlight upcoming training opportunities and resources that will be available to schools:

- **Regional Training Dates:** Four dates have been established for regional trainings on AdvancED. More information regarding these training dates will be available online at www.dpi.state.nd.us/events.shtm. These dates include:
 - Minot – March 31
 - Mandan – April 1
 - Grand Forks – April 7
 - Fargo – April 8
- **Webinars:** Dr. Angie Koppang, AdvancED Regional Director, is working to develop tutorials regarding each tool in ASSIST. These webinars will be recorded so they can be reviewed when it is convenient for school personnel.
- **Title I Program Improvement Workshop:** Annually, the Federal Title Programs office is required to provide a workshop for all schools and districts that are identified for program improvement. Featured at this workshop will be a breakout session regarding using AdvancED's online ASSIST tools to submit a Title I Program Improvement Plan.

Units within the ND DPI continue to collaborate to better understand what the rollout of AdvancED (and its tool ASSIST) means for North Dakota schools and how the information completed for AdvancED accreditation can help fulfill other department requirements, including those for federal Title programs (e.g., Schoolwide Title I plan, comprehensive needs assessment, etc.). Information regarding these requirements will be communicated once these alignments are completed and crosswalk tools become available.

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Superintendent's Corner

It's been a little over a year since I took office. I'd like to take this opportunity to look at where this past year has taken North Dakota public education: what we were facing when I started in January 2013, what we have accomplished, and what additional initiatives we have begun.

Some of the issues we faced at this time last year included a decision about North Dakota's application for an ESEA Flexibility Waiver from NCLB requirements, a school funding and property tax formula, a decision to make between the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and the Partnership of the Assessment Readiness for College and Career (PARCC), sequestration and its effects on all of our districts, and rapid enrollment and school construction were also included in our concerns.

After much consideration of the waiver requirements compared to NCLB requirements that were already in place, we decided that it was best for North Dakota to withdraw its waiver application. New school funding and property taxes were debated in the legislature, in the media, and in school districts throughout the state until final passage of the ND DPI budget in the last hours of the 2013 legislative session.

Making the choice between the SBAC and PARCC involved educators from across the state. In the end, SBAC was selected as the best fit for North Dakota. Districts across our state continued planning to provide space and resources to serve the 8,000-plus students who have entered our schools since 2010. We have accomplished a great deal!

While many projects and initiatives have been completed, decided, or resolved, others continue. The Vertical Alignment Project began working to improve the alignment of high school and higher education coursework in mathematics and English language arts. The mathematics and English language arts groups have met several times at Bismarck State College and Valley City State University and have made great strides. The groups will continue their work and expand to other campuses in the near future. The Principal and Teacher Evaluation Support System (PTESS) working group has met regularly and is committed to providing the highest quality evaluation model for our state. Full rollout of statewide accreditation through AdvancED also continues with trainings occurring throughout the state.

Early childhood education has had a good year with adoption of pre-kindergarten content standards early last fall; in addition, North Dakota is participating with a group of states that received a grant to develop a kindergarten entry assessment. The ND DPI is also facilitating a study of North Dakota's resources for and needs of early childhood education and child care, as authorized by the 2013 legislative assembly.

Superintendent's Corner, continued

Even with so many efforts completed and goals accomplished, we have also begun many new initiatives that will improve the chances of our students' success beyond high school. The ND DPI is building a stronger partnership with the higher education system. K-12 education is, at last, involved in the conversation regarding college admissions policies. An even more important aspect of this collaboration is the discussion of how the K-12 system might be able to leverage our seniors' final year in high school so that they are ready to be successful after high school graduation. The ND DPI realized educators wanted the department to take a stronger lead on North Dakota's English language arts and mathematics standards based on the Common Core; therefore, we began work with statewide partners to provide professional development, and to develop resources and instructional strategies for teachers and districts. Our readiness – both technological and academic – will be determined when students participate in the field test this spring, preparing for full implementation of the online assessment in spring 2015.

Finally, we've begun discussions regarding how we might be able to move from measuring students' seat time to measuring their proficiency or competency in our classes. It is my belief that many students in our state will benefit if we design a system where learning is the constant and time is the variable.

It has been a full and productive year as we all work to serve our students. I look forward to another busy year full of progress ahead of us! Thank you, again, for all that you do to help prepare our students to be successful in their lives after graduation.



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A Focus on Early Childhood Education Educating Our Children When They Are Most Ready To Learn

By Tara Bitz, ND DPI Early Childhood Education Administrator

Pre-kindergarten Standards Professional Development

The ND DPI is pleased to offer professional development opportunities based on the North Dakota Pre-kindergarten Content Standards. The University of Mary will facilitate four full-day opportunities for early childhood professionals. Registration is limited to the first 50 registrants per session. *Registration is currently open for the March 28 session.*



Alignment of Curriculum and Assessment to Pre-kindergarten Standards — March 28, 2014

Fargo – Ramada Plaza Suites & Conference Center: Participants will explore how the Standards support developmentally appropriate practices by cross walking tools and utilizing additional resources to assist in the alignment of curriculum and assessment. Register here: www.surveymonkey.com/s/BQ2DWM7

Utilizing the Pre-kindergarten Standards to Build Classroom and Program Practices — April 11, 2014

Grand Forks – Canad Inns Destination Center: This session focuses on utilizing the Standards to support all aspects of a program and classroom from the chosen approach, philosophy, mission, curriculum, and assessment. Participants will also discuss how to use the Standards while developing environments and lesson plans for both groups and individuals.

