

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, Sept. 8, 2016

CONTACT: Mary Stadick Smith, South Dakota Department of Education, (605) 773-7228, mary.stadicksmith@state.sd.us or

Ruth Raveling, South Dakota Department of Education, (605) 773-2593, ruth.raveling@state.sd.us

Shared services grants, part of 2016 legislative package, awarded to schools

PIERRE, S.D. – Four proposals from South Dakota school districts will be funded under the state's new shared services grant program. The program was established as part of the 2016 legislative package aimed at improving teacher recruitment and retention efforts in South Dakota.

"The Blue Ribbon Task Force discussions about teacher recruitment and retention included a focus on providing students with access to high quality learning opportunities, no matter where they are located in the state. That can be a challenge when teachers are hard to find, particularly for some of our more rural and remote districts," said Secretary of Education Dr. Melody Schopp.

Part of the purpose of SB 133 was to provide incentives for districts to work together to find ways to increase those learning opportunities.

Recipients of the grants are:

- The Baltic and Garretson school districts will receive funds to share a Spanish teacher.
- The Bridgewater-Emery and Hanson school districts will receive funds to share an art teacher.
- The Florence and Henry school districts will receive funds to share a Spanish teacher.
- The Belle Fourche and Spearfish school districts will receive funds to share a teacher for English language learners.

Grant awards are for a three-year time period, with a 50 percent reduction in funding in year two and a 75 percent reduction in year three. A total of \$376,000 will be distributed to the districts over the three years.