

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**Washington, D.C. 20202-5335**

**APPLICATION FOR GRANTS**  
**UNDER THE**

**Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) Program**

**CFDA # 84.371C**

**PR/Award # S371C240029**

**Grants.gov Tracking#: GRANT14194876**

OMB No. , Expiration Date:

Closing Date: Jun 24, 2024

PR/Award # S371C240029

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This application was generated using the PDF functionality. The PDF functionality automatically numbers the pages in this application. Some pages/sections of this application may contain 2 sets of page numbers, one set created by the applicant and the other set created by e-Application's PDF functionality. Page numbers created by the e-Application PDF functionality will be preceded by the letter e (for example, e1, e2, e3, etc.).

## Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

☐ Preapplication  
☒ Application  
☐ Changed/Corrected Application

☒ New  
☐ Continuation  
☐ Revision

\* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s):

\* Other (Specify):

\* 3. Date Received:

06/24/2024

4. Applicant Identifier:

FKTMJESNM3U6

5a. Federal Entity Identifier:

FKTMJESNM3U6

5b. Federal Award Identifier:

### State Use Only:

6. Date Received by State:

7. State Application Identifier:

### 8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

\* a. Legal Name: Nebraska Department of Education

\* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN):

470491233

\* c. UEI:

FKTMJESNM3U6

### d. Address:

\* Street1:

500 S 84th St

Street2:

2nd Floor

\* City:

Lincoln

County/Parish:

\* State:

NE: Nebraska

Province:

\* Country:

USA: UNITED STATES

\* Zip / Postal Code:

68510-2611

### e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name:

Department of Education

Division Name:

### f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:

Prefix:

\* First Name:

Allyson

Middle Name:

\* Last Name:

DenBeste

Suffix:

Title: Academic Officer

Organizational Affiliation:

Nebraska Department of Education

\* Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

\* Email:

PR/Award # S371C240029

Page e3

## Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

### \* 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:

A: State Government

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

\* Other (specify):

### \* 10. Name of Federal Agency:

Department of Education

### 11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

84.371

CFDA Title:

Comprehensive Literacy Development

### \* 12. Funding Opportunity Number:

ED-GRANTS-042324-001

\* Title:

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE): Well Rounded Education: Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) program, Assistance Listing Number 84.371C

### 13. Competition Identification Number:

84-371C2024-1

Title:

Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) Program

### 14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

Add Attachment

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### \* 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:

Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments

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**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424****16. Congressional Districts Of:**\* a. Applicant \* b. Program/Project 

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

Add Attachment

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**17. Proposed Project:**\* a. Start Date: \* b. End Date: **18. Estimated Funding (\$):**

* a. Federal	<input type="text" value="11,020,244.00"/>
* b. Applicant	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* c. State	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* d. Local	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* e. Other	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* f. Program Income	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* g. TOTAL	<input type="text" value="11,020,244.00"/>

**\* 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

- ☐ a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on .
- ☐ b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.
- ☒ c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

**\* 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)**☐ Yes ☒ No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

Add Attachment

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**21. \*By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications\*\* and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances\*\* and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 1001)**

☒ \*\* I AGREE

\*\* The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

**Authorized Representative:**

Prefix:  \* First Name:

Middle Name:

\* Last Name:

Suffix:

\* Title: \* Telephone Number:  Fax Number: \* Email: \* Signature of Authorized Representative:  \* Date Signed:

## CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

### Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

### Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

#### \* APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION

Nebraska Department of Education

#### \* PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Prefix:  \* First Name:  Middle Name:   
\* Last Name:  Suffix:   
\* Title:

\* SIGNATURE:



\* DATE:

## Abstract

An abstract is to be submitted in accordance with the following:

### 1. Abstract Requirements

- Abstracts must not exceed one page and should use language that will be understood by a range of audiences.
- Abstracts must include the project title, goals, and expected outcomes and contributions related to research, policy, and practice.
- Abstracts must include the population(s) to be served.
- Abstracts must include primary activities to be performed by the recipient.
- Abstracts must include subrecipient activities that are known or specified at the time of application submission.

For research applications, abstracts also include the following:

- Theoretical and conceptual background of the study (i.e., prior research that the investigation builds upon and that provides a compelling rationale for this study).
- Research issues, hypotheses and questions being addressed.
- Study design including a brief description of the sample including sample size, methods, principals, and dependent, independent, and control variables, as well as the approach to data analysis.

[Note: For a non-electronic submission, include the name and address of your organization and the name, phone number and e-mail address of the contact person for this project.]

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## You may now Close the Form

**You have attached 1 file to this page, no more files may be added. To add a different file, you must first delete the existing file.**

\* Attachment:

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NDE will increase system-wide capacity and cohesion by funding literacy initiatives that will support every student to read at or above grade level. This proposal addresses **Competitive Preference Priorities 1 through 4** and the **Invitational Priority**.

**Goals:** 1. Cohesion and alignment of statewide tools and resources, 2. Statewide teacher and leader training and preparation in structured literacy and the Science of Reading encompassing strategies from early childhood through adult literacy, and 3. Support the selection, implementation, and continuation of HQIM and evidence-based practices to promote adequacy in resources for underserved students in early learning programs and school settings.

**Objectives:** 1. a: Update Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan. 1. b: Supplement Nebraska's statewide literacy coach network. 1. c: Expand and align tools and resources to ensure families and caregivers, including early childhood education centers, can equip literacy at home. 2. a: Large-scale, evidence-based professional learning centered on instructional approaches to increasing literacy, such as structured literacy and culturally responsive pedagogy. 2. b: Collaborate with teachers and EPPs to update State licensure standards in the area of literacy instruction and ensure the preparation of teachers and leaders in Nebraska is based on structured literacy and the Science of Reading. 3. a: Support the selection and implementation of HQIM to promote adequate resources through inclusive programs. 3. b: Address the impacts of COVID-19 through continuing best-practice ESSER investments to expand access to high-quality learning by removing barriers through the implementation of inclusive programs.

**Major Activities:** NDE will implement sub-granting strategies, build state capacity, update Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan, create a Literacy Training and Technical Assistance Center, align the work of 16 EPPs and state licensure standards to structured literacy and culturally responsive pedagogy, expand and align resources, and share best practices.



## Project Narrative File(s)

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**\* Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename:**

1243-NDE\_CLSD\_Project\_Narrative.pdf

Add Mandatory Project Narrative File

Delete Mandatory Project Narrative File

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To add more Project Narrative File attachments, please use the attachment buttons below.

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# Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy

## through Nebraska's Multi-Tiered Support System

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**NeMTSS**  
FRAMEWORK



For over a decade, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) has sought additional state and federal resources to ensure students can read at or above grade level. Beginning in 2011, NDE developed a Statewide Literacy Plan and application for a Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant. With the passage of the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act in 2018, NDE again requested a state literacy investment that was not fulfilled. NDE then made biennial budget requests in 2020 (denied) and 2022 (also denied).

Despite the legislature's refusal of critical resources to address systemic literacy needs and fulfill the requirements of the Reading Improvement Act, NDE created the NebraskaREADS initiative, developed rigorous content standards, and implemented Nebraska's Multi-Tiered System of Support (NeMTSS) Framework. NeMTSS implementation focused on statewide accountability and supported districts with the selection and implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), creating small wins for Nebraska's readers.

In 2022, the legislature established a statewide goal: 70% of Nebraskans will attain a postsecondary diploma, degree, or credential of economic value by 2030. Nebraska's State Board of Education supported this goal with its own "Nebraska Ready" legislative priorities, naming the PK-12 policies and actions necessary to reach this goal. One such priority is to increase third-grade English Language Arts proficiency to 75% by 2030. This goal is fueling momentum and interest in statewide literacy and positioning NDE to enact a myriad of initiatives with CLSD partners such as the Nebraska's Governor's Office, other state agencies, districts, Universities, early childcare programs, teachers, families, and public and private partners.

In 2023, NDE again made a push for transformative literacy funding to Nebraska's legislature and received partial funding: a \$1.8 million appropriation for job-embedded

professional learning, literacy coaching, and family literacy<sup>1</sup> initiatives. In the same year, NDE leveraged state set-aside funding from three tranches of pandemic relief funds to support literacy initiatives. One such program has served nearly 34,000 children across 1,000 sites statewide, with a plan to distribute 800,000 books and eliminate Nebraska's book deserts.

These investments still fall short of the resources needed for Nebraska's readers to attain proficiency. With CLSD funding, Nebraska is poised to expand the reach of existing initiatives, strengthen literacy infrastructure, and ensure equitable implementation of best practices.

As evidenced by investments over the last five years, Nebraska's proposal demonstrates a commitment to ensuring students have the literacy skills and resources necessary to become proficient readers, considering the needs of all students including students with disabilities, English learners, and those reading or writing below grade level. This proposal addresses **Competitive Preference Priorities 1 through 4** and the **Invitational Priority**. CLSD funding will allow NDE to significantly expand literacy efforts within the robust NeMTSS Framework.

**(A) Weaknesses in Services, Infrastructure, and Opportunities:** Nebraska's CLSD project proposal was informed by a statewide needs assessment by NDE's Literacy Leadership Team that includes the Offices of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, Early Childhood, Special Education, and Coordinated School and District Support along with partner organizations including the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, and the Region 11 Comprehensive Center. Nebraska's Literacy Needs

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<sup>1</sup> Defined according to the U.S. Dept. of Ed. as

Assessment, included in Appendix E and summarized below, found four key weaknesses.

**(1) Proficiency:** Statewide summative data from the 2022-2023 school year indicate that 42% of Nebraska’s grades 3-8 students are not reading proficiently, while 54% of Nebraska high school students are not reading proficiently. Pandemic-related challenges such as changes in opportunities to learn, the impact of trauma, and shifts in access to instruction due to quarantine and shortened assessments are still being addressed in Nebraska. A recent update to the Education Recovery Scorecard reported students in the Omaha Public Schools, Nebraska’s largest district, experienced a loss of 6.75 months of reading instruction resulting in a total economic loss of over \$1 billion in lifetime earnings (Harinstein, 2023).

Figure 1.1 below shows additional negative impacts of COVID-19. The Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS) and the ACT® assess Nebraska’s third through eighth graders and high school juniors, respectively, in English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, and science. These assessments resumed last school year following a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. According to Figure 1.1: Covid Impact on NSCAS Scores, Nebraska’s statewide proficiency declined across all subjects except science compared to pre-pandemic scores (Bonderson, 2022). From the 2018-19 school year to the 2021-22 school year, Nebraska proficiency in all grades dropped an average of 6% in math and 5% in ELA.

**Figure 1.1: Covid Impact on NSCAS Scores**



The impact of the pandemic appears to have widened many achievement gaps. 56% of

White students were on track or met the benchmark for college and career-ready in ELA. By comparison, 25% of African American students, 31% of Hispanic students, and 24% of English learners met the same standards.

In 2022, only 1,145 out of 4,358 grade 4 students with disabilities achieved proficiency on the NSCAS, resulting in a proficiency rate of just 26.27%. While this represents a slight improvement from previous years, significant efforts are needed to ensure all students reach reading proficiency and return to pre-pandemic achievement rates. Nebraska's Literacy Needs Assessment provides additional details in Appendix E.

Achievement profiles in Nebraska reveal significant gaps in literacy proficiency. In 2022, there was a 30-point achievement gap between White and Black eighth-grade students and a 22-point gap between White and Hispanic eighth-graders. Similarly, there was a 20-point difference in reading outcomes between those eighth-graders who were eligible for National School Lunch and those who were not (USED, 2022). This indicates students are not advancing to the literacy levels required for college and the workforce between grades 3 and 11.

A compounding concern between grades 3 and 11 is chronic absenteeism, which NDE's accountability system defines as an absence rate of 10% or more. During the 2022-2023 school year, 69,000 students (22% of all Nebraska students) were chronically absent (NDE, 2023). Absenteeism has a disproportionate effect on students of color, students with disabilities, English learners, and economically disadvantaged students (NDE, 2023).

**(2) Significant Disproportionality:** Across the nation, students of color are more likely than their White peers to be misidentified as students with disabilities. These students are then isolated or provided instruction and materials below their grade level, compounding barriers to literacy attainment.

In response to pandemic-related academic needs, NDE's Office of Special Education launched its Journey to Inclusion pilot program that supports coherent school improvement strategies and utilizes Inclusive Education for students with disabilities as a framework to implement evidence-based practices identified in school improvement plans. While NDE's Journey to Inclusion, now a statewide initiative in its third year, aims to mitigate the practices of misidentification, sufficient resources are needed so that participating schools can address the organizational and structural changes necessary.

**(3) Inequity in Access to Quality Teachers and HQIM:** In the 2022-2023 school year, only 42% of Nebraska's public school districts reported the use of HQIM as the primary resource for ELA instruction, up from 5% in 2019. While the selection of HQIM has grown with ESSER investments, additional resources are needed for increased adoption rates. NDE currently lacks the resources to track implementation efforts or to bring essential curriculum-based professional learning to scale. The shortfall of both materials and strong implementation means students miss crucial learning opportunities due to reliance on non-evidence-based materials or ineffective instruction.

Research indicates that the quality of instructional materials is a key indicator of the quality of instruction (Allen, et al., 2015). When teachers have comprehensive training in SoR or structured literacy accompanied by standards-aligned materials, student mastery of foundational skills improves. Currently, there is a lack of consistency in professional development for the Science of Reading across Nebraska, a benchmark for NDE in determining the quality of teachers. Until very recently, Nebraska's teacher preparation programs have not been required to include SoR or structured literacy concepts within course sequences for pre-service elementary or ELA teachers. Regulations for the Approval of Educator Preparation Programs, known in

Nebraska as Rule 20, were approved by the Governor in May 2023 and now direct programs to include such content. Currently, NDE lacks the resources to train faculty in course design or instruction thoroughly.

Only nine of Nebraska's seventeen Educational Service Units (ESUs) have offered Lexia's Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling training in their respective regions. While a small number of ESUs have trained over 300 teachers, others have reached fewer than five teachers. The percentage of leaders who have received training is smaller still, resulting in insufficient skills to provide instructional leadership. This disparity means fewer students benefit from evidence-based instruction in foundational skills.

Rural Nebraska students face additional challenges compared to those in metropolitan areas, including limited access to diverse teachers, high-quality teachers, ESU services, technology, and advanced academic programs. Nebraska's two primary urban areas are clustered along its eastern border, each with a dedicated ESU for its public school system. As such, the vast majority of the state's expansive geographical area, 77,421 square miles, is considered rural, along with over 200 of the 244 public Local Education Agencies (LEAs).

**(4) Capacity:** NDE has developed a vision for improving literacy outcomes for children but does not currently have the internal capacity to build a coherent system of effective K-12 literacy, or to complete wraparound evaluations of existing and future initiatives. For example, NDE has a single K-3 Reading Specialist on staff serving all 244 Nebraska school districts. This position is jointly funded between three offices and shares duties and responsibilities between those offices, diluting the ability to meet the vast professional learning needs of schools throughout the state.

**(B) Severity and Magnitude:** see Appendix E for Nebraska's Literacy Needs Assessment data and findings in more detail; a summary follows.

15% of children entering Kindergarten in Nebraska fell below the widely held expectations of Language and 11% below the threshold for Literacy (*Early Childhood Education State Report*, 2024). This leaves **one in ten** students entering Kindergarten unprepared to build the literacy skills necessary for future academic success.

According to NSCAS data from the 2022-2023 school year, 43% of participating grade 5 students did not meet grade-level proficiency on State ELA assessments. 37% of participating grade 8 students did not meet grade-level proficiency on the same assessments. This equates to more than **one in three** students in middle schools across Nebraska reading below grade level.

High School ELA proficiency is currently measured by the ACT® in grade 11. According to data from the 2022-23 school year, more than half of Nebraska’s eleventh-grade students are not reading at grade level (NDE, 2023). This means **one in two** students in high schools across Nebraska are reading below grade level.

Table 1.2 illustrates additional inequities in proficiency measures, showing five student groups consistently achieving 50% proficiency and above including Asian students, White students, and students who identify with two or more races. By comparison, student groups with less than 50% proficiency, marked by red, include several diverse student groups: Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch, Special Education students, English learners, highly mobile students, and students served by migrant programs.

With a staggering 93% of students identifying as English learners falling below grade 11 ELA expectations on the , now is the time for Nebraska to align with partners, secure additional resources, and employ evidence-based programs and culturally responsive pedagogy from birth to grade 12 for all of Nebraska’s learners.

**Table 1.2: NSCAS English Language Arts Data**

\*Results from the

\*\*Results from both NSCAS and                      unavailable for this student group at the 11<sup>th</sup> grade level

	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient
3		45%		35%	39%		38%		49%	29%		40%		48%		37%		40%		37%		35%		
4		38%		36%	42%		33%		44%	36%		49%		40%		26%		32%		27%		35%		
5		38%		25%	40%		33%		40%	34%		47%		41%		25%		30%		32%		28%		
6		38%		25%	41%		28%		44%	36%		48%		40%		23%		25%		29%		32%		
7		37%		27%	39%		28%		45%	37%		49%		39%		20%		20%		25%		30%		
8		47%		35%	34%		38%		47%	28%		40%		48%		25%		24%		37%		35%		
11		24% *		20% *	48% *		18% *	**	**	44% *		40% *		28%	47%		7% *		12% *		17% *			

**(A) Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes:** As a result of CLSD funding, NDE will achieve the following goals and objectives, while addressing the Competitive Preference Priorities (CPP) and Invitational Priority, by 2029. \*Objectives marked by an asterisk are at least partially supported by competitive sub-awards.

1. Goal 1: Cohesion and alignment of statewide tools and resources.

- Objective 1.a: Update Nebraska’s Statewide Literacy Plan. **CPP1, CPP3**
- Objective 1.b: Supplement Nebraska’s statewide literacy coach network. **CPP3\***
- Objective 1.c: Expand and align tools and resources to ensure families and caregivers, including early childhood education centers, can equip literacy at home. **CPP2, CPP3, CPP4, IP\***

2. Goal 2: Statewide teacher and leader training and preparation in structured literacy and the Science of Reading encompassing strategies from early childhood through adult literacy.

**CPP1, CPP2, CPP3, CPP4, IP**

- Objective 2.a: Large-scale, evidence-based professional learning centered on instructional approaches to increasing literacy, such as structured literacy and culturally responsive pedagogy. **CPP3, CPP4, IP\***
- Objective 2.b: Collaborate with teachers and Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) to update State licensure standards in the area of literacy instruction and ensure the preparation of teachers and leaders in Nebraska is based on structured literacy and the Science of Reading. **CPP1, CPP4**

3. Goal 3: Support the selection, implementation, and continuation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and evidence-based practices to promote adequacy in resources for

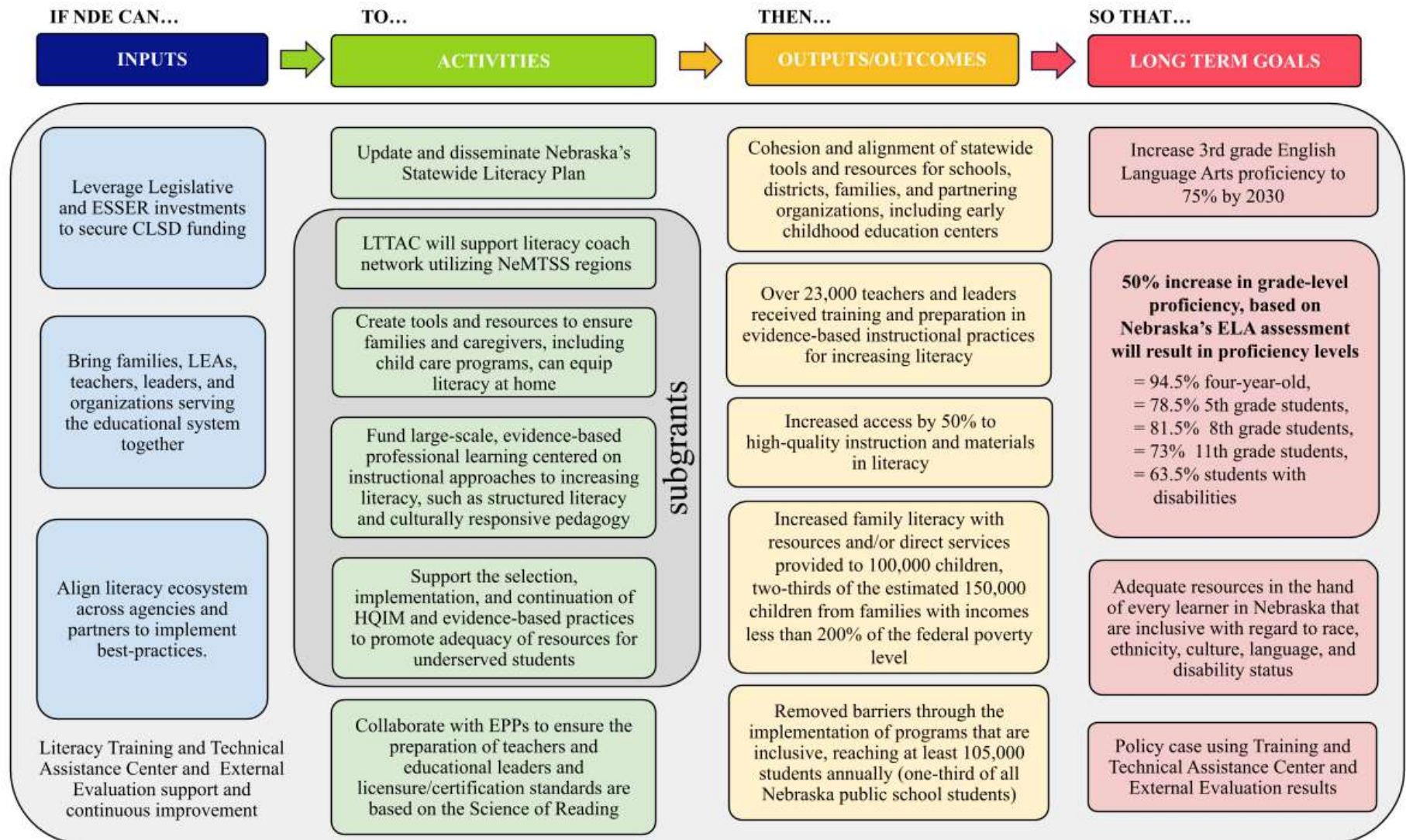
underserved students in early learning programs and school settings. **CPP2**

- Objective 3.a: Support the selection and implementation of HQIM to promote adequate resources through inclusive programs. **CPP2, CPP3\***
- Objective 3.b: Address the impacts of COVID-19 through continuing best-practice ESSER investments to expand access to high-quality learning by removing barriers through the implementation of inclusive programs. **CPP2, CPP3\***

**Outcomes:** A tiered model will provide all of Nebraska’s LEAs and associated ECE providers with access to some level of differentiated literacy support. By doing so, Nebraska’s CLSD project will indirectly impact the quality of literacy instruction for all 328,722 students in the state. Additionally, NDE anticipates approximately ten statewide initiatives will receive competitive subgrants annually (a breakdown of anticipated use of funds is available in Table 3.3: Sub-Award Requirements). The specific sites receiving sub-awards will be determined through an application process, with priority given to applicants updating or providing materials or learning opportunities to low-income or underserved students, including students with disabilities, English learners, and those reading or writing below grade level. NDE anticipates 105,000 to 110,000 students, or approximately one-third of all Nebraska public school students, will be served annually by organizations selected for subgrants and targeted or intensive support. Additionally, NDE anticipates supporting all 23,758 educators in the five-year performance period.

**Logic Model:** Nebraska’s Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS is driven by a logic model, outlined in Figure 2.1: Nebraska’s Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS Logic Model.

**Figure 2.1: Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through the NeMTSS Logic Model**



**(1) Inputs:** The model shown in Figure 2.1 begins with the inputs needed to catalyze Nebraska’s CLSD project activities. NDE currently staffs one full-time literacy program specialist. CLSD funding would expand NDE capacity by two additional personnel and would allow the NDE to create an Office of Literacy to continue working toward student achievement and grade-level proficiency. The second input focuses on bringing together families, LEAs, teachers, leaders, and organizations serving the educational system. Finally, NDE will need the support and capacity of aligned providers and departments administering literacy programs, including feedback, coherence, and continuing ESSER investment successes. These inputs will allow NDE and partners to implement the activities listed next in the Logic Model.

**(2) Activities:** NDE will leverage state-level activities and sub-awards to successfully implement the activities described in Figure 2.1: Nebraska’s Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS Logic Model.

**(i) State-Level Activities:** NDE will reserve not more than 5 percent of the CLSD funds it receives for:

**(a) Administration:** NDE will create an Office of Literacy, hire two new staff, initiate and execute sub-award processes, publicize best practices through the NDE website, and ensure implementation with fidelity through program monitoring.

**(b) EPP Alignment:** strengthening and enhancing pre-service courses for students preparing to teach children from birth through grade 12 in explicit, systematic, and intensive instruction in evidence-based literacy methods through coordination with Nebraska’s 16 EPPs. While the new Rule 20 shows Nebraska’s overall system alignment, NDE will need to bolster its capacity to support these

EPPs in implementation.

**(c) Certification and Licensure Standards:** reviewing and updating Nebraska's teacher certification and licensure standards in the area of literacy instruction in early education through grade 12.

**(d) Training and Technical Assistance:** to enable the eligible entities to design and implement literacy programs with fidelity.

**(f) Evaluation:** NDE will perform monitoring and reporting subgrant successes and best practices to inform continuous improvement during and after the life of the CLSD award. Additionally, NDE will contract for external evaluation and comply with national CLSD evaluation.

**(ii) Sub-awards:** 95% of funds will be sub-awarded as agreed to in the assurances published in the notice of funding opportunity by the U.S. Department of Education. NDE will publish competitive awards seeking partners to align statewide tools and resources, offer professional learning to educators, leaders, and early childcare providers from birth through grade 12, and address the impacts of COVID-19 including rigorous HQIM, tutoring services, extended learning opportunities, family engagement, and/or chronic absenteeism. NDE aims to directly impact 4,000 teachers and leaders each year through training and preparation in evidence-based instructional practices for increasing literacy.

**(3) Outputs:** These activities will lead to many outcomes and outputs including:

- Cohesion and alignment of statewide tools and resources for schools, districts, families, and partnering organizations, including early childhood education centers.
- Over 23,000 teachers and leaders receive training and preparation in evidence-based

instructional practices for increasing literacy.

- Increased access by 50% to high-quality instruction and materials in literacy.
- Removed barriers through the implementation of inclusive programs, directly impacting at least 105,000 students annually (one-third of all Nebraska public school students).
- Increased family literacy with resources and/or direct services provided to 100,000 children, two-thirds of the estimated 150,000 children in Nebraska from families with incomes less than 200% of the federal poverty level.

**(4) Long-Term Goals:** Nebraska's CLSD plan will achieve measurable long-term goals:

- Increase third-grade English Language Arts proficiency to 75% by 2030.
- Adequate resources in the hands of every learner in Nebraska that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status.
- 94.5% of participating four-year-old children will achieve significant gains in oral literacy. This includes only the children who are observed for oral language skills which occur in Nebraska in ESU or LEA-operated early childhood education centers through the TS GOLD assessment, described in Appendix E: Nebraska's Literacy Needs Assessment.
- 78.5% of fifth-grade students will meet or exceed proficiency on State reading/language arts assessments.
- 81.5% of eighth-grade students will meet or exceed proficiency on State reading/language arts assessments.
- 73% of high school students will meet or exceed proficiency on State reading/language arts assessments, currently measured by the ACT administered to eleventh-grade students.

- 63% of students with a disability will meet or exceed proficiency on State reading/language arts assessments.
- A policy case will be developed using Nebraska's Literacy Training and Technical Assistance Center (LTTAC) and external evaluator results.

**(B) Project Implementation:** With these evidence-based, best-practice activities in mind, Nebraska's CLSD project also includes a high-quality plan for project implementation. This Implementation Plan is later detailed in the Gantt Chart in Table 3.1.

NDE will begin to make sub-awards in Year 1 with the expertise of the Offices of Procurement and Budget and Grant Management. These competitions will operate similarly to ARP ESSER state set-aside fund awards with the addition of CLSD preferences to serve students facing barriers to literacy achievement and achieve Objectives 1.b, 1.c, 2.a, 3.a, and 3.b as indicated by an asterisk at the beginning of Section II.A. Additionally, the sub-award funding distribution will align with both the assurances provided in the funding announcement for CLSD by the U.S. Department of Education, representing a geographically diverse area including students in poverty, and the NeMTSS regional model. NDE plans to implement an annual funding cycle with required annual reporting.

Year 1 will also see the hiring of relevant NDE staff and the continued focus on updating Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan. First, relying upon the expertise of NDE's Office of Human Resources, NDE will begin its hiring process for the two full-time positions described later in the narrative, upon notice of award. Central to their role will be coordinating the update of the Statewide Literacy Plan, utilizing Nebraska's existing State Literacy Writing (SLW) Team members, described in more detail in the Literacy Needs Assessment found in Appendix E, with the addition of external stakeholders to create Nebraska's Literacy Team. The Literacy Team

will utilize CLSD funding to complete a thorough feedback loop to ensure continuous improvement will play a critical role in the new Statewide Literacy Plan.

Finally, in Year 1, NDE will establish a Literacy Training and Technical Assistance Center (LTTAC). NDE is seeking a statewide nonprofit organization that is well-positioned to serve as the LTTAC for the Comprehensive Statewide Literacy Development Plan. This organization will be leveraging its extensive statewide reach and robust infrastructure. With established, place-based partnerships in communities across the state, the organization will have demonstrated its capacity to engage diverse local stakeholders effectively. This organization will have collaborated with the Nebraska Department of Education on COVID relief or other efforts, showcasing its ability to respond to emergent needs and implement large-scale initiatives. Additionally, its strong cross-agency partnerships will provide a solid foundation for fostering interagency collaboration, ensuring comprehensive and cohesive literacy development efforts across the state. By drawing on these strengths, the organization can offer critical support and guidance to enhance literacy outcomes for all Nebraskans.

Years 2 through 5 will include additional subgranting periods, anticipated to last one year each. Additionally in these years, NDE will seek out all 16 EPPs across Nebraska through the close collaboration of Brad Dirksen, Administrator of NDE's Office of Accreditation, Certification, and Approval, and his membership with the Nebraska Council on Teacher Education (NCTE). Dirksen will facilitate the alignment of teacher training programs to the Science of Reading. He will also lead feedback sessions with teachers and EPPs through NCTE to update licensure and certification standards in the area of literacy instruction in early education through grade 12, with support from the Office of Literacy staff as needed.

**Nebraska's Multi-Tiered System of Support (NeMTSS):** States increasingly recommend that

districts and schools use multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) to improve reading outcomes for all students. States have also suggested that MTSS is a viable service delivery model in response to new state legislation to screen, identify, and treat students with word-level reading disabilities (i.e., dyslexia). One model of MTSS that utilizes Enhanced Core Reading Instruction (ECRI MTSS), has demonstrated significant increases in students' early acquisition of foundational reading skills (Smith et al., 2016). Impact data indicates moderate to strong effects on student decoding, word reading, and fluency skills for students in the schools with MTSS that utilize Enhanced Core Reading Instruction. Results suggest that schools can use ECRI MTSS to improve foundational reading skills for struggling early readers, including students with or at risk for word-level reading disabilities.

At the heart of Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy is Nebraska's Multi-Tiered System of Support (NeMTSS). This framework was designed through the lens of continuous improvement to guide school districts, schools, and all educators to ensure that every student has access to learning experiences that enhance their educational outcomes. This is accomplished through a whole-child approach to ensure each student's social, emotional, behavioral, academic, and environmental needs are met from pre-kindergarten through graduation. Continuous improvement is not the job of one or two people, working in isolation, but rather unfolds progressively and implementation is driven by district, school, and student-level teams that are dependent upon a common purpose and collaboration. The NeMTSS Framework outlines specific skills and actions to organize, support, deliver, and drive continuous improvement.

Nebraska will infuse money to bolster the regional model within NeMTSS, depicted in Figure 2.2: NeMTSS Regional Support Map. Each of the five regions has a team that is providing implementation support in the area of MTSS including school improvement efforts to build a system of support that meets the needs of all students. Each region includes anywhere from two to three ESUs that partner to provide support to schools in that overall region.

**Figure 2.2: NeMTSS Regional Support Map**



Four essential elements offered by the NeMTSS framework will support the rollout of CLSD activities:

- **Infrastructure and Shared Leadership:** Sound infrastructure and effective shared leadership are the foundation from which all the other essential elements are built. Without a strong infrastructure and effective shared leadership, it is not possible to design a strong, layered continuum of support, engage in sound data-based decision-making, or support collaboration and communication.
- **Layered Continuum of Support:** Within a layered continuum, tiered supports are provided to meet the unique needs of each student. Supports are dependent on data, and there is flexibility among the tiers, allowing each student to receive the support they need, when they need it. Adults are responsible for monitoring student progress and matching the support to each student's specific needs.
- **Data-Based Decision-Making:** Collaborative Teams and Student Support Teams engage in the problem-solving model to identify, analyze, plan, implement, and reflect on student

**Figure 2.3: NeMTSS Problem Solving Model**



support, as demonstrated in Figure 2.3: NeMTSS Problem Solving Model, using a variety of data points to identify student needs and support planning. Supporting effective data-based decision-making in NeMTSS requires district and school teams to engage in the problem-solving model to drive continuous improvement of the support for the system.

- **Communication and Collaboration:** Effective communication and collaboration hinge upon the belief that student, family, and community engagement enhance learning experiences and are culturally inclusive and relevant for each student. Student success and engagement rely on positive partnerships and relationships to fundamentally improve the outcomes for each student, school, district, and community.

**Project Partners:** Utilizing this NeMTSS Framework, NDE will work with several project partners to drive the implementation of the project's goals and objectives. Specific assurances are included regarding early childhood program partners. The early childhood partners mentioned below will play a vital role in collaborating to update the Statewide Literacy Plan and utilizing the Early Learning Guidelines to drive implementation of both the CLSD subgrants and the Statewide Literacy Plan. NDE has collaborated with the following organizations in the writing of the CLSD application, as it related to the Early Childhood portion and the Early Learning

Guidelines described in Figure 2.4, and will continue to collaborate with the following organizations and departments in making and implementing subgrants under the early childhood education portion of the CLSD program:

**Figure 2.4: Nebraska's Early Learning Guidelines**



- (1) The State agency responsible for administering early childhood education programs in Nebraska is NDE's Office of Early Childhood. In coordination with NDE's Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessments, NDE's Office of Early Childhood staff will develop a system for identifying programs that would benefit from literacy support. This team will also build a network of early childhood, kindergarten, and grades 1 through 3 educators and leaders for professional learning in structural literacy and the Science of Reading.
- (2) The state agency responsible for administering childcare programs is the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS). Both the NDE and NDHHS are represented in the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council described in more detail below. In coordination with the Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessments, NDE and NDHHS will administer the selection process for the competitive sub-awards under the early childhood education portion of the CLSD program.
- (3) In Nebraska, the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care established

pursuant to section 642(b)(1)(A)(i)) of the Head Start Act is the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC). The ECICC is tasked to advise and assist collaborating agencies in carrying out the provisions of state and federal statutes pertaining to early childhood care and education initiatives under state supervision. Members are also tasked with required reporting to the legislature, Nebraska's Governor, and state agencies.

Supported by NDE's Office of Early Childhood and Special Education and NDHHS's Child Care Subsidy Unit, this Council includes members representing Nebraska's Department of Health and Human Services (Medicaid Office, Mental Health, Child Care Subsidy and Licensing, and Child Welfare), Nebraska's Department of Insurance, Social Services, Early Intervention, Homeless Education, childcare providers, organizations providing professional development, Head Start State Collaboration Office, and regional Education Service Units. While currently vacant, the ECICC holds space for additional members representing Higher Education, businesses, parents, physicians, developmental disabilities, Mental Health, Head Start, Public Health, the State of Nebraska's Legislature, and Head Start's Tribal organization. Representatives serving the ECICC are listed in Appendix F: Nebraska Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council Membership Roster.

