

NEBRASKA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING NOTIFICATION AND AGENDA

- Meeting Date:** Friday, October 3, 2025 9:00 AM
- Meeting Title:** State Board of Education Meeting Notification and Agenda
- Location:** Fremont Public Schools District Office
Board Room
130 E 9th Street
Fremont, NE 68025
- Agenda:** Except for emergency items added at the time of the meeting, the agenda will not be changed less than 24 hours prior to the start of the meeting and any changes will be immediately posted on the website. The Board will attempt to adhere to the sequence of the published agenda, but reserves the right to adjust the order of items if necessary and may elect to take action on any of the items listed.
- Interpreter:** If you need interpreter services or other reasonable accommodations, please contact the Nebraska Department of Education at (402) 471-5059 five (5) days prior to the meeting to coordinate arrangements.
- Website:** An electronic version of the agenda and support materials are available on the State Board of Education's Agenda page: www.education.ne.gov/stateboard/state-board-agendas/
- Lunch:** On Friday, October 3, 2025, the State Board of Education may also take a recess for lunch. The Board may resume work on the agenda at approximately 1:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER (The Board may take a recess)
President Tegtmeier
 - 1.1. Roll Call
President Tegtmeier
 - 1.2. Pledge of Allegiance
President Tegtmeier
 - 1.3. Announcement of the placement of the Open Meetings Act information
President Tegtmeier
2. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS
President Tegtmeier
 - 2.1. Adopt the Resolution to Recognize October as Dyslexia Awareness Month
Commissioner Maher

3. COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Maher

3.1. Agenda Overview and Consent Agenda Process

Commissioner Maher

3.1.A. Commissioner's recommendations and items to be removed from consent agenda

Commissioner Maher

4. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Tegtmeier

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

President Tegtmeier

5.1. Public Comment

5.2. Written Public Comment

6. CONSENT AGENDA

President Tegtmeier

6.1. Board Member Out-of-State Travel Approval

6.2. Committee Appointments

6.2.A. Appoint the Recommended Individual(s) to Fill Vacancies on the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) (PE.062025.004)

Amy Rhone

6.2.B. Appoint a Member to the State Committee for the Reorganization of School Districts (EX.062025.002)

Bryce Wilson

6.3. Contract Approvals

6.3.A. Contract Renewal for the Completion of Required Compliance Reviews of Schools Operating the National School Lunch Programs and the Summer Food Service Program (BF.102025.004)

Zainab Rida and Kayte Partch

6.3.B. Contract Amendments for the SLDS Grant Activities (BF.102025.005)

Jill Aurand

6.4. Grant Approvals

6.4.A. Grant Renewal for the University of Nebraska Lincoln WORDS Project
Funding (BF.042025.021)
Amy Rhone

6.5. Lease Approvals

6.6. Minutes of the Previous State Board of Education Meeting

6.7. Miscellaneous Approvals

6.7.A. Approve School Districts' Requests for Exclusions to the Budget Limitation
in Accordance with the Provisions of the Tax Equity & Educational Opportunities
Support Act (TEEOSA) (BF.082025.005)
Bryce Wilson

6.7.B. Approve Renewal of Rule 11 Waivers (PE.092025.003)
Melody Hobson

6.7.C. Adopt List of Hearing Officers for Contested Cases and Authorize the
Commissioner to Approve Contracts for Special Education (SPED) Hearing
Officers (EX.102025.001)
Ami Huff

7. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS
President Tegtmeier

7.1. Executive Committee
President Tegtmeier

7.1.A. Discussion Item: Strategic Plan (EX.022025.003)

7.1.B. Discussion Item: Board Bylaw and Policy Revisions (EX.062025.003)

7.2. Budget and Finance Committee
Kristin Christensen

7.2.A. Monthly Board Travel Expense Reports

7.2.B. Action Item: Authorize the Commissioner to Submit the 2025-26 Deficit
Budget Request (BF.082025.002)

7.2.C. Action Item: Contract for a Program Quality Anchor for Results Matter and
Step Up to Quality (BF.092025.003)

7.2.D. Action Item: Contract for Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS)
(BF.092025.004)

7.3. Planning and Evaluation Committee
Lisa Schonhoff

7.3.A. Action Item: Subject Area Examinations and Passing Scores for Temporary
Certificates (PE.082025.001)

7.4. Rules and Regulations Committee
Maggie Douglas

7.4.A. Report On Rules

8. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS
President Tegtmeier

9. INFORMATION ITEMS AND REPORTS
President Tegtmeier

9.1. Contracts Approved by Commissioner

9.2. Grants Approved by Commissioner

10. GOOD OF THE ORDER

This section of the agenda is intended for Board members to offer informal observations of the work of the State Board. Board members may make brief announcements about attendance at future events for the purpose of informing other Board members. No business or motions, or suggested actions of the Board may be offered at this point in the agenda; nor should Board members engage in substantive discussion about other agenda items or introduce new agenda items.

President Tegtmeier

11. ADJOURNMENT
President Tegtmeier

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the State Board of Education will be held on Friday, December 5, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in Lincoln, Nebraska. As needed, a work session will be held on Thursday, December 4, 2025 in Lincoln, Nebraska.

The agenda contains a list of subjects known at the time of its distribution on September 25, 2025. A copy of the agenda reflecting any changes will be available for public inspection during the normal business hours in the Office of the Commissioner of Education and on the State Board of Education's Agenda page: www.education.ne.gov/stateboard/state-board-agendas/. *Except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda will not be changed later than 24 hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting.*



Resolution for Dyslexia Awareness Month

WHEREAS, dyslexia is defined as an unexpected difficulty in reading;

WHEREAS, dyslexia is most commonly caused by a difficulty in phonological processing (the appreciation of the individual sounds of spoken language), which affects the ability of an individual to speak, read, spell, and, often, the ability to learn a second language;

WHEREAS, dyslexia is the most common learning disability and affects 80 to 90 percent of all individuals with a learning disability;

WHEREAS, dyslexia is persistent and highly prevalent, affecting as many as one out of every five individuals;

WHEREAS, great progress has been made in understanding dyslexia on a scientific level, including the epidemiological, cognitive, and neurobiological bases of dyslexia;

WHEREAS, the achievement gap between typical readers and dyslexic readers emerges as early as first grade; and

WHEREAS, early screening for, and early diagnosis of, dyslexia are critical for ensuring that individuals with dyslexia receive targeted, evidence-based intervention that leads to fluent reading, the promotion of self-awareness and self-empowerment, the wellbeing of the student, and the provision of necessary accommodations that ensure success in school and in life.

WHEREAS, Nebraska has taken steps to improve outcomes for students with dyslexia through the implementation of the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act, passage of the Nebraska Literacy Plan, and receipt of the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant; now, therefore be it,

RESOLVED, the State Board of Education recognizes October as “Dyslexia Awareness Month,”

RESOLVED, the State Board calls on other policymakers, districts, schools, community providers, and parents and education decision makers to partner together to support students with dyslexia,

RESOLVED, the State Board calls upon the NDE to provide and promote best practices and resources to parents, families, and educators in support of all Nebraska children.

Signed on behalf of the Nebraska State Board of Education, this 3rd day of October 2025.

Elizabeth Tegtmeier, President

Deborah Neary, Vice President

Nebraska State Board of Education Written Public Comment October 2025

Nebraska State Board of Education

Pursuant to State Board of Education Board Operating Policy 1.06 - Public Participation at Board Meetings:

Persons may address the Board for public comment purposes by written submission in lieu of live testimony. Such written submissions must be provided 24 hours in advance to the start of the public meeting where public comment is scheduled, or by close of business of the Thursday prior to any meeting scheduled for a Monday, and is limited to 750 words. Written public comments submitted in accordance with these requirements will be provided to the Board members and become part of the record of the meeting, but will not be read aloud during the meeting.

Individuals who submit written public comment for a given meeting should not plan to speak before the Board in live testimony at that month's meeting.

Individuals may submit only one written public comment entry per month. Multiple submissions will not be accepted.

Submissions must include your complete first and last name, city and state. You will also be required to electronically sign the submission. This information will be included with your comments.

Click the "Next" button below to begin.

Identification

Please complete the following information to identify yourself. This information will appear with the text of your written public comment.

First name *

Teresa

Last name *

Franks

City *

Omaha

State *

NE

Written Comment

There is a limit of 750 words.

Written Comments *

There is a limit of 750 words (approximately 5000 characters with spaces.)

I want to express my deep gratitude to the Nebraska State Board of Education and the Nebraska Department of Education for proclaiming October as Dyslexia Awareness Month in Nebraska. Dyslexia is the most common learning disability, but most children are never identified or receive special education services, and the life outcomes for them can be devastating - from increased suicide risk to lower educational attainment to incarceration. But when dyslexic children get the support and instruction they need - especially before the critical 3rd grade - the outcomes can include better health, more wealth, and high life satisfaction.

As our state prepares to implement the Nebraska Literacy Plan, I urge you to keep dyslexia at the forefront. The Science of Reading - the vast body of interdisciplinary research and evidence, conducted for over 100 years, on how we learn to read and the instructional approaches that are effective for struggling readers - was founded, developed, and advanced by studying dyslexia. We now know that what works for dyslexic learners works for all learners.

Finally, I would ask that the school districts, the Nebraska Department of Education, and the Nebraska State Board of Education convene listening sessions with families of dyslexic children. The families often feel ignored, misdirected, or powerless when trying to navigate legal and academic mazes to gain understanding, acknowledgement, and intervention for their children.

By centering dyslexia research and engaging dyslexic children and their families, Nebraska can improve the reading outcomes for all our children.

With this proclamation, Nebraska is moving in the right direction. I thank the Nebraska State Board of Education Board Members and Commissioner Maher of Nebraska Department of Education for supporting dyslexic learners, raising dyslexia awareness, and providing and promoting best practices and resources.

Until everyone can read.

Sincerely,

Teresa Franks, President of Nebraska Dyslexia Association

Signature

Please type your first and last name again. This will appear with your written comments and serves as your signature.

Signed,

First name *

Teresa

Last name *

Franks

This form was created inside of NE-Dept Of Education.

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Nebraska State Board of Education Written Public Comment October 2025

Nebraska State Board of Education

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Identification

Please complete the following information to identify yourself. This information will appear with the text of your written public comment.

First name *

Vicki

Last name *

Duin

City *

Omaha

State *

NE

Written Comment

There is a limit of 750 words.

Written Comments *

There is a limit of 750 words (approximately 5000 characters with spaces.)

I would like to take a moment to emphasize the importance of understanding dyslexia. It is most commonly caused by a difficulty in phonological processing, which affects an individual's ability to speak, read, spell, and often learn a second language. In fact, one out of four students in each classroom may have some form of dyslexia.

The key to supporting these students lies in direct and systematic instruction provided by qualified teachers, using a curriculum that adheres to the science of reading.

I would like to conclude with a powerful quote from Dr. Joseph Torgesen: "There is no comprehension strategy powerful enough to compensate for the inability to read the words."

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Signature

Please type your first and last name again. This will appear with your written comments and serves as your

signature.

Signed,

First name *

Vicki

Last name *

Duin

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Nebraska State Board of Education Written Public Comment October 2025

Nebraska State Board of Education

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Identification

Please complete the following information to identify yourself. This information will appear with the text of your written public comment.

First name *

Joe

Last name *

Goddard

City *

Lincoln

State *

Nebraska

Written Comment

There is a limit of 750 words.

Written Comments *

There is a limit of 750 words (approximately 5000 characters with spaces.)

Dear Members of the Nebraska State Board of Education,

Thank you for adopting the resolution recognizing October as Dyslexia Awareness Month. I sincerely appreciate the Board's acknowledgment of the challenges faced by students with dyslexia, as well as the importance of early identification, evidence-based intervention, and appropriate accommodations.

Your recent efforts through the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act, the Nebraska Literacy Plan, and the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant are meaningful steps forward. At the same time, much work remains to ensure that every Nebraska student with dyslexia is supported, and that every educator and administrator has the knowledge, training, and resources needed to identify and respond to dyslexia effectively.

The greatest impact will come from equipping our dedicated teachers and administrators with the tools to put this resolution into practice—through high-quality training in evidence-based screening, intervention, and accommodations. I urge the Board to continue prioritizing professional development and intensive teacher training in structured literacy so that the promise of this resolution is fully realized in classrooms across Nebraska.

I am grateful for your leadership and commitment to Nebraska's students. By keeping dyslexia awareness, teacher education, and student support at the forefront, we can ensure that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Signature

Please type your first and last name again. This will appear with your written comments and serves as your signature.

Signed,

First name *

Joe

Last name *

Goddard

Google Forms

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Nebraska State Board of Education

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Click the "Next" button below to begin.

Identification

Please complete the following information to identify yourself. This information will appear with the text of your written public comment.

First name *

April

Last name *

Buschelman

City *

Omaha

State *

NE

Written Comment

There is a limit of 750 words.

Written Comments *

There is a limit of 750 words (approximately 5000 characters with spaces.)

To the Nebraska State Board of Education:

On behalf of the Nebraska Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (NACTE), I respectfully submit this comment to express gratitude for the collaborative efforts of the Board, the Legislature, and the Nebraska Department of Education to expand teaching pathways. Nebraska's colleges and universities deeply appreciate these advances, which are already helping address the teacher shortage crisis.

The challenge is well documented: districts continue to report hundreds of unfilled positions for fully qualified teachers. In the most recent vacancy survey, special education and elementary education remain among the hardest-hit fields, with STEM close behind. These shortages are neither new nor temporary: of the 17 shortage areas tracked, six have been listed for more than 15 years.

Against that backdrop, the state's policy shifts and new flexibility have been essential. For example, the Alternative Program Teaching Permit allows positions to be filled immediately by candidates with a bachelor's degree, a job offer, and a college or university plan to finish preparation. At the institutional level, many programs now offer alternative or accelerated certification options. Institutions have designed hybrid, flexible, and competency-based coursework to support candidates teaching while they learn.

Within this broader landscape, NACTE members have reported inspiring growth in alternative and accelerated teacher preparation. At Creighton University, we have seen meaningful increases in enrollment. We now offer a one-year route in which secondary-focused candidates serve in schools full time as apprentice teachers or teachers of record while completing pedagogy and content coursework for certification. This design leverages state permit flexibilities. Because the program is compressed and centered on classroom experience, the transition to certified teacher is seamless, providing districts with more support sooner. Candidates receive guidance from the university, school, and district, helping them transition to full-time teaching. Candidates also receive financial aid from various sources and similar to other NACTE institutions, many candidate programs are fully funded. Through online delivery, we reach students statewide, including western and northeast Nebraska and our private school partners. This model attracts mid-career professionals, recent graduates, and those seeking a faster path into teaching without sacrificing rigor. Growth at Creighton—and similar reports across the state—shows these pathways are effective and affordable.

NACTE respectfully offers a few recommendations to sustain momentum:

1. Sustain and expand funding for mentoring and supervision. Success of alternative-route candidates depends on strong mentors and oversight. Continued state investment or district incentives remain critical.
2. Data tracking and transparency. Maintain and expand longitudinal data on retention, effectiveness, and certification outcomes for alternative-route candidates to guide improvement and sustain investment.
3. Awareness and outreach. Broaden promotion of alternative pathways—including to mid- and second-career entrants—so more candidates consider teaching. Targeted outreach to nontraditional candidates complements structural reforms.

In closing, NACTE congratulates the Board, the Legislature, and NDE for strategic and forward-looking actions. The combination of permit flexibility, institutional innovation, and retention support is shifting Nebraska's teacher pipeline. We stand ready to partner in sustaining and scaling this progress.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Nebraska Association of Colleges of Teacher Education,

April Buschelman
Creighton University Director of Certification and Field Placements

Signature

Please type your first and last name again. This will appear with your written comments and serves as your signature.

Signed,

First name *

April

Last name *

Buschelman

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Nebraska State Board of Education Written Public Comment October 2025

Nebraska State Board of Education

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Click the "Next" button below to begin.

Identification

Please complete the following information to identify yourself. This information will appear with the text of your written public comment.

First name *

Heather

Last name *

Schmidt

City *

Lincoln

State *

Nebraska

Written Comment

There is a limit of 750 words.

Written Comments *

There is a limit of 750 words (approximately 5000 characters with spaces.)

Thank you for acknowledging that October is dyslexia awareness month. I especially want to thank President Tegtmeier for recognizing we have a problem and leading this board and department towards positive change. The Dyslexia proclamation is a good first step towards verbalizing support for Nebraska students struggling with dyslexia. It is beyond time that Nebraska publicly acknowledges and supports dyslexic learners. I applaud you for saying "dyslexia" out loud. It will do a lot for students mental health to know that their reading struggles doesn't mean that they are not smart.

Please be bold and go further this year. Demand that EPP's follow state statutes and prepare our teachers with the skills they need to teach students with dyslexia how to sound out words and read. Laws are not suggestions, they are passed after hard fought bi-partisan compromise. It's your job and your duty to hold colleges accountable when they are not following. the law. If you don't you are not only failing our children but also our teachers who have paid for an education they may not be receiving.

Signature

Please type your first and last name again. This will appear with your written comments and serves as your

signature.

Signed,

First name *

Heather

Last name *

Schmidt

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Out-State Travel Authorization Reports - October

<u>Name</u>	<u>Event Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Trip Request (i.e. 1st, 2nd, Other)</u>
Kristin Christensen	(NONE)			
Lisa Schonhoff	(NONE)			
Sherry Jones	Excelin Ed National Summit	November 17-20, 2025	New Orleans, LA	2nd
Elizabeth Tegtmeier	(NONE)			

Out-State Travel Authorization Reports - October

<u>Name</u>	<u>Event Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Trip Request (i.e. 1st, 2nd, Other)</u>
Maggie Douglas	(NONE)			
Liz Renner	(NONE)			
Kirk Penner	(NONE)			
Deborah Neary	(NONE)			



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 17, 2025

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Amy R. Rhone – Office of Special Education

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: Authorize the Commissioner to appoint the recommended individual(s) to fill vacancies on the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC).

AGENDA ITEM TYPE (contract/grant/rule/program/other): Other

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The State Board approves all SEAC members. The normal expiration of terms of individuals after the 2024-2025 year created 5 SEAC vacancies. To meet the requirements of the federal special education law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), it is necessary to fill the vacancies. Members are chosen to represent all eight of the State Board of Education election districts. The Council voting membership shall not be fewer than 15 members nor more than 30 members.

Below is the final recommended new member; we are still actively recruiting for membership representation in State Board District 3. Completed applications for the recommended members are on file in the Special Education Office and are available upon request. However, they are not included here due to IDEA confidentiality requirements.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representation</u>
Pamela Dobrovlny (ii) <i>*State Board District 3</i>	Teacher

Pamela has been a member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) since 1991 and currently holds the Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC). She was an active member of the Nebraska Association of Special Education Supervisors (NASES) for over 20 years, serving until her retirement as a special education director in 2022.

From 2009 to 2015, Pamela served on the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC), including a leadership role as Chairperson from 2012 to 2015. Over the course of her career in Nebraska public schools, she has held multiple positions within the field of special education, including speech-language pathologist, special education director, early childhood director, teacher, and coach/consultant.

Currently, Pamela works as a teacher coach/consultant with Educational Service Unit #3 in La Vista, NE. In this role, she primarily supports Blair Community Schools in Washington County. Pamela would be honored

to serve on SEAC as a representative from State Board Region 3 and brings decades of experience and leadership in special education to the role.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): September 2025

ESTIMATED COST: N/A

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:

- Indicate the Funding Source: N/A
- New or Renewal:
- If renewal, date of first approval:

FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT:

- Indicate the method of procurement:
- Rationale for method of procurement:
- Rationale for contractor selection:

FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS:

- Describe the grantee selection process:



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 22, 2025

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Bryce Wilson, Finance Officer

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: Appointment of a member to the State Committee for the Reorganization of School Districts.

AGENDA ITEM TYPE (contract/grant/rule/program/other): Information

Approve the re-appointment for a committee member due the completion of their previously appointed term ending December 31, 2025. This member opening is for a Lay person to serve on the committee. It is recommended that Mr. Fornander be re-appointed to the committee.

Per State Statute §79-435, "...The State committee shall be composed of six members ... Three members of the state committee shall at all times be laypersons, and two members shall at all times be persons holding teachers' certificates issued by the authority of the State of Nebraska..."

The membership and terms of office of the State Committee for the Reorganization of School Districts are as follows:

Dale Fornander, Chappell, Lay person	12/31/2025
Chris Prosocki, Blue Springs, Educator	12/31/2026
Ted DeTurk, Papillion, Educator	12/31/2027
Shad Stamm, Benkelman, Lay person	12/31/2028
Dave Welsch, Milford, Lay person	12/31/2029

This opening was sent out via the school finance monthly email to Superintendents/Business Managers and posted on the State Committee for Re-Organization's website for 6 weeks. Mr. Fornander was the only application received for this position. Mr. Fornander has been a long time Re-Organization Committee Member and has previously served as the Chair of the Committee for multiple years. Mr. Fornander's background as a teacher/coach, long time school board member, farmer and insurance agent provides him a unique perspective that allows him to evaluate re-organization issues from all sides of the issue. Mr. Fornander's historical knowledge and experience working with the committee make him a great fit for another term.

Contact Micki Iverson at micki.iverson@nebraska.gov

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): October 2025

ESTIMATED COST: None.

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS: N/A

FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT: N/A

FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS: N/A



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 22, 2025

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Zainab Rida, Ph.D., R.D., Administrator, Office of Coordinated Student Support Services
Kayte Partch, M.S., R.D., Assistant Administrator, Office of Coordinated Student Support Services

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: Grant the Commissioner the authority to contract with CN Resource to conduct required compliance functions of the Child Nutrition Programs on behalf of the Nebraska Department of Education.

AGENDA ITEM TYPE (contract/grant/rule/program/other): Contract

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The USDA requires that SFAs participating in the School Nutrition Programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), receive regular oversight and monitoring through Administrative Reviews (AR) and Procurement Reviews (PR). Sponsors participating in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) must also receive regular oversight through compliance reviews. The NDE Nutrition Services team requires support for completing these reviews in order for all (approximately 385) SFAs to receive this oversight and monitoring once every five years. Full-time staffing limitations governed by the Legislature, along with other staff responsibilities, require the support of a contract company to ensure thorough oversight is completed within the required timelines governed by the USDA regulations. Therefore, the NDE Nutrition Services would like to continue its contractual agreement with CN Resource to complete a portion of the Administrative and Procurement Reviews for SY2025-26.

CN Resource was selected using formal procurement through a Request for Proposal process completed in September 2021. The contract for SY2025-26 is the fourth of four possible renewals.

The first one-year contract, approved in November 2021, included work to complete compliance reviews of schools operating the USDA School Nutrition Programs totaling \$191,430; this contract was amended to extend it through SY2022-23 to maximize carryover of program funds and its value increased to \$371,000 and was executed to conduct compliance reviews of the School Nutrition Programs in SY2022-23. The SY2022-23 contract was amended again in May 2023 to increase the value to \$398,000 for the completion of Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) compliance reviews in summer 2023.

The third one-year contract (second renewal) totaling \$165,906 was approved for School Nutrition Programs compliance reviews in November 2023; it was amended in May 2024 to increase the value to \$219,149 in order to include SFSP Reviews.

The fourth one-year contract (third renewal), approved for School Nutrition Programs compliance reviews in November 2024 totaled \$171,225 and was amended to include SFSP compliance reviews in May 2025 for an increased value of \$249,355.

The SY2025-26 contract will be the fifth contract (fourth renewal) and will include work to complete compliance reviews of the School Nutrition Programs.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): October 2025

ESTIMATED COST: \$268,000

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:

- Funding Source: Federal State Administrative Expense (SAE) funds
- New or Renewal: Renewal (fourth of up to four renewals)
- If renewal, date of first approval: October 2021

FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT:

- Method of procurement: NA
- Rationale for method of procurement: NA
- Rationale for contractor selection: NA

FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS:

- Describe the grantee selection process: NA



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 23, 2025

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Jill Aurand, Administrator, Data Management and Application Development

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: Consent Item: Amend the authorization for the Commissioner to approve contracts for SLDS Grant Activities

AGENDA ITEM TYPE (contract/grant/rule/program/other): Contract

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The State Board approved this item at its September 5, 2025, meeting. This request is to seek approval to amend the timeframe to encompass additional months of approval, as ESSER funds were not available as expected. This request seeks to approve use of these funds starting July 1, 2025. The Board approved funding authorization of \$2,940,604 at the September 2025 meeting. No additional funding authority is requested.

The Nebraska Department of Education was a successful applicant for the most recent round of Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) grant funding and was awarded \$4 million which was accepted by the Nebraska State Board of Education on October 6, 2023. Expenditures from these SLDS grant funds for 2024-25 and 2025-26 are intended to integrate seamlessly with data and infrastructure improvements completed during prior work.

