

## **Recommended uses of IDEA Part B Funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009.**

The U.S. Department of Education provided the following guidance regarding the use of Funds for Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Made Available Under The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

“The *IDEA* recovery funds constitute a large one-time increment in *IDEA*, Part B funding that offers states and LEAs a unique opportunity to improve teaching and learning and results for children with disabilities. Generally, funds should be used for short-term investments that have the potential for long-term benefits, rather than for expenditures the LEAs may not be able to sustain once the recovery funds are expended. Some possible uses of these limited-term *IDEA* recovery funds that are allowable under *IDEA* and aligned with the core reform goals for which states must provide assurances under SFSF include:

- Obtain state-of-the art assistive technology devices and provide training in their use to enhance access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities.
- Provide intensive district-wide professional development for special education and regular education teachers that focuses on scaling-up, through replication, proven and innovative evidence-based school-wide strategies in reading, math, writing and science, and positive behavioral supports to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.
- Develop or expand the capacity to collect and use data to improve teaching and learning.
- Expand the availability and range of inclusive placement options for preschoolers with disabilities by developing the capacity of public and private preschool programs to serve these children.
- Hire transition coordinators to work with employers in the community to develop job placements for youths with disabilities.”

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services  
April, 2009

This handout is designed to give school personnel ideas on how to spend the additional IDEA-B funds that are available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. The U.S. Department of Education has firmly stated that these funds are a one-time only grant that must be obligated by September 30, 2011. The department highly recommends that school districts look for ways to spend additional funds that will not force them to eliminate staff in two years or obligate the district to pay for staff once the funding is gone. This handout is meant to share ideas on ways to spend the additional funds that will not obligate the district once the funding disappears.

There is a clear expectation that all ARRA funds must be used wisely for the purposes of IDEA. Districts will be required to publicly report on how these funds are used.

In alignment with the U.S. Department of Education's recommended priorities for appropriate use of ARRA funds for Special Education, the Department of Public Instruction prepared this expanded list of ideas for your planning purposes.

**ARRA Priority: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY, ACCESSIBLE TECHNOLOGY, UDL**

IDEA Priority: *Obtain state-of-the-art assistive technology devices and provide training in their use of enhance access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities*

**Needs Assessment:** Use ARRA funds to conduct a comprehensive assessment of district needs related to assistive technology, accessible technology, and universal design for learning (UDL).

- Self-Assessment Survey (Electronic self-assessment survey and analysis at: Using Technology to Raise Achievement of All Students [http://www.accessibletech4all.org/self\\_assessment/index.cfm](http://www.accessibletech4all.org/self_assessment/index.cfm))
- Incorporate AT/UDL within Educational Technology Plan for districts
- Prepare guidance regarding what AT/UDL includes
- Coordinate planning with Interagency Project for Assistive Technology (IPAT), North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) to reduce duplication and fill gaps

**Build infrastructure:** Technical assistance (tools and strategies) & training, needs assessment, plan, implementation supports

- Several strategies and initiatives are listed on DPI website at: <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/resource/curriculum/index.shtm>

**Tools:**

- Determine your district's stage of development using the Ed Tech Locator from CITED at [http://www.cited.org/index.aspx?page\\_id=110](http://www.cited.org/index.aspx?page_id=110)
- Software packages with broad-based utility (Examples: IntelliTools Classroom Suite 4 or Kurzweil 1000)
- Real-time captioning, interactive interpreting services
- Technology infrastructure for therapy (Teletherapy in rural-remote areas)
- Soundfield/classroom amplification systems (Preschool and primary grades) See American Journal of Audiology Vol.17 50-59 June 2008 at <http://aja.asha.org/cgi/content/abstract/17/1/50>
- Online Learning (For teachers: UDL resources Center for Applied Science Technology (CAST) resources at <http://www.cast.org> and Center for Implementing Technology in Education (CITEd) resources at <http://www.cited.org/index.aspx>)
- Smart boards/white boards and other instructional technology that can be used to support diverse learners.
- Tech Matrix (A tool for finding educational and assistive technology products for students with special needs) at <http://www.techmatrix.org>
- CAST – consultation/planning assistance (<http://www.cast.org>)

**Demonstration Sites**

- Establish a UDL demonstration school within a district or special education unit

### **Teams to work with schools**

- Contract with training providers to implement assistive and accessible technologies (IT and AT professionals within the state)
- Work with IEP Teams to improve AT consideration and implementation strategies
- Consulting: Basics vs. Specialized

### **Assessment Infrastructure**

- UDL administration (Develop a team of leaders to implement school-wide technology plan)
- Build on/ imbed UDL principles in formative assessments (Office of Special Education Programs: Ideas that Work: <http://www.osepideasthatwork.org/udl/assessment.asp> )
- Combine UDL and RTI activities relative to classroom and intervention strategies, as well as progress monitoring (<http://www.k8accesscenter.org/documents/RTIandUDLFinal2.pdf> )

### **ARRA Priority: DISTRICT-WIDE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT-EVIDENCE BASED SCHOOLWIDE STRATEGIES IN READING, MATH, SCIENCE, BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS**

IDEA Priority: *Provide intensive district-wide professional development for special education and regular education that focuses on scaling-up, through replication, proven and innovative evidence-based school-wide strategies in reading, math, writing and science, and positive behavioral supports to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.*

Encourage school/district participation in ND Positive Behavioral Support Initiative (PBS).

