Hay Springs Public School
407 N. Baker Street
P.O. Box 280
Hay Springs, Nebraska 69347

Dr. Sadie Coffey, District Superintendent
Mrs. Tera Digmann, PK-12 Principal
Mrs. Nichole Marcy, Activities Director

Mission/Vision Statement: Empower students to **S.O.A.R.**: **S**how pride through success. **O**wn opportunities. **A**ct positively to achieve. **R**espect all.

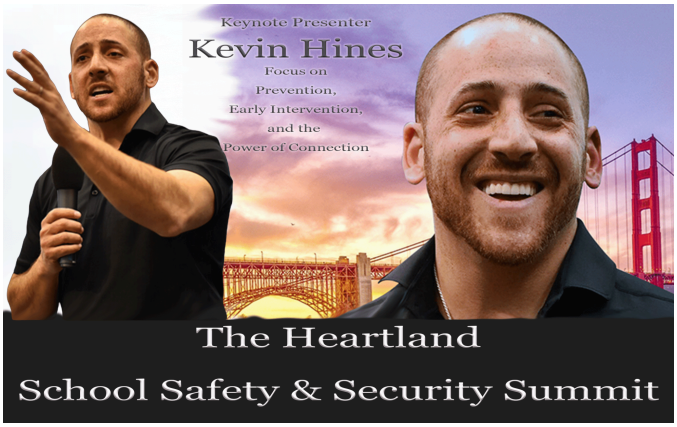
Hay Springs Public School Strategic Plan Objectives:

1. Student Learning & Growth: Rigorous, relevant instruction that ensures every student grows and achieves.
2. Staff Excellence & Unity: Effective leadership and a unified, highly effective staff committed to student success.
3. Resources & Learning Environment: Responsible use of resources to sustain a safe, effective, and continuously improving school.

October 2026

Superintendent Report







This week's Heartland School Safety & Security Summit in Lincoln and NeMTSS Summit in Kearney provided valuable learning opportunities, with powerful keynote messages from Kevin Hines on mental health, hope, and resilience and Ben Hartranft ("Benergy") on inclusion, kindness, and the power of believing in others.

Continuous School Improvement Goal: 80% of Hay Springs students will meet projected growth and/or 80% of students will be proficient on NWEA MAP assessments in Math, Reading, Language Arts, and Science.
Targeted Improvement Plan (Students): Hay Springs K–11 students with disabilities (students on an IEP) will improve reading proficiency on the NWEA MAP assessment, increasing from a baseline of 20% proficient (Winter 2025–2026) to 60% proficient by Spring 2028.
Targeted Improvement Plan (Adults): By Spring 2028, Hay Springs K–11 staff teaching literacy, including general education, special education, and intervention staff, will demonstrate full implementation of explicit and systematic literacy instruction, as measured by achieving an average score in the Area of Strength (≥3.0) across all ten applicable Foundational and ELA Instructional Practice Guide (IPG) Core Action 2 components.

Discussion Items: consider, discuss, and take all necessary action

- **Lister-Sage**
    - Discussion: Provide an update regarding Lister-Sage staffing, facility use, and/or other matters. Review any additional information gathered since the September meeting and determine whether further Board direction is needed.
    - Board Direction Requested: Discuss next steps and provide direction to administration as appropriate.
- **Grant Updates**
    - Discussion: Provide updates regarding current district grant applications and awards, including RHTP Initiative 1.1 – School Kitchen Modernization, RHTP Initiative 1.3 – Farm-to-School Partnership, and the FY26 COPS School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP).
    - Board Direction Requested: Information/discussion and direction regarding implementation planning as needed.
- **Scratch-Based Kitchen Items**
    - Discussion: Discuss continued planning for increased scratch and semi-scratch food preparation, locally produced foods, equipment and kitchen needs, and implementation considerations associated with the district's school nutrition and farm-to-school initiatives.
    - Board Direction Requested: Review current planning and provide direction regarding priorities, purchases, implementation, or other next steps as appropriate.
- **Buildings, Grounds & Capital Improvement Projects**
    - Discussion: Continue review and prioritization of facility and capital improvement needs, including roofing, HVAC, stairs/steps, gravel/site work, wall reinforcement or related projects, and other items identified through the district's Capital Improvement Plan. This continues the planning process identified in September.
    - Board Direction Requested: Establish priorities and provide direction regarding estimates, procurement, scheduling, and next steps.
- **Student Representative to the Board of Education**
    - Discussion: Continue discussion regarding establishment of a nonvoting student representative to the Board. Administration has reviewed Nebraska statutory requirements and sample policies from other Nebraska districts. In September, the Board discussed potential selection structures and policy development.
    - Board Direction Requested: Review the proposed structure/policy and determine whether it is ready for Board action.
- **NASB Goals and Budget Resource**
    - Discussion: Review the NASB Goals and Budget resource and discuss how the resource may assist the Board and administration in connecting district goals, budgeting decisions, and long-range planning.
    - Board Direction Requested: Discuss potential use of the resource in future Board goal-setting and budget planning.
- **School District Boundary Changes / Land Transfer Information**
    - Discussion: Continue discussion regarding procedures available to landowners seeking transfer of property between school districts. The September report reviewed the potential application of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-413 and noted that the applicable process depends upon acreage, current district, property configuration, and other circumstances.
    - Board Direction Requested: Information/discussion. Administration will continue to obtain parcel-specific information if landowners indicate an interest in pursuing a transfer.
- **Policy Review**

    - **Evaluation of Administration — Policies 302.05, 303.06, and 2230**
        - Discussion: Review district policies governing evaluation of administrators to ensure district practices, timelines, responsibilities, and recently adopted evaluation tools align with Board policy.
        - Board Direction Requested: Identify any policy revisions or administrative follow-up needed. May choose to complete “first readings.”
    - **Evaluation of Staff — Policies 406.08, 412.07, 4150, and 4260**
        - Discussion: Review district policies governing evaluation of certificated and classified staff, including evaluation expectations, timelines, documentation, professional growth, and consistency of district evaluation practices.
        - Board Direction Requested: Identify any policy revisions or administrative follow-up needed. May choose to complete “first readings.”
- **Upcoming Board Professional Development**
    - Discussion: Review upcoming NASB and other Board professional development opportunities, registrations, attendance, and scheduling. This continues the professional-development planning discussed in September.
    - Board Direction Requested: Confirm attendance and provide direction regarding registrations and related arrangements.
- **Annual Review of the Emergency Operations Plan (Safety Plan)**
    - Discussion: Conduct the Board's annual review of the district Emergency Operations Plan/Safety Plan, including current procedures, identified needs, and any recommended updates.
    - Board Direction Requested: Review the plan and provide direction regarding any revisions, training, communication, equipment, or other safety priorities.
    - Administrative Note: The current Emergency Operations Plan requires updating. Administration will identify necessary revisions through the annual review process and bring recommended updates forward as appropriate. (direct link HERE)

Action Items

Executive Summary for Agenda Item: Authorize the Reinvestment of Maturing Certificates of Deposit (CDs)

Prepared by: Superintendent
Proposed Action:
___ Information Only
___ Presentation/Discussion
_X_ Discussion/Action by Board of Education
___ Presentation/Discussion/Future Board Action
Proposed Need: To authorize the reinvestment of district funds currently held in Certificates of Deposit (CDs) that are reaching maturity.
Authority for Item: Simple majority
Data/Alternatives: The district can currently reinvest the maturing funds in a 12-month Certificate of Deposit at an interest rate of 4.05%. The Board may authorize the 12-month reinvestment at 4.05%, consider another available term or investment option, or direct administration to obtain additional information before reinvestment.
Fiscal Impact: Reinvestment at the current 12-month rate of 4.05% allows district funds to continue earning interest while maintaining a defined investment term. Actual interest earnings will depend upon the principal amount invested.

Building Level: District-wide
Goal Impact: Supports Resources & Learning Environment through responsible fiscal management and stewardship of district funds.
Summary: District Certificates of Deposit are reaching maturity and require Board direction regarding reinvestment. A 12-month Certificate of Deposit is currently available at a 4.05% interest rate. Reinvesting the funds provides an opportunity to continue generating interest income while maintaining the district's conservative investment approach and considering anticipated cash-flow needs.
Superintendent Recommendation: Authorize the reinvestment of the district's maturing Certificates of Deposit for a 12-month term at the available 4.05% interest rate.
Suggested Motion: I move to authorize the reinvestment of the district's maturing Certificates of Deposit for a 12-month term at an interest rate of 4.05%.

Executive Summary for Agenda Item: Approve the 2026–2027 Rule 10 District Assurance Statement
Prepared by: Superintendent
Proposed Action:
___ Information Only
___ Presentation/Discussion
_X_ Discussion/Action by Board of Education
___ Presentation/Discussion/Future Board Action
Proposed Need: To approve the district's annual Rule 10 Assurance Statement and document Hay Springs Public Schools' compliance with Nebraska accreditation requirements for the 2026–2027 school year.
Authority for Item: Rule 10, Section 003.07; Simple majority
Data/Alternatives: Rule 10, Section 003.07 requires each school system, by November 1 of each year, to submit to the Nebraska Department of Education an Assurance Statement prescribed by the Department and signed by a representative of the school system governing body. The statement must affirm compliance or specifically identify any areas of noncompliance with Rule 10. The Board may approve the Assurance Statement as presented or identify areas requiring clarification or correction prior to submission.
Fiscal Impact: No direct fiscal impact.
Building Level: District-wide
Goal Impact: Supports all three Strategic Plan objectives: Student Learning & Growth; Staff Excellence & Unity; and Resources & Learning Environment; by maintaining compliance with Nebraska accreditation requirements and supporting effective district operations.
Summary: Rule 10, Section 003.07 requires each Nebraska school system to submit an annual Assurance Statement to the Nebraska Department of Education by November 1. The statement affirms the district's compliance with Rule 10 requirements or specifically identifies any areas of noncompliance. Assurance Statements received after 11:59 p.m. on November 1 are considered late and are subject to a formal notice of noncompliance. Administration has reviewed the district's practices and requirements in preparation for the 2026–2027 submission.
Superintendent Recommendation: Approve the 2026–2027 Rule 10 District Assurance Statement as presented and authorize its submission to the Nebraska Department of Education.
Suggested Motion: I move to approve the 2026–2027 Rule 10 District Assurance Statement as presented and authorize the Superintendent to complete the required submission to the Nebraska Department of Education.