Several of these entities currently belong to the State Literacy Writing Team as described in Section A: Need for the Project. Additionally, they are actively working with the NDHHS, Nebraska Head Start Association, and Nebraska Head Start State Collaboration Office on the Early Learning Guidelines depicted in Figure 2.4: Early Learning Guidelines.

These entities will collaborate in awarding subgrants under the early childhood education portion of the CLSD program to meet all requirements outlined in the CLSD assurances.

**(C) Promising Evidence:** Nebraska's CLSD project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, as described in the Evidence Form completed in Grants.Gov and Table 2.5: Design and Activities Framework and Rationale. Nebraska's CLSD design includes components from studies found in the What Works Clearinghouse showing strong (Tier 1) and moderate (Tier 2) evidence.

**(i) Strong Evidence: Tier 1** recommendations to increase reading proficiency include providing explicit vocabulary instruction, providing direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction, implementing intensive and individualized interventions for struggling readers provided by trained specialists, implementing tutoring, teaching academic language, teaching phonological and phonemic awareness, teaching decoding and writing word parts, and incorporating connected text daily to support reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. These strong evidences will support Goals 1, 2, and 3 and Objectives 1.a, 1.c, 2.a, 3.a and 3.b.

**(ii) Moderate Evidence: Tier 2** recommendations to increase reading proficiency include implementing literacy coaches, providing opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation, and increasing student motivation and engagement in literacy learning. These moderate evidences will support Goals and Objectives 1.a, 1.b, and 2.a.

**Table 2.5: Design and Activities Framework and Rationale**

Goal/Objective	CLSD Activities	Supporting Research	What Works Clearinghouse Extent of Evidence	Methodological Tools
<b>Goal 1: Cohesion and alignment of statewide tools and resources. CPP1, 2, 3, 4, IP</b>				
Objective 1.a: Update of Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan. <b>CPP1, CPP3</b>	Hire NDE Literacy Director, Update SLP, Continue State Literacy Writing Team meetings to align tools and resources to NeMTSS and NDE's Journey to Inclusion	Kamil, M. L., Borman, G. D., Dole, J., Kral, C. C., Salinger, T., and Torgesen, J. (2008).	Tier 1: Strong Evidence	Statewide Literacy Plan and dissemination plan review, District implementation plan review during continuous improvements site visits
Objective 1.b: Supplement Nebraska's statewide literacy coach network. <b>CPP3</b>	Competitive sub-awards to increase the impact of literacy coaches through support services (additional funding for more coaches, funding for HQIM materials, additional implementation support, and more)	Allen, J. P., Hafen, C. A., Gregory, A. C., Mikami, A. Y., & Pianta, R. (2015).	Tier 2: Moderate Evidence	Surveys of districts regarding HQIM implementation, ELA Assessments, TS GOLD results, Classroom observations by literacy coaches
Objective 1.c: Creation of tools and resources to ensure families and caregivers, including early childhood education centers, can equip literacy at home. <b>CPP2, 3, 4, IP</b>	Competitive sub-awards to create and distribute evidence-based resources targeted to family and caregiver engagement, including early childhood stakeholders, through inclusive programs	Kosanovich, M., Lee, L. and Foorman, B. (2020).  Esmaeeli, S. (2024).  Maier, A., Daniel, J., Oakes, J., & Lam, L. (2017).	Companion Guide to Tier 1: Strong Evidence  N/A  N/A	Resource review and creation, Surveys to families/caregivers TS GOLD results

Goal/Objective	CLSD Activities	Supporting Research	What Works Clearinghouse Extent of Evidence	Methodological Tools
Goal 2: Statewide teacher and leader training and preparation in structured literacy and the Science of Reading encompassing strategies from early childhood through adult literacy. <b>CPP1, CPP2, CPP3, CPP4, IP</b>				
Objective 2.a: Large-scale, evidence-based professional learning centered on instructional approaches to increasing literacy, such as structured literacy and culturally responsive pedagogy. <b>CPP3, CPP4, IP</b>	Competitive sub-awards for PL to strengthen student learning at transition times	Institute of Educational Sciences. (2022).	Tier 1: Strong Evidence	Classroom observations by literacy coaches, Surveys
	Competitive sub-awards for PL to strengthen HQIM implementation	Kamil, M. L., Borman, G. D., Dole, J., Kral, C. C., Salinger, T., and Torgesen, J. (2008).  TNTP (2018).	Tier 2: Moderate Evidence  N/A	Surveys to districts regarding their implementation of HQIM
Objective 2.b: Collaborate with teachers and EPPs to update State licensure standards in the area of literacy instruction and ensure the preparation of teachers and leaders in Nebraska is based on structured literacy and the Science of Reading. <b>CPP1, CPP4</b>	Advisory committee, including EPP faculty and Community College faculty in offered w/ CLSD funds, align w/ office of teacher certification and work on requirement for new educators and SOR	Leko, M. M., & Handy, T. (2019).  Moats, L. (2014).	N/A  N/A	First and third-year teacher surveys, Literacy coaches review syllabi for elements of the Science of Reading, Participants served, aligned EPP programs

Goal/Objective	CLSD Activities	Supporting Research	What Works Clearinghouse Extent of Evidence	Methodological Tools
Goal 3: Support the selection, implementation, and continuation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and evidence-based practices to promote adequacy in resources for underserved students in early learning programs and school settings. <b>CPP2, CPP 3</b>				
Objective 3.a: Support the selection and implementation of HQIM to promote adequate resources through inclusive programs. <b>CPP2, CPP3</b>	Competitive sub-awards to provide HQIM and implementation support to districts	Institute of Educational Sciences. (2022).	Tier 1: Strong Evidence	Surveys to districts regarding their implementation of HQIM
Objective 3.b: Address the impacts of COVID-19 through continuing best-practice ESSER investments to expand access to high-quality learning by removing barriers through the implementation of inclusive programs. <b>CPP2</b>	Competitive sub-awards for statewide tutoring with inclusive programs	Markovitz, C. E., Hernandez, M. W., Hedberg, E. C., & Whitmore, H. W. (2021).  Robinson, C.D., Pollard, C., Novicoff, S., White, S., and Loeb, S. (2024).	Tier 1: Strong Evidence  N/A	Quantitative program impact study, Surveys
	Competitive sub-awards for extended learning opportunities with inclusive programs	Johnson, J., Jadoobirsingh, A., Spencer, S., Skoglund, B., and Volz, M. (2024)	N/A	Quantitative program impact study, Surveys
	Competitive sub-awards to create and distribute evidence-based resources targeted to family and caregiver engagement, including early childhood stakeholders, through inclusive programs (repeated from above)	Kosanovich, M., Lee, L. and Foorman, B. (2020).  Esmaeeli, S. (2024).	Companion Guide to Tier 1: Strong Evidence  N/A	Resource review and creation, Surveys to families/caregivers, TS GOLD results



**Supplement Not Supplant:** CLSD grant funds awarded will be used to supplement, and not supplant, other Federal, State, and local funds. NDE’s Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS proposal leverages the Nebraska Legislature’s investment of \$1.8 million to provide regional literacy coaches without duplicating these efforts outlined in NDE’s implementation plan to support the current literacy coaches.

Additionally, CLSD funding will ensure the continuation of ARP ESSER investments in literacy development for children still impacted by COVID-19 without supplanting services. This coordination will be reinforced by the policies and procedures of NDE’s Office of Budget and Grants Management detailed in Section IV: Ensuring High-Quality Products and Services.

**Methodological Tools to Ensure Successful Achievement:** Nebraska’s CLSD project uses the appropriate methodological tools to ensure the successful achievement of project objectives as outlined in the final column of Table 2.5: Design and Activities Framework and Rationale.

**(A) Gantt Chart:** NDE has defined timelines and milestones for completing activities and accomplishing project milestones in Table 3.1: Nebraska’s CLSD Activities Gantt Chart.

NDE will begin the work of the CLSD grant immediately. With an anticipated September 2024 notice of award from the U.S. Department of Education, three tasks can begin before receiving funds and several more will take place in Quarter 1 after the anticipated October 1, 2024, start date. NDE will implement and monitor activities on a trimester calendar beginning in January 2025. In Year 1, NDE will build the Literacy Team comprised of cross-agency representatives, early childhood representatives, literacy-focused initiatives, and partners representing a diverse background and all geographic regions of the state.

**Table 3.1: Nebraska's CLSD Activities Gantt Chart**

#	Task Title	Task Owner	Start Date	Due Date	1st Qtr	YEAR ONE			YEAR TWO			YEAR THREE			YEAR FOUR			YEAR FIVE			
					Fall	Spr	Sum	Fall	Spr	Sum	Fall	Spr	Sum	Fall	Spr	Sum	Fall	Spr	Sum	Fall	
Project Launch																					
0.1	Recruit and hire the NDE project team	A. DenBeste	Upon award notice	1/31/25																	
0.2	Source a statewide technical assistance center	NDE Procurement Staff		1/31/25																	
0.2.1	Contract with a statewide technical assistance center	A. DenBeste		1/31/25																	
0.3	Source an evaluator	NDE Procurement Staff		1/31/25																	
0.3.1	Contract with an evaluator	A. DenBeste		1/31/25																	
Goal 1 Cohesion and alignment of statewide tools and resources.																					
1.1	Hold CLSD Project Team Meetings	Office of Literacy Director (OLD), Literacy Project Manager (LPM)	Ongoing	9/30/29																	
1.1.1	Implement changes based on continuous improvement	LPM	4/1/25	9/30/29																	
1.2	Continue updating Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan	LPM, CLSD Project Team (CPT)	5/1/25	8/31/29																	
1.2.1	Disseminate and collect feedback on SLP	CPT and LTTAC	1/1/25	9/30/29																	
1.4	Attend NCTE meetings to discuss the alignment of teacher preparation programs to the Science of Reading	B. Dirksen	Ongoing	6/30/29																	
1.5	Engage with teachers and EPPs to update licensure and certification standards in the area of literacy instruction to include the Science of Reading	B. Dirksen	Ongoing	8/1/29																	

#	Task Title	Task Owner	Start Date	Due Date	1st Qtr	YEAR ONE			YEAR TWO			YEAR THREE			YEAR FOUR			YEAR FIVE			
					Fall	Spr	Sum	Fall	Spr	Sum	Fall	Spr	Sum	Fall	Spr	Sum	Fall	Spr	Sum	Fall	
Goal 2 Statewide teacher and leader training and preparation in structured literacy and the Science of Reading encompassing strategies from early childhood through adult literacy.																					
2.1	Launch PL sub-award application process	OLD, LPM	1/1/25	1/31/29																	
2.1.1	Review and score applications	CPT	3/1/25	3/31/29																	
2.1.2	Approve sub-awards	OLD	4/1/25	4/30/29																	
2.1.3	Review post-award reports	CPT	11/1/15	9/30/29																	
2.2	Implement changes based on continuous improvement	CPT, LTTAC	5/1/25	9/30/29																	
Goal 3 Support the selection, implementation, and continuation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and evidence-based practices to promote adequacy in resources for underserved students in early learning programs and school settings.																					
3.1	Launch sub-award application process	OLD, LPM	1/1/25	1/31/29																	
3.1.1	Review and score applications	CPT	3/1/25	3/31/29																	
3.1.2	Approve sub-awards	OLD	4/1/25	4/30/29																	
3.1.3	Review post-award reports	CPT	11/1/15	9/30/29																	
3.2	Implement changes based on continuous improvement	CPT, LTTAC	5/1/25	9/30/29																	
Grant Management																					
4.1	Hold Office of Literacy CLSD Grant Management Meetings	OLD, LPM, EE, LTTAC	3/31/25	9/30/29																	
4.2	Conduct surveys and focus groups	External Evaluator (EE)	1/1/25	7/30/29																	
4.2.1	Collect quantitative and qualitative data	EE	1/1/25	9/30/29																	
4.3	Submit Annual Reports	OLD, LPM, EE, LTTAC	12/31/25	9/30/29																	
4.3.1	Submit Final Report	OLD, LPM, EE, LTTAC	1/1/29	9/30/29																	

This team will establish sub-award processes and procedures, including priorities and ranking systems to administer a competitive grant, leverage the Literacy Team to update Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan (some work is already being done as described in Section 1: Needs Assessment with the State Literacy Writing Team and in Appendix E) and disseminate best practices on the NDE website. Years 1 through 5 include an annual competitive sub-award process, biannual meetings of the statewide literacy team, a plan to continuously improve and disseminate a statewide literacy plan, EPP alignment to CLSD activities and the Science of Reading, teacher and EPP feedback gathered to update licensure and certification requirements, and the continued sharing and reporting of best practices.

**(B) Feedback and Continuous Improvement:** NDE will implement continuous improvement in a structure that aligns with the Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle as described in the U.S. Department of Education's Needs Assessment Guidebook (Cuiccio et al., n.d.) in coordination with the newly created Literacy Training and Technical Assistance Center (LTTAC). Through the LTTAC work with subgrantees and the External Evaluator, NDE will receive feedback from families, students, teachers, and community members in the forms of surveys, quotes, and data that will be shared with NDE's CLSD Project Team described in Table 3.2. Feedback will also be solicited from aligned partners and advisory groups such as the Statewide Literacy Writing Team, Nebraska Council of School Administrators (NCSA), NCTE, and ECICC.

Using this feedback, NDE will follow the process outlined earlier in Figure 2.3: NeMTSS Problem Solving Model to create activities that will lead to greater outcomes for students. Collaborative Teams and Student Support Teams engage in the problem-solving model to identify, analyze, plan, implement, and reflect on student supports, as demonstrated in NDE will work with an external evaluation partner to examine the effectiveness of sub-awardees and

activities in producing student achievement outcomes. Because effective improvement requires a commitment to action, assessment, and ongoing adjustment, employing the elements of a successful needs assessment throughout implementation can support periodic data reviews to assess progress (Cuiccio et al., n.d.). NDE will use the needs assessment findings in Section A: Need of the Project and Nebraska's Literacy Needs Assessment in Appendix E to inform the continuous improvement cycle by reflecting the needs of individuals and the context of use, which are essential for innovative work in education (Cuccio et al., n.d.).

Feedback will be collected from partners through advisory meetings (NCFF, NCTE, NCFL, NCSA, ECICC) and annual post-award reports from sub-awardees. The external evaluator, to be selected through a competitive process, will assist in gathering data from partners regarding activities and feedback from participants as sub-awardees complete activities. The evaluator's role is further detailed in Section V.B. Performance Feedback and Assessment of Progress. NDE will implement continuous improvement standards through these competitive processes and will review and rank sub-awardees' plans to include continuous improvement in their proposed grant-funded activities.

**(C) Key Project Personnel:** Objectives of the project will be completed on time and within budget with the support of NDE's Offices of Teaching, Learning, and Assessments (TLA), Budget and Grant Management (BGM), and a newly created Office of Literacy.

From within the Office of TLA, the Office of Literacy Director, a new position funded by the CLSD project, will be responsible for implementing grant activities as detailed in Appendix A. Until a Director is hired, Dr. Payzant and the Office of TLA will execute grant activities, further assuring the timeliness of grant activities. The Director will collaborate with the Office of BGM to ensure activities are being completed with fidelity and within budget restraints. BGM

personnel are key to ensuring the success of CLSD activities. These staff are discussed in more detail in Section IV.

**Director (to be hired)** — *tentative title: Office of Literacy Director*

Role and Responsibilities: Provide leadership, coordination, and implementation for sections and programs related to Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan including CLSD initiatives, advisory councils, HQIM, and professional learning. Responsible for oversight of CLSD strategies, sub-awards, and school system communications and relations, project budget and reporting, dissemination of results, on-site monitoring of sub-awardees, and active monitoring throughout the life of the CLSD grant. Direct supervision of Literacy Project Manager.

Qualifications: Educational background in reading, literacy, or an aligned field of work. Master's degree in education required, Doctorate or Ed. Specialist preferred. Current teaching or administrative certificate and five years of experience or any combination thereof. 10 or more years of experience teaching or leading teachers to enhance student achievement or proficiency is required. Successful PK-12 leadership experience including direct supervisory experience preferred.

**Project Manager (to be hired)** — *tentative title: Literacy Project Manager*

Role and Responsibilities: Supports the statewide leadership, content area experts, Literacy Training and Technical Assistance Center, and other aligned partners such as the NeMTSS Regional Literacy Coaches, to implement CLSD activities and sub-award processes including monitoring and reporting. Ensures project management tools and processes are maintained through the lifecycle of Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS project (CLSD) including Literacy Team meetings with internal NDE staff, external partners, students, teachers, leaders, and community members.

Qualifications: Educational background in reading, literacy, or an aligned field of work.

Bachelor's degree required, Master's degree preferred, Literacy endorsement PK-12 preferred. 2 or more years of experience as a PK-12 teacher or school administrator to enhance student achievement and proficiency OR 2 or more years managing projects from inception to completion.

**Dr. Marissa Payzant, *Temporary Project Manager (until the new FTE is hired)* — *Assistant Administrator and Director of Content Area Standards***

Role and Responsibilities: In her role as the Assistant Administrator and Director of Content Area Standards with the Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessments, Dr. Payzant provides strategic leadership and vision for content standards development and implementation.

Additionally, she provides broad support and supervision to the NDE's content specialists to ensure statewide work related to teaching, learning, and assessment adherence to agency policies and priorities. Dr. Payzant will support project strategy, execution, and communication while supervising the new hire, as detailed above. Dr. Payzant will play an integral role in the management of surveying or monitoring activities associated with the short- and long-term outcomes of the project.

Qualifications: Dr. Payzant has served at the NDE since 2018, formerly as the English Language Arts Specialist, Interim Academic Officer, and currently as the Assistant Administrator and Director of Content Area Standards. In her current role, she leads all content area specialists who directly implement the state's teacher professional learning and literacy initiatives.

**Allyson DenBeste, *Principal Investigator and Temporary Director (until the new FTE is hired)* — *Academic Officer, Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessments***

Role and Responsibilities: In her role at NDE

Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessments, DenBeste provides strategic leadership and vision for content area standards and instruction. Additionally, she oversees the implementation of high-quality instructional materials within the state, sitting as a representative member of the Comprehensive Center Region 11 Governing Board. In her role, DenBeste will support project strategy, execution, and communications, ensuring alignment between work related to the CLSD project and Nebraska's larger literacy ecosystem. Additionally, she supervises all staff belonging to the Teaching, Learning, and Assessments team, detailed below. DenBeste and her team will ultimately be responsible for managing any statewide activities and monitoring short- and long-term outcomes.

Qualifications: DenBeste has five years of experience serving in a variety of roles within NDE, including four years of service as NDE's Title III Director and ELPA21 Coordinator. In her current role, she manages the office that is directly responsible for oversight of Nebraska's teacher professional learning and literacy areas.

Additional key project personnel are listed and described in Table 3.2: NDE's CLSD Project Team in order of time dedicated to Nebraska's CLSD project. These additional personnel span the Offices of NDE demonstrating the importance of literacy and the critical need for CLSD funding and activities. This team will meet at least biannually to review feedback, implement continuous improvement strategies, and align the work being initiated statewide. Meetings will be convened and led by members of NDE's Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessments, most commonly the Project Manager or Dr. Payzant.

**Table 3.2: NDE's CLSD Project Team**

Name	Title	Role With CLSD	Time on Project
TBD	Office of Literacy Director	Provide leadership, coordination, and implementation for sections and programs related to Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan including CLSD initiatives, advisory councils, HQIM, and professional learning. Responsible for oversight of CLSD strategies, sub-awards, and school system communications and relations, project budget and reporting, dissemination of results, on-site monitoring of sub-awardees, and active monitoring throughout the life of the CLSD grant. Direct supervision of Literacy Project Manager.	100%
TBD	Literacy Project Manager	Supports the statewide leadership, content area experts, Literacy Training and Technical Assistance Center, and other aligned partners such as the NeMTSS Regional Literacy Coaches, to implement CLSD activities and sub-award processes including monitoring and reporting. Ensures project management tools and processes are maintained through the lifecycle of Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS project (CLSD) including Literacy Team meetings with internal NDE staff, external partners, students, teachers, leaders, and community members	100%
Dr. Marissa Payzant	Assistant Administrator and Director of Content Area Standards, Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment	Provide direct supervision to Office of Literacy Director; oversee RFP process for procurement of statewide professional learning; coordinate support for districts in need of high-quality instructional materials and/or implementation support; manage initial reviews of sub-award applications	25%
Allyson DenBeste	Academic Officer and Office Administrator	Coordinate and oversee grant activities and ensure alignment with major agency initiatives; help to provide resources.	15%
Olivia Alberts	Reading Specialist	Serve as the primary point of contact for statewide professional learning; provide expertise and technical support in developing criteria for sub-awards; coordinate scheduling and other logistics for PL; assist in reviewing sub-award applications; serve as the primary point of contact for EPP faculty and provide expertise and technical assistance with activities to bring structured literacy to pre-service teacher programs	10%



Brad Dirksen	Administrator of the Office of Accreditation, Certification, and Approval	Alignment to teacher prep and certification/licensure requirements, facilitate NCTE collaboration with EPPs across the state, ensure alignment of EPP structure with Rule 20	10%
Melody Hobson	Administrator of the Office of Early Childhood Education	Alignment to statewide early childhood initiatives, ECICC representative, and liaison with Nebraska's partners in early childhood	10%
Becky Michael	ELA Content Specialist	Assist in reviewing sub-award applications and provide technical assistance while monitoring the progress toward the ongoing development of the State Literacy Plan	10%
Amy Rhone	Administrator of the Office of Special Education	Alignment to NeMTSS and initiatives affecting students with disabilities	10%
Zainab Rida	Equity Officer and Administrator of the Office of Coordinated Student Support Services	Prioritize equity in the administration of CLSD activities	10%
Stacey Weber	Teaching and Learning Associate	Administrative support as needed	10%
Zachary Bomberger	Grants Management Specialist	Oversee management of grant funds, submission of reimbursement information, assistance with budget management of payments and financial reports	5%
Lane Carr	Administrator of the Office of Strategic Initiatives	Alignment to leveraged funds from ESSER and the Nebraska Legislature and continued relationship building with Legislators to ensure sustainability	5%
Thomas Goeschel, Jr.	Director of Grants Compliance	Ensure timely and accurate financial reporting, grant compliance, and successful mitigation of any risk factors	5%
Shirley Vargas	School Transformation Officer and Administrator of Coordinated School and District Support	Align professional learning funded by CLSD with Learning Forward Nebraska standards and culturally responsive pedagogy	5%

NDE has established clear areas of responsibility in its management structure to promote efficient administration of the project. Nebraska CLSD staffing structures ensure sufficient time commitment to the project, with six NDE Office Administrators dedicating 5 to 15% time and effort as shown in Table 3.2: NDE's CLSD Project Team, the program will have sufficient

oversight and direction. Both the Director and Project Manager will dedicate 100% of their time to the project to ensure project objectives are reached on time and within budget.

The management structure makes use of several tools and processes to ensure success, including work plans and budgets, training, project and financial monitoring and support, data collection and management, and statewide partner coordination.

**(D) Subrecipient Monitoring:** Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c), NDE will award subgrants to eligible entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application. NDE will award at least 95% of the funds received for subgrants to eligible entities selected through competition under procedures established by NDE and consistent with sections 2222–2224 of the ESEA and CLSD assurances totaling more than \$52,000,000 and prioritizing services that meet the needs of low-income and high-need students, and prioritizing geographic diversity (described in assurances, Appendix D). NDE will follow State Funding Allocations as depicted in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3: Sub-Award Requirements**

		Birth-Kindergarten Entry	Professional Development, Family Literacy
		Equitably among K-5	HQIM, Professional Development, Extended Learning Opportunities, Tutoring, Reducing Chronic Absenteeism
		Equitably among 6-12	

Per the U.S. Department of Education’s assurances, NDE will give priority to applications for funding that serve children from birth to 5 who are from families with income levels at or below 200% of the poverty line or that serve LEAs with a high number of high-need schools. Additional priority is available to applicants covering a diversity of NeMTSS regions, ensuring a diversity of students and families impacted by CLSD funds.

Sub-award monitoring will include the reporting of demographic information that will allow NDE staff to ensure equitable services through the Office of Budget and Grants Management in collaboration with the Office of Literacy staff, as described in Section C. Quality of Management Plan above. Training and technical support and formal program evaluators will also be monitoring the demographics of students and families impacted by the CLSD project.

**Ensuring High-Quality Products and Services:** In establishing the sub-award strategies and priorities, NDE will utilize the reporting mechanisms in place within the Offices of Teaching, Learning, and Assessments and Budget and Grants Management to ensure that high-quality products and services are being created as a result of CLSD funds.

One such mechanism for monitoring sub-award activities is the Grants Management System (GMS). Through the ESSER experience, NDE's Office of Budget and Grants Management (BGM) staff have kept abreast of best practices and new implementation techniques to create a user-friendly system that will allow for timely data collection and reporting. This data then informs the continuous improvement necessary for CLSD success.

This GMS system will inform sub-recipient monitoring. BGM staff will operate as the fiscal monitor for sub-recipients through GMS. Each awardee will be required to use GMS to submit receipts for and report on grant activities. The newly hired Project Manager within the Office of Literacy will operate as the program monitor utilizing GMS, site visits, and annual awardee reports. If at any time these systems or reports show that services or products are being offered as less than intended, NDE staff will initiate communication with the sub-awardee to review the expectations that accompany the sub-award.

NDE is making substantial time and effort available to the CLSD project so that more funds can be allocated directly to the benefit of students. To ensure timely and accurate financial

reporting, grant compliance, and successful mitigation of any risk factors, BGM and the Office of Literacy will leverage GMS and supporting processes that have led to a proven track record of success in managing federal and sub-awards in the past.

Under the Office of BGM, NDE has specifically formed the Grants Compliance Section (GCS) headed by Thomas Goeschel, Jr., Director of Grants Compliance. GCS is responsible for ensuring NDE complies with all state and Federal regulations in aspects of grants fiscal management. GCS's Fiscal Monitoring Plan is a public document that fully outlines the controls, systems, and procedures in place to ensure successful reporting and monitoring of all federal grant dollars received. NDE is also committed to making future investments to ensure that there are robust and systematized data collection, storage, and review processes in operation during the grant period, as well as controls and mechanisms to ensure compliance with all reporting requirements.

The Director and Project Manager will work with an external evaluation team to provide formative and summative evaluation of services and associated student outcomes. NDE will contract with an eligible organization after completing a competitive RFP process, including a preference for an evaluator with a proven track record of evaluation of CLSD programs, to evaluate the program providing essential formative data and results for needed course corrections throughout the life of the project. This will guide CLSD implementation in terms of understanding the return on investment of time and where to further allocate time and resources.

**Cooperation with National Evaluation:** NDE and its sub-recipients will cooperate with a national evaluation of the CLSD program (34 CFR 75.591). The evaluation will include high-quality research that applies rigorous and systematic procedures to obtain valid knowledge relevant to the implementation and effect of the CLSD program. The evaluation will directly

coordinate with individual State evaluations of the CLSD program implementation.

## IV. Quality of Project Services

**(A) Likely Impact of Services:** NDE will leverage CLSD funding to transform students' academic achievement and literacy proficiency rates, as described in Figure 2.1. With a substantial investment in the systems and activities related to Nebraska's literacy ecosystem (students, teachers, families, and early childhood education centers), NDE will:

- Ensure equitable access to resources by reducing barriers for students,
- Directly impact 24,000 teachers and leaders through professional learning which would, in turn, indirectly impact every student in Nebraska,
- Directly impact 105,000 students annually through sub-award activities, and
- Increase family literacy with resources and/or direct services provided to 100,000 children, two-thirds of the estimated 150,000 children in Nebraska from families with incomes less than 200% of the federal poverty level.

To ensure equitable access for all participants, including those aligned to sub-award activities, NDE will address barriers to participation (**CPP3**) in the following specific ways related to the proposed project.

**Step 1. Materials development.** Materials produced by the proposed project will target students in the general education population, with a particular focus on ensuring the materials are accessible to all students including students with disabilities, English learners, and those reading or writing below grade level. All materials developed through this project will be reviewed for bias, sensitivity, and accessibility.

In addition, materials developed through this project will be made available in multiple forms to accommodate accessibility needs. Thus, the project's development efforts will

deliberately address equitable access and participation by **all** students.

**Step 2. Modifications of materials.** Since the materials developed for the proposed project will be distributed statewide, NDE staff and local educators will be collaborators in making the necessary adjustments to materials for students and families with accessibility needs. All materials produced through this project will be developed with accessibility in mind, thus all will be adaptable to accommodate a diverse range of accessibility needs for students, educators, administrators, families, and partner organizations including biliteracy.

**Step 3. Accessibility and accommodations.** Every effort will be made to ensure full accessibility to meetings, project deliverables, communications, and other project activities. Special accommodations for participants with all types of disabilities will be made so that anyone wishing to will be able to fully participate. For example, face-to-face meetings and workshops will be held at venues that are fully accessible. This includes providing interpreters for staff, partners, and stakeholders who have a disability or limited English proficiency. In addition, all project tools, resources, and relevant information will be made publicly available online via the project website, which will be in a format that meets standards for accessibility.

**Step 4. Recruitment of participants by sub-awardees.** Procedures will be in place to ensure equitable access to and participation by teachers, students, families, and stakeholders from diverse groups that represent Nebraska's widely varying demographic and cultural profiles. Teachers and other stakeholders from diverse backgrounds will be encouraged to participate. Project partners will provide NDE with criteria and strategies aimed at obtaining a diverse population of educators and students when recruiting participants. Other unforeseen barriers to full access may be identified as the project gets underway, and NDE will address those barriers as they arise. Within contractual service agreements, NDE requires all entities to encourage

applications from underrepresented groups and to identify strategies for doing so.

**(B) Improving Practice through Professional Learning:** Training and professional development services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice as demonstrated in Table 2.5: Design and Activities Framework and Rationale and the Evidence Form completed in Grants.Gov.

A university in Nebraska has developed a model course and another provider has developed a literacy workshop that may be utilized as a model for the professional development portion of sub-awards. These options offer relevant, evidence-based, and short-term learning opportunities based on structured literacy to providers, educators, and leaders of birth through grade 12 education. These courses and workshops have already begun serving educators and have been funded through ESSER investments and private dollars. Ranging from several weeks to semesters long, professional learning opportunities in Nebraska are making the shift to structured literacy instruction and beginning to offer these courses and workshops in cohorts starting each semester.

One such opportunity is a 5-session graduate course that builds knowledge and instructional practices focused on early literacy foundational skills such as print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency. Participants will be able to identify concrete strategies to support student learning and practice. The course helps to build knowledge and skills of evidence-based early literacy instruction and provides resources to support educators' planning and instruction.

In these courses, students: examine **concepts of print** and their influence on the development of early readers; identify the relationship between **phonemic awareness** and reading proficiency; develop strategies for teaching **phonics** using an explicit, systematic approach; develop strategies

to enhance students' **sight word vocabulary** and word analysis skills to identify words and their meaning; articulate the dimensions of **fluency**, how fluency or the lack thereof influences **comprehension**, and examine strategies to enhance fluency; and improve the field and/or school community by sharing expertise with colleagues through presentations, professional learning communities, and interdisciplinary **collaborations** to ensure comprehensive support of early readers.

A similar university opportunity targets providers and teachers of students in birth through grade 5. NDE funded the first cohort of 100 educators with ESSER funds and received interest from nearly 200. In addition to the Nebraska colleges, asynchronous online learning is also available to educators. This online learning addresses the Science of Reading and other structured literacy programs that are beneficial, though very costly to educators and districts. All of the professional learning opportunities discussed offer job-embedded and professional learning community elements to varying degrees.

Additional professional learning opportunities are needed in the area of overlapping literacy and special education. Most EPPs for special education, particularly for special educators who will teach reading to secondary students with learning disabilities, lack both an adequate number of reading courses and reading courses that incorporate practice-based approaches (e.g., case-based learning, video analysis, rehearsal, aligned field experiences, virtual reality simulation, lesson study, and structured tutoring experiences) (Leko & Handy, 2019). Referencing various research studies, Moats offers ways to improve teachers' ability to effectively teach reading. Namely, integrating the International Dyslexia Association's Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading and the associated certification exam in evidence-based instructional practices for literacy and language development (Moats, 2014).

This will require EPPs and professional learning to continually teach these foundational reading skills.

NDE intends to partner with Learning Forward Nebraska, a state affiliate of Learning Forward International, to ensure standards for professional learning are embedded into all learning opportunities. To make this a reality, the NDE, along with all sub-awardees, must develop an awareness and understanding of the standards for professional learning. This will allow for a set of common expectations for the use of language, accessibility and modifications, implementation support, and culturally responsive pedagogy.

The standards for professional learning will also serve as a tool to assess the quality and effectiveness of professional learning opportunities. The standards are focused on rigorous content for each learner, conditions for success, and transformational processes.

This will be supplemented by in-depth professional development about implementing the Science of Reading in community-based early childhood education settings for providers who have a high school diploma or some college education. This work will focus on the skills and knowledge necessary to help infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children transitioning to kindergarten gain and use the language, pre-literacy, and pre-writing skills necessary to become fluent readers once they enter formal schooling.

NDE aims to directly impact 4,000 teachers and leaders each year through these training and preparation practices for increasing literacy. This would equip all of Nebraska's educators (just over 23,000 in the 2023-2024 school year) with evidence-based practices to take back to the classroom and would indirectly impact each student in Nebraska.

**(C) Applying Up-to-Date Knowledge:** In partnership with the Learning Forward Nebraska affiliate, the NDE and sub-awardees will ensure there is application of up-to-date knowledge

related to adult learning and evidence-based literacy instruction through the use of surveys and continuous improvement on-site visits. NDE will align the work of its Offices of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment with the Accreditation, Certification, and Approval to review survey feedback and implement continuous improvement strategies to provide up-to-date knowledge with districts and EPPs lacking in the implementation or planning phases of updating all content to the Science of Reading. These plans are the result of literature reviewed in Table 2.6, Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Needs Assessment in Appendix E, and a review of tools and resources from the U.S. Department of Education's CLSD Literacy Center.

**(A) Thorough, Feasible, and Appropriate Evaluation:** The following evaluation plan aligns with the NDE's proposed CLSD grant initiative. Upon successful award, the NDE will contract with an independent, third-party evaluator for the CLSD grant. The planned evaluation will support the NDE by providing information regarding the implementation and outcomes of the initiative. Over the five-year project period, the evaluation team will collect data to examine project implementation and outcomes as aligned to the initiative's main goals shown in Figure 5.1: Objectives and Associated Performance Measures.

