

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Monday, Nov. 7, 2016

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

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

### **Second round of shared services grants awarded to schools**

PIERRE, S.D. – Two proposals from South Dakota school districts will be funded under the second round of 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. Four other proposals were funded in the first round of shared services grants awarded earlier this fall.

“The 2016 education package has important effects beyond raising teacher pay, and this grant program is another benefit of the legislation,” said Secretary of Education Dr. Melody Schopp. “As we see in the cases of these grant awardees, one small rural district may not be able to afford a teacher for a particular need, but when districts have the resources to work together, students benefit.”

These grants were created by SB 133 to provide incentives for districts to work together to find ways to increase learning opportunities.

Recipients of the second round of grants are as follows:

- The Marion and Parker school districts will receive funds to share a teacher for English learners.
- The Deuel and Milbank school districts will also receive funds to share a teacher for English learners.

English learners are students whose native language is not English and who are not yet proficient in English. There are three distinct populations of English learners in South Dakota: Hutterite colony students, Native Americans, and immigrants and refugees.

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. Approximately \$122,000 will be distributed to these districts over the three years.