The purpose of the Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Initiative is to improve academic performance. It is not a curriculum that dictates what schools or districts must do; rather it is a way to create a positive climate that fits with the individual culture of each school. *It is just a way of doing things.* To do this, each school develops at least three behavior expectations and then proactively teaches the students what those expectations “look like” in various school settings. It is a seamless system in that the expectations apply to all students. It is also seamless in that ALL staff participate in proactively establishing the school culture. The program training requires eight days over a three-year period. For more information, contact NDDPI.

Encourage school/district participation in Response to Intervention (RTI) to promote schoolwide strategies in Reading, Math, Science, and Writing.

Response to Intervention (RTI) is the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying student response data to important educational decisions. RTI can be applied to decisions in general, remedial and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction/intervention guided by student outcome data. Optimal learning outcomes occur when students’ skills and abilities closely match the curriculum and instruction within the classroom. When a mismatch occurs, student outcomes and learning suffer. Quality classroom instruction usually provides a good match for most students. For other students, success is not easy. The hypothesis is that, with RTI, these struggling students can be identified early and provided appropriate instruction, thus increasing the likelihood that they can be successful.

Three foundational beliefs regarding RTI are identified as follows:

- 1) All children can learn and we can effectively teach (reach) all children.
- 2) Everyone involved within a school has the responsibility and need for continuous, job-embedded learning in order to improve student outcomes.
- 3) Instruction is based on research; and where there is no strong research base, it is acknowledged. For more information, contact NDDPI.

Collaborative Program Planning Specific Examples – Title I and IDEA-B

- Identify practices that increase parent involvement and engagement in their child's education
- Hire and train parent liaisons to promote parent involvement
- Expand homeless student resources and liaisons
- Train and pay teachers to conduct parent outreach and training
- Develop a communications campaign for staff and community about importance of school involvement
- Scale up and implement with fidelity the Reading First Program
- Reading Coach to provide support
- Reading Interventionist to support struggling students in targeted grades
- Reading Assessments (e.g., DIBELS)
- Core Reading Program
- Reading Intervention Materials, including educational technology
- Increase access to reading materials- book baskets, promoting Library use, Family Fun nights
- Offer increased professional development opportunities
- Purchase materials like graphing calculators, manipulatives, science kits and consumables
- Purchase aligned short-cycle assessments
- Provide after school enrichment programs that follow state guidelines
- Develop Health / Mental Health teams

**Activities authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 that are approved for use of freed up funds:**

- **Response to Intervention (RTI)**
- **Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS)**
- **Pre-K activities**
- **Early Reading First**
- **After school programs**
- **Summer school**
- **Expand school hours/days**

**Additional activities authorized under the ESEA: link to *NDDPI Evidenced-Based Ideas for Using Additional Title I Funds Under the Economic Stimulus Bill***

[http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/Legislative/stimulus/additional\\_funds.pdf](http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/Legislative/stimulus/additional_funds.pdf)

**ARRA Priority: DATA UTILIZATION AT THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL, FOR SCHOOL LEVEL PLANNING**

## **Data Utilization for Program Decision-making**

*IDEA Priority:* Develop or expand the capacity to collect and use data to improve teaching and learning.

Utilization of data to drive decision making is an essential skill for school level planning. Consider using your ARRA funds to:

- Provide professional development for district personnel related to the use of data. Access training for school teams to improve building and district interpretation of state assessment results; and how to plan to address the results for improved teaching and learning. <http://www.ask.com/bar?q=north+dakota+Lead+center&page=1&qsrc=0&ab=0&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ndlead.org%2F>
- Purchase software to enhance school district ability to collect, display, analyze and use data for program decision making.

## **ARRA Priority: INCLUSIVE PLACEMENT OPTIONS FOR PRESCHOOLERS WITH DISABILITIES**

*IDEA Priority:* Expand the availability and range of inclusive placement options for preschoolers with disabilities by developing the capacity of public and private preschool programs to serve these children.