**Evaluation Framework:** The proposed evaluation framework will incorporate a developmental approach (Patton, 2010), which has been shown to best support innovation and allows for just-in-time feedback to support iterations. This is also a preferred approach for evaluating complex and dynamic systems, such as statewide literacy initiatives. While just as rigorous as traditional evaluation approaches, developmental evaluation is superior because of its dual focus on processes and outcomes as well as its positioning of the evaluator as a key partner in determining the next steps. It is particularly useful in situations where traditional evaluation methods might

**Table 5.1: Strategies, Objectives, and Performance Measures**

Objective 1.a: Update of Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan. <b>CPP1, CPP3</b>	Y1: Build Statewide Literacy Writing Team Y2: Updated Plan Crafted and Published Y3 + 4: Updated Plan Feedback Collected Y5: Updated Plan Crafted and Published	SEA website: <a href="http://education.ne.gov">education.ne.gov</a>	Surveys to writing plan members and document review	Y1: July 2025 Y2: July 2026 Y4: August 2027 Y5: Dec 2028
Objective 1.b: Supplement Nebraska's statewide literacy coach network. <b>CPP3</b>	Y1: Baseline data collected on districts reached/utilization of NeMTSS Framework Y2: Baseline +5% Y3: Baseline +10% Y4: Baseline + 15% Y5: Baseline + 20%	SEA report to the Legislature on Statewide Literacy Coaching Network	Surveys to ESU and School District Administration	Y1: Sept 2025 Y2: Sept 2026 Y3: Sept 2027 Y4: Sept 2028 Y5: Sept 2029
		TS GOLD for students in ESU and LEA centers, pre- and post-surveys indicating training knowledge for EC providers	TS GOLD Observations, Surveys of Professional Learning Participants	Y1: Sept 2025 Y2: Sept 2026 Y3: Sept 2027 Y4: Sept 2028 Y5: Sept 2029



Objectives	Performance Measures	Data Sources	Instruments/ Methodology	Completion Dates
Objective 1.c (Continued)	Y1-5: Increased family literacy with resources and/or direct services provided to 100,000 children, two-thirds of the estimated 150,000 children from families with incomes less than 200% of the federal poverty level.	Participant, ECE, and family surveys, Participant count, Resource distribution count	Surveys, Qualitative data	Y1: Sept 2025 Y2: Sept 2026 Y3: Sept 2027 Y4: Sept 2028 Y5: Sept 2029
<b>Goal 2: Statewide teacher and leader training and preparation in structured literacy and the Science of Reading. CPP1, CPP2, CPP3, CPP4, IP</b>				
Objective 2.a: Large-scale, evidence-based professional learning centered on instructional approaches to increasing literacy, such as structured literacy and culturally responsive pedagogy. <b>CPP3, CPP4 , IP</b>	Y1-5: 4,000 teachers and leaders each year will receive training and preparation in evidence-based instructional practices for increasing literacy. Y5: All of Nebraska’s estimated 23,000+ educators are trained in evidence-based instructional practices for increasing literacy.	Participant surveys, EPP reports	Surveys of professional learning participants	Y1: Sept 2025 Y2: Sept 2026 Y3: Sept 2027 Y4: Sept 2028 Y5: Sept 2029
Objective 2.b: Collaborate with teachers and EPPs to update State licensure standards in the area of literacy instruction and ensure the preparation of teachers and leaders in Nebraska is based on structured literacy and the Science of Reading. <b>CPP1, CPP4</b>	Y1-4: Literacy coaches review syllabi for elements of the Science of Reading for 4 of Nebraska’s 16 EPPs. Y1 – 5: Attend NCTE meetings annually.	NCTE meeting minutes, Literacy Coaches reports	Surveys and reviews of NCTE member institutions, including all 16 EPPs in Nebraska	Y1: Sept 2025 Y2: Sept 2026 Y3: Sept 2027 Y4: Sept 2028 Y5: Sept 2029

Objectives	Performance Measures	Data Sources	Instruments/ Methodology	Completion Dates
Goal 3: Support the selection, implementation, and continuation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and evidence-based practices to promote adequacy in resources for underserved students in early learning programs and school settings. <b>CPP2, CPP 3</b>				
Objective 3.a: Support the selection and implementation of HQIM to promote adequate resources through inclusive programs. <b>CPP2, CPP3</b>	Y1: Baseline % of districts that have implemented literacy HQIM. Y2: Baseline +12.5% Y3: Baseline +25% Y4: Baseline + 37.5% Y5: Baseline + 50%	Surveys to districts regarding their implementation of HQIM	Surveys of districts	Y1: Sept 2025 Y2: Sept 2026 Y3: Sept 2027 Y4: Sept 2028 Y5: Sept 2029
	Baseline: 62% of students in grade 3 meet or exceed proficiency on State ELA assessments. Y1: 65.8% Y2: 69.6% Y3: 73.4% Y4: 77.2% Y5: 81% (increasing proficiency by 50% of baseline)	NSCAS score reports	Surveys of PL participants, NSCAS ELA Assessments	Y1: Sept 2025 Y2: Sept 2026 Y3: Sept 2027 Y4: Sept 2028 Y5: Sept 2029
	Baseline: 57% of students in grade 5 meet or exceed proficiency on State ELA assessments. Y1: 61.3% Y2: 65.6% Y3: 69.9% Y4: 74.2% Y5: 78.5% (increasing proficiency by 50% of baseline)	NSCAS score reports	Surveys of PL participants, NSCAS ELA Assessments	Y1: Sept 2025 Y2: Sept 2026 Y3: Sept 2027 Y4: Sept 2028 Y5: Sept 2029
	Baseline: 63% of students in grade 8 meet or exceed proficiency on State ELA assessments. Y1: 66.7%	NSCAS score reports	Surveys of PL participants, NSCAS ELA	Y1: Sept 2025 Y2: Sept 2026 Y3: Sept 2027



Objectives	Performance Measures	Data Sources	Instruments/ Methodology	Completion Dates
Objective 3.a (Continued)	<p>Y2: 70.4% Y3: 74.1% Y4: 77.8% Y5: 81.5% (increasing proficiency by 50% of baseline)</p> <p>Baseline: 46% of students in grade 11 meet or exceed proficiency on State ELA assessments. Y1: 51.4% Y2: 56.8% Y3: 62.2% Y4: 67.6% Y5: 73% (increasing proficiency by 50% of baseline)</p> <p>Baseline: 26% of students with disabilities meet or exceed proficiency on State ELA assessments. Y1: 33.4% Y2: 40.8% Y3: 68.2% Y4: 55.6% Y5: 63% (increasing proficiency by 50% of baseline)</p>	<p>ACT® score reports</p> <p>NSCAS Alternative Assessment score reports</p>	<p>Assessments</p> <p>Surveys of PL participants, ACT® ELA Assessments</p> <p>Surveys of PL participants, NSCAS ELA Assessments</p>	<p>Y4: Sept 2028 Y5: Sept 2029</p> <p>Y1: Sept 2025 Y2: Sept 2026 Y3: Sept 2027 Y4: Sept 2028 Y5: Sept 2029</p> <p>Y1: Sept 2025 Y2: Sept 2026 Y3: Sept 2027 Y4: Sept 2028 Y5: Sept 2029</p>
Objective 3.b: Address the impacts of COVID-19 through continuing best-practice ESSER investments to expand access to high-quality learning by removing barriers through the implementation of inclusive programs. <b>CPP2</b>	Y1-5: CLSD-funded activities will directly impact 105,000 students annually.	Post-award reporting	External Evaluation	Y1: Sept 2025 Y2: Sept 2026 Y3: Sept 2027 Y4: Sept 2028 Y5: Sept 2029



not be effective due to the complex and rapidly changing nature of the program. NDE will evaluate proposals to choose an evaluator who has demonstrated flexibility in allowing for feedback and adjustments, emergent learning from unexpected outcomes, and collaboration with multiple state agencies, LEAs, and stakeholders.

**Implementation Study** questions: (1) To what extent are CLSD initiative activities cohesive and aligned to current state literacy initiatives and Nebraska’s Statewide Literacy Plan? (2) To what extent have partners implemented the CLSD initiative activities as intended? (3) What factors impede or support the implementation of CLSD initiative activities? (4) To what extent does implementation support promote the selection, implementation, and sustainability of evidence-based practices? (5) What are the lessons learned that could strengthen or improve implementation?

**Impact Study** questions: (1) To what extent do the CLSD initiative activities promote equity? (2) To what extent has the CLSD initiative met its short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes?

**(B) Performance Feedback and Assessment of Progress:** The team will address the evaluation questions through both qualitative and quantitative methods and varied data sources as indicated in Table 5.1, including annual reviews of organizational and policy documents, surveys at varied intervals to varied groups, interviews occurring at the time of services rendered, site visits, assessment reports, and network analyses. In coordination with the external evaluator, a cadence for performance reviews and assessments will be dictated upon notification of award and included in the scope of work, not to exceed one year of length between evaluations.

**Evaluation Milestones and Deliverables:** The evaluation team and NDE will collaborate to develop an evaluation timeline suitable for each activity and identify appropriate evaluation participants. NDE and each sub-awardee will determine a point-of-contact who will have regular

communication with the lead evaluator at a cadence that ensures sufficient information without becoming burdensome. For each activity, the evaluation team will create quarterly updates and annual reporting, synthesizing findings to present a full picture of the program that can be used to inform improvements and assess outcomes. As needed, the evaluator will summarize new findings to inform iterative revisions to both the implementation of activities and evaluation.

**Quarterly Updates:** The purpose of the quarterly update is to provide a brief review and interpretation of any data for that specific quarter. The update will supplement the “just-in-time” feedback from each evaluation activity to fuel continuous improvement during the initial phases of the initiative and inform needed adjustments to evaluation activities. These updates will be shared with the NDE and its sub-awardees as appropriate and are included in planned grant activities demonstrated in Table 3.1: Nebraska’s CLSD Activities Gantt Chart.

**Annual Report:** At the end of each year of the NDE CLSD initiative, the evaluation team will generate an annual report that answers the evaluation questions through the synthesis of data. The team and NDE partners will co-interpret this report to ensure that the context is fully understood before the results and recommendations are finalized. This report will contain recommended areas for improvement for NDE partners to review and decide upon changes for the upcoming year. Additionally, the NDE will have the option to disseminate all or portions of the annual report to stakeholders. The evaluation team will support this process. Part of the dissemination will include in-depth co-interpretation sessions with identified sub-awardees who could provide context to ensure an accurate interpretation of the findings and who could most benefit from the information to improve their funded work in the upcoming year. The annual report will also support NDE in meeting any federal reporting requirements and will contribute to the national evaluation of Nebraska’s Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS.

- A. Resumes and Job Descriptions
- B. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
- C. Bibliography
- D. Assurances
- E. Nebraska's Literacy Needs Assessment
- F. Nebraska Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council Membership Roster
- G. Letters of Support



**NeMTSS**  
FRAMEWORK



**Other Attachment File(s)**

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# U.S. Department of Education Evidence Form

OMB No. 1894-0001

Exp. 07/31/2025

## 1. Level of Evidence

Select the level of evidence of effectiveness for which you are applying. See the Notice Inviting Applications for the relevant definitions and requirements.

☐ Demonstrates a Rationale

☐ Promising Evidence

☐ Moderate Evidence

☒ Strong Evidence

## 2. Citation and Relevance

Fill in the chart below with the appropriate information about the studies that support your application.

A. Research/Citation	B. Relevant Outcome(s)/Relevant Finding(s)	C. Project Component(s)/Overlap of Populations and/or Settings
Kamil, M. L., Borman, G. D., Dole, J., Kral, C. C., Salinger, T., and Torgesen, J. (2008). Improving adolescent literacy: Effective classroom and intervention practices: A Practice Guide (NCEE #2008-4027). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from the NCEE website: <a href="http://whatworks.ed.gov">http://whatworks.ed.gov</a> .	This WWC guide summarizes several recommendations to increase adolescents' reading abilities, with Strong Evidence of three: providing explicit vocabulary instruction, providing direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction, and implementing intensive and individualized interventions for struggling readers provided by trained specialists have strong evidence.	NDE's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS will implement these strategies from the article when granting sub-awards to provide professional development and high-quality instructional materials consistent with the study and incorporate these strategies into Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan. This supports Objective 1.a: Update of Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan and <b>CPP1, CPP3</b> .
Kosanovich, M., Lee, L. and Foorman, B. (2020). A Kindergarten Teacher's Guide to Supporting Family Involvement in Foundational Reading Skills (REL 2020-016). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences.	Companion guide to the WWC's Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade guide includes 3 research-based recommendations of Strong Evidence: corresponding steps, links to diverse resources, and printable activities for helping families promote literacy at home. The strategies are: teaching academic language, teaching phonological and phonemic awareness, teaching decoding and writing word parts, and incorporating connected text daily to support reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.	NDE's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS will implement these strategies from the article when granting sub-awards to supplement family literacy initiatives consistent with the study findings. This will support Objective 1.c: Creation of tools and resources to ensure families and caregivers, including early childhood education centers, can equip literacy at home and CPP2, 3, 4, IP.

A. Research/Citation	B. Relevant Outcome(s)/Relevant Finding(s)	C. Project Component(s)/Overlap of Populations and/or Settings
<p>Institute of Educational Sciences. (2022). Providing Reading Interventions for Students in Grades 4-9. What Works Clearinghouse. <a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/practiceguide/29">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/practiceguide/29</a></p>	<p>Students with significant gaps in literacy, hereby known as striving readers, must receive explicit, systematic instruction in their areas of need in order to reduce learning gaps. Strong evidence supports these interventions and strategies: build students' decoding skills so they can read complex, multisyllabic words, provide purposeful fluency-building activities to help students read effortlessly, and routinely use a set of comprehension-building practices to help students make sense of the text.</p> <p>IES Recommendation 2 focuses on instructional activities. The evidence included samples of students in grades 3–9, examined interventions that were implemented as a supplement to Tier 1 instruction.</p>	<p>NDE's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS will implement these strategies from the article when granting competitive sub-awards to provide HQIM and implementation support to districts that will include these evidence-based requirements to address literacy needs, supporting Objective 3.a: Support the selection and implementation of HQIM to promote adequate resources through inclusive programs and CPP2 and CPP3.</p>
<p>Markovitz, C. E., Hernandez, M. W., Hedberg, E. C., &amp; Whitmore, H. W. (2021). Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Volunteer One-on-One Tutoring Model for Early Elementary Reading Intervention: A Randomized Controlled Trial Replication Study. American Educational Research Journal, 59(4), 000283122110668. <a href="https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312211066848">https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312211066848</a></p>	<p>The results of the two evaluations showed that kindergarten and first-grade students who received a single semester of Reading Corps tutoring achieved significantly higher literacy assessment scores, and demonstrated meaningful and significant effects after a full school year of the intervention for second- and third-grade students.</p>	<p>NDE's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS will implement these strategies from the article when granting competitive sub-awards for statewide tutoring with inclusive programs to achieve significantly higher literacy assessment scores, a primary source of data for Nebraska's CLSD achievement goals, supporting Objective 3.b: Address the impacts of COVID-19 through continuing best-practice ESSER investments to expand access to high-quality learning by removing barriers through the implementation of inclusive programs, supporting CPP2.</p>



# U.S. Department of Education Evidence Form

OMB No. 1894-0001

Exp. 07/31/2025

## 1. Level of Evidence

Select the level of evidence of effectiveness for which you are applying. See the Notice Inviting Applications for the relevant definitions and requirements.

☐ Demonstrates a Rationale                      ☐ Promising Evidence                      ☒ Moderate Evidence                      ☐ Strong Evidence

## 2. Citation and Relevance

Fill in the chart below with the appropriate information about the studies that support your application.

A. Research/Citation	B. Relevant Outcome(s)/Relevant Finding(s)	C. Project Component(s)/Overlap of Populations and/or Settings
Allen, J. P., Hafen, C. A., Gregory, A. C., Mikami, A. Y., & Pianta, R. (2015). Enhancing secondary school instruction and student achievement: Replication and extension of the My Teaching Partner-Secondary intervention. <i>Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness</i> , 8(4), 475-489.	Research indicates that the quality of instructional materials is a key indicator of the quality of instruction. Substantial academic achievement gains across subjects and improved teacher-student interactions were noted for grades 6 through 12 students after their teachers participated in coaching intervention in which teachers were paired with a master teacher coach and met every 6 weeks. Rated as Tier 2 Moderate evidence on the WWC website.	NDE's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS will implement these strategies from the article when granting sub-awards to increase the impact of literacy coaches through support services (additional funding for more coaches, funding for HQIM materials, additional implementation support, and more), supporting Objective 1.b: Supplement Nebraska's statewide literacy coach network supporting <b>CPP3</b> .
Kamil, M. L., Borman, G. D., Dole, J., Kral, C. C., Salinger, T., & Torgesen, J. (2008). Improving adolescent literacy: Effective classroom and intervention practices: A Practice Guide (NCEE #2008-4027). National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <a href="http://whatworks.ed.gov">http://whatworks.ed.gov</a> .	Providing opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation and increasing student motivation and engagement in literacy learning are supported by moderate evidence.	NDE's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS will implement these strategies from the article when granting sub-awards for professional learning to strengthen HQIM implementation, supporting Objective 2.a: Large-scale, evidence-based professional learning centered on instructional approaches to increasing literacy, such as structured literacy and culturally responsive pedagogy supporting <b>CPP3, CPP4 , IP</b> .

## Appendix A. Resumes and Job Descriptions

Please redact personal information.

<b>I. Resumes</b>	<b>1</b>
Olivia S. Alberts	2
Zachary D. Bomberger	3
Lane S. Carr	7
Allyson Olson DenBeste	10
Brad Dirksen	13
Melody Hobson	16
Becky Michael	17
Marissa A. Payzant	21
Amy Rhone	26
Zainab Rida, Ph.D., RDN	29
Shirley B. Vargas, Ed.L.D.	34
Stacey Weber	37
 <b>II. Job Descriptions</b>	 <b>39</b>
Proposed Office of Literacy Director	39
Proposed Literacy Project Manager	41



**NeMTSS**  
FRAMEWORK



# Olivia S. Alberts

## EDUCATION

Concordia University  
Degree: Master of Education in Reading  
Endorsement: Reading Specialist Endorsement  
GPA: 3.88/4.0  
Graduation: Fall of 2022

University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
Degree: Bachelor of Science in Education & Human Sciences  
Endorsement: Elementary Education  
GPA: 3.6/4.0  
Graduation: Spring of 2020

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION READING SPECIALIST (June 2023- Present)**

- Inform and educate stakeholders on research-based literacy practices
- Develop, implement, and oversee initiatives aimed at enhancing reading proficiency among Nebraska Students
- Collaborate and communicate with other state agency departments, Educational Service Units (ESU), district leaders, educators, and community stakeholders

### **LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS READING INTERVENTIONIST (August 2022- May 2023)**

- Ensured that classroom instruction is handled according to Nebraska English Language Arts standards
- Taught frequent, intensive research-based interventions to students in kindergarten through fifth grade to positively impact literacy achievement
- With administration assistance, guided my team through the processes of diagnostic and progress monitoring data for individual students
- Attend monthly meetings with district leaders to grow my understanding of the science of reading, DIBELS 8, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports
- Selected to be trained in Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) to help grasp a more profound knowledge of literacy and language

### **YORK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM TEACHER (August 2020- May 2022)**

- Encourage student participation and provide individual instruction as necessary
- Planned and collaborated with the grade-level team to create high-quality learning experiences for students of all learning abilities
- Create and apply formative and summative assessments for multiple content areas and grade levels

**Zachary David Bomberger**



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**Availability:**

**Job Type:** Permanent

**Work Schedule:** Full-time

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**Work Experience:**

**Budget Management Specialist**

**Nebraska Department of Education**



**11/2023 - Present**

**Hours per week:** 40

**Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:**

Support the Budget Management service center and help desk ticketing system by serving as the financial expert for internal stakeholders and educational entities.

Assist with review, interpretation, and implementation of federal and state laws and regulations related to fiscal compliance.

Gather, analyze, and interpret financial data to generate forecasting reports to assist with budget development.

Conducts budget analysis and projections for designated budget programs and grants.

Advise Education Office staff on the financial status, budget status, and available funding sources and grant appropriations.

Participate in the allocation and administration of appropriations and grant funds to designated offices.

Provide guidance related to budget management best practices, state and federal finances, statutory regulations, federal compliance, and grant programs.

Processes requests and contract approvals for funds, ensuring supporting documentation is included and meets financial regulatory requirements.

Develops and submits Federal Financial Reports for grant awards.

Verifies accuracy of account and payroll coding, purchase orders, print requisitions, and other transactions.

Monitor activity in the state accounting system, review invoices, adjust journal entries, and process contracts, requisitions, and purchase orders.

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**DHHS Fiscal Project Analyst**

**Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services**

301 Centennial Mall South

Lincoln, NE

**1/2022 - 11/2023**

**Hours per week:** 40

**Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:**

Monitor and report expenditures for the state Medicaid, CHIP, and Survey and Certification grants on a quarterly basis into federal systems such as MBES and MACFin.

Continually reconcile grants, administrative costs, and journal entries using internal accounting programs such as E1 and Excel as well as federal systems such as PMS and Grant Solutions.

Establish new grants by creating and requesting appropriate business units and notifying appropriate program staff of the new funding availability in accordance with the Notice of Award.

Ensure federal regulation compliance as well as internal policy and procedure compliance.

Maintain working relationships with federal partners and auditors.

PR/Award # S371C240029

Run morning reports and post to shared spaces.

Special Projects as needed.

**Supervisor:** Ann Murphy (b) (6)

**Okay to contact this Supervisor:** Yes

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### **Accountant III**

#### **Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services**

301 Centennial Mall South

Lincoln, NE

**5/2021 - 1/2022**

**Hours per week:** 40

#### **Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:**

Monitor compliance with State guidelines to ensure proper distribution of Child Support funds with the accounting software.

Review, process, and execute court orders affecting child support payments.

Work with judges, county and court officials, and attorneys to clarify court order questions.

Help teammates with complex accounting procedures such as manual distributions, refunds, and funds transfers.

Provide customer support to payees/payors when they have child support financial questions.

Work with IT to troubleshoot issues within the accounting software.

**Supervisor:** Jeanette Hill (b) (6)

**Okay to contact this Supervisor:** Yes

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### **Administrative Assistant III**

#### **Nebraska Office of the Chief Information Officer**

301 Centennial Mall South

Lincoln, NE

**12/2020 - 5/2021**

**Hours per week:** 40

#### **Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:**

Provide support to the State E-rate Coordinator and the NITC Education I.T. Manager in administrating the Network Nebraska program.

Ensure compliance of the Office of the CIO's responsibilities to participate in the federal E-rate program.

Conduct monthly invoice review and approval for payment based on vendors compliance to contract award

Maintain accurate record management, creation, completion, processing, and submission of all E-rate related documentation

Research and prepare documentation in response to USAC Program Integrity Assurance reviews, Payment Quality Assurance reviews and federal/state audit findings.

Provide guidance to Educational Service Units and other school officials involved with the E-rate program

Monitors FCC and USAC communications for policy and rule changes that will affect the states compliance requirements

Work with the State Purchasing Bureau in developing Requests for Proposals and Cost Proposal worksheets for E-rate Category 1 and 2 services

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### **Revenue Operations Supervisor II**

#### **Nebraska Department of Revenue**

301 Centennial Mall South

Lincoln, NE

**2/2020 - 12/2020**

**Hours per week:** 40

#### **Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:**

Provide support in Revenue Operations by:

Planning, assigning, and directing work activities of 3 Supervisor I's and 20 Teammates

Confer with Managers to develop policies, procedures and standards

Work with fellow Supervisor II's to identify the type and impact of work problems, and to create possible solutions

Update, develop, and implement procedures to ensure compliance with IRS and state regulations and department standards

Develops and evaluates work performance standards and their application

Compares work performance of staff with established standards

Makes decisions regarding daily work schedules based on section priorities

Identifies employee training needs and career advancement potential

Complete special projects as assigned by Section Manager

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### **Fiscal Compliance Analyst**

#### **Nebraska Department of Revenue**

301 Centennial Mall South

Lincoln, NE

**10/2019 - 2/2020**

**Hours per week:** 40

#### **Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:**

Performed Sales and Use tax examinations of Nebraska small businesses

Educated taxpayers of the various taxes affecting their business

Created detailed reports for each business

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### **Revenue Operations Clerk II**

#### **Nebraska Department of Revenue**

301 Centennial Mall South

Lincoln, NE

**6/2019 - 10/2019**

**Hours per week:** 40

#### **Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:**

Review and correct Individual Income Tax, Corporate, Partnership, and Fiduciary returns

Provide support to data entry staff when needed

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### **Property Director**

#### **YMCA of Lincoln**

1039 P Street

Lincoln, NE

**3/2018 - 11/2018**

**Salary:** \$32,000.00 USD Per Year

**Hours per week:** 45

#### **Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:**

Oversaw maintenance and custodial needs of a six-story facility

Serviced and maintained a 150,000 gallon lap lane pool

Hired, trained, supervised custodial staff and volunteers

Created and executed budget protocols

Ordered and handled all supplies and chemicals for pool, custodial, and maintenance needs

Installed, maintained, and serviced all exercise equipment

Maintained and installed building equipment including: HVAC, Plumbing, and Electrical

**Supervisor:** Sharon Bredehoft [REDACTED]

**Okay to contact this Supervisor:** Yes

PR/Award # S371C240029

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**Fiscal Compliance Analyst**  
**Nebraska Department of Revenue**  
301 Centennial Mall South  
Lincoln, NE

**7/2015 - 10/2017**

**Salary:** \$19.17 USD Per Hour

**Hours per week:** 40

**Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:**

Performed Sales and Use tax examinations of Nebraska small businesses

Educated taxpayers of the various taxes affecting their business

Created detailed reports for each business

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**Pet Care Technician**

**Nebraska Animal Medical Center**

5720 Old Cheney Rd

Lincoln, NE

**10/2013 - 7/2015**

**Salary:** \$10.50 USD Per Hour

**Hours per week:** 35

**Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:**

Cared for hospitalized patients

Worked exam rooms with doctors

Worked Front Desk and Reception

Worked in Kennels with Daycare and Boarding

Performed routine maintenance for all equipment and building

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**Warehouse Technician**

**Dawson Public Power District**

75191 Rd. 433

Lexington, NE

**5/2012 - 8/2013**

**Salary:** \$14.50 USD Per Hour

**Hours per week:** 40

**Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:**

Maintained supply and material stock for 2 warehouses

Provided order lists for purchasing agent

Provided support to various departments when needed

Maintained the grounds for the office building and outposts

Operated heavy equipment such as bobcats, bucket trucks, and trenchers

**Supervisor:** Jeremy Kaiser [REDACTED]

**Okay to contact this Supervisor:** Yes

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**Education:**

**Hastings College** Hastings, NE United States

Bachelor's degree 5 / 2012

**Credits Earned:** Semester Hours

**Major:** Business Administration and Psychology

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**References:**

# Lane S. Carr

Fierce advocate for high-quality education and equitable outcomes for students; Experience engaging varied stakeholders in making complex education policy decisions; Leader of cross-functional teams and creator of coherent and enterprise-level strategies.

## EDUCATION

MAY 2017

**MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY**, VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

- Thesis: *Creating More Vibrant Communities through Rural Schools: Three Policy Recommendations*

MAY 2012

**BACHELOR OF ARTS**, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

- Political Science and History (With Highest Distinction and Honors)
- Senior Thesis: *An Attitudinal Study of Superintendents' Perceptions of the TEEOSA State Aid Formula*

## EXPERIENCE

SEPTEMBER 2021– PRESENT

**ADMINISTRATOR - OFFICE OF POLICY & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**,  
NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- Serve on the Commissioner of Education Leadership Council and Cabinet and work directly with Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners to facilitate and execute strategies aligned with mission, priorities, and goals of the agency.
- Coordinated and managed Nebraska's \$76 million Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief (ESSER) statewide projects
  - Facilitated agency-wide and statewide needs assessment, survey, and roundtables to identify key investment areas
  - Authored Nebraska's American Rescue Plan ESSER state plan
  - Co-developed "Together, Better" initiative focused on family and community engagement, full service community schools, and expanded learning
  - Shepherded the development of Nebraska Growing Readers Project, a \$3.8 million project which will distribute over one million culturally and linguistically appropriate books in book deserts across Nebraska
  - Designed a full-time position to support processes, facilitated hiring processes, and supervised new staff
  - Supported evaluation and storytelling of key investments
  - Managed contracts, tracked expenditures, and submitted required reports
- Coordinate cross-agency policy agenda
  - Research, draft, and coordinate legislative priorities, culminating in the State Board of Education's "Nebraska Ready Policy Agenda."
  - Craft policy briefs and work with state senators and other policymakers
  - Drafted "Policymaker's Guide," a comprehensive guide to education statistics, policies, and initiatives in Nebraska
  - Managed six interns supporting strategic projects and legislative tracking
  - Developed processes to track and implement legislation agency-wide, and created protocols for checking in and supporting staff in implementation

**MAY 2018 – SEPTEMBER 2021**

**DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTABILITY, NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

- Wrote business rules operationalizing state and federal accountability systems
- Lead communication strategy for accountability results and theory of action
- Designed and improved sense-making opportunities for school and system leaders to create meaningful school improvement plans
- Coordinated enterprise-wide strategy for differentiated accountability and support model
- Developed Launch NE and Served as COVID Response Coordinator
  - Marshaled inter-agency and cross-sector partners to create unified strategy
  - Led response team to appropriately and efficiently inform school, district, community, and statewide partners through development of website, guidance documents, and academic recovery protocols and investments
  - Co-developed strategy for CARES Act statewide investments resulting in schools securing personal protective equipment, educational technology, and materials and training to accelerate learning

**MAY 2017 – MAY 2018**

**INNOVATION GRANT MANAGER, NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

- Managed \$4.4 million grant program including communication, establishment of financial protocols, and the creation of “Conversation on Innovation” summit fostering connections between private donors and school leaders
- Supported writing of Nebraska’s Every Student Succeeds Act Plan
  - Researched and presented policy recommendations and drafted language
  - Synthesized policy decision to varied stakeholders

**MAY 2016 – APRIL 2017**

**RESEARCH ASSISTANT, *PATHWAYS TN*, TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

- Performed economic base and commuter pattern analysis for Tennessee counties
- Coordinated career and postsecondary pathway mapping to better align Tennessee high school programming with postsecondary courses and labor market data

**AUGUST 2016 – APRIL 2017**

**GRADUATE ASSISTANT, STATEWIDE COLLABORATIVE ON REFORMING EDUCATION**

- Created policymaker’s guide for education to provide information on education-related agencies, statutes, and initiatives
- Summarized legislative bills pertaining to education topics to be used by advocacy team

**MARCH 2016 – SEPTEMBER 2016**

**RESEARCH ASSISTANT, TENNESSEE GOVERNOR’S RURAL TASK FORCE**

- Researched and summarized education policies affecting rural education, and presented to Education and Workforce Subcommittee of taskforce
- Investigated commonalities among Tennessee’s 23 distressed, rural counties

**AUGUST 2015 – JUNE 2016**

**TUTOR & RESEARCH ASSISTANT**, PENCIL FOUNDATION; FUCHS SPECIAL EDUCATION RESEARCH GROUP, VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

- Individually tutored 17 struggling readers, tracked acquisition skills, and implemented reading strategies.
- Member of team responsible for testing 500 elementary students in Metro Nashville Public Schools who received math remediation program

**AUGUST 2012 – JUNE 2015**

**SCIENCE TEACHER**, LETCHER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, BLACKKEY, KY

- Middle school integrated science
- Site-based Decision Making Team (2013-14, 2014-15)
- District Certified Evaluation Committee, Non-Tenured Member 2014
- Basketball, football, baseball, and speech coach

## COMMUNITY

**JUNE 2017 – DECEMBER 2023**

**BOARD MEMBER**, LAUNCH LEADERSHIP

- Youth leadership development organization serving 2,500 students annually through hands-on leadership experiences.
- Secured \$10,000 grant for general operations and expanding services to four underserved schools
- Developed grant strategy and organizational boilerplate language to facilitate future grant applications.

**JUNE 2022 – PRESENT**

**BOARD MEMBER**, BELMONT COMMUNITY CENTER

- Nonprofit facility serving prekindergarten through middle school aged children
- Supported Executive Director in developing funding and grant strategies
- Co-developed capital campaign for facility improvements

**JANUARY 2021 – PRESENT**

**COMMUNITY IMPACT COMMITTEE MEMBER**, UNITED WAY OF LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY

- Volunteer position responsible for recommending the priorities and directions of United Way investments to support varied programs, activities, and initiatives based on community needs across three pillars: education, financial stability, and health.

# Allyson Olson DenBeste

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## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Instructional leader with over 18 successful years in education administration. Experienced in curriculum design, school improvement, and management of Federal programs. Skillful in planning and implementing professional learning for a wide range of participants. Strengths include excellent communication and critical-thinking skills.

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## ENDORSEMENTS HELD

Nebraska PK-12 Superintendent

Nebraska PK-12 Principal

Nebraska K-6 Teacher

## EDUCATION

Education Specialist, Education Administration, Wayne State College, Wayne, NE.

Master of Science, Education Leadership, Drake University, Des Moines, IA.

Bachelor of Science, Elementary Education, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO.

## EXPERIENCE

### **Nebraska Department of Education, Lincoln, Nebraska (2019 to present)**

#### **Academic Officer and Administrator of the Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (2023-2024)**

- Provide agency-wide strategic vision and leadership for teaching, learning, and statewide assessment aligned with the mission, strategic priorities, and goals of the State Board of Education.
- Collaborate with and provide agency leadership on significant issues, program development, and operations of the Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment.
- Provide direction and guidance related to the development and implementation of Nebraska Content Area Standards.
- Oversee statewide assessment to ensure balanced assessment of Nebraska Content Area Standards.
- Lead processes to guide selection and implementation of high-quality, standards-based instructional resources.
- Supervise, support, and provide for the development of 24 team members.

#### **Title III Director and ELPA21 Coordinator (2019-2023)**

- Advocated for English Learners and their families and support the educators who serve them.
- Collaborated with five statewide networks comprised of various stakeholder groups to strengthen practices and programs for English Learners.
- Provided technical assistance in implementing Title III English Learner programs and state and local responsibilities for the education of English Learners.
- Developed and implement professional learning related to English Learner programs, Title III, and assessment.
- Participated in assessment development for the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (ELPA21) and the alternate English Language Proficiency assessment (Alt ELPA) and oversee statewide administration of the ELPA21.
- Represented Nebraska in various roles related to Title III and English Learners.
- Calculated annual allocations of Title III English Learner and Title III Immigrant Education Grants.
- Reviewed and approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Consolidated and ESSER grant applications and amendments.
- Conducted on-site monitoring of federal programs.

# Allyson Olson DenBeste

## **South Sioux City Community Schools, South Sioux City, Nebraska (2006 to 2019)**

### **Director of Programs and District Assessment Coordinator (2018 to 2019)**

Position created due to internal reorganization.

- Oversaw instructional program for English Learners K-12 and managed Title III English Learner and Title III Immigrant Education grants.
- Coordinated district assessment program, ensuring that 100% of students in designated grades were assessed with appropriate accommodations and met all state and federal accountability requirements.
- Collaborated with district leadership team to plan school improvement strategies, identify professional learning initiatives, and implement Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

### **Director of Secondary Education and District Assessment Coordinator (2013 to 2018)**

Position created due to internal reorganization.

- Supervised eight secondary building administrators in leading the district instructional program, including implementation of the Marzano Instructional Framework.
- Led curriculum reviews in secondary content areas with a focus on continuous improvement.
  - Increased the number of AP and dual credit courses offered and increased student enrollments.
  - Developed five Career Academies by aligning and sequencing courses into specific career clusters.
  - Began a Grade 6-12 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) program through grant funds for Robotics and Project Lead the Way Engineering, Biomedical, and Computer Science programs.
- Ensured the district met state accreditation requirements.
- Managed federal grants including Title IIA, Title III English Learner, Title III Immigrant Education, and Perkins Grants.
- Oversaw instructional program for English Learners K-12.
- Coordinated district assessment program.

### **Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (2010 to 2013)**

- Guided continuous school improvement process in collaboration with school improvement teams.
- Planned and monitored comprehensive district assessment program, meeting state and federal accountability requirements.
  - Achieved 100% participation rating for multiple years and consistent growth in most tested subjects and grade levels as measured by the Nebraska State Accountability Assessment (NeSA).
  - Participated in pilot program for online ACT testing and became early adopter of online ACT testing.
- Designed and coordinated professional learning for all certificated employees and established an instructional coaching model.
- Coordinated Title I program for six school-wide elementary buildings, one nonpublic building, and one neglected and delinquent facility.
- Managed annual department budget of over \$1.2 million.

### **Assistant Principal, South Sioux City Middle School (2007- 2010)**

- Collaborated with principal to provide instructional leadership for 850 students and 65 certificated staff members. Reduced the number of failing grades by 75% over a 3-year period.
- Supervised and coached teachers in the development and implementation of the district curriculum.
- Represented the school district in a joint venture between the Nebraska Department of Education and Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) to develop the Nebraska English Language Learners Leadership Institute (NELLI).

### **Lead Teacher – At Risk Education (2006-07)**

- Served as instructional leader for district alternative high school and middle school at-risk program.
- Managed department of nine staff members and coordinated communication between secondary school administrators, At-Risk programs, and Student Services Director.
- Reorganized the schedule at alternative high school to provide more instructional time, resulting in an increase in average credits earned by students from 7.54 per term to 12.55 per term in one year.