One example of the ability to leverage multiple streams of funding to achieve continued progress on important agency projects was the completion and initial go-live of the NDE Portal in July 2025. Phase 1 of the NDE Portal utilized Board approved ESSER funding and was built as a safe and secure, one-stop gateway where schools, districts, and NDE staff can log in and access all the applications, reports, and tools they need. The portal is accessible by districts and schools and can be used by both public district and non-public district users. Current SLDS funds will be used for further enhancements to make the portal easier to use, more powerful, and more flexible. This includes providing added features such as paper-free, fully auditable access requests, auditing capacity and monitoring tools for enhanced security and improved support features to minimize portal downtime. Similarly, new SLDS activities will build upon and enhance prior work completed using general funds provided by the Legislature for one of the State Board's legislative priorities: cross-agency data sharing to enhance educational outcomes of systems-involved youth as mandated under Neb. Rev. Stat. §79-303.01 (2024); as well as supplementing current fiscal year appropriations pursuant to LB296 from the 2025 legislative session: to ensure the education services for students under the jurisdiction of a juvenile court are not disrupted and that the educational records for such students are complete. SLDS

work in this area is intended to enhance the ability of Rule 18 interim program schools to submit data into NDE's ADVISER data system as school districts are now able to do.

In accordance with the USDOE-approved grant project plan, additional development activities utilizing funding from the SLDS grant will focus on the following overarching areas:

- Goal A: Implementing Policies, Procedures, and Systems to Improve the Educational Outcomes of At-Risk and Systems-Involved Students.
- Goal B: Access, Privacy, and Security of Data.
- Goal C: Enhance P-20W SLDS Cooperation between the NDE K-12 SLDS (ADVISER, ECIDS) and NSWERS systems.
- Goal D: Strengthen NDE Data Governance by incorporating stakeholder input on matters related to data visualizations, as well as the provision of comprehensive training on data privacy, security, and utilization.
- Grant Management Activities: Fixed Term Project Manager; and
- Scalable Data Use Project: Participation in a national project to help identify and prioritize data use applications such as reports, dashboards, or research request tools for statewide longitudinal data.

Illustrative examples of specific projects that will be completed from the goal areas above include:

- Requirements gathering, data modeling and visualization development for at-risk students.
- Modernization of district authentication and district access management to improve data privacy and security
- Prototyping of enhanced data deidentification process.
- Modernization of NDE ID matching process and integration into existing systems.
- Creation of master service agreements for P20-W data sharing.
- Create and facilitate District Data Visualization Group (DDVG).
- Collect and implement stakeholder use cases for at-risk student data visualizations.
- Provide training to districts on new services, visualizations and infrastructure and develop self-service training resources.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): October 2025

ESTIMATED COST: \$0

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:

- Indicate the Funding Source: Federal
- New or Renewal: N/A
- If renewal, date of first approval: N/A

FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT:

- Indicate the method of procurement: N/A
- Rationale for method of procurement: N/A
- Rationale for contractor selection: N/A

FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS:

- Describe the grantee selection process: N/A



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 19, 2025

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Amy Rhone, Administrator – The Office of Special Education

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: Consent: Authorize the Commissioner to Approve the University of Nebraska Lincoln WORDS Project Funding (BF.042025.021)

AGENDA ITEM TYPE (contract/grant/rule/program/other): Grant

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In April, the board approved the WORDS project funding that was initially approved to be funded through the ESSERs Plan funding. As a result of the ESSER liquidation period ending March 28, 2025, the Office of Special Education was able to continue to fund the Nebraska WORDS project using IDEA funding from the 2024-25 IDEA Part B – 611 Grant through August 31, 2025.

In June, the board approved the Office of Special Education to fund \$365,000 of the WORDS project through September 1, 2025 through August 31, 2026 through the 2025-26 IDEA Part B – 611 and 619 grant awards.

It is the intent of the NDE to fund additional components of the WORDS project using Title II-A funding from October 6, 2025 through October 5, 2026.

WORDS addresses the needs of school districts in Nebraska through the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act, which was passed into law during the 2018 legislative session. The Dyslexia Act was passed at this same time. Both laws take a comprehensive approach to improve the early literacy skills of Nebraska's K-3 students, including those who exhibit characteristics of dyslexia. WORDS promotes an integrated system connecting all educators, along with all components of teaching and learning, into a high quality, standards-based instruction and intervention system. This happens through professional development and training that begins by establishing a strong core of literacy for all students which provides the foundation of prevention within the entire system.

The Nebraska WORDs Project has been previously funded through IDEA, federal funding. This is an appropriate use of IDEA funds and there are funds available. This request is to approve the additional expenditure of Title II-A funding in combination with the IDEA funding to continue the WORDS project.

WORDS Project Funding Timeline:

January 2020 – January 2024: IDEA, Part B Federally Funded Project (\$250,000.00 annually)

January 2024 – January 2025: ESSERS Funded Project (\$1,000,000.00)

* When ESSERS funds were paused at the end of March 2025, IDEA, Part B funded was utilized to support the project.

January 2025 – January 2026: IDEA, Part B Federally Funded Project (\$365,000.00)

October 2025 -September 2026: Title II-A Federally Funded Project (\$200,000.00)

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): October 2025

ESTIMATED COST: \$200,000.00

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:

- Indicate the Funding Source: Federal – Title II-A Funding
- New or Renewal: Renewal
- If renewal, date of first approval: January 2020

FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS:

- Describe the grantee selection process: N/A

State Board of Education Work Session and Business Meeting.

Thursday-Friday September 4-5, 2025

Nebraska Department of Education, State Board Room, 500 S 84th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508

[Link to Agenda and Attachments](#)

[Link to Video of Meeting](#) September 5, 2025

Publicized notice of the business meeting was given by posting notice on the Department's website and emailed to news media requesting notification, which gave the date, time, and location of the meeting.

STATE BOARD WORK SESSION, Thursday, September 4, 2025, 12:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Tegtmeier called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

1.1 Roll Call

Roll Call showed the following attendance:

Deborah Neary

Elizabeth Tegtmeier

Kristin Christensen

Lisa Schonhoff

Liz Renner

Maggie Douglas

Sherry Jones

Kirk Penner

Commissioner Maher was also in attendance.

1.2. President Tegtmeier led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3. President Tegtmeier announced the placement of the Open Meetings Act.

2. BUSINESS

2.1. Information on Agency Hiring Process

NDE Representative, Amy Spellman, provided information on the agency hiring process.

2.2. Strategic Plan Update

NDE Representative, Ryan Floor, provided an updated on the Strategic Plan.

3. ADJOURNMENT

President Tegtmeier adjourned the meeting at 1:51 p.m.

The State Board of Education will reconvene Friday, September 5, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. at Nebraska Department of Education, State Board Room, 500 S 84th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING, Friday, August 8, 2025, 9:00 a.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER – President Elizabeth Tegtmeier called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

1.1 Roll Call

Roll Call showed the following attendance:

Elizabeth Tegtmeier	Kirk Penner	Kristin Christensen
Lisa Schonhoff	Liz Renner	Maggie Douglas
Sherry Jones		

Commissioner Maher was also in attendance.

Absent: Deborah Neary

1.2. President Tegtmeier led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3. President Tegtmeier announced the placement of the Open Meetings Act.

2. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

2.1. Annual Presentation from the Nebraska Council on Teacher Education (NCTE)

Susan Stake, President-Elect on the NCTE Executive Committee, provided the annual presentation from the Nebraska Council on Teacher Education (NCTE). Tim Frey, Committee B Chair, answered how NAPE Scores are used.

2.2. Adopt the Resolution to Recognize September as Attendance Awareness Month and Commence the “Nebraska Every Day Counts!” Campaign

Motion by Sherry Jones, second by Liz Renner to adopt the Resolution to recognize September as Attendance Awareness Month and commence the “Nebraska Every Day Counts!” Campaign.

Deborah Neary	Absent
Elizabeth Tegtmeier	Yes
Kirk Penner	Yes
Kristin Christensen	Yes
Lisa Schonhoff	Yes
Liz Renner	Yes
Maggie Douglas	Yes
Sherry Jones	Yes

The motion passed.

3. COMMISSIONER’S REPORT

3.1. Agenda Overview and Consent Agenda Process

3.1.A. Commissioner Maher’s recommendation and items to be removed from consent agenda

No items were requested to be removed from the Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Maher delivered the Commissioner’s report.

4. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

President Tegtmeier did not have a President’s report.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

5.1. Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

5.2. Written Public Comment

There was one Written Public Comment submitted.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Liz Renner, second by Kristin Christensen to approve the Consent Agenda.

Deborah Neary	Absent
Elizabeth Tegtmeier	Yes
Kirk Penner	Yes
Kristin Christensen	Yes
Lisa Schonhoff	Yes
Liz Renner	Yes
Maggie Douglas	Yes
Sherry Jones	Yes

The motion passed.

7. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

7.1. **Executive Committee** – Elizabeth Tegtmeier, Chair, reported on the meeting of the Committee.

7.2. **Budget and Finance Committee** – Kristin Christensen, Chair, reported on the meeting of the Committee.

7.2.A. Monthly Board Travel Expense Report

There was no further discussion on this item.

7.2.B. Action Item: Nebraska Improvement Grant Projects

The Committee recommended no action.

7.2.C. Action Item: Approve the Contract for the Nebraska Literacy Leadership Network

Motion by Kristin Christensen, second by Kirk Penner to approve the contract for the Nebraska Literacy Leadership Network.

Deborah Neary	Absent
Elizabeth Tegtmeier	Yes
Kirk Penner	Yes
Kristin Christensen	Yes
Lisa Schonhoff	Yes
Liz Renner	Yes
Maggie Douglas	Yes
Sherry Jones	Yes

The motion passed.

7.2.D. Action Item: McKinney-Vento Grant Proposed Funds for the 2025-2026 School Year

Motion by Kristin Christensen, second by Maggie Douglas to approve McKinney-Vento Grant Proposed Funds for the 2025-2026 School Year.

Deborah Neary	Absent
Elizabeth Tegtmeier	Yes
Kirk Penner	Yes
Kristin Christensen	Yes
Lisa Schonhoff	Yes
Liz Renner	Yes
Maggie Douglas	Yes
Sherry Jones	Yes

The motion passed.

7.2.E. Action Item: Approve Contracts for SLDS Grant Activities

Motion by Kristin Christensen, second by Liz Renner to authorize the Commissioner to approve contracts for SLDS Grant Activities.

Deborah Neary	Absent
Elizabeth Tegtmeier	Yes
Kirk Penner	Yes
Kristin Christensen	Yes
Lisa Schonhoff	Yes
Liz Renner	Yes
Maggie Douglas	Yes
Sherry Jones	Yes

The motion passed.

7.2.F. Discussion Item: 2025-2026 Deficit Budget Request

There was no further discussion on this item.

7.3. **Planning and Evaluation Committee Report** – Lisa Schonhoff, Chair, reported on the meeting of the Committee.

7.3.A. Action Item: Approve Rule 11 Teacher Waiver Requests

Motion by Maggie Douglas, second by Kristin Christensen to approve Rule 11 Teacher Waiver requests from Bloomfield, Stapleton, and Umon Hon Nation Public Schools.

Deborah Neary	Absent
Elizabeth Tegtmeier	Yes
Kirk Penner	Yes
Kristin Christensen	Yes
Lisa Schonhoff	Yes
Liz Renner	Yes
Maggie Douglas	Yes
Sherry Jones	Yes

The motion passed.

7.3.B. Action Item: Pilot Process for Clinical Practice at the University of Nebraska Kearney

Motion by Kristin Christensen, second by Liz Renner to approve the Pilot Process for Clinical Practice at the University of Nebraska Kearney.

Deborah Neary	Absent
Elizabeth Tegtmeier	Yes
Kirk Penner	Yes
Kristin Christensen	Yes
Lisa Schonhoff	Yes
Liz Renner	Yes
Maggie Douglas	Yes
Sherry Jones	Yes

The motion passed.

7.3.C. Discussion Item: Subject Area Examinations and Passing Scores for Temporary Certificates

No further discussion.

7.4. **Rules and Regulations Committee** – Maggie Douglas, Chair reported on the meeting of the Committee.

7.4.A. Report on Rules

The report on rules is linked through Sparq in Board Agenda item 7.4.A.

7.4.B. Action Item: Proposed Revision of Rule 8 (92 NAC 8) Regulations for School Finance and Budgeting/State Funding of Educational Service Units and Learning Communities

Motion by Lisa Schonhoff, second by Kristin Christensen to approve proposed revision of Rule 8 (92 NAC 8) Regulations for School Finance and Budgeting/State Funding of Educational Service Units and Learning Communities.

Deborah Neary	Absent
Elizabeth Tegtmeier	Yes
Kirk Penner	Yes
Kristin Christensen	Yes
Lisa Schonhoff	Yes
Liz Renner	Yes
Maggie Douglas	Yes
Sherry Jones	Yes

The motion passed.

7.4.C. Action Item: Proposed Revision of Rule 86 (92 NAC 86) Regulations and Procedures for Public School Breakfast Program Reimbursement

Motion by Lisa Schonhoff, second by Kirk Penner to approve proposed revision of Rule 86 (92 NAC 86) Regulations and Procedures for Public School Breakfast Program Reimbursement.

Deborah Neary	Absent
Elizabeth Tegtmeier	Yes
Kirk Penner	Yes
Kristin Christensen	Yes
Lisa Schonhoff	Yes

Liz Renner	Yes
Maggie Douglas	Yes
Sherry Jones	Yes

The motion passed.

8. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

(NONE)

9. INFORMATION ITEMS AND REPORTS

Information items and reports are linked through Sparq under Board Agenda item 9.

10. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Elizabeth Tegtmeier and Kristin Christensen are both attending the Nebraska MTSS Summit October 9-10, 2025, in Kearney.

11. ADJOURNMENT

President Tegtmeier adjourned the meeting at 10:26 a.m.

The next meetings of the State Board of Education are scheduled for October 2 and 3, 2025, in Fremont, Nebraska.



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 16, 2025

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Bryce Wilson, Administrator, Office of Financial & Administrative Services

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: Approve school districts' requests for exclusions to the budget limitation in accordance with the provisions of the Tax Equity & Educational Opportunities Support Act.

AGENDA ITEM TYPE (contract/grant/rule/program/other): Other

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Distance Education Courses

Proposed Board Action: Approve the exclusion amount for Distance Education Courses for the district shown on the attachment.

Rationale/Background information: Section 79-1028.01(1)(d) provides for the State Board to permit a district to exceed its budget authority for the general fund budget of expenditures for amounts received from educational entities for providing distance education courses through the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council to such educational entities. Department Staff have reviewed the request listed on the attachment and recommend approval. If approved, the school district may access additional budget authority. This request is applicable to the 2025/26 school district budget.

2. Early Childhood Education Grants

Proposed Board Action: Approve the amount for the 2025/26 Early Childhood Education Grants Expenditure Exclusion for the district shown on the attachment.

Rationale/Background information: Section 79-1028.01(2)(c) provides for the State Board to permit a district to exceed its budget authority for the general fund budget of expenditures for the amount received by the district for 2025/26 Early Childhood Education Grants if 2025/26 is the first year early childhood membership is included in the district's formula students. Department Staff have reviewed the request listed on the attachment and recommend approval. If approved, the school district may access additional budget authority. This request is applicable to the 2025/26 school district budget.

3. Interfund Loans

Proposed Board Action: Approve the Interfund Loan listed on the attachment as a Special Grant Fund.

Rationale/Background information: The State Board, pursuant to provisions of State Statute Section 79-1003(38), has designated Interfund Loans as a special grant fund for budget limitation purposes. The Interfund Loans listed on the attachment has been reviewed by Department Staff and appears to qualify as a special grant fund. If approved, the school districts may access additional budget authority. This request is applicable to the 2025/26 school district budget.

4. Native American Impact Aid

Proposed Board Action: Approve the exclusion amount for Native American Impact Aid Exclusion for the district shown on the attachment.

Rationale/Background information: Section 79-1028.01(1)(n) provides for the State Board to permit a district to exceed its budget authority for the general fund budget of expenditures for Federal Impact Aid received by the district. Districts that have land within its boundaries that is federal property classified as Indian lands under and have children in attendance who reside on Indian lands in accordance with 20 U.S.C. 7703(7) and have received funds in accordance with 20 U.S.C. 7703(a)(1)(c) are eligible for this exclusion. Department Staff have reviewed the request listed on the attachment and recommend approval. If approved, the school district may access additional budget authority.

5. Retirement Contribution Increase

Proposed Board Action: Approve the exclusion amount for a Retirement Contribution Increase for the district shown on the attachment.

Rationale/Background information: Section 79-1028.01(1)(e)&(f) provides for the State Board to permit a district to exceed its budget authority for the general fund budget of expenditures for a retirement contribution increase. Department Staff have reviewed the request listed on the attachment and recommend approval. If approved, the school district may access additional budget authority. This request is applicable to the 2025/26 school district budget.

6. Short-Term Borrowings

Proposed Board Action: Approve the Short-Term Borrowing listed on the attachment as a Special Grant Fund.

Rationale/Background Information: Section 79-1028.01(1)(m) provides for the State Board to permit a district to exceed its budget authority for the general fund budget of expenditures for amounts received for Short-Term Borrowings as a special grant fund for budget limitation purposes. The Short-Term Borrowing listed on the attachment has been reviewed by Department Staff and appears to qualify as a special grant fund per State Statute Section 79-1003(38). If approved, the school district may access additional budget authority. This request is applicable to the 2025/26 school district budget.

7. Special Supplementary Grant

Proposed Board Action: Approve the grant listed on the attachment as a Special Supplementary Grant.

Rationale/Background Information: Section 79-1028.01(1)(m) provides for the State Board to permit a district to exceed its budget authority for the general fund budget of expenditures for amounts received for Special Supplementary Grants from Corporations, Foundations, or Other Private Interests as special grant funds for budget limitations purposes. The individual grant listed on the attachment has been reviewed by Department Staff and appears to qualify as a special supplementary grant per State Statute Section 79-1003(38). If approved, the school district may access additional budget authority. This request is applicable to the 2025/26 school district budget.

8. Voluntary Termination Agreements

Proposed Board Action: Approve the exclusion amount for Voluntary Termination Agreements for the district shown on the attachment.

Rationale/Background information: Section 79-1028.01(1) (g), (i), (j), (k), provides for the State Board to permit a district to exceed its budget authority for the general fund budget of expenditures for expenditures for voluntary termination agreements. Department Staff have reviewed the request listed on the attachment and recommend approval. If approved, the school district may access additional budget authority. This request is applicable to the 2025/26 school district budget.

per State Statute Section 79-1003(38). If approved, the school district may access additional budget authority. This request is applicable to the 2025/26 school district budget.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): October 2025

ESTIMATED COST: None

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS: N/A

FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT: N/A

FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS: N/A

**Updated 08.15.2023*

**Requests Relative to the Budgeting Provisions
of the Tax Equity & Educational Opportunities Support Act
For the 2025/26 School Year
October 3, 2025**

Recommendation 1

Distance Education Courses [Section 79-1028.01(1)(d)]

County-District Number	School District Name	Amount to be Approved
61-0049	Palmer Public Schools	\$61,800

Recommendation 2

Early Childhood Education Grants [Section 79-1028.01(2)(c)]

County-District Number	School District Name	Amount to be Approved
79-0016	Gering Public Schools	\$133,250

Recommendation 3

Interfund Loan [Section 79-1003(38)]

County-District Number	School District Name	Amount to be Approved
70-0005	Plainview Public Schools	\$300,000
90-0595	Winside Public Schools	\$1,200,000

Recommendation 4

Native American Impact Aid [Section 79-1028.01(1)(n)]

County-District Number	School District Name	Amount to be Approved	School Year
87-0017	Winnebago Public Schools	\$8,000,000	2025/26

Recommendation 5

Retirement Contribution Increase [Section 79-1028.01(1)(e)&(f)]

County-District Number	School District Name	Amount to be Approved
04-0001	Banner County Public Schools	\$72,322
11-0001	Tekamah-Herman Public Schools	\$162,939
14-0054	Laurel-Concord-Coleridge School	\$161,152
17-0009	Potter-Dix Public Schools	\$68,972
21-0101	Sumner-Eddyville-Miller Schools	\$86,530
22-0011	South Sioux City Comm Schools	\$1,178,032
24-0001	Lexington Public Schools	\$890,611
26-0070	Allen Consolidated Schools	\$68,544
32-0046	Maywood Public Schools	\$71,504
36-0100	Burwell Public Schools	\$144,441
48-0008	Fairbury Public Schools	\$285,669
54-0096	Crofton Community Schools	\$122,080
54-0586	Bloomfield Community Schools	\$85,235
55-0148	Malcolm Public Schools	\$176,906
56-0001	North Platte Public Schools	\$1,036,375
56-0007	Maxwell Public Schools	\$80,671
61-0049	Palmer Public Schools	\$23,559
67-0001	Pawnee City Public Schools	\$101,610

Recommendation 5 (continued)**Retirement Contribution Increase [Section 79-1028.01(1)(e)&(f)]**

77-0027	Papillion-La Vista Comm Schools	\$2,785,836
79-0016	Gering Public Schools	\$514,844
79-0032	Scottsbluff Public Schools	\$1,005,829
85-0060	Deshler Public Schools	\$82,823
87-0001	Pender Public Schools	\$124,801
87-0017	Winnebago Public Schools	\$325,541

Recommendation 6**Short-Term Borrowings [Section 79-1003(38)]**

County-District Number	School District Name	Amount to be Approved
13-0001	Plattsmouth Public Schools	\$3,500,000

Recommendation 7**Special Supplementary Grant [Section 79-1003(38)]**

County-District Number	School District Name	Amount to be Approved	Source
28-0010	Elkhorn Public Schools	\$136,275	Learning Community of Douglas & Sarpy Counties
		\$146,193	Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation
77-0027	Papillion La Vista Community Schools	\$610,588	Papillion La Vista Comm Schools Foundation
		\$389,412	Learning Community

Recommendation 8**Voluntary Termination Agreements [Section 79-1028.01(1)(g), (i), (j), (k)]**

County-District Number	School District Name	Amount to be Approved
55-0148	Malcolm Public Schools	\$61,042
77-0027	Papillion La Vista Comm Schls	\$420,000
79-0016	Gering Public Schools	\$32,040



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 16, 2025

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Melody Hobson

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: Approve renewal of Rule 11 waivers

AGENDA ITEM TYPE: Waiver renewal

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- Operation of school district and educational service unit (ESU) early childhood programs are governed by the Nebraska Department of Education Rule 11: Regulations for the Approval of Prekindergarten Programs Established by School Boards and Educational Service Units and for the Issuance of Early Childhood Education Grants (Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 11).
- The Nebraska State Board of Education is charged with approving prekindergarten programs (Early childhood education and care programs for children birth to compulsory attendance age) operated by school districts and educational service units annually.
- Teachers in school district and ESU prekindergarten classrooms are required to hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an early childhood endorsement.
- School districts that hire individuals with a valid teaching certificate, but no early childhood endorsement must ensure that the teacher works toward earning an early childhood endorsement.
- School Districts and ESUs that cannot hire one or more teacher(s) who hold a valid teaching certificate of any kind must apply for a Rule 11 waiver for the teacher(s).
- Nebraska State Board has the authority/responsibility to either approve or deny the Rule 11 waiver.
- The following School districts and ESU have current Rule 11 waivers for one or more teachers. Each of the listed districts and ESU have ensured that each teacher included in the waiver has made progress toward his/her degree and certification within the past year.
 - Fairbury received a Rule 11 teacher waiver in 2024 for one early childhood teacher. This teacher is attending the University of Nebraska at Kearney and has taken courses each semester during the last year to work toward her degree and teaching certificate.
 - Educational Service Unit #3 received a waiver for 2024. The ESU is requesting a waiver for one teacher for the 2025/2026 school year. That teacher has taken courses at the University of Nebraska Kearney and is on track do her student teaching in the fall of 2027.

- This is the 6th year that ESU #13 has received a waiver for one or more teachers. The ESU is requesting a waiver for 11 teachers. Nine of these teachers are assigned to the Early Head Start program and teach infants and/or toddlers. All the teachers who were included in the ESU #13 waiver last year have made progress toward their degree and teaching certificate.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING: October 2025, Consent

ESTIMATED COST: NA

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS: NA

FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT: NA

FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS: NA

**Updated 08.15.2023*



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 24, 2025

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Ami Huff
General Counsel

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM:

Adopt list of Hearing Officers for Contested Cases and Authorize the Commissioner to Approve Contracts for Special Education (SPED) Hearing Officers.

AGENDA ITEM TYPE (contract/grant/rule/program/other): Other/Contract

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In accordance with Board Operating Policy 1.10, the following proposed list of Hearing Officers is being presented for the Board for approval. In the event of a SPED or Vocational Rehabilitation contested case, the Department appoints a Hearing Officer from the list of Hearing Officers. In contested cases regarding Professional Practices, Nutrition Services appeals, Option Enrollment, or Teacher Certification appeals, the Board President appoints a Hearing Officer from the list of Hearing Officers. Authorization is requested for the Commissioner to contract with SPED Hearing Officers.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): October, 2025

ESTIMATED COST: Up to \$100,000 per SPED Hearing Officer contract.

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:

- Indicate the Funding Source: IDEA Part B, 611 and 619, and IDEA Part C funds (for SPED Hearing Officers contracts)
- New or Renewal: Renewal of two existing contracts, addition of three new Hearing Officers (for SPED contested cases)
- If renewal, date of first approval: Hearing Officer Mona (Molly) Burton in May, 2019; Hearing Officer Robert Bartle in August, 2023.