Utilizing the Pre-kindergarten Standards to Enhance Teaching Practices — May 2, 2014

Minot – Sleep Inn & Suites: Participants will focus on using the Standards to plan purposeful, relevant, and developmentally appropriate experiences for the children in their classrooms. Topics include the cycle of planning, development of goals, scaffolding, and extending learning for both groups and individuals.

Pre-kindergarten Standards: A Resource for Leveled Learners and Assessment — May 9, 2014

Bismarck – Kelly Inn: This session focuses on using the Standards to support assessment, differentiated activities, and teaching practices with leveled learners. Participants will practice several strategies to guide development for children with varying learning needs.

Early Childhood Education Grants

The 63rd Legislative Assembly passed House Bill 1013, making these early childhood education grants available:

- Early Childhood Continuing Education Grants (www.dpi.state.nd.us/EarlyChildhoodEduc/grants.shtm)
To qualify for the \$1,200 grant award, the eligible recipient must:
 - Be a preschool teacher or teacher assistant for whom a baccalaureate degree will be required in the future;
 - Be an individual working in the childcare industry and/or Head Start program who wishes to obtain a Child Development Associate Degree, Associate of Arts Degree, or Bachelor Degree in Early Childhood Education; and
 - Be enrolled in a North Dakota state college or university.
- Classroom Environment Grants (www.dpi.state.nd.us/EarlyChildhoodEduc/grants.shtm)
To qualify for the \$5,000 grant award, the applicant must have either:
 - Created new space for the district's early childhood education services; or
 - Recently expanded the space of the district's Early Childhood Education program.

Public school districts are eligible to receive this grant to support, enhance, or establish a new or expanded early childhood learning environment. Allowable use of funds include costs incurred to get the physical learning space ready for the early childhood programs. Guidance on allowable use of these grant funds is available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/EarlyChildhoodEduc/grants/eceqa.pdf.

For more information on these early childhood education professional development and grant opportunities, please contact Tara Bitz at tbitz@nd.gov or (701) 328-4646.

PAGE: A Framework for Access and Equity

By Beth Larson-Steckler, Title II , Part B Program Administrator



PAGE is funded through the National Science Foundation (NSF) and hosted by the Science Museum of Minnesota. PAGE is focused on addressing gender, racial, and class-based achievement gaps in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education throughout the Upper Midwest (Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin). North Dakota has historically been unrepresented.

Travis Sandland from the Science Museum of Minnesota will be presenting on *The Peer Alliance for Gender Equity (PAGE)* on February 13, 2014, from 1:00-3:00 pm at the North Dakota State Capitol, Pioneer Room. PAGE is looking for teams with district-wide or state-wide responsibility for STEM education who have a passion for addressing critical issues of access and equity in STEM education and provide professional development, training, coaching, mentoring, and/or leadership to K-12 teachers. Teams should consist of principals, assistant principals, curricular directors, or STEM center directors.

The meeting will provide individuals the opportunity to learn more in-depth information about the PAGE grant and its benefits. Representatives from the Science Museum of Minnesota will also spend time on the application process for PAGE. Applications are due in April. Since the inception of PAGE, no North Dakota applications have been submitted. Teams are highly encouraged to attend and apply for this grant as this is an amazing opportunity for North Dakota students and educators. Attendance at this training does not commit you to this project. There is no cost to the district to participate in this project. The grant covers all expenses, including a stipend and \$2,500 for the purchase of resources and materials to use with teachers in your schools.

PAGE is a year-long commitment of professional development. There are numerous benefits of participation, which include 60+ hours of professional development designed specifically for district STEM leaders; ongoing PAGE community and Science Museum of Minnesota support; and training in a repertoire of research-based strategies, frameworks, and professional development resources that address issues of equity in STEM.

To register to attend the PAGE training, go to www.surveymonkey.com/s/PAGEregistration. A confirmation letter will be sent to all registrants with additional details.

A Practice Run of the New State Assessment System

By Rob Bauer, NDSA Testing Coordinator

Beginning in mid-March, over 5,000 students statewide will be field testing the new, online state assessment system from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). More than three million students across the country will also be 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 that 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.

Updates on the North Dakota English Language Arts and Mathematics Standards Based on the Common Core

By Ryan Townsend, Academic Standards Director

Area Student and School Show Support for the North Dakota English Language Arts and Mathematics Standards



Chloe Rickards addressing the Interim Education Funding Committee on January 29, 2014. (Photo courtesy of TaTiana Cash, KFYR-TV, Bismarck)

- **Minot Public School District**
Chloe Rickards, a Minot Public School District student, recently wrote a letter to the ND DPI advocating for higher standards and increased rigor as part of a school assignment to write to an elected official that she admires.

Chloe moved to North Dakota from Alabama, where she attended an academically challenging high school. Her correspondence to the ND DPI requested a more challenging course load and included her support of the new North Dakota English language arts and mathematics standards based on the Common Core.

- **Bismarck Public School District**
On January 31, 2014, Tamara Uselman, superintendent of the Bismarck Public School District, posted an article on the district's website regarding the North Dakota English language arts and mathematics standards based on the Common Core. The article urged patrons to read a document created by the Bismarck Public School District to help provide information and clarification to parents, educators, legislators, etc., on the Common Core.

The [document](#) provides historical information, answers to commonly asked questions, and dispels numerous myths about the North Dakota English language arts and mathematics standards based on the Common Core.

Resources on the ND English and Math Standards based on the Common Core

The ND DPI has created a dedicated website to share and disseminate information on the North Dakota English language arts and mathematics standards based on the Common Core. Information can be accessed at www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/common_core.shtm on the department's website.