# Allyson Olson DenBeste

## **Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools, Sioux City, Iowa (1999-2006)**

### **Middle School Social Studies Teacher (2001-2006)**

- Designed engaging lessons using a variety of instructional strategies for over 100 students daily in World Geography and United States History.
- Initiated and led teacher workgroup to develop portfolios aligned to the Iowa Teaching Standards.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

- *Improving Schools for Multilingual Learners: A Team Approach*, DenBeste, A., King, J., & Shebby, S. Meeting the Moment: How State Leaders are Using Innovation for Impact, March 2024, Washington, D.C.
- *Collaborating to Strengthen Our English Learner Programs and Practices*, DenBeste, A. & Hubbell, A. MIDTESOL October 2023, Kansas City, MO.
- *Academic Language: What's Good for Some is Good for All*, DenBeste, A., Gebers, B., & Hubbell, A. Nebraska Administrator Days July 2023, Kearney, NE.
- *Empowering ALL Teachers to Enhance Academic Language through Project ASSETS*, Lawrence, J., Kickbusch, C., Olson DenBeste, A., & Hubbell, A. Nebraska Administrator Days July 2022, Kearney, NE.
- *Putting Your Money Where Your Mouth Is: Equity in ESSER*, Olson, A., Rhone, A., & Rida, Zainab. Nebraska Administrator Days, July 2021, Kearney, NE.
- *Meaningful Family Connections Made Easy*, Olson, A. & Hubbell, A., Nebraska Administrator Days, July 2021, Kearney, NE.
- *Partnering for Student Success*, Olson, A. & Honke, M., Nebraska State Education Conference, November 2014, La Vista, NE.
- *English Language Learners Leadership Institute*, Olson, A. & Rowch, N., Nebraska Administrator Days, July 2008, Kearney, NE.
- *Providing Hope: Attendance/Truancy Reduction*, Olson, A. & Warder, R., At-Risk Youth National Forum, February 2007, Myrtle Beach, SC.

## **PROFESSIONAL AND VOLUNTEER AFFILIATIONS**

- National Association for English Learner Program Administrators (NAELPA) Executive Board Secretary 2021-2024.
- ELPA21 Governing Board Chair 2021-2022.
- Partnership for Innovations (PFI) 2014-2018. Chair 2017-2018.
- Northeast Nebraska Career Academy Partnership (NENCAP) 2015-2018. Chair 2017-2018.
- Nebraska Career Academy Advisory Committee 2016-2018.
- Nebraska Association for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (NACIA) 2010-2018.
- TeamMate Mentoring Program Mentor 2011 - 2019.
- Boost-Face Forward Diversion Program. Advisory Council 2015-2017.
- Comprehensive Strategy, Sioux City, IA. Council member 2011-2018.
- Junior League of Sioux City, Sioux City, IA. Member since 1991. President 1996-1997.

# Brad Dirksen

***Accomplished and results driven Program Director*** qualified for senior level management opportunities within a public or nonprofit organization. Strengths include planning, development, and visionary leadership. Recognized for professionalism, commitment to excellence, and demonstrated ability to communicate and work with senior management, associates, and customers/stakeholders. Has excellent interpersonal skills, able to communicate and collaborate effectively with co-workers at all levels. Self-motivated and can work independently or in a team environment.

## AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- **EXCELLENT STRATEGIST** - Provide solutions that boost productivity and efficiency across the organization. Quickly identify problem areas and implement effective solutions to meet goals.
- **EXCEPTIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS** - Consistently recognized by colleagues for exceptional talents in needs analysis and problem resolution in fast-paced environments.
- **STRONG SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY** - Solid professional standards; excellent track record of dependability. Maintain focus on achieving results while implementing solutions to meet a diversity of needs.
- **ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT** - Knowledgeable of administrative and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, leadership technique, and coordination of people and resources.
- **COLLABORATOR** - Proven record of achieving consensus amongst varied constituencies and form key partnerships in the education community. Demonstrated ability to inspire, motivate, and build consensus among stakeholders.
- **COMPUTER SKILLS** - Excellent skills in Microsoft Word and Excel. Managed multiple databases. Knowledgeable of computer programs to include Operating Systems: Windows 95/98/00/ME/XP/Vista; DOS; Mac OS X, Software Applications: Microsoft Word; Excel; Access; Works; PowerPoint; Outlook; Visio; Adobe, Industry Specific: Datatel; Colleague/UI; VA-ONCE, VA computer system Other: Email (Microsoft Exchange and Outlook); Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, Google Chrome (access and navigation). Managed digitization of microfilm records to OnBase for Private Postsecondary Career Schools and Veterans Education section of the Nebraska Department of Education. Currently working on implementing a new online application/database system.

- Provided leadership, coordination, and implementation for sections and programs related to AQuESTT, Educator Certification, Educator Preparation Program Approval, Veterans Education, Private/Postsecondary Career School Approval, School Accreditation, Statewide Teacher and Principal Support, and School Improvement.
- Oversees the educator certification system of issuing credentials to ensure a licensing system that is responsive to the educational community.
- Oversees the review and approval of educator preparation programs at higher education levels.
- Provides leadership and insight to strengthen educator leadership among district, school, and teacher leaders.
- Ensures that accountability, accreditation, school improvement and educator quality issues are accurately and appropriately represented in policy decisions and connect to programs within and outside of the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE).
- Establishes and fosters strategic partnerships among state agencies, nonprofit organizations, postsecondary education institutions, and/or business and industry partners to coordinate program and policy development and implementation.
- Collaborates with and advises agency leadership on significant issues, program developments, and operations of the Office of Accreditation, Certification, and Approval. Maintains an understanding of the programs, services, and operational functions and appropriately implements policies, procedures, and guidelines.
- Works collaboratively to complete annual and biennial budgets, and ensures the budget reflects major projects and initiatives, operational requirements, and changes in state and/or federal regulations.
- Provides leadership in the hiring, supervision, and potential discipline of staff. Conducts performance management activities including establishing annual goals related to the strategic plan, holding check-in meetings to discuss goal progress, and completing performance appraisals. Facilitates a continuous learning environment by promoting professional development to ensure all employees have the opportunity and skills to be efficient and effective in meeting the goals of the agency. Delegates work and projects appropriately among staff.

- Planning, organizing, managing, and evaluating the day-to-day activities of the Private Postsecondary Career School (PPCS) and Veterans Education section of the Nebraska Department of Education.
- Reviews and evaluates applications and supporting documents for private postsecondary career schools to ensure compliance with 92NAC 41, 42, 43, and 44 and NE revised State Statute 85-1601 through 85-1658.
- Collaborate with PPCS advisory council and make recommendations to Nebraska Board of Education related to revising statutes and rules related to the PPCS Act.

- Conduct accreditation and compliance visits (audits), recommends accreditation status to Commissioner of Education.
- Monitor the activities of approximately 80 private postsecondary career schools and 100+ veterans' education approved facilities.
- Provide vision and goals for PPCS and Veterans education section of NDE; create and implement strategic plan.
- Collaborate with multiple state and federal agencies including NE Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Motor Vehicles, Department of Labor, NE and US Department of Veterans Affairs, US Department of Education; and various national and regional accreditation organizations.
- Complete, monitor, manage and evaluation of veterans' education contract with US Department of Veterans Affairs
- Conduct quarterly reviews and annual appraisals of staff members in the PPCS and Veterans Education sections of the NE Department of Education
- Prepare and monitor budgets for PPCS and Veterans Education sections; prepare and submit invoices for reimbursements in accordance with VA contract
- Conducted financial research and analysis of PPCS fee structure. Presented information to and problem solved with PPCS Advisory Council regarding restructuring PPCS fees.
- Duties of Veterans Education Specialist II as seen below.

#### **Veterans Education Specialist II:**

Nebraska Department of Education • Lincoln, NE

**May 2009-October 2011**

- Approve education, on the job training, and apprenticeship programs for veterans' education benefits.
- Conduct compliance visits and solve complex problems to ensure training organizations are in compliance with federal rules and regulations in efforts to protect federal funds.
- Discuss results of compliance visits with school officials and writes reports, documents findings, and recommends appropriate action. When discrepancies are found, follows up to assure corrective action has been taken.
- Request and process paperwork to continue, revise and withdraw approval of programs, modes of instruction and other training related information.
- Write approval letters based on appropriate policies, rules and regulations.
- Maintained cooperative relations with the Education Liaison Representative and with all educational institutions and training establishments in the state.
- Assist with the licensing and accreditation of private postsecondary career schools in the State of Nebraska.

#### **Assistant Director of Admissions:**

Iowa Western Community College • Council Bluffs, IA

**January 2006–April 2009**

- Coordinates all aspects of acceptance process and manages acceptance for competitive career and technical programs.
- Communicates regularly with deans, program chairs, and admissions staff regarding acceptance timeline and program enrollments.
- Manages all correspondence associated with the acceptance process including but not limited to accepted, pending, and reserved students.
- Coordinates the creation, maintenance, and inactivation of all admissions files.
- Manage campus visit and tour process including supervision and scheduling of student workers.
- Supervises and trains clerical admissions staff members and testing services.
- Leads Communications Management group to improve communication to prospective students including design and structure of automated communication.
- Advise students about Career and Technical Education opportunities in individual and group settings.
- Regularly gave presentations to deans, instructors, admissions advisors, staff, students, and prospective student in regards to a variety of topics including Career and Technical Education.
- Recruit traditional and non-traditional learners
- Work closely with college registrar to ensure appropriate transfer of credits and maintenance of student files.
- Register students and provide basic student services information including financial aid, international students, tutoring services, testing services, TRIO program, student housing cafeteria, placement services, disability services, and student athletics/activities.
- Participated on the student retention committee.

### **EDUCATION**

#### **Education Specialist Degree:**

Doane University • Crete, Nebraska

**2023**

#### **Masters of Public Administration:**

University of Nebraska-Omaha • Omaha, Nebraska

**2010**

#### **Graduate Credit Hours: International and Transcultural Education**

Columbia University • New York City, New York

**2004**

#### **Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education and History**

Peru State College • Peru, NE

**2004**

#### **Undergraduate Credit Hours:**

University of Nebraska • Lincoln, NE

**2002**

#### **Associate of Arts and Associate of Science – Academic Transfer**

Southeast Community College • Lincoln, NE

**2001**

## **CERTIFICATION and LICENSURE**

Certified Teacher in Nebraska (current)  
AdvancED Qualified School Lead Evaluator (June 2012)

## **MEMBERSHIPS and ASSOCIATIONS**

National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA) (2009-2018)

- Central Region Vice President and Executive Board Member (02/2017-06/2018)
- Central Region Alternate Vice President (08/2016-02/2017)
- Institution of Higher Learning/Non-College Degree Committee Vice Chair (08/2016-present)
- Joint Advisory Council (NASAA and VA Central Office council) (08/2016-present)
- Conference Planning Committee (member and host of the 2019 NASAA Conference in Omaha, NE)

National Association of State Administrators and Supervisors of Private Schools (NASASPS) (member 2011-2018)

# Melody Hobson

Administrator

## Contact



## Education

University of Nebraska  
Lincoln, NE  
MA, Special Education

University of Nebraska  
Omaha, NE  
BS, Elementary Education

## Key Skills

Collaboration  
Systems Building  
Inclusive Practices

## Certification

Standard teaching certificate  
Elementary and Early  
Childhood Inclusive  
Endorsements

## Objective

As Administrator of the Office of Early Childhood Education, my primary objectives are to work with state partners to build and refine early childhood education and care systems in Nebraska and to support the work of staff members who are:

- Implementing the technical assistance and monitoring system for school district and Educational Service Unit early childhood programs.
- Implementing Step Up to Quality: Nebraska's Quality Rating and improvement System.
- Managing the early childhood professional development system through the Early Childhood Training Center.

## Experience

AUGUST 2008 – PRESENT

**ADMINISTRATOR** – OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION  
NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LINCOLN, NE

JUNE 2004-AUGUST 2008

### Early Childhood Education Specialist

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Provided monitoring and Technical Assistance to school district early childhood programs.

Provided leadership to state initiatives.

AUGUST 1997-MAY 2004

### Director |

Blue River Child Development Program

Provided leadership to ensure the program met NAEYC accreditation standards and was fully compliant with Nebraska child care licensing requirements.

Provided supervision and support to full-and-part-time staff including professional development in inclusive practices, early literacy, and active learning.

# Becky Michael

## ELA Education Specialist

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### Becky Michael

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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### Education

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#### Olivet Nazarene University - Bourbonnais, IL

Master of Education/Curriculum and Instruction

June, 2008 / GPA 4.0

#### University of Nebraska - Lincoln, NE

Bachelor of Science/Elementary Education

May, 1990 / GPA 3.84

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### Professional Experience

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#### Nebraska Department of Education

##### K-12 ELA Content Specialist

August, 2022- PRESENT Lincoln, NE

- Work collaboratively with colleagues and school administrators to develop policies and school structures that incorporate effective teaching strategies and effective practice in all content areas, but especially literacy.
- Lead professional development of research-based curriculum development, instruction, learning, and assessment practices.
- Encourage and support implementation of high-quality instructional materials, coach, and assist educators and others to implement effective instructional strategies; promote the use of technology in teaching and learning process.
- Participate in the implementation of systemic change and successfully implement reform initiatives that produce significant gains in closing the achievement gap.
- Develop, deliver, and provide professional development and training to state, district, and community groups to assure high literacy goals and objectives are achieved.
- Create and support student, parent, and stakeholder partnerships related to literacy while developing and implementing strategies and opportunities for students to achieve academic, social and emotional growth.
- Plan, oversee and coordinate programs for Nebraska's Literacy Cadre and other agency partners and personnel.
- Work with content staff to develop and lead early literacy materials by supporting methodology of review, identification of criteria for early literacy components, developing training, and reviewing process materials.

- Enhance ELA training and processes in early literacy informed by current research.
- Work across content areas to support early literacy connections in mathematics and science where appropriate.
- Lead teams in the use of student data to support district and building staff while increasing their capacity for application of research-based instructional best practices to improve student outcomes and to determine ongoing professional development needs.
- Attend and participate in a variety of meetings, workshops and in-services related to ELA; prepare and deliver oral and written reports, recommendations, and presentations to the Board, committees, parents, community stakeholders and others regarding a variety of literacy topics.
- Understand and be sensitive to those of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

#### **District 145 / Classroom Teacher**

August, 2021 - August, 2022 Waverly, NE

- Grade 5 Classroom Educator
- Co-led grade's intervention program
- Attended IEP and Team meetings

#### **Scottsbluff Public Schools / K-12 ELA Content Area Specialist**

August, 2016 - August, 2021 Scottsbluff, NE

- Worked directly under the district's Superintendent, Director of Curriculum and Assessment, and Director of Student Services to analyze student performance data and determine staff development needs
- Conducted building and classroom visits with teachers and managed follow up visits with reflective dialogue and researched and peer-reviewed pedagogical practices
- Met with building level administrators to assess and discuss possible solutions for building performance concerns
- Ensured the state's standards and district's learning guides were the foundation of instruction in ELA content areas
- Disaggregated formative and summative data to inform and elevate curricular and instructional program improvement on a district, building, classroom, and individual student level
- Implemented a new high-quality-instruction ELA program that introduced educators to new methods, materials, and instructional strategies proven to increase student understanding and achievement
- Co-led district's Multi Tiered System of Support and implemented a systemic research-based intervention system
- Communicated the district's curriculum efforts with the Board of Education and other community stakeholders

**Scottsbluff Public Schools / Middle School Teacher**

August, 2015 - August, 2016 Scottsbluff, NE

- Grades 6, 7, and 8 English Language Arts Educator
- Grades 6, 7, and 8 Teen Life Exploratory Educator
- Attended IEP and Team Meetings

**Gering Public Schools / K-6 Instructional Coach**

August, 2009 - August, 2015 Gering, NE

- Supervised core instruction and provided leadership to teachers by co-planning, collaborating, modeling, and facilitating change to improve core instructional programming in ELA, math, and science
- Provided training and built educator capacity with knowledge and application standards, content, and high-quality instructional materials
- Worked and presented with principals in grade-level meetings to affect horizontal and vertical continuity of instructional programming throughout four elementary schools within the district
- Collected and monitored student growth data
- Served as a resource and trainer for classroom educators and paraprofessionals across the district, state, and nation
- Grade 2 ELA interventionist
- Grade 1 ELA interventionist

**Gering Public Schools / Classroom Teacher**

August, 2001 - August, 2009 Gering, NE

- Grade 6 Classroom Educator
- Grade 4 Classroom Educator
- Grade 3 Classroom Educator
- Practiced evidence-based educational methods and interventions with striving students in my classroom
- Formulated plans to assist in student growth

**Mead Public Schools / Classroom Teacher**

August, 1991 - August, 1998 Mead, NE

- Grade 6 Classroom Educator
- High Ability Learner Sponsor
- Organized Schools K-6 Science Fair
- Varsity Volleyball Assistant Coach

**St. Michael's Catholic School / Classroom Teacher**

August, 1990 - August, 1991 Albion, NE

- Grades 5-8 Science and Physical Education Educator
- Led buildings nutrition experiences and experiments
- Substituted as building needs arose

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## **Related Experiences**

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### **Led Revision of Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan - 2023**

Led and worked side by side with district and state representation to write revisions to the 2011 Statewide Literacy Plan consistently promoting effective literacy instruction based on Nebraska's MTSS four essential elements

### **Foundational Literacy Instructional Routines - 2022**

Collaborated to build and design an instructional document based off of evidence-based, peer-reviewed practices for fluency and comprehension in early literacy

### **Complex Texts and Knowledge-Building in Grades 6-12 - 2021**

Assisted Wit and Wisdom Team with presenting three ELA PD sessions for the NDE

### **ELA Content Advisory Panel - 2021**

Joined the state's revision team and reviewed 2021 ELA Standards

### **Nebraska District: Wit and Wisdom is Transformational - 2021**

Assisted in authoring a Wit and Wisdom post regarding an implementation process

### **Nebraska Materials Matter Interview - 2020**

Advocated for rigorous, grade-level-appropriate core curriculum in ELA

# Marissa A. Payzant

## EDUCATION

### **Ed.D. in Curriculum, Teaching & Professional Development**

**August 2016**

*University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln NE*

*Carnegie Program for the Education Doctorate (CPED)*

Dissertation Committee: Dr. Stephanie Wessels, Dr. Edmund Hamann, Dr. Jenelle Reeves,  
and Dr. Robert Brooke

GPA 3.96

### **Master of Arts**

**December 2010**

#### **Department of Liberal Studies**

*Creighton University, Omaha, NE*

Thesis Title: The Transparent Classroom: Engendering the Culture of the Master Teacher

Thesis Advisors: Dr. William P. Durow, Dr. Kathleen Rettig, and Dr. Richard White

GPA 3.95

### **English as a Second Language 7-12 Endorsement**

**May 2010**

#### **Department of Education**

*Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska*

GPA 4.0

### **PostBaccalaureate Language Arts 7-12 Teaching Certification**

**August 2007**

#### **College of Education**

*Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska*

GPA 3.95

### **Bachelor of Journalism**

**May 1996**

#### **College of Journalism & Mass Communications**

*University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska*

GPA 3.02

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

### **Doctoral Researcher**

**October 2015-present**

*College of Education and Human Sciences*

*University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

- Conduct extensive literature review on topic and related ancillary topics
- Prepare materials for submission to Institutional Review Board
- Develop interview questions and conduct interviews of subjects
- Collect and analyze data

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

### **Assistant Administrator and Director of Content Area Standards**

**November 2022-present**

*Nebraska Department of Education*

- Provide leadership and support for programs and initiatives related to Teaching, Learning, and Assessment including content area standards, instruction, high-quality instructional materials, curriculum, assessment, and professional learning.
- Develop and provide statewide support for the implementation of Nebraska's College- and Career-Ready Standards in all content areas
- Develop and share resources for the selection of high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials and professional learning both within the agency and to Nebraska districts
- Establish strategic partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders including national organizations and a variety of state agencies
- Coordinate the review of legislative bills and activities; develop and disseminate guidance for newly enacted legislation
- Manage annual budget and fiscal priorities for the Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment
- Provide leadership in hiring and supervision of staff and conduct performance appraisals
- Facilitate ongoing professional learning and collaboration for staff within the team and across the agency

### **English Language Arts Specialist**

**June 2018-November 2022**

*Nebraska Department of Education*

- Provided statewide leadership and content expertise to Nebraska's K-12 public schools as it relates to English Language Arts standards, instruction, and assessment in accordance with the Nebraska Department of Education's mission and vision for equity.
- Coordinated the revision and implementation of Nebraska's College- and Career-Ready Standards for English Language Arts
- Established and maintained key partnerships with stakeholders; created and provided professional learning and technical assistance to K-12 educators; provided strategic support in the selection and implementation of high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials.

### **Honors Language Arts Teacher and Team Leader**

**August 2014-June 2018**

*Alfonza W. Davis Middle School*

*Omaha Public Schools*

- Teach 8<sup>th</sup> grade Honors language arts courses at newest OPS middle school
- Develop and facilitate rigorous Honors program in context of high-ability learners in a new school site with emphasis on program continuity through the middle grades
- Write and implement curriculum for creative and challenging student-centered Honors pedagogy including Socratic seminars, multi-genre writing projects, literature circles, and interdisciplinary activities
- Prepare students for transition to high school Honors programs; initiate ongoing communication with students, their families, and other school personnel
- Collaborate closely with Gifted and Talented Facilitator to ensure ongoing student involvement in activities such as Book Blasters, Scholars, Think Tank, Poetry Slams, and Academic Pentathlon; provide student coaching and attend various events throughout the school year
- Serve as Writing Team Leader, Department Co-Chair, and Principal Staff Advisory member
- Create and deliver professional development sessions to faculty and administration
- Supervise and mentor student and practicum teachers as well as new faculty

**Adjunct Instructor****March 2011-present**

*English as a Second Language Department*  
*Metropolitan Community College*  
Omaha, Nebraska

- Teach English as a Second Language beginning, intermediate, and advanced reading and writing courses to a diverse population of adult learners
- Collaborate with students and academic advisors to facilitate course placement
- Attend annual meetings and maintain communication with full-time faculty
- Demonstrate proficiency with a variety of educational technology in the classroom

**8th Grade Language Arts and Team Leader****August 2007-May 2014**

*R.M. Marrs Magnet Middle School*  
*Omaha Public Schools*

- Served as 8th grade Team Leader; conducted student concern, business, and Language Arts department meetings, coordinated team scheduling needs, acted as liaison between administration and faculty, provided leadership in a variety of tasks and activities associated with managing a large student body
- Developed and implemented daily and unit lesson plans aligned with Nebraska state and district standards; proctored state and district testing according to standardized testing protocols
- Consistently increased student achievement using focused reading, writing, and problem solving skills across the curriculum
- Delivered rigorous and relevant instruction to meet diversified needs of students; differentiated instruction for English as a Second Language and Special Education learners including small-group reading and writing activities
- Implemented new technology in the classroom according to Excels School Improvement Plan and objectives of a technology magnet school; regularly incorporated new technologies and learning platforms
- Planned and implemented professional development activities for faculty and staff
- Coordinated student-led semester conferences and administered electronic student portfolios
- Served on Omaha Public Schools New Curriculum Adoption Committee
- Served as 8th Grade Student Council teacher representative on an annual basis and led and participated in all related activities

**Teacher Apprentice****September 2005-August 2006**

*Athens Montessori Middle School*  
Athens, Georgia

- Provided instructional and organizational support in all subject areas for middle level students in a nationally recognized, premiere Montessori school
- Assisted lead teacher in all aspects of curriculum development, lesson planning, and implementation of individualized academic programs and interdisciplinary activities
- Differentiated instructional resources to meet the needs of high-ability learners in the classroom
- Provided one-on-one tutoring and mentoring to students
- Planned and supervised a variety of outings and extracurricular activities

**Substitute Teacher****August 2005-January 2006**

*Clarke County School District*  
Athens, Georgia

- Delivered high quality daytoday instruction in a variety of subject areas
- Implemented effective teaching and behavioral strategies
- Used relevant technology to support instruction

### **Long-term Substitute Teacher**

**August 2003-June 2005**

#### **School District of Lancaster**

Lancaster, Pennsylvania

- Served as full-time classroom teacher for 7th and 8th grade Language Arts and 9th grade English students in three consecutive long-term positions
- Prepared lesson plans and maintained grade and class records
- Collaborated closely with team members in professional development sessions
- Taught after-school and Saturday test preparation program for at-risk students
- Consistently recognized for successfully establishing high standards of academic excellence

## **MENTORING EXPERIENCE**

### **Cooperating Teacher**

*Language Arts Department*

*Omaha Public Schools*

- Mentor and supervise student teachers, practicum students, and new language arts teachers
- Orient beginning teachers to basic pedagogy, classroom management, and navigating the complex classroom environment
- Provide ongoing coaching, feedback, and support; model effective pedagogical practice
- Instruct beginning teachers on school, district, and state-wide policies and procedures
- Provide evaluative information to supervising faculty of student teachers

### **AmeriCorps Member**

*Good Neighbor Community Center*

Lincoln, Nebraska

- Completed 1700 hours of federally funded service hours providing mentoring and tutoring to Kurdish and Iraqi refugee students
- Provided tutoring, community outreach, and support to adult English language learners in conjunction with the Lincoln Literacy Council
- Recruited, trained, and supervised volunteer tutor staff of college age
- Conducted weekly home visits to students and their families
- Designed and implemented individualized academic curriculum

*ESL Paraprofessional*

*Lefler Middle School*

Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska

- Provided excellent instructional support to English as a Second Language students in diverse middle school located in refugee resettlement community
- Managed and supported a large international student population including small group instruction, supervision, oneonone tutoring, curriculum development, grading, and other clerical tasks

## ADDITIONAL TEACHING ACTIVITIES

### the.news Teacher Representative

#### *PBS News*

- Selected by MacNeil/Lehrer Productions (MLP), to represent R.M. Marrs Magnet Center and Omaha Public Schools in a noncommercial multiplatform news production competition
- Led group of middle school students in conception, storyboarding, production, editing, and uploading to website and in conjunction with Jewish Community Center, produced a Holocaust survivor documentary

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Problems of Practice,” CEHS Student Research Conference Program, panel participant and organizer. Lincoln, NE, November 9, 2013.

“Teacher Learning: Themes and Perspectives,” CEHS Student Research Conference Program, panel participant and organizer, Lincoln, NE, November 8, 2014.

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Educational Research Association

National Council of Teachers of English

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages International Association

Facilitator, METLink Omaha, Metropolitan English Teachers

Kappa Delta Pi National Honor Society

English Teachers’ Association

## PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

### **Dr. Stephanie Wessels, PhD**

Associate Professor

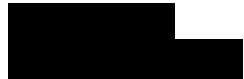
College of Education and Human Sciences

Department of Teaching, Learning

& Teacher Education

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Henzlik Hall 61C



### **Edmund Hamann, PhD**

Professor

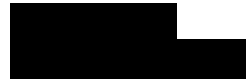
College of Education and Human Sciences

Department of Teaching, Learning,

& Teacher Education

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Henzlik Hall 44B



### **Jenelle Reeves, PhD**

Associate Professor

College of Education and Human Sciences

Department of Teaching, Learning

& Teacher Education

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Henzlik Hall 44C



### **Kathleen Rettig, PhD**

Assistant Professor

Department of English

Creighton University



### **Naomi Mardock**

Faculty

English as a Second Language

## **EXPERIENCE**

### **Administrator/State Director**

Nebraska Department of Education – Office of Special Education, Lincoln, Ne  
*March 2020 - Present*

- Provides leadership, coordination, and implementation for sections and programs related to Special Education, including Federal IDEA and Rule 51 and 52.
- Oversees preparation and implementation of grant proposals, contracts, and memorandums of understanding, and manages state and federally funded projects and grants awarded to, and by, the Office of Special Education.
- Establishes and fosters strategic partnerships among state agencies, nonprofit organizations, postsecondary education institutions, and/or business and industry partners to coordinate program and policy development and implementation.
- Collaborates with and advises agency leadership on significant issues, program developments, and operations of the Office of Special Education. Maintains an understanding of the programs, services, and operational functions and appropriately implements policies, procedures, and guidelines.
- Works collaboratively to complete annual and biennial budgets, and ensures the budget reflects major projects and initiatives, operational requirements, and changes in state and/or federal regulations.
- Provides leadership in the hiring, supervision, and potential discipline of staff. Conducts performance management activities including establishing annual goals related to the strategic plan, holding check-in meetings to discuss goal progress, and completing performance appraisals. Facilitates a continuous learning environment by promoting professional development to ensure all employees have the opportunity and skills to be efficient and effective in meeting the goals of the agency. Delegates work and projects appropriately among staff.

### **Assistant Director**

Nebraska Department of Education – Office of Special Education, Lincoln, Ne  
*August 2016 – March 2020*

- Assist in establishing the overall vision for the Special Education Office including rigorous goals and targets for the Special Education Team, establishing timelines and implementation activities necessary to achieve those goals and targets
- Provide leadership to staff within the Special Education Team and on matters related to Special Education
- Strengthen and enhance relationships between NDE, school districts and parents to initiate positive outcomes for students with disabilities through collaboration

with policy partners to facilitate resolution of controversial issues between stakeholders with diverse points of view (e.g. legislative, non-public, administrators, teachers, special education directors, service providers, parents).

- Establish linkages between the improvement of Special Education programs and the general education improvement process by providing leadership.
- Provide leadership, consultations, and technical assistance to school districts, administrators, boards of education and parents regarding state and federal Special Education regulation. Provide technical assistance through small and large group presentations and written materials regarding state and federal Special Education.
- Administer and implement state and federal statutes and regulations directing activities of the Nebraska Department of Education, Office of Special Education.
- Supervise the Rule revision process for the Office of Special Education (Rule 51, 52, 53 – Repealed, and 55)
- Supervise staff within the Special Education Team including completion of performance evaluations, staff development activities, mentor and assist employees in understanding and effectively performing their assignments.
- Direct the Special Education State Complaint Investigation System.
- Special Education Legislation.
- Lead the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) in the development of SEAC priorities and activities.
- Oversee all Part B Programs, Technical Assistance, and Support.
- Oversee and Manage the Part B Federal Application and Discretionary Grant Application and Budget.
- Collaborate and participate in NDE teams to improve outcomes for ALL students.

#### **State Personnel Development Grant Director and Coordinator of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports**

Nebraska Department of Education , Lincoln, Ne

May 2015 – August 2016

- Provide leadership for implementation of federally funded Special Education, State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG).
- Responsible for successful program operation including planning, implementation, training, evaluation, and dissemination per objectives timeline of grant.
- Responsible for Leadership Development Institute training/conference including: determining content of training and selection of participants; coordination of dates/timelines and finalizing training content and sequence with presenters; directing project assistants in preparing for meetings/training and technical assistance events; providing for dissemination/replication.
- Brokering and coordinating technical assistance activities to schools including providing training, supervise behavior coaches, maintain and monitor implementation of building action plans.
- Align SPDG with NE Continuous Improvement Process.
- Coordinate and assist in program evaluation activities.
- Align SPDG activities with and serves as a liaison for stakeholder including: appropriate advisory committees; and other offices at NDE; Parent Training

	<p>Center, Munroe-Meyer Institute; community and agency members as appropriate and related efforts in instruction and behavior such as IDEA stakeholder groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervises development of sub-grants and contracts in implementing SPDG activities. Monitors and approves sub-grant claims, and contract deliverables/invoices provided by contractors and sub-grantees receiving funds for SPDG related activities.</li> <li>• Serves on NDE committees as appropriate.</li> <li>• Collects data/information for performance reports and other federal reports.</li> <li>• Oversees content and nature of project web site including technical assistance and dissemination materials.</li> <li>• Working across the state to provide professional development, technical assistance and coaching to school districts, ESUs, and other stakeholders relating to evidence based instructional strategies that specifically link to Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports.</li> <li>• Participates and contributes as a member of the SSIP Results Driven Accountability core team related to other areas of the SSIP report.</li> </ul> <p><b>Principal</b> Canyon Pointe Academy – Pointe Schools, Glendale, AZ <i>May 2007 – January 2015</i></p> <p><b>Director of Special Programs</b> Pointe Schools, Phoenix, AZ <i>January 2012– January 2015</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Education</li> <li>• Section 504 Coordinator</li> <li>• ELL Coordinator</li> <li>• K-3 Move on When Reading Coordinator</li> </ul> <p><b>Teacher/Assistant Principal</b> Canyon Pointe Academy – Pointe Schools, Glendale, AZ <i>2004 - 2007</i></p>
	<p><b>EDUCATION</b> Masters in Education - University of Phoenix, Phoenix, AZ Bachelors in Human Resource &amp; Family Science – University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE</p>

**PERSONAL STATEMENT**

My professional practices approach is guided by the social ecological model and directed at the whole school that is influenced by its community to address every child's needs. My research interest centers on the whole child education that focuses on and promotes long term development and success by ensuring each child is emotionally and physically healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. I possess a strong commitment to providing guidance and strategic administrative direction, building collaborative partnerships and synergy within functional units, and empowering students by engaging them in various activities and projects.

**EDUCATION**

***December 2012***

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln**

Department of Nutrition and Health Sciences

***Major: Human Sciences***

***Minor: Educational Psychology***

Dissertation: *School Food Environment the Frontline for Childhood Obesity Prevention- A Mixed-Methods Study of Nutritional Competencies and Skills of School Nutrition Professionals in Nebraska*

Major Advisor: Wanda Koszewski, Ph.D., RD, LMNT

***July 2009***

**Dietetic Internship**

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln**

Department of Nutrition and Health Sciences

***Major: Dietetic***

Major Advisor: Wanda Koszewski, Ph.D., RD, LMNT

***August 2006***

**Master of Science**

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln**

Department of Nutrition and Health Sciences

***Major: Nutrition and Health Sciences***

Thesis: *The Impact of "Be a Food Sleuth" on Fifth Grade Limited-Resource Youth*

Major Advisor: Wanda Koszewski, Ph.D., RD, LMNT

***June 1997***

**Doctor in Veterinary Medicine (DVM)**

University of Hama, Veterinary School, Syria

Thesis: *Treatment of Common Diseases of Madagascar Lovebirds*

Major Advisor: Mahmmoud Al-Eimady, Ph.D., DVM

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## PROFESSIONAL AND TEACHING EXPERIENCES

***September 2019-Present***

**Equity Officer and Administrator  
Office of Coordinated Student Support Services  
Nebraska Department of Education**

- Provide leadership and direction on the strategic and visionary development and implementation of the agency's diversity, equity and inclusion plan.
- Oversee the office of Coordinated Student Support Services including the Whole Child, School Safety, Mental Health Services, Nutrition Services, School Health Services, Social Emotional Learning, School Safety, 21<sup>st</sup> Century and Community Engagement.

***October 2010-August 2019***

**Director of Nebraska Team Nutrition and Healthy Schools  
Nebraska Department of Education**

- Direct the USDA Team Nutrition (TN) and CDC Healthy Schools Programs
- Provide leadership regarding NDE Positive Partnership, Relationship and Students Success Tenet.
- Provide leadership to NE schools, ESUs, professional organizations and higher education in providing quality programs in the areas of health, nutrition, and physical activity.
- Direct NDE Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (known as Coordinated School Health) Institutes.

***August 2018-August 2019***

**Adjacent Online Instructor  
Northeast Community College-Norfolk**

- Teach Field Experience Nutrition and Diet Therapy Course
- Teach Introduction to Food Service and Nutrition Course
- Teach Sanitation and Food Safety Course
- Teach Culinary Nutrition Application Course
- Teach Culinary Math Course

***January 2013-August 2019***

**Adjacent Lecturer  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln**

- Teach Advanced Community Nutrition (NUTR 956) Graduate Course
- Teach Research Methods in Childhood Obesity Prevention/Transdisciplinary Childhood Obesity Prevention-Part I Fall Semester (NUTR/CYAF 810) Graduate Course
- Teach Research Method in Childhood Obesity Prevention/ Transdisciplinary Childhood Obesity Prevention-part II Spring (NUTR/CYAF 910) Graduate Course
- Teach Community Nutrition (NUTR 356) Undergraduate Course

- Teach Cultural Aspect of Nutrition (NUTR 253) Undergraduate Course

***January 2011-January 2014***      **Adjacent Lecturer**  
**Southeast Community College**

- Basic Nutrition (FSDT 1350) undergraduate class

***Sept.2002–Sept. 2010***      **Extension Associate-Nutrition Education Program**  
**University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Extension in**  
**Lancaster County**

- Coordinated, developed and taught nutrition programs to high school students, including pregnant teens, parenting teens, child development, and food wellness classes. Nutrition during high risk pregnancies, dietary guidelines, feeding infants, benefits of breastfeeding were among the lessons taught. One hundred and thirty-one classes were conducted, reaching 992 students in Lincoln Public High Schools.
- Coordinated and taught nutrition in middle schools in Lincoln Public Schools (LPS). Lessons included eating disorders, eating right and light, portion distortion, among others. One hundred and ten classes were conducted, reaching 2,278 students.
- Developed and delivered nutrition programs for elementary school students (k-5th). Approximately 92 classes were conducted, reaching 2,248 students.
- Developed and delivered nutrition programs for LPS Head Start program. Approximately 19 classes were conducted, reaching 248 students.