### **Least Restrictive Environment, LRE, Continuum Expansion**

- Conduct a preschool LRE self assessment to determine needed areas of improvement in providing a continuum of inclusive placement options for preschoolers with disabilities. Develop a plan to address needs found through the self assessment process.
- Visit other districts to review possible continuum options
- Expand access to inclusive early care and education experiences for preschool- aged children
- Make modifications to facilities so that they are accessible to children with disabilities
- Provide early childhood special education mentors to work with providers in early childhood settings
- Provide LRE grants to districts who have submitted a proposal to address LRE issues within their district programs

### **Professional Development**

- Invest in the professional development of the individuals providing services for preschoolers with disabilities, including providing training, technical assistance, improved compensation, scholarships and other financial assistance and supports to Part B providers.
- Collaborate with other early childhood service providers in providing professional development, i.e. Head Start, Title I, Child Care providers
- Review and utilize national resources relating to LRE for preschoolers with a disability, i.e. the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center <http://www.nectac.org/>

### **Coordinate best practices between Part C to Part B service systems**

- Through surveying Part C and Part B preschool staff, determine areas of need to ensure a smooth transition from Part C to Part B for families and children. Develop and implement a plan to address these needs.

### **Child Find**

- Strengthen mechanisms for referrals to Child Find for children aged 3 through 5
- Ensure that a Child Find system is in place for Part B that coordinates with Part C and that includes identifying children with disabilities in all settings

### **Social-Emotional Early Childhood Programming**

- Review current district practices to assure that preschool children are provided appropriate and comprehensive programming which addresses key social-emotional issues that make it difficult for some preschoolers with disabilities to receive services in early care and education services/programs
- Review and utilize state and national resources which focus on practices to improve the social-emotional outcomes for young children with, or at risk for, delays or disabilities, i.e. **Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children, (TACSEI)** [www.challengingbehavior.org](http://www.challengingbehavior.org)

### **Data Collection**

- Develop or expand the capacity to collect and use data to improve teaching and learning, and child, family, and systemic outcomes.
- Review early childhood State Performance Plan Indicator data to determine needed improvements relating to each area. Develop and implement a plan to address these issues

### **Assistive Technology**

- Purchase assistive technology devices and provide training to children, families, and teachers on the use of them to enhance learning opportunities for children with disabilities in their least restrictive setting

### **ARRA Priority: SECONDARY TRANSITION**

*IDEA Priority:* Hire transition coordinators to work with employers in the community to develop job placements for youth with disabilities.

*Needs Assessment:* Review district IDEA State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report outcome data related to Indicators 1, 2, 13, & 14.

ARRA funds may be used to:

- Hire and train individuals to serve as transition coordinators (*These coordinators do not need to be qualified teachers*).
- Explore braided funding opportunities between North Dakota Job Service, Vocational Rehabilitation, Developmental Disabilities, and Education.

Roles of Transition Coordinators may include:

- Intraschool Linkage

- Examples: Assist families, parents, and students to access transition services; assist school staff in interpreting transition assessment results and recommending appropriate transition strategies; arrange for Transition Fairs and other methods of providing information.
- Interagency/Business Linkages
  - Examples: Identify, establish, and maintain linkages with community agencies and businesses; Facilitate referrals to other agencies; Link students with postsecondary Disability Support Coordinators;
- Assessment and Career Counseling
  - Examples: Identify and refer students for vocational assessments within the school district; Coordinate the development of career awareness and explore activities as part of the career counseling process; Coordinate with the school counselor
- Transition Planning
  - Examples: Coordinate with the IEP Case Manager; identify transition services provided by community agencies; identify appropriate assistive technology; monitor adherence to federal labor laws.
- Education and Community Training
  - Examples: Coordinate school and community work-based learning; serve as job coach and/or train job coaches; coordinate community based instruction; coordinate teaching of daily living skills; examine/identify postsecondary training and education options; provide transition supports for students going on to postsecondary education such as visits to Disability Support Offices; coordinate teaching of self advocacy skills; develop modules.
- Family Support and Resource
  - Develop and provide parent training; promote understanding of laws, eligibility requirements, availability of services; assist students/families in understanding the system and accessing services including adult services; develop training modules.

Building Infrastructure: Technical Assistance (Tools and strategies) & training, needs assessment, implementation supports.

- Several strategies and initiatives are listed on the DPI/Transition Website at: <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/transitn/index.shtm>
- Several strategies and tools are also available at the following national technical assistance websites:
  - National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center: [www.nsttac.org](http://www.nsttac.org) (e.g., Evidence Based Practices for Functional Curriculums, Transition Assessment information, etc.).
  - National Postschool Outcomes Center: [www.psocenter.org](http://www.psocenter.org)
  - National Dropout Prevention Center for students with Disabilities: [www.ndpc-sd.org](http://www.ndpc-sd.org)

Examples of Tools that may be purchased with ARRA Funds:

- Transition Assessments [www.nsttac.org/products\\_and\\_resources/tag.aspx](http://www.nsttac.org/products_and_resources/tag.aspx)
- Self Determination Curriculums <http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/sped/tri/selfdet.htm>
- ACT NOW (Achieving College Transitions Now) materials [www.northampton.edu/office/st\\_services/disability/act](http://www.northampton.edu/office/st_services/disability/act)
- Check and Connect Comprehensive Student Engagement Intervention Model (<http://ici.umn.edu/checkandconnect/>)