A few resources to highlight include:

- [The Truth about the Common Core](#) - The ND DPI has created a brochure which lists the facts about the North Dakota English language arts and mathematics standards based on the Common Core.
- North Dakota English Language Arts and Mathematics Standards based on the Common Core - The [website](#) provides a link to access the new North Dakota standards in the subjects of mathematics and reading.
- [Common Core Instructional Tools](#) - These tools are for special education teachers whose students will be assessed using the next generation alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards. These materials align with the North Dakota English language arts and mathematics standards based on the Common Core and Dynamic Learning Maps Essential Elements and are created specifically for use with students with severe cognitive disabilities.

These materials were created by North Dakota teachers, for teachers, to assist them in assessing the standards in a meaningful fashion. The goal is to provide teachers of students with severe cognitive disabilities with tools to get them started with the North Dakota English language arts and mathematics standards based on the Common Core.

Updates on the North Dakota English Language Arts and Mathematics Standards Based on the Common Core, continued

Superintendent Baesler Addresses Interim Education Funding Committee

On Wednesday, January 29, 2014, Superintendent Baesler addressed the Interim Education Funding Committee to provide an update on the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, statewide assessments, and the North Dakota English language arts and mathematics standards based on the Common Core.

State Superintendent Baesler informed committee members that before the North Dakota English language arts and mathematics standards based on the Common Core were adopted in North Dakota, they received a rigorous review by a group of 60 North Dakota educators. Baesler also reiterated that it is important to distinguish between standards and curriculum—the North Dakota English language arts and mathematics standards based on the Common Core is a set of standards that determine broad concepts students should learn, while the curriculum materials to meet the standards are determined by local districts and teachers.

Career and College Readiness Coalition Created

On January 29, 2014, the ND DPI hosted the first meeting of the North Dakota Career and College Readiness Coalition to share their plans to help support schools, teachers, and administrators in meeting their goal of having students college and career ready. The 26-member coalition is made up of educators, business and community members, legislators, parents, and ND DPI staff.

The first meeting was to share the ND DPI's vision for the coalition, discuss college and career readiness and what it means for North Dakota students, and to garner feedback on the strategies that the ND DPI is developing to support schools in professional development and communication, as well as share curriculum and assessment resources.

State Superintendent Baesler welcomed the group and thanked them for their commitment to the students of North Dakota. Ryan Townsend, Academic Standards Director for the ND DPI, facilitated the meeting and presented on the context and history of college and career readiness in North Dakota. Townsend also shared the strategies that the ND DPI has been developing following a meeting of stakeholders last spring and a capacity review undertaken in September 2013. In the afternoon, the coalition discussed future plans and offered initial feedback on the morning's presentation.

The coalition will meet, in person, throughout the year to discuss opportunities to further the goals of college and career readiness for students in North Dakota.



**Professional
Development
Survey
Released!**

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction recently emailed a survey to every teacher in North Dakota to gauge professional learning needs in our state.

Please take the time to complete this survey when you receive it.

If you did not receive the link to the survey, please email Ryan Townsend at srtownsend@nd.gov.

DLM Consortium to Develop Alternate Assessments

REPRINT PERMISSION GRANTED from DLM 27DEC13

Last fall, the ND DPI selected the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) consortium to develop alternate state assessments for students with severe cognitive disorders (SWSCD). As a member of DLM, the ND DPI is a part of the development process and will also have the ability to make modifications as needed. The following article from Dynamic Learning Maps' December 2013 newsletter, discusses recently determined student participation guidelines and is reprinted with permission from DLM. For more information, contact Gerry Teevens, Special Education Director, at (701) 328-2692 or gteevens@nd.gov.

Late last fall, the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System Consortium (DLM-AAS) took a substantial step forward in policy when members agreed on student-participation guidelines. "Historically, states have varied in the language they have used to describe what 'significant cognitive disabilities' means and who should take the alternate assessment," said Dr. Neal Kingston, Director of the Dynamic Learning Maps Project and Professor in the Department of Psychology and Research in Education at the University of Kansas. "This can be a problem when children change school districts, especially if they move over state lines. Who are the estimated one percent of all schoolchildren who will take the alternate assessment test? The challenge is to reach a consensus on who those students are."

To qualify a student for DLM-AAS participation, educators must answer yes to each of three questions:

- Does the student have a significant cognitive disability?
- Are DLM Essential Elements the primary content standards for the student's instruction?
- Does the student require extensive, direct, individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measureable gains in the grade- and age-appropriate curriculum?

"The consortium has adopted this as our official guidance," Kingston said. "The adoption of this guidance is a significant step. States can make their own modifications, as needed, to fit their particular policies - for example, if a state has had particular issues in the past they might want to offer additional clarification. This is meant to serve as guidance; it's not a mandate."

The 2012-2013 DLM First Contact Survey collected data from consortium members on students who were candidates for the alternate assessment. Each student's teacher—the individual with the deepest, firsthand knowledge of the student—responded to the survey.

The results described the student population that is likely to participate in DLM learning and assessment. The majority of students in the sample were classified as students with intellectual disabilities (44%), with autism (23%), or with multiple disabilities (14%). According to survey results, the majority of students could read some words. Approximately 9% of students were rated as reading above the third-grade level. Many of the students could perform very simple mathematical tasks at least 80% of the time.