Executive Summary for Agenda Item: Approve the First Reading of Policy 9110.1: Student Member of School Board

Prepared by: Superintendent

Proposed Action:

___ Information Only

___ Presentation/Discussion

_X_ Discussion/Action by Board of Education

___ Presentation/Discussion/Future Board Action

Proposed Need: To consider and approve the first reading of Policy 9110.1, establishing a nonvoting student member of the Hay Springs Public Schools Board of Education.

Authority for Item: Simple majority

Data/Alternatives: The proposed policy is based upon NASB Policy 506.05 and has been designated as Policy 9110.1 to align with the district's existing policy numbering structure. The Board may approve the first reading as presented, approve the first reading with revisions, or direct administration to make additional revisions before the policy is brought forward for further consideration.

Fiscal Impact: No direct fiscal impact.

Building Level: District-wide

Goal Impact: Supports Student Learning & Growth and Staff Excellence & Unity by increasing student voice, leadership opportunities, communication, civic engagement, and student participation in district governance.

Summary: Nebraska law permits the Board to establish a nonvoting student member position. Proposed Policy 9110.1 provides a framework for student participation on the Board of Education and is intended to provide student input into decisions affecting students, increase student involvement in district governance, and strengthen communication between students and the Board. The student member would serve in an advisory, nonvoting capacity and would not participate in executive sessions.

Decisions for the Board

1. **Number of Student Representatives**
   - One nonvoting student representative
   - Two nonvoting student representatives
   - **My recommendation: One representative for Hay Springs.**
2. **Selection of Student Representative**
   - Nebraska law provides three options:
     - Student body or student council president
     - Senior class representative
     - Representative elected from and by the entire student body
   - **My recommendation: A representative elected by the entire student body. This provides an opportunity for broader student participation rather than automatically assigning the position to an existing student leader**
3. **Student Representative Recall**
   - Include the optional provision allowing student council to recall a representative. Remove that provision and rely on the Board's authority to address unacceptable conduct.
   - **My recommendation: Remove the student council recall provision unless the Board wants a formal student-led removal process.**
4. **Annual Reinstatement**
   - Retain the model policy's requirement for annual reinstatement.

Remove that requirement so the policy remains effective until amended or repealed.

My recommendation: Remove the annual reinstatement requirement to avoid unnecessary annual action.

The one-year student term beginning September 1 and exclusion from executive sessions are statutory requirements, not optional choices.

Superintendent Recommendation: Approve the first reading of Policy 9110.1: Student Member of School Board as presented.

Suggested Motion: I move to approve the first reading of Policy 9110.1: Student Member of School Board as presented.

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Mrs. Nichole Marcy, Activities Director

7 October 2026

Principal's Board Report

- We are in the last week of the quarter. The kids have been very excited about the "Horse Race". Our attendance has been very good! To date I have sent one 10-day attendance letter and six 5-day letters, and 0 to high school or elementary. Student passing percentages have been up and down.
- We are noticing our 6th graders are struggling with being on the eligibility list. The teachers and I have discussed having an open house at the beginning of the year for the 6th graders and their parents (possibly run an abbreviated schedule with them) so parents understand the difference between elementary and middle school.
- Parent/Teacher conferences had a nice turnout. Most of the elementary teachers reported a 100% turnout. The office had overall attendance at 65%.

Technology Report for October 2026 Board Meeting

As prepared by Mr. Larel Reimann

State Reporting

-Mrs. Marx and I have started the syncing process and corrected a couple of errors we noticed. The final due date for fall reporting is at the end of October. Currently things look really good, but since the state "turns on" more errors, we may have more to deal with still.

Infinite Campus Messenger

-I believe I have most of the setup done for our Infinite Campus Messenger service which will eventually take the place of Remind. I have successfully sent emails, robo-calls, and text messages to myself. Hopefully this week I will do a bit more testing to additional contacts. Then it is just a matter of planning how we want all of this to work...there are a lot of options! Some of the more interesting ones include automatically notifying parents of failing and missing assignments.

Mapping Project

-At the request of Dr. Coffey, I will start a mapping project for the school which will include water shut-offs, firm alarm systems, breaker panels, and fire extinguishers. We will potentially add more items to the maps as we think of them. The idea is that if the custodians or myself aren't available, anyone could grab the maps and be able to get to one of these locations should something need done.

E-Rate

-I have also started work on an E-Rate grant for a new firewall(to replace our current one which is getting a bit of "computer age" on it. I am in the very early stages of the process yet, but the gears have begun turning at least!

506.05 - STUDENT MEMBER OF SCHOOL BOARD

The School Board believes it is important to receive student input into decisions which affect students. For this reason, the position of nonvoting student member of the Board of Education is established.

Purposes

To help the School Board gain a greater insight into student activities, programs, and needs;

To encourage more student involvement in school district governance activities;

To provide a greater awareness and understanding of mutual issues between school staff and students;

To provide for the active involvement of students in their education and to foster a spirit of inquiry whereby students may freely express their views and listen to and evaluate the opinions of others.

Legal Qualifications

The student member shall be the student body or student council president, the senior class representative, or a representative elected from and by the entire student body, as designated by the voting members of the School Board.

The terms of office will be one year, beginning on September 1.

Student members will not participate in school board meetings during periods when the board meets in executive session.

Guidelines

The district will have *[one; two]* nonvoting student member(s) on the Board of Education. The role of student member is advisory.

[One student member of the Board of Education will be selected from each of the high schools in the district.]

Student membership on the Board of Education is limited to senior students.

Student members may not introduce motions.

Student members are expected to attend all public meetings of the Board and can be appointed to committees of the Board at the discretion of the president.

[The student council can recall a student Board member from its high school. The principal or his/her designee will determine the process of such a recall.]

The Board of Education will reserve the right to bar the participation of a student member if actions of said student member are unacceptable to the Board.

The provisions of this policy are contingent upon annual reinstatement

Legal Reference: Neb. Statute 79-547

79-551

79-552

79-559

Cross Reference: 201.02 Board Membership

506.03 Student Government

Approved _____ Reviewed _____ Revised _____

Hay Springs Public Schools

2026-29 Board-Superintendent Goals

Justin Anderson, President

Katy Hughbanks

Dr. Sadie Coffey, Superintendent

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Miriam Kearns

Tami Milne

David Russell

Katie Stock

Hay Springs Public Schools

2026-2029 Board-Superintendent Goals

The following superintendent-board goals reflect a summary of feedback received from board, superintendent, and administrators during the board retreat held on September 28, 2026. The board will work through committee and regular board meeting discussion, consideration, and action to monitor progress and success.

The superintendent will prioritize the goals according to urgency and impact. To establish accountability of the board and superintendent, it will be important to establish a consistent process for reviewing progress toward the goals throughout the 2026-2029 timeframe. For each goal, the board and superintendent will establish the baseline, measurable target, evidence of success, and a timeline for achieving the target. Progress will be reviewed at agreed-upon intervals throughout the year, with the superintendent providing evidence of progress and identifying barriers, adjustments, and anticipating next steps when targets are not met. Updates will be presented to the board and community through board meeting updates. The board may wish to consider the following questions to support discussion of the superintendent's progress report:

1. What progress has been realized and are you on track?
2. What evidence was presented to support the progress update?
3. What barriers, if any, have you encountered and what adjustments are being made?
4. What do you need from the board?

I. Board-Superintendent Relations Goal:

Objective: The Board will fulfill its statutory responsibility to evaluate the superintendent twice during the first year of employment and annually thereafter while establishing clear performance expectations, measurable goals, and evidence of success. The superintendent will collaborate with the board to define expectations, policies, and goals to support instruction and student learning.

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i. The superintendent will remind the board members in writing at least 45 days before the date of each upcoming evaluation.
ii. The board will authorize the distribution of the Online Superintendent Self-Evaluation distribution of the board evaluation thereafter.
iii. The board will place Superintendent Evaluation Review on the board agenda as information/discussion item.
iv. If deficiencies are noted in the superintendent's work performance, the board shall work collaboratively with the superintendent to develop goals to address the areas of growth. [e.g., superintendent goals and measures of progress and success]
v. The evaluation shall be signed by the board president and the superintendent. A copy of the evaluation will be placed in the superintendent's personnel file.
vi. The superintendent will share progress updates of goals during each monthly regular board meeting.
vii. The Board will review progress toward superintendent goals at agreed-upon intervals throughout the year and use evidence of progress, barriers, results, and necessary adjustments to inform the evaluation process.
viii. The Board will maintain a clear distinction between its governance responsibilities and the superintendent's administrative responsibilities and will provide the superintendent with the authority necessary to conduct assigned responsibilities.
ix. The Board will communicate with the superintendent in a professional, respectful, and collaborative manner and will address concerns directly with the superintendent rather than through individual staff members or informal channels.
x. The Board will annually complete a Board Self-Assessment to measure the effectiveness of the board-superintendent working relationship and identify opportunities to strengthen communication, trust, role clarity, and collective effectiveness.