***February 2002-January 2003***      **Nebraska Read Program**  
**Lincoln Action Program, Lincoln, NE**

- Coordinated and supported the activities of Head Start programs related to literacy activities; assisted with learning activities for Head Start children.
- Conducted educational workshops for people with limited English; taught ESL classes for Persian and Arabic people; provided interpretation services for the Lincoln Action Program clients and promoted educational opportunities.
- Participated in local and county-wide activities related to personal and professional development.
- Compiled and maintained a database of community members for the Lincoln Action Program.

***December 1999-November 2001***      **Veterinarian Technician**  
**Belmont Veterinary Center, Lincoln, NE**

- Performed physical examination of animals, including blood, X-rays, and dental surgery.
- Assisted the lab in data management, data entry and other office duties.

*June 1997- August 1999*

**Veterinarian  
Veterinary Center, Damascus, Syria**

- Performed various medical surgeries and treatments for farm and home animals.
  - Conducted vaccinations of various animals by using appropriate formulae and technology.
  - Developed educational materials and educated community about animals' diseases
- 

**PUBLISHED RESEARCH ABSTRACTS/ PRESENTATIONS**

- Sehi, N., Nacke, B., Rida, Z. (July, 2018). Maximizing Efforts in Building Healthy School Cafeteria Through the Collaboration of Nebraska Community Nutrition Educators. Presented at the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior Annual conference, Minneapolis, MN.
- Rida, Z., Coffey, J., Fischer, J., (October, 2017). Identification of Tray-Waste in Elementary School Cafeterias. Presented at the Food and Nutrition Conference Expo 2017, Chicago, IL.
- Rida, Z., Hulse, E., Dev, D., Guo, Y., Burger, C. (October, 2017) Go NAP SACC: An Effective Approach in Meeting the Best Practices of Nutrition and Physical Activity for Early Childhood Obesity Prevention. Presented at the Food and Nutrition Conference Expo 2017, Chicago, IL.
- Askelson, N., Andersen, L., Rida, Z., (July, 2017) Parent perceptions of School Breakfast in 3 States with Low Participation. Presented at the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior Annual conference, Washington, DC.
- Hatton-Bowers, H., Dev, D., Guo, Y., Rida, Z., Cruikshank, K., Behrends, D., Sehi, N., Hulse, E., Dingman, H., Burger, C., (July, 2017). Go NAP SACC: A Valuable and Sustainable Approach for Improving Breastfeeding and Infant Feeding Environmental Policies and Practices in Family Child Care Homes. Presented at the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior Annual conference, Washington, DC.
- Rida, Z., Coffey, J., Fischer, J., Sehi, N., Nacke, B., (July, 2017). Nebraska utilizes an innovative approach in creating Smarter Lunchrooms. Presented at the 2017 National School Nutrition Association in Atlanta, GA.
- Rida, Z., Coffey, J., Fischer, J., Sehi N., Houska, K., (May, 2017) Nebraska Smarter Lunchroom Movement. Presented at the 2017 National Urban Extension Conference in Bloomington, MN.
- Rida, Z., Carr, T., Kohnke, C., Dev, D., (October, 2016). School Food Environment the Frontline for Childhood Obesity prevention-A Mixed-Method Study of nutritional Competencies and Skills of School Nutrition Professionals in Nebraska. Presented at the Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo 2016, Boston, MA
- Rida, Z., Hill, J., (July, 2016). Nebraska Team Nutrition Supports Sustaining

Healthy Nebraska Schools Through the Coordinated School Health Initiative.  
Presented at the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior Annual  
conference, San Diego, CA

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### **CERTIFICATIONS**

- UNL & SDSU-Transdisciplinary Childhood Obesity Prevention.
  - USDA-Produce University National Restaurant Association - ServSafe Food Protection Program.
  - State of Nebraska – Licensed Medical Nutrition Therapist
  - American Dietetic Association - Registered Dietitian
- 

### **HONORS/ AWARDS**

- Outstanding Abstract of 2016 Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo 2016, Boston, MA.
  - The Emerging Dietetic Leader/Nebraska Academy of Nutrition and Dietetic – Lincoln District - Lincoln, 2013.
  - Excellence in Team Programming in Nebraska’s Extension Award, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2010.
  - Membership into Gamma Sigma Delta Honor Society of Agriculture, University of Nebraska - Lincoln, 2007.
  - Five Years of Dedicated Service to the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, 2007.
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### **MULTICULTURAL/DIVERSITY EXPERIENCE**

- Conducted successful health educational workshops for Middle Eastern, Sudanese, Hispanic and Vietnamese moms (2004-2009).
  - Worked with Middle Eastern families who participated in Early Head Start/Head Start programs (2004-2009).
  - Provided cultural orientation and training for new refugees to help them learn how to live and thrive in the Lincoln community (2002-2003).
  - Taught English to new immigrants and refugees (2002-2003).
  - Taught Cultural Aspect of Nutrition to undergraduate UNL students (2013 & 2014).
  - Proven adaptability to differing cultural and business environments including Iraq (early 80s), Iran (late 80s), Syria (early 90s), Jordan (1998), England (2003-2016), France (2016), Italy (2016), and Canada (2014-2016).
  - Attended UNL-CYAF Study Abroad program in Cuernavaca, Mexico in 2004.
  - Served as a committee member for the Multicultural Advisory Committee (January 2010-October 2012).
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### **LANGUAGES**

- Arabic, fluent
- Persian, basic reading and conversation

# Shirley B. Vargas, Ed.L.D.

## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

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Dynamic and visionary systems leader with extensive and diverse leadership experiences ranging from classroom-level to state-level and across urban, rural, and international settings. Proven-success building and managing cross-functional teams across multiple entities with a focus on improving student outcomes.

## EDUCATION

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*Doctor of Educational Leadership, (Ed.L.D.)* Harvard University  
August 2016 – May 2019 Cambridge, MA  
Dissertation, *The Emerging Role of the Nebraska Department of Education in Leading for Equity in School Improvement*

*Master of Science, (M.S.)* Baruch College  
February 2010 – May 2013 New York, NY  
Scaffolded Apprentice Model Program: Concentration in Educational Leadership  
Culminating Paper, *Assistant Principal Professional Learning in Community School District 23*

*Master of Arts, (M.A.)* New York University  
September 2006 – May 2008 New York, NY  
Concentration in Foreign Language Education – Spanish and TESOL  
Master's Thesis, *Focus on Form: The Importance and Future of Teaching Grammar in World Language Classrooms*

*Bachelor of Arts, (B.A.)* Hunter College  
August 2001 – June 2005 New York, NY  
Concentration in Spanish Language and Literature

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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*School Transformation Officer*  
*Administrator, Office of Coordinated School & District Support* Nebraska Department of Education  
June 2019- Present Lincoln, NE

- Serve on the Commissioner of Education Leadership Council and work directly with the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners of Education to facilitate and execute strategies aligned with the mission, priorities, and goals of the Nebraska State Board of Education and the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE).
- Prepare and disseminate statutory reporting for various legislation and provide assistance and expertise to the Governor's Office and the Nebraska Legislature on relevant legislation.
- Lead a cross-functional support and professional learning team, with members from the Office of Federal Programs; Teaching, Learning, and Assessment; and Special Education, for the lowest 5% of Title I schools resulting in streamlined communication, coordinated trainings, and integrated monitoring of improvement plans and coordinated site visits.
- Strategically partner with leadership teams of state designated *Priority Schools* to implement needs-based, data-driven, context-specific improvement strategies to increase teacher and leader effectiveness and student academic and non-academic outcomes, resulting in three schools out of the original six schools exiting this status.
- Collaborate and coordinate with offices across the NDE and Educational Service Unit (ESU) staff to design a continuum of supports for schools identified for underperformance by student disability, progress toward English language proficiency, students experiencing poverty, and students across racial and ethnic groups.

- Provide leadership and direction for the NDE Coherence Project, an internal initiative to breakdown silos and leverage existing communications and resources to better support schools/districts focus on whole child approaches for school improvement.
- Strategically partner with federal technical assistance centers to enhance agency capacity to address high leverage statewide problems of practice, in partnership with local school districts, ESU staff, and higher education faculty.
- Oversee a budget of \$11.8 million of state funds to attract and retain teachers in shortage areas, provide student loan repayment assistant programs, and support statewide teacher and leader effectiveness.
- Coordinate cross-office budgeting processes, approximately \$6 million in federal funds, to support the implementation of the state and federal accountability system and provide differentiated support to underperforming schools.

*Student Achievement Coordinator*

Nebraska Department of Education

June 2018 – May 2019

Lincoln, NE

- Served as a liaison for three state designated *Priority Schools* and coordinate supports across the agency for each school in literacy, math, English Learners, and special education.
- Co-designed and executed a secondary math professional learning series with NDE content area specialist, ESU staff developers, and external consultants for *Priority School* teachers and administrators.
- Co-authored revisions for the State Board of Education Equity/Nondiscrimination Position Statement.
- Served as a liaison for the Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties, in the Omaha Metro area, to support student achievement in the participating 11 school districts, as well as provided regular progress updates to the Nebraska State Board of Education.

*Education Consultant*

Harvard Graduate School of Education

November 2016 – May 2018

Cambridge, MA

- Consulted with Waltham Public Schools, MA, and Cambridge Public Schools, MA, to provide recommendations in K-8 reading curriculum program implementation and use of a balanced scorecard for progress monitoring of strategic plan initiatives, respectively.
- Consulted with the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to provide recommendations on paraprofessional entry requirements and professional standards.
- Designed and executed a professional learning module for pre-service teachers with the Harvard Teacher Fellows program, which focused on student-centered learning and culturally sustaining pedagogy. Additionally, co-constructed a framework for an empowering learning environment.

*Director of School Renewal*

Office of School Superintendent, NYCDOE

March 2015 – September 2016

Brooklyn, NY

- Supported and monitored the implementation of the NYC School Renewal Program – aligned with the instructional and operational needs of four schools identified as “struggling” or under “receivership” status in Brooklyn.
- Conducted listening sessions and held public hearings alongside school leadership teams to share current school data with community members, obtain data regarding school perception, and garner suggestions for improvement strategies.
- Provided leadership coaching in strategic planning with school leadership teams, as they created a theory of action and selected community-based organizations with proven experience in social work and family engagement and establish a Community Schools Model for improvement.
- Coached principals on the Data Wise Improvement Process to support teacher teams in inquiry work, to identify areas of improvement in their daily practice to support student learning and establish feedback loops for actionable next steps.

- Led summer intensive trainings on *Advance*, the teacher development and evaluation system, to 500 participants system-wide to set expectations and support school team training.
- Conducted regular school visits to 50 schools throughout NYC to support school leaders with *Advance*, provided tangible next steps to school leaders and superintendents, and designed meaningful professional learning opportunities. Schools were in 95% compliance for completed observations and 97% of teacher evaluation reports included appropriate evidence and rationales.
- Coached over 100 school leaders and school leadership teams with observation and feedback cycles to hone their skills in providing specific, actionable, and time-bound feedback through simulations and rehearsals.
- Established and led a district-wide Assistant Principal professional learning community, where leaders engaged in instructional rounds, provided peer-feedback on problems of practice, and regularly discussed student work samples.

- Developed and implemented a middle school curriculum, grounded in World Language and NY Common Core State Standards, focused on the four-language skills, through project-based learning which resulted in 90% of students receiving high school credit for language proficiency.
- Conducted parent meetings for newly admitted students, administered the LAB-R exam, and programmed ELL-identified students per their proficiency levels. Created interdisciplinary, thematic units that supported student learning across core content areas.
- Created and delivered ELL-specific professional learning opportunities for all teachers to support diversity and inclusion practices for English Language Learners.
- Mentored new teachers in creating and implementing daily classroom routines and procedures and supported with curriculum mapping and using student data to adjust daily instruction.

- Designed and implemented project-based English language lessons for elementary and middle school aged students in rural communities.
- Collaborated with colleagues to utilize different language teaching methods such as Immersion, Direct Method, or Total Physical Response, to support language use.

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

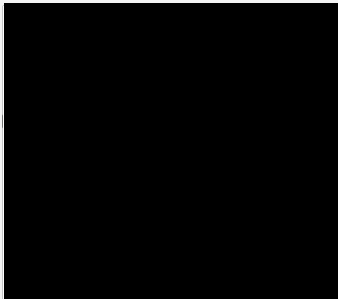
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- Member, Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society in Education
- Member, Learning Forward
- Board Member, Learning Forward Nebraska
- Board Member, Winnebago Tribal Education Advisory Board

# STACEY WEBER

## CONTACT

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## SUMMARY

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Highly creative educator specializing in designing standards based, academic excellence with engaging, active learning.

## SKILLS

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Experienced educator with diverse experience across states, grade levels, and cultures.

Advanced knowledge of standards, curriculum development, creative education approaches

Trained in Articulate 360+ & Adobe Captivate. Created asynchronous tutorials for a variety of purposes

Strong team player who loves collaboration and people relations

## CAREER EXPERIENCE

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### OFFICE ASSOCIATE & TRAINING SPECIALIST

Nebraska Department of Education & Department Of Administrative Services State Of Nebraska

2018 - Present

#### Training and Support:

- Create asynchronous training using Articulate and Canvas, training in Articulate 360+ (Storyline, Studio, Peek, and Replay, Rise)
- Create tutorials, using Adobe Captivate and Audacity, designed to instruct all state employees on use of a new business software system
- Provide administrative support for Educational Specialists, organize workshops, state meetings, and input sessions

#### Communication and Stakeholder Management:

- Regularly communicate with districts, teachers, Nebraska Department of Education employees, event venues, vendors, parents, and stakeholders

#### Assessment:

- Review testing materials for English Language Arts and alternate tests,
- Conduct assessment security visits in Nebraska schools,
- Proofread administration, accommodation, security manuals and other communications

#### State & Federal Compliance:

- Assisted with CGSA federal grants,
- Manage Peer Review for the United States Department of Education,
- Completed Accountability Evidence Based Analysis Review

### 7/8 LEAD TEACHER & HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHER

HCA, Hamilton, MT

2014-2018

#### Curriculum Design

- Wrote creative, integrated curriculum that actively engaged students while meeting state and accreditation standards

#### Teaching:

- Instructed 7/8 students in writing, reading, grammar, speech, world & American history, computers, art & music appreciation
- Instructed grades 9-12 English using school literature, grammar, vocabulary, and writing curriculum. Focused on literary analysis, advanced writing & research skills, critical thinking, social & cultural awareness.
- Taught 1st-8th Title I reading classes as a contracted public school representative.

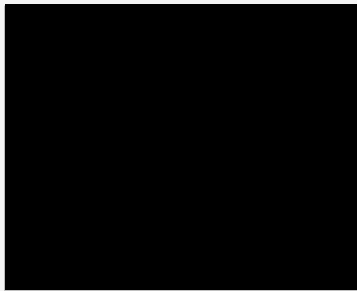
#### Administrative & Management:

- Wrote and organized narratives for school accreditation focusing on how school policy and curriculum stranding enhanced learning for all students.
- Planned and managed field trips for hands-on enhancement to key concepts
- Managed school's online grade book, roster, and curriculum mapping software. Trained staff in database use and best practices for standardized input
- Managed Terra Nova, PreACT, and ACT standardized testing for 3rd through 11th grade

# STACEY WEBER

## CONTACT

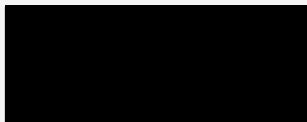
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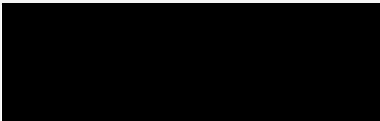
## REFERENCES

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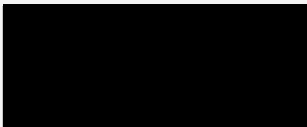
**Abby Burke, Ed.D.**  
Education Specialist



**Mary Ulrich, Ph.D.**  
Director, NMSU DACC  
Workforce Development &  
Career Readiness



**Tanya Horat**  
Academic Success Program  
Instructor Advisor Missoula  
County Public Schools  
Lifelong Learning Center  
Ravalli



## CAREER EXPERIENCE

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### ENGLISH LANGUAGE TUTOR & CULTURAL ASSISTANT

A.C.E. Language Institute,  
Montana State University, Bozeman, Mt

**Summers 2012-2014**

#### Curriculum Design

- Created personalized lesson plans for participants and designed teaching methods course

#### Language & Culture Education:

- Tutored Japanese and Korean English teachers in conversational English and American culture during short-term summer exchange programs
- Assisted program in social and cultural events for participants
- Received positive reviews from participants

### HUMANITIES TEACHER

Lorien Wood, Vienna, Va

**2010-2012**

#### Curriculum Design

- Assisted with development of Humanities curriculum for both struggling readers and writers and highly gifted students.

#### Teaching:

- Instructed students in writing, reading, speech, world history, art

#### Administrative & Management:

- Coordinated parent volunteers for projects such as cultural feasts and art studies.
- Maintained active relationships with student families through regular emails, home visits, and attendance of student extra-curricular activities
- Designed middle school weekly schedule for all classes
- Coordinated CogAt standardized testing for 3rd-8th Grade

### 7/8 LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHER

Welches Middle School, Welches, Or

**1998-2005**

#### Curriculum Design

- Designed inquiry curriculum to promote critical thinking, quality communication, and creative presentation
- Set departmental standards for effective English language education
- Analyzed state learning standards and student data for necessary curriculum reform and alignment of the program to relevant learning goals

#### Teaching

- Instructed students in essay writing, literary analysis, and speech

### READING SPECIALIST

Ganado High School, Ganado, Az

**1996-1998**

#### Curriculum Design

- Designed reading program for struggling Navajo high school students

#### Teaching:

- Taught reading classes focusing on basic literacy skills
- Coached speech and debate team

## **Proposed Job Description**

### ***Tentative Title: Office of Literacy Director***

Essential Functions (pending final approval from NDE's Office of Human Resources):

- Provides leadership, coordination, and implementation for sections and programs related to Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan including English Language Arts (ELA) content standards, instruction, instructional materials, curriculum, assessment, and professional learning.
- Oversees the establishment of and ongoing communication with a Statewide Literacy Council comprised of Nebraskans with expertise in the area of literacy and the Literacy Team comprised of NDE staff and CLSD project aligned partners.
- Provides direction and guidance related to the development and implementation of Nebraska ELA content standards and alignment to the Science of Reading.
- Oversees the K-3 screenings required by the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act of 2019 and revised in 2023.
- Leads processes designed to guide selection and implementation of high-quality, standards-based instructional resources within local school districts (e.g. curriculum, digital resources, open educational resources, assessment resources) related to literacy while administering and monitoring CLSD State and Subaward Activities.
- Establishes and fosters strategic partnerships among NeMTSS regions, Educational Service Units(ESUs), postsecondary education institutions, state agencies, business, and nonprofit organizations regarding literacy and alignment to evidence-based instructional materials.

- Coordinates review and preparation of literacy-related reports and legislation, providing assistance to the Governor's Office and Nebraska State Legislature and year-end reporting for CLSD funds.

Qualifications (pending final approval from NDE's Office of Human Resources):

- Educational background in reading, literacy, or an aligned field of work.
- Master's degree in education required, Doctorate or Ed. Specialist preferred. Current teaching or administrative certificate and five years of experience or any combination thereof.
- 10 or more years of experience teaching or leading teachers to enhance student achievement or proficiency required. Successful PK-12 leadership experience including direct supervisory experience preferred.

## **Proposed Job Description**

### ***Tentative Title: Literacy Project Manager***

Essential Functions (pending final approval from NDE's Office of Human Resources):

- Supports statewide leadership, content area experts, CLSD training and technical assistance center, and professional learning related to early literacy education to schools, ESUs, NeMTSS regional literacy coaches, and postsecondary institutions to complete aligned projects and CLSD initiatives.
- Advises schools, districts, ESUs, and other stakeholders on requirements and implementation of the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act and CLSD requirements, preferences, and assurances.
- Provides support related to curating, vetting, and using early literacy assessments of language and literacy while aligning public and non-public pre-K assessments.
- Develops and delivers professional learning experiences and provides resources related to Early Literacy Education aligned to evidence-based best practices and structured literacy.
- Provides guidance and recommendations on selecting and implementing high-quality, standards-aligned instructional resources to support strong core instruction in early literacy and English Language Arts aligned to CLSD goals and objectives.
- Establishes and fosters strategic partnerships with other NDE Offices, state agencies, nonprofit organizations, postsecondary education institutions, and business and industry partners.
- Ensures project management tools and processes are maintained through the lifecycle of Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS project (CLSD) including

reporting requirements, Literacy Team meetings with both internal NDE staff and external partners, and students, teachers, leaders, and community members.

- Liaison with CLSD training and technical assistance and external evaluation partners.

Qualifications (pending final approval form NDE's Office of Human Resources):

- Educational background in reading, literacy, or an aligned field of work.
- Bachelors degree required, Masters preferred, Literacy endorsement PK-12 preferred.
- 2 or more years of experience as a PK-12 teacher or school administrator to enhance student achievement and proficiency OR 2 or more years managing projects from inception to completion.

## Appendix B. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement



**NeMTSS**  
FRAMEWORK



**INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT  
STATE EDUCATION AGENCY**

**Organization:**

Nebraska Department of Education  
500 S 84th Street, 2nd Floor  
Lincoln, NE 68510-2611

**Date:** November 2, 2022

**Agreement No:** 2022-514

**Filing Reference:** This replaces previous  
Agreement No. 2020-019

**Dated:** 5/26/2020

The approved indirect cost rates herein are for use on grants, contracts, and other agreements with the Federal Government. The rates are subject to the conditions included in Section II of this Agreement and regulations issued by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards under 2 CFR 200.

**Section I - Rates and Bases**

<b><u>Type</u></b>	<b><u>From</u></b>	<b><u>To</u></b>	<b><u>Rate</u></b>	<b><u>Base</u></b>	<b><u>Applicable To</u></b>
Predetermined	7/1/2020	6/30/2023	12.7%	MTDC	Unrestricted
Predetermined	7/1/2020	6/30/2023	8.8%	MTDC	Restricted
Predetermined	7/1/2023	6/30/2027	12.7%	MTDC	Unrestricted *
Predetermined	7/1/2023	6/30/2027	8.8%	MTDC	Restricted *

\* In accordance with 2 CFR 200.414(g), Nebraska Department of Education requested an extension of its current rate for fiscal year 2022, and it is extended in accordance with this regulation.

**Distribution Base:**

MTDC      Modified Total Direct Cost - Total direct costs excluding equipment, capital expenditures, participant support costs, pass-through funds and the portion of each subaward (subcontract or subgrant) above \$25,000 (each award; each year).

**Applicable To:**

Unrestricted      Unrestricted rates apply to programs that do not require a restricted rate per 34 CFR 75.563 and 34 CFR 76.563.

Restricted      Restricted rates apply to programs that require a restricted rate per 34 CFR 75.563 and 34 CFR 76.563.

**Treatment of Fringe Benefits:**

Fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as direct costs. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.431, (b), (3), Paragraph (i), unused leave costs for all employees are allowable in the year of payment. The treatment of unused leave costs should be allocated as an indirect cost except for those employee salaries designated as a direct cost for the restricted rate calculation.

**Capitalization Policy:** Items of equipment are capitalized and depreciated if the initial acquisition cost is equal to or greater than \$5,000.

## **Section II – Particulars**

**Limitations:** Application of the rates contained in this Agreement is subject to all statutory or administrative limitations on the use of funds, and payments of costs hereunder are subject to the availability of appropriations applicable to a given grant or contract. Acceptance of the rates agreed to herein is predicated on the following conditions: (A) that no costs other than those incurred by the Organization were included in the indirect cost pools as finally accepted, and that such costs are legal obligations of the Organization and allowable under the governing cost principles; (B) the same costs that have been treated as indirect costs are not claimed as direct costs; (C) that similar types of information which are provided by the Organization, and which were used as a basis for acceptance of rates agreed to herein, are not subsequently found to be materially incomplete or inaccurate; and (D) that similar types of costs have been accorded consistent accounting treatment.

**Accounting Changes:** The rates contained in this agreement are based on the organizational structure and the accounting systems in effect at the time the proposal was submitted. Changes in organizational structure or changes in the method of accounting for costs which affect the amount of reimbursement resulting from use of the rates in this agreement, require the prior approval of the responsible negotiation agency. Failure to obtain such approval may result in subsequent audit disallowance.

**Provisional/Final/Predetermined Rates:** A proposal to establish a final rate must be submitted. The awarding office should be notified if the final rate is different from the provisional rate so that appropriate adjustments to billings and charges may be made. Predetermined rates are not subject to adjustment.

**Fixed Rate:** The negotiated fixed rate is based on an estimate of the costs that will be incurred during the period to which the rate applies. When the actual costs for such period have been determined, an adjustment will be made to a subsequent rate calculation to compensate for the difference between the costs used to establish the fixed rate and the actual costs.

**Notification to Other Federal Agencies:** Copies of this document may be provided to other Federal agencies as a means of notifying them of the agreement contained herein.

**Audit:** All costs (direct and indirect, federal and non-federal) are subject to audit. Adjustments to amounts resulting from audit of the cost allocation plan or indirect cost rate proposal upon which the negotiation of this agreement was based may be compensated for in a subsequent negotiation.

**Reimbursement Ceilings/Limitations on Rates:** Awards that include ceiling provisions and statutory/regulatory requirements on indirect cost rates or reimbursement amounts are subject to the stipulations in the grant or contract agreements. If a ceiling is higher than the negotiated rate in Section I of this agreement, the negotiated rate will be used to determine the maximum allowable indirect cost.

### Section III - Special Remarks

Alternative Reimbursement Methods: If any federal programs are reimbursing indirect costs by a methodology other than the approved rates in this agreement, such costs should be credited to the programs and the approved rates should be used to identify the maximum amount of indirect costs allocable.

Submission of Proposals: New indirect cost proposals are necessary to obtain approved indirect cost rates for future fiscal years. **The next indirect cost rate proposal is due six months prior to the expiration dates of the rates in this agreement.**

### Section IV – Approvals

#### For the State Education Agency:

Nebraska Department of Education  
500 S 84th Street, 2nd Floor  
Lincoln, NE 68510-2611

#### For the Federal Government:

U.S. Department of Education  
OFO / OAGRM / ICD  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4500

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Bryce Wilson  
Name

Finance Officer  
Title

11/3/2022  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Andre Hylton  
Name

Director, Indirect Cost Division  
Title

November 2, 2022  
Date

Negotiator: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

# Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS

## Appendix C. Bibliography



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# Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS

## Appendix D. Assurances



**NeMTSS**  
FRAMEWORK



## **CLSD Application and Program Assurances**

Pursuant to sections 2222-2224 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), an eligible state educational agency (SEA) receiving a grant under the CLSD program must provide the assurances described below.

As the duly authorized representative of the grantee, I certify to the following:

### **Application Assurances**

An SEA must include in its application the following signed application assurances:

An SEA must include in its application the following assurances:

(1) State Funding Allocations.

(a) An SEA must assure that it will subgrant not less than 95 percent of grant funds to eligible entities (as defined in this notice), based on their needs assessment and a competitive application process, for comprehensive literacy instruction programs according to the funding allocations in Program Requirement (a).

(b) An SEA must assure it will use grant funds described in section 2222(f)(1) for comprehensive literacy instruction programs as follows:

(i) Not less than 15 percent of such grant funds must be used for State and local programs and activities pertaining to children from birth through kindergarten entry.

(ii) Not less than 40 percent of such grant funds must be used for State and local programs and activities, allocated equitably among the grades of kindergarten through grade 5.

(iii) Not less than 40 percent of such grant funds must be used for State and local programs and activities, allocated equitably among grades 6 through 12.

(2) Serving Low-Income and High-Need Students.

An SEA must assure that it will give priority in awarding subgrants to eligible entities that--

(i) Serve children from birth through age 5 who are from families with income levels at or below 200 percent of the Federal poverty line (as defined in this notice); or

(ii) Are LEAs serving a high number or percentage of high-need schools.

(3) Geographic Diversity.

An SEA must assure that it will provide subgrants to eligible entities serving a diversity of geographic areas, giving priority to entities serving greater numbers or percentages of children from low-income families.

### **Program Assurances**

An SEA must include in its application the following signed program assurances:

State Funding Allocations.

(1) Grantees must use not less than 95 percent of grant funds to award subgrants to eligible entities, based on their needs assessment and a competitive application process;

(2) Grantees must subgrant funds as follows:

(i) Not less than 15 percent of the funds awarded to subgrantees must be used for State and local programs and activities pertaining to children from birth through kindergarten entry;

(ii) Not less than 40 percent of the funds awarded to subgrantees must be used for State and local programs and activities, allocated equitably among the grades of kindergarten through grade 5; and

(iii) Not less than 40 percent of the funds awarded to subgrantees must be used for State and local programs and activities, allocated equitably among grades 6 through 12.

(b) State-Level Activities.

(1) A grantee may reserve not more than 5 percent of the CLSD funds it receives for activities identified through the needs assessment and comprehensive literacy plan, including, at a minimum, the following activities:

(i) Providing technical assistance, or engaging qualified providers to provide technical assistance, to eligible entities to enable the eligible entities to design and implement literacy programs.

(ii) Coordinating with IHEs in the State to provide recommendations to strengthen and enhance pre-service courses for students preparing to teach children from birth through grade 12 in explicit, systematic, and intensive instruction in evidence-based literacy methods.

(iii) Reviewing and updating, in collaboration with teachers and IHEs, State licensure or certification standards in the area of literacy instruction in early education through grade 12.

(iv) Making publicly available, including on the SEA's website, information on promising instructional practices to improve child literacy achievement.

(v) Administering and monitoring the implementation of subgrants by eligible entities.

(2) After making awards to subgrantees and carrying out the State-level activities described in this notice, an SEA may use any remaining amount to carry out one or more of the following activities:

(i) Developing literacy coach training programs and training literacy coaches.

(ii) Administration and evaluation of CLSD activities.

(3) Collaboration requirement.

A grantee must collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering early childhood education programs, the State agency responsible for administering child care programs, and, if applicable, the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care designated or established pursuant to section 642(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act, in making and implementing subgrants under the early childhood education portion of the CLSD program, described in section 2222(d)(2)(D)(i).

Note: Section 2222(d)(1) of the ESEA specifically references childcare and early childhood programs within a State. Since the CLSD service population encompasses children from birth and includes pre-literacy services, applicants may collaborate with the State agencies administering the Part C program for infants and toddlers under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in their program planning, as some children being served under Part C would likely benefit from CLSD services.

(c) Requirements that Apply to Subgrants to Eligible Entities in Support of Birth through Kindergarten Entry Literacy.

(1) Subgrantee application requirements.

- (i) How the CLSD funds will be used to enhance the language and literacy development and school readiness of children, from birth through kindergarten entry, in early childhood education programs, which must include an analysis of data that support the proposed use of CLSD funds;
- (ii) How the CLSD funds will be used to prepare and provide ongoing assistance to staff in the programs, including through high-quality professional development;
- (iii) How the activities assisted with the CLSD funds will be coordinated with comprehensive literacy instruction at the kindergarten through grade 12 levels; and
- (iv) How the CLSD funds will be used to evaluate the success of the activities assisted under the subgrant in enhancing the early language and literacy development of children from birth through kindergarten entry.

(2) Priority.

In awarding subgrants to eligible entities in support of birth through kindergarten entry, sections 2222(d)(2)(E) and 2223(c) of the ESEA require that an SEA must provide an assurance that it will--

- (i) Give priority to an eligible entity that will use CLSD funds to implement evidence-based activities;
- (ii) Give priority to an eligible entity that will use CLSD funds to serve children from birth through age 5 who are from families with income levels at or below 200 percent of the Federal poverty line or is a local educational agency (LEA) serving a high number or percentage of high-need schools.

(3) Duration.

The term of a subgrant must be determined by the grantee and must not exceed five years.

(4) Sufficient size and scope.

Each subgrant must be of sufficient size and scope to allow the eligible entity to carry out high-quality early literacy initiatives for children from birth through kindergarten entry.

(5) Local uses of funds.

An eligible entity that receives a subgrant from the SEA must use the CLSD funds, consistent with the entity's approved application, to—

- (i) Carry out high-quality professional development opportunities for early childhood educators, teachers, principals, other school leaders (as defined in this notice), paraprofessionals, specialized instructional support personnel, and instructional leaders;
- (ii) Train providers and personnel to develop and administer evidence-based early childhood education literacy initiatives; and
- (iii) Coordinate the involvement of families, early childhood education program staff, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel (as appropriate), and teachers in literacy development of children served under CLSD.

(d) Requirements that Apply to Subgrants to Eligible Entities in Support of Kindergarten through Grade 12 Literacy.

(1) Subgrantee application requirements.

An eligible entity desiring to receive a subgrant from the SEA under the CLSD program must submit an application to the SEA at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the SEA may require. Such application must include, for each school that the eligible entity identifies as participating in a CLSD program, the following information:

- (i) A description of the eligible entity's needs assessment conducted to identify how CLSD funds will be used to inform and improve comprehensive literacy instruction at the school.

- (ii) How the school, the LEA, or a provider of high-quality professional development will provide ongoing high-quality professional development to all teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel (as appropriate), and other instructional leaders served by the school.
- (iii) How the school will identify children in need of literacy interventions or other support services.
- (iv) An explanation of how the school will integrate comprehensive literacy instruction into a well-rounded education (as defined in this notice).
- (v) A description of how the school will coordinate comprehensive literacy instruction with early childhood education programs and activities and after-school programs and activities in the area served by the LEA.

(2) Priority.

In awarding subgrants to eligible entities, sections 2222(d)(2)(E) and 2223(c) of the ESEA require that an SEA must provide an assurance that it will--

- (i) Give priority to an LEA that will use CLSD funds to implement evidence-based activities; and
- (ii) Give priority to an LEA serving a high number or percentage of high-need schools.

(3) Duration.

The term of a subgrant must be determined by the grantee and must not exceed five years.

(4) Sufficient size and scope.

Each subgrant must be of sufficient size and scope to allow the eligible entity to carry out high-quality comprehensive literacy instruction in each grade level for which the CLSD funds are provided.

(5) Local uses of funds for kindergarten through grade 5.

An eligible entity that receives a subgrant from the SEA under the CLSD program must use the CLSD funds to carry out the following activities pertaining to children in kindergarten through grade 5:

- (i) Developing and implementing a comprehensive literacy instruction plan across content areas for such children that--
  - (A) Serves the needs of all children, including children with disabilities and English learners, especially children who are reading or writing below grade level;
  - (B) Provides intensive, supplemental, accelerated, and explicit intervention and support in reading and writing for children whose literacy skills are below grade level; and
  - (C) Supports activities that are provided primarily during the regular school day but that may be augmented by after-school and out-of-school time instruction.
- (ii) Providing high-quality professional development opportunities for teachers, literacy coaches, literacy specialists, English as a second language specialists (as appropriate), principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, school librarians, paraprofessionals, and other program staff.
- (iii) Training principals, specialized instructional support personnel, and other LEA personnel to support, develop, administer, and evaluate high-quality kindergarten through grade 5 literacy initiatives.
- (iv) Coordinating the involvement of early childhood education program staff, principals, other instructional leaders, teachers, teacher literacy teams, English as a second language specialists (as appropriate), special educators, school personnel, and specialized instructional support personnel (as appropriate) in the literacy development of children served.

(v) Engaging families and encouraging family literacy experiences and practices to support literacy development.

(6) Local uses of funds for grades 6 through 12.

