

Going the Distance:

Monthly News & Updates

January 2023

News Briefs

Virtual Education at the 68th Legislative Assembly

CDE is carefully monitoring proposed legislation related to virtual instruction and considering its impact on CDE operations. To date, four significant bills may impact CDE enrollments and/or services:

- **HB 1019:** The Department of Career and Technical Education budget bill includes CDE's fiscal requests, including 3 FTEs and continued special spending authority at \$4.5m.
- **HB 1132:** This bill allows military students whose families have been relocated to continue being educated by their North Dakota school district virtually through the end of a school year, with the district continuing to count them in ADM. A recent amendment expands this allowance to migrant students and those with medical conditions that prevent in-person attendance.
- **HB 1156:** This bill would allow CDE to offer dual credit to out-of-state students in partnership with an accredited college or university and serve as a district's kindergarten provider when it doesn't offer this grade level.
- **HB 1376:** This bill allows students the option of choosing virtual education in another school district or through CDE. When electing to take courses through CDE, the district of residence would be responsible for paying tuition. The bill also lifts current barriers to open enrollment, including the application date.

CDE's New Mission Statement

The CDE leadership team has been engaged in work centered on organizational planning and visioning over the last few months. We're pleased to showcase our new mission statement, which emphasizes how CDE serves the state, primarily by supporting and supplementing the work occurring in bricks and mortar schools. The mission statement also is intended to explain to students the benefits of pursuing coursework through CDE. It also highlights CDE's commitments when offering services to students and schools, both practical and aspirational--to focus on quality and to play a role in North Dakota's long-term prosperity. Refinements to our organizational values and a new strategic plan will follow this spring.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Center for Distance Education's (CDE) mission is to provide virtual education to support North Dakota's K-12 schools. It offers all students access to extensive educational opportunities, allowing them to achieve their personal goals and reach their full potential. CDE is innovative and quality-focused in its approach to educational delivery and its scope of services to foster the strength of North Dakota's future.



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In the Spotlight: Educators, Students, & CDE Staff

Mrs. Edith Wagar, NDCDE Social Studies/Language Arts teacher, was invited to sit on a educators' panel in a dual credit course, Introduction to the Teaching Profession, at Valley City High School. The purpose of the panel was to provide students with the opportunity to visit with educators from four unique classroom settings. As a teacher with CDE and a former classroom teacher, Mrs. Wagar was able to share many perspectives on teaching with future educators. Her stories about the joys and challenges in both classroom and online teaching were appreciated by everyone.

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What is a Learning Coach?

The Learning Coach (formerly called an Exam Administrator or EA) is an adult who works actively with students in their environment and at their academic level to ensure success with distance education. Their primary responsibility is to proctor tests but also assist with pacing and communication between CDE teachers and students.

Learning Coaches must be approved by the student's school of record. CDE recommends the following considerations:

- Secondary level Learning Coaches could be educational professionals such as teachers, counselors, administrators, librarians, support professionals, college faculty, military educational liaisons, or clergy.
- Elementary level Learning Coaches could include the options above as well as a parent/guardian or a family member.

CDE also encourages schools to limit Learning Coaches to no more than two per student. Other school officials needing access to student records and activity in CDE courses can request it by contacting us: <https://www.cde.nd.gov/about-us/contact-us>. To learn more about the roles and responsibilities of a CDE Learning Coach, visit: <https://www.cde.nd.gov/information/learning-coach>

Applying Technology Courses Update

CDE has temporarily removed Applying Technology courses from our store for updates. These are courses used by districts with SmartLabs. Districts needing these courses while updates are underway should contact Dr. Greywind (tonya.greywind@k12.nd.us) who is assisting districts with accessing the content during this transition.

Educator Spotlight (continued)



Edith Wagar (left) with the Introduction to Teaching panel

Wagar began teaching in 1986 in Eagle Butte, South Dakota as a federal employee and then moved to Streeter, North Dakota, during the district's reorganization process. Wagar served various roles while raising her children, including managing a nursery/landscaping business, selling educational toys, teaching piano, working overnight in a bakery, being a pyrotechnician, bookkeeping, and serving on the Valley City School Board.

In 1999, she began teaching again in Valley City, just as the district launched an alternative school. She taught English and social studies there and used the North Dakota Division of Independent Study for math and science. She became an adjunct instructor with CDE in 2013, transitioning to a full-time position in 2019. The motto at VCHS was "pursue your passion," and this mantra inspired Wagar to work for CDE full-time.

Wagar views becoming an FTE online instructor during a pandemic as one of her most significant accomplishments, referencing both the learning curve associated with teaching online and all pressures of the pandemic placed on online learning. Wagar recently received a service award from CDE for her three years of full-time employment. Congrats, Edith!

EmpowerU Impact

CDE is excited to announce that it will continue to partner with DPI to offer a discount on EmpowerU courses through the end of the fiscal year. EmpowerU student resilience and wellbeing programs do the heavy lifting of combining daily online lessons with embedded 1:1 student support from EmpowerU's highly trained instructors. To help demonstrate the program's impact, we've included recent feedback from North Dakota educators and students.

"EmpowerU was a great opportunity for my students to reflect within themselves and learn about what they can do to better themselves as an individual. They were able to make short-term and long-term goals, reflect on what coping strategies worked for them, and learned how being mindful can affect stress and anxiety they might feel throughout their day. EmpowerU was a great class for them to practice metacognition, which is a great skill for them to use for the rest of their lives!" -Northwood special education teacher

"My Inner Coach has helped me navigate through situations when I am feeling uncomfortable . . . I know how to use it and what to say to myself. I am a lot more confident and content being around other people." -CDE EmpowerU student

To learn more about EmpowerU courses and how your district can take advantage of the matching grant DPI offers when enrolling students in the courses, visit: <https://www.cde.nd.gov/news/cde-empoweru-partnership>.