Board Measured Progress:

1. Did the board conduct the evaluations properly and on time?
2. Did the board establish targets, evidence, monitor progress, and provide feedback?
3. Did the board maintain the professional relationship and appropriate governance/administrative boundaries necessary for the superintendent to lead?

II. Student Achievement, Instruction and Engagement Goal

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Hay Springs Public Schools will improve student achievement by strengthening high-quality instruction, with an emphasis on a strong literacy foundation, while increasing student engagement through active learning, personalized opportunities, family involvement, and community/business partnerships.

1. Strengthen Instruction, Literacy and Student Achievement

Superintendent Action Steps:

a. Use student achievement, literacy, and ACT data to identify priorities, establish measurable targets, and monitor student progress.
b. Strengthen instructional practices, curriculum alignment, professional learning, and targeted student supports based on identified needs.
c. Monitor and communicate results, adjusting strategies as needed to ensure instructional efforts are producing measurable improvement in student learning.

Board Goal: Monitor student achievement, literacy, and ACT results and support the superintendent in achieving measurable improvement in student learning.

a. Review achievement data and progress toward established targets.
b. Provide appropriate resources and support aligned with identified needs.
c. Hold regular progress conversations with the superintendent and adjust expectations or support as needed.

2. Strengthen Student Engagement, Attendance and Enrollment

Superintendent Action Steps:

a. Analyze attendance and enrollment trends to identify barriers, opportunities, and strategies that support consistent student participation, retention, and enrollment growth.
b. Strengthen student and family connection by promoting meaningful engagement and communicating the district's programs, opportunities, and strengths to current and prospective families.
c. Monitor results and adjust strategies to improve attendance, student engagement, retention, and option enrollment.

Board Goal: Monitor attendance, engagement, and enrollment trends and support superintendent in strengthening student connection, retention, and enrollment.

a. Review attendance, engagement, and enrollment data at regular intervals.
b. Support strategies and resources that strengthen student and family connection.
c. Monitor results and hold the superintendent accountable for progress toward established goals.

III. Culture of Trust, Teamwork, and Belonging Goal:

Hay Springs Public Schools will strengthen a culture of trust, teamwork, and belonging where staff feel heard, valued, supported, and connected to one another, district leadership, the school, and the community.

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Superintendent Action Steps:

a. Build trust through visible, approachable leadership and respectful, consistent interactions with staff, students, families, and the community.
b. Strengthen communication and listening by creating opportunities for staff and stakeholders to share perspectives, concerns, and feedback.
c. Respond constructively to feedback and concerns, communicating decisions clearly and fostering a culture where people feel heard, valued, and supported.

Board Goal: The board will support the superintendent in building a culture of trust, teamwork, and belonging through clear expectations, open communication, and regular monitoring of organizational culture.

a. Maintain a strong board-superintendent relationship grounded in trust, respect, communication, and clear roles.
b. Provide support and feedback to the superintendent regarding leadership, communication, and organizational culture.
c. Monitor progress through regular conversations with the superintendent and evidence of staff and stakeholder engagement.

IV. Facilities, Finance, and Long-Range Sustainability Goal:

Hay Springs Public Schools will develop and implement a fiscally responsible, long-range capital improvement plan that provides safe, functional, comfortable, and high-quality learning environments while prioritizing identified facility needs and protecting the district's financial sustainability.

Superintendent Action Steps:

a. Develop and implement a short- and long-term facilities and capital improvement plan that prioritizes safety, building and grounds needs, transportation, and long-term district needs.
b. Maintain and monitor fiscal stability by managing the budget, controlling expenses, and aligning resources with district priorities despite increasing costs and funding challenges.
c. Regularly assess and communicate facility and financial needs, progress, and priorities to the board to support informed decision-making and long-term sustainability.

Board Goal: The board will monitor financial stability and progress toward a long-range facilities and capital improvement plan while supporting the superintendent in aligning resources with district priorities.

a. Establish clear financial and facilities priorities aligned with the district's strategic plan and long-term needs.
b. Review and monitor budget, facility, and capital improvement progress to ensure resources are being used responsibly.

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Hay Springs Board-Superintendent Leadership Profile Priorities

During the Monday, September 28, 2026, board retreat, board members and the superintendent identified the priorities within the Superintendent Search Leadership Profile. The priorities are aligned to the recent goals set by the board and superintendent. This is simply a summary of the work, the goal document has been shared under separate cover.

Goal 1 — Student Achievement, Instruction and Engagement

Hay Springs Public Schools will improve student achievement by strengthening high-quality instruction, with an emphasis on a strong literacy foundation, while increasing student engagement through active learning, personalized opportunities, family involvement, and community/business partnerships.

Leadership Profile Identified Priorities:

- **Boost academic performance** through data-driven decision making, ACT preparation, and continuous curriculum enhancements to improve student learning and raise test scores.
- **Strengthen student attendance** through strategies that promote engagement, connection, and consistent school participation.
- **Maintain and grow enrollment** through the effective implementation and promotion of the district's option enrollment program.

Goal 2 — Culture of Trust, Teamwork and Belonging

Hay Springs Public Schools will strengthen a culture of trust, teamwork, and belonging where staff feel heard, valued, supported, and connected to one another, district leadership, the school, and the community.

Leadership Profile Identified Priorities:

- **Exhibit professional and approachable leadership** through respectful interactions with staff, parents, and students, while maintaining a personable demeanor.
- **Demonstrate strong communication and listening skills**, including the ability to accept feedback and address concerns constructively.

Goal 3 — Facilities, Finance and Long-Range Sustainability

Hay Springs Public Schools will develop and implement a fiscally responsible, long-range capital improvement plan that provides safe, functional, comfortable, and high-quality learning environments while prioritizing identified facility needs and protecting the district's financial sustainability.

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Leadership Profile Identified Priorities:

- **Implement a five-year improvement plan** focused on building, grounds, and transportation upgrades, ensuring facilities, vehicles, and buses are in good condition.
- **Prioritize upkeep and infrastructure improvements** across school buildings and facilities to support a safe and functional learning environment.
- **Develop a short- and long-term facilities plan.**
- **Maintain a solid budget** despite increasing costs and reductions in state funding.
- **Control expenses effectively** to ensure financial stability.

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NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

BUDGET RESOURCE

Board Leadership
NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Marcia Herring, NASB Director of Board Leadership
mherring@NASBonline.org
800-422-4572

DISTRICT RESOURCES

The Board aligns and advocates for needed district resources to meet goals and promote student growth and success.

Purpose:

A school board that remains focused on student success when allocating resources ensures efforts toward learning outcomes and addresses disparities.

Community Leader:

To support the responsible management of district resources to ensure alignment to student success, and guide resource allocation to provide long-term sustainability for the district and community.

The Board Will:

- Adopt a budget that supports the vision and is aligned to the needs and priorities of the district.
- Use data to link instructional needs to resources to support learning.
- Review monthly financial reports relative to the management and expenditure of the current budget with two years of historical data to assess spending levels.

Questions to Consider:

- How does the district prioritize the budget?
- Does the board adopt a budget calendar?
- Who is involved in developing the budget?
- How does the budget align to growth of student success?
- How does the board engage the public in the discussion of budget accountability?

Budget /Finance and the Board's Supporting Role:

It is the board's fiscal duty to support a budget that ensures that all students have the opportunity to learn in well-equipped learning facilities with highly effective teachers leading instruction. However, there is a defined line between fiscal policy, which is the duty of the school board, and fiscal management, the duty of the superintendent and business manager.

Developing the budget is an administrative process that involves making adjustments and decisions under tight constraints. It may be fair to say that next year's budget will be a tweaked version of this year's budget. Unless, however, administration projects a shortfall or the district has identified needs which will require additional funding. In these cases, the board and administration will work collaboratively to identify priorities for cutting back programs and in some cases adding or reducing staff.

The budget preparation is too often portrayed as merely a financial plan rather than planning process, which conveys the message that only in crisis should the board have the opportunity to be involved. The superintendent may take a lead role in the budget development process preferring not to place the board

in a precarious position, which may lead to micro-managing administration. However, it is highly recommended that a budget planning process be utilized. Following this model, the board will be apprised of budget factors months before the budget is approved. This allows the board to weigh in on the overall direction of the budget without crossing over into micromanagement. Both board and administration come into the budget adoption process feeling much better when there has been an exchange of ideas about the budget well in advance of that time.

Board members must always serve a dual role and responsibility. The board has an obligation to ensure that all students receive a quality education by utilizing financial and physical resources to meet the district's vision, mission, and student learning goals. When the board is not engaged in the discussion of the budget, they lack understanding of why the budget is set as it is. When the superintendent fosters an open dialogue with the board, he/she garners the understanding and ultimately the support of an informed and educated board. Communication regarding a key role and responsibility of the board and superintendent when faced with pointed questions pertaining to the investments and expenditures of tax dollars.

School finance is complex. Collaboration and communication between board members and the superintendent are critical to ensuring the budget process aligns with district policy and state regulations. Effective budget planning, however, is not a task reserved for August and September. It is a year-long process that begins in January and is strengthened through regular board work sessions and retreats over the next several months. These ongoing discussions allow the board and superintendent, together with administration, to carefully develop and understand the intricate design and components of a purposefully crafted budget. By the time the district reaches the final stage of adoption, the proposed budget reflects months of intentional dialogue, stakeholder engagement, and collaborative planning.