An eligible entity that receives a subgrant from the SEA under CLSD must use CLSD funds to carry out the following activities pertaining to children in grades 6 through 12:

(i) Developing and implementing a comprehensive literacy instruction plan across content areas for such children that--

(A) Serves the needs of all children, including children with disabilities and English learners, especially children who are reading or writing below grade level;

(B) Provides intensive, supplemental, accelerated, and explicit intervention and support in reading and writing for children whose literacy skills are below grade level; and

(C) Supports activities that are provided primarily during the regular school day but that may be augmented by after-school and out-of-school time instruction.

(ii) Training principals, specialized instructional support personnel, school librarians, and other LEA personnel to support, develop, administer, and evaluate high-quality comprehensive literacy instruction initiatives for grades 6 through 12.

(iii) Assessing the quality of adolescent comprehensive literacy instruction as part of a well-rounded education.

(iv) Providing time for teachers to meet to plan evidence-based adolescent comprehensive literacy instruction to be delivered as part of a well-rounded education.

(v) Coordinating the involvement of principals, other instructional leaders, teachers, teacher literacy teams, English as a second language specialists (as appropriate), paraprofessionals, special educators, specialized instructional support personnel (as appropriate), and school personnel in the literacy development of children served.

(7) Additional local allowable uses of funds for kindergarten through grade 12.

An eligible entity that receives a subgrant from an SEA under CLSD may, in addition to carrying out the activities described in paragraphs 5 and 6 of this requirement, use subgrant funds to carry out the following activities pertaining to children in kindergarten through grade 12:

(i) Recruiting, placing, training, and compensating literacy coaches.

(ii) Connecting out-of-school learning opportunities to in-school learning in order to improve children's literacy achievement.

(iii) Training families and caregivers to support the improvement of adolescent literacy.

(iv) Providing for a multi-tier system of supports (as defined in this notice) for literacy services.

(v) Forming a school literacy leadership team to help implement, assess, and identify necessary changes to the literacy initiatives in 1 or more schools to ensure success.

(vi) Providing time for teachers (and other literacy staff, as appropriate, such as school librarians or specialized instructional support personnel) to meet to plan comprehensive literacy instruction.

(e) Supplement not Supplant.

Grantees must use CLSD funds to supplement, and not supplant, non-Federal funds that would otherwise be used for activities authorized under the CLSD program.

(f) Cooperation with National Evaluation.

Grantees must cooperate with a national evaluation of the CLSD program (34 CFR 75.591). The evaluation will include high-quality research that applies rigorous and systematic procedures to obtain valid knowledge relevant to the implementation and effect of the CLSD program. The

evaluation will directly coordinate with individual State evaluations of the CLSD program implementation.

(g) Subgrantees.

Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c), a grantee under this grant competition must award subgrants -- to directly carry out project activities described in its application -- to eligible entities. The grantee must award at least 95% of the funds it receives for subgrants to eligible entities it selects through a competition under procedures established by the grantee and consistent with sections 2222-2224 of the ESEA.

Allyson DenBeste  
NAME OF AUTHORIZING OFFICIAL

Academic Officer  
TITLE

  
SIGNATURE

6/17/2024  
DATE

Nebraska Department of Education  
APPLICANT/ENTITY NAME

# Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS

## Appendix E. Nebraska's Literacy Needs Assessment



**NeMTSS**  
FRAMEWORK



# Nebraska's Literacy Needs Assessment

Completed in 2024

by NDE's Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

*When districts, schools, classrooms, and families collaboratively work together to plan, fund, staff, schedule, and implement inclusive educational programming, they make massive strides toward equitable education for students with disabilities. As barriers to access are removed and inequities in opportunities and outcomes for students with disabilities shrink, schools truly become drivers of equity for all learners.*

## **Nebraska's Literacy Needs Assessment**

According to data from the Needs Assessment Guidebook, states and districts are more likely to implement strategies effectively when strategy selection is based on a data-based assessment of local capacity (Cuiccio & Husby-Slater, n.d.). The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) formed the Nebraska State Literacy Writing (SLW) Team to conduct a data-based assessment of local capacity. This assessment identified the demand for accessible and affordable literacy support and a lack of alignment of current resources to evidence-based literacy approaches like the Science of Reading. Only recently, recommended changes to NDE's Rule 20: Regulations for the Approval of Teacher Education Programs, have been approved, requiring Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) to include content about Science of Reading in a teacher preparation program. For educators and other stakeholders administering literacy programs, funding is needed to bridge this gap.

Included in NDE's review of state resources and programs is the Journey to Inclusion and the Coherence Model, NDE's approach to align high-quality instructional material, professional learning opportunities, and resources to a multi-tiered systems approach that will allow every student equitable opportunities. Nebraska's Multi-Tiered System of Support (NeMTSS) was designed through the lens of continuous improvement to guide school districts, schools, and all educators to ensure each and every student has access to learning experiences that enhance their educational outcomes. This NeMTSS approach to literacy will define Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy, and allow a guiding structure and regional deployment of resources.

Nebraska is committed to ensuring our students have the literacy skills necessary to become proficient readers, as evidenced by ESSER investments over the last five years. Nebraska's Literacy Needs Assessment considers the needs of all students but especially disadvantaged children, including those living in poverty, English learners, students with disabilities, and other student groups that are historically underserved.

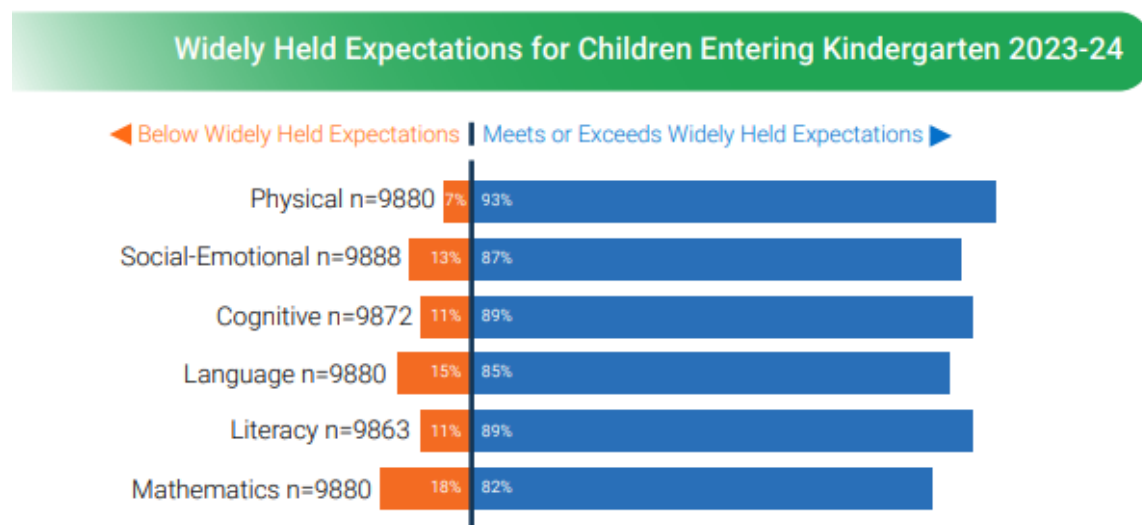
Across Nebraska, these series of significant and compounding need-based gaps in services, infrastructure, and opportunities have resulted in systemic cycles of generational poverty and lack of economic investment, ultimately putting children impacted at risk of educational failure. The following section addresses the severity of these needs and the impact on students in Nebraska.

## By the Numbers

According to NSCAS data, 43% of participating grade 5 students did not meet grade-level proficiency on State reading/language arts assessments. 37% of participating grade 8 students did not meet grade-level proficiency on State reading/language arts assessments. This equates to more than one in three students in middle schools across Nebraska reading below grade level.

Nebraska utilizes the Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD) assessment to gauge the readiness of children entering Kindergarten. Administered in ESU or LEA-operated early childhood settings, children are tested for a myriad of skills including oral language skills. Based on finalized data for children ages 3 to 5, there were more than 14,500 children analyzed with beginning and end-of-year assessments. The kindergarten readiness data depicted in Figure 1.2: Nebraska's TS GOLD Report comes from end-of-year data on more than 9,800 children who entered kindergarten in the fall of 2023 (*Early Childhood Education State Report, 2024*). While only reporting the portion of children enrolled in school district programs and children with IEPs who are not enrolled in a preschool program operated by a school district or ESU, his data shows that 15% of observed children entering Kindergarten in Nebraska fell below the widely held expectations of Language and 11% below the threshold for Literacy. This leaves one in ten observed Kindergarteners unprepared to build literacy skills.

### Nebraska's TS GOLD Report



### NSCAS English Language Arts Data

Grade	Hispanic or Latino		American Indian or Alaska Native		Asian		Black or African American		Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		White		Two or More Races		Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch		Special Education Students		English Learners		Highly Mobile Students		Students Served in Migrant Programs	
	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient	% below	% proficient
3	55%	45%	65%	35%	39%	61%	62%	38%	51%	49%	29%	71%	40%	60%	52%	48%	63%	37%	60%	40%	63%	37%	65%	35%
4	62%	38%	64%	36%	42%	58%	67%	33%	56%	44%	36%	64%	49%	51%	60%	40%	74%	26%	68%	32%	73%	27%	65%	35%
5	62%	38%	75%	25%	40%	60%	67%	33%	60%	40%	34%	66%	47%	53%	59%	41%	75%	25%	70%	30%	68%	32%	72%	28%
6	62%	38%	75%	25%	41%	59%	72%	28%	56%	44%	36%	64%	48%	52%	60%	40%	77%	23%	75%	25%	71%	29%	68%	32%
7	63%	37%	73%	27%	39%	61%	72%	28%	55%	45%	37%	63%	51%	49%	61%	39%	80%	20%	80%	20%	75%	25%	70%	30%
8	53%	47%	65%	35%	34%	66%	62%	38%	53%	47%	28%	72%	40%	60%	52%	48%	75%	25%	76%	24%	63%	37%	65%	35%
11	76%*	24%*	80%*	20%*	48%*	52%*	82%*	18%*	**	**	44%*	56%*	60%*	40%*	72%	28%	47%	53%	93%*	7%*	88%*	12%*	83%*	17%*

NSCAS reports from grades 3 through 11 test results are included above, showing disparity in students with disabilities, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Black or African American students' results. This is compounded by the results showing disparity among students eligible for free and reduced lunch, special education students, English language learners, highly mobile students, and students served in migrant programs.

The percentage of Nebraska's grade 4 students performing at or above proficiency on the 2021 NAEP was 35%, demonstrating that 65% of grade 4 students need additional support. For some students, including English Learners, those with dyslexia, and other reading disabilities, achieving proficiency is especially challenging. Nebraska's English Language Arts standards require students to read and learn from an increasingly complex text in all subject areas as they progress. It is critical students have access to a sequence of explicit, systematic foundational reading skills provided by qualified teachers and with high-quality instructional materials.

This table include color coding, where any "percent below" that is above 50% is colored red and any "percent proficient" that is above 50% in green. Table 1.3 shows five categories of students consistently achieving proficiency above 50% including Asian students, White students, and students who identify with two or more races. By comparison, student groups attaining less proficiency or demonstrating a higher percentage of below proficiency, marked by red, include several diverse student groups: Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, students eligible for Free and reduced Lunch, Special Education students, English Language Learners, highly mobile students, and students served by migrant programs.

To better understand the needs of Nebraska's learners with disabilities, Nebraska's SLW Team broke down the NCSAS data by disability category to help give meaning to the data and allow districts to see what groups of students needed to be targeted in their improvement work. The data in Table 1.4: NSCAS Assessment Scores by Disability and Race/Ethnicity shows the proficiency of students at grade 4 level by disability category and includes both students who took the general education assessment as well as the alternate assessment. The scores are arranged from the lowest to highest levels of proficiency. Students with specific learning disabilities are the lowest performing group of students with 13.30% being proficient, followed by students with OHI (24.68% proficient), our students with ED (27.92% proficient), students with Autism (31.73% proficient), students with ID (37.50% proficient), and students with SLI (46.20% proficient).

**NSCAS Assessment Scores by Disability and Race/Ethnicity**

<b>Disability Category</b>	<b>Percent Proficient</b>	<b>Race/Ethnicity Category</b>	<b>Percent Proficient</b>
Specific Learning Disability (SLD)	13.30%	Black/African American	10.66%
Other Health Impaired (OHI)	24.68%	Hispanic/Latino	14.91%
Emotional Disturbance (ED)	27.92%	Native American/ Alaskan Native	16.9%
Autism	31.73%	Two or More Races	25.85%

Intellectual Disability (ID)	37.50%	White	32.01%
Speech/Language Impairment (SLI)	42.20%	Asian	32.94%
No disability	61.68%	Native Hawaiian	37.50%

Using data from MAP scores, an even more pronounced shortage in proficiency for students with a disability is apparent. According to (SOURCE), students with disabilities are more than twice as likely to be “at-risk” of not achieving reading proficiency based on their spring 2023 MAP Reading Assessment Data. This Reading Assessment is given to students in Kindergarten through grade 3. Table 1.5: Percent of Students Found “At-Risk” of Not Achieving Reading Proficiency shows this growing disparity in proficiency.

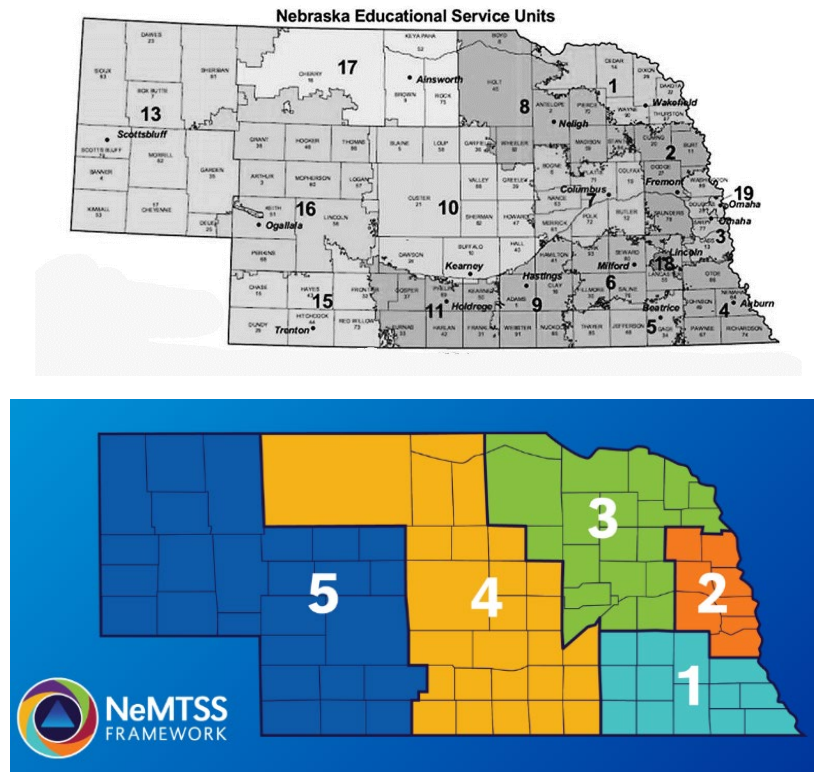
**Percent of Students Found “At-Risk” of Not Achieving Reading Proficiency**

	<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Grade</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</b>
Students without Disabilities	14.75%	18.81%	18.26%	14.44%
Students with Disabilities	31.14%	42.30%	45.81%	43.79%
Based on Spring 2023 MAP Reading Assessment Data				

## Barriers Identified

### Physical Access

Due to its predominantly rural nature, Nebraska's LEAs are organized and served regionally by Educational Service Units (ESUs) shown in Figure 4. Lower-resourced schools receive specialized services through the ESU. The NeMTSS framework is also operated regionally, allowing rural areas to equitable services.



### Students Living in Poverty

Of Nebraska's total 328,722 public school students, 49.7% were eligible for free or reduced lunch in 2022-23, with the highest rates in high-poverty, rural districts (NDE, 2023).

According to the most recent U.S. Census data updated in December of 2023, a staggering 22% of Hispanic children are living in poverty (a statistic that may be significantly undercounted given the U.S. Census has persistently struggled to accurately count this demographic, particularly during the 2020 Census) (Fong & Percival, 2022; U.S. Census Bureau, 2023). The impact of living in poverty on children is severe. There is a strong relationship between family socioeconomic status and student achievement (Chen et al., 2018), observed most clearly in the longevity of the number of years eligible for free-and-reduced price lunch and grade 8 test scores (Dynarski & Micheltmore, 2017). Additionally, competent peer interactions relate to fewer problems, greater high school achievement, and peer acceptance.

Between 2022 and 2023, 50% of Nebraska K-12 students were eligible for free or reduced lunch, a significant increase from the 2008 to 2009 window when the rate was only 8%. Concurrently, English and Language Arts assessment scores from students included in this program in both

grades 4 and 8 assessments have a statistically significant difference of more than 20 score points favoring the non-eligible students in Nebraska.

In grades 3 through 8 assessment scores, students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch underperform compared to their ineligible peers. This gap ranges from 4% to 22%, exemplifying the achievement disparity facing students experiencing poverty.

### **Hispanic Learners**

The population in Nebraska is growing more diverse and the number of Hispanic/Latino residents is increasing at a faster rate than the White, non-Hispanic population (which has declined since 2000). Across the state of Nebraska, 12.3% of the population is Hispanic/Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023). Omaha Public Schools is the state's largest school district with 52,000 students, of which 1 in 5 are limited English proficient. Smaller districts like Lexington Public Schools also face teacher staffing challenges that impact their 3,221 students, of whom 40% are ELs.

Based on The Survey of Immigrants conducted across the U.S. during the spring of 2023, one-third of Hispanic or Latino adults are immigrants and they are more likely than other groups to have limited English proficiency, noncitizen status, and have lower levels of education attainment (Schumacher et al., 2024).

### **English Learners**

A high proportion of people speak a language other than English at home, more than 1 in 10 of Nebraska's youth. Dual language learners are less likely than their peers to be enrolled in high-quality early childhood education and care, the spaces where early English language development and academic learning occur (Park et al., 2017).

The gaps that exist between students based on their risk of educational failure and disadvantages are profound for Hispanic/Latino students, English Language Learners (ELL), and migrant students (see Table 1.3: NSCAS English Language Arts Data).

### **Teacher Shortage**

Teacher recruitment and retention are challenging due to lower salaries and the geographic isolation of these regions. This is specifically a pain point when attracting and retaining educators and academic leaders.

In 2022-23, 48.75% of respondents to NDE's annual teacher vacancy survey reported unfilled teacher positions (NDE, 2022). That proportion grew to 56.77% at the beginning of the 2023-24 school year with 361 teacher vacancies and 908 positions reportedly filled by someone other than a fully qualified teacher (NDE, 2023). In Nebraska, more than 20% of teacher vacancies are in districts with fewer than 500 students (NDE, 2023).

This is especially true for Special Education teachers. Almost a quarter (23%) of all reported teacher vacancies in Nebraska for the 2023-24 school year were for Special Education positions (NDE, 2023). These shortages are leaving Nebraska's most vulnerable students without the level of attention needed to overcome barriers to literacy proficiency.

## Current State Literacy Plan

In 2020, the NDE conducted a comparative analysis of nationwide, state-level best practices in early literacy and engaged Nebraska stakeholders regarding their experiences with and recommendations for improving early literacy instruction. The stakeholder engagement included convenings, focus groups, and discussions with a wide range of statewide community partners, higher education and PreK-12 educators, and families. This group also highlighted the need to align best practices and NDE initiatives, with strong preference and priority around professional learning for educators and the use of high-quality instructional materials. The NDE used this plan (NDE, 2011), to leverage new partnerships with community and school district stakeholders to ensure educators, families, and students are set up for literacy success.

Nebraska's SLW Team is currently revising Nebraska's 2011 Statewide Literacy Plan and utilizing the U.S. Department of Education's CLSD National Literacy Center tools and resources. Of importance to the SLW Team are grade-level experiences and the four essential elements of infrastructure and leadership, a layered continuum of supports, data-based decision-making, and collaborative communication. These focus areas continue to guide how Nebraska will utilize professional practice and high-quality instructional materials implementation as building blocks for the updated Statewide Literacy Plan.

## Work To Date

For over a decade, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) has sought additional state and federal resources to ensure students can read at or above grade level. Beginning in 2011, NDE developed a Statewide Literacy Plan and application for a Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant. With the passage of the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act in 2018, NDE again requested a state literacy investment that was not fulfilled. NDE made biennial budget requests in 2020 and 2022. Despite not receiving critical resources to address systemic literacy needs, or to fulfill requirements of the Reading Improvement Act such as ensuring teachers are highly effective and trained in the Science of Reading (SoR), NDE created supports such as the NebraskaREADS initiative. NebraskaREADS provides tools and resources related to evidence-based practices, including a repository of IES Practice Guide Summary briefs customized to the needs of Nebraska educators. In addition, NDE continued developing rigorous content standards, strengthening Nebraska's Multi-Tiered System of Support (NeMTSS) Framework and its implementation, focusing on statewide accountability, and supporting districts with the selection and implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) through ongoing participation in the Council for Chief State School Officers Instructional Materials and Professional Development Network.

In response to pandemic-related academic needs, NDE invested in a statewide Coherence Project, to bring consistency among key pieces of Nebraska's teaching and learning system and to advance aligned priorities, goals, and grade-level student experiences. At the same time, the NDE's Office of Special Education launched its Journey to Inclusion pilot program that supports coherent school improvement strategies and utilizes Inclusive Education for students with disabilities as a framework to implement evidence-based practices identified in school improvement plans.

In 2022, the legislature established a statewide goal through LR335 which seeks to have 70% of

Nebraskans attain a postsecondary diploma, degree, or credential of economic value by 2030. As part of its commitment to this goal, the State Board of Education established “Nebraska Ready” legislative priorities, naming the antecedents in PK-12 necessary to accomplish these goals. One such priority is to increase third-grade English Language Arts proficiency to 75% by 2030.

The NDE again made a push for transformative funding for literacy to the legislature in 2023 and achieved partial funding through a \$1.8 million appropriation for job-embedded professional learning, literacy coaching, and family literacy initiatives. Additionally, NDE has leveraged state set-aside funding from three tranches of pandemic relief funds to support professional learning, coaching, investments in early childhood educators, and most significantly, family literacy and direct distribution of books. In fact, the Nebraska Growing Readers initiative has served nearly 34,000 children across 1,000 sites statewide, with a plan to distribute 800,000 books and eliminate Nebraska’s book deserts. These investments still fall short of the resources needed for Nebraska’s readers to attain proficiency. With adequate resources, Nebraska is poised to expand the reach of existing initiatives, strengthen its literacy infrastructure, and ensure statewide implementation of best practices.

As seen in other successful CLSD states, when districts, schools, classrooms, and families collaboratively work together to plan, fund, staff, schedule, and implement inclusive educational programming, they make massive strides toward equitable education for students with disabilities. As barriers to access are removed and inequities in opportunities and outcomes for students with disabilities shrink, schools truly become drivers of equity for all learners.

As evidenced by ESSER investments over the last five years, Nebraska demonstrates its commitment to ensuring students have the literacy skills necessary to become proficient readers. This Needs Assessment details the additional need to implement a comprehensive, system-wide plan for literacy support.

# Multi-Literacy Expanded Learning Opportunities in Out-of-School-Time Settings

## Financial Literacy

In Nebraska, NCCFF offers financial literacy education to young people with experience in the foster care and juvenile justice systems via Opportunity Passport™ (OP), a program developed by the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative®. OP connects young people in the Connected Youth Initiative with essential financial opportunities and tools for planning for the future and saving money for important expenses including higher education and career training. OP offers a matched savings (up to 4:1) account to use toward purchasing an asset and gives young people experience managing finances, interacting with mainstream banking systems, and accumulating savings. Opportunity Passport™ participants in Nebraska have met their savings goals and made asset purchases such as vehicles, mortgage/housing, college tuition, credit repair and reduction, investment, business start-up, and entrepreneurship.

## Afterschool and Summer

Beyond School Bells (BSB), Nebraska's statewide afterschool network and a program of the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation. The following describes a collection of innovative, fun, and hands-on projects to engage youth in afterschool and summer programs that naturally align with aspects of the multiliteracy approach<sup>12</sup> by encouraging youth to make meaning of the digital and physical world utilizing twenty-first century technologies to express learning, experience cultural expansion, and employ design thinking across different modalities.

## Student Led Design Studios

The first two opportunities we present include use of Beyond School Bells' Design Studios. Design Studios are student led, iterative design processes facilitated by BSB, afterschool program staff, and industry professionals where high school and college students come together over a shared topic and design fun, engaging, hands-on curriculum for K-12th grade students enrolled in afterschool or summer programs. Design Studios produce curriculum across topics and fields. We propose utilizing this highly engaging, collaborative process to create Novel Engineering and/or Multi-Language Literacy clubs and camp curricula for youth in afterschool and summer learning programs.

## Novel Engineering/STEM

Novel engineering is an innovative teaching approach developed by researchers at Tuft's *Center for Engineering Education and Outreach* to improve reading literacy and build engineering problem solving skills for K-12 youth.<sup>3</sup> Students enter into engineering design processes through the gateway

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<sup>1</sup> The New London Group. "A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures." *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 66, No. 1, Spring 1996.

<sup>2</sup> Cope, Bill and Mary Kalantzis. "The Things You Do to Know: An Introduction to the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies." *A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Learning by Design*. Edited by Bill Cope and Mary Kalantzis, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, pp. 1-35, < [http://neamathisi.com/uploads/Things\\_You\\_Do\\_to\\_Know\\_Cope\\_Kalantzis\\_2015.pdf](http://neamathisi.com/uploads/Things_You_Do_to_Know_Cope_Kalantzis_2015.pdf) >.

<sup>3</sup> Watkins, Jessica, Mary McCormick, Morgan Hynes, Elissa Milto, and Merredith Desiree Portsmouth. 2020. *Novel Engineering, K-8: An Integrated Approach to Engineering and Literacy*. NSTA Press, (May 2020).

of literature as they collaborate to solve problems for characters in books through hands-on design. Modelled after real world engineering firms' interaction with clients, youth work together to help characters overcome challenges faced in the stories. This process requires youth to engage deeply with books by critically examining the story context to understand a challenge faced by a character. Youth then apply their analysis of the character's problem to a real-world design solution. This process very naturally engages dimensions of the multiliteracy approach to pedagogy (experiencing the story, conceptualizing a problem, analyzing the problem, and applying a solution) while also crossing between different modes of learning and meaning making (reading and tactile building).<sup>4</sup> Novel engineering experiences can be designed as afterschool clubs or more condensed summer camp experiences for K-8 students.

### **Multi-Language Literacy**

In order to increase meaning making and literacy across different cultures, we propose using the Design Studio process to create Multi-Language Learner club and camp curricula. The learning structure would include access to DuoLingo or other language learning apps and supplemental children's books in the languages of focus. The programming would introduce youth to different languages via multiple learning modes weaved and integrated together throughout the experience that would include the digital app, books, articles of culture such as songs and poetry, and role-playing conversations giving students the opportunity to apply their learning in the real-world context. Students would gain insight into different languages and culture in an atmosphere very different than the strictures of the classroom. Instead of language tests, they would have the opportunity to learn language basics through digital technology, memorizing youth-centered age-appropriate songs and/or poetry, and engaging in fun role playing with other club participants. This provides a variety of meaning-making opportunities across learning modalities.

### **Youth Videography**

Our Youth Videography club curricula was designed to offer students experiences that build digital technology and storytelling skills. Youth determine stories they are interested or passionate about, learn about the topics through online research, structure the stories they want to tell, and learn how to use video equipment (cameras, microphones, and tripods) to perform interviews, collect footage needed to supplement their stories, and digitally edit footage to piece their stories together. Students are engaged across several modes of learning including making sense of online resources; analyzing, synthesizing, and pulling information together into a cohesive story; learning how to apply technology to their story; and interacting with community members in interviews and with the physical world to capture video imagery. The club curriculum could easily be adapted for summer Youth Videography camps.

### **Coding and Software Engineering**

To engage students in building digital literacy skills and to help students become computer tech savvy we collaborated with Jobs For the Future to develop a project-based "Building an App" curriculum, which provides fun, hands-on activities to help youth in grades 8-12 learn about the world of coding and software engineering, with the culminating project of building their own app that is useful in the social context. This programming is designed to empower youth not just in using technology effectively but to become active technology builders. They learn about the world of coding and critically analyze existing apps, then design an app of their own and apply their coding

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<sup>4</sup> Cope, Bill and Mary Kalantzis. *A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Learning by Design*, pp. 3-4.

skills to create, test, and iterate on their designs. Finally, they learn to market, brand, and present their app. Over the course of this process, youth learn how to use computer skills to solve a social need with an app, then use branding and marketing to communicate the utility of their tech invention to a wider audience.

## **E-CAP**

Beyond School Bells' **Environmental-Conservation Action Program (E-CAP)** is a series of interrelated initiatives designed to provide youth in afterschool programs with hands-on experiences in the environmental sustainability and conservation career areas. Through these initiatives youth gain an appreciation of the environment and learn how to become active stewards of our planet through engagement with cutting edge, high-tech food growing and environmental sustainability processes.

## **Digital Literacy**

Afterschool programs offer spaces where youth, who might not have broadband access at home, can develop digital literacy outside of the school day, increasing digital access opportunities for both the youth and their communities. Afterschool programs can facilitate productive student interaction in digital spaces by not merely being consumers of digital media, but by engaging in content creation, STEM skills exploration, homework completion, and opportunities for cultural expression and active citizenship. Beyond School Bells can help afterschool clubs focus on digital literacy for middle school youth utilizing a Design Studio format and could also engage high school students through service-learning projects to help bridge the digital divide by teaching digital literacy to community members left out of digital advances due to lack of technology access or affordability.

## **Future Forward Program**

Future Forward, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving student literacy through personalized one-on-one tutoring and comprehensive family engagement services. The program is specifically designed to address the learning needs of students struggling with reading proficiency and overall academic success. By embedding these services within the school day, in alignment with best practices identified by the National Student Support Accelerator at Stanford University, Future Forward ensures that students receive consistent, targeted support without disrupting their regular educational activities. The organization also prioritizes intensive family involvement as a co-equal component of its model, with trained Family Engagement Coordinators connecting with caregivers through home visits, phone calls, and family events to build a strong support system for the students.

Future Forward's implementation of the science of reading is a cornerstone of its success. The science of reading is an evidence-based approach that focuses on the five essential components of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Future Forward tutors utilize structured literacy practices that are aligned with these principles, ensuring that students receive systematic, explicit instruction tailored to their individual needs. This method has been shown to be highly effective, as evidenced by multiple randomized control trials. For instance, one study found that students in the Future Forward program were six times

more likely to achieve grade-level reading benchmarks compared to their peers who did not participate in the program.<sup>5</sup>

The impact of Future Forward's approach is both immediate and long-lasting. Research demonstrates significant improvements in reading proficiency, school attendance, and reduced placement in special education for students who participate in the program.<sup>6</sup> Future Forward students have shown a 27% reduction in chronic absenteeism and maintain reading skills that are six months ahead of their peers even five years after completing the program.<sup>7</sup> These outcomes highlight the program's effectiveness in fostering sustainable academic growth, particularly for male African American students, who have shown notable improvements through the Future Forward model.<sup>8</sup> Recognized for meeting the "strong evidence" criteria of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Future Forward is included in the U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse and has received the highest possible rating from the Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences.<sup>9</sup> Through its comprehensive and research-backed approach, Future Forward effectively supports young learners in developing essential literacy skills, thereby laying a strong foundation for their future academic success and personal growth.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.adi.org/journal/2018fw/JonesFall2018.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://futureforwardliteracy.org/research-evidence/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://uwm.edu/sreed/wp-content/uploads/sites/502/2021/04/The-Sustained-Impact-of-Future-Forward.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://uwm.edu/sreed/wp-content/uploads/sites/502/2022/02/FF-2020-21-report.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/WWC/Study/32028>

## Family Literacy

The Family Literacy model (FLM) is a high-impact, evidence-based program that is instrumental to addressing learning recovery and information and technology inequities in the NE SFEC's COVID-19 response for families. The family literacy sites established in 13 elementary and middle schools across Nebraska are essential hubs for underserved families during the pandemic. With an average family program participation rate of 86%, the FLMs build strong home-school relationships. Parents demonstrate increased confidence in supporting their children's education and increased progress to achieving their own adult education goals, a key consideration for building capacity of families. NE SFEC FLMs foster communication between parents and educators. Parents reported that increased relationship-building with their children's teachers and schools was important to accessing both academic and basic services during COVID-19 (Levesque et al., 2021). Strong family-school partnerships allowed FLM staff to quickly identify the technology needs of families and supply resources for remote learning.

While most family literacy strategies focus primarily on the earliest learners, the need for family engagement and family involvement in their students' education does not end after elementary school. NCFF's secondary family engagement strategies have focused on modifying these strategies for middle and high schools.

Bring Up Nebraska (BUN) is a public-private partnership of 22 local community collaboratives reaching 90% of the state's citizens. These collaboratives support the needs and gaps in services in local communities as a result of the pandemic, with a focus on factors that support family well-being, such as food insecurity, the digital divide, and mental health (NCFF, 2021). The NE SFEC will be central to BUN's work to reach more families, schools, and community-based organizations through a scaled structure of high-quality TTA offerings; high-impact, evidence-based programs; and parent-informed advocacy. The NE SFEC will work with BUN's holistic, fundamental services for families, reflecting an exemplar of family, school, and community engagement.

## Community Schools and Success Planning

One of the critical flaws in school systems is that their architecture is based on a one-size fits-all model that does not address the particular, complex, and varied needs of children and youth, particularly those living in poverty, English Language Learners, or disconnected youth. Generally, school systems do not have the robust system needed to customize interventions or otherwise account for the special circumstances, assets, and challenges faced by individual children, unless they are identified to receive special education services.

The goal of Success Planning<sup>10</sup> led by Harvard Graduate School of Education's Education Redesign Lab, is to fundamentally and dramatically redesign, align, and integrate our systems of child development and education. The process of Success Planning is the implementation of the FSCS strategy to ensure every child has a plan for success in school and life. Recognizing that different communities have varying needs and capacities, EdRedesign has developed a set of guiding principles and core components for Success Planning rather than a single model.

These components are: **A Navigator**—an adult who forms an individual relationship with a child and, ideally, their family, and develops an understanding of the child's needs and interests; **A plan for action and a process for enacting it**; **A coordinated system of supports and opportunities**; and **A data platform** to capture information over time. EdRedesign's Success Planning framework distills key elements of several models for personalizing supports for children, emphasizing both the importance of one-on-one relationships between adults and children and integrated student supports. Success Planning should ideally not be a standalone effort, but part of a broader community-wide strategy to support children that is coordinated by a cross-sector CWB Collaborative and State Steering Committee. The following depiction shows Success Planning connection to a student.

Success Planning is a systematic way to build personalized plans to support each child *with the inclusion of family and child voices*. The award of this grant proposal will allow for the development and implementation of success planning for youth and provide the means to ensure that the site coordinator is integrated into the existing school infrastructure. Success Plans will capture the in- and out-of-school strengths and needs of children and youth, connect to the infrastructure that can match them with tailored services and opportunities, and seamlessly coordinate education and community resources to increase access and equitable opportunities. Success Plans will specifically address **transitions between education settings** (pre-k to elementary, elementary to middle, middle to high, high to postsecondary) by carrying through the knowledge and practices identified for each child's success to the new building, programs, schedules, and expanded learning opportunities.

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<sup>10</sup> Communities In Schools, All In for Students: 2017 National Impact Report, March 2017, 10, <https://www.communitiesinschools.org/our-data/publications/publication/2017-national-impact-report>

The foundation of the Success Plan is integrated student support by collaborative partnerships among the following entities: a CWB Collaborative with Central Navigation / Community Response (CN/CR) infrastructure; a school-based Site Coordinator with knowledge of and training in CN/CR; and partners, including schools, OST programs, business, and community agencies. The CWB Collaborative conducts an initial assessment of community needs, assets, and resources and partners with school district leaders to identify how best to leverage the partnerships on behalf of youth and families. The Site Coordinator, who often has social work experience, establishes a school support team or works with an existing team to review school-wide demographic, academic achievement, mobility, attendance, school climate, and other types of data. The team also examines community factors such as educational attainment data and crime and employment rates, collects additional data through surveys, interviews, and focus groups with students, teachers, and parents, and reviews school improvement plans. At minimum, the Coordinator reports to school leaders, school site teams, and the leaders of the CWB Collaborative about activities and progress during every grading period. The Coordinator also serves as the contact for community agencies to ensure services are provided without duplication, and collaborates with school staff members to embed the Success Plan model in the work of the school.

