

2005-2006 Annual Report

Mission Statement

The Grants and Research Office of Intermediate District 287 and Northeast Metro 916, working collaboratively with member districts, will implement research-based educational programs and practices and seek funding for these programs.

The Grants and Research Office will provide services to help member districts:

- identify, plan and implement research-based educational programs and practices;
- seek funding for these research-based educational programs and practices;
- evaluate the implemented research-based educational programs and practices.

Grant Services

- Added a new on-line [Grant Search Help Request Form](#) to the GRO web site. Members complete 10 questions to describe their project/goals and submit on-line. The Grants Manager searches for local, regional, and national grant funders and sends back a list of prospective foundations and/or corporations. When appropriate, community connections and fundraising ideas are suggested.
- Responded to 10 requests for the GRO grant search service offering over 225 grant ideas. Each member receives an average of 20-25 grant prospects, including local businesses, community foundations, as well as regional and national funders.
- The Grants and Research Office joined the Foundation Center, and paid a basic membership to receive access to their Foundation Directory Online. The Grants Manager uses this national directory of more than 68,000 trustees, officers, and donors to search for information that members request.
- The web site for the Grants and Research Office provided a valuable service for members. The Web Master reports that the site received 350-400 visits per month during the 2005-2006 school year. To see the usage statistics for the GRO web site go to <http://grantsandresearchhelp.us/webalizer/>
- The member Login system for the GRO web site was upgraded February 1, 2006. Each member creates their own individualized account with user name and password. The new system allows for the Grants Manager and the GRO office support staff to monitor use of the web site, and block people who are not members. Those outside of our member districts who attempt to utilize the web site are asked to join as an associate member. The GRO team hopes that more school employees outside the 287 and 916 member districts will join as associate members, either as a district, school building, or as an individual member.

- On the GRO web site, the demographic information on our 24 member districts was updated. Direct links to the MDE School Report Card Data were added to create easy access to important data.

Research Services

Differentiated Instruction for All (DIAL) Project

- The website containing the structure for both the institution and the classroom to implement differentiated instruction was updated last fall.
- Exemplary programs and resources gathered from other schools and institutions are hot-linked into our website. Hot-links were updated and expanded for use last fall.
- Differentiated strategies focusing on reading/language arts/English, math, science, and social studies for elementary, junior high/middle school and high school were added last fall to the website for use during the school year.
- Differentiated instruction learning communities were held this school year in Spring Lake Park District #16 (*Westwood Middle School, Spring Lake Park High School*); Eden Prairie School District #272 (*Forest Hills Elementary School, Cedar Ridge Elementary School*); Roseville School District #623 (*Roseville Middle School, Parkview Center School, Roseville High School*); and Mahtomedi School District #832 (*Mahtomedi Middle School, Wildwood Elementary School*)
- Additional levels of differentiated instruction learning communities are being considered for next year. The current level and the new levels will be promoted this spring.
- The DIAL Project was shared at professional conferences and with other service providers including the MDE for use in professional development programs.
- A partnership with Learning Bridges was explored but did not materialize.
- Differentiated literacy strategies workshops were held last winter for 80 educators.

Scientifically Based Education Research (SciBER) Project

- The website includes the resources shared at the three-part *Bridging Research to Practice Symposium* held during the last school year.
- Scientifically based education researched literacy curriculum, assessment, and instructional resources were added to the website this winter.
- Scientifically based education researched science, math and social studies curriculum, assessment, and instructional resources will be added to the website this spring.
- Differentiated literacy strategies workshops were held last winter for 80 educators.

- The member districts curriculum sequence for math, reading/language arts/English, science, and social studies was added to the website this winter.
- Exploring a project with Learning Bridges to be the service provider for an assessment/scientifically based instructional strategies project supported by the MDE.
- Supported member districts in the development of the Striving Readers Grant in collaboration with the Saint Paul Public Schools.

Personalizing the High School Learning Experience Project

- Resources from the Personalizing the High School Learning Experience Forum held last year are posted on the website including grant planning and materials.
- Resources on personalizing the high school learning experience were added to the website last winter.
- Updates were sent to member districts on the status of funding and the process for applying for U.S. Dept. of Education Smaller Learning Communities grants for the upcoming school year.
- Participated in the MDE High School Redesign Symposium and explored a collaborative partnership with them.
- Developing professional development programs for the Robbinsdale School District Smaller Learning Grant to be offered this summer on advisor/advisee programming, teaming, and literacy. Workshops will be open to member districts.

Grants and Research Office Operations and Promotion

- The Grants and Research Office Advisory Committee met twice during the year to provide input and feedback related to GRO initiatives.
- Two introductory grant workshops entitled, “Engaging Community Partners to Create Strong Grant Proposals” were presented at conferences by the GRO Grants Manager. Besides important grant planning information, participants also learned about the GRO web site and other services. The workshop was presented at the Metro Pathways Conference in St. Paul (11-16-05) and at the South Central Service, Work and Learning Conference in Mankato (3-30-06).
- Materials associated with GRO initiatives are frequently distributed at professional meetings to connect people to the Grants and Research Office.
- The Grants and Research Office promoted its services at the Education Minnesota Fall Conference.
- The Grants and Research Office had a booth at the spring conference of the Minnesota Association of School Administrators.
- The GRO-o-gram, our e-newsletter, was electronically distributed each month (May will be the 8th issue) to over 1700 people. GRO-o-grams announce grant opportunities, updates, and promote workshops sponsored by the Grants and Research Office, Minnesota Department of Education, the Minnesota Council of

Foundations, and others. Each month, a grant writing tip, a grant profile, and a creative fundraising idea are also included in the GRO-o-gram. (GRO-o-grams from the past two years will be available on the GRO web site by June, 2006)

- Associate membership levels were created to offer individual memberships to GRO as well as negotiable membership rates for districts, individual schools, and school organizations based on school enrollment and/or size of the school.
- A new brochure insert was developed for use with non-member districts to provide an overview of GRO services and promote associate memberships. These materials have been sent to all MASA members and individuals from non-member districts who have participated in GRO activities during the past year. (A new membership section inviting people to join and on-line GRO brochures will be added to the GRO web site by June, 2006)
- Minnesota Life College and the Magililwa Area Secondary School located in Tanzania have joined GRO as associate member districts.
- Six people have joined GRO as individual members.

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May 11, 2006