NDE Finance & Organizational Services [FOS]

Follow this link to review district data and certification documents.

https://sfos.education.ne.gov/Forms/FormsHome

Budget Planning Calendar

September

- Notice of Hearing to Approve Tax Request and budget to newspaper (Statute requires 5 days previous publication). Statute 13-511 (2) "the four calendar days shall include the day of publication but not the day of hearing."
- Statute 13-511 (5):" Within thirty calendar days after the adoption of the budget under section 13-506, a governing body may, within thirty calendar days after notification of an error by the auditor, governing body shall, correct an adopted budget with contains a clerical, mathematical, or accounting error which

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does not affect the total amount budget by more than once percent or increase the amount required from property taxes. No public hearing shall be required for such correction."

- Notice of Summary of Changes– information that must be published if the budget that was adopted is different from the budget information that was published in the Notice of Budget Hearing and Budget Summary. If this form is published within 20 days after the budget is adopted, no additional hearing is required.
- **September 4**, Information due to County Clerk
- **September 14-23** Joint Public Hearing on Budget; Tax Request Hearing; Approve 2015-2016 Budget and Tax Request
- **September 15**, Student and Staff Reporting (NSSRS)
- **September 29**, ESSA Consolidated application and SPED Flex Funding Grant.
- **September 30** Filing deadline for Budget and LC-2 to 1) NDE, 2) Auditor of Public Accounts, 3) County Clerk(s)
- Submit the following documents to NDE through the LC-2 collection
    - ☐ Documents from the School District Budget Form
    - ☐ Interlocal Form Cover Page through Page 6
    - ☐ Schedules A, B, D Property Tax Resolution
    - ☐ Notices of Budget Hearing and Special Hearing (Special Hearing is eliminated if Joint Public hearing was required)
    - ☐ Proof of Publication for: Notice of Budget Hearing, Notice of Special Hearing to Set the Final Tax Request (Eliminated if joint public hearing was required)
    - ☐ Certification(s) of Taxable Value
    - ☐ Board minutes showing approval of district budget
    - ☐ Board minutes showing 70% board approval to request more property taxes than the certified authority amount (if applicable)
    - ☐ Election Ballot and Certification of Election Results for a successful election to override the levy limitation (if applicable)
    - ☐ Election Ballot and Certification of Election Results for a successful election to exceed the expenditure limitation (if applicable)
    - ☐ Election Ballot and Certification of Election Results for a successful election to exceed the Property Tax Authority (if applicable)
    - ☐ Lid Computation Form (LC-2) submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education through the NDE Portal
- Budget Submission for Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) and your County Clerk – A list of supporting materials required is on the "Checklist" tab of the School District Budget Form
    - ☐ Online submission of LC-2 (includes the Special Grant Fund List) to NDE

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- ☐ Printed copy of online LC-2 and Special Grant Fund List mailed to the Auditor of Public Accounts and the County Clerk
- ☐ Sample Ballot and Certification of Election Results - if a successful Special Election was held to exceed the expenditure limitation and/or levy limitation
- ☐ School District Budget Form - Pages 1-5 (Do not file the Worksheet Pages)
- ☐ Proof of Publication for Notice of Budget Hearing
- ☐ Notice of Budget Hearing and Budget Summary
- ☐ Schedules A, B, C & D of the School District Budget Form
- ☐ Copy of Certification of Taxable Value
- ☐ Sample Ballot and Certification of Election Results - if a successful Special Election was held to override the levy limitation
- ☐ Board Minutes showing approval of District Budget

- Review array and begin negotiations process
  - ☐ **September 1** Bargaining agent must request recognition
  - ☐ **October 1** Governing Board must respond to request
  - ☐ **November 1** Negotiations must begin

October

- **October 2-3** District Audit Scheduled
  - ☐ Student Membership and Attendance Audit Requirement**.** New Fall-2016. NDE will require formal verification from your auditors that testing has been performed on your student membership and attendance reporting. Statute 79-1089.
- **October 13**-Resolutions setting all tax requests filing deadline-this is typically done in September
- **October 15**-CDC Report
  - ☐ Assessed Valuations and Levies
  - ☐ Elementary Site Allowance
  - ☐ Estimated Expenditures for LEP and Poverty
  - ☐ PK Instructional Program Hours
  - ☐ Student Growth Adjustment
  - ☐ Summer School Student Unit
  - ☐ Two-Year New School Adjustment
- **October 15** County Boards set tax requests
- Poverty and LEP Plans open on the GMS in August (all plans for the following year are due October 15)

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November

- **November 1** Negotiations must begin
- **November 5** District Tax Requests become final
- **November 5** Deadline for school audit submission to Commissioner and State Auditor
- Acceptance of Audit Report-have your auditor present the district audit to the Board

December

- Discuss and consider School Calendar for next year
- Review and adopt the Certified Staff and Administrator's Professional Development Plan for next year

January

- Reorganization of the Board-election of officers and committees
- Deadline for amendments to General, Depreciation & Employee Benefits Funds in order to be included in certification of Budget Authority
- Board/Administrative Retreat for Goal setting
- Designate superintendent for federal and state programs
- Review depositors (banks, NLAF, etc.)
- **January 31** Response to the Letter to Management from Auditor
- Reminder: Negotiations needs to be completed by **February 8**

February

- Certified Staff Negotiations **February 8** *If no agreement parties must submit to resolution officer*
- Requisition forms, summer maintenance requests and supply forms
- Begin Budget Planning for next fiscal year (2.5%-3.5% increases)
    - Prepare new budget on NDE form with new AFR data
    - Begin Line-Item Budget
- Five-year expenditure projection-be sure you can sustain the current spending pattern or begin the staff reduction process
- Consider administrative contracts for the upcoming year
- Review transportation needs
- Curricular additions or deletions
- Budget Authority and Allowable Reserve Percentage Certification

March

- **March 1** State Aid Certification, Certified Budget Authority and Allowable Reserve Percentage Calculation
- **March 18-27** NEW 2025-Unified Grant Profile-all LEA's that use the GMS
- **March 25** Negotiations completed
- Summer maintenance requests due to superintendent

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- Consider teacher contracts
- Staffing recommendations
- Budget worksheets and requisitions
- Spring budget workshop
- Staff College Credit Report - staff requests for movement on pay scale/Form submissions

April

- Staffing Profile **April 15** RIF Deadline
- Summer facility work schedule
- Determine classified salaries

May

- Approve extra-duty assignments
- Days in Session-Instructional Program Hours Report on CDC opens
- Pupil Transportation Report opens-CDC

June

- Consolidated Data Collection
    - Annual Participation Report for Title I; Graduation Requirements; Days in Session/Instructional Hours; ESU District Profile; NEP Nebraska Education Profile; Transportation Report; Suspensions and Expulsions; Substitute Teachers report
- School District Budget Form and LC-2 documents available on FOS Website
- Supply and equipment orders placed for July delivery
- SPED IDEA Consolidated Application (Opens late April-due July)

July

- Schedule budget work session
- ESSA and IDEA reimbursement request
- REAP make sure funds have been spent and reimbursements requests completed
- Expenditure Exclusions request to State Board
    - Special and Supplementary Grants
    - Retirement Incentive Plans
    - Voluntary Termination Agreements
    - Retirement Contribution Increase
- Set substitute salaries
- Review Student Fees including activity admission prices and hot lunch prices
- Send preliminary budget to NDE for review
- Upload test AFR – Function and object codes change annually

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August

- Summer School Supplement due
- New payroll data needs to be updated with your insurance company for Workman's Compensation information
- **August 20**, County Assessors Certify District's Assessed Valuation
- LEP & Poverty Allowance Expenditure Requirement 117.65% of allocation (document prior to end of fiscal period)
- Set Budget Hearing and Tax Request Hearing dates in September

The key is to ask questions that clarify, connect, and hold the budget accountable to district priorities and student outcomes.

Current and Proposed Fund Balances

Outline all current fund balances, recommended balances, and proposed percentage increase for each:

1) General Fund
2) Cash Reserves
3) Depreciation Fund
4) Employee Benefit Fund
5) Contingency Fund
6) Activities Fund
7) School Nutrition Fund
8) Bond Fund
9) Special Building Fund
10) Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund [QCPUF]
11) Cooperative Fund
12) Current loans

Budget Planning and Discussion

During the planning and discussion phase of budget development, the board may wish to focus on key topics that clarify the overall budgeting process, set clear expectations for aligning resources with student outcomes, and ensure transparency without becoming involved in individual line-item allocations.

Mission, Vision, and Goals

- How does the budget align with our district's mission, vision, and strategic priorities?

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- What changes in this year's budget most directly support student success and district continuous improvement goals?
- Where is the district investing the most significant amount of resources to support instruction and learning, and why?
- What are the top priorities funded in this budget, and why were they chosen?

Revenue, Property Valuation

A short summary of variables that impact the design of the district budget.