Utilizing a MTSS framework, services are stacked, sequenced, bundled, aligned and coordinated in such a way as to increase our confidence that children and families are getting more of what they need to succeed, when they need it. MTSS offers stacking, sequencing, and bundling of services through three tiers. Tier 1 services are available to all students enrolled in the school to address school-level risk factors, Tier 2 services are targeted programs available to groups of students with common needs, and Tier 3 services are often more intensive and designed to address individual students' needs. Students needing Tier 2 and 3 services participate in Success Plan case management, and the Site Coordinator works with the school support team to examine individual student data, including early warning indicators; feedback from teachers, counselors, or other school staff members, whether the student is receiving social services; and parent and family data. Different assessments and tools are also utilized to assess a range of factors, including social and emotional development, competencies and skills such as self-regulation, motivation, and engagement, and social capital. The assessment's purpose is to identify needs and, equally, the student's assets and strengths. Success Plan goals for elementary schools often focus on

attendance, parent engagement, and social and emotional development. Middle school goals address behavior and social and emotional development; high school goals focus on persistence, completion, and college and career readiness.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted education, exacerbating existing inequities and creating new challenges for students and families. With their comprehensive and integrated approach, community schools are well-positioned to support interventions that address these impacts.



- Integrated Student Supports:** During the pandemic, many students faced increased health, economic, and social challenges. Community schools can mitigate these issues by providing integrated support such as mental health services, food distribution, and access to technology. For example, "the community schools approach effectively coordinated various supports, such as distributing meals and providing technological devices, which helped to alleviate immediate barriers to learning caused by the pandemic" (Maier, A., Daniel, J., Oakes, J., & Lam, L. (2017). *Community schools as an effective school improvement strategy: A review of the evidence*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.). This holistic support system ensures that students' basic needs are met, allowing them to focus on their education.
- Expanded Learning Time and Opportunities:** With significant learning loss occurring during school closures, expanded learning time is critical. Community schools can offer after-school tutoring, summer learning programs, and weekend workshops to help students catch up. According to the report, "expanded learning opportunities, such as after-school and summer programs, have been shown to improve academic outcomes and help students recover from learning losses" (Maier, A., Daniel, J., Oakes, J., & Lam, L. (2017). *Community schools as an effective school improvement strategy: A review of the evidence*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute). These programs can be tailored to address the specific gaps in learning that students experienced during the pandemic.
- Family and Community Engagement:** The pandemic highlighted the importance of strong connections between schools and families. Community schools can enhance family engagement by providing regular communication, virtual learning support, and resources for home-based education. "Engaging families through regular communication and providing resources for home learning were key strategies that helped maintain educational continuity during the pandemic" (Maier, A., Daniel, J., Oakes, J., & Lam, L. (2017). *Community schools as an effective school improvement strategy: A review of the evidence*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute). Schools can continue to build on these practices to support families as they navigate the ongoing challenges of the post-pandemic era.
- Collaborative Leadership and Practice:** Effective leadership and collaboration are essential for implementing and sustaining interventions. Community school leaders can work with teachers, parents, and community partners to develop and execute a comprehensive plan to address the impacts of COVID-19. "Collaborative leadership in community schools facilitated the development of coordinated responses to the pandemic, ensuring that all stakeholders were involved in decision-making processes" (Maier, A., Daniel, J., Oakes, J., & Lam, L. (2017). *Community schools as an effective school improvement strategy: A review of the evidence*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute). This inclusive approach ensures that the interventions are well-supported and effective.

By leveraging these pillars, community schools can implement targeted interventions to overcome the educational impacts of COVID-19, ensuring that all students have the support they need to succeed.

# Promoting Equity

## in Student Access to Educational Resources

### Nebraska Growing Readers

The Nebraska Growing Readers (NGR) program is a collaboration between Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, the Nebraska Department of Education, the Statewide Family Engagement Center, and Unite for Literacy. The program's primary focus is to provide licensed childcare providers with free picture books who can share them with the families that they serve. NGR is proving to be effective in getting books into children's homes, building successful reading habits among children and their families, and in helping them make personal connections to literacy.

We believe that NGR can be just as effective in intentionally serving multilingual learners from birth through grade 5 by translating, narrating and distributing culturally relevant picture books along with coordinating family literacy guides, in print and digital formats. We'll focus on the top 50 languages spoken by Nebraska's youngest multilingual children and their families.

Additionally, NGR is currently utilizing child care providers as early literacy distribution points for books for families. NGR is contracting with certified teachers to develop a training to run through the Nebraska Early Childhood Training Center which will offer early literacy opportunities and resources across the state. Nebraska's Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five renewal application due July 31, 2024 may possibly be able to offer child care provider incentives for attending the NGR training.

### The Need/Justification for What We Propose NE Growing Readers To Do:

5% of all public school students in Nebraska, 24,121 students, are English language learners as reported statewide for 2021-2022.<sup>11</sup> The counties with the highest number of English learners are Dawson, Dodge, Douglas, Hall, and Lancaster, with more than 1,000 ELL students each.<sup>12</sup> While these counties may be small relative to others, like Lincoln and Holt Counties, their needs are outsized. They are rural, agricultural communities with high numbers of immigrant residents and students who put a strain on local school districts that try to meet their educational needs.

Approximately one-third of all children aged 0–8 are currently exposed to more than one language in the home, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (Park, Zong, & Batalova, 2018). The Office of Head Start reports that at least a third of preschool children in its programs are considered multilingual learners (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2022)

More than 140 languages have been identified within the Head Start child population, with nearly 90% of all Head Start classrooms serving multilingual learners and many serving a population representing more than three different home languages (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2022). Unfortunately, early care and education teachers who are able to speak more than

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/EL-Students-by-Grade-Level-and-Languages-Spoken-2021-2022.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/County-Map-of-EL-Students-2021-2022.pdf>

one language remain in short supply, making up roughly 15% of the ECE educator workforce (Park, McHugh, Zong, & Batalova, 2015).

### **Additional Support for the Work We Propose:**

“Knowing additional languages along with English is a much-needed skill that will have an enormous impact on our nation’s future workforce as well as our ability to compete and engage globally.” – U.S. Department of Education

“Research has shown that the most effective language model for multilingual learners teaches them English systematically while actively supporting their home language development. Full proficiency in more than one language is associated with cognitive, cultural, social, and economic benefits...Additional research, materials, professional development, and multilingual educators can support the realization of the new vision.”<sup>13</sup>

Shared reading increases a child’s readiness to learn. It “...has a positive impact on the students’ comprehension and other literacy skills,...[like making] important predictions in reading.”<sup>14</sup>

“...Black, Latino, and Indigenous children will need books that reflect their identity and their cultural and linguistic knowledge. Similarly, emergent bilingualism is an equitable goal for children who speak a language other than English or in addition to English in the home.”<sup>15</sup>

“To thrive in a global, multilingual world while also forming a positive self-identity and maintaining and sustaining strong bonds with their immediate and extended families, preschool multilingual learners need a strong foundation in their home language, as well as high levels of English proficiency.”<sup>16</sup>

The Nebraska Growing Readers (NGR) program is a collaboration between Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, the Nebraska Department of Education, the Statewide Family Engagement Center, and Unite for Literacy. The program’s primary focus is to provide licensed childcare providers with free picture books who can share them with the families that they serve. NGR is proving to be effective in getting books into children’s homes, building successful reading habits among children and their families, and in helping them make personal connections to literacy.

NGR can be just as effective in intentionally serving multilingual learners from birth through grade 5 by translating, narrating and distributing culturally relevant picture books along with coordinating family literacy guides, in print and digital formats. We’ll focus on the top 50 languages spoken by Nebraska’s youngest multilingual children and their families.

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<sup>13</sup> *A New Vision for High-Quality Preschool Curriculum (2024)*, National Academies

<sup>14</sup> Altamimi, M. O., & Ogdol, R. (2023). The effects of shared reading approach on improving students’ comprehension. *International Journal of Research in Education and Science (IJRES)*, 9(2), 308-328. <https://doi.org/10.46328/ijres.3047>

<sup>15</sup> *A New Vision for High-Quality Preschool Curriculum (2024)*, National Academies.

<sup>16</sup> Halle et al., 2012; Espinosa & Crandell, 2020

## Collaborative Resources



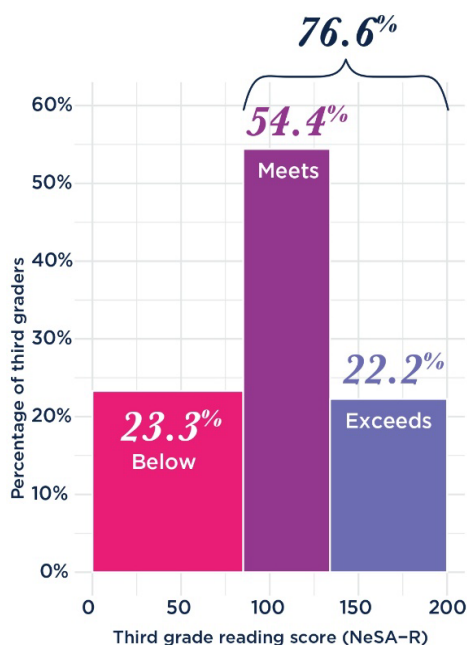
### NSWERS Brief on **EARLY READING PROFICIENCY IN NEBRASKA**

by David Nguyen

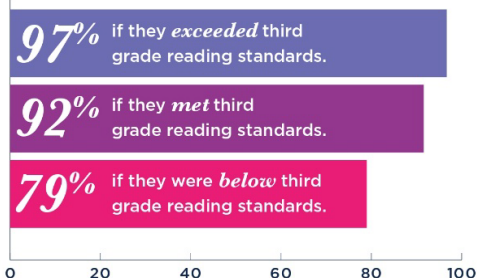
Students in third grade who struggle with reading are less likely to graduate high school, which can lead to lower earnings and a shorter lifespan<sup>1,2,3</sup>. In 2022, 35 percent of Nebraska's students did not meet the reading proficiency standards by the fourth grade, according to a national standardized test<sup>4</sup>. In response, Nebraska's educators and policymakers have worked to enhance resources and training for teachers<sup>5,6</sup>. To understand how these efforts to improve early reading skills could benefit Nebraskans, NSWERS examined how early reading proficiency is related to high school graduation and college going. The results show that Nebraskans with better reading skills in third grade were more likely to graduate on time and go to college. Since these outcomes are closely linked to better earnings and health, successful initiatives to improve early reading proficiency could provide life-long benefits for Nebraska's youth.

### Students with better reading skills in third grade are more likely to graduate high school on time and go to college.

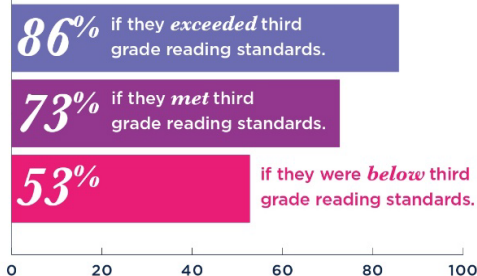
In 2012, **77** out of every 100 third graders achieved reading scores on the state assessment that **met** or **exceeded** third grade reading standards and **23 students** were below third grade reading standards.



Nine years later, as high schoolers, these students graduated on time at rates of:



As high school graduates, these students went to college at rates of:



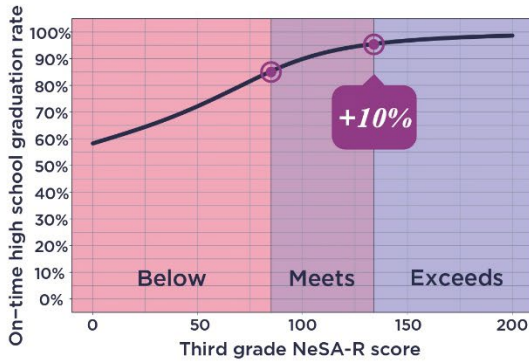
## Proficient readers also benefit from improved reading skills.

Students who achieve the same third grade reading level can have very different chances of on-time high school graduation and college going. For example, top scorers who **met** but did not exceed reading standards in third grade were:

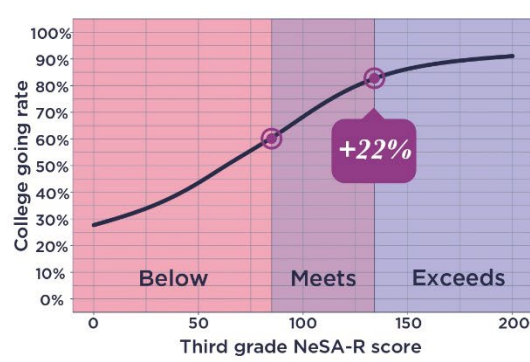
- **10 percentage points** more likely to graduate high school on-time;
- **22 percentage points** more likely to go to college;

compared to lower-scoring students who also **met** third grade reading standards. Hence, even for proficient students, further development of reading skills is beneficial.

### High School Graduation Rate



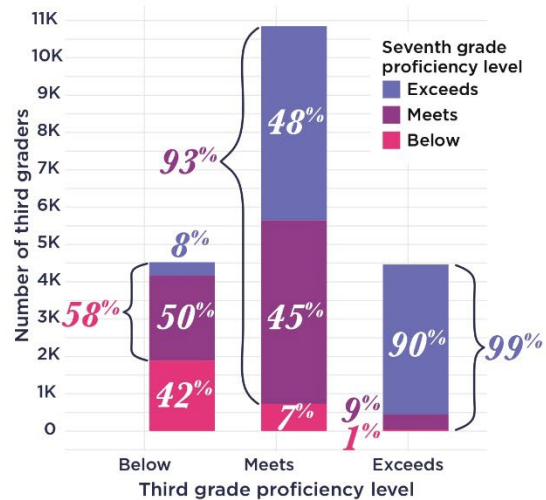
### College Going Rate



These charts show the average high school graduation rate and college going rate across third grade reading scores.

## Most third graders maintain or improve their grade-level reading proficiency by seventh grade.

**Third grade reading proficiency sets the stage for seventh grade reading proficiency.** Only **58 percent** of students who had **below standard third grade reading** achieved reading proficiency by seventh grade compared to **93 percent** of students who **met standards** and **99 percent** of students who **exceeded standards** for third grade reading. Few students attained lower reading proficiency levels in seventh grade than in third grade. These trajectories of student reading proficiency matter because they predict who will graduate high school on time and go to college.



The probability of a student achieving a specific seventh grade reading proficiency level based on their reading proficiency in third grade.

## Students with a history of strong reading skills are more likely to go to college.

### High School Graduation Rate

Seventh grade reading proficiency	Third grade reading proficiency		
	Below	Meets	Exceeds
	Below	Meets	Exceeds
Exceeds	98%	96%	98%
Meets	87%	91%	92%
Below	72%	73%	79%

The rate of on-time high school graduation for different trajectories of third and seventh grade reading proficiency.

Seventh graders who were proficient at reading had similarly high chances of on-time high school graduation regardless of their third grade reading level (top row, **96 to 98 percent**). Non-proficient readers in seventh grade had lower chances of on-time high school graduation even if they met standards in third grade (bottom center and right, **73 to 79 percent**). This suggests that even **below-proficiency third graders can have similarly high school graduation outcomes if they can improve their reading proficiency by seventh grade**. However, this does not mean that third grade reading is insignificant as it determines the likelihood the student will be proficient in reading by seventh grade.

### College Going Rate

Seventh grade reading proficiency	Third grade reading proficiency		
	Below	Meets	Exceeds
	Below	Meets	Exceeds
Exceeds	69%	80%	88%
Meets	56%	68%	72%
Below	45%	49%	48%

The rate of college going for different trajectories of third and seventh grade reading proficiency.

Students who had higher seventh grade reading proficiency were also more likely to go to college. However, unlike on-time high school graduation, seventh graders who exceeded reading standards were more likely to go to college if they also exceeded standards in third grade (top right, **88 percent**) compared to students who met (top middle, **80 percent**) or were below (top left, **69 percent**) standards in third grade reading. The difference was larger when comparing students who exceeded standards in both third and seventh grade (top right, **88 percent**) to students who met reading standards in both third and seventh grade (middle, **68 percent**) or were below standards in both third and seventh grade (bottom left, **45 percent**). This suggests **college-going is most likely for students with consistently high reading performance**.

## Taking action to improve early reading skills could have important long-term educational and economic benefits for Nebraskans.

This report includes data on third graders who took the Nebraska State Accountability - Reading (NeSA-R) subject test in the 2012 academic year. This includes students participating in English Learning Programs and/or Special Education who took the standard NeSA-R test (not an alternative assessment). These are the most recent students who can be included in the analysis of on-time high school graduation and college going. At the date of analysis, NSWERS data system included data from 2012 to 2021 from the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) so high school graduation records for students who were in third grade after 2012 is not yet within the NSWERS data system. On-time high school graduation rate calculations do not include students who transferred out of the Nebraska public school system or were deceased per NDE guidelines. College going is calculated for high school graduates per NSWERS data definition.

## Guiding Questions:

### ***Parent/Guardian:***

- Is my student reading at grade level?
- How can I work with my student's teachers to improve their reading skills?

### ***Teacher:***

- How many of my students are reading at grade level?
- Is my curriculum and instruction effective for improving reading?
- Are there students who do not qualify for additional services (e.g., special education, Title I) who seem to need additional support?
- How can I work with my school leadership (including the ESUs) to better support my students who do not qualify for services?

### ***Principal:***

- Does my school use high-quality instructional materials with fidelity?
- Do my teachers in grades K-8 understand how to support struggling adolescent readers?

### ***Policymaker:***

- Do schools have the resources necessary to buy and implement high-quality instructional materials and interventions?

## Terms:

### ***Nebraska State Accountability - Reading (NeSA-R):***

The standardized test administered to Nebraska public school students to assess if their reading skills meet grade-level expectations. This test was replaced by the Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS) in 2018.

### ***Reading Proficiency:***

Students are considered proficient readers if they either meet or exceed grade-level standards on the Nebraska State Accountability - Reading (NeSA-R) subject test. Students are non-proficient if they are below grade-level standards. The NeSA-R grade-level proficiency levels are:

- **Below standards** (1 to 84 points)
- **Meets standards** (85 to 134 points)
- **Exceeds standards** (135 to 200 points)

### ***On-time High School Graduation:***

A student who graduates within four years of starting high school as a ninth grader for the first time.

### ***College Going:***

A high school graduate who enrolls in a U.S. college within 16 months of their high school graduation.

#### **Citations:**

1. D. J. Hernandez, "Double Jeopardy" (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2012)
2. Education pays, 2023," (Career Outlook, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024)
3. P. Novosad, C. Rafkin, S. Asher. "Mortality Change among Less Educated Americans." American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, 14 (4): 1-34. (2022)
4. The Nation's Report Card (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2022)
5. L. Wagner, "Nebraska schools slowly changing curriculum to improve how students are taught to read," Omaha World Herald. January 21, 2024.
6. L. Wagner, "Two Nebraska bills would train educators on how to teach students to read effectively," Omaha World Herald. January 29, 2024.

#### **Source:**

Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System analysis of data from NSWERS Data System, 2012-2023. These data include records for public high schools and public postsecondary institutions in Nebraska. These provisional results are based on certified NSWERS data as of January 16, 2024. The provisional results in this brief may change because of data resubmissions by NSWERS Partners and/or Affiliates. For updated results, please contact support@nswers.org.



Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System  
901 N 17th, NH W 208 • Lincoln, NE 68588-0524 • nswers.org



# Together, Better

A partnership of Nebraska Department of Education  
and Nebraska Children and Families Foundation

## Shared Priorities, Goals, and Guiding Principles:

- Nebraska Will Have the Most Robust Community Well-Being Model in the US
- Connected Systems of Supports for Children and Families
- Children and Families Can Thrive with Support
- Intentional Family Engagement Promotes Sustainability
- Robust Community Well Being Will Impact Economic Growth
- Partnership Will Yield Greater Impact and Extend the Reach of Services
- Success and Well-Being for Children, Families, and Community

### In order to...

- Address learning and opportunity disparities
- Deepen investments in primary prevention
- Enhance efficiency for basic needs supports
- Ensure all can live "The Good Life"
- Rebuild connectedness and trust in institutions
- Reduce impact of poverty on life outcomes for youth
- Support pandemic recovery

### Key Strategies:

- Afterschool and Summer School
- Community Schools
- Early Learning
- Family Engagement
- Provide High-Quality Learning
- Rural Community Focus
- Whole Child Approach

### Existing WorkStreams to Leverage and Expand:

- Beyond School Bells
- 21st Century Learning Centers
- Communities 4 Kids
- Community Response
- Connected Youth Initiative
- Rooted in Relationships
- Postsecondary Readiness
- Sixpence
- Statewide Family Engagement Center

### Desired Results:

#### For Our Youth

- Academic Growth and Learning
- Connected to Advocates & Navigators
- Developed 21st Century Skills
- Enhanced Equitable Access to Needed Services
- Expanded Opportunities and Experiences
- Post-secondary Readiness
- Successful School Transitions

#### For Our State

- Inspire Future Partnerships with State Agencies
- Integrated Resources to Further Reach
- Maximized Services Without Duplication
- Productive School - Community Partnerships
- Robust Learning and Continuous Improvement
- Rural Vitality and Sustainability
- Supported Schools
- Thriving Families and Communities



# Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS

## **Appendix F. Nebraska Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council Membership Roster**



**NeMTSS**  
FRAMEWORK



Nebraska ECICC Member, City, Representing	
Jessica Anthony, Lincoln State Agency-DHHS Medicaid	Michelle Nunemaker, Lincoln State Agency-DHHS-Mental Health
Susan Borchert, Tecumseh Service Provider-Social Services	Kristine Ray, Lincoln State Agency-NDE-Special Education, Preschool
Amy Bunnell, Lincoln State Agency-NDE-Early Intervention	Nora Robinson, (Vice Chairperson) Kimball Educational Service Units
Ann Carmoney, Lincoln State Agency-NDE-Homeless Education	Nicole Vint, Lincoln State Agency-DHHS-Child Care
Gwendolyn Easter, Omaha Child Care Provider-Family	Allison Wilson, Lincoln State Agency-DHHS-CAPTA
Allison Freeny, Omaha Professional Development	Jessica Anthony, Lincoln State Agency-DHHS Medicaid
Melody Hobson, Lincoln State Agency-NDE-Early Childhood, Preschool	Susan Borchert, Tecumseh Service Provider-Social Services
Amber Jara, (Chairperson) Lincoln Parent	Amy Bunnell, Lincoln State Agency-NDE-Early Intervention
Steph Knust, Lincoln Head Start State Collaboration Office	Ann Carmoney, Lincoln State Agency-NDE-Homeless Education
John Marinovich, Lincoln State Agency-Department of Insurance	Gwendolyn Easter, Omaha Child Care Provider-Family
Additional vacant seats are currently being filled to represent businesses, higher education, parents, physicians, service providers, social services, and legislators.	

# Nebraska’s Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS

## Appendix G. Letters of Support

**I. Letters of Support .....1**  
Gov. Jim Pillen.....2  
Erin Bock, The Sherwood Foundation.....3  
Dr. Susan Toohey, Lozier Foundation .....4





**Jim Pillen**  
Governor

# STATE OF NEBRASKA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
P.O. Box 94848 • Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4848

June 24, 2024

The Honorable Miguel Cardona  
Secretary of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

Secretary Cardona:

I am pleased to support the application by the Nebraska Department of Education to the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant (CLSD) program. My administration is driven by four simple priorities: kids, taxes, agriculture, and values. Education being the most essential need for a child. Our students deserve the best education possible, and literacy is the most important piece of the larger education picture. By protecting education and investing in literacy, we are protecting our kids.

An identified area of need in Nebraska schools is the provision of essential training for educators in the science of reading. Such an investment will ensure every teacher is prepared to use evidence-based approaches and strategies. We must bring back basic reading principles such as phonics, which is proven to be a driver in literacy gains.

My office has supported several initiatives to improve the reading skills of our youth, including championing legislation to support literacy mentoring, job-embedded coaching and professional learning, and family literacy. This funding will assist Nebraska is helping make sure every student has a well-trained educator and the educator has a coach they can turn to.

If you ask anyone, "name three people who have impacted your life?", I bet the farm that every person will reply with either a teacher or a coach in that list. Educators deserve the support of a mentor/coach, and this will ensure they are prepared to help our children succeed while also given our young students star teachers to look up to.

I support the NDE's application and believe it will help us reach our goals for literacy.

Sincerely,

Governor Jim Pillen  
State of Nebraska



June 14, 2024

Erin Bock  
The Sherwood Foundation  
808 Conagra Drive  
Omaha, NE 68102

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of The Sherwood Foundation, I write to express our support for the Nebraska Department of Education's proposed project under the Comprehensive State Literacy Development (CLSD) program titled Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy. This project has been designed to improve student literacy attainment statewide, align resources to evidence-based programming, and remove barriers for our most vulnerable students.

Sherwood is especially interested in this work because it directly addresses the significant needs for a robust literacy infrastructure in our state. We are also supportive of this work as it dovetails with efforts in Omaha, where Sherwood primarily funds.

We believe Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy will make a difference for educators, students, and other stakeholders. We are excited to collaborate with the Nebraska Department of Education to accomplish this important work.

Sincerely,

Erin Bock  
Vice President, Housing and Education

June 18, 2024

Dear US Department of Education,

On behalf of the Lozier Foundation, I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy initiative. This transformative program embodies the values and goals that are central to our mission of promoting equitable education opportunities and fostering community engagement.

At the Lozier Foundation, we firmly believe in the power of literacy as a cornerstone of personal growth, community development, and societal progress. Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy not only aligns with these beliefs but also exemplifies a proactive approach to addressing the educational needs of diverse learners across the state.

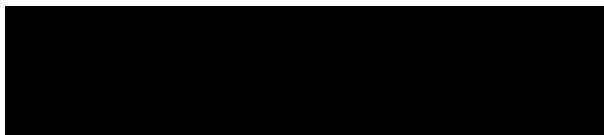
The initiative's commitment to inclusivity and accessibility is particularly commendable. By expanding access to high-quality literacy resources and supporting educators in implementing culturally responsive teaching practices, Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy is poised to make a profound impact on students' academic achievement and overall well-being.

Furthermore, we are impressed by the collaborative efforts involved in this initiative. Bringing together educators, community leaders, university faculty, and stakeholders from various backgrounds demonstrates a shared commitment to creating an educational environment where every student can thrive. The Lozier Foundation has been committed to the science of reading for over a decade and are excited to see the explicit use of this in the initiative.

The Lozier Foundation is honored to endorse Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy and pledges our support to its continued success. We are confident that this initiative will not only enhance educational outcomes but also inspire other communities to prioritize inclusive literacy practices.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if there are opportunities for further collaboration or if additional support is needed. Together, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of Nebraska's students and contribute to a more inclusive and equitable future.

Thank you for your dedication to advancing literacy and educational equity in Nebraska.



Dr. Susan Toohey

Director of Educational Initiatives

Lozier Foundation

## Budget Narrative File(s)

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\* **Mandatory Budget Narrative Filename:**

Add Mandatory Budget Narrative

Delete Mandatory Budget Narrative

View Mandatory Budget Narrative

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To add more Budget Narrative attachments, please use the attachment buttons below.

Add Optional Budget Narrative

Delete Optional Budget Narrative

View Optional Budget Narrative

The budget effectively supports the proposed goals, objectives, and activities presented in the project narrative for Nebraska’s Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS. The budget consists only of costs allowable under federal law and regulations, as well as non-regulatory guidance and all applicable OMB circulars. The budgeted federal funds will be used to supplement, not supplant, funds for existing programs. All funds requested for the project will create new services or supplement existing services that meet the needs of the project participants. Nebraska’s CLSD project will adhere to all federal and state regulations, policies, and procedures pertaining to procurement. This budget narrative depicts calculations and plans to expend a federal CLSD grant award amount of [REDACTED] between 10/1/2024 and 9/30/2029.

[illegible]

**1. Personnel: Salary (Federal Budget Line 1):** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]						
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]						
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Personnel identified in the budget are those that will be compensated in part from CLSD federal funds. As outlined in the project narrative, funds are requested to support the following positions at the listed percentages:

- Office of Literacy Director, 1.0 FTE, 100% of time spent on CLSD initiatives. This position will support the attainment of Goals 1, 2, and 3, with additional emphasis on providing leadership in the execution of Objective 1.a. Duties: Provide leadership, coordination, and implementation for sections and programs related to Nebraska’s Statewide Literacy Plan including CLSD initiatives, advisory councils, HQIM, and professional learning. Responsible for oversight of CLSD strategies, sub-awards, and school system communications and relations, project budget and reporting, dissemination of results, on-site monitoring of sub-awardees, and active monitoring throughout the life of the CLSD grant. Direct supervision of Literacy Project Manager.
- Literacy Project Manager, 1.0 FTE, 100% of time spent on CLSD initiatives. This position will support the attainment of Goals 1, 2, and 3, with additional emphasis on the processes and systems used to execute continuous improvement as noted in Tasks 1.1.1, 2.1, 3.1, and 4.3 of the Gantt Chart in Table 3.1 of the Project Narrative. Duties: Supports the statewide leadership, content area experts, Literacy Training and Technical

Assistance Center, and other aligned partners such as the NeMTSS Regional Literacy Coaches, to implement CLSD activities and sub-award processes including monitoring and reporting. Ensures project management tools and processes are maintained through the lifecycle of Nebraska’s Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS project (CLSD) including Literacy Team meetings with internal NDE staff, external partners, students, teachers, leaders, and community members.

- Basis for cost estimates and calculations: The salaries for these positions are commensurate with peer positions within the state of Nebraska state agencies.

Compensation levels are approved by NDE’s Office of Human Resources. The federal budget for salaries reflects a three percent (3%) increase over the previous year’s total salary amount. Within the three percent salary pool, annual salary adjustments will be based on performance and State salary policy for non-classified employees.

**2. Fringe Benefits (Federal Budget Line 2):** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

The benefits package includes all financial rewards that are generally not paid directly to the employee. These benefits are a significant part of employee “total compensation.” The federal budget for benefits reflects a three percent (3%) salary increase over the previous year’s total salary amount. Calculations are provided by NDE’s Office of Budget and Grants Management

and Accounting with stable annual amounts calculated for Life Insurance and the Employee Assistance Program, fluctuating and gradual increases per employee for health insurance, and progressive percentages of pay for retirement, FICA, and workers compensation.

### 3. Travel (Federal Budget Line 3): [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Travel to conferences will support Nebraska’s CLSD implementation and continuous improvement as NDE learns from and later shares best practices and implements these evidence-based practices across Nebraska utilizing NeMTSS regions. Additional travel to support NeMTSS regions across Nebraska as they implement CLSD activities supports Goals 1, 2, and 3 and all objectives of the project. This travel is especially necessary to receive feedback from teachers, students, and stakeholders that represent diverse backgrounds and experiences across the state. Given Nebraska’s rural landscape and the fact that schools are spread over a large geographic area, transportation funds are critical.

- Board/Travel will cover the room, board, and per diems for traveling staff to learn and share best practices both inside of Nebraska’s borders and in out-of-state opportunities. This travel also includes potential site visits requiring mileage, per diem payments, and overnight stays.
  - Year 1:

- Out-of-state travel: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] = [REDACTED]

- In-state travel: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- Years 2-5: Subsequent years assume the same travel with a 3% rise in cost due to inflation.
- Commercial Travel separates the cost of airfare for the travel indicated above.
  - [REDACTED]
  - Years 2-5: Subsequent years assume the same travel with a 3% rise in cost due to inflation.
- Vehicle Mileage includes mileage at a rate of \$0.68/mile.
  - [REDACTED].
  - Years 2-5: Subsequent years assume the same travel with a 3% rise in cost due to inflation.
- Miscellaneous Travel includes a small budget for incidentals such as parking and taxi costs.
  - [REDACTED]

#### 4. Equipment (Federal Budget Line 4): \$0.00

Not applicable to this program.

#### 5. Supplies (Federal Budget Line 5): [REDACTED]

Data Processing/ Communication	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Office Supplies						

The budget reflects the requisite materials and supplies to perform CLSD activities. This includes data processing/communications (telephone and data service), office supplies (including printing, copying, postage, and consumable items for meetings and professional development), non-capitalized equipment (basic computer capability), and software. Without these supplies, the goals and objectives of Nebraska's CLSD initiatives would not be completed.

- Basis for cost estimates and computations: Estimates are provided based on NDE's realized costs with similar staffing and programs.

#### 6. Contractual (Federal Budget Line 6):



Contract #1: External Evaluation: Yearly cost of with additional funding in Year 5 to publish and share results. The external evaluation contractor will be sought through NDE procurement procedures to support all 3 goals of Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS by assessing results and participating in the continuous improvement process, directly affecting all goals of the initiative. The external evaluation contractor will play an active

role in the grant management tasks 4.2: Conduct surveys and focus groups, 4.2.1: Collect quantitative data, 4.3: Submit annual reports, and 4.3.2: Submit final report. These are outlined in Table 3.1: Nebraska's CLSD Activities Gantt Chart within the project narrative.

Contract #2: Literacy Training and Technical Assistance Center (LTTAC): Yearly cost of [REDACTED] based on similar contracts with NDE to assist in federal grants. The LTTAC contractor will be sought through NDE procurement procedures to support CLSD initiatives and implementation, specifically supporting Goal 1 through task 1.2, Goal 2 through task 2.2, and Goal 3 through task 3.2. Additionally, LTTAC will play a role in grant management as shown in the Gantt Chart in Table 3.1 of the Project Narrative in tasks 4.1: Hold Office of Literacy CLSD Grant Management Meetings, 4.3: Submit annual reports, and 4.3.1: Submit final report.

Contract #3: Technology Upgrades to Sub-award System and Budget & Grants Management Needs for Administration: The current Grants Management System will not accommodate the amount and frequency of sub-awards without a setup fee in Year 1 of [REDACTED] and an annual fee in Years 1 through 5 of [REDACTED] Totals [REDACTED] during the life of the CLSD grant. This GMS system will be utilized in all sub-awards, supporting Goals 2 and 3.

These additional contracts will allow the NDE to provide literacy resources while respecting the 5% administrative cap on services. These investments are most needed due to the limited staff capacity referenced in Section A: Need for the Project. Without an investment in literacy, Nebraska will continue to fall behind.

CLSD project contracts will, according to NDE policies and procedures, be competitively awarded and brought before the State Board of Education for oversight. Because no CLSD contracts will provide professional services, all will be subject to Modified Total Direct Costs. In

securing all contracts, NDE will follow the procedures for procurement under: 2 CFR 200.317-200.326.

- Basis for cost estimates: prior projects.

**7. Construction (Federal Budget Line 7): \$0.00**

Not applicable to this program.

**8. Other (Federal Budget Line 8):** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

NDE acknowledges that a minimum of 95% of the total CLSD budget will be sub-awarded over the life of the grant. Without an office and working equipment, the goals and objectives of Nebraska's CLSD initiatives would not be completed.

- Rent Expense: Included in this line item is the agency's expense for workspace at a cost of [REDACTED] per staff for two staff in Year 1 and adjusted for inflation in the following years.
- Repairs: Included in this line item is the agency's expense for repairs of all office equipment at a cost of [REDACTED] per staff for two staff in Year 1 and adjusted for inflation in the following years.

- Sub-awards: NDE plans to evenly sub-award at least 95% of the CLSD awarded funds in Years 1 through 5, equating to [REDACTED] per year. Sub-awards will support the implementation of Goals 1, 2, and 3 through Objectives 1.b, 1.c, 2.a, 3.a, and 3.b.
- Basis for cost estimates and computations: Estimates are provided based on NDE's realized costs with similar staffing and programs.

**9. Total Direct Costs (Federal Budget Line 9): [REDACTED]**

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>	<b>\$ 10,985,445</b>	<b>\$ 10,938,442</b>	<b>\$ 10,948,600</b>	<b>\$ 10,959,084</b>	<b>\$ 10,994,906</b>	<b>\$54,826,477</b>

- The amount that is the sum of expenditures, per budget category, of lines 1-8.

