



Minot State
UNIVERSITY

**North Dakota Center
for Persons with Disabilities**
A University Center of Excellence

November 3, 2008

Mark Sloan
628 6th Ave
Alice, ND 58031

Dear Mr. Sloan

The increase in diagnosis of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders in North Dakota is having a significant impact on families and service providers. Although various partners have implemented initiatives to address the needs of families and communities, more work remains to be done. The unique nature of this condition and the challenges it presents requires a coordinated systemic response at multiple levels and from multiple agencies and systems in partnership with the individuals and families that are affected.

For that reason, several partners have recently committed to developing a State Plan on Autism. The availability of such a plan can be used to guide decision-making, coordinate a systemic response to the challenge of ASD and position partners to leverage resources and identify responses that can be sustained over time.

Please accept our invitation to join us at an upcoming meeting to think about and design our plan. The meeting will be held at the ND Heritage Center in Bismarck, ND on Friday, November 14th, from 10 AM to 2 PM. At the meeting we will examine data that may inform decision-making, review a proposed timeline for plan development, outline important components of the plan, exchange information from our diverse perspectives and identify next steps in plan development.

Attendance at the meeting is by invitation only. Families will be with us at the table as key partners in our efforts to create a plan that works for everyone.

Frankly, we have invited *you* because we believe *your* input is vital not only to the success of any plan we create but in creating a plan that has the buy-in and vision to serve the people of ND. If you cannot attend for any reason, please contact us and suggest someone from your agency who would be a suitable partner to convey your perspective and contribute significantly to this important work. Obviously we need a count for the purposes of providing seating and refreshments at the meeting. Please RSVP for yourself or with an alternate name to Cathy Haarstad at 701-858-3230 cathy.haarstad@minotstateu.edu

Thank you for your support,

Brent A. Askvig, Ph.D.
Executive Director, NDCPD