- Students enrolled in Grades K-12
- Qualified 4-year-old students
- Contracted students from another district
- Net Option Funding [positive option students times state average. Basic Funding per student.]
- Local Effort Rate [Adjusted valuation divided by 100 x $1.00]
- Allocated Income Tax [percentage of income tax paid by patrons]
- Other Actual Receipts, Basic Funding, Poverty Allowance, Limited English Proficiency Allowance, Focus School & Program Allowance, Summer School Allowance, Special Receipts, Transportation, and many others not listed here.
- What assumptions were made regarding enrollment, state aid, federal funding, and local revenue?
- How conservative or aggressive are the revenue projections? What risks exist if projections are not met?
- Are there any one-time revenue resources [e.g., grants, ESU, state/federal monies] that are being used to cover ongoing expenses?
- Are there any anticipated changes in funding levels this year or in the near future?

Expenditures and Prioritization

- What are the noted increases or decreases the board should be cognizant of as compared to last year's budget?
- Which expenditures are mandated (state/federal) which are discretionary?
- What percentage of the budget funds are allocated to instruction, administration, and general operations?
- What areas of the current budget have been identified as potential cost savings or efficiencies?

Fund Balance and Long-Term Financial Stability

- Does this budget ensure long-term financial stability, or are we relying on reserves for recurring expenses?
- What are the district's contingency plans if revenue is lower than projected?
- If the district accesses a loan to offset the shortfall, what is the interest rate, terms of the loan, and maximum dollar amount the district may borrow?
- What are the projected budget impacts over the next three to five years?
- Do we have sufficient reserves?

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- What financial risks or uncertainties should the board be aware of?

Capital, Facilities/Grounds, and Debt

- How are capital improvement needs addressed in this budget?
- Do we anticipate taking on new debt, and how will this affect taxpayers?
- Are building and transportation maintenance and replacement cycles adequately funded?
- New external contracts/renewals (e.g., transportation, custodial, food service, garbage, recycling, snow removal, mowing, other

Staffing and Compensation

- How does this budget affect staffing levels?
- What percentage of the budget is allocated to salaries and benefits?
- What percentage of the negotiated agreement salary increase is a apportioned to the vertical movement of certified staff on the salary schedule?
- What portion of the budget reflects the negotiated agreement and projected staffing needs?
- What trend data is available outlining the trends of retention and attrition rates for the last three years?
- Are there positions being added, reduced, or repurposed and what is the rationale?
- How are funds being allocated to ensure equity across schools and student populations?
- Are at-risk, special education, English Language Learners, and gifted students adequately supported?

Transparency and Community Impact

- What would be the tax levy impact of this budget on local taxpayers?
- How will this budget be communicated to staff, parents, and the community at large?

Monitoring and Accountability

- What reports will be provided to the board to monitor spending throughout the year to ensure expenditure remains within the adopted budget?
- What will the headlines read once the board adopts the budget?

The Board's Fiscal Guidelines

I. The Role of the Board

A. Define and sustain the District Mission, Vision, and Goals

B. Hire and evaluate the superintendent

C. Engage and communicate with the community

D. Delegate authority through policy

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II. The Role of the Board related to school finance:

A. Establish clear expectations regarding the district's financial standing

1. Fund balances
2. Approve proposed debt
3. Monitor cash flow levels
4. Review and monitor financial reports and audits

B. Establish outcomes and priorities to be reflected in the budget

(The board is the voice of the community, and the budget should reflect the expectations for the school district including identifying and allocating resources to support improvement.)

C. Establish expectations for the development of the budget

1. Assess revenue and expense projections
2. Assess budget ramifications because of new legislation (i.e., adjustments to the state aid formula, etc.)
3. Identify expectations for a budget surplus and/or possible deficit
4. Consider district priorities and objectives as determined in the School Improvement Plan, Strategic Plan, District Goals, etc.

D. Establish policies governing business procedures

1. Review, revise, and establish board policies to govern school district financial and business management procedures. This ensures compliance with the law, ethical behavior, guide for decision-making, and a method of communicating with administration and staff.

Policies may include, but not be limited to:

a. Board Member Conflict of Interest
b. Ethics and Gifts
c. Board Member Expenses
d. Fund Balances
e. Revenue/Investments
f. Incurring Debt
g. Insufficient Fund Checks
h. Payment Procedures
i. Credit Cards
j. Purchases and Contracts

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k. Accounting and Audits

l. Activity Funds

m. Insurance

n. Transportation

o. Food Services

p. Free and Reduced – Price Food Services

q. Waiver of Student Fees – Student Fees

r. Expenses

1. Monitor compliance with board policies and procedures
2. Sustain continuous decision-making to support the mission, vision, and goals of both short- and long-range financial planning

E. Monitor financial performance (income and expenses) in relation to the adopted budget

1. Review a summary of income and expenses comparing with historical financial data to ensure appropriate management and expenditures
2. Review updated balance sheets monthly to reflect the district's financial standing
3. Assess appropriate evidence to ensure cash flow is adequate and the district is meeting obligations and in a timely fashion

F. Monitor the district's financial standing, current and long-term

1. Periodically throughout the year, the business manager/superintendent will provide information reflecting the district's financial standing including cash flow trends, accumulation of deficits or surplus, and long-term projections of income and expenditures

G. Monitor other financial issues which may result in positive or negative changes to the district's financial standing

1. Monitor current and projected student enrollment numbers and trends to assess the impact to the district's budget
2. Monitor option enrollment numbers
3. Monitor tax increment financing both current and proposed
4. Monitor state mandates and changes to the state aid formula
5. Monitor equalized and non-equalization status

III. School District Budget – Board Members should be exposed to:

A. Budget Timeline/Activities

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B. TEEOSA (Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act)

C. State Aid Calculation Factors

    1. Students – students educated by the district and students for which tuition is paid.
    2. State Aid calculated based upon
        a. Fall enrollment figures/Average Daily Membership
        b. Qualified Early Childhood Fall Membership
        c. Contracted Students

D. Classification of Funds

    1. Fund
    2. General Fund
    3. Depreciation Fund
    4. Employee Benefit Fund
    5. Contingency Fund
    6. Activities Fund
    7. School Lunch Fund
    8. Bond Fund
    9. Special Building Fund
    10. Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund
    11. Cooperative Fund
    12. Student Fee Fund

E. Revenue Sources

    1. Certified Valuation
    2. Estimated Tax Levy
    3. General Fund Revenue
        a. Local
            i. Property & Motor Vehicle Taxes
            ii. Interest & Local Fines and Licenses
        b. State
            i. State Aid, State Grants, Apportionment
            ii. SPED Reimbursement

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c. Federal

i. IDEA & Title Funding, Medicaid

ii. Other Federal Grant Funding

d. Non-Revenue

i. Transfers from other funds, Loans, Sale of District Property, Insurance Proceeds

IV. Board Role in Audit

F. Questions for the Auditor

1. What are the fund balances?
2. What are fund balance trends?
3. What is the percent of debt-to-debt limitation?
4. Is there an appropriate separation of duties?
5. What items are on the management letter?
6. Findings?

The Budget Process

Policy Process—The board must set policy to define and support the budgeting process.

Planning Process—The leadership team follows a budget calendar which defines budget related deadlines and board work sessions to assess and discuss district needs relative to the next school year. This enables administration to inform and educate the board on matters that may impact the levy, fund balances, available resources, etc.

Budget Hearing and Adoption Process—The board invites public input through the budget hearing process. It is at this phase that the board may decrease and/or increase the tax asking, respond to Legislative and Department mandates, and address district needs.

Budget Management and Assessment Process—The board monitors the budget through monthly budget reports and the assessment of expenditures.

Annual Audit Process—The board authorizes the annual audit which is required by law. The board receives and approves the audit report at a regular monthly board meeting.

§ 13-506 Proposed budget statement; notice; contents; hearing; adoption; certify to board; file with auditor; school district; duties.

(1) Each governing body shall each year or biennial period conduct a public hearing on its proposed budget statement. Such hearing shall be held separately from any regularly scheduled meeting of the governing body and shall not be limited by time. Notice of place and time of such hearing, together with a summary of the

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proposed budget statement, shall be published at least four-calendar days prior to the date set for hearing in a newspaper of general circulation within the governing body's jurisdiction.

TEEOSA

What is the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act (TEEOSA)? The Act is the current school finance formula used to calculate funding of Nebraska public schools. TEEOSA was adopted into law in 1990. The TEEOSA aid process is calculated twice per year, spring for the following school year and fall for the current year.

There are several forms of aid that the state provides for school systems:

Allocated Income Tax: Every school district receives a portion of the income tax paid to the state by the patrons of the district (approximately 2%).

Net Option Funding: If a district has more students optioning in than they have opting out they receive aid dollars for each student above the number optioning out.

Equalization Aid: This is the largest piece of aid package the state funds for schools. Currently, the majority of school districts do not receive this type of funding. To determine if schools get equalization aid the district's resources are compared to the cost associated with educating the students in the district (needs).

Need sources include:

I. Formula Students

   Students enrolled in Grades K-12

   Qualified 4-year-old students

   Contracted students with another school district

II. Allowances and Adjustments

   Poverty

   English Language Learners

   Transportation, Summer School, Elementary Site, etc.....