**10. Indirect Costs (Federal Budget Line 10): [REDACTED]**

[REDACTED]						
[REDACTED]						
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]						
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

NDE will utilize the negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) of 8.8%. The NICRA is attached to Appendix B: Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.

- Calculation: Modified total direct costs x 8.8% = Indirect Costs displayed in the table above. Modified total direct costs are equal to the total direct costs, less the sub-award total, less the amount of any contract above [REDACTED] each year of the contract.

**11. Total Federal Costs (Federal Budget Line 11): [REDACTED]**

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$ 11,020,244</b>	<b>\$ 10,971,745</b>	<b>\$ 10,982,797</b>	<b>\$ 10,994,203</b>	<b>\$ 11,030,978</b>	<b>\$54,999,567</b>

This line combines all budget categories and sub-categories identified above. All costs relate to meeting the needs outlined in the proposal narrative. NDE's CLSD budget is reasonable and cost-effective for a comprehensive effort to provide activities in alignment with CLSD goals.



U.S. Department of Education  
Grant Application Form for Project Objectives and Performance Measures Information  
See Instructions.

OMB Number: 1894-0017  
Expiration Date: 06/30/2026

Applicant Information

Legal Name:

Nebraska Department of Education

1. Project Objective:

Objective 1. a: Update Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan. CPP1, CPP3

1.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
Build Statewide Literacy Writing Team	PROJECT	1		/	

1.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
Updated Plan Crafted and Published	PROJECT	1		/	

1.c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
Updated Plan Feedback Collected through at least one listening session with representatives across Nebraska.	PROJECT	1		/	

2. Project Objective:

Objective 1. b: Supplement Nebraska's statewide literacy coach network. CPP3

2.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data				
		Target				
		Raw Number	Ratio			%
Utilization and Reach: Baseline data collected on districts reached/utilization through surveys to ESU and School District administration with an increase of at least 20% by the end of the project period.	PROJECT		20	/	100	20.00

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**U.S. Department of Education**  
**Grant Application Form for Project Objectives and Performance Measures Information**

**3. Project Objective:**

Objective 1. c: Creation of tools and resources to ensure families and caregivers, including early childhood education centers, can equip literacy at home. CPP2, 3, 4, IP

3.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
Align TS GOLD assessment to non-educational setting assessments used by NE DHHS in all 5 of the NeMTSS regions.	PROJECT		5	/	5100.00

3.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
Baseline: 89% of participating four-year-old children achieve significant gains in literacy skills (currently according to TS GOLD). By the end of the project period, baseline measurement of the newly created assessment tool in Performance Measure 3.a + 15% OR TS GOLD measures at 94.5% four-year-old literacy proficiency (increasing proficiency by 50% of base).	PROJECT		94	/	10094.00

3.c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
Increased family literacy with resources and/or direct services provided to 100,000 children, two-thirds of the estimated 150,000 children from families with incomes less than 200% of the federal poverty level.	PROJECT	100,000		/	

**4. Project Objective:**

Objective 2.a: Large-scale, evidence-based professional learning centered on instructional approaches to increasing literacy, such as structured literacy and culturally responsive pedagogy. CPP3, CPP4 , IP

4.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
4,000 teachers and leaders each year, equal to 20,000 total educators during the life of the performance period, will receive training and preparation in evidence-based instructional practices for increasing literacy.	PROJECT	20,000		/	

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**Grant Application Form for Project Objectives and Performance Measures Information**

4.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
By Year 5, all of Nebraska's estimated 23,000+ educators are trained in evidence-based instructional practices for increasing literacy.	PROJECT	23,000		/	

**5. Project Objective:**

Objective 2. b: Collaborate with teachers and EPPs to update State licensure standards in the area of literacy instruction and ensure the preparation of teachers and leaders in Nebraska is based on structured literacy and the Science of Reading. CPP1, CPP4

5.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
Literacy coaches review syllabi for elements of the Science of Reading for all 16 of Nebraska's EPPs by the end of the performance period (roughly 4 per year for the first 4 years, leaving time for continuous improvement in year 5).	PROJECT		16	/	16
					100.00

5.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
Attend NCTE meetings annually	PROJECT		5	/	5
					100.00

**6. Project Objective:**

Objective 3. a: Support the selection and implementation of high-quality instructional materials to promote adequate resources through inclusive programming. CPP2, CPP3

6.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
Y1: Baseline % of districts have implemented literacy HQIM, as measured by surveys to districts (self reported). Y2: Baseline +12.5% Y3: Baseline +25% Y4: Baseline + 37.5% Y5: Baseline + 50%	PROJECT		50	/	100
					50.00

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**Grant Application Form for Project Objectives and Performance Measures Information**

6.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
Baseline: 62% of students in grade 3 meet or exceed proficiency on State reading/ language arts assessments. Y1: 65.8% Y2: 69.6% Y3: 73.4% Y4: 77.2% Y5: 81% (increasing proficiency by 50% of baseline, surpassing the State Board of Education's goal to increase 3rd grade reading proficiency to 75% by 2030)	PROJECT		81 /	100	81.00

6.c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
Baseline: 57% of students in grade 5 meet or exceed proficiency on State reading/ language arts assessments. Y1: 61.3% Y2: 65.6% Y3: 69.9% Y4: 74.2% Y5: 78.5% (increasing proficiency by 50% of baseline)	PROJECT		78 /	100	78.00

6.d. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
Baseline: 63% of students in grade 8 meet or exceed proficiency on State reading/ language arts assessments. Y1: 66.7% Y2: 70.4% Y3: 74.1% Y4: 77.8% Y5: 81.5% (increasing proficiency by 50% of baseline)	PROJECT		81 /	100	81.00

6.e. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data			
		Target			
		Raw Number	Ratio		%
Baseline: 46% of students in grade 11 meet or exceed proficiency on State reading/ language arts assessments. Y1: 51.4% Y2: 56.8% Y3: 62.2% Y4: 67.6% Y5: 73% (increasing proficiency by 50% of baseline)	PROJECT		73 /	100	73.00

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**Grant Application Form for Project Objectives and Performance Measures Information**

6.f. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data				
		Target				
		Raw Number	Ratio		%	
Baseline: 26% of students with disabilities meet or exceed proficiency on State reading/language arts assessments. Y1: 33.4% Y2: 40.8% Y3: 48.2% Y4: 55.6% Y5: 63% (increasing proficiency by 50% of baseline)	PROJECT		63	/	100	63.00

**7. Project Objective:**

Objective 3.b: Address the impacts of COVID-19 through continuing best-practice ESSER investments to expand access to high-quality learning by removing barriers through the implementation of inclusive programs. CPP2

7.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data				
		Target				
		Raw Number	Ratio		%	
CLSD funded activities will directly impact 105,000 students annually, 525,000 students over the 5-year project period.	PROJECT	525,000		/		

## INSTRUCTIONS GRANT APPLICATION FORM FOR PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES INFORMATION

### PURPOSE

Applicants must submit a **GRANT APPLICATION FORM FOR PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES INFORMATION** via Grants.gov or in G5 when instructed to submit applications in G5. This form collects project objectives and quantitative and/or qualitative performance measures at the time of application submission for the purpose of automatically prepopulating this information into the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) automated Grant Performance Report form (ED 524B), which is completed by ED grantees prior to the awarding of continuation grants. Additionally, this information will prepopulate into ED's automated ED 524B that may be required by program offices of grant recipients that are awarded front loaded grants for their entire multi-year project up-front in a single grant award, and will also be prepopulated into ED's automated ED 524B for those grant recipients that are required to use the ED 524B to submit their final performance reports.

### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

#### Applicant Information

- **Legal Name:** The legal name of the applicant that will undertake the assistance activity will prepopulate from the Application Form for Federal Assistance (SF 424 Form). This is the organization that has registered with the System for Award Management (SAM). Information on registering with SAM may be obtained by visiting [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

#### Project Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data

Your grant application establishes project objectives stating what you hope to achieve with your funded grant project. Generally, one or more performance measures are also established for each project objective that will serve to demonstrate whether you have met or are making progress towards meeting each project objective.

- **Project Objective:** Enter each project objective that is included in your grant application. When completing this form in Grants.gov, a maximum of 26 project objectives may be entered. Only one project objective should be entered per row. Project objectives should be numbered sequentially, i.e., 1., 2., 3., etc. If applicable, project objectives may be entered for each project year; however, the year to which the project objective applies must be clearly identified as is presented in the following examples:
  1. **Year 1.** Provide two hour training to teachers in the Boston school district that focuses on improving test scores.
  2. **Year 2.** Provide two hour training to teachers in the Washington D.C. school district that focuses on improving test scores.
- **Performance Measure:** For each project objective, enter each associated quantitative and/or qualitative performance measure. When completing this form in Grants.gov, a maximum of 26 quantitative and/or qualitative performance measures may be entered. There may be multiple quantitative and/or qualitative performance measures associated with each project objective. Enter only one quantitative or qualitative performance measure per row. Each quantitative or qualitative performance measure that is associated with a particular project objective should be labeled using an alpha indicator. Example: The first quantitative or qualitative performance measure associated with project objective "1" should be labeled "1.a.," the second quantitative or qualitative performance measure for project objective "1" should be labeled "1.b.," etc. If applicable, quantitative and/or qualitative performance measures may be entered for each project year; however, the year to which the quantitative and/or qualitative performance measures apply must be clearly identified as is presented in the following examples:

- 1.a. **Year 1.** By the end of year one, 125 teachers in the Boston school district will receive a two hour training program that focuses on improving test scores.
- 2.a. **Year 2.** By the end of year two, 125 teachers in the Washington D.C. school district will receive a two hour training program that focuses on improving test scores.

- **Measure Type:** For each performance measure, select the appropriate type of performance measure from the drop down menu. There are two types of measures that **ED** may have established for the grant program:

1. **GPRA:** Measures established for reporting to Congress under the Government Performance and Results Act; and
2. **PROGRAM:** Measures established by the program office for the particular grant competition.

In addition, you will be required to report on any project-specific performance measures (**PROJECT**) that you established in your grant application to meet your project objectives.

In the **Measure Type** field, select one (1) of the following measure types: **GPRA; PROGRAM; or PROJECT.**

- **Quantitative Target Data:** For quantitative performance measures with established quantitative targets, provide the target you established for meeting each performance measure. Only quantitative (numeric) data should be entered in the Target boxes. If the collection of quantitative data is not appropriate for a particular performance measure (i.e., for **qualitative** performance measures), please leave the target data boxes blank.

The Target Data boxes are divided into three columns: **Raw Number; Ratio, and Percentage (%)**.

For performance measures that are stated in terms of a single number (e.g., the number of workshops that will be conducted or the number of students that will be served), the target data should be entered as a single number in the **Raw Number column** (e.g., **10** workshops or **80** students). Please leave the **Ratio and Percentage (%) columns** blank.

For performance measures that are stated in terms of a percentage (e.g., percentage of students that attain proficiency), complete the **Ratio column**, and leave the **Raw Number and Percentage (%) columns** blank. The **Percentage (%)** will automatically calculate based on the entered ratio. In the **Ratio column** (e.g., **80/100**), the numerator represents the numerical target (e.g., the number of students that are expected to attain proficiency), and the denominator represents the universe (e.g., all students served).



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BUDGET INFORMATION  
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

OMB Number: 1894-0008  
Expiration Date: 08/31/2026

Name of Institution/Organization

Nebraska Department of Education

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Project Year 6 (f)	Project Year 7 (g)	Total (h)
1. Personnel								
2. Fringe Benefits								
3. Travel								
4. Equipment								
5. Supplies								
6. Contractual								
7. Construction								
8. Other								
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)								
10. Indirect Costs*								
11. Training Stipends								
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	11,020,244.00	10,971,745.00	10,982,797.00	10,994,203.00	11,030,978.00			54,999,967.00

**\*Indirect Cost Information (To Be Completed by Your Business Office):** If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, please answer the following questions:

- (1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- (2) If yes, please provide the following information:  
Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: 07/01/2023 To: 06/30/2027 (mm/dd/yyyy)  
Approving Federal agency: ☒ ED ☐ Other (please specify):  
The Indirect Cost Rate is 8.80 %.
- (3) If this is your first Federal grant, and you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, are not a State, Local government or Indian Tribe, and are not funded under a training rate program or a restricted rate program, do you want to use the de minimis rate of 10% of MTDC? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, you must comply with the requirements of 2 CFR § 200.414(f).
- (4) If you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, do you want to use the temporary rate of 10% of budgeted salaries and wages?  
☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, you must submit a proposed indirect cost rate agreement within 90 days after the date your grant is awarded, as required by 34 CFR § 75.560.
- (5) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:  
☒ Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? Or, ☐ Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)? The Restricted Indirect Cost Rate is 8.80 %.
- (6) For Training Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a rate that:  
☐ Is based on the training rate of 8 percent of MTDC (See EDGAR § 75.562(c)(4))? Or, ☐ Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, because it is lower than the training rate of 8 percent of MTDC (See EDGAR § 75.562(c)(4))?

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Name of Institution/Organization	Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.
Nebraska Department of Education	

**SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY  
NON-FEDERAL FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Project Year 6 (f)	Project Year 7 (g)	Total (h)
1. Personnel								
2. Fringe Benefits								
3. Travel								
4. Equipment								
5. Supplies								
6. Contractual								
7. Construction								
8. Other								
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)								
10. Indirect Costs								
11. Training Stipends								
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)								

**SECTION C - BUDGET NARRATIVE (see instructions)**

Name of Institution/Organization	Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.	
Nebraska Department of Education		

**IF APPLICABLE: SECTION D - LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES**

(1) List administrative cost cap (x%):

(2) What does your administrative cost cap apply to? ☐ (a) indirect and direct costs or, ☐ (b) only direct costs

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Project Year 6 (f)	Project Year 7 (g)	Total (h)
1. Personnel Administrative	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
2. Fringe Benefits Administrative	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
3. Travel Administrative	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
4. Contractual Administrative	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
5. Construction Administrative	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
6. Other Administrative	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
7. Total Direct Administrative Costs (lines 1-6)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
8. Indirect Costs	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
9. Total Administrative Costs	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
10. Total Percentage of Administrative Costs	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424  
Application for Federal Assistance

OMB Number: 1894-0007  
Expiration Date: 04/30/2026

1. Project Director and Applicable Entity Identification Numbers:

Prefix:	* First Name:	Middle Name:	* Last Name:	Suffix:
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Allyson"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="DenBeste"/>	<input type="text"/>

\* Project Director Level of Effort (percentage of time devoted to grant):

Address:

* Street1:	<input type="text" value="500 S 84th St"/>
Street2:	<input type="text" value="2nd Floor"/>
* City:	<input type="text" value="Lincoln"/>
County:	<input type="text"/>
* State:	<input type="text" value="NE: Nebraska"/>
* Zip Code:	<input type="text" value="68510-2611"/>
* Country:	<input type="text" value="USA: UNITED STATES"/>

\* Phone Number (give area code)      Fax Number (give area code)

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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\* Email Address:

<input type="text"/>
----------------------

Alternate Email Address:

<input type="text"/>
----------------------

OPE ID(s) (if applicable)

<input type="text"/>
----------------------

NCES School ID(s) (if applicable)

<input type="text"/>
----------------------

NCES LEA/School District ID(s) (if applicable)

<input type="text"/>
----------------------

2. New Potential Grantee or Novice Applicant:

☒ N/A. This item is not applicable because the program competition's notice inviting applications (NIA) does not include a definition of either "New Potential Grantee" or "Novice Applicant." This item is not applicable when the program competition's NIA does not include either definition.

For NIA's that include a definition of "New Potential Grantee" or "Novice Applicant," complete the following:

a. Are you either a new potential grantee or novice applicant as defined in the program competition's NIA?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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### 3. Human Subjects Research:

a. Are any research activities involving human subjects planned at any time during the proposed Project Period?

☒ Yes ☐ No

b. Are ALL the research activities proposed designated to be exempt from the regulations?

☒ Yes Provide Exemption(s) #(s): ☒ 1 ☒ 2 ☐ 3 ☒ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8

☐ No Provide Federal Wide Assurance #(s), if available:

c. If applicable, please attach your "Exempt Research" or "Nonexempt Research" narrative to this form as indicated in the definitions page in the attached instructions.

1245-Research on Human Subjects Exemptions.pdf

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

### 4. Infrastructure Programs and Build America, Buy America Act Applicability:

If the competition Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) in section III. 4. "Other" states that the program under which this application is submitted is subject to the Build America, Buy America Act (Pub. L. 117-58) (BABAA) domestic sourcing requirements, complete the following:

☒ This application does not include any infrastructure projects or activities and therefore **IS NOT** subject the BABAA domestic sourcing requirements.

☐ This application **IS** subject to the BABAA domestic sourcing requirements, because the proposed grant project described in this application includes the following infrastructure projects or activities:

☐ Construction

☐ Remodeling

☐ Broadband Infrastructure

If this application **IS** subject to the BABAA domestic sourcing requirements, please list the page numbers from within the application narrative where the proposed infrastructure project or activities are described:

## **NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS: EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES**

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) ([20 U.S.C. 1228a](#)) applies to applicants for grant awards under this program.

**ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW GRANT AWARDS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

Please respond to the following requests for information. Responses are limited to 4,000 characters.

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

The mission of the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) is to lead and support the preparation of all Nebraskans for learning, earning, and living. This commitment includes ensuring that all Nebraskans, across all backgrounds and circumstances, have equitable access and opportunities for success. The NDE commits to confronting a societal history of bias, bigotry, and racism, and its negative impact by leading for educational equity. The goal of equity efforts is that all students are known, heard, and supported while having access to the opportunities and resources needed to be ready for success in their post-secondary learning experiences, careers, and civic lives. The State Board believes that all children enrolled in public schools are entitled to equitable educational opportunity across all races, colors, sexes, and national origins. In addition, the Nebraska Legislature has declared that it shall be an unfair or discriminatory practice for any educational institution (as defined in Section 79-2,115 R.R.S.) to discriminate on the basis of sex in any program or activity.

With respect to the requirements of the General Education Provisions Act, Section 427 (GEPA) and NDE's mission, the NDE along with project partners will take all steps necessary to ensure equitable access to and participation in the activities provided through the project for all stakeholders, including state and local administrators, teachers, parents, and students. NDE and the project's state, district, and organizational partners fully support Equal Employment Opportunity principles, practices, and programs, and do not discriminate among applicants or employees on the basis of gender, race, color, national origin, disability, or age. Applicants or employees capable of performing the duties of a position or job classification may not be discriminated against because of a physical or mental disability. In addition, the partner states have strong beliefs about the value of inclusion of individuals with diversity and/or special needs in their educational programs. None discriminate in hiring, employment practices or in the delivery of education or other services.

The proposed project will ensure that meaningful access to the opportunities for participation and the project resources will be provided to all stakeholders, including teachers, students, and parents. Equity requires that these opportunities and outcomes exist for all project partners and their teachers and students, including but not limited to, and unrestricted by age, citizenship status, color, disability, economic status, ethnicity, family mobility, family structure, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, tribal membership, or veteran status.

**2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?**

Based on the planned activities in the proposed project, project partners identify the following barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity: barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.

**3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?**

Step 1. Materials Development: All materials will target the general education population and will be accessible to all students, including those with disabilities and English learners, by complying with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. All materials will be reviewed using the built-in accessibility checkers in software programs and checklists created by the US Dept. of Health & Human Services to identify any issues such as order of content, contrast ratios and uses of color, and the inclusion of alternative text. Materials will also be reviewed for bias/sensitivity/accessibility and made available in multiple forms to accommodate accessibility needs. The resources and website will be in a format that meets a government or industry-recognized standard for accessibility. In addition, materials developed through this project will be made available in multiple forms to accommodate accessibility needs. Thus, the project's development efforts will deliberately address equitable access and participation by all students.

Step 2. Modifications of Materials: Since the materials developed for the proposed project will be distributed statewide, NDE staff and local educators will be collaborators in making the necessary adjustments to materials for students and families with accessibility needs. All materials produced through this project will be developed with accessibility in mind, thus all will be adaptable to accommodate a diverse range of accessibility needs for students, educators, administrators, families, and partner organizations.

Step 3. Accessibility and Accommodations: Every effort will be made to ensure full accessibility to meetings, project deliverables, communications, and other project activities. Special accommodation for participants with all types of disabilities will be made so that anyone wishing to will be able to fully participate. For example, face-to-face meetings and workshops will be held at fully accessible venues. This includes providing interpreters for staff, partners, and stakeholders who have a disability or limited English proficiency. In addition, all project tools, resources, and relevant information will be made publicly available online via the project website, which will be in a format that meets standards for accessibility.

Step 4. Diversity of Project Staff: Diverse groups of people will be involved in developing project activities and in the recruitment and retention of participants. People with minority status, whether based on gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age, will be encouraged to participate. Training and professional development for personnel will be available to promote sensitivity and awareness of students with diverse learning needs and to create a supportive climate that fosters authentic engagement of participating teachers and other project stakeholders. NDE will work closely with our equity officer and Office of Special Education to

ensure all requirements are being addressed.

Step 5. Recruitment of Participants by Sub-awardees: Procedures will be in place to ensure equitable access to and participation by teachers and students from diverse groups that represent widely varying demographic and cultural profiles. Stakeholders with minority status will be encouraged to participate. Project partners will provide criteria and strategies aimed at obtaining a diverse population of educators and students when recruiting participants for activities.

Step 6. Promoting Equity and Access with the Proposed Project: Strategies for ensuring that processes and products are equitable, culturally relevant, and accessible to all students will be in place during the project period. To strengthen equity and access within the proposed project, we will ensure participation of stakeholders from diverse backgrounds to incorporate diverse perspectives in the project's resources.

#### 4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

Project partners will take steps to address the identified barriers and evaluate the success of those steps throughout the entire project period of October 2024 through September 2029. At the start of the project in October 2024, project partners will employ specific steps to overcome the identified barriers. Project partners will continue addressing the barriers and implementing the steps to overcome them at each phase of the project. These are outlined in Table 3.1 of the Project Narrative.

#### Notes:

1. Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity in order to submit an application.

2. Applicants may identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.

3. Applicants may have already included some or all of this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) and page number(s) in their applications or State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

**Paperwork Burden Statement**

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1894-0005. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering, and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain a benefit. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this individual collection, send your comments to [ICDocketMgr@ed.gov](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov) and reference OMB Control Number 1894-0005. All other comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual form may be addressed to either (a) the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section in the competition Notice Inviting Applications, or (b) your assigned program officer.



U.S. Department of Education  
Evidence Form

OMB Number: 1894-0001  
Expiration Date: 07/31/2025

1. Level of Evidence

Select the level of evidence of effectiveness for which you are applying. See the Notice Inviting Applications for the relevant definitions and requirements.

☐ Demonstrates a Rationale    ☐ Promising Evidence    ☐ Moderate Evidence    ☒ Strong Evidence

2. Citation and Relevance

Fill in the chart below with the appropriate information about the studies that support your application.

A. Research/Citation	B. Relevant Outcome(s)/Relevant Finding(s)	C. Project Component(s)/Overlap of Populations and/or Settings
Kamil, M. L., Borman, G. D., Dole, J., Kral, C. C., Salinger, T., and Torgesen, J. (2008). Improving adolescent literacy: Effective classroom and intervention practices: A Practice Guide (NCEE #2008-4027). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from the NCEE website: <a href="http://whatworks.ed.gov">http://whatworks.ed.gov</a> .	This WWC guide summarizes several recommendations to increase adolescents' reading abilities, with Strong Evidence of three: providing explicit vocabulary instruction, providing direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction, and implementing intensive and individualized interventions for struggling readers provided by trained specialists have strong evidence.	NDE's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS will implement these strategies from the article when granting sub-awards to provide professional development and high-quality instructional materials consistent with the study and incorporate these strategies into Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan. This supports Objective 1.a: Update of Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Plan and CPP1, CPP3.
Kosanovich, M., Lee, L. and Foorman, B. (2020). A Kindergarten Teacher's Guide to Supporting Family Involvement in Foundational Reading Skills (REL 2020-016). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences.	Companion guide to the WWC's Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade guide includes 3 research-based recommendations of Strong Evidence: corresponding steps, links to diverse resources, and printable activities for helping families promote literacy at home. The strategies are: teaching academic language, teaching phonological and phonemic awareness, teaching decoding and writing word parts, and incorporating connected text daily to support reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.	NDE's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS will implement these strategies from the article when granting sub-awards to supplement family literacy initiatives consistent with the study findings. This will support Objective 1.c: Creation of tools and resources to ensure families and caregivers, including early childhood education centers, can equip literacy at home and CPP2, 3, 4, IP.
Institute of Educational Sciences. (2022). Providing Reading Interventions for Students in Grades 4-9. What Works Clearinghouse. <a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/practiceguide/29">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/practiceguide/29</a>	Students with significant gaps in literacy, hereby known as striving readers, must receive explicit, systematic instruction in their areas of need in order to reduce learning gaps. Strong evidence supports these interventions and strategies: build students' decoding skills so they can read complex, multisyllabic words, provide purposeful fluency-building activities to help students read effortlessly, and routinely use a set of comprehension-building practices to help students make sense of the text.  IES Recommendation # 53746240029 Instructional activities. The evidence included samples of	NDE's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS will implement these strategies from the article when granting competitive sub-awards to provide HQIM and implementation support to districts that will include these evidence-based requirements to address literacy needs, supporting Objective 3.a: Support the selection and implementation of HQIM to promote adequate resources through inclusive programs and CPP2 and CPP3.

	students in grades 3-9, and examined interventions that were implemented as a supplement to Tier 1 instruction.	
Markovitz, C. E., Hernandez, M. W., Hedberg, E. C., & Whitmore, H. W. (2021). Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Volunteer One-on-One Tutoring Model for Early Elementary Reading Intervention: A Randomized Controlled Trial Replication Study. American Educational Research Journal, 59(4), 000283122110668. <a href="https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312211066848">https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312211066848</a>	The results of the two evaluations showed that kindergarten and first-grade students who received a single semester of Reading Corps tutoring achieved significantly higher literacy assessment scores, and demonstrated meaningful and significant effects after a full school year of the intervention for second- and third-grade students.	NDE's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS will implement these strategies from the article when granting competitive sub-awards for statewide tutoring with inclusive programs to achieve significantly higher literacy assessment scores, a primary source of data for Nebraska's CLSD achievement goals, supporting Objective 3. b: Address the impacts of COVID-19 through continuing best-practice ESSER investments to expand access to high-quality learning by removing barriers through the implementation of inclusive programs, supporting CPP2.

## Instructions for Evidence Form

1. **Level of Evidence.** Check the box next to the level of evidence for which you are applying. See the Notice Inviting Applications for the evidence definitions.
2. **Citation and Relevance.** Fill in the chart for each of the studies you are submitting to meet the evidence standards. If allowable under the program you are applying for, you may add additional rows to include more than four citations. (See below for an example citation.)
  - a. **Research/Citation.** For Demonstrates a Rationale, provide the citation or link for the research or evaluation findings. For Promising, Moderate, and Strong Evidence, provide the full citation for each study or WWC publication you are using as evidence. If the study has been reviewed by the WWC, please include the rating it received, the WWC review standards version, and the URL link to the description of that finding in the WWC reviewed studies database. Include a copy of the study or a URL link to the study, if available. Note that, to provide promising, moderate, or strong evidence, you must cite either a specific recommendation from a WWC practice guide, a WWC intervention report, or a publicly available, original study of the effectiveness of a component of your proposed project on a student outcome or other relevant outcome.
  - b. **Relevant Outcome(s)/Relevant Finding(s).** For Demonstrates a Rationale, describe how the research or evaluation findings suggest that the project component included in the logic model is likely to improve relevant outcomes. For Promising, Moderate and Strong Evidence, describe: 1) the project component included in the study (or WWC practice guide or intervention report) that is also a component of your proposed project, 2) the student outcome(s) or other relevant outcome(s) that are included in both the study (or WWC practice guide or intervention report) and in the logic model (theory of action) for your proposed project, and 3) the study (or WWC intervention report) finding(s) or WWC practice guide recommendations supporting a favorable relationship between a project component and a relevant outcome. Cite page and table numbers from the study (or WWC practice guide or intervention report), where applicable.
  - c. **Project Component(s)/Overlap of Population and/or Settings.** For Demonstrates a Rationale, explain how the project component(s) is informed by the research or evaluation findings. For Promising, Moderate, and Strong Evidence, explain how the population and/or setting in your proposed project are similar to the populations and settings included in the relevant finding(s). Cite page numbers from the study or WWC publication, where applicable.

*EXAMPLES: For Demonstration Purposes Only (the three examples are not assumed to be cited by the same applicant)*

A. Research/Citation	B. Relevant Outcome(s)/Relevant Finding(s)	C. Project Component(s)/Overlap of Populations and/or Settings
Graham, S., Bruch, J., Fitzgerald, J., Friedrich, L., Furgeson, J., Greene, K., Kim, J., Lyskawa, J., Olson, C. B., & Smither Wulsin, C. (2016). <i>Teaching secondary students to write effectively</i> (NCEE 2017-4002). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from the NCEE website: <a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/22">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/22</a> . This report was prepared under Version 3.0 of the WWC Handbook (p. 72).	<p>(Table 1, p. 4) Recommendation 1 ("Explicitly teach appropriate strategies using a Model – Practice – Reflect instructional cycle") is characterized as backed by "strong evidence."</p> <p>(Appendix D, Table D.2, pp. 70-72) Studies contributing to the "strong evidence" supporting the effectiveness of Recommendation 1 reported statistically significant and positive impacts of this practice on genre elements, organization, writing output, and overall writing quality.</p>	(Appendix D, Table D.2, pp. 70-72) Studies contributing to the "strong evidence" supporting the effectiveness of Recommendation 1 were conducted on students in grades 6 through 12 in urban and suburban school districts in California and in the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. These study samples overlap with both the populations and settings proposed for the project.

A. Research/Citation	B. Relevant Outcome(s)/Relevant Finding(s)	C. Project Component(s)/Overlap of Populations and/or Settings
<p>U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, What Works Clearinghouse. (2017, February). Transition to College intervention report: Dual Enrollment Programs. Retrieved from <a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Intervention/1043">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Intervention/1043</a>. This report was prepared under Version 3.0 of the WWC Handbook (p. 1).</p>	<p>(Table 1, p. 2) Dual enrollment programs were found to have positive effects on students' high school completion, general academic achievement in high school, college access and enrollment, credit accumulation in college, and degree attainment in college, and these findings were characterized by a "medium to large" extent of evidence.</p>	<p>(pp. 1, 19, 22) Studies contributing to the effectiveness rating of dual enrollment programs in the high school completion, general academic achievement in high school, college access and enrollment, credit accumulation in college, and degree attainment in college domains were conducted in high schools with minority students representing between 32 and 54 percent of the student population and first generation college students representing between 31 and 41 percent of the student population. These study samples overlap with both the populations and settings proposed for the project.</p>
<p>Bettinger, E.P., &amp; Baker, R. (2011). <i>The effects of student coaching in college: An evaluation of a randomized experiment in student mentoring</i>. Stanford, CA: Stanford University School of Education. Available at <a href="https://ed.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/bettinger_baker_030711.pdf">https://ed.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/bettinger_baker_030711.pdf</a></p> <p>Meets WWC Group Design Standards without Reservations under review standards 2.1 (<a href="http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Study/72030">http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Study/72030</a>).</p>	<p>The intervention in the study is a form of college mentoring called student coaching. Coaches helped with a number of issues, including prioritizing student activities and identifying barriers and ways to overcome them. Coaches were encouraged to contact their assignees by either phone, email, text messaging, or social networking sites (pp. 8-10). The proposed project for Alpha Beta Community College students will train professional staff and faculty coaches on the most effective way(s) to communicate with their mentees, suggest topics for mentors to talk to their mentees, and be aware of signals to prevent withdrawal or academic failure.</p> <p>The relevant outcomes in the study are student persistence and degree completion (Table 3, p. 27), which are also included in the logic model for the proposed project.</p> <p>This study found that students assigned to receive coaching and mentoring were significantly more likely than students in the comparison group to remain enrolled at their institutions (pp. 15-16, and Table 3, p. 27).</p>	<p>The full study sample consisted of "13,555 students across eight different higher education institutions, including two- and four-year schools and public, private not-for-profit, and proprietary colleges." (p. 10) The number of students examined for purposes of retention varied by outcome (Table 3, p. 27). The study sample overlaps with Alpha Beta Community College in terms of both postsecondary students and postsecondary settings.</p>

**Paperwork Burden Statement:** According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1894-0001. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to vary from 1 to 4 hours per response, with an average of 1.5 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data sources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4537. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to the Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202

PR/Award # S371C240029

# Exempt Research on Human Subjects Narrative

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) will contract research services to an external vendor experienced with conducting high-quality studies in education settings. The vendor will select and use an independent institutional review board (IRB) to review research proposals involving human subjects for compliance with federal Protection of Human Subjects regulations. This independent IRB will be fully accredited by the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs (AAHRPP). If the project is funded, the vendor will obtain and send IRB certification to the Department of Education, as required. For the proposed evaluation, NDE has determined that the research activities are exempt under multiple exempt categories. Research activities are exempt under **Category 1** (observations, site visits) will be conducted in common educational settings to evaluate the effectiveness of targeted instructional techniques. Other research activities (surveys, focus groups) are exempt under **Category 2**, involving survey and interview procedures that is not recorded in a manner in which responses are identifiable. The remaining activities (administrative data, artifact review) are exempt under **Category 4**, involving the collection or study of existing data and documents. The following narrative describes the exempt human subjects research activities for the project evaluation.

**1. Human subjects involvement and characteristics:** Participants in the study will include Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS subgrantee staff (i.e., teachers and administrators) from Nebraska school districts. The only inclusion criterion is participation in grant-funded activities. There are no exclusion criteria.

**2. Sources of materials:** The proposed project will utilize research materials from a variety of sources. The evaluation vendor will obtain information from human subjects, including surveys

and focus groups, specifically for the purpose of the research. These will be reported in aggregate, and not linked to individual respondents. Site visit and observation information will be collected during the course of normal educational activities and be de-identified before reporting. In addition, the vendor will access existing data, which will include materials created for the regional workshops and state administrative records of disaggregated achievement for students with reading disabilities both at the district and state levels.

**3. Recruitment and informed consent:** All staff from subgrantees will be invited to participate in the research project by the evaluation vendor. For those who are interested in participating in the study, the vendor will provide the informed consent form, encourage them to ask questions, and rephrase information as needed to ensure understanding. The vendor conducting the informed consent process will sign two copies of the informed consent form. One copy of the signed consent will be given to the subject. The informed consent form will be approved by the IRB and include information about the purposes of the study, the anticipated number of subjects to be enrolled, the study procedures, potential risks and benefits, and procedures to protect confidentiality. The informed consent forms will also emphasize that participation is completely voluntary and unrelated to employment status in any way.

**4. Potential risks:** The potential risks for subjects participating in this research are minimal and most likely psychological and temporary in nature. It is possible that individuals may feel uncomfortable answering some of the questions. We believe they will encounter no more than minimal risks, such as those a person ordinarily encounters in daily life. For all participants, violation of privacy and loss of confidentiality are risks.

**5. Protection against risk:** Risks to research subjects participating in the study will be minimized by reminding participants that they can refuse to answer any questions at any time,

without penalty. Confidentiality of research subjects will be protected by anonymizing results although the small size of the group may allow for some risk of identification. No contact information for participants will be collected. We feel these measures will be effective in protecting confidentiality, but as with any study, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

**6. Importance of the knowledge to be gained:** The knowledge gained through the project will help improve Nebraska's Journey to Inclusive Literacy through NeMTSS which will in turn result in improved support to children with reading disabilities to improve their literacy outcomes. Given the minimal risks associated with participation in the proposed study, we feel the benefits far exceed the risks.

**7. Collaborating sites:** The contracted evaluation vendor will manage all research activities in collaboration with the Nebraska Department of Education (state education agency in Nebraska). The vendor (research institution) and NDE (education agency), will jointly coordinate data collection activities. All research activities will take place in NDE meeting spaces and subgrantee district buildings across the state.