DLM-AAS aims to provide educators with an improved tool for answering such questions by giving them a comprehensive system that A) supports student learning and B) measures what students with significant cognitive disabilities know and can do. The system is designed to support individualized learning experiences for each student by presenting questions and tasks that are appropriate for a student's cognitive and sensory abilities.

The system design rests on the premise that educators, who have engaged with a student academically, know a great deal about the student's characteristics, accessibility needs, and broad academic abilities in English language arts and mathematics. These educators are considered an important source of information to guide initial structuring of students' unique learning experiences.

DLM-AAS is designed to simultaneously support teacher instruction and student learning. The online tool is composed of more than 6,500 testlets, each of which includes an engagement activity and three to five assessment questions. Collectively, these testlets reveal what students know and can do as well as provide valuable insights into student understanding that can inform teacher instruction.

ND DPI Moves to Revise State Science Standards

By Greg Gallagher, Assessment Director

A committee of statewide educators has begun the process of revising North Dakota's academic content standards in science. Last revised in 2006, the state's science content standards declare what students should know and be able to do in science, spanning grades K-12. Established procedures guide the revision process to ensure that the standards undergo an extensive review against nationally recognized science benchmarks.

A forty-five member committee of educators, representing a wide range of K-12 and higher education interests, began their review work in July 2013. The committee will study current national efforts, prepare interim drafts for public comment, and prepare a final draft recommendation for State Superintendent Baesler's consideration for approval by June 2014.

Over recent years, national efforts have emerged to redesign the scope of science standards across the nation. In 2012, the National Research Council, a research arm of the National Academy of Sciences, released a broad science content framework. This framework was adopted by a consortium of approximately 25 states to craft voluntary science content standards, titled the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). These NGSS are available at the following website: www.nextgenscience.org/next-generation-science-standards.

The state's science standards revision committee is studying the NGSS with the assistance of a gap analysis study comparing the NGSS to the state's current 2006 science standards, in addition to other external review studies. The committee is considering the prospects of referencing the NGSS; however, there exists no predetermined expectation to adopt the NGSS. Any such recommendation would rest with the committee following its review. An initial draft for public comment is expected to be available in early 2014.

This study, drafting process, and the subsequent release of public review drafts provide for a complete, open, and transparent review of the state's forthcoming standards by all education stakeholders. This form of review allows the state's educators to engage in the discussion leading up to any possible adoption. Direct any questions or comments regarding this review process to Greg Gallagher, Director of Assessment, at (701) 328-1838 or ggallagher@nd.gov.

2014 GED Series Now Available

By Valerie Fischer, Adult Education Director

Updated regularly, the new GED series is now aligned to both the Common Core State Standards and the College and Career Readiness Standards. The 2014 GED is computer based; paper and pencil testing is only available for disability accommodations. The new test is comprised of four content area exams – reading/language arts, math, science and social studies.

Norming and validation studies indicate that 40% of high school seniors can not pass the GED. All 17 Adult Learning Centers in North Dakota now offer keyboarding and computer literacy to students as part of the GED preparation program.

The exam fee is \$30/test. The Bank of North Dakota supports the GED program and its students by paying for the first and last test fee for state residents who pass the first and last test. GED services are available across the state to anyone 16 years of age and older. During 2013, the ND DPI Adult Education office in collaboration with the Adult Learning Centers helped many students obtain their GED.

Other adult education services include adult ESL services, adult citizenship, displaced homemakers, and basic adult education.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD: Showcasing Education at its Best!

The ND DPI Federal Title Programs and Academic Standards offices recently co-funded grants to our state REAs to sponsor high quality professional development statewide



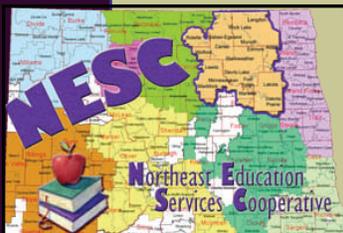
South East Education Cooperative (SEEC) in Fargo

The SEEC is contracting with Dr. Kevin Feldman to provide professional development to principals and teachers on Adolescent Literacy. In addition, they are helping fund teams of educators to attend the Breakthrough Coach two-day training.



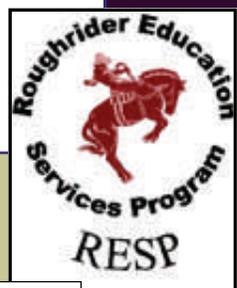
Great Northwest Education Cooperative (GNWEC) in Williston

The GNWEC is working to upgrade elementary teachers' mathematics knowledge and skills by providing stipends to middle school and high school mathematics teachers to provide professional development to elementary math teachers.



Northeast Education Services Cooperative (NESC) in Devils Lake

The NESC is contracting with Steve Dunn for five days of professional development promoting "Strategies in Writing."



Roughrider Education Services Program (RESP) in Dickinson

The RESP is contracting with Paul Keidel and DSU STEM consultants to facilitate eight professional development workshops on the LEGO education program.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD: Showcasing Education at its Best!



Missouri River Education Cooperative (MREC) in Mandan

The MREC is contracting with Dr. Marcia Tate to provide a two-day professional development in-service on “Brain Based Instructional Practices” which includes 20 follow-up days of training.



Mid Dakota Education Cooperative (MDEC) in Minot

The MDEC is contracting with a consultant and purchasing licenses for NextPert to offer multiple professional development sessions in adolescent literacy. In addition, they are consulting with Dr. Cory Steiner to provide professional development for principals using the “Breaking Ranks for Leading Change” series.