Resources include:

I. Local Effort Rate (Adjusted valuation divided by 100 x $1.00)

II. Net Option Funding (positive option students times state avg. Basic Funding per student)

III. Allocated Income Tax (percentage of income tax paid by patrons)

IV. Other Actual Receipts (other monies the district receives from any other source)

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FORMULA NEEDS CALCULATION				
Basic Funding	282.17 Students @	$14,134 ←	Avg Cost of 10 Larger / 10 Smaller	$3,988,139
	# of students from ADM			
Poverty Allowance			Based on Free and Reduced Lunch	$129,650
Limited English Allowance			Based on LEP Students	$-
Focus School Allowance			Districts in Learning Community	$-
Summer School Allowance			Based on Summer School Costs	$-
Special Receipts Allowance			Actual Receipts for Special Education	$207,828
Transportation Allowance			Lesser of actual costs or calculation	$135,247
Elementary Site Allowance			Sites offer same grades / Distance	$-
Distance Education Allowance			Based on % of Internet Costs	$-
Averaging Adjustment			>900 students & levy > $1.00	$-
New School Adjustment			New Building in the District	$-
Student Growth Adjustment			Student Growth > 25 students or 1%	$-
Community Achieve Adjust			Learning Community Districts (3 yrs)	$-
LEP Allowance Correction			Actual LEP expenses < required	$-
Student Growth Correction			Actual student growth < required	$-
Poverty Allowance Correction			Actual poverty costs < required	$-
Non Qualified LEP Adjust			LEP expenditures < 50% of allowances	$-
Total Calculated Formula Needs				$4,460,864
Formula Needs Stabilization			Previous year needs between 100 - 112 %	$229,142
Total Formula Needs				**$4,690,006**

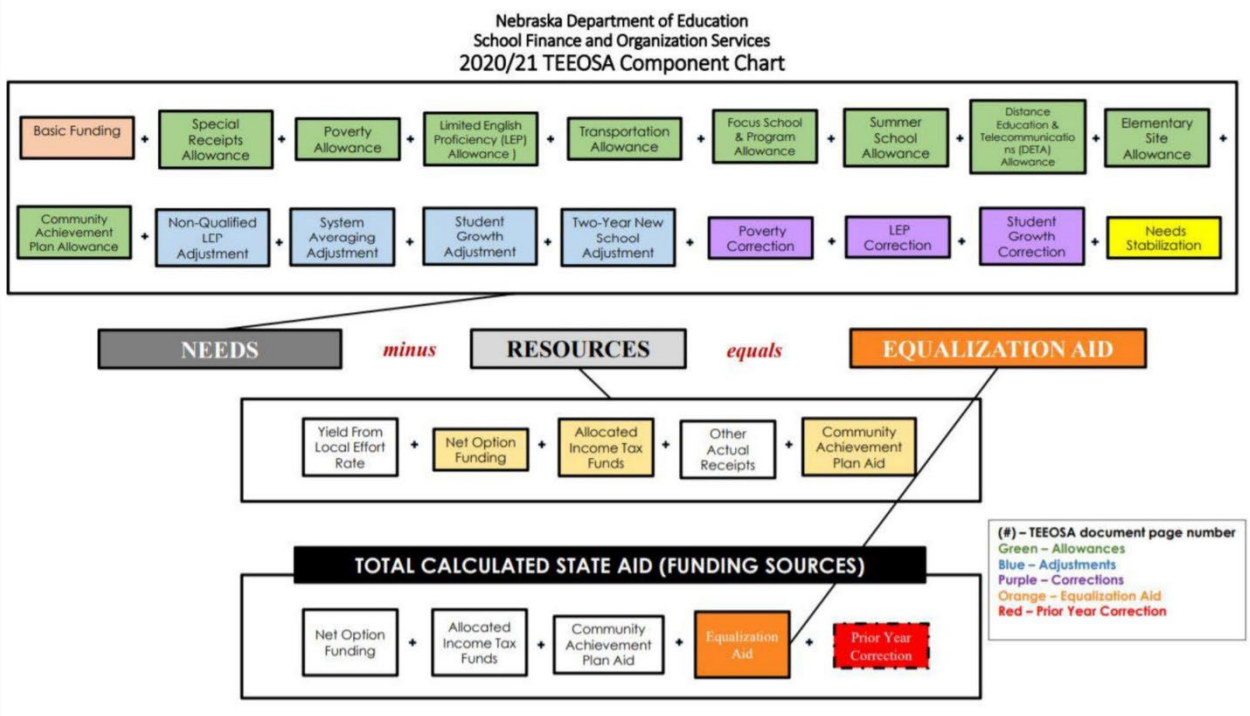
FORMULA RESOURCES CALCULATION				
Yield from Local Effort Rate	Adusted Valuation	$665,328,840	$665,328,840/100 * $1.00	$6,653,288
Net Option Funding			Net Option Students * Statewide Avg Basic	$-
Allocated Income Tax			% of Income Tax of District Residents	$25,041
Other Actual Receipts			Actual Receipts from Previous Year	$521,182
Community Achive Plan				$-
Total Formula Resources				**$7,199,511.40**

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STATE AID CALCULATION					
Equilization Aid	Needs	minus	Resources	Needs minus resources dictates need for aid	
	$4,690,006		$7,199,511	$(2,509,505)	
				Resources greater than needs so equalization	$-
Net Option Funding				Net Option Students * Statewide Avg Basic	$-
Allocated Income Tax				% of Income Tax of District Residents	$25,041
Community Achive Plan					$-
Total State Aid Calculated					$25,041.00
Prior Year State Aid Correction				Recalculation of Prior Year Aid based on Actual	$-
Total State Aid					**$25,041**

In this illustration the school district's resources are greater than its needs, so it does not qualify for Equalization Aid. There are more students opting out than opting in, so they do not receive any Net Option Funding. Consequently, the only funds they receive from the state are Allocated Income Tax dollars.

The numbers for every district in the state will be different but the same needs versus resources calculation is done for each district. Schools that have a positive net option number will receive money for the number of positive students they have. Every school district will receive a percentage of the income taxes paid by their patrons.



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Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why does our school district receive a small amount of state aid?

   The school district may be considered non-equalized, which means the district does not receive equalization aid. The equalization aid is the largest component of the TEEOSA Aid, the resources are greater than the need, and if the district is property rich, that results in reduced amount of support from the state.

   As school districts realize decreased valuations and enrollment, the district may as a result, become equalized.

2. Does the general fund levy have an effect on TEEOSA aid?

   No, the school district's general fund levy rate does not affect TEEOSA aid.

3. Are there restrictions on how school district resources can be expended?

   Yes, the tax proceeds must be spent for the purpose for which the taxes were collected. Ex. Building fund projects cannot be paid out of the General Fund.

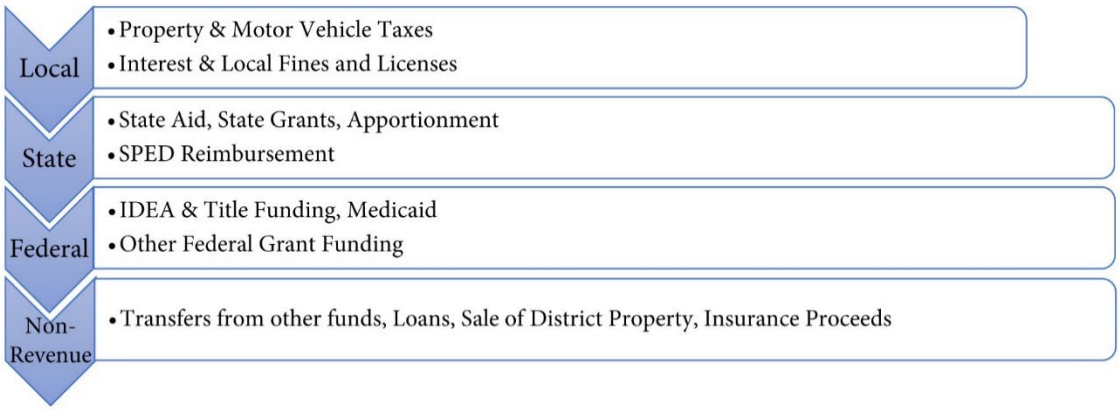
4. How much will the school district's levy generate in property taxes?

   (Levy x Valuation) ÷ 100

5. What will a penny of my levy generate in property taxes?

   Move decimal over four spaces to the left. Example $450,000,000 [$.01 = $45,000]

General Fund Revenue



Classification of Funds

A **FUND** is a sum of money or is the money derived from certain sources and set aside for specific purposes and activities. An **ACCOUNT** within a fund records the financial transactions that are similar in terms of a given frame of reference, either as a receipt or as a disbursement. The fund accounts collectively constitute a complete record of all transactions encompassed by the fund. In addition, State Statute §79-1089 requires

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that a public accountant or a certified public accountant annually examine all financial records maintained by school districts.

GENERAL FUND - The General Fund finances all facets of services rendered by the school district. General Fund receipts are classified according to source while its expenditures are classified according to specific functions. The General Fund is maintained by all operating school districts in the state. General Fund expenditures are limited by statute. The tax levy for this fund is restricted. The General Fund cannot be used to purchase buildings or land for the district -- those are functions of the Special Building Fund.

BOND FUND - The Bond Fund shall be used to record tax receipts, investment interest, and the payment of bond principal, interest, and other related costs (i.e. trustee fees). If the fund balance is not sufficient to meet interest or bond retirement payments from the Bond Fund, the General Fund shall be used for these payments. Revenue from a levy to retire bonds in any school district is retained in a separate fund by the county treasurer, the financial institution serving as a fiscal agent, or the school district. Funds shall be disbursed upon appropriate demand. All records of the transactions in this area shall be maintained in this fund. Proceeds from a bond issue shall be deposited into the Special Building Fund to be expended on the actual building project.

The tax levy for this fund is restricted for expenditures other than principal and interest on bonds. Proceeds from a bond issue shall be deposited into the Special Building Fund to be expended on the actual building project.