Regarding SPED Hearing Officers, these activities are being continued pursuant to the Federal IDEA Part B and Part C regulations that require federal IDEA Part B and Part C funds to be utilized by states for activities outlined within the IDEA Part B federal application. The Office of Special Education, Part B Discretionary Grant funds requested within this proposal meet the Federal subawarding requirements contained within 2 CFR §200.331 to use the funds to carry out a portion of the public award and for a public purpose specified in the authorizing statute of IDEA Part B and Part C.

FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT:

- Indicate the method of procurement: Competitive process, advertised to establish a competent panel of hearing officers willing to serve, and licensed to practice law in Nebraska.
- Rationale for method of procurement: Necessity to form a panel of potential candidates, who are licensed to practice law in Nebraska, with the requisite training and expertise to conduct administrative hearings on behalf of NDE.
- Rationale for contractor selection: For existing hearing officers, continuity and familiarity with legal requirements and scope of work. For new hearing officers, knowledge and prior experience in administrative law and as serving as a hearing officer.

Hearing Officer List for SPED Cases

Name	Firm Name and Address
Robert F. Bartle (renewal)	Bartle & Geier Law Firm 1141 H St. Lincoln, NE 68508
Mona (Molly) Burton (renewal)	Anderson & Creager & Wittstruck PC LLO 17601 Old Cheney Rd. Lincoln, NE 68512
Melanie Whittamore-Mantzios (new)	Baylor, Evnen, Wolfe & Tannehill, 1248 "O" St., Ste. 900 Lincoln, NE 68508
Amy Van Horne (new)	Kutak Rock, L.L.P., 1650 Farnam St. Omaha, NE 68102
Amanda Palmer (new)	316 Chicago Ave., Ste. 2 Plattsmouth, NE 68048

Hearing Officer List for Professional Practices, Nutrition Services Appeals, Vocational Rehabilitation, Optional Enrollment, Teacher Certification Appeal Cases

Name	Firm Name and Address
Robert F. Bartle (renewal)	Bartle & Geier Law Firm 1141 H St. Lincoln, NE 68508
Jim Titus (renewal)	Peetz, Koerwitz & LaFleur PC LLO 5825 S 14 th St. Lincoln, NE 68512
Mona (Molly) Burton (renewal)	Anderson & Creager & Wittstruck PC LLO 17601 Old Cheney Rd. Lincoln, NE 68512
Susan K. Sapp (renewal)	Cline Williams Wright Johnson & Oldfather, L.L.P. 233 South 13 th St., Ste. 1900 Lincoln, NE 68508
Wendy A. Wussow (renewal)	Koukol Johnson Schmit & Milone, LLC 3839 South 148 th St. Ste. 160 Omaha, NE 68144
Patricia L. Vannoy (renewal)	Mattson Ricketts Law Firm 2077 N St., Ste. 320 Lincoln, NE 68510
Melanie Whittamore-Mantzios (new)	Baylor, Evnen, Wolfe & Tannehill, 1248 "O" St., Ste. 900 Lincoln, NE 68508
Amy Van Horne (new)	Kutak Rock, L.L.P., 1650 Farnam St. Omaha, NE 68102
Amanda Palmer (new)	316 Chicago Ave., Ste. 2 Plattsmouth, NE 68048



STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Date: October 3, 2025

The Executive Committee reports on its October 2, 2025, meeting. Members present were chair Elizabeth Tegtmeier, vice chair Deb Neary, Sherry Jones, and Liz Renner.

The committee reviewed two discussion items. First, NDE staff provided the committee with an update on the strategic planning process and shared an initial text draft of the plan. Then the committee reviewed potential Board bylaw and policy revisions as recommended by NDE staff.

The committee also reviewed two information items. First the committee reviewed revised information regarding a proposed process for improvement grants. Finally, the committee reviewed the recommendation of a reappointment to the State Committee for the Reorganization of School Districts. This item appeared on the consent agenda for approval.

This concludes the Executive Committee report.

Elizabeth Tegtmeier, Chair

*Submit a printed copy to the Committee Chair and email to the Recording Secretary.



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 25, 2025

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Dr. Ryan Foor, Ph.D., Assistant Commissioner and Chief of Staff

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: Strategic Plan

AGENDA ITEM TYPE (contract/grant/rule/program/other): Other

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The first draft of the Nebraska Department of Education strategic plan is presented for review by the State Board of Education. This draft is informed by a process that began in January 2025, with key input from the board at its February 2025 meeting, followed by input from citizens, students, clients, school leaders, and other partners. Feedback was reviewed from the September 2025 board work session. This draft is presented for board member review and feedback, with recommended approval of a final draft at the December 2025 board meeting.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): October 2025

ESTIMATED COST: \$0

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS: N/A

- Indicate the Funding Source: (*--e.g., Federal, State*)
- New or Renewal:
- If renewal, date of first approval:

(--Following the funding source, include a statement that indicates if/ how the activity is part of an annual budget or allocation, or, approved as an activity for a grant. For example, "The funds for this contract are budgeted in the Office's annual allocation of state funds." Another example, "The funds for this activity are included in the grant award for this program.")

FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT: N/A

- Indicate the method of procurement:
- Rationale for method of procurement:

- Rationale for contractor selection:

FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS:

- Describe the grantee selection process:

**Updated 08.15.2023*

Good Life | Great Schools | Excellent Education

The Nebraska Department of Education Strategic Plan for 2026 - 2030

The Nebraska Department of Education engaged in a strategic planning process beginning in January 2025. After rigorous engagement with citizens, partners, clients, and staff, this document outlines our roadmap for the statewide education system in Nebraska. Through this process, members of the state board of education and agency staff members received input and feedback from over 2,500 Nebraskans who represent students, families, and schools in our public, nonpublic, and exempt schools, as well as vocational rehabilitation clients. This roadmap, titled **Good Life | Great Schools | Excellent Education** embodies a vision to ensure that all Nebraskans receive high quality educational opportunities for success in learning and life.

Good Life is a nod to our state’s longtime state slogan, “The Good Life.” The slogan first appeared in the 1970s and has been widely used in marketing, on highway signs, and in tourism campaigns. Often when referring to “The Good Life,” Nebraskans are referring to the quality of life in the state, deep connections to our communities, the natural environment, as well as agriculture, industry, and employment opportunities.

Great Schools highlights the importance we place on our local schools, public and nonpublic, as well as the educational opportunities afforded to students through exempt (home) school settings. Nebraskans are proud of their local schools and the learning that takes place in those spaces. Schools also provide learning opportunities outside the classroom through activities and athletics, and in many ways serve as a hub of community life for many people.

Excellent Education promotes the desire for all Nebraskans to have access to high quality educational opportunities and resources. Ultimately, the Nebraska Department of Education exists to serve students and our clients. While the NDE provides some direct services to students and clients, much of the work we do is dependent on our partners, such as teachers and school leaders. We aim to hold up the Nebraska education system as a beacon for educational excellence in our country and the world.

Good Life | Great Schools | Excellent Education is organized in four major areas:

- Who we are
- Who we serve
- What we do
- Where we are going

Key findings from the strategic planning process are embedded throughout this document, highlighting what we heard from people across the state. Additional information about the strategic planning process is found in Appendix A.

Who We Are

The Nebraska Department of Education is a state constitutional agency operating under the authority of an elected, non-partisan board of education. The State Board appoints the commissioner of education, who oversees the administration of the state school system. The state constitution provides an overarching description of the authority of the NDE.

Article VII, Section I

The Legislature shall provide for the free instruction in the common schools of this state of all persons between the ages of five and twenty-one years. The Legislature may provide for the education of other persons in educational institutions owned and controlled by the state or a political subdivision thereof.

Article VII, Section II

The State Department of Education shall be comprised of a State Board of Education and a Commissioner of Education. The State Department of Education shall have general supervision and administration of the school system of the state and of such other activities as the Legislature may direct.

Article VII, Section III

The State Board of Education shall be composed of eight members, who shall be elected from eight districts of substantially equal population as provided by the Legislature. Their term of office shall be for four years each. Their duties and powers shall be prescribed by the Legislature, and they shall receive no compensation, but shall be reimbursed their actual expense incurred in the performance of their duties. The members of the State Board of Education shall not be actively engaged in the educational profession and they shall be elected on a nonpartisan ballot.

Article VII, Section IV

The State Board of Education shall appoint and fix the compensation of the Commissioner of Education, who shall be the executive officer of the State Board of Education and the administrative head of the State Department of Education, and who shall have such powers and duties as the Legislature may direct. The board shall appoint all employees of the State Department of Education on the recommendation of the Commissioner of Education.

The NDE employees carry out the mission of the agency on behalf of Nebraska students and clients in public and nonpublic schools, as well as exempt school settings. The NDE staff interact with schools and institutions of higher education to develop, coordinate, and improve educational programs.

Over 500 employees carry out the myriad duties assigned by state and federal statutes and the policy direction of the State Board of Education. In broad terms, the work of NDE may be categorized into four main areas:

1. Education programs and services – serving public and nonpublic schools, educators, and students
2. Vocational Rehabilitation - assisting people with disabilities to join the workforce
3. Disability Determination Services - adjudication of claims for disability benefits under Social Security or Supplemental Security Income
4. Agency operations – areas like human resources, accounting, legal services, and information technology

[Key Finding: Vocational Rehabilitation is a critical, somewhat forgotten (or unknown) part of the work of the NDE.]

The NDE provides a broad range of consultative and support services for Nebraska public, nonpublic, and exempt schools. Services are provided in areas such as:

- Adult education and GED®
- After-school programs
- Career and technical education
- Data management
- Early childhood
- Family and community engagement
- Federal programs
- Student support services
- School accreditation
- School improvement
- Special education
- School finance
- Teaching, learning, and assessment

[Key Findings: The greatest strengths of Nebraska’s education system are high-quality teachers, support for the different needs of learners, safe environments, academic expectations, standards, and curriculum. Additionally, schools are seeing increased student needs, including mental and behavioral health.]

While the above list relates mostly to the statewide education system, most of the agency employees work in vocational rehabilitation and disability determination services. In many ways, the NDE ensures success for all learners from cradle to career.

Mission Statement

The **mission** of the Nebraska Department of Education is *to lead and support the preparation of all Nebraskans for learning, earning, and living.*

[Key Finding: The NDE’s mission resonated with survey respondents who recommended no changes be made.]

Values

The NDE grounds its work in the following core values:

- **Communication:** The NDE prioritizes accessible, consistent, transparent communication that informs the public and our partners of key priorities and activities and allows our partners to have a voice in the work of the state agency. Valuing communication enables the NDE and its stakeholders to implement best practices at scale with efficiency, thereby accelerating learners’ achievement and outcomes.
- **Accountability:** The NDE is accountable to our partners when we use resources wisely, follow through and show integrity, take responsibility for our actions and outcomes, and uphold high standards. Valuing accountability will lead the NDE to support our partners, thereby improving outcomes and opportunities for all learners.
- **Respect:** Nebraska is a state with diverse geographies, demographics, languages, backgrounds, cultures, and needs, and the NDE will engage in open-minded, intentional, and consistent listening and decision-making processes. Valuing respect, the NDE will operate similarly to Nebraska’s classrooms where respect builds a positive learning environment; the NDE will model respect in all processes, allowing partners to contribute to the statewide education system.
- **Excellence:** The NDE will be a model for educational and workplace excellence in Nebraska, guided by evidence-based, data-informed research. The NDE will strive for operational excellence in our services, serving as a model for actively identifying problems, implementing solutions, and evaluating impact. Similarly, the NDE will expect excellence of external partners serving learners throughout Nebraska. Valuing excellence will elevate the level of performance across the education system.
- **Service:** The work of the NDE depends upon the service we provide to students, educators, families, communities, and external partners. A service mindset recognizes that we, as an entity of state government, serve the citizens of Nebraska. Valuing service will allow the NDE to strengthen partnerships and achieve greater results.

[Key Finding: These five values were identified and defined throughout the strategic planning process with partners, the public, and NDE staff.]

These five values form an acronym, CARES. This acronym serves as an easy-to-remember structure for communicating about our core values, and implementing the values in decision-making processes, as well as providing a common set of expectations for employees.

Who We Serve

Nebraska schools educate over 365,000 students in public and nonpublic school districts and systems. There are nearly 330,000 students who attend public schools in the state. School districts range in size from serving 50 to 60 students to the largest district serving over 51,000 students. Nonpublic schools serve over 36,000 students in schools that range with student counts from three to over 1,000. Additionally, there are nearly 14,000 students educated through exempt (home) schools. Our schools are served by over 41,000 certificated staff, of which, 26,000 are teachers. In terms of vocational rehabilitation, nearly 3000 individuals are served by Nebraska VR.

The state laws of Nebraska further detail the responsibilities of the Nebraska Department of Education. Nebraska Revised Statute § 79-301 provides a general, overall view of the statutory duties of the NDE:

- (1) The State Department of Education provided for in Article VII, section 2, of the Constitution of Nebraska shall consist of a State Board of Education and a Commissioner of Education. The State Department of Education shall have general supervision and administration of the school system of the state and of such other activities as the Legislature may direct.
- (2) The State Board of Education, acting as a unit, shall be the policy-forming, planning, and evaluative body for the state school program. Except in the appointment of a Commissioner of Education, the board shall deliberate and take action with the professional advice and counsel of the Commissioner of Education.
- (3) The Commissioner of Education shall be the executive officer of the State Board of Education and the administrative head of the professional, technical, and clerical staff of the State Department of Education. The commissioner shall act under the authority of the State Board of Education. The commissioner shall have the responsibility for carrying out the requirements of law and of board policies, standards, rules, and regulations and for providing the educational leadership and services deemed necessary by the board for the proper conduct of the state school program. In the event of vacancy in office or the absence or incapacity of the Commissioner of Education, a deputy commissioner shall carry out any duties imposed by law upon the commissioner.

Partners

To meet these responsibilities, the NDE serves our partners differently in both direct and indirect ways. The individuals and entities in the direct service list represent those partners with whom the NDE has direct and regular interactions. The individuals and entities in the indirect service list represent those partners with whom the NDE serves by working with the partners in the direct service list. Note that the NDE staff are not teaching in the classrooms, rather they are supporting the teachers, school leaders, and schools who have direct interactions with students every day in classrooms. This distinction is important, as it highlights the scope and reach of the work of the NDE and it serves as a reminder that the NDE exists to serve students through partnership with our schools. In another example, NDE vocational rehabilitation staff are, in many cases, working directly with students in schools.

<i>Direct Service Partners</i>	<i>Indirect Service Partners</i>
<i>PK-12 schools</i>	<i>Students</i>
<i>Early childhood education programs</i>	<i>Families</i>
<i>Vocational Rehabilitation clients</i>	<i>Businesses - the current and future workforce</i>
<i>Business partners</i>	
<i>Educators (e.g., school leaders, teachers)</i>	
<i>Applicants for certifications</i>	
<i>Postsecondary educational institutions</i>	
<i>Educational Service Units</i>	
<i>Students (e.g. students participating in career and technical student organization)</i>	
<i>Families and citizens (e.g., families seeking exempt school opportunities)</i>	
<i>Nonprofit organizations serving the education system</i>	

What We Do

Services

The services describe the work of the NDE and are derived from state and federal statutory authority, as well as initiatives and priorities set by the state board of education. In order to set a strategic roadmap, the “work” of the NDE must be clear. This list of 10 services provides a relatively comprehensive description of the work of the Nebraska Department of Education, cutting across all of its component offices. These services are rooted in quality assurance.

- **Certification, e.g., educators:** The NDE is tasked, by statute, to set the rules and regulations that dictate requirements for teacher certification.
- **Coordination with other government/non-governmental agencies:** The NDE is the state education agency and, as such, represents the educational system in cross-agency collaborations such as the Governor’s efforts to decrease the teacher shortage with other state agencies. Additionally, the NDE is responsible for administrative management of several statewide commissions and councils.
- **Direct services to students/learners/clients:** Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) provides direct services to clients and the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education provides learning opportunities for students in career and technical student organizations.
- **Grant funding opportunities to education entities and third parties:** The NDE plays a role in pass-through funding made available from the United States federal government. Additionally, the NDE stewards state and non-governmental funds, when available, to advance the priorities of the state board of education.
- **Program and fiscal compliance and monitoring:** The NDE is statutorily required to regulate schools and school districts and direct compliance activities.
- **Program accreditation and approval:** The NDE is required, by statute, to serve as the accreditation and approval authority for public and nonpublic schools, educational service units, and educator preparation programs.
- **Professional development:** The NDE provides high-quality professional development activities for educators that align with the content area standards of the state, and other programmatic activities.
- **School and continuous improvement:** Through a required evaluation process, Nebraska’s schools and districts report leading and lagging indicators of success. The NDE responds to these evaluations with hands-on support to ensure that each student is afforded the opportunities and support necessary to achieve success.
- **School accountability, e.g., content standards and assessment:** The NDE is statutorily required to lead the state school accountability system, including setting statewide content standards for and administering statewide proficiency assessments. The agency is

also responsible for determining state classifications and federal designations of public schools and districts.

- **Technical assistance:** The NDE provides resources for all schools, public and nonpublic, as well as parents, families, and citizens in support of the education system.

Strategic Levers

The Nebraska Department of Education, as the state education agency, has the opportunity to create change, drive improvement, and cultivate innovation through several strategic levers. Strategic levers are tools and frameworks used to drive transformation and improve learning outcomes. These seven strategic levers are designed to address specific challenges and goals within the education system. The purpose of these strategic levers is to create a more effective and efficient educational system that meets the needs of all students and contributes to the overall development of society.

- Boldly set the vision for the statewide education system
- Consistently promote evidence-based practices
- Continuously assess school systems
- Effectively implement policy
- Intentionally monitor for compliance
- Responsibly report and messaging data
- Strategically allocate state and federal funding

[Key Finding: Political change and uncertainty at the federal level specifically seem to be on the minds of stakeholders. NDE could be an important “leveler” to help manage and stabilize the disruption.]

Where We Are Going

In response to what we heard from citizens, educators, school leaders, clients, students, parents, and others, as well as examining statewide data, the Nebraska Department of Education is committed to four strategic priorities. *Strategic priorities* are the clearly defined areas of focus for the NDE as essential to achieving our long term mission; they act as guiding principles for decision-making, resource allocation, and daily actions. These are the top-level goals of the strategic plan; in other words, what we focus on.

Strategic priorities are further defined by strategic outcomes. *Strategic outcomes* are the specific results or impacts the NDE aims to achieve by pursuing our strategic priorities. Strategic outcomes are the measurable results or changes that demonstrate progress toward our long-term mission. Strategic outcomes tell us what success looks like; they are our desired results.

Metrics are the specific measures or indicators used to track our progress toward achieving our strategic outcomes. Metrics turn broad goals into observable, quantifiable evidence of success. Metrics demonstrate whether strategic priorities are being achieved, in other words, the evidence.

All of the strategic levers identified above may be used to some degree to effect change with each strategic priority. Potential strategies are identified as suggested actions with each strategic priority for implementation of the plan.

[Key Finding: Respondents made clear that the success of any strategic plan is a lean focus. In response, the NDE proposes only four priorities that provide actionable changes that will contribute to the success of all of Nebraska’s learners and the system that supports them.]

Three of the strategic priorities are outward facing in their impact. In other words, they set goals for students, schools, and clients. The fourth strategic priority is inward facing and focused on the operations of the NDE.

Strategic Priority 1: Accelerate Student Achievement

Students and clients thrive when they are met with high expectations and gain the knowledge, skills, and mindsets to engage and contribute to their communities. While all content areas are important to prepare students, the NDE will focus this plan on English language arts and mathematics, recognizing the immediate achievement needs of students in these two areas.

Strategic Outcome 1.1: Improved Student Achievement

Metrics:

1.1.1. 75% of 3rd grade students will score proficient in English language arts as measured by the NSCAS statewide assessment by 2030.
(2023-24 baseline: 59% of 3rd grade students are proficient.)

1.1.2. 80% of 8th grade students will score proficient in mathematics as measured by the NSCAS statewide assessment by 2030.

(2023-24 baseline: 56.5% of 8th grade students are proficient.)

1.1.3. 71% of 11th grade students will score proficient in math and 73% will score proficient in ELA as measured by the ACT assessment by 2030.

(2023-24 baseline: ACT scores for Math and ELA are 42.1% and 45.5% proficient respectively.)

Strategic Outcome 1.2: Reduced chronic absenteeism

Metric:

1.2.1. Reduce chronic absenteeism by 50% by 2030

(2023-24 baseline: Current rate of chronic absenteeism is 22% of students)

[Key Finding: Students noted concerns with a focus on college entrance exams, and called for deeper engagement with course content “rather than test prep.”]

Potential Strategies:

- Focus discretionary or unrestricted funds to ELA and mathematics achievement, and chronic absenteeism efforts.
- Support schools through targeted school improvement and continuous improvement activities leading to increased student achievement.
- Provide statewide resources supporting ELA and mathematics achievement, and student engagement strategies.

[Key Findings: There is a strong call for better support for students with disabilities, English learners, and those in poverty. Respondents of the NDE’s survey emphasized the importance of early intervention and access to resources. Additionally, chronic absenteeism is seen as a growing issue, especially post-COVID. Survey respondents and public focus groups linked attendance to broader social issues like poverty, mental health, and family engagement.]

Strategic Priority 2: Grow the Educator Pipeline

The single most important in-school factor associated with student achievement is the quality of the educator a student engages with daily. Every child deserves access to high-quality educators, supported by high-quality leaders and support staff. (Note: The NDE recognizes the importance of all educators and school personnel; this plan focuses squarely on teachers, recognizing the current classroom teacher needs in the state.)

Strategic Outcome 2.1: Increased supply of teachers

Metrics:

2.1.1. 1,100 students per year will concentrate in the education and training program of study by 2030.

(2023-24 baseline: 552 student concentrators in the education and training program of study)

2.1.2. Decrease by half the number of vacant teacher positions by 2030.

(2023-24 baseline: 200 vacant teacher positions)

2.1.3. Decrease by half the number of unfilled teacher positions by 2030.

(2023-24 baseline: 669 unfilled teacher positions)

[Key Finding: Throughout the NDE’s strategic planning process, stakeholders escalated teacher shortages and retention as one of the state’s most significant challenges in education. Survey respondents and focus group participants cited low pay, lack of respect, and burnout as major factors.]

Potential Strategies:

- Support schools in the implementation of education and training programs of study
- Direct resources to incentivize teaching as a career
- Explore rules and regulations revisions related to teacher certification

Strategic Priority 3: Equip the Workforce

Nebraskans are best prepared to participate in the workforce when they are ready for what is next after high school, whether a career or postsecondary training or education. Students and clients must have the foundational knowledge to earn a family-sustaining wage. The NDE will support the preparation of life-long learners who are engaged, productive members of their communities, state, and nation. Learners will have transferable, career-readiness skills like critical thinking, communication, and empathy.

Strategic Outcome 3.1: Increased postsecondary access and attainment

Metrics:

3.1.1: 94% of students will graduate by 2030.

(2023-24 baseline: 88% graduation rate)

3.1.2: 50% of students will engage in dual enrollment by 2030.

(2023-24 baseline: 33% of students are engaged in dual enrollment)

3.1.3. 77% of students will concentrate in a CTE career cluster by 2030.

(2023-24 baseline: 54% of students are CTE concentrators)

3.1.4. Partner in the creation of a system to capture the number of industry-recognized credentials obtained by Nebraska graduates.

Strategic Outcome 3.2: Improved skill attainment for clients and learners

Metrics:

3.2.1. 47.2% of VR clients will receive a credential of value by 2030

(2023-24 baseline: 42% of clients receive a credential of value)

3.2.2. 63.6% of VR clients will be employed in quarter four after exit from services by 2030

(2023-24 baseline: 56.7% of clients are employed in quarter four)

3.2.3. 1000 students per year will achieve the Seal of Biliteracy by 2030

(2023-24 Baseline: 384 students achieve the Seal of Biliteracy)

[Key Finding: Workforce shortages across the state are especially evident in education, and even more acute in specific areas.]

Potential Strategies:

- Coordinate with schools and other education partners to provide resources and support to attain each metric
- Coordinate with partner state agencies and the business community to ensure workforce needs are addressed
- Direct financial and human resources to support the strategic outcomes

[Key Finding: Students expressed a desire to learn and experience greater opportunities to problem-solve and develop a sense of lifelong learning.]

Strategic Priority 4: Provide Exceptional Service

The NDE will improve efficiencies and systems to serve our agency and the state with a high-quality, exceptional service mindset, while upholding our constitutional and statutory duties.

(Note: For this strategic priority, example metrics are offered for illustration, as each office within the NDE will be responsible for operationalizing how the respective office reports on each strategic outcome.)

Strategic Outcome 4.1: Improved agency-wide efficiency

Example metrics: average number of days for invoice processing; average number of days to complete the contract routing process; average number of days for educator certification approvals.

Strategic Outcome 4.2: Increased responsiveness and communication

Example metrics: average number of hours/days to respond to emails and calls; average number of days to respond to help desk tickets.

Strategic Outcome 4.3: Improved capacity building

Example metrics: number of cross training opportunities; number of identified succession planning opportunities.

