

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **With \$50,000 boost, at-risk students to receive oral health treatment**

Bismarck, N.D. – Seal! ND, a school-based oral health program administered by the North Dakota Department of Health, has provided oral health education, dental screenings, dental sealants and fluoride varnish to thousands of children at risk for tooth decay over the past six years. The program just received a \$50,000 grant from Delta Dental of Minnesota to help serve more North Dakota children.

“Tooth decay can be painful, expensive to treat, and distracting for children whose only focus at school should be on learning,” said Jaci Seefeldt, the prevention coordinator for the North Dakota Department of Health’s Oral Health Program. “Seal! ND has helped thousands of children prevent tooth decay and we are looking forward to expanding our reach with the Delta Dental of Minnesota grant.”

The Seal! ND program sends dental hygienists to targeted schools to deliver services to children in need. According to a 2015 [survey](#), 73 percent of North Dakota third-grade children have a history of tooth decay – substantially higher than the national average of 52 percent. Last year, the program reached 2,863 children in 42 schools. This year, the program plans to expand its reach to 50 schools, serving 3,100 children. “A healthy mouth and healthy body go hand in hand,” said Seefeldt. “It’s never too early to start teaching children to take care of teeth and gums. Healthy habits learned in childhood can pay off in adulthood.”

“Schools are the ideal place to reach children, and ultimately their families, with education and care that they might not otherwise receive,” said Rodney Young, CEO and President of Delta Dental of Minnesota. “Seal! ND has a tradition of performing this critical work, and we are honored to support their efforts.”

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***About North Dakota Department of Health***

*The North Dakota Department of Health's mission is to protect and enhance the health and safety of all North Dakotans and the environment. To help accomplish this, Seal! ND is committed to improve the health status of children in our state.*

***About Delta Dental of Minnesota serving North Dakota:***

*Delta Dental of Minnesota is an independent, nonprofit health services company that serves the oral health needs of Minnesota and North Dakota residents. Since 1969, Delta Dental of Minnesota has accomplished this mission by providing the best access across the state to oral health care through affordable dental plans. Delta Dental of Minnesota is an authorized licensee of the Delta Dental Plans Association of Oak Brook, Illinois. To learn more, visit [DeltaDentalMN.org](http://DeltaDentalMN.org).*

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