QUALIFIED CAPITAL PURPOSE UNDERTAKING FUND - A Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund may be established for the removal of environmental hazards, the reduction or elimination of accessibility barriers in school district buildings, the repayment of a qualified zone academy bond issued for a qualified capital purpose, modifications for life safety code violations, life safety hazards, and mold abatement and prevention projects for existing facilities only. General Fund expenditures for the purpose of this fund are not allowable. Qualified Zone Academy Bonds, Qualified School Construction Bonds, and Build America Bonds are included in the Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund if issued prior to April 19, 2016. Effective April 19, 2016, the tax levy for this fund is restricted to $.03. The tax levy for Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking projects in place prior to April 19, 2016, remains at $.052. The levy may exceed the $.03 levy limit if valuation has decreased from the last year bonds were issued and the bond principal and interest obligation cannot be met. Tax levies for the removal of environmental hazards, the reduction or elimination of accessibility barriers in school district buildings, the repayment of a qualified zone academy bond issued for a qualified capital purpose, modifications for life safety code violations, and mold abatement and prevention projects cannot exceed ten years for each project. Tax levies for each qualified capital purpose for which the Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) is issued according to (§79-10,110 R.R.S.) cannot exceed fifteen years.

SPECIAL BUILDING FUND - A Special Building Fund shall be established when a school board decides to acquire or improve sites and/or to erect, alter or improve buildings. The sale of bonds, the sale of property, or tax receipts will be the primary sources of revenue for the Special Building Fund. Regardless of the source of money to be used for building construction and related costs, all income for the purposes of this fund

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shall be accountable through this fund. General Fund expenditures for the purpose of this fund are not allowable. Special Building Fund accounting provides a more effective means of identifying those expenditures associated with construction activities and provides a complete and consolidated record of all costs of the building program at the conclusion of a project(s). If more than one Special Building Fund project is active at the same time, separate accounts for each project may be established within the single Special Building Fund. Teacherage-related transactions are included in the Special Building Fund. The tax levy for this fund is restricted to $.14 with local board approval or $.175 following a vote of the people for a term not to exceed ten years (§79-1098 R.R.S.).

DEPRECIATION FUND - A Depreciation Fund may be established by a school district to facilitate the eventual purchase of costly capital outlay by reserving such monies from the General Fund. To allocate monies from the General Fund, a school district will show the movement of monies as an expense from the General Fund and the Depreciation Fund will show the revenue as a transfer from the General Fund. The school district may divide this fund into more than one account to allocate a portion of this fund for different valid purposes. The purpose of the Depreciation Fund is to spread replacement costs over a period of years to avoid a disproportionate tax effort in a single year to meet such an expense. This fund is restricted by statute as part of the Allowable Reserve limitation. The Depreciation Fund is not specifically provided for in law; therefore, this fund shall be considered a component of the General Fund.

EMPLOYEE BENEFIT FUND - An Employee Benefit Fund may be established in order to specifically reserve General Fund money for the benefit of school district employees (unemployment compensation, early retirement, health insurance deductibles, etc.) To allocate monies from the General Fund, a school district will show the movement of monies as an expense from the General Fund, and the Employee Benefit Fund will show the revenue as a transfer from the General Fund. A school district may divide this fund into more than one account to allocate a portion of this fund for different valid purposes. The cash reserve of this fund is restricted by statute as part of the Allowable Reserve limitation. The Employee Benefit Fund is not specifically provided for in law; therefore, this fund shall be considered a component of the General Fund.

CONTINGENCY FUND - A Contingency Fund is authorized by statute (§79-1072) and may be established by a school district to fund uninsured losses and legal fees incurred by the school district for defense against public losses. Expenditures from this fund shall not exceed five percent of the total budgeted General Fund expenditures of the school district. To allocate monies from the General Fund, a school district shall show the movement of monies as an expense from the General Fund, and the Contingency Fund shall show the revenue as a transfer from the General Fund.

ACTIVITIES FUND - The Activities Fund is required to account for the financial operations of quasi-independent student organizations, inter-school athletics, and other self-supporting or partially self-supporting school activities. The inclusion of such accounts in the General Fund would distort the financial position of the basic school operation and would complicate the computation of the net expense incurred in conducting school services. The Activities Fund shall not be used to record general operation revenues or expenditures, nor shall this fund be used as a clearinghouse for the General Fund. The school district may divide this fund into more than one account to allocate a portion of this fund for different purposes.

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The financial operations of all school-connected activities are a legal responsibility of the board of education. If deficits in such activities are incurred, they shall be covered by funds transferred from the General Fund. Such revenue shall finance only those projects that qualify for approval under policies established by the school district board of education for such activities. Districts offering curriculum to build or construct homes or other structures that may be sold to the public should include those revenues and corresponding costs to the Activities Fund.

SCHOOL NUTRITION FUND - The School Nutrition Fund is required to accommodate the financial activities of all Nutrition Programs operated by the school district. The School Nutrition Fund shall reflect a record of all revenues and expenditures incident to the operation of all Nutrition Programs. If a deficit is incurred in the operation, the deficiency shall be covered by funds transferred from the General Fund.

COOPERATIVE FUND - The Cooperative Fund may be used by the school district acting as the fiscal agent for any cooperative activity between one or more public agencies. All school districts, including the school district acting as the fiscal agent, shall show the payment for services to the cooperative in their General Fund.

STUDENT FEE FUND - The Student Fee Fund is a separate school district fund not funded by tax revenue into which all money collected from students pursuant to the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act must be deposited. Included are fees for Extracurricular Activities, Postsecondary Education and Summer/Night School. Expenditures from this fund must be for the purposes for which the fees were collected.

NDE School Finance & Organization Services Budget Finance Glossary of Terms

Access to Prior Year's Unused Budget Authority – an amount equal to the lesser of 2% of the prior year's adjusted general fund expenditures or the prior year's total unused budget authority. This amount is calculated by the Department of Education.

Adopted Budget – the document adopted by a board of education. Provides the authority for a school district to make expenditures and generate tax dollars. Contains the estimated amounts of receipts and expenditures for each fund. Required by the Nebraska Budget Act. May also be referred to as the budget.

Amended Budget – the document that reflects a change in expenditures for any fund. Budgets may be amended through the last day of the school fiscal year (August 31). An amendment should occur whenever it has been determined the amount of budgeted expenditures originally adopted will not meet the financial needs of the school district.

Applicable Allowable Reserve Percentage – determined by statute §79-1027. The percentage is based on the average daily membership (ADM) of a school district. Places a limitation on the amount of funds that may be budgeted as reserves in the General Fund and Employee Benefit Fund and the total requirements in the Depreciation Fund.

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Assessed Valuation – certified by the county assessor on or before August 20. Includes all real, personal, and centrally assessed valuation in a school district. Used by the county board of equalization to determine the tax levy for each taxing fund in a school district.

Basic Allowable Growth Rate – determined by §77-3446 and §79-1025. The basic allowable growth rate for 2014/15 is 2.5%. May also be referred to as BAGR.

Budget – the document that provides the authority for a school district to make expenditures and generate tax dollars. Contains the estimated amounts of receipts and expenditures for each fund. Required by the Nebraska Budget Act. May also be referred to as the adopted budget or the School District Budget Form.

Budget Authority – the total amount of funds that may be budgeted to be expended during a school fiscal year. In the General Fund, this includes special education expenditures, special grant funds and non-special education expenditures.

Budget Based Calculation – a method for determining certified budget authority found in §79-1023(4). This calculation uses the prior year's budget information, and the ensuing year's Formula Needs.

Budget Factors Certification – a document provided by the Department of Education. Includes required information for preparing the LC-2 for the ensuing school fiscal year.

Certification of Taxable Value – the document from the county assessor that certifies the amount of assessed valuation for the school district. A school district that has land in more than one county will receive this document from each county assessor.

Certified Budget Authority – the greater of the Budget Based Calculation, the Student Growth Adjustment, or the Formula Needs Calculation. Certified budget authority plus Access to Prior Year's Unused Budget Authority is the amount that must stay within the expenditure limitation.

Exclusions – items that are removed from the levy limitation or the expenditure limitation. Levy limitation exclusions are found in §77-3442 and expenditure limitation exclusions are found in §79-1003(39) and §79-1028.01.

Expenditure Limitation – a restriction or limit in budgeted expenditures for a school district. May also be referred to as the spending lid.

Formula Needs Based Calculation – a method for determining certified budget authority found in §79-1023(3). This calculation uses the total formula needs certified for the ensuing school fiscal year and the budgeted special education expenditures from the prior school fiscal year.

General Fund Budget of Disbursements and Transfers – the total amount of disbursements a school district estimates spending during a school fiscal year. A school district may not exceed this total amount. May also be referred to as General Fund Budget of Expenditures or General Fund Expenditures.

General Fund Cash Reserves – this is not cash on hand or cash or a beginning cash balance. The General Fund Cash Reserve helps with cash flow based upon the collection of tax receipts and enables the school district to keep three to four months of disbursements as cash reserve in the general fund.

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LC-2 – the Lid Computation form. The LC-2 assists a school district in preparing the budget to stay within the statutory expenditure limitation. The LC-2 is available as an online data collection through the NDE Portal. May also be referred to as the Lid Computation Form or the Budget Form LC-2.

Levy – the rate at which property is taxed based on each $100 of assessed valuation. Restricted by §77-3442. School districts are under a statutory maximum levy plus exclusions. May also be referred to as the tax rate.

Levy Exclusions – items that are removed from the statutory maximum levy calculation. Levy limitation exclusions are found in §77-3442.