Potential Strategies:

- Implement a customer service model based on the organizational values
- Implement an employee goal model based on the organizational values
- Provide training and support for employees based on the organizational values

Implementing the Plan

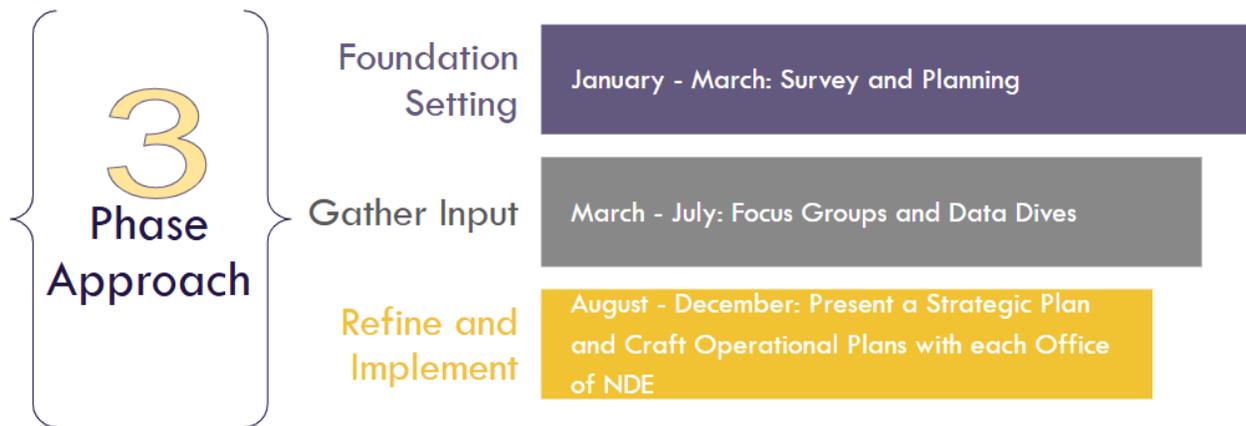
Upon approval of the plan by the state board of education, the commissioner of education is charged with implementation and reporting on achievement, leading to measurable success.

The first three Strategic Priorities will be implemented through **Action Teams**, appointed by the commissioner of education. Each action team will have a designated leader and will consist of cross-agency representatives, given the task of addressing one of the identified strategic priorities. Each action team will inherit the metrics identified in the strategic plan and will set strategies and timelines necessary to accomplish the outcomes by way of a commissioner approved **Action Plan**. Action teams will ensure alignment of agency resources and engage with external stakeholders. Additional responsibilities will include data management, reporting, and regular updates to the commissioner, who will in turn, report to the state board of education. The Commissioner's Office and Office of Policy and Strategic Initiatives will provide administrative support and coordination to the action teams.

The fourth Strategic Priority will be implemented through **Operational Plans** with assigned responsibility to each office administrator within the agency. Each office administrator in the agency will be tasked to lead their respective staff teams in identifying relevant metrics and strategies in support of the strategic outcomes. The Commissioner's Office and Office of Policy and Strategic Initiatives will provide administrative support and coordination to office administrators in the development of their respective operational plans. Office administrators will report on key metrics to the commissioner, who in turn, will report summary highlights to the state board of education.

Appendix A Summary of the Strategic Planning Process

The Nebraska Department of Education followed a three-phase approach to strategic planning: Phase I Foundation Setting, Phase II Gather Input, and Phase III Refine and Implement. Among these three phases, the staff of the NDE gathered data from five sources to inform the future strategic plan. These three phases and five data sources are summarized below with additional information available at www.education.ne.gov/commissioner/2026-strategic-plan/.



Phase I: Foundation Setting occurred between January and March 2025. During this time, NDE staff created and distributed surveys. While open to the public, the NDE coordinated the logistics needed to meet citizens and partners in a regional approach. Phase I ended with the closing of the public survey and nearly 2,000 responses from staff, teachers, administrators, community partners, and citizens of Nebraska. This **survey** is the first of five data sources that guide the work of the strategic plan, and is summarized at this link:

https://www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Strat-Plan-Survey-Summary_4.14.25.pdf.

Phase II: Gather Input through regional and public focus groups, and analyze the data collected during Phase I. Between March and July 2025, the NDE staff studied the data collected from the public survey and used the gaps to solicit future feedback opportunities. For example, the public reached near consensus that the education system should have these three values: communication, respect, and accountability. With additional time and modes of communication, the NDE was able to ask for standard definitions of those values as they relate to our state, our students, and our work.

Phase II also allowed the NDE staff to meet with more than 200 partners in 10 communities. These **community focus groups**, the second of five data sources, allowed public input on the NDE's strategic planning process. Additionally, the NDE staff and commissioner were able to secure valuable time with and feedback with students in four communities during **student focus groups**, the third of five data sources. The NDE staff then met with partners of the education system to discuss the work currently underway at the NDE through SWOT analyses. SWOT analysis includes examining the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the work of the NDE and our partners. First, the NDE staff leading these efforts met with each of the 16 offices of the NDE. These **Internal SWOT Analyses** were the fourth of five data sources. Next, NDE staff asked for feedback from partners. These **External SWOT Analyses** were the final of five data sources.

Phase III: Refine and Implement is the final phase of work, executed from August to December 2025. The NDE's staff drafted the outline of the strategic plan under the guidance of Commissioner Maher. This framework was taken to the State Board of Education at an August work session. Feedback was collected from board members with additional insight from employers, philanthropic partners, and school leaders. With additional context from these partners and the feedback collected in Phases I and II, the NDE staff drafted a strategic plan.

Final approval is expected from the State Board of Education prior to implementation. In preparation for implementation, staff began creating operational plan templates that will be utilized by each office of the NDE and cross-agency teams. These templates are being developed to address each strategic priority and are intended to aid each NDE employee to see their work tied to the mission of the organization and the strategic priorities of Nebraska's education system. The public can expect to see the results of this work online at www.education.ne.gov/commissioner/2026-strategic-plan/ and during State Board of Education meetings.



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 24, 2025

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Ami Huff
General Counsel

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM:

- Adopt revisions to the Board Operating Policies
- Adopt revisions Agency Management Policies

AGENDA ITEM TYPE (contract/grant/rule/program/other): Board policies.

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

As a result of discussion in the Executive Committee on August 7, 2025, in Lincoln, to review the current Board Operating Policies, NDE staff proposes the attached revisions as follows:

1. BOP 1.06: Language related to Public Participation to clarify the topic matter to be addressed in public comment.
2. AMP 2.01: Use of the term “Internal Operating Procedure” instead of “Administrative Memoranda” to reflect NDE current practice.

All proposed revisions are in legislative format.

Revisions to the BOP and AMP require a majority vote (BOP 1.15).

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): December, 2025

ESTIMATED COST: \$0.00

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS: Not applicable.

- Indicate the Funding Source:
- New or Renewal:

- If renewal, date of first approval:

FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT: Not applicable.

- Indicate the method of procurement:
- Rationale for method of procurement:
- Rationale for contractor selection:

FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS: Not applicable.

- Describe the grantee selection process:

BOP 1.06

Public Participation at Board Meetings

The Board establishes the following procedures with regard to public participation in the meetings of the Board.

The published agenda of meetings of the Board shall contain an item identified as public comment period. This period may be available to any person who wishes to address the Board on any matter **that is on the agenda and within the Board's authority to act**. Up to ninety minutes will be allowed for public comment period. A majority of members present and voting may take action to extend the total amount of time allowed for the public comment period. A majority of members present and voting may also take action to allow or terminate public comment at any time during a meeting. Each person may address the Board for up to five minutes. A majority of members present and voting may take action to reduce or extend the amount of individual time allotted to all speakers. If at any time persons appearing before the Board exceed the time limitations set forth in this policy or on the agenda, or become abusive or threatening in language or behavior, it shall be the responsibility of the President to refuse permission to continue to address the Board.

Each individual speaking to the Board will be required to complete a "Sign-in" card for identification of oneself. Individuals are required to include on the Sign-In card their name, address, and name of any organization represented. Individuals may be prohibited to speak in public comment if the Sign-In card does not include the required information. Persons speaking to the Board during public comment should state their name, city, and state at the beginning of their allotted time and may submit printed materials for the Board but may not use any other form of media. Anyone refusing to be identified will be prohibited from speaking.

Generally, Board members will not engage in dialogue during the public comment period. A Board member may request from the President to ask a clarifying question of a public comment speaker for the purpose of understanding a point or statement made by the speaker. Asking a clarifying question should not result in extended dialogue.

Persons may address the Board for public comment purposes by written submission in lieu of live testimony. Such written submissions must be provided 24 hours prior to the start of the public meeting where public comment is scheduled, or by close of business of the Thursday prior to any meeting scheduled for a Monday and is limited to 750 words. Written public comments submitted in accordance with these requirements will be provided to the Board members and become part of the record of the meeting, but will not be read aloud during the meeting.

Revision History

- Created: 1981
- Last Revised: 2024
- Reviewed: 1984, 1995, 2006, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017, 2020, 2022, 2023, 2024
- Approved: 08/02/2024

Board Action History

- 11/15/1981 – Prior BCBI
(No copies of prior version.)
- 12/07/1984 – Prior 9322 BOP
(Same text as BCBI, except for deletion of statute references.)
- 12/08/1995 – Prior B12
(Similar text in first 3 paragraphs, but appearance extensions may also be granted by majority, public comment period reduced from 30 to 15 minutes for items not on agenda [and from 6 to 3 persons], added agenda item public comment designations, and option for allowing additional public comment during meetings.)
- 09/07/2006 – B12
(Added majority vote option for extending public comment period.)
- 03/05/2013 – B12
(Changed wording regarding the Public Comment Period.)
- 01/07/2014 – B12
(Changed wording regarding the Public Comment Period.)

Board Action History (cont'd)

- 05/06/2016 – B12
(Added language for special appearances.)
- 03/03/2017 – B12
(Align language with B5 (formerly B11) regarding dates of Board Meetings.)
- 03/03/2017 – B12(B9)
(Reorganized Board Policy Reference Manual with new designated letters for categories of policy [P], bylaws [B] and position statements [S]. B12 is now B9)
- 12/11/2020 – B9
(Four-year review. Added language to reflect current approaches providing public participation in remote audio video/audio technologies at Board meetings.)
- 01/07/2022 - B9
(Changed wording regarding the Public Comment Period.)
- 12/02/2022 – B9(BOP 1.06)
(Reorganized Board bylaws and policies with new designated letters for categories of bylaws [BLW], board operating policies [BOP] and agency management policies [AMP]. B9 is now BOP 1.06.)
- 01/05/2024 – BOP 1.06
(Reordered information to organize like information together; deleted pandemic-specific paragraph; deleted opening paragraph and paragraph on contested cases; revised to include consistent language throughout the document.)
- 08/02/2024 – BOP 1.06
(Revised wording regarding the Public Comment Period required for all meetings per statutory revision; speakers shall state name, city, and state at beginning of public comment; reduced Public Comment Period from two hours to ninety minutes.)

Cross-References

- 84-1412 R.R.S.– Public participation.
- 79-317(2) R.R.S. – Public participation.
- State Board Policy B5, “Board Meeting Notification for Regular Meetings”

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AMP 2.01

Human Resources Policies

Personnel Policies and Internal Operating Policies ~~Administrative Memoranda~~

The Commissioner is the administrative head of the Department and has the authority to establish and maintain an appropriate system of personnel administration and such administrative rules and regulations as are necessary for the proper execution of duties and responsibilities placed upon him or her. The Department Personnel Rules for employees exempt from the Bargaining Agreement shall be approved by the Board as these are subject to the Nebraska Administrative Procedures Act.

The Board also authorizes the Commissioner to promulgate a series of internal operating procedures for the Department at his or her discretion and to issue, revise, and update such internal operating procedures without subsequent approval by this Board.

Professional Personnel Hiring

The Board shall, upon the recommendation of the Commissioner of Education, appoint and fix the compensation of all new professional positions in the Department, including any Deputy Commissioner. A new professional position is defined as one that requires specialized knowledge and intensive academic preparation and was not previously part of the organization of the agency.

The Commissioner may approve employment of any persons hired as a replacement Deputy Commissioner or a new professional position in the interim between Board meetings; however, such appointments are still subject to Board approval at the subsequent Board meeting.

Labor Negotiations

The Commissioner shall act as representative of the Board in all labor negotiations and shall appoint the bargaining team and chief negotiator. The Commissioner shall advise the Board prior to, and on a regular basis, during negotiations. Bargaining Agreements shall be approved by the Board.

Nebraska State Board of Education
Agency Management Policies

Equal Opportunity Employment and Nondiscrimination

The Board prohibits employment practices by the Department that are a violation of state and federal law.

Revision History

- Created: 1977
- Reviewed: 1978, 1979, 1984, 1995, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2016, 2020, 2022, 2023
- Approved: 01/05/2024

Board Action History

- 03/11/1977 – Prior BIB
(Mentioned statute authorizing system of personnel administration in list of Commissioner’s duties.)
- 07/07/1978 – Prior HAE
(Board appoints negotiating team and chief spokesman)
- 07/02/1979 – Prior GAAA
(Equal Opportunity Employment)
- 12/07/1984 – Prior 2231 DO
(Referenced personnel statute as in former BIB, and covered personnel policies, administrative memorandums, and State school policy manual)
- 12/07/1984 – Prior 4135.3 DO
(Same as former HAE)
- 12/07/1984 – 4118.11 DO
(Same as GAAA, without statute references)
- 12/08/1995 – Prior D4
(Combined 3 prior policies, but designated Commissioner to act as labor representative and to appoint bargaining team. Revised non-discrimination statement to cite statute.)
- 11/03/2006 – D4
(Deleted reference to State school policy manual and Personnel manual and added 48-004 R.R.S. reference.)
- 10/08/2009 – D4
(Amended to include Subsection (4) of 48-1004 R.R.S., which prohibits retaliation.)

Board Action History (cont'd)

- 03/03/2017 – D4(P4)
(Reorganized Board Policy Reference Manual with new designated letters for categories of policy [P], bylaws [B] and position statements [S]. D4 is now P4.)
- 09/04/2020 – P4
(Revisions providing further clarification to existing language that aligns with the Board's approval of the NDE Personnel Rules and also an addition that makes reference to the Department following not only state law concerning employment discrimination, but also Federal Law.)
- 12/02/2022 – P4
(Combined prior P6 with P4.)
- 12/02/2022 – P4(AMP 2.01)
(Reorganized Board bylaws and policies with new designated letters for categories of bylaws [BLW], board operating policies [BOP] and agency management policies [AMP]. P4 is now AMP 2.01.)
- 01/05/2024 – AMP 2.01
(Removed language deemed unnecessary; clarified definition of new professional position; clarified replacement Deputy Commissioner or new professional position hires are subject to approval at subsequent Board meetings; removed language referencing state statutes verbatim related to employment practices; revised to include consistent language throughout the document.)

Cross-References

- 79-306 R.R.S.
- 48-1004 R.R.S.
- 49-1104 R.R.S.
- 93 NAC 1-16

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STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Date: October 2, 2025

The Budget and Finance Committee reports that at its Thursday, October 2nd meeting, members present were Kristin Christensen, Maggie Douglas, Kirk Penner and Lisa Schonhoff. The Committee reviewed three action items. The first item reviewed was the submission of the 2025/26 Deficit Budget Request. The Committee recommends approval of this item. The second action item reviewed was a potential contract for a program quality anchor for results matter and step up to quality. The Committee had no recommendation on this item. The last action item reviewed was for a contract for early childhood integrated data system. The Committee recommends approval of this item.

The Committee then reviewed one discussion item for board member travel expenses noting no concerns.

Last, the Committee reviewed four information items including an update on the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant expenditures, a proposed contract for a Veterans Education Management System Application and Database, and a proposed contract for Federal IDEA and Early Childhood Data Application Development, and a Contract for 21st Century Community Learning Centers Statewide Evaluation.

This concludes the Budget and Finance Committee report.

Kristin Christensen, Chair

*Submit a printed copy to the Committee Chair and email to the Recording Secretary.

Updated 02.02.2023



2025-2026 Board Travel

At-A-Glance

Budgeted

\$19,754

Monthly Spending

\$3,250
Average

Annual Spending

\$39,000
Projected

Expenditures

Lodging
Meals
Mileage



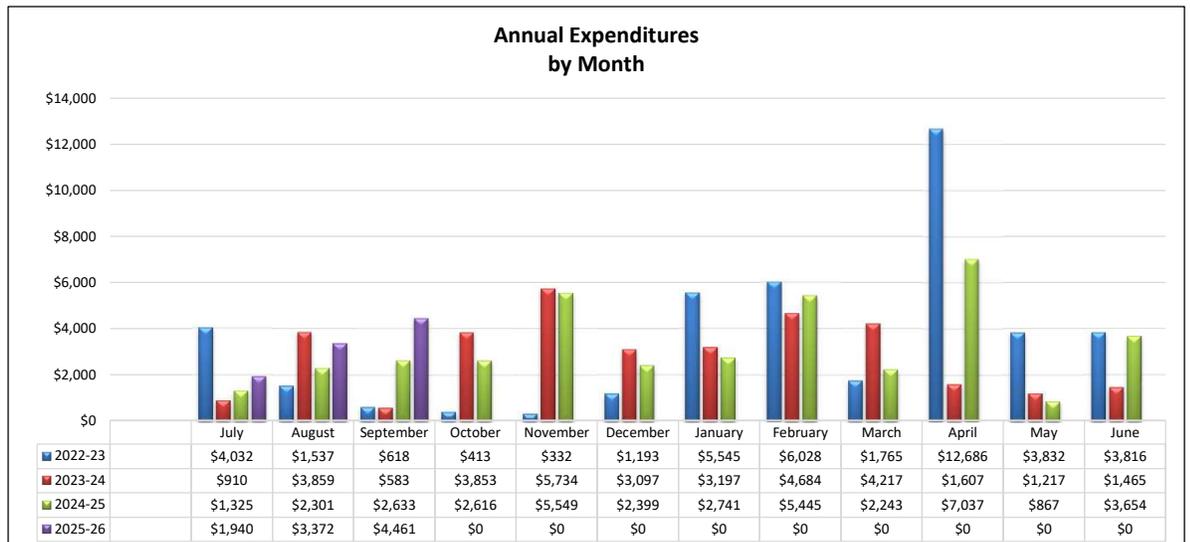
Board Member Activity

District	Board Member
1	Patsy Koch Johns <i>Incumbent</i>
1	Kristin Christensen <i>Appointed Dec. 2024</i>
2	Lisa Fricke <i>Incumbent</i>
2	Maggie Douglas <i>Appointed Dec. 2024</i>
3	Patti Gubbels <i>Incumbent</i>
3	Lisa Schonohoff <i>Appointed Dec. 2024</i>
4	Jacquelyn Morrison <i>Incumbent</i>
4	Liz Renner <i>Appointed Dec. 2024</i>
5	Kirk Penner
6	Sherry Jones
7	Elizabeth Tegtmeier - President
8	Deborah Neary - Vice President

Current Year July 2025-June 2026		
September	Year-To-Date	
\$0	\$0	
\$14	\$720	
\$0	\$0	
\$294	\$1,107	
\$0	\$0	
\$1,446	\$2,643	
\$0	\$0	
\$154	\$764	
\$14	\$44	
\$750	\$1,059	
\$1,635	\$3,252	
\$154	\$184	
\$4,461	\$9,773	
Annual Budget	\$19,754	
Under or -Over Budget	\$9,981	

Prior Year July 2024-June 2025		
September	Year-To-Date	
\$12	\$39	
\$0	\$0	
\$502	\$870	
\$0	\$0	
\$491	\$1,053	
\$0	\$0	
\$12	\$560	
\$0	\$0	
\$12	\$39	
\$682	\$1,624	
\$908	\$1,682	
\$12	\$39	
\$2,633	\$5,907	
	\$19,754	
	\$13,847	

Variance		
September	Year-To-Date	
-\$12	-\$39	
\$14	\$720	
-\$502	-\$870	
\$294	\$1,107	
-\$491	-\$1,053	
\$1,446	\$2,643	
-\$12	-\$560	
\$154	\$764	
\$2	\$4	
\$67	-\$564	
\$727	\$1,571	
\$142	\$144	
\$1,828	\$3,866	



In-State Travel Authorization Reports - October

Name	Event Name	Date	Location	Board Bylaw B16 Code A-F
Kristin Christensen	2025 NASB State Education Conference	November 20, 2025	CHI Health Center - Omaha	E
Lisa Schonhoff	2025 NASB State Education Conference	November 20, 2025	CHI Health Center - Omaha	E
Sherry Jones	(NONE)			
Elizabeth Tegtmeier	Nebraska Teacher of the Year Award	September 15, 2025	Mullen, NE	E
	ESU 17 Meeting	September 16, 2025	Ainsworth, NE	E

In-State Travel Authorization Reports - October

Name	Event Name	Date	Location	Board Bylaw B16 Code A-F
Maggie Douglas	2025 NASB State Education Conference	11/20/2025	CHI Health Center - Omaha	E
Liz Renner	2025 NASB State Education Conference	11/20/2025	CHI Health Center - Omaha	E
Kirk Penner	(NONE)			
Deborah Neary	2025 NASB State Education Conference	11/19/2025 - 11/21/2025	CHI Health Center - Omaha	E



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 10, 2025

TO: Brian L. Maher.
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Bryce Wilson, Finance Officer

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: 2025-26 Deficit Budget Request (BF.082025.002)

AGENDA ITEM TYPE (contract/grant/rule/program/other): Other

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Section 81-126 R.R. of Nebraska provides for the Governor to make recommendations to the Legislature as to the deficiency funding requirements of the various agencies, boards, and commissions of State government.

Section 81-126 further defines deficiency as “any increase or decrease in any fund source for any budget program for the biennium in progress.”

The Department’s deficit budget request must be submitted to State Budget Division for consideration by October 15th, 2025.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): NDE reviewed potential biennial requests during the September 2025 board meeting and is requesting the State Board’s approval during the October 2025 meeting.

ESTIMATED COST: N/A

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:

- Indicate the Funding Source:
- New or Renewal:
- If renewal, date of first approval:

FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT:

- Indicate the method of procurement:
- Rationale for method of procurement:
- Rationale for contractor selection:

FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS:

- Describe the grantee selection process:

**Updated 07.06.2023*

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
2026 Legislative Session - Deficit Request
AS OF SEPTEMBER 23, 2025

		2025-26			
Issue Description		NDE Request			
GENERAL ISSUES	25	Vacation/Sick Leave Payout Incurred since 7/1/2025	General	\$74,666	Amounts will be updated until submission 10/24/2025
			Cash	\$0	
			Federal	\$29,259	
			PSL	\$47,993	
158	TEEOSA Aid Adjustment Reduce TEEOSA - Premium Tax Based on Certified Valuations	General	Place Holder		
		General		\$74,666	
		Cash		\$0	
		Federal		\$29,259	

		2025-26			2026-27				
		NDE 31.579% Increase <small>(11%, 18.54%, Compounded)</small>	LB 264 Enacted <small>(11% Increase)</small>	Request (NDE Increase minus Enacted)	NDE 31.579% Increase <small>(11%, 18.54%, Compounded)</small>	LB 264 Enacted <small>(11% Increase)</small>	Request (NDE Increase minus Enacted)		
HEALTH INSURANCE	25	Education Administration	General	\$461,096	\$116,556	\$344,540	\$652,806	\$245,933	\$406,873
			Cash	\$56,045	\$15,180	\$40,865	\$68,570	\$32,030	\$36,540
			Federal	\$801,148	\$176,253	\$624,895	\$1,057,577	\$371,894	\$685,683
	161	Education Innovation	Cash	\$19,685	\$3,278	\$16,407	\$24,571	\$6,917	\$17,654
	351	Vocational Rehabilitation	General	\$299,343	\$57,981	\$241,362	\$420,653	\$122,340	\$298,313
			Cash	\$256	\$4,928	-\$4,672	\$304	\$10,398	-\$10,094
			Federal	\$923,632	\$271,865	\$651,767	\$1,214,923	\$573,635	\$641,288
	352	Disability Determinations	Federal	\$1,018,063	\$144,903	\$873,160	\$1,218,312	\$305,745	\$912,567
			General	\$760,439	\$174,537	\$585,902	\$1,073,459	\$368,273	\$705,186
			Cash	\$75,986	\$23,386	\$52,600	\$93,445	\$49,345	\$44,100
		Federal	\$2,742,843	\$593,021	\$2,149,822	\$3,490,812	\$1,251,274	\$2,239,538	
Total Health Plan Increase			\$3,579,268	\$790,944	\$2,788,324	\$4,657,716	\$1,668,892	\$2,988,824	



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 23, 2025

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Melody Hobson

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: Program quality anchor contract (BF.092025.003)

AGENDA ITEM TYPE: Contract

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- Step up to Quality is Nebraska’s early childhood quality rating and improvement system for early childhood programs. It is available to school district early childhood programs, Head Start, licensed child care and community preschools
 - Nebraska’s Step Up to Quality Child Care Act (R.R.S. § 71-1952 to 71-1964) requires the Nebraska Departments of Education (NDE) and Nebraska Health and Human Services to collaborate to operate a quality rating and improvement system for Nebraska’s early childhood programs, including establishing and using quality rating criteria for early childhood programs. See additional information about Step Up to Quality.
- Results Matter Nebraska is a child, program, and family outcomes measurement system designed and implemented to improve programs and supports for all young children served by school districts and their community partners. Additional information about Results Matter can be found on the NDE website at <https://www.education.ne.gov/oc/results-matter-nebraska/#1680724617303-26e6594d-9a45>
- One component of both Step Up to Quality and Results Matter is measurement of aspects of program quality. This is done using validated program quality tools. One set of tools that are used are the Environment Rating Scales (ERS). These rely on highly trained observers to complete the assessments in classrooms or family child care programs across the state.
- The accuracy of the system is dependent on the training of program quality observers. Part of that training includes achieving and maintaining a high level of reliability with “anchors” (experts who have achieved reliability with the authors/publishers of the program quality tools). The NDE is requesting approval to contract with Erica Timperley to be the anchor for the Environment Rating Scales (ERS).
- Ms. Timperley will be training others to use the ERS as well as completing program quality assessments in addition to her work as an anchor for the ERS.
- The selection of this contractor was done through NDE procurement procedures.
- This contract is coming to the board for a multi-year project as an action item.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING: Information, September 2025 – Action, October 2025

ESTIMATED COST:

Year 1 \$75,000
Year 2 \$75,000
Year 3 \$75,000
Year 4 \$75,000

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:

- Indicate the Funding Sources:
 - Federal - Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)
 - This is part of the annual agreement for use of CCDF funds between the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and the NDE. It is a federally allowable use of the CCDF/QRIS funding. The purpose of CCDF QRIS funding is to improve the quality of early childhood education and care programs through state Quality Rating and Improvement Systems
 - State – Step Up to Quality and General Funds - this is part of budgeted activities
 - State - Early Childhood Grant Program Technical Assistance Set Aside – This is an allowable use of these dollars

- New or Renewal: New

- If renewal, date of first approval:

FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT:

- Indicate the method of procurement: Open bidding

- Rationale for method of procurement: This contract method is required for contracts over \$50,000

- Rationale for contractor selection: Ms. Timperley’s reliability with entities authorized by the publisher were above 90%, which is the threshold for reliability at the anchor level. She will be the Nebraska anchor for three different scales. The three scales are listed along with her reliability score for each.
 - Family Child Care Rating Scale (100%),
 - Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (94% average),
 - Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (98%).

FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS: NA

**Updated 08.15.2023*

High-quality early learning programs have a lifelong impact on young children.

A person's brain develops the fastest from birth to age 5. Early learning builds the foundation for development and skills needed in school, work and life.

AN OVERWHELMING AMOUNT OF RESEARCH SHOWS THAT CHILDREN WHO RECEIVE HIGH-QUALITY EARLY EDUCATION:

-  **HAVE A JOB**
-  **EARN HIGHER WAGES**
-  **SHOW IMPROVED READING AND MATH SKILLS**
-  **GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL**
-  **ATTEND COLLEGE**

As Nebraska's Quality Rating and Improvement System, Step Up to Quality helps early childhood educators continuously improve the quality of their care so the children they serve have the very best start in life.

Join the hundreds of child care providers who are participating in Step Up to Quality.

Enroll at education.ne.gov/stepuptoquality



ENROLL TODAY

Visit education.ne.gov/stepuptoquality

For more information:

nde.stepuptoquality@nebraska.gov
844-807-5712

Nebraska Department of Education

Step Up to Quality
P.O. Box 94987
Lincoln NE. 68509-4987

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Scan this QR code to go directly to our website.



Helping early childhood educators

provide the best care possible to children in Nebraska





Quality matters.

Step Up to Quality is not a typical rating system, it's a journey toward continuous quality improvement. Successful providers continue to infuse a quality mindset into their program's culture every day.

Step Up to Quality focuses on the following quality standards, which are integrated within the entire process:

- Program administration
- Child outcomes
- Professional development and training
- Family engagement and partnerships
- Learning environment and program curriculum

Every child matters.

Most child care and early childhood education programs in Nebraska can participate in Step Up to Quality, including:

- Licensed family child care homes
- Licensed child care centers
- Head Start and Early Head Start programs
- Public school early childhood education programs
- Licensed preschools

Every provider matters.

When providers enroll in Step Up to Quality, they join a supportive and diverse community of early childhood education professionals from across the state. They also have special access to resources that help them improve the quality of their care:

- Coaching
- Professional development and training
- Increased Child Care Subsidy reimbursement
- Incentive bonuses
- Financial support and grants through partner organizations

For more information about the benefits of participating in Step Up to Quality, visit education.ne.gov/stepuptoquality



Every step matters.

While Step Up to Quality is a rigorous process, it's also self-paced. Providers receive supportive guidance and helpful resources along the way.

STEP 1

- Complete orientation
- Complete program application
- Enter director and staff information into NECPRS.ne.gov

STEP 2

- Complete training sessions:
 - ▶ Special Care
 - ▶ At least 4 of the 7 Early Learning Guidelines Domains
 - ▶ Introduction to the Environment Rating Scale OR Introduction to the CLASS
- Complete Go NAPSACC Initial Self-Assessments

STEP 3 ONLY OPTION (*no observation*)

- Gather and organize evidence for quality indicators selected on Rating Request Form
- Submit the Rating Request Form to Step Up to Quality for the on-site rating review

STEPS 3-5 (*with observation*)

- Gather and organize evidence for quality indicators selected on Rating Request Form
- Prepare for observation
 - ▶ Choose either the Environment Rating Scales or the CLASS observation tool
 - ▶ Complete relevant observation tool training
- Submit the Rating Request Form to Step Up to Quality for the on-site rating review and observation(s)

Please note that pre-kindergarten programs established by public schools, Head Start programs and nationally accredited programs are eligible to enter at Step 3.



A thousand reasons to celebrate this past year



In early 2025, Step Up to Quality reached an exciting milestone: more than 1,000 providers participating in our program. This is a great achievement not only for our expanding community of providers but for elevating the overall caliber of early childhood education in Nebraska.

Since launching our program in 2014, more than 50,000 children in the state have benefitted from these enriched learning environments.

This accomplishment is only possible because of our dedicated educators, caregivers and child care directors. Your important work is actively making a difference right now while supporting a thriving future for our state, one child at a time. The children in your care are learning, socializing, developing and growing because of your hard work.

Just as we encourage Nebraska providers to become better and better with Step Up to Quality, our team is also committed to continual improvement, which led to a complete redesign of our website. We refreshed our navigational structure, added a search function, consolidated parent and provider resources, and created a comprehensive blog page with filters for content types.

We also partnered with an accessibility consultant to audit our two previous websites and conduct user testing to ensure the new site was as accessible as possible, including color contrast, image descriptions and short summaries at the bottoms of main pages to

help minimize cognitive load. All of these updates not only improve our website's experience for people with disabilities — they benefit every site visitor! Moving forward, we will continue to implement updates that increase accessibility even further.

Thank you for being part of the Step Up to Quality family. We're excited to continue our own journey of quality improvement while supporting yours, and we can't wait to see how many more providers step up in the future.



1,036

CHILD CARE PROGRAMS
from across Nebraska are participating in Step Up to Quality



53,796

CHILDREN SERVED
in participating Step Up to Quality programs since 2014



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 16, 2025

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Lane Carr, Policy and Strategic Initiatives

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: Action Item: Approve Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) Expenditures and authorize the Commissioner to enter into contracts for these expenditures.

AGENDA ITEM TYPE (contract/grant/rule/program/other): Contract

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) was originally a joint partnership between NDE and DHHS to develop the infrastructure to combine, secure, and report information from a variety of early learning services and programs. The ability to gather and combine multiple sources of early childhood data is essential to gaining a better understanding of how early childhood experiences affect students' later educational performance and outcomes. Prior to development of ECIDS, no infrastructure existed to house this data.

Development of the technical infrastructure was paid for by DHHS over multiple years from a combination of federal funding sources. The ECIDS infrastructure resides at NDE and is managed by NDE. Staffing costs for ECIDS were originally paid for by DHHS from the same combination of funds used for construction of the technical infrastructure for the system and contracts for the ECIDS Lead, other program staff positions and infrastructure development have been approved by the Board since 2019. NDE received general funds from the Legislature for 2025-2026 to continue non-DHHS-related funding for the ECIDS Project Lead (1 FTE), a part-time technical lead (.5 FTE), cloud hosting costs and ECIDS-related travel. A description of the primary job duties of the ECIDS Project Lead is attached as Attachment A.

LR205 was introduced during the 2025-26 Legislative session with the goal of examining “barriers to and benefits of data sharing between the State Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services for purposes of the Early Childhood Integrated Data System.” The interim study for this resolution is now underway and will examine the following issues:

- (1) Describing the Early Childhood Integrated Data System as it currently exists and the historical context for its development.
- (2) Examining the use of the Early Childhood Integrated Data System to maximize efficiencies for participating state agencies to meet legislatively mandated reporting requirements, providing

accountability for public dollars, and supporting parental choice in early childhood settings;

(3) Analyzing the statutory barriers to interagency data sharing and potential solutions;

(4) Examining data privacy procedures and data access rules maintained in the Early Childhood Integrated Data System;

(5) Analyzing the infrastructure necessary to improve the Early Childhood Integrated Data System, including funding; and

(6) Reviewing early childhood integrated data systems in other states.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): September 2025

ESTIMATED COST: Not to exceed \$250,000.

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:

- Indicate the Funding Source: State funds; The 2025-26 funds for these contracts were provided to NDE by the Legislature in 2025.
- New or Renewal: New. As noted above, NDE ECIDS-related contracts previously existed that were paid for from a different funding source; these contracts have reached the maximum allowable number of renewals and a new contract must be executed.
- If renewal, date of first approval: N/A

FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT:

- Indicate the method of procurement: Non-Competitive Negotiation for ECIDS Lead position (Ben Baumfalk); Existing state contract with OCIO/Covendis will be used to procure technical assistance and does not require an RFP.
- Rationale for method of procurement: Non-competitive sole source procurement will be used to contract with the existing ECIDS Project Lead. The availability of sole source procurement as a permissible procurement method is based on either the uniqueness of the service provided or sole availability at the location of the service. ECIDS systems are unique and require a specialized knowledge base for development. Ben Baumfalk has been the ECIDS Project Lead for about five years and possesses extensive knowledge of the history, development, and implementation of the Nebraska ECIDS system specifically. He is currently the sole source of this knowledge. The unique knowledge and skills of our existing contractor cannot be obtained from another source at this time. The ability to have continuity of knowledge and skills is essential as we move through a critical year in continuing to develop existing ECIDS capacity and participating in the ECIDS Legislative Study.
- Rationale for contractor selection: See above. Ben Baumfalk is the most comprehensive source of ECIDS knowledge and possesses relevant skillsets essential to project success.

FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS:

- Describe the grantee selection process: N/A

**Updated 08.15.2023*

Attachment A: ECIDS Project Lead Duties and Deliverables

The ECIDS Lead is to perform the following specific activities, deliverables or other services under the Contract:

Activities

- Serves as the primary stakeholder and public liaison of the Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS)
- Directs a portfolio of projects designed to improve education system outcomes through continuous improvement efforts and advancement of agency policy changes (including but not limited to those listed below under “Deliverables.”)
- Applies change, risk and resources management aiming to maximize return on investment.
- Adapts to multiple roles including facilitator, project manager, consultant, process change analyst and serve as the single point of contact.
- Establishes a written course of action to accomplish specific goals aligned with “Mapping Nebraska’s ECE Technology Ecosystem” report (November 2024), facilitates progress, makes recommendations on allocation of resources based on available state allocation and evaluates success towards measurable outcomes as aligned with the report or the Legislative interim study on ECIDS.
- Attend meetings and collaborate with the Early Childhood Data Coalition and other experts from Early Childhood stakeholder groups to communicate effective strategies for data integration and use of data to support policy.
- Establishes statewide data governance policies and procedures through stakeholder engagement and administrative and/or legislative activities in accordance with the Legislative interim study recommendations on ECIDS by the end of the contract year.
- Engage in product development planning and activities, including the vision, strategy, roadmap and tactical execution (including but not limited to those listed below under “Deliverables”)
- Translates product roadmap features into well-defined and documented product requirements including features, user stories, and acceptance test criteria.

Deliverables

- Convene and facilitate stakeholder groups as needed to implement recommendations from the legislative interim study on ECIDS, documenting processes, decisions, and next steps.
- Document and provide summaries of contacts with cross-agency representatives at least monthly.
- Meet at a minimum of once a month with NDE supervisor to provide updates and status on Data Sharing Agreements/MOUs administered and developed in collaboration with partner entities.

By the end of the contract year:

- Produce a distinct count of children served across agencies using advanced statistical processes, (e.g., HyperLog), with safeguards to prevent sharing of personally identifiable

information (PII) or direct data linkage, in collaboration with NSWERS.

- ECIDS Reactivation and Implementation Plan – Deliver a detailed cost analysis and technical plan outlining the steps, resources, and timeline required to reactivate and fully implement the Nebraska Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS).
- Using data from NDE and endowment provider, design and conduct a pilot study examining child pathways and outcomes within the Sixpence program, including methodology, findings, and recommendations for scaling.
- Develop a comprehensive plan to link early childhood data with K–3 student data through ECIDS, establishing a framework for monitoring Nebraska’s statewide progress toward literacy goals.



STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION PLANNING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Date: October 2, 2025

The Planning and Evaluation Committee reports on their committee meeting on October 2, 2025. The members present were Lisa Schonhoff, Sherry Jones, Deborah Neary, and Kristin Christensen.

The committee discussed one action item related to subject area exams and passing scores for temporary certificates. The committee recommends board approval on this item.

The committee reviewed informational items related to the Community Achievement Plan progress report and timeline, the Assessment and Reporting Plan and Assessment Technical Report, and the K-6 geography and civic standards. NDE staff will bring these items to a future meeting for discussion and subsequent approval, where appropriate.

The committee also reviewed a consent agenda item related to the appointment of individuals to fill vacancies on the Special Education Advisory Council.

This concludes the Planning and Evaluation report.

Lisa Schonhoff, Chair

*Submit a printed copy to the Committee Chair and email to the Recording Secretary.
Updated 02.02.2023



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: September 17, 2025

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Brad Dirksen, Administrator, Accreditation, Certification, & Approval
Katelyn Larsen, Director, Educator Certification

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: Subject Area Examinations and Passing Scores for Temporary Certificates

AGENDA ITEM TYPE (contract/grant/rule/program/other): other

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Since September of 2015, passing a subject area examination, often referred to as content tests, was required to obtain most endorsements. The State Board of Education set the subject area examinations and the minimum passing score for endorsements pursuant to Rule 24. June of 2024 was the most recent approval (attached) of examinations and passing scores used in accordance with Rule 24. Revisions to Rule 24, effective June of 2025, eliminated the requirement for subject examinations for teachers completing an educator preparation program.

While subject area examinations were eliminated in Rule 24, Nebraska Revised State Statute 79-8,145 provides for the issuance of temporary certificates to teach, in-part based on the passing appropriate subject area examinations as designated by the State Board of Education. The subject area examinations designated by the Board for the purpose of Rule 24 were being utilized to issue temporary certificates. The current list also includes administrative endorsements which cannot be utilized in connection to 79-8,145. This agenda item will provide an opportunity for the Board to eliminate administrative endorsements from the list and potentially adjust the list of currently approved subject area examinations with a focus on the issuance of temporary teaching permits.

Since the 2024-2025 school year, the Department has issued approximately 29 temporary certificates. Each certificate includes one endorsement area; below are the endorsements that have appeared on the certificates and their frequency.

- Elementary Education (11)
- Special Education Generalist (10)
- Early Childhood Inclusive (2)

- Business, Marketing, and Information Technology (1)
- English Language Arts (1)
- Family and Consumer Science (1)
- Mathematics (1)
- Middle Level Education, Math (1)
- Secondary English (1)

The majority of teachers holding this certificate are enrolled in an educator preparation program. Three school systems had two teachers with temporary teaching certificates and twenty-three school systems had a single teacher on a temporary teaching certificate. The twenty-six school systems who had a teacher on a temporary teaching certificate vary from large to small schools and are spread across the state.

The Commissioner recommends that the Board set subject area examinations and passing scores for all subject and field endorsements except endorsements that require graduate coursework (Reading Specialist, School Counselor, School Librarian, School Psychologist, and Speech Language Pathologist).

Department staff brought together an advisory group of teachers, administrators, and higher education professionals. The group concurred with the recommendation as noted above.

A prepared list of endorsements and corresponding subject area examinations and passing scores is attached.

Per Committee request, additional information regarding Special Education Generalist subject examination is also attached.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): October 2025

ESTIMATED COST: \$0

**Updated 08.15.2023*

Nebraska – Temporary Certificate: Endorsements, Praxis Subject Assessments, and Passing Scores

Prepared pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §79-8,145

Endorsement Area	Praxis Subject Assessment (Test Code & Name)	Passing Score
Agricultural Education	5701 Agriculture	147
American Sign Language	0634 American Sign Language Proficiency Interview	170
Art	5134 Art: Content Knowledge	158
Biology	5236 Biology	154
Business, Marketing, and Information Technology	5101 Business Education: Content Knowledge	154
Chemistry	5246 Chemistry	146
Early Childhood Inclusive	5024 Education of Young Children	160
Earth and Space Science	5572 Earth and Space Science	154
Economics	5911 Economics	150
Elementary Education	5017 Elementary Education: Curriculum and Instruction Assessment	153
English Language Arts	5039 English Language Arts: Content and Analysis	168
Family and Consumer Sciences Occupational	5123 Family and Consumer Sciences	151
Geography	5921 Geography	157
Health Education	5551 Health Education	155
Health and Physical Education	5857 Health and Physical Education: Content Knowledge	160
Health Sciences Education (Field)	5052 Health Occupations	152
History	5941 World and U.S. History: Content Knowledge	147
Mathematics	5165 Mathematics	159
Middle Level English Language Arts	5047 Middle Grades: English Language Arts	164
Middle Level Mathematics	5164 Middle School: Mathematics	157
Middle Level Science	5442 Middle School: Science	152
Middle Level Social Science	5089 Middle School: Social Studies	155
Music	5114 Music: Content and Instruction	162
Physical Education	5091 Physical Education: Content Knowledge	146
Physics	5266 Physics	145
Political Science	5931 Government/Political Science	149

Psychology	5391 Psychology	154
Science	5436 General Science	141
Secondary English	5039 English Language Arts: Content and Analysis	168
Social Studies	5581 Social Studies: Content Knowledge (or 5081 accepted through 8/2025)	153
Sociology	5952 Sociology	154
Special Education Generalist	5355 Special Education: Core Knowledge/Applications	145
Special Education – Deaf or Hard of Hearing	5272 Special Education: Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students	160
Special Education – Early Childhood	5023 Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education	166
Special Education – Visual Impairment	5282 Special Education: Teaching Students with Visual Impairments	163
Vocal Music	5114 Music: Content and Instruction	162
World Language – French	5174 French: World Language	162
World Language – German	5183 German: World Language	163
World Language – Latin	5601 Latin	155
World Language – Spanish	5195 Spanish: World Language	168



Multistate Standard-Setting Technical Report for the
***Praxis*[®] Special Education: Foundational Knowledge**
(5355)

Student and Teacher Assessments: Validity and Test Use

ETS

Princeton, New Jersey

January 2023

Executive Summary

To support the decision-making process of education agencies establishing a passing score (cut score) for the *Praxis*® Special Education: Foundational Knowledge (5355) test, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a multistate standard-setting study (Tannenbaum, 2011, 2012).

Participating States

Panelists from 14 states were recommended by their respective education agencies. The education agencies recommended panelists with (a) experience as special education teachers or college faculty who prepare those special education teachers and (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning special education teachers.

Recommended Passing Score

ETS provides a recommended passing score from the multistate standard-setting study to help education agencies determine an appropriate operational passing score. For the *Praxis* Special Education: Foundational Knowledge test, the recommended passing score¹ is 62 out of a possible 110 raw-score points. The scale score associated with a raw score of 62 is 145 on a 100–200 scale.

¹ Results from the two panels participating in the study were averaged to produce the recommended passing score.

Introduction

To support the decision-making process for education agencies establishing a passing score (cut score) for the *Praxis*[®] Special Education: Foundational Knowledge (5355) test, research staff from ETS designed and conducted a multistate standard-setting study (Tannenbaum, 2011, 2012) in December 2022. Education agencies² recommended panelists with (a) experience as either special education teachers or (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning special education teachers. Fourteen states (Table 1) were represented by 29 panelists. (See Appendix A for the names and affiliations of the panelists.)

Table 1
Participating States and the Number of Panelists

Arkansas (4 panelists)	Mississippi (2 panelists)
Colorado (2 panelists)	Nebraska (1 panelist)
Delaware (3 panelists)	Nevada (1 panelist)
Idaho (1 panelist)	Rhode Island (1 panelist)
Kansas (2 panelists)	Tennessee (3 panelists)
Kentucky (3 panelists)	West Virginia (1 panelist)
Maryland (1 panelist)	Wyoming (4 panelists)

The following technical report contains three sections. The first section describes the content and format of the test. The second section describes the standard-setting processes and methods. The third section presents the results of the standard-setting study.

ETS provides a recommended passing score from the multistate standard-setting study to education agencies. In each state, the department of education, the board of education, or a designated educator licensure board is responsible for establishing the operational passing score in accordance with applicable regulations. This study provides a recommended passing score, which represents the combined judgments of a group of experienced educators. Each state may want to consider the recommended passing score but also other sources of information when setting the final *Praxis* Special Education: Foundational Knowledge passing score (see Geisinger & McCormick, 2010). A state may

² States and jurisdictions that currently use *Praxis* tests were invited to participate in the multistate standard-setting study.

accept the recommended passing score, adjust the score upward to reflect more stringent expectations, or adjust the score downward to reflect more lenient expectations. There is no *correct* decision; the appropriateness of any adjustment may only be evaluated in terms of its meeting the state’s needs.

Two sources of information to consider when setting the passing score are the standard error of measurement (SEM) and the standard error of judgment (SEJ). The former addresses the reliability of the *Praxis* Special Education: Foundational Knowledge test score and the latter, the reliability of panelists’ passing-score recommendation. The SEM allows states to recognize that any test score on any standardized test—including a *Praxis* Special Education: Foundational Knowledge test score—is not perfectly reliable. A test score only *approximates* what a candidate truly knows or truly can do on the test. The SEM, therefore, addresses the question: How close of an approximation is the test score to the *true* score? The SEJ allows states to gauge the likelihood that the recommended passing score from the current panel would be similar to the passing scores recommended by other panels of experts similar in composition and experience. The smaller the SEJ, the more likely that another panel would recommend a passing score consistent with the recommended passing score. The larger the SEJ, the less likely the recommended passing score would be reproduced by another panel.

In addition to measurement error metrics (e.g., SEM, SEJ), each state should consider the likelihood of classification errors. That is, when adjusting a passing score, policymakers should consider whether it is more important to minimize a false-positive decision or to minimize a false-negative decision. A false-positive decision occurs when a candidate’s test score suggests that they should receive a license/certificate, but their actual level of knowledge/skills indicates otherwise (i.e., the candidate does not possess the required knowledge/skills). A false-negative decision occurs when a candidate’s test score suggests that they should not receive a license/certificate, but they actually do possess the required knowledge/skills. States need to consider which decision error is more important to minimize.

Overview of the *Praxis*® Special Education: Foundational Knowledge Test

The *Praxis*® Special Education: Foundational Knowledge *Study Companion* document (ETS, in press) describes the purpose and structure of the test. In brief, the test measures whether entry-level

special education teachers have the knowledge/skills believed necessary for competent professional practice.

The two-hour assessment contains 120 selected-response items³ covering four content areas: *Human Development and Individual Learning Differences* (approximately 32 items), *Effective Planning and Instruction and Productive Learning Environments* (approximately 38 items), *Assessment* (approximately 27 items), and *Professional Learning, Practice, and Collaboration* (approximately 23 items).⁴ The reporting scale for the *Praxis* Special Education: Foundational Knowledge test ranges from 100 to 200 scale-score points.

Processes and Methods

The design of the standard-setting study included two, independent expert panels. Before the study, panelists received an email explaining the purpose of the standard-setting study and requesting that they review the content specifications for the test. This review helped familiarize the panelists with the general structure and content of the test.

For each panel, the standard-setting study began with a welcome and introduction by the meeting facilitator. The facilitator described the test, provided an overview of standard setting, and presented the agenda for the study. Appendix B shows the standard-setting study agenda.

Reviewing the Test

The standard-setting panelists first took the test and then discussed the content measured. This discussion helped bring the panelists to a shared understanding of what the test does and does not cover, which serves to reduce potential judgment errors later in the standard-setting process.

The test discussion covered the major content areas being addressed by the test. Panelists were asked to remark on any content areas that would be particularly challenging for entry-level special education teachers or areas that address content particularly important for entry-level special education teachers.

³ Ten of the 120 selected-response items are pretest items and do not contribute to a candidate's score.

⁴ The number of items for each content area may vary slightly from form to form of the test.

Defining the Just-Qualified Candidate

Following the review of the test, panelists described the just-qualified candidate. The *just-qualified candidate description* plays a central role in standard setting (Perie, 2008); the goal of the standard-setting process is to identify the test score that aligns with this description.