North Central Education Cooperative (NCEC) in Bottineau

The NCEC is contracting with professional development presenters to travel within the region and facilitate workshops on the following topics: RTI strategies and implementation, STEM/Understanding by Design, K-12 vertical alignment, close reading/ELA Common Core, college & career readiness, and differentiated learning.



Red River Valley Education Cooperative (RRVEC) in Grand Forks

The RRVEC is contracting with Dr. Phil Warrick and Dr. Peg Portscheller to provide professional development on Marzano’s Leadership Evaluation Model.

News from Safe & Healthy Schools

By Valerie Fischer, Safe & Healthy Schools Director



New Education Program Administrator

The Safe & Healthy Schools office is pleased to announce the hiring of Katherine (Kate) Black as an Education Program Administrator. Kate previously worked for the North Dakota Department of Health. Kate will focus on physical activity, physical education, nutrition, health education, drugs and alcohol, suicide prevention, injury prevention, playground safety, and the cooperative Centers for Disease Control grant with the Department of Health.

Suicide Prevention

Across North Dakota, suicide rates are rising among school age youth and it is now the second leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10-24. According to the 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 16% of North Dakota students grades nine through twelve seriously considered attempting suicide and 12% of students actually attempted suicide one or more times during the past 12 months.

To promote identification and awareness of suicide indicators, Senate Bill 2306, introduced and passed during the 2013 legislative session, requires each school district to provide professional development relating to youth suicide prevention. More details are available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/new/Youth_Suicide_Prevention.pdf.

CPR Funding Still Available

During the 2013 legislative session, funds were appropriated to assist middle and high schools in providing Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training to students. The training and reimbursement requirements can be found on the Safe & Healthy School's website at www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/new/facts2013.shtm. If you have any questions, contact the Safe & Healthy Schools office at (701) 328-2753.

Moments of Impact Video Released

On October 29, 2011, five Mandan youth and longtime friends spent a night partying and drinking. On their way home, the driver, who was drunk with a blood alcohol level three times in excess of the legal limit, crashed the car into a tree while traveling over 85 mph, killing three of his buddies and seriously injuring himself and another passenger. The accident resulted in a penitentiary sentence of eight years for the driver who caused the accident and subsequent deaths. As these young men were well known and respected within the Bismarck-Mandan community, friends and agency partners collaborated funds and talents to tell the story in video format, in hopes of saving others.

This very somber and cutting edge 30-minute video, **Moments of Impact**, can be shared with students, staff, and parents as you so choose. In cooperation with the North Dakota Safety Council, a curriculum guide has been developed to use with the video as a classroom supplement. Any instructors with available Internet access will be able to show the video to students. This video has been highly regarded as a parent and community presentation and the video has been regionally recognized for its excellence. As this has some slight graphic references, please review before showing to middle school or younger audiences.

On the ND DPI Safe & Healthy Schools webpage, www.dpi.state.nd.us/health/new/new.shtm, you will find the following classroom or presentation supplements to use with your audience: video, pre- and post-test with answer key, instructional PowerPoint for discussion, instructional guide, student guide, and parent handout questionnaire.

News from Safe & Healthy Schools, continued

School Discipline Guidance Package

The U.S. Department of Education (USDE), in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), released a school discipline guidance package that assists states, districts, and schools in developing practices and strategies to enhance school climate, and ensure those policies and practices comply with federal law. The package includes a Dear Colleague guidance letter on civil rights and discipline, a Guiding Principles document that draws from emerging research and best practices, a Directory of Federal School Climate and Discipline Resources that indexes federal technical assistance and other resources, and a Compendium of School Discipline Laws and Regulations that catalogue state laws and regulations related to school discipline. To view the resource documents, visit www.ed.gov/school-discipline.

Healthy Active Classroom Celebrations

Classroom parties and celebrations are an important way for children to feel connected to their school community. Students learn to make healthy choices in the lunch room and to be physically active before, during school, after school, and at recess, so it is also good to align those practices to the parties in their classroom. Some ways to encourage healthy foods and physical activity into classroom parties and celebrations are:

- A scavenger hunt outside, in the classroom, or throughout the whole school
- Encourage healthy beverages: low fat milk, 100% juice, and water
- Celebrate birthdays or holidays with open gym or an extra recess
- Go on a field trip to the skating rink, bowling alley, park, or zoo
- Encourage fruit, vegetables, cheese cubes, yogurt, whole grains, and lean meats in place of candy, cookies, cakes, bars, doughnuts, or high salt/sodium chips
- Move the desks around to create space to use hula hoops and jump ropes because kids not only like to have fun, but they are also using muscles to move the desks and learning to cooperate with each other by accomplishing that task
- Use fitness and yoga videos, tapes, or DVDs
- Turn on some music and dance
- Go outside and sled, build a snowman, or throw frisbee
- Create a tasting party where students prepare, taste, and review new healthy foods like smoothies, guacamole, papaya, humus, mango, coconut milk, etc. This incorporates math, writing, and debate skills, as well as taking turns and working together

North Dakota Indian Education Summit

By Lucy Fredericks, Indian Education Director

The ND DPI Indian Education and North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission will be sponsoring the “2014 North Dakota Native Nations Educational Summit”.

When: Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Where: North Dakota State Capitol, Brynhild Haugland Room - Bismarck

Additional information will be coming soon!