Levy Limitation – a restriction on the growth in tax dollars for a school district. The statutory maximum levy is $1.05 plus exclusions per $100 of assessed valuation for school fiscal year 2014/15 for school districts that are not members of a learning community. School districts that are members of a learning community are limited to a combined General Fund and Special Building Fund levy that will be the difference between $1.05 and the amount a learning community coordinating council levies for the General Fund and Special Building Fund of its member school districts. May also be referred to as the levy lid.

Local System – a learning community, a unified system, or a Class II, III, IV or V school district.

Minimum Levy Adjustment – a component of State Aid. Applied to any local system that is a member of a learning community that has a general fund levy that is 5¢ less than the statutory maximum levy for a learning community. For all other local systems, applied if the general fund levy is 10¢ less than the statutory maximum levy.

Nebraska Budget Act – the portions of state statute (§13-501 through §13-513) that refer to the budget practices and procedures that all political subdivisions must follow.

Necessary Cash Reserve(s) – an amount of budgeted funds to provide a stable cash flow during a school fiscal year. Limited by the Applicable Allowable Reserve Percentage (only impacts the General, Depreciation and Employee Benefit Funds) or by 50% of the total expenditures in a budgeted fund less capital outlay.

Notice of Amended Budget Hearing – information that must be published in a newspaper of general circulation in a school district. Notifies the public of the time, day, and place of a hearing to amend the current school fiscal year budget, the dollar amount of the amendment, and the reason for amending the budget. Must be published 5 days before the hearing. The Auditor of Public Accounts considers the day of publication and the day of the hearing in the 5-day requirement. Contains the proposed amendment to the current school fiscal year budget and contains a copy of the originally published budget summary. May also be referred to as the Notice of Amended Budget Hearing and Budget Summary.

Notice of Budget Hearing – the form that must be published in a newspaper of general circulation in a school district. Notifies the public of the time, day, and place of a hearing on the ensuing school fiscal year budget. Must be published 5 days before the hearing. The Auditor of Public Accounts considers the day of publication and the day of the hearing in the 5-day requirement. Details the total receipts, expenditures,

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cash reserves, and property tax request for the school district. May also be referred to as the Notice of Budget Hearing and Budget Summary.

Notice of Special Hearing to Set Final Tax Request – required by §77-1601.02. Provides notice to the taxpayer of the opportunity to provide input on the amount of property taxes being requested for the upcoming school fiscal year.

Notice of Summary of Changes – information that must be published if the budget that was adopted is different from the budget information that was published in the Notice of Budget Hearing and Budget Summary. If this form is published within 20 days after the budget is adopted, no additional hearing is required.

Proof of Publication – the document received from the newspaper that provides documentation the notice of hearing was published. May also be referred to as the Affidavit of Publication.

Property Tax Request – the total dollar amount of funds that will need to be generated through taxes to meet the operating needs for the upcoming school fiscal year. Includes county treasurer's commission and an amount for delinquent taxes.

Schedule A – an attachment to the School District Budget Form. Provides the amount of general fund expenditure exclusions for repairs to infrastructure damaged by a natural disaster, judgments not paid for by a school district's liability insurance, voluntary termination agreements, the retirement contribution increase, and distance education courses.

Schedule B – an attachment to the School District Budget Form. Provides the amount of the total personal and real property tax request that is excluded from the levy limitation for voluntary termination agreements, Special Building Fund projects commenced prior to April 1, 1996, judgments, lease-purchase agreements entered into between July 1, 1996 and July 1, 1997, and bond principal and interest. It does not include the repayment of principal, premium, or interest on general obligation bonds issued for insurance premium costs and the payment of all costs and expenses associated with membership in a risk management pool that are effective after April 2, 2008.

Schedule C – an attachment to the School District Budget Form. A worksheet to assist schools in calculating the amount of the personal and real property tax request that is under the levy limitation.

School District Budget Form – the document that provides the authority for a school district to make expenditures and generate tax dollars. Contains the estimated amounts of receipts and expenditures for each taxing fund. Required by the Nebraska Budget Act. Also referred to as the budget or budget document.

Special Education Budget of Disbursements and Transfers – the estimated expenditures for special education activities. Includes instructional and transportation costs. May also be referred to as Special Education Budget of Expenditures or Special Education Expenditures.

School Fiscal Year – begins on September 1 and ends on August 31.

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Special Grant Funds – exclusions to the expenditure limitation. State Board of Education approves the list of special grant funds for each school fiscal year. Special Grants are funds receipted and expended for a specific purpose. Special grant funds do not increase the property tax request for a school district.

Spending Authority – the total amount of expenditures actually budgeted in each fund on the School District Budget Form.

Statutory Maximum Levy – the maximum levy per $100 of taxable value. The maximum General Fund levy for school districts that are not members of a learning community is $1.05 plus exclusions. The maximum levy for schools that are members of a learning community will be the difference between $1.05 and the amount a learning community coordinating council levies for the General Fund and Special Building Fund of its member school districts.

Student Growth Adjustment – a method for determining certified budget authority found in §79-1023(3). This calculation uses the prior year's budget information and the ensuing year's Student Growth Adjustment component of State Aid.

Student Growth Correction – a State Aid data component used to determine Student Growth Adjustment budget authority. The difference between the Student Growth Adjustment component of State Aid and the average daily membership for the most recently available complete data year.

Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act – the statutory provisions for calculating and certifying State Aid and Budget Factors to school districts. May also be referred to as TEEOSA.

Property Tax Request Resolution – a document adopted by a board of education and forwarded to the county clerk. Includes the total amount of tax dollars requested for each taxing fund of a school district.

Total Budget of Disbursements and Transfers – the total amount of expenditures required to operate a school district for a school fiscal year. This amount is the maximum a school district may expend. May also be referred to as Total Budget of Expenditures.

Total Unused Budget Authority – the prior year's unused budget authority reduced by access to the prior year's unused budget authority and increased by the current year's unused budget authority. Total unused budget authority is calculated on the LC-2 and carries forward into future school fiscal years.

Unused Budget Authority – the difference between total allowable budget authority and total adjusted general fund budget of disbursements and transfers. Unused budget authority is calculated on the LC-2 and is a component of Total Unused Budget Authority.

Nebraska Negotiations Law

The negotiations process is governed by a constitutionally created agency titled the Commission of Industrial Relations (CIR). The Supreme Court defines the Commission as an administrative agency with the authority to conduct hearings on and conduct investigations into disputed claims to understand the facts and make a judgment call regarding the outcome or consequences. The proceedings that come before

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the Commission may be filed by the employer, the employee or the employee's association or union. There are three commissioners assigned to the case and it is heard by one commissioner independently, but the decision is decided by the three appointed.

The Commission is made up of five part-time commissioners appointed for a 6-year term by the Governor and requires legislative approval. The commissioners pick one of their members to serve as presiding commissioner for a two-year term. The Commission rules on:

Wage—which is to say that the Commission establishes rates of pay and conditions of employment which are comparable to the prevalent wage rates paid and conditions of employment maintained for the same or similar work of workers exhibiting like or similar skills under the same or similar working conditions.

Prohibited Practice Complaints—the duty to negotiate in good faith on mandatory topics of bargaining. Good faith bargaining requirements ensure that an employer will not simply "go through the motions" of discussing mandatory topics of bargaining and then take unilateral action by implementing its own terms. This requirement, coupled with the requirement that the parties reach a genuine impasse on the issue, ensures that an employer will not achieve its terms in bad faith.

Mandatory subjects of bargaining:

- Wages
- Benefits (insurance, personal and sick leave, etc.)
- Deviation
- Salary schedule, including placement
- Bonuses
- Grievance procedure
- Contracting out bargaining unit work
- Cash-in-lieu
- Management employment prerogatives:
- Right to hire
- Maintain order and efficiency
- Schedule work
- Control transfers and assignments
- Determine what extracurricular activities may be; supported or sponsored
- Determine the curriculum
- Contract days

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- Class size
- Specialties to be employed

On or Before	Negotiations Timeline Action or Activity
September 1	Bargaining agent must request recognition
October 1	Board must respond to recognition request
November 1	Negotiations must begin (on or before)
February 8	If no agreement, parties must submit to mediation or fact-finding (unless both parties agree in writing to forgo)
March 25*	Negotiations must end on or before or within 25 days after certification of amounts
September 15	CIR must render decision on industrial dispute

Note: There shall be no fewer than four negotiations meetings between the certificated and instructional employees' collective bargaining agent and the governing board's bargaining agent. **This does not mean that if the board settles in three meetings that the district is in violation of the law.*

Superintendent Pay Transparency Act

Superintendent/ESU Administrator approved contracts and amendments are to be filed with the Nebraska Department of Education by August 1 each school year. Updated contracts/amendments may be uploaded at any time. Note: If the school district and/or ESU has a change during the school year, NDE requires that the old contract and amendments are removed and updated with the new contract and supporting documentation.

Supporting Documentation

For each school district and Educational Service Unit, a separate identification and description of all current and future costs of the contract that are reasonably anticipated as a result of any contract, and any adopted amendments, for services rendered by the superintendent or ESU Administrator, must be included in the budget statement and reported to the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) per statute.

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SUPERINTENDENT PAY TRANSPARENCY ACT STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS [§79-2401 through §79-2405]	
Step I. **Board Notice to Public**	**REQUIRED TIMELINE AND ACTION OF THE BOARD**
(Prior to Board Action.) **RETURNING & NEW HIRE** of the Superintendent or ESU Administrator	At least **three days** before the Board Meeting: ☐ Publish/Post Meeting Notice to approve proposed contract or amendment to the contract that provides detailed contract costs, date, time, and location of the Board