The panelists created a description of the just-qualified candidate, focusing on the knowledge/skills that differentiate a *just-qualified* from a *not quite-qualified* candidate. To create this description, the panelists from both panels were assigned to three smaller groups in order to create a draft description. Then they reconvened and, through whole-group discussion of the three drafts, reached consensus on to determine the final version. This final description of the just-qualified candidate was used by both panels for the remainder of the study.

The description of the just-qualified candidate summarized the panels' discussion in a list format. The description was not intended to describe all the knowledge and skills of the just-qualified candidate but only highlight those that differentiate a *just-qualified candidate* from a *not-quite-qualified* candidate. A clean, PDF-version of the final description was distributed to panelists to use for the remaining phases of the study (see Appendix C for the just-qualified candidate description).

Given that the two-panel multistate standard-setting study was designed to provide two recommendations for the same performance standard, it was important that panels use a consistent just-qualified candidate description to frame their judgments. Therefore, the panelists from both panels worked together until the just-qualified candidate description was finalized.

Panelists' Judgments

The standard-setting process for the *Praxis* Special Education: Foundational Knowledge test was a probability-based Modified Angoff method (Brandon, 2004; Hambleton & Pitoniak, 2006). Using this method, each panelist judged each item on the likelihood (probability or chance) that the just-qualified candidate would answer the item correctly. Panelists made their judgments using the following rating scale: 0, .05, .10, .20, .30, .40, .50, .60, .70, .80, .90, .95, 1. The lower the value, the less likely it is that the just-qualified candidate would answer the item correctly because the item is difficult for the just-qualified candidate. The higher the value, the more likely it is that the just-qualified candidate would answer the item correctly.

Panelists were asked to approach the judgment process in two stages. First, they reviewed both the description of the just-qualified candidate and the item and determined the probability that the just-qualified candidate would answer the question correctly. The facilitator encouraged the panelists to consider the following rules of thumb to guide their decision:

- Items in the 0 to .30 range were those the just-qualified candidate would have a *low chance* of answering correctly.
- Items in the .40 to .60 range were those the just-qualified candidate would have a *moderate chance* of answering correctly.
- Items in the .70 to 1 range were those that the just-qualified candidate would have a *high chance* of answering correctly.

Next, panelists decided how to refine their judgment within the range. For example, if a panelist thought that there was a *high chance* that the just-qualified candidate would answer the question correctly, the initial decision would be in the .70 to 1 range. The second decision for the panelist was to judge if the likelihood of answering it correctly is .70, .80, .90, .95 or 1.

After the training, panelists made practice judgments and discussed those judgments and their rationales. All panelists completed a post-training evaluation to confirm that they had received adequate training in the Modified Angoff method and felt prepared to continue; the standard-setting process continued only if all panelists confirmed their readiness.

Following this first round of judgments (*Round 1*), item-level feedback was provided to the panel. The panelists' judgments were displayed for each item and summarized across panelists. Item-level data were highlighted to show when panelists converged in their judgments or diverged in their judgments (i.e., when at least two-thirds of the panelists' judgments were in the same difficulty range).

The panelists discussed their item-level judgments. These discussions helped panelists maintain a shared understanding of the knowledge/skills of the just-qualified candidate and helped to clarify aspects of items that might not have been clear to all panelists during the Round 1 judgments. The purpose of the discussion was not to encourage panelists to conform to another's judgment, but to understand the different relevant perspectives among the panelists.

In Round 2, panelists discussed their Round 1 judgments and were encouraged by the facilitator (a) to share the rationales for their judgments and (b) to consider their judgments in light of the rationales provided by the other panelists. Panelists recorded their Round 2 judgments only for items

when they wished to change a Round 1 judgment. Panelists’ final judgments for the study, therefore, consist of their Round 1 judgments and any adjusted judgments made during Round 2.

Other than the description of the just qualified candidate, results from Panel 1 were not shared with Panel 2. The item-level judgments and resulting discussions for Panel 2 were independent of judgments and discussions that occurred with Panel 1.

Results

Expert Panels

Table 2 presents a summary of the panelists’ demographic information. The panel included 29 educators representing 14 states. (See Appendix A for a listing of panelists.) Eleven panelists were special education teachers and two were educational specialists. Of the three administrators and department heads, one was a district-level educational leader and two were school department heads. Eleven panelists were college faculty and two held other positions. Ten of the eleven of the faculty members’ job responsibilities included the training of special education teachers. The number of experts by panel and their demographic information are presented in Appendix D (Table D1).

Table 2
Panel Member Demographics (Across Panels)

Background Survey Question	Number	Percent
What is your current position?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Special education teacher	11	38
Educational specialist	2	7
Administrator or Department Head	3	10
College faculty	11	38
Other: Special education teacher (9-12th) and department head/LSC	1	3
Other: Retired director of special education for Gallatin County Schools	1	3
How do you describe yourself (i.e., race/ethnicity)?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Asian or Asian American	1	3
Black or African American	9	31
White	17	59
Other: Hispanic or Latino/Middle Eastern or North African/White	1	3
Prefer not to respond	1	3

Table 2 (continued from the previous page)
Panel Member Demographics (Across Panels)

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
What is your gender?		
Female/Woman	23	79
Male/Man	5	17
Non-binary	0	0
Prefer to self-describe	0	0
Prefer not to respond	1	3
Are you currently certified as a special education teacher in your state?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	18	62
No	0	0
I am not currently working at the P-12 level	11	38
Are you currently teaching special education in your state?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	12	41
No	6	21
I am not currently working at the P-12 level	11	38
Are you currently supervising or mentoring other special education teachers?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	15	52
No	3	10
I am not currently working at the P-12 level	11	38
At what P–12 grade level are you currently teaching special education?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Elementary (P - 5 or P - 6)	2	7
Elementary and middle school	1	3
Middle school (6 - 8 or 7 - 9)	4	14
Middle and high school	1	3
High school (9–12 or 10–12)	3	10
Other	3	10
Not currently teaching at the P–12 level	15	52
Including this year, how many years of experience do you have teaching special education?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
3 years or less	1	3
4–7 years	10	34
8–11 years	2	7
12–15 years	1	3
16 years or more	4	14
I am not currently working at the P-12 level	11	38
Which best describes the location of your P–12 school?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Urban	5	17
Suburban	4	14
Rural	6	21
Not working in a school (e.g., district-level)	3	10

Table 2 (continued from the previous page)
Panel Member Demographics (Across Panels)

If you are college faculty, are you currently involved in the training/ preparation of special education teachers?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	10	34
No	1	3
Not college faculty	18	62

Standard-Setting Judgments

Panelist-level results, for Rounds 1 and 2, are presented in Appendix D (Tables D2 – D4). The mean represents the panel’s passing score recommendation after Round 2. Table 3 also includes the standard deviation and the standard error of judgment (SEJ). The SEJ is one way of estimating the reliability or consistency of a panel’s standard-setting judgments. It indicates how likely it would be for several other panels of educators similar in makeup, experience, and standard-setting training to the current panel to recommend the same passing score on the same form of the test. The confidence intervals created by adding/subtracting two SEJs to each panel’s recommended passing score overlap, indicating that they may be comparable. (Appendix E provides the technical notes, which further describe the SEJ.)

Table 3
Summary of Round 2 Standard-setting Judgments by Panel

Statistic	Panel 1	Panel 2
Mean	60.61	63.22
Minimum	45.90	53.35
Maximum	68.55	76.95
SD	5.82	6.18
SEJ	1.50	1.65

Data from Panelist 11 on panel 1 and Panelist 2 on panel 2 were detected to be outliers (High, 2000; see Appendix E). However, ETS does not recommend that their data be removed from the panel recommendation. Based on a report from the panel facilitators, the panelists were believed to be following the standard-setting process faithfully. Throughout the standard-setting, panelists are encouraged to consider the perspectives of their colleagues but that were not required to agree with their judgments.

Round 1 judgments are made without discussion among the panelists. The most variability in judgments, therefore, is typically present in the first round. Round 2 judgments, however, are informed

by panel discussion; thus, it is common to see a decrease both in the standard deviation and SEJ. This decrease—indicating convergence among the panelists’ judgments—was observed (see Table 4).

The Round 2 mean score is the panel’s final recommended passing score. The panel’s passing score recommendation for the *Praxis* Special Education: Foundational Knowledge test are 60.61 for Panel 1 and 63.22 for Panel 2 (out of a possible 110 raw-score points). The values were rounded to the next highest whole number to determine the functional recommended passing score—61 for Panel 1 and 64 for Panel 2. The scale scores associated with 61 and 64 raw points are 144 and 148, respectively.

In addition to the recommended passing score for each panel, the average passing score across the two panels is provided to help education agencies determine an appropriate passing score. The panels’ average passing score recommendation for the *Praxis* Special Education: Foundational Knowledge test is 61.92 (out of a possible 110 raw-score points). The value was rounded to 62 (next highest raw score) to determine the functional recommended passing score. The scale score associated with 62raw points is 145.

The conditional standard error of measurement (CSEM) around the recommended passing score is 5.23 raw points. A standard error represents the uncertainty associated with a test score (See Appendix E for further information about the CSEM.) Table 5 shows the raw scores and the scale scores associated with one and two CSEM below and above the recommended passing score.

Table 5
Scores 1 and 2 CSEM Around the Recommended Passing Score (RPS)

Scores	Raw Score Points out of	
	110	Praxis Scale Score Equivalent
RPS - 2 CSEM	52	132
RPS - 1 CSEM	57	139
RPS	62	145
RPS +1 CSEM	68	153
RPS +2 CSEM	73	159

Notes. CSEM = conditional standard error(s) of measurement. The CSEM of the recommended passing score is 5.23 raw points. The unrounded CSEM value is added to, or subtracted from, the rounded passing-score recommendation. The resulting values are rounded up to the next-highest whole number and then converted to scale scores.

Final Evaluations

The panelists completed an evaluation at the conclusion of the standard-setting study. The evaluation asked the panelists to provide feedback about the quality of the standard-setting implementation and the factors that influenced their decisions. The responses to the evaluation

provided evidence of the validity of the standard-setting process, and, as a result, evidence of the reasonableness of the recommended passing score.

Panelists were shown the panel’s recommended passing score after Round 2 and asked, in the evaluation, (a) how comfortable they are with the recommended passing score and (b) if they think the score was *too high*, *too low*, or *about right*. A summary of the final evaluation results, per panel, is presented in Appendix D (Tables D5 – D14).

All panelists *strongly agreed* that they understood the purpose of the study. All panelists *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that the facilitator’s instructions and explanations were clear. All panelists *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that they were prepared to make their standard-setting judgments. All panelists *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that the standard-setting process was easy to follow.

All panelists reported that the description of the just-qualified candidate was at least *somewhat influential* in guiding their standard-setting judgments. All of the panelists reported that between-round discussions were at least *somewhat influential* in guiding their judgments. Eighteen of the 29 panelists indicated that their own professional experience was *very influential* in guiding their judgments.

Twenty-four of the 29 panelists indicated they were *very comfortable* with the passing score they recommended; the remaining panelists indicated they were *somewhat comfortable* with the recommended passing score. Twenty-seven of the 29 panelists indicated the recommended passing score was *about right*; the remaining two panelists felt that the panel’s recommended score was *too low*.

Summary

To support the decision-making process for education agencies establishing a passing score (cut score) for the *Praxis* Special Education: Foundational Knowledge test, research staff from ETS designed and conducted a multistate standard-setting study.

ETS provides a recommended passing score from the multistate standard-setting study to help education agencies determine an appropriate operational passing score. For the *Praxis* Special Education: Foundational Knowledge test, the recommended passing score⁵ is 62 out of a possible 110 raw-score points. The scale score associated with a raw score of 62 is 145 on a 100–200 scale.

⁵ Results from the two panels participating in the study were averaged to produce the recommended passing score.

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Appendix A: Panelists' Names & Affiliations

Participating Panelists With Affiliation and State

<u>Panelist Name</u>	<u>Panelists' Affiliation and State Abbreviation</u>
Bret Arwood	Sweetwater County School District #1 (WY)
Valerie Bahige	Campbell County School District (WY)
Shannon Banashak	Biloxi Public School District (MS)
Caitlin Best	Colonial School District (DE)
Michelle Bills	Eastside Elementary (WY)
Jerrie Brooks	Fort Hays State University (KS)
Tammaniqua Carr	Canton Public School District (MS)
Hayden Cook	Bethany College (WV)
Carol Douglass	Harding University (AR)
Veronica Fiedler	Colorado Department of Education (CO)
Terrance Hannah	Hamilton County School System (TN)
Frederick Hoppe	Lincoln Public Schools (RI)
Jennifer Hune	UA Little Rock (AR)
Jessica Jersild	Morrill Public Schools (NE)
Jo Ann McCaughan	Retired Director of Special Education from Gallatin County Schools (KY)
Aundrea McFall	Freed-Hardeman University (TN)
Makenzie Meade	West Grand School District (CO)
Ma Naneth Mendoza	Reed Elementary School (AR)
Barbara Mitchell	Kansas State University (KS)
Kimberly Noah	Great Basin College (NV)
Shannon Patrick	Baltimore city Public Schools (MD)
Jacee Phillips	UW Lab School (WY)
Kimberly Puckett	Model Lab School at Eastern Kentucky University (KY)
Kristie Robinette	Sullivan County Schools (TN)

<u>Panelist Name</u>	<u>Panelists' Affiliation and State Abbreviation</u>
Megan Schnetzer	Wilmington University (DE)
Kayla Steltenkamp	Thomas More University (KY)
Jahsha Tabron	Delaware Professional Standards Board (DE)
Royal Toy	Lewis-Clark State College (ID)
Vashanti Williams	Hot Springs School District (AR)

Appendix B: Agenda

Praxis[®] Special Education: Foundational Knowledge (5355)

Standard-Setting Study

MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2022

**10:00 AM EST/9:00 AM CST/
8:00 AM MST/7:00 AM PST**

Welcome, introductions, and goals for the day

Standard-setting overview presentation

- Q&A about the training
- Polling: Checking for understanding

Test familiarization for the test

- Overview & instructions
- Independent test familiarization
- Self-scoring instructions
- Independent self-scoring

Break

Discussion of the content measured

Lunch break

Just-Qualified Candidate (JQC)

- Overview
- Polling: Who is the JQC?
- Drafting the JQC description in small groups

Break as needed in small groups

Preparation for Day 2

End of Day 1

**7:00 PM EST/ 6:00 PM CST/
5:00 PM MST/ 4:00 PM PST**

Praxis® Special Education: Foundational Knowledge (5355)

Standard-Setting Study

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2022

**10:00 AM EST/9:00 AM CST/
8:00 AM MST/7:00 AM PST**

Overview of the Day

Just-Qualified Candidate (JQC) (continued)

- Finalizing the JQC description – whole group consensus

Break

Resume in Separate panels

Standard Setting Training for Selected-Response Items

- Instructions and materials
- Independent practice round judgments

LUNCH BREAK

Practice Round Data Discussion

- Instructions, materials, and screen setup
- Discussion of the practice round data
- Polling: Evaluation of the judgment training

Round 1 Standard Setting Judgments

Break individually as needed

Check out before completing work for the day

- Save and send the judgment form (instructions provided)
- Facilitator will confirm the data is received by each person

**7:00 PM EST/ 6:00 PM CST/
5:00 PM MST/ 4:00 PM PST**

End of Day 2

Praxis® Special Education: Foundational Knowledge (5355)

Standard-Setting Study

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2022

**10:00 AM EST/9:00 AM CST/
8:00 AM MST/7:00 AM PST**

Overview of the Day

Honoraria Payment Process Presentation

Round 1 feedback: Summary data

- Polling: Evaluation of data presentation

Round 1 feedback: Item-level data and
Round 2 judgments (**break as needed**)

- Check out when finished

LUNCH BREAK

Round 2 feedback: Recommended Passing Scores

Complete final evaluation

Wrap Up/ Final Steps

- Review Nondisclosure of Secure Materials
 - Destruction of Files
 - What you can/cannot discuss
- Final Questions and Thank You

**4:00 PM EST/ 3:00 PM CST/
2:00 PM MST/ 1:00 PM PST**

End of Study

Appendix C: Just-Qualified Candidate Description

Description of the Just-Qualified Candidate⁶

A just-qualified candidate...

1. Understands typical and atypical human development and behavior and how these can impact student learning
2. Understands the basic characteristics and defining factors for each of the major disability categories under IDEA
3. Knows the basic characteristics of designing coherent instruction and how to adapt them to diverse learners (e.g., students with disabilities, English Language learners, etc.) and environments
4. Is familiar with how to gather and use data to design, implement, and adjust positive behavior interventions and support systems for individuals, groups, and classroom management
5. Is familiar with and attempts to implement research-based approaches to differentiating and delivering instruction to meet individual needs
6. Knows how to select and is familiar with administering and interpreting appropriate assessments to make informed data-driven decisions
7. Knows the basics of MTSS, including the role of RTI
8. Understands the role of the special education teacher in the pre-referral process.
9. Knows the major components of IDEA and other relevant legal mandates
10. Knows how to initiate appropriate communication and collaboration with families and school and community professionals
11. Is familiar with the roles of support professionals in relation to individual students (e.g., related service providers, paraprofessionals, general education teachers, administration)
12. Knows the required components of an IEP

⁶ Description of the just-qualified candidate focuses on the knowledge/skills that differentiate a *just* from a *not quite* qualified candidate.

Appendix D: Panel-Specific Results

Table D1

Panel Member Demographics per Panel

Background Survey Question	Panel 1 Number	Panel 1 Percent	Panel 2 Number	Panel 2 Percent
What is your current position?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Special education teacher	6	40	5	36
Educational specialist	2	13	0	0
Administrator or Department Head	1	7	2	14
College faculty	5	33	6	43
Other: Special education teacher (9-12th) and department head/LSC	1	7	0	0
Other: Retired director of special education for Gallatin County Schools	0	0	1	7
How do you describe yourself (i.e., race/ethnicity)?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Asian or Asian American	1	7	0	0
Black or African American	5	33	4	29
White	8	53	9	64
Other: Hispanic or Latino/Middle Eastern or North African/White	0	0	1	7
Prefer not to respond	1	7	0	0
What is your gender?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Female/Woman	11	73	12	86
Male/Man	3	20	2	14
Non-binary	0	0	0	0
Prefer to self-describe	0	0	0	0
Prefer not to respond	1	7	0	0
Are you currently certified as a special education teacher in your state?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	10	67	8	57
No	0	0	0	0
I am not currently working at the P-12 level	5	33	6	43

Table D1 (continued from previous page)
Panel Member Demographics per Panel

Background Survey Question	Panel 1 Number	Panel 1 Percent	Panel 2 Number	Panel 2 Percent
Are you currently teaching special education in your state?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	7	47	5	36
No	3	20	3	21
I am not currently working at the P-12 level	5	33	6	43
Are you currently supervising or mentoring other special education teachers?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	9	60	6	43
No	1	7	2	14
I am not currently working at the P-12 level	5	33	6	43
At what P–12 grade level are you currently teaching special education?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Elementary (P - 5 or P - 6)	2	13	0	0
Elementary and middle school	1	7	0	0
Middle school (6 - 8 or 7 - 9)	1	7	3	21
Middle and high school	1	7	0	0
High school (9–12 or 10–12)	2	13	1	7
Other	1	7	2	14
Not currently teaching at the P–12 level	7	47	8	57
Including this year, how many years of experience do you have teaching special education?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
3 years or less	0	0	1	7
4–7 years	7	47	3	21
8–11 years	1	7	1	7
12–15 years	0	0	1	7
16 years or more	2	13	2	14
I am not currently working at the P-12 level	5	33	6	43

Table D1 (continued from previous page)
Panel Member Demographics per Panel

Background Survey Question	Panel 1 Number	Panel 1 Percent	Panel 2 Number	Panel 2 Percent
Which best describes the location of your K–12 school?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Urban	3	20	2	14
Suburban	1	7	3	21
Rural	4	27	2	14
Not working in a school (e.g., district-level)	2	13	1	7
Not currently working at the P–12 level	5	33	6	43
If you are college faculty, are you currently involved in the training/ preparation of special education teachers?	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	5	33	5	36
No	0	0	1	7
Not college faculty	10	67	8	57

Table D2***Panel 1 Passing Score Summary by Round of Judgments***

Panelist	Round 1	Round 2
1	60.60	58.10
2	62.50	61.40
3	74.20	68.55
4	63.95	63.45
5	53.00	54.80
6	59.60	58.90
7	57.05	57.05
8	56.40	59.05
9	59.00	61.30
10	56.20	59.40
11	45.70	45.90
12	68.40	66.70
13	67.05	65.80
14	60.80	60.30
15	71.70	68.50

Table D3***Panel 2 Passing Score Summary by Round of Judgments***

Panelist	Round 1	Round 2
1	59.35	59.45
2	78.85	76.95
3	60.55	62.05
4	72.05	69.10
5	78.70	64.30
6	65.45	64.05
7	66.40	66.40
8	70.00	68.80
9	52.30	54.10
10	56.40	58.20
11	61.40	60.40
12	71.50	63.60
13	65.40	64.30
14	50.15	53.35

Table D4***Summary of Standard-setting Judgments by Panel and by Round***

Statistic	Panel 1, Round 1	Panel 1, Round 2	Panel 2, Round 1	Panel 2, Round 2
Mean	61.08	60.61	64.89	63.22
Minimum	45.70	45.90	50.15	53.35
Maximum	74.20	68.55	78.85	76.95
SD	7.34	5.82	8.85	6.18
SEJ	1.90	1.50	2.37	1.65

Table D5: Panel 1 Final Evaluation Process Questions

Likert Statement	Strongly agree N	Strongly agree %	Agree N	Agree %	Disagree N	Disagree %	Strongly disagree N	Strongly disagree %
I understood the purpose of this study.	15	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The instructions and explanations provided by the facilitators were clear.	15	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The training in the standard-setting method was adequate to give me the information I needed to complete my assignment.	14	93	1	7	0	0	0	0
The explanation of how the recommended passing score is computed was clear.	9	60	6	40	0	0	0	0
The opportunity for feedback and discussion for round 2 judgments was helpful.	15	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The process of making the standard-setting judgments was easy to follow.	14	93	1	7	0	0	0	0

Table D6: Panel 1 Final Evaluation: Standard-Setting Process

	Too much time <i>N</i>	Too much time %	About the right amount of time <i>N</i>	About the right amount of time %	Too little time <i>N</i>	Too little time %
Small group JQC drafts	1	7	14	93	0	0
Whole group JQC consensus	1	7	13	87	1	7
Training and practice for making standard-setting judgments	0	0	13	87	2	13
Round 1 judgments (independent)	0	0	13	87	2	13
Round 2 judgments (with discussion)	1	7	14	93	0	0

Table D7: Panel 1 Final Evaluation: Influences in Standard-Setting Judgments

How influential was each of the following factors in guiding your standard-setting judgments?	Very influential <i>N</i>	Very influential %	Somewhat influential <i>N</i>	Somewhat influential %	Not influential <i>N</i>	Not influential %
The description of the just-qualified candidate	13	87	2	13	0	0
The between-round discussions	9	60	6	40	0	0
The knowledge/skills required to answer each test item	11	73	4	27	0	0
The passing scores of other panel members	3	20	10	67	2	13
My own professional experience	10	67	5	33	0	0

Table D8: Panel 1 Final Evaluation: Comfort with the Panel's Recommendation

Question	Very comfort- able	Very comfort- able	Somewhat comfort- able	Somewhat comfort- able	Somewhat uncom- fortable	Somewhat uncom- fortable	Very uncom- fortable	Very uncom- fortable
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Overall, how comfortable are you with the panel's recommended passing score?	12	80	3	20	0	0	0	0

Table D9: Panel 1 Final Evaluation: Opinion of the Final Recommendation

Statement	Too low	Too low	About right	About right	Too high	Too high
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Overall, the recommended passing score is:	1	7	14	93	0	0

Table D10: Panel 2 Final Evaluation Process Questions

Likert Statement	Strongly agree N	Strongly agree %	Agree N	Agree %	Disagree N	Disagree %	Strongly disagree N	Strongly disagree %
I understood the purpose of this study.	14	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The instructions and explanations provided by the facilitators were clear.	13	93	1	7	0	0	0	0
The training in the standard-setting method was adequate to give me the information I needed to complete my assignment.	14	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The explanation of how the recommended passing score is computed was clear.	13	93	1	7	0	0	0	0
The opportunity for feedback and discussion for round 2 judgments was helpful.	14	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The process of making the standard-setting judgments was easy to follow.	12	86	2	14	0	0	0	0

Table D11: Panel 2 Final Evaluation: Standard-Setting Process

	Too much time <i>N</i>	Too much time %	About the right amount of time <i>N</i>	About the right amount of time %	Too little time <i>N</i>	Too little time %
Small group JQC drafts	1	7	12	86	1	7
Whole group JQC consensus	0	0	13	93	1	7
Training and practice for making standard-setting judgments	0	0	14	100	0	0
Round 1 judgments (independent)	1	7	13	93	0	0
Round 2 judgments (with discussion)	0	0	14	100	0	0

Table D12: Panel 2 Final Evaluation: Influences in Standard-Setting Judgments

How influential was each of the following factors in guiding your standard-setting judgments?	Very influential <i>N</i>	Very influential %	Somewhat influential <i>N</i>	Somewhat influential %	Not influential <i>N</i>	Not influential %
The description of the just-qualified candidate	14	100	0	0	0	0
The between-round discussions	11	79	3	21	0	0
The knowledge/skills required to answer each test item	10	71	4	29	0	0
The passing scores of other panel members	3	21	10	71	1	7
My own professional experience	8	57	5	36	1	7

Table D13: Panel 2 Final Evaluation: Comfort with the Panel's Recommendation

Question	Very comfort- able	Very comfort- able	Somewhat comfort- able	Somewhat comfort- able	Somewhat uncom- fortable	Somewhat uncom- fortable	Very uncom- fortable	Very uncom- fortable
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Overall, how comfortable are you with the panel's recommended passing score?	12	86	2	14	0	0	0	0

Table D14: Panel 2 Final Evaluation: Opinion of the Final Recommendation

Statement	Too low	Too low	About right	About right	Too high	Too high
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Overall, the recommended passing score is:	1	7	13	93	0	0

Appendix E: Technical Notes

Standard Error of Judgment (SEJ)

The standard error of judgment (SEJ) is one way of estimating the reliability or consistency of a panel's standard-setting judgments. It indicates how likely it would be for several other panels of educators similar in makeup, experience, and standard-setting training to the current panel to recommend the same threshold score on the same form of the assessment. The SEJ assumes that panelists are randomly selected and that standard-setting judgments are independent. It is seldom the case that panelists are randomly sampled, and only the first round of judgments may be considered independent. The SEJ, therefore, likely underestimates the uncertainty of threshold scores (Tannenbaum & Katz, 2013).

