

TESTIMONY ON LEVERAGING THE SENIOR YEAR

2016 Special Session

Senate Education Committee

August 2, 2016

By: Ann Ellefson, Office of Academic Support Director

701-328-2488 or aellefson@nd.gov

Department of Public Instruction

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ann Ellefson and I am the Director in the Office of Academic Support for the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI). I am here to provide information on the Leveraging the Senior Year initiative which includes Advanced Placement (AP) and developmental coursework.

During the 2015 Legislative Session, funding was secured for this two-pronged initiative which encompasses projects happening simultaneously to address the needs for secondary students to be college and career ready. It provides additional opportunities for all students to grow academically during their high school career.

The first prong of Leveraging the Senior Year ensures that students who are not on track to take credit bearing courses their first year of college can get the extra instruction they need during their senior year. This is often referred to as remediation or developmental coursework. Scaling up this program was unique as the funding was placed solely in the department's operational line. This required

the funding to be contracted for services. After many conversations with interested stakeholders, in July 2016 the NDDPI officially partnered with the Dakota College at Bottineau to support North Dakota College Ready English and Math (ND CREAM). Students participating in ND CREAM will have the opportunity, with assistance from their high school teachers, to pursue online coursework which will help address the credit bearing courses in which they are struggling and need developmental coursework. It is anticipated North Dakota students will begin to see direct services of ND CREAM beginning in the fall of 2016.

Additionally, the North Dakota University System (NDUS) revised language in NDUS Procedure 402.1.2 *Student Placement into College Courses* so that students without a qualifying placement score can enroll in a college level, credit bearing course in mathematics or English upon successful completion of a developmental course or other approved placement resource.

The second prong of Leveraging the Senior Year ensures that students who have taken all of the available courses at their high school have greater options for advanced coursework, in particular AP courses in mathematics, science, English, and computer science. In order to do this, additional professional development was provided for experienced and new AP teachers. Additionally, state funding was used to cover the expense of AP exam fees in mathematics, science, English, and computer science.

During the 2015-2016 school year, 42 instructors received specialized training on AP Biology, AP Calculus AB, and AP English Language Composition. Additionally, 61 instructors participated in 4-day trainings throughout the summer of 2016 in mathematics, science, English, and computer science. These professional development opportunities have been provided through the use of approximately \$150,000 in state funding. State funding also covered the expense of 1,701 AP student exam fees in mathematics, science, English, and computer science totaling approximately \$124,700.

During the 2016-2017 school year, the NDDPI will continue to support AP professional development opportunities for staff, AP exam fees for students, and will be working with the North Dakota Center for Distance education to discuss options for supporting online AP courses (i.e., tuition expenses, mentors, etc.).

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee that concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.