**Save the
Date!**

RECOGNITION

The ND DPI proudly recognizes exemplary North Dakota educators and schools

2013 Blue Ribbon Schools

Three North Dakota schools are included in the 2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Kirsten Baesler announced that Edgeley Public School, William S. Gussner Elementary School in Jamestown, and Wyndmere Elementary School are among the schools to be recognized for this prestigious national honor.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools award recognizes schools in one of two categories: Exemplary High Performing or Exemplary Improving. To be considered as an Exemplary Improving school, the school must demonstrate that at least 40% of the school's students are from disadvantaged backgrounds and also show the most progress in improvement in student achievement levels as measured by state assessments or nationally-normed tests. Schools considered for both categories of the award are measured against other schools within their respective states.

The selected schools were announced by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and were formally recognized at a ceremony November 18-19, 2013, in Washington, D.C. A list of all 2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools is available at www.ed.gov/nationalblueribbonsschools.

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



Edgeley Public School



Wyndmere Elementary



Gussner Elementary



2014 North Dakota Teacher of the Year

Governor Jack Dalrymple and State Superintendent Kirsten Baesler jointly named Aaron Knodel, an English language arts teacher at both West Fargo High School and Sheyenne High School, as North Dakota's 2014 Teacher of the Year. The announcement was made on September 20, 2013, during a ceremony at West Fargo High School that was attended by administrators, educators, representatives from the state's education associations, and students.



Knodel was selected from a pool of four finalists that included Julie Jaeger, a K-5 gifted education teacher from Minot Public Schools; Debra Nelson, a science teacher from Bottineau Junior/Senior High School; and Kristi Shanenko, an English language arts teacher from Valley City Junior/Senior High School.

Aaron Knodel teaches senior English, advanced placement language and composition, the fundamentals of public speaking, and debate and argumentation. He also serves as an adjunct professor at both North Dakota State University and the North Dakota State College of Science, teaching courses in public speaking and the methods of teaching writing. He is currently serving as president of the North Dakota Council of Teachers of English. Just this year, Knodel was named West Fargo Public Schools' Teacher of the Year and was named West Fargo High School's Teacher of the Year in 2011-2012.

The North Dakota Teacher of the Year Program recognizes and honors the contributions of America's classroom teachers. The program is the oldest and most prestigious commendation to focus public attention on excellence in teaching. The state's Teacher of the Year program is sponsored by the ND DPI in conjunction with the Council of Chief State School Officers.

A teacher may be recommended initially for nomination by any person within the school or community including parents, students, business leaders, school administrators, or colleagues and are reviewed by a seven-member selection panel. Knodel will now advance to the national Teacher of the Year program.

For more information on the North Dakota Teacher of the Year, please contact Pat Laubach at plaubach@nd.gov or (701) 328-4525.

2013 Title I Distinguished School Award



Each year, the National Association of State Title I Directors (NASTID) sponsors the National Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program. Through this program, North Dakota can select one Title I school (targeted assistance or schoolwide) to receive the National Title I Distinguished Schools Award. The schools are selected for outstanding results on one of two categories: (1) Exceptional student performance for two or more consecutive years, or (2) Closing the achievement gap between student groups.

The Title I Distinguished School for 2013-2014 is Ben Franklin Elementary School in Grand Forks, North Dakota. They won in the category of exceptional student performance for two or more consecutive years.

The announcement was made at the 2013 Title I, Special Education, 21st CCLC Fall Conference in October 2013. Ben Franklin staff members Beth Randklev, Tami Schumacher, and Sara Streeter (pictured L to R) were present to accept the award.

Distinguished schools selected across the nation were also recognized at the National Title I Conference in San Diego, CA, in February 2014.

Community Eligibility Option for School Nutrition Programs

By Linda Schloer, Child Nutrition & Food Distribution Director

Beginning in School Year 2014-15, schools serving high numbers of low-income children will be able to participate in the Community Eligibility option for reimbursement of meals served through the USDA National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs. Community Eligibility allows schools with high numbers of low-income children to serve free breakfast and lunch to all students without collecting school meal applications. This option increases participation by children in the school meal programs, while schools reduce labor costs and increase their federal revenues, allowing for a healthier student body and a healthier school meal budget.



How it Works

- Schools in high-poverty areas provide free breakfasts and lunches to all students without collecting applications or tracking eligibility in the cafeteria.
- A formula based on the number of students certified without the need for paper applications (called “Identified Students”) is the basis for reimbursements instead of paper applications.
- Any school building can use this option when 40% or more students are certified for free meals without a paper application based on their status as in foster care, Head Start, homeless, migrant, or living in households that receive SNAP/Food Stamps, TANF cash assistance, or FDPIR benefits.
- The reimbursement rate for both lunch and breakfast is determined by multiplying the percent of Identified Students by 1.6. The resulting number is the percent of meals reimbursed at the “free” reimbursement rate, with the rest being reimbursed at the “paid” rate. For example, a school with 50% Identified Students would be reimbursed at the free rate for 80% of the breakfasts and lunches it served ($50 \times 1.6 = 80$) and the remaining 20% would be reimbursed at the paid rate.
- Participating schools are guaranteed to receive the same reimbursement rate (or a higher one if the level of direct certification increases) for four years.
- “Community Eligibility” is currently being offered in 11 states – and the early results show that it improves participation in the school meal programs. A new report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Food Research and Action Center found in schools that have participated in Community Eligibility for two years, lunch participation increased by 13% and breakfast participation increased by 25%.

Benefits

- All students receive all meals at no charge.
- Paperwork for schools and families is dramatically reduced. Families no longer have to complete applications, and schools no longer have to certify individual student eligibility which also eliminates the verification process.
- School meal service is streamlined. School meal staff no longer collect payments or do individual student counting and claiming. They simply count total meals served and assure that each student only receives one meal at the point of service.
- Universal (free) meals make it easier for schools to implement alternative meal service such as “grab and go” and breakfast in the classroom.

The ND DPI will notify all schools that are eligible to participate in the Community Eligibility option by April 15, 2014. Schools will be able to sign up for Community Eligibility during the School Nutrition Program renewal process in July 2014.

For more information, contact Linda Schloer at lschloer@nd.gov.

New Federal Grant Regulations

By Stephanie Gullickson, Fiscal Management Director

The Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released new grant management regulations on December 26, 2013, known as the "Super-Circular". The Super-Circular is intended to reduce the administrative burden of non-Federal entities that receive federal awards while reducing the risk of waste, fraud, and abuse. The Super-Circular consolidates eight grant related circulars (e.g., A-21, A-87, A-133, etc.) into one Super-Circular.

The USDE has six months to submit an implementation plan to OMB for approval. Once the plan has been approved, states will receive implementation guidance on these new regulations. The expected effective date of the new guidance for state and local governments is December 2014; however, it is unclear on when grantees must comply with the new regulations.

What exactly does this mean to school district personnel? The regulations contained in EDGAR (Education Department General Administrative Regulations), which apply to all federal education grants, will be revised based on the Super-Circular. This will change the administrative grant requirements of items such as time and effort reporting, allowable expenses, and Single Audits (A-133).

For example, the Super-Circular raises the Single Audit (A-133) threshold from \$500,000 to \$750,000. This increase will allow some of our ND schools to be exempt from the A-133 audit requirement potentially beginning with audits conducted for the year ending June 30, 2015. The full text of the Super-Circular can be found at www.regulations.gov/#%21documentDetail;D=OMB_FRDOC_0001-0127. We will continue to provide updates as more information becomes available.

2013 NAEP Reading and Math Scores Released

By Pauline Iler, North Dakota NAEP Coordinator

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2013 reading and mathematics scores were released in November 2013. NAEP is given to a sampling of fourth and eighth grade students nationwide every other year to track student academic progress over time.

"North Dakota student scores have stayed fairly level over time, and they compare favorably with national results," State Superintendent Kirsten Baesler said. "It is important for us to remember that our schools are doing a good job, but we must continue our work to become better. It is our job to help prepare our students to be successful in college, in their careers, and in their lives."

North Dakota fourth graders scored an average of 224 (compared to a 2011 average of 226) on the reading assessment; the national average score was 221. The eighth grade reading average score was 268 (compared to a 2011 average of 269); the national average was 266.

On the mathematics assessment, North Dakota fourth graders scored an average of 246 (compared to a 2011 average of 245); the national average score was 241. The eighth grade math average score was 291 (compared to a 2011 average of 292); the national average score was 284.

When compared to other states, North Dakota's fourth graders ranked fourth in mathematics and thirteenth in reading; eighth graders ranked sixth in mathematics and sixteenth in reading.

Full results of the 2013 NAEP are available online at www.nationsreportcard.gov.

For more information, contact Pauline Iler, North Dakota NAEP Coordinator at (701) 328-4518 or pailer@nd.gov.

Our School Has Students Who Speak Another Language, Now What?

By Laurie Matzke, Federal Title Programs Director

In North Dakota, and all across the nation, we are seeing a surge of English Language Learners (ELL) in our school systems. In fact, ELL is currently the fastest growing subgroup of students in the nation. An ELL student is defined as a student who has a primary language other than English or is significantly influenced by a language other than English. The ND DPI receives calls and emails each week indicating that our schools are regularly getting new students that have a primary language other than English.



The following list outlines the steps to follow if your school receives any new students.

- **Step 1:** The first step is to give the student a Home Language Survey (HLS) to determine if there is a primary home language other than English. A sample HLS survey can be accessed at www.dpi.state.nd.us/bilingul/tech/index.shtm on the department's website.
- **Step 2:** The second step is to administer an assessment (Model, W-APT) to any new students who have a home language other than English identified through the HLS. In order to administer this assessment, an individual must meet the following requirements:
 - **North Dakota Teachers holding Bilingual or ELL Endorsement**
Face-to-Face ACCESS Training **OR** Webinar ACCESS Training and WIDA Online ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator Training for each module being administered (minimum score of 80% on quiz).
 - **North Dakota Teachers Not Holding Bilingual or ELL Endorsement**
Face-to-Face ACCESS Training **and** supervision by ELL endorsed teacher and WIDA Online ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator Training for each module being administered (minimum score of 80% on quiz).
 - **All North Dakota Teachers**
Refresh Speaking Training every two years via WIDA Online ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator Training for the Speaking Test (minimum of 80% on speaking quiz).
- **Step 3:** If the assessment determines the student meets the definition of ELL and there is, in fact, a home language other than English, then it requires the school to log on to the STARS Enrollment Report and enroll the child as an ELL student.
- **Step 4:** The fourth step would be to disseminate a parental notification letter in a language understood by parents/guardians.
- **Step 5:** The fifth step would be the placement of the ELL identified student in LEP program of "high quality language instruction, based on scientifically-based research." In addition, an Education Learning Plan (ELP) or Individual Language Plan (ILP) must be developed for every ELL identified student.

In-depth guidance on the identification of ELL students and numerous other ELL-related guidance documents can be accessed at www.dpi.state.nd.us/bilingul/tech/index.shtm on the department's website. The second bullet provides Identification and Screening guidance and the third bullet provides Programming guidance.

All districts are required to identify an ELL director as the responsible party for this process on the MIS01 Fall Report. School districts must provide an ELL program for ELL identified students. This is a civil rights issue. If you have students in need of ELL services, the district will be responsible for identifying an ELL teacher who holds an ELL endorsement to provide services.

If you have any questions pertaining to ELL, please contact Laurie Matzke, Director of Federal Title Programs at lmatzke@nd.gov or (701) 328-2284 or Jill Frohlich, Administrative Assistant for ELL, at jmfrohlich@nd.gov or (701) 328-2254. The ND DPI is in the process of filling a vacant position to administer the Title III/ELL program in North Dakota.

Research Corner

[The Educational Value of Field Trips](#)

School field trips to a variety of cultural institutions have a long history in public education. Field trips are in a decline for a variety of reasons. This article summarizes a research study to review the benefits of field trips and finds that they do, indeed, have many notable benefits.

[Kids Ready for Math](#)

Children as young as three can understand the meaning and value of multi-digit numbers and might be more ready for direct math instruction when they begin formal schooling than previously believed, according to new research by developmental psychologists.

[Getting the Facts Right on Pre-K and the President's Pre-K Proposal](#)

This policy report by W. Steven Barnett clears up some common misconceptions about preschool's effectiveness and benefits, and addresses the following questions:

1. Does high quality pre-kindergarten have lasting benefits?
2. What is the evidence for the \$7 to \$1 return on investment for preschool?
3. Do non-disadvantaged children benefit from pre-kindergarten? Is a targeted or a universal approach to preschool more effective?
4. Are large-scale public pre-kindergarten programs, including Head Start, effective?

Dr. Barnett examines the research evidence that supplies answers to all of these questions.



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](#)

Title II

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

North Dakota State Library

[Flickertail Newsletter](#)

[Discovery Newsletter](#)

**PAGE: A Framework for Access and Equity**

February 13, 2014

North Dakota State Capitol—Pioneer Room, Bismarck

[Registration](#)

Regional Trainings on AdvancED

March 31, 2014—Minot

April 1, 2014—Mandan

April 7, 2014—Grand Forks

April 8, 2014—Fargo

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

Alignment of Curriculum and Assessment to Pre-kindergarten Standards

March 28, 2014

Ramada Plaza Suites & Conference Center—Fargo

[Registration](#) (Please note registration is limited to the first 50 registrants)

Pathfinder Parent Involvement Conference

April 10-12, 2014

Grand Hotel (formerly The Grand International)—Minot

[Registration](#)

Utilizing the Pre-kindergarten Standards to Build Classroom and Program Practices

April 11, 2014

Canad Inns Destination Center—Grand Forks

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

2014 Title I Program Improvement Workshop

April 28, 2014

Bismarck Civic Center—Bismarck

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

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. When will schools and districts receive their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reports based on the fall 2013 assessment data?

- A. All North Dakota school districts received their 2013-2014 North Dakota assessment data from CTB in January 2014. The department will now begin the process to create an official AYP report for every school and district in the state based upon the 2013-2014 state assessment data. School personnel will be able to access their building level preliminary AYP reports confidentially on the State Automated Reporting System (STARS). At the completion of the review period, the department will officially release AYP reports. We anticipate that preliminary AYP reports will be released in late March 2014.

Q. I have been hearing rumors about a new principal and teacher evaluation system in North Dakota. Where can I find more information regarding the new process?

- A. In late 2011, the Principal and Teacher Evaluation System Support (PTESS) committee was convened to develop North Dakota's plan for principal and teacher evaluations as part of the state's ESEA Flexibility Waiver Request. In March 2013, North Dakota withdrew its waiver request to the U.S. Department of Education, but decided to continue the work on the state principal and teacher evaluation system and to develop a model evaluation rubric for North Dakota.

The committee and the ND DPI have set a goal for a deliverable model evaluation rubric by spring 2014. When the program is fully implemented, every administrator and teacher will be evaluated every year using an ND DPI approved evaluation tool. The annual evaluation process will be included as an assurance in statewide accreditation.

The ND DPI just released a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) designed to update the educators in the state on what is happening with the principal and teacher evaluation system. The FAQ can be accessed at www.dpi.state.nd.us/approve/PTESS/faq.pdf on the department's website.

Q. I recently read in the news that North Dakota has an extremely high homeless youth population. Is this true?

- A. It was recently reported nationwide that in 2011-2012, North Dakota experienced a 212% increase in children and youth reported to have experienced homelessness. The following were two contributing factors:
- In 2011, North Dakota experienced a devastating flood resulting in hundreds of families being evacuated from their permanent residences. FEMA communities were established to bring temporary housing to families while they rebuilt their permanent dwellings. Under McKinney-Vento guidelines, children residing in a FEMA trailer or who are doubled-up with other families are considered homeless.
 - Our state has experienced an increase in population due to the exploration and production of natural resources. Some major cities have experienced a shortfall of housing due to a rapid increase in population. Employees are temporarily housed in hotels, motels, and trailers/campers. Under McKinney-Vento guidelines, children living in hotels, motels, and trailers/campers are considered homeless, regardless of family income. Therefore, through the reporting process, North Dakota saw a significant increase in our homeless population.

Statewide homeless consortiums meet regularly to monitor and research solutions to the current homeless issue and to bring relief and services to families that have become victims of homelessness due to hardship. Each public school district in North Dakota is required to have a designated homeless liaison available to provide assistance and services to homeless children. Contact Jacki Harasym, ND DPI Homeless Coordinator, at jharasym@nd.gov or (701) 857-7770 for additional information on McKinney-Vento guidelines and the availability of homeless services in your area.

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