The SEJ is calculated by dividing the standard deviation of the panelists' judgments (*SD*) by the square root of the number of panelists (*n*). The result serves as an estimate of the standard error of the mean (Brennan, 2002).

$$SEJ = SD/\sqrt{n}$$

Outlier Analysis

An analysis of the data is conducted per panel. Judgments that are above or below 1.5 times the interquartile range for that panel are identified as outliers (High, 2000). ETS makes recommendations on the removal of *specific* outliers based on the observations of the panel facilitator. The panel facilitator reports whether or not the specified panelist was faithfully participating in the standard-setting process. The decision to accept the panel recommendation with or without the outlier data is solely at the discretion of the state.

Conditional Standard Error of Measurement (CSEM)

The conditional standard error of measurement (*CSEM*) for a test is computed from the study value (*SV*) of the recommended passing score and the number of selected-response items (*n*) on the test (see Lord, 1984):

$$CSEM = \sqrt{(SV)(n - SV)/(n - 1)}$$



STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RULES AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Date: October 2, 2025

The Rules and Regulations Committee reports on the October 2, 2025, meeting of the committee. Members present were chair Maggie Douglas, vice chair Liz Renner, Elizabeth Tegtmeier, and Kirk Penner.

Committee members reviewed the Report on Rules and Committee Report.

NDE staff provided information on Rule 13, Regulations and Procedures for Exempting Schools for Which Parents Elect Not to Meet Legal Requirements for School Approval and Accreditation. Committee members discussed the changes and recommended adding a specific timeframe for enrollment. Committee members recommended proceeding with a hearing.

NDE staff provided information on revisions to Rule 51, Special Education Program Standards due to findings received from the Federal Office of Special Education Programs.

NDE Staff provided information with regard to the Educator Preparation Program Pathways and the conversations around LR144 that could lead to revisions in Rule 20 (Educator Preparation Programs), Rule 21 (Certification) and Rule 24 (Endorsement).

This concludes the Rules and Regulations Committee report.

Maggie Douglas, Chair

*Submit a printed copy to the Committee Chair and email to the Recording Secretary.



To: Dr. Brian L. Maher, Commissioner of Education
From: Debra Holmes, Paralegal
Date: September 16, 2025
Subject: Report on Rules

Awaiting Approval by the Attorney General

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 3, *Regulations Governing High Ability Learners*

Public Hearing held: April 29, 2025
Approved by the State Board of Education: June 6, 2025
Approved by the Attorney General:
Approved by the Governor:
Effective Date:

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 8, *Regulations and Procedures for Community Achievement Plan Approval School Finance and Budgeting/State Funding of Educational Service Units and Learning Communities*

Public Hearing held: August 18, 2025
Approved by the State Board of Education: September 5, 2025
Approved by the Attorney General:
Approved by the Governor:
Effective Date:

Revision – Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 15, *Regulations and Procedures for English Learner Programs in Nebraska Public Schools*

Public Hearing held: June 2, 2025
Approved by the State Board of Education: June 6, 2025
Approved by the Attorney General:
Approved by the Governor:
Effective Date:

Repeal - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 22, *Regulations Governing the Master Teacher Program*

Public Hearing held: April 29, 2025
Approved by the State Board of Education: June 6, 2025
Approved by the Attorney General:

Approved by the Governor:
Effective Date:

Repeal - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 25, *Regulations Governing the Excellence in Teaching Act*

Public Hearing held: April 29, 2025
Approved by the State Board of Education: June 6, 2025
Approved by the Attorney General:
Approved by the Governor:
Effective Date:

Repeal - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 26, *Regulations and Procedures for Mentor Teacher Programs*

Public Hearing held: April 29, 2025
Approved by the State Board of Education: June 6, 2025
Approved by the Attorney General:
Approved by the Governor:
Effective Date:

Revision – Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 86, *Regulations and Procedures for Public School Breakfast Program Reimbursement*

Public Hearing held: August 18, 2025
Approved by the State Board of Education: September 5, 2025
Approved by the Attorney General:
Approved by the Governor:
Effective Date:

Revision - Title 93, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapters 1-16, *Personnel Rules*

Public Hearing held: May 15, 2025
Approved by the State Board of Education: June 6, 2025
Approved by the Attorney General:
Approved by the Governor:
Effective Date:

Hearing Scheduled for 10-15-25

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 11, *Regulations for the Approval of Prekindergarten Programs Established by School Boards or Educational Service Units and for the Issuance of Early Childhood Education Grants*

Posted for Public Input: July 17-30, 2025
Public Hearing to be held: October 15, 2025
Approved by the State Board of Education:
Approved by the Attorney General:
Approved by the Governor:
Effective Date:

Hearing Scheduled for 10-24-25

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 20, *Regulations for the Approval of Educator Preparation Programs*

Posted for Public Input:	July 8-22, 2025
Public Hearing to be held:	October 24, 2025
Approved by the State Board of Education:	
Approved by the Attorney General:	
Approved by the Governor:	
Effective Date:	

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 89, *Regulations and Procedures to Incentivize for the ~~Education Innovation Fund Program~~ – Distance Education ~~Equipment Reimbursement and Incentives~~*

Public Hearing to be held:	October 24, 2025
Approved by the State Board of Education:	
Approved by the Attorney General:	
Approved by the Governor:	
Effective Date:	

Hearing to be Scheduled

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 47, *Regulations for Career Academy Programs Established by School Districts*

Information Items for October Rules and Regulations Committee Meeting

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 13, *Regulations and Procedures for Exempting Schools for which Parents Elect Not to Meet Legal Requirements for School Approval and Accreditation*

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 51, *Regulations and Standards for Special Education Programs*

Other Rules in the Revision Process

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 6, *Regulations and Standards for Uniform Sharing of Student Data, Records and Information*

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 10, *Regulations and Procedures for the Accreditation of Schools*

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 14, *Regulations and Procedures for the Legal Operation of Approved Nonpublic Schools*

Repeal - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 17, *Regulations Governing the Approval of Alternative Schools, Classes, or Programs for Expelled Students*

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 19, *Regulations Regarding School Enrollment*

Revision – Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 24, *Regulations for Certificate Endorsements*

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 27, *Regulations and Standards for Professional Practices Criteria*

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 28, *Professional Practices Investigations, Hearings, and Determinations by the State Board*

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 55, *Rules of Practice and Procedure for Due Process Hearings in Special Education Contested Cases*

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 91, *Regulations Governing Driver Qualifications and Operational Procedures for Pupil Transportation Vehicles*

Revision - Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 92, *Regulations Governing the Minimum Equipment Standards and Safety Inspection Criteria for Pupil Transportation Vehicles*

NDE CONTRACTS

DATE REC'D	CONTRACT #	AMENDMENT #	CONTRACT NAME	MAXIMUM CONTRACT AMOUNT	START DATE	ENDING DATE	FUNDING SOURCE	SCOPE OF SERVICES	CONTACT PERSON
1/2/2025	45217		Share Collaborative	\$10,000	2/3/2025	12/19/2025	Federal	Provide training.	Lindy Foley
1/2/2025	45187	AM#1	Security Equipment Incorporated					Increase amount/scope.	Joel Scherling
1/2/2025	44316	AM#1	Office Innovations					Extend date.	Joel Scherling
1/6/2025	45219		Hendrickson Leadership Group	\$4,450	4/1/2025	6/5/2025	General	Conduct training.	Katie Graham
1/6/2025	44245	AM#2	FSU 4					Increase amount/scope.	Zainab Rida
1/6/2025	45216		Abigail Fiske	\$23,000	1/1/2025	12/31/2025	Federal	Serve as 2025 FCCLA State Officer Coordinator.	Katie Graham
1/7/2025	45199		Peru State College	\$83,997	11/15/2024	6/30/2027	Federal	Lower finance barrier for teaching candidates.	Brad Dirksen
1/13/2025	45213		UNL	\$700,000	11/15/2024	6/30/2027	Federal/General	Apprenticeship Expansion Formula Grant.	Brad Dirksen
1/15/2025	42127	AM#3	UNL					Extend date.	Zainab Rida
1/17/2025	45212		Chadron State College	\$100,000	11/15/2024	6/30/2027	Federal/General	Apprenticeship Expansion Formula Grant.	Brad Dirksen
1/22/2025	45225		Kimberly Sanderson	\$15,000	1/15/2025	1/14/2026	Federal/General	Coaching/training services.	Melody Hobson
1/23/2025	45220		Hayes & Associates	\$54,848	1/15/2025	9/30/2025	Federal	Child & Adult Care Food Program audits of for-profit centers.	Zainab Rida
1/23/2025	45223		Dick Meyer	\$15,000	1/24/2025	6/30/2025	General	Provide consultation/facilitation.	Shirley Vargas
1/23/2025	45224		HHS	\$29,406	1/21/2025	1/20/2026	Federal	Provide information on TBI individuals.	Lindy Foley
1/24/2025	45222		UNL	\$6,414	2/1/2025	1/31/2026	Federal	Support NDE transition program by maintaining website.	Amy Rhone
1/30/2025	45227		Smarter Learning Group	\$20,000	1/21/2025	3/31/2025	Federal	Develop Family Literacy Implementation Guide for schools.	Zainab Rida
1/31/2025	45226		Brain & Body Balancing	\$17,000	2/1/2025	1/31/2026	Federal/General	Provide coaching/training services.	Melody Hobson
2/3/2025	45221		Renner's Cleaning Service	\$2,130	2/1/2025	4/30/2025	Federal	Cleaning service for Norfolk VR office.	Lindy Foley
2/3/2025	45075	AM#2	ESUCC					Reduce amount.	Zainab Rida
2/4/2025	45214		Nebraska Appleseed	\$9,500	1/31/2025	1/30/2026	Federal	Support Nebraska School Breakfast Challenge.	Zainab Rida
2/4/2025	45195	AM#2	Wayne State College	\$200,000	11/15/2024	6/30/2027	Federal	Lower finance barrier for teaching candidates.	Brad Dirksen
2/10/2025	44054	AM#2	NE State College System					Extend date.	Lane Carr
2/10/2025	45110	AM#1	ESU 2					Adjust contract amount.	Lindy Foley
2/10/2025	45231		Irene Jo Smith	\$9,000	3/1/2025	2/28/2026	Federal/General	Provide coaching/training services.	Melody Hobson
2/13/2025	45175	AM#1	K Crom Saunders					Funding change.	Amy Rhone
2/13/2025	45234		Say Hey There	\$9,000	3/1/2025	8/31/2025	General	Create advertising campaigns and posts for Safe2Help NE social media platforms.	Zainab Rida
2/13/2025	45236		Emspace	\$49,500	2/10/2025	2/9/2026	Federal/General	Assist NDE in expanding the awareness and use of local specialty crops with materials development as part of a Dept of Agriculture grant as well as educational and culinary resources.	Zainab Rida
2/13/2025	45199	AM#1	Peru State College					Scope/consideration.	Brad Dirksen
2/14/2025	45065	AM#1	NE Children & Families Foundation					Increase amount.	Zainab Rida
2/14/2025	45202	AM#1	College of Saint Mary					Scope/consideration.	Brad Dirksen
2/14/2025	45196	AM#1	Midland University					Increase amount/scope.	Brad Dirksen
2/14/2025	45240		Tanya's Childcare	\$3,000	3/1/2025	2/27/2026	General	Use of classroom.	Melody Hobson
2/14/2025	44370	AM#1	ESU 7					Scope.	Zainab Rida
2/14/2025	45195	AM#1	Wayne State College					Scope/consideration.	Brad Dirksen
2/14/2025	45235		ESU 9	\$25,000	2/14/2025	4/30/2025	Federal	Execute Deaf & Hard of Hearing Statewide Conference.	Amy Rhone
2/18/2025	45239		Easter Seals of NE	\$7,860.70	3/1/2025	12/31/2025	Federal	Provide training.	Lindy Foley
2/18/2025	45241		Creative Press & Design	\$15,000	3/1/2025	2/28/2026	General	Produce and ship signage for Step Up to Quality.	Melody Hobson
2/18/2025	45229		UNL	\$48,591	4/1/2025	3/31/2026	Federal	Assist with meeting Federal post-school outcome data reporting requirements.	Amy Rhone
2/18/2025	45185		Children's Hospital & Medical Center	\$83,500	12/1/2024	11/30/2025	Federal	Provide technical assistance with School Mental Health.	Zainab Rida
2/18/2025	45237		Heather Schmidt	\$10,000	3/1/2025	2/28/2026	Federal/General	Provide coaching services.	Melody Hobson
2/20/2025	45238		Kansas State School for the Deaf	\$10,000	1/8/2025	5/22/2025	General	Pay for residential costs associated with the student enrollment.	Amy Rhone
2/20/2025	45232		Kids Can Community Center	\$3,000	2/15/2025	2/14/2026	General	Use of classroom.	Melody Hobson
2/24/2025	45194	AM#1	UNO					Scope/consideration.	Brad Dirksen
2/25/2025	45233		Partners for Insightful Evaluation	\$49,650	2/5/2025	2/4/2026	Federal	Summarize findings, create report, analyze after-school pre and post surveys.	Zainab Rida
2/25/2025	45243		Black Chick Farm	\$15,000	3/7/2025	3/6/2026	Federal	Assist in development and evaluation of Farm to School and Early Care Education and Harvest of the Month resources.	Zainab Rida
2/25/2025	45242		NCBVI	\$24,999.99	3/1/2025	2/28/2026	Federal	Provide installation of equipment and individualized consumer training.	Lindy Foley
2/27/2025	45192		A1 Media	\$49,999	1/17/2025	1/16/2027	Federal	Provide simple and efficient video caption for virtual NDE conferences.	Kristin Yates
2/28/2025	45050	AM#1	Center for Rural Affairs					Increase amount.	Zainab Rida
2/28/2025	45188	AM#1	UNL					Scope/consideration.	Brad Dirksen
2/28/2025	45244		Tasha Jedlicka	\$13,000	3/1/2025	2/28/2026	Federal/General	Conduct rating reviews for Step Up to Quality.	Melody Hobson
3/3/2025	45027	AM#1	Saffron Buettner					Consideration.	Melody Hobson
3/3/2025	45245		Susan Borchert	\$4,500	3/1/2025	2/28/2026	General	Provide training.	Melody Hobson
3/3/2025	45247		Janice Lee	\$4,500	3/1/2025	2/28/2026	General	Provide training.	Melody Hobson
3/3/2025	45248		Suzanne Schneider	\$5,000	4/1/2025	3/31/2026	Federal/General	Provide coaching and training services.	Melody Hobson
3/3/2025	45250		UNL	\$30,683	3/17/2025	3/16/2026	Federal	Assist schools in increasing awareness of the MyPlate symbol, resources and the nutritional quality of schoolmeals among key audiences.	Zainab Rida
3/5/2025	45228		UNL	\$49,634.50	1/27/2025	5/30/2026	General	Establish a Networked Improvement Community with pilot rural high schools with high rates of chronic absenteeism.	Shirley Vargas
3/5/2025	45252		Amara Munoz	\$15,000	3/15/2025	3/14/2026	General	Provide spanish translation of trainings and other documents.	Melody Hobson

NDE CONTRACTS

DATE REC'D	CONTRACT #	AMENDMENT #	CONTRACT NAME	MAXIMUM CONTRACT AMOUNT	START DATE	ENDING DATE	FUNDING SOURCE	SCOPE OF SERVICES	CONTACT PERSON
3/5/2025	45254		Primrose School of Lincoln	\$3,000	4/1/2025	3/31/2026	General	Provide classrooms for program quality assessment observations.	Melody Hobson
3/6/2025	46000		Eagle Delivery Service	\$17,446.08	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Mail services.	Krysti Michl
3/6/2025	45253		Missouri Rehab Association	\$2,700	5/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Mail services.	Krysti Michl
3/7/2025	45246		Jeanne Fielder	\$4,500	3/1/2025	2/28/2026	General	Provide training.	Melody Hobson
3/7/2025	45149	AM#2	LINQ					Increase amount/scope.	Zainab Rida
3/10/2025	45251		Jennifer Snyder	\$4,500	3/1/2025	2/28/2026	General	Provide training.	Melody Hobson
3/12/2025	45255		Monarch Psychological Svcs	\$33,000	3/25/2025	6/30/2025	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
3/18/2025	45258		Smarter Learning Group	\$48,000	3/17/2025	9/15/2025	Federal/General	Support the development of Nebraska attendance action plan. Develop computer science and technology education teacher professional learning.	Zainab Rida
3/19/2025	45275		CodeHS Inc	\$1,275,000	3/14/2025	6/30/2026	General	Medical consultative services.	Katie Graham
3/19/2025	45256		Margaret Donovan	\$33,000	3/25/2025	6/30/2025	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
3/19/2025	45264		ESU 1	\$37,525.37	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21. Provide oral interpretation and written translation for NDE Early Childhood training and training materials.	Lindy Foley
3/19/2025	45259		World Speaks	\$33,660	3/15/2025	3/14/2026	Federal/General	Extend date.	Melody Hobson
3/20/2025	45265		ESU 6	\$23,044.68	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/20/2025	45162	AM#1	NE Children & Families Foundation					Extend date.	Lane Carr
3/20/2025	45263		Beatrice YMCA	\$7,457.98	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/21/2025	45276		Madonna School & Comm Based Svcs	\$22,736.56	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/21/2025	45277		Omaha Goodwill	\$46,556.64	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/21/2025	45271		Norris Public Schools	\$16,246.43	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/21/2025	45279		Cambridge Public Schools	\$48,156.17	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/21/2025	45268		The Arc of Lincoln	\$20,554.08	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/21/2025	45270		Grand Island Public Schools	\$48,885.34	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/21/2025	45283		Transunion Risk & Alternative Data Solutions	\$2,040	4/1/2025	3/31/2026	General	Subscription service to proprietary public record databases.	Ami Huff
3/25/2025	45037	AM#1	Donelle Wolters					Extend date/increase amount/scope.	Katie Graham
3/25/2025	45107	AM#1	District Management Group					Consideration.	Shirley Vargas
3/25/2025	45186		Dyslexico	\$499,985.12	3/21/2025	6/30/2025	Federal	Conduct research to design a new method leveraging AI technology to identify, correct and categorize errors and patterns in student writing.	Allyson DenBeste
3/25/2025	45262		ESU 13	\$16,424.02	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21. Develop pilot program to make menstrual products available to each school district.	Lindy Foley
3/25/2025	45274		ESUCC	\$250,000	6/6/2025	11/15/2026	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Zainab Rida
3/25/2025	45269		District OR1 Public School	\$18,312.25	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/25/2025	45267		Angel Guardians	\$48,984.97	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/25/2025	45278		CASA of South Central NE	\$48,999.99	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/25/2025	45273		Diller O'Dell Public Schools	\$10,811.97	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/26/2025	45258	AM#1	Smarter Learning Group					Other	Zainab Rida
3/26/2025	45285		Community Language Cooperative	\$48,000	5/13/2025	5/12/2026	Federal/General	Translation of materials.	Melody Hobson
3/26/2025	45230		HHS	\$10,500	4/5/2025	4/4/2026	Federal	Conduct facilitation/presentation. Assist with planning and implementation of the Heartland Farm to School & ECE Institute.	Amy Rhone
3/27/2025	45257		Green School Farms	\$16,800	3/26/2025	3/25/2026	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Zainab Rida
3/27/2025	45281		LPS	\$34,871.23	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/27/2025	45266		Whispering Acres Trails & Treasures	\$46,175.90	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/27/2025	45280		Novak Educational Consulting	\$7,000	6/3/2025	6/3/2025	Federal	Keynote speaker.	Allyson DenBeste
3/28/2025	45287		Linda Villagomez	\$9,000	5/1/2025	4/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide training in Spanish.	Melody Hobson
3/28/2025	45272		Seward Public Schools	\$20,081.44	4/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Provide summer transition program for youth ages 14-21.	Lindy Foley
3/28/2025	45282		Linda Meyers	\$19,500	5/1/2025	4/30/2026	General	Provide training and classroom quality observations.	Melody Hobson
3/28/2025	45261		Corinne Combs	\$10,335.25	3/26/2025	7/1/2025	Federal	Serve as SkillsUSA Nebraska State Leadership & Skills Conference Coordinator. Strategic planning with apprenticeship stakeholders to grow registered apprenticeships in Nebraska.	Katie Graham
3/28/2025	45260		Delivery Associates	\$49,000	3/10/2025	6/30/2025	Federal	Pay for annual renewal of the Nebraska OER Commons site which is a shared expense.	Brad Dirksen
3/28/2025	45289		ESUCC	\$2,750	3/1/2025	3/1/2026	Federal	Extend date.	Allyson DenBeste
3/31/2025	42127	AM#4	UNL					Extend date/increase amount.	Zainab Rida
3/31/2025	44323	AM#2	OCIO-Srekanth Pall					Extend date/increase amount.	Kristin Yates
4/1/2025	45227	AM#1	Smarter Learning Group					Extend date/increase amount.	Zainab Rida
4/3/2025	45290		Value-Up	\$39,000	4/1/2025	12/17/2025	Federal	Provide training.	Zainab Rida
4/9/2025	45284		National Financial Educators	\$8,500	3/20/2025	9/30/2025	Federal	Provide opening keynote at Nebraska Get Connected conference. Scope.	Zainab Rida
4/9/2025	45070	AM#1	District Management Group					Amount change.	Shirley Vargas
4/9/2025	45114	AM#1	Avenue Scholars					Amount change.	Shirley Vargas
4/9/2025	45115	AM#1	Central Plains Center for Services					Amount change.	Shirley Vargas
4/9/2025	45116	AM#1	College Possible					Amount change.	Shirley Vargas
4/9/2025	45294		Campbell Cleaning Svc	\$11,560	4/1/2025	3/31/2026	Federal	Cleaning service for Kearney VR Office.	Lindy Foley
4/9/2025	45292		Rapport International	\$10,000	5/1/2025	4/30/2026	Federal	Interpreting Services.	Lindy Foley
4/9/2025	45286		Cynthia Villanueva	\$9,000	5/1/2025	4/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide training in Spanish.	Melody Hobson
4/9/2025	45249		UNL	\$12,100	4/1/2025	3/31/2026	Federal/General	Provide training and CDA observations.	Melody Hobson
4/9/2025	46003		Kathryn Benes	\$126,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46001		Kathleen Barrett	\$126,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl

NDE CONTRACTS

DATE REC'D	CONTRACT #	AMENDMENT #	CONTRACT NAME	MAXIMUM CONTRACT AMOUNT	START DATE	ENDING DATE	FUNDING SOURCE	SCOPE OF SERVICES	CONTACT PERSON
4/9/2025	46015		Kevin Coughlin	\$151,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46010		Helen Montoya	\$91,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46008		Surgical Care	\$176,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2025	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46017		Lee Branham	\$61,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2025	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46009		Patricia Newman Consulting	\$205,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46018		Margaret Donovan	\$126,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46012		Kevin Wycoff	\$151,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46014		Daniel Cronk	\$205,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46019		Monarch Psychological Svcs	\$126,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46005		Alexandra Suslow-Geditz	\$181,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46002		Bradford Brabec	\$205,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46016		Dianna Clyne	\$136,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46007		Joanell Wheeler	\$126,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46011		Jerry Tanner	\$205,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46013		Thomas Martin	\$126,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46006		Terri Vontz	\$61,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/9/2025	46004		Child & Family Services	\$176,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Medical consultative services.	Krysti Michl
4/10/2025	45293		Michelle Rupiper	\$16,000	5/1/2025	4/30/2026	Federal	Provide coaching/training and curriculum development.	Melody Hobson
4/14/2025	45189	AM#1	Geonasha Agbeletey					Increase amount/scope.	Lane Carr
4/14/2025	45291		TNTP	\$36,193	4/1/2025	6/1/2025	General	Design/present professional learning session.	Shirley Vargas
4/14/2025	45288		Fremont YMCA	\$3,000	5/1/2025	4/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide classrooms.	Melody Hobson
4/14/2025	45296		Meghan Gibbons	\$12,000	5/1/2025	4/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide coaching/training services.	Melody Hobson
4/15/2025	45300		Vivaviv	\$22,500	4/7/2025	9/30/2025	Federal	Build online learning module.	Zainab Rida
4/16/2025	46020		Lorenzo Brown	\$11,000	7/15/2025	7/16/2025	Federal	Provide keynote presentation for VR's 2025 State Staff Conference.	Lindy Foley
4/16/2025	45298		Danielle Bettmann	\$8,000	6/7/2025	6/6/2026	Federal	Review and approve independent study documentation via NECPRS.	Melody Hobson
4/17/2025	45297		Mobility Motoring	\$115,290	4/1/2025	12/31/2025	Federal	Provide installation of an ATC Accessibility Vehicle Modification.	Lindy Foley
4/17/2025	45304		Dyane Smokorowski	\$2,500	6/2/2025	6/3/2025	Federal	Speaker at Future Ready conference.	Allyson DenBeste
4/17/2025	45301		Megan Shepherd	\$48,900	6/1/2025	5/31/2026	Federal	Make changes/edits to Early Childhood online course on the Learning Management System.	Melody Hobson
4/17/2025	45303		ESU 9	\$37,705	4/21/2025	9/30/2025	Federal	Deliver high quality professional development to teachers and school leaders.	Katie Graham
4/21/2025	45076	AM#1	Emspace					Scope/consideration.	Melody Hobson
4/21/2025	45299		Emily Aksamit	\$14,500	5/1/2025	4/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide CLASS and ERS observations for Step Up to Quality.	Melody Hobson
4/21/2025	45306	AM#1	Student1	\$40,000	5/1/2025	8/31/2025	Federal	Maintain and transfer the Early Childhood resource and referral website.	Melody Hobson
4/21/2025	44036		Utah State University					Other.	Amy Rhone
4/21/2025	45213	AM#1	JNL					Amount change/scope/consideration.	Brad Dirksen
4/22/2025	45305		Taryn Brown	\$25,557	4/21/2025	3/31/2026	Federal	Serve as HOSA State Officer Coordinator.	Katie Graham
4/22/2025	45308		Ali Hearn Coaching & Consulting	\$49,500	5/20/2025	5/19/2026	Federal	Provide training and support in the implementation of advanced restorative practices.	Amy Rhone
4/22/2025	46021		Barbara Davidson	\$5,000	8/4/2025	8/5/2025	Federal	Keynote speaker.	Allyson DenBeste
4/28/2025	44379	AM#1	Kristi Albrecht					Increase amount.	Melody Hobson
4/30/2025	44314	AM#3	Edwise					Increase amount.	Kristin Yates
5/1/2025	45312		Vivaviv	\$30,000	4/28/2025	9/15/2025	Federal	Update psychological safety and suicide prevention toolkits.	Zainab Rida
5/1/2025	46022		Illumination Group	\$11,500	7/14/2025	7/16/2025	Federal	Provide keynote presentation for VR's 2025 State Staff Conference.	Lindy Foley
5/1/2025	45201	AM#1	Teachstone					Scope/consideration.	Melody Hobson
5/1/2025	45313		NE Dept of Environment and Energy	\$12,000	6/1/2025	8/31/2025	Federal	Conduct health inspections.	Zainab Rida
5/2/2025	45310		Reed Family Learning Academy	\$3,000	5/1/2025	4/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide classrooms used for ERS/CLASS observations.	Melody Hobson
5/5/2025	45309		NE Chamber of Commerce	\$42,000	4/25/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Coordinate efforts surrounding education and the workforce.	Ryan For
5/5/2025	45311		ESU 2	\$49,800	3/12/2025	9/11/2025	Federal	Conduct training.	Zainab Rida
5/5/2025	45316		ESU 9	\$12,000	4/28/2025	9/15/2025	Federal	Conduct training.	Zainab Rida
5/6/2025	45307		Sparq Data Solutions	\$2,600	4/23/2025	3/31/2026	General	Electronic meeting service.	Elizabeth Tegtmeyer
5/7/2025	45295		Douglas Co Health Dept	\$8,000	6/1/2025	9/30/2025	Federal	Conduct health inspections.	Zainab Rida
5/7/2025	45302		Lori Chleborad	\$7,000	5/1/2025	4/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide coaching and training services.	Melody Hobson
5/7/2025	45034	AM#1	State of Iowa-Dept of Ed					Other.	Amy Rhone
5/12/2025	45318		ESU 6	\$15,120	5/5/2025	9/15/2025	Federal	Conduct training.	Zainab Rida
5/12/2025	46023		Teaching Strategies	\$48,258	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide training.	Melody Hobson
5/13/2025	45317		Brenda Saxe	\$14,000	6/1/2025	5/31/2026	Federal/General	Provide coaching/training services.	Melody Hobson
5/14/2025	45324		Eric Knoll	\$6,000	5/15/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Plan and conduct CTE Jumpstart Summer professional development workshop.	Katie Graham
5/15/2025	45315		Nikki Robertson-Griffin	\$5,500	6/2/2025	6/3/2025	Federal	Present at Future Ready conference.	Allyson DenBeste
5/16/2025	45062	AM#1	Nicole Long					Increase amount.	Melody Hobson
5/16/2025	45321		Southsat Comm College	\$18,368	5/31/2025	6/26/2025	Federal	Deliver high quality technical skill workshops.	Katie Graham
5/19/2025	45314		John Mlinar	\$11,976	5/19/2025	9/30/2025	General	Process application and communicate with applicants.	Brad Dirksen
5/19/2025	45239	AM#1	Easter Seals of NE					Consideration.	Lindy Foley
5/19/2025	45320		Central Comm College	\$15,211	5/15/2025	6/30/2025	Federal	Deliver high quality technical skill workshops.	Katie Graham
5/19/2025	45325		ESU 6	\$13,500	6/1/2025	5/31/2026	Federal/General	Provide 1/2 price Early Learning Guidelines training registrations.	Melody Hobson
5/19/2025	46024		ESU 4	\$4,445,600	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	General	Operate NCECBVI.	Amy Rhone

NDE CONTRACTS

DATE REC'D	CONTRACT #	AMENDMENT #	CONTRACT NAME	MAXIMUM CONTRACT AMOUNT	START DATE	ENDING DATE	FUNDING SOURCE	SCOPE OF SERVICES	CONTACT PERSON
5/19/2025	46027		NWEA	\$7,598,321.97	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	General	Provide statewide assessments.	Allyson DenBeste
5/19/2025	45328		Student1	\$45,000	5/15/2025	6/30/2025	General	Technical assistance for systems-involved youth data system planning.	Kristin Yates
5/19/2025	45326		Foundry Community	\$2,600	5/15/2025	6/30/2025	Federal	System alignment for apprenticeship expansion in partnership with NDOL and other stakeholders.	Lane Carr
5/19/2025	45323		Paula Thompson	\$3,000	6/1/2025	7/31/2025	Federal	Complete Nebraska Head Start Collaboration Office needs assessment and 5-year strategic plan development.	Melody Hobson
5/20/2025	45040	AM#2	Bartle & Geier Law Firm					Increase amount.	Amy Rhone
5/20/2025	45052	AM#1	Sandra Miller					Consideration.	Melody Hobson
5/20/2025	46029		Teaching Strategies	\$40,000	8/1/2025	7/31/2027	Federal	Provide access and technical support to NDE as well as subscription programs for the Teaching Strategic GOLD online platform.	Amy Rhone
5/20/2025	46028		UNMC	\$78,484	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Support NDE in working with the child outcomes process for Results Matter.	Amy Rhone
5/22/2025	45189	AM#2	Geonasha Agbeleley					Increase amount/scope/consideration.	Lane Carr
5/22/2025	45330		ESU 3	\$15,000	6/1/2025	5/31/2026	Federal/General	Provide training.	Melody Hobson
5/28/2025	45322		Marna Stack	\$10,000	5/26/2025	5/25/2026	Federal	Support for local food for schools.	Zainab Rida
5/28/2025	45334		ESU 2	\$42,700	5/27/2025	9/11/2025	Federal	Conduct trainings.	Zainab Rida
5/28/2025	46030		Kansas State School for the Deaf	\$20,000/student	8/1/2025	7/31/2026	General	Allow Nebraska students to attend.	Amy Rhone
5/28/2025	46034		SPED Strategies	\$75,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Expand support to schools.	Amy Rhone
5/28/2025	45331		Susan Wiggins	\$6,500	6/1/2025	5/31/2026	Federal	Support Bellevue Public schools.	Amy Rhone
5/29/2025	45333		ESU 7	\$12,660	5/28/2025	9/15/2025	Federal	Conduct training.	Zainab Rida
5/29/2025	45332		Nancy Woodhams	6,500	6/1/2025	5/31/2026	Federal	Support Bellevue Public schools.	Amy Rhone
6/2/2025	45338		Laurel Wheeler	\$8,000	6/1/2025	8/15/2025	Federal	Support for local food for schools.	Zainab Rida
6/4/2025	44387	AM#1	JNQ					Increase amount/scope.	Shirley Vargas
6/6/2025	45319		Midland University	\$1,620,921	5/9/2025	6/30/2027	Federal	Award State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula grant funds.	Brad Dirksen
6/10/2025	45339		ESU 10	\$6,400	6/9/2025	9/15/2025	Federal	Conduct trainings.	Zainab Rida
6/10/2025	45336		Jackson Lewis PC	\$15,960	5/23/2025	12/31/2026	Federal/General	Provide professional legal services.	Kristin Yates
6/10/2025	46032		NCSA	\$24,000	7/1/2025	9/30/2025	General	Administrator Days Conference.	Ryan Foor
6/10/2025	46025		Kimberly Jacobson	\$36,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Provide guidance & support in mental health psychological first aid for schools and suicide prevention awareness/response.	Zainab Rida
6/10/2025	46026		Sally Carlson	\$36,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Provide guidance & support in mental health psychological first aid for schools and suicide prevention awareness/response.	Zainab Rida
6/10/2025	45262	AM#1	ESU 13					Scope.	Lindy Foley
6/10/2025	45076	AM#2	Emspace					Increase amount.	Melody Hobson
6/10/2025	45036	AM#1	Traci Strazdas					Consideration.	Melody Hobson
6/10/2025	43084	AM#3	ACERI Partners					Consideration.	Amy Rhone
6/10/2025	43085	AM#4	Data Driven Enterprises					Consideration.	Amy Rhone
6/10/2025	43087	AM#3	Nicole Stewart					Consideration.	Amy Rhone
6/10/2025	46038		Traci Strazdas	\$76,600	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal/General	Serve as program quality tool statewide anchor, complete observations and provide training.	Melody Hobson
6/10/2025	46046		ESU 9	\$852,913.80	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	General	Provide professional development.	Amy Rhone
6/10/2025	46043		ESU 9	\$609,122.70	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	General	Provide staff--Statewide Coordinator.	Amy Rhone
6/10/2025	46047		ESU 7	\$503,710.90	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	General	Provide professional development.	Amy Rhone
6/11/2025	46035		Therapeutic Play	\$9,100	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Provide training.	Amy Rhone
6/12/2025	45312	AM#1	Vivavic					Increase amount/scope/consideration.	Zainab Rida
6/12/2025	45337		Firespring	\$20,400	6/15/2025	6/14/2026	Federal/General	Manage website.	Melody Hobson
6/12/2025	45327		ESU 7	\$4,200	6/1/2025	5/31/2026	Federal/General	Provide training registrations.	Melody Hobson
6/13/2025	45041	AM#2	Anderson & Creager & Wittstruck					Increase amount/consideration.	Amy Rhone
6/13/2025	45305	AM#1	Taryn Brown					Consideration.	Katie Graham
6/13/2025	46033		TNTF	\$49,780	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Ensure students with disabilities receive support.	Amy Rhone
6/16/2025	46037		Education First Consulting	\$120,000	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Carry out grant activities.	Allyson DenBeste
6/16/2025	46036		State of Iowa-Dept of Ed	\$119,657/student	7/1/2025	6/3/2026	General	Provide services to children & youth with hearing impairments.	Amy Rhone
6/17/2025	45150	AM#2	CN Resource					Increase amount/scope.	Zainab Rida
6/17/2025	42219	AM#5	ACT					Other.	Allyson DenBeste
6/17/2025	45319	AM#1	Midland University					Consideration.	Brad Dirksen
6/17/2025	46041		SB Consulting	\$36,500	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide coaching, training and completion of program quality observations.	Melody Hobson
6/17/2025	46044		ESU 3	\$1,244,826.70	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	General	Provide professional development.	Amy Rhone
6/30/2025	46048		Literacy Pro	\$47,831	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Serve as the National Reporting System online student data management system.	Katie Graham
6/30/2025	46050		George Toman	\$30,000	7/8/2025	7/7/2026	Federal	Provide consultation.	Amy Rhone
6/30/2025	46045		ESU 18	\$602,719.90	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	General	Provide professional development.	Amy Rhone
6/30/2025	45340		Instruction Partners	\$34,000	6/13/2025	12/31/2025	General	Develop training materials.	Allyson DenBeste
6/30/2025	45329		UNMC	\$34,254	6/20/2025	9/29/2025	Federal	Create content development plan.	Zainab Rida
6/30/2025	46052		ESU 1	\$8,100	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide half-priced registration fees for Early Learning Guidelines training.	Melody Hobson
6/30/2025	45039	AM#1	Amanda Hoffmann					Consideration.	Katie Graham
6/30/2025	45049	AM#1	SPED Strategies					Increase amount.	Amy Rhone
6/30/2025	46039		Sandra Miller	\$23,600	8/1/2025	7/31/2026	Federal/General	Provide coaching, training and completion of program quality observations.	Melody Hobson
6/30/2026	45335		Nebraska Expressive Arts Therapy Foundation	\$11,300	5/19/2025	5/18/2026	Federal	Provide training.	Zainab Rida
6/30/2025	46040		Rebecca Dunlap-Morton	\$8,200	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide training and complete program quality observations.	Melody Hobson

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DATE REC'D	CONTRACT #	AMENDMENT #	CONTRACT NAME	MAXIMUM		START DATE	ENDING DATE	FUNDING SOURCE	SCOPE OF SERVICES	CONTACT PERSON
				CONTRACT AMOUNT						
6/30/2025	46042		Kayla Parr	\$6,800		7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide training.	Melody Hobson
7/1/2025	46049		Boys Town	\$845,000		7/1/2025	6/30/2026	General	Host anonymous report line.	Zainab Rida
7/1/2025	46055		ESU 10	\$97,492		7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Provide staff, equipment and facility to support ATP activities.	Lindy Foley
7/1/2025	45341		National Assoc of State Head Injury Admin	\$49,000		6/30/2025	6/29/2026	Federal	Develop curriculum/content for training staff.	Lindy Foley
7/7/2025	45261	AM#1	Corinne Combs						Extend date/scope.	Katie Graham
7/7/2025	45029	AM#1	Leah Merkwan						Consideration.	Melody Hobson
7/7/2025	45267	AM#1	Angel Guardians						Consideration.	Lindy Foley
7/7/2025	45328	AM#1	Student1						Extend date.	Kristin Yates
7/7/2025	45213	AM#2	UNL						Decrease amount.	Brad Dirksen
7/8/2025	45040	AM#3	Bartle & Geier Law Firm						Increase amount.	Lindy Foley/Amy Rhone
7/9/2025	44248	AM#2	OCIO-Mike Eckel						Increase amount/extend date.	Kristin Yates
7/10/2025	45195	AM#2	Wayne State College						Decrease amount/scope/consideration.	Brad Dirksen
7/14/2025	45202	AM#2	College of Saint Mary						Decrease amount/scope/consideration.	Brad Dirksen
7/14/2025	46056		Ntl Assoc of Head Injury Admin	\$49,000		7/14/2025	7/13/2026	Federal	Provide technical assistance and support.	Lindy Foley
7/15/2025	45236	AM#1	Emspace						Increase amount/scope/consideration.	Zainab Rida
7/18/2025	46064		Stephanie Winter	\$16,000		7/3/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Interpreting Services.	Lindy Foley
7/18/2025	46020	AM#1	Lorenzo Brown						Extend date/increase amount/scope.	Lindy Foley
7/21/2025	46058		Brain Injury Association of NE	\$48,891.02		7/14/2025	7/13/2026	Federal	Expand access to and increase availability of Peer to Peer Support for Nebraskans.	Lindy Foley
7/22/2025	46063		Beth Townsend	\$16,000		7/7/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Interpreting Services.	Lindy Foley
7/22/2025	46066		June Analco	\$16,000		7/7/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Interpreting Services.	Lindy Foley
7/24/2025	46076		Ben Sparks	\$16,000		7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Interpreting Services.	Lindy Foley
7/24/2025	44054	AM#3	NE State College System						Extend date/consideration.	Lane Carr
7/24/2025	45065	AM#2	NE Children & Families Foundation						Increase amount/scope/consideration.	Zainab Rida
7/24/2025	46053		InLumon	\$175,000		7/1/2025	6/30/2026	General	Secure hosting NE Educator licensure system.	Brad Dirksen
7/24/2025	46067		EdCount	\$49,000		8/1/2025	12/31/2025	Federal	Ensure grant activities move forward without delay.	Allyson DenBeste
7/29/2025	46065		Gieranne Knoebel	\$16,000		7/7/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Interpreting Services.	Lindy Foley
7/31/2025	46051		Westminster	\$3,000		7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide classrooms.	Melody Hobson
8/1/2025	46054		ACTFL	\$3,000		9/1/2025	10/10/2025	General	Provide workshops.	Allyson DenBeste
8/4/2025	46062		Leah Merkwan	\$28,000		8/1/2025	7/31/2026	Federal/General	Provide coaching/trng.	Melody Hobson
8/4/2025	46071		Kristi Albrecht	\$21,000		8/1/2025	7/31/2026	Federal/General	Provide coaching/trng.	Melody Hobson
8/4/2025	46072		Center for Rural Affairs	\$49,999		8/15/2025	8/14/2026	Federal	Assist w/Harvest of the Month program.	Zainab Rida
8/4/2025	45188	AM#2	UNK						Decrease amount/scope/consideration.	Brad Dirksen
8/5/2025	46060		Nicole Long	\$9,200		8/1/2025	7/31/2026	Federal	Provide quality observations.	Melody Hobson
8/5/2025	46061		Diane Ellis	\$8,100		8/1/2025	7/31/2026	Federal	Provide quality observations.	Melody Hobson
8/6/2025	46050	AM#1	George Toman						Increase amount.	Amy Rhone
8/7/2025	46075		Margaret Propp	\$16,000		7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Interpreting Services.	Lindy Foley
8/8/2025	46059		LaSonja Kirksey	\$17,000		8/1/2025	7/31/2026	Federal	Provide program quality observations.	Melody Hobson
8/11/2025	46070		SRI	\$64,600		7/14/2025	12/31/2026	Federal	Assess comprehensive literacy state development grant.	Allyson DenBeste
8/11/2025	46078		Utah State University	\$18,200		8/26/2025	8/27/2025	Federal	Provide training.	Allyson DenBeste
8/11/2025	46042	AM#1	Kayla Parr						Increase amount/scope/consideration.	Melody Hobson
8/11/2025	45151	AM#1	Lacey Sateren						Increase amount.	Melody Hobson
8/11/2025	46077		Kathleen Miller	\$20,000		9/1/2025	8/31/2026	Federal	Conduct training.	Melody Hobson
8/13/2025	46076	AM#1	Ben Sparks						Extend date/increase amount.	Lindy Foley
8/13/2025	46074		National Council for Behavioral Health	\$26,000		8/1/2025	9/30/2025	Federal	Provide training on youth mental health first aid.	Zainab Rida
8/13/2025	46079		Emspace	\$200,000		9/1/2025	8/31/2026	Federal	Continuation of statewill communicaton and public engagement project.	Melody Hobson
8/15/2025	46068		Bartle & Geier Law Firm	\$25,000		7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Serve as hearing officer.	Amy Rhone
8/18/2025	46082		META Associates	\$19,500		8/18/2025	6/30/2026	Federal	Provide annual external evaluation for 2024-25.	Beth Wooster
8/25/2025	46073		Nebraska Chamber of Commerce	\$75,000		7/30/2025	6/30/2026	General	Ensuire alignment between PK-16 pathways employer needs statewide talent, education goals, stronger connections across education and workforce systems.	Lane Carr
8/25/2025	46087		Central Plains Center for Services	\$41,519.16		8/25/2025	6/30/2026	General	Provide educational services to low-income and underrepresented students in high school and postsecondary education.	Shirley Vargas
8/26/2025	46075	AM#1	Margaret Propp						Extend date/increase amount.	Lindy Foley
8/26/2025	45338	AM#1	Laurel Wheeler						Extend date/increase amount.	Zainab Rida
8/27/2025	46083		Partners for Insightful Evaluation	\$32,000		9/1/2025	10/31/2026	Federal	Provide performance evaluation services for NE VR's Traumatc Brain Injury State Demonstration Grant Program.	Lindy Foley
8/28/2025	42405	AM#6	Ben Baumfalk						Extend date.	Kristin Yates
8/28/2025	46095		Emspace	\$49,840		9/5/2025	9/4/2026	Federal	Design and develop digital assets.	Zainab Rida
9/3/2025	46081		Rita Porter	\$25,000		8/10/2025	6/30/2026	General	Serve as Nebraska IT Initiative Project Manager.	Katie Graham
9/3/2025	46094		Say Hey There	\$18,000		9/1/2025	8/31/2026	General	Promotion of SafeHelp on social media.	Zainab Rida
9/3/2025	46084		Jennifer Burkey	\$25,000		10/1/2025	9/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide coaching and training services.	Melody Hobson
9/3/2025	46085		Larissa Resendiz de Moguel	\$21,000		10/1/2025	9/30/2026	Federal/General	Provide coaching and training services.	Melody Hobson
9/3/2025	45328	AM#2	Student1						Extend date.	Kristin Yates
9/4/2025	46089		Avenue Scholars	\$261,573.71		8/11/2025	6/30/2026	General	Provide educational services to low-income and underrepresented students in high school and postsecondary education.	Shirley Vargas

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				CONTRACT AMOUNT						
9/4/2025	46088		College Possible	\$112,102.73		8/25/2025	6/30/2026	General	Provide educational services to low-income and underrepresented students in high school and postsecondary education.	Shirley Vargas
9/8/2025	46086		JUNL	\$3,300		9/1/2025	5/31/2026	Federal	Participate in Heartland Farm to School and Early Care & Education Institute.	Zainab Rida
9/9/2025	46043	AM#1	ESU 9						Consideration.	Amy Rhone
9/9/2025	46091		Nicole Stewart	\$49,999		8/8/2025	8/7/2026	Federal	Conduct rule complaint investigation.	Amy Rhone
9/9/2025	46090		Torsh	\$49,808.20		9/18/2025	9/17/2026	Federal	Provide licenses to Talend Premium & Network Architecture.	Amy Rhone
9/9/2025	46093		Data Driven Enterprises	\$49,999		8/8/2025	8/7/2026	Federal	Conduct rule complaint investigation.	Amy Rhone
9/9/2025	46092		ACERI Partners	\$49,999		8/8/2025	8/7/2026	Federal	Conduct rule complaint investigation.	Amy Rhone
9/10/2025	46101		Cline Williams Wright Johnson & Oldfather	\$150,000		7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal/General	Serve as hearing officer.	Ami Huff
9/10/2025	46106		Bartle & Geier Law Firm	\$150,000		7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal/General	Serve as hearing officer.	Ami Huff
9/10/2025	46098		National Assoc of State Directors of Career Technical Consortium	\$49,000		9/8/2025	11/30/2026	Federal	Update and develop Nebraska nontraditional occupations by gender list. Annual statewide license for comprehensive online college and career planning system.	Katie Graham
9/10/2025	46105		Kuder	\$175,000		9/10/2025	8/31/2026	General		Katie Graham
9/10/2025	46104		Peetz Koerwitz & Lafleur	\$150,000		7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Federal/General	Serve as hearing officer.	Ami Huff
9/15/2025	42361	AM#2	NE Chamber of Commerce						Increase amount.	Lane Carr
9/15/2025	45309	AM#1	NE Chamber of Commerce						Increase amount.	Lane Carr
9/15/2025	46109		ESU 13	\$90,000		9/2/2025	8/28/2026	Federal	Assist with implementation of the statewide educator effectiveness system.	Shirley Vargas
9/15/2025	46099		NE Children & Families Foundation	\$45,000		9/8/2025	8/31/2026	Federal	Coordinate and implement the Boys in HEAL Professional project.	Katie Graham
9/16/2025	45171	AM#1	Dawn Murphy						Increase amount.	Melody Hobson
9/16/2025	46108		NCSA	\$40,000		9/15/2025	8/31/2026	Federal	Provide conference management services.	Katie Graham
9/16/2025	46100		Andori	\$3,180		9/1/2025	8/31/2026	Federal	Provide cleaning services.	Lindy Foley
9/16/2025	46102		Koukol Johnson Schmit & Milone	\$150,000		7/1/2025	6/3/2026	Federal/General	Serve as hearing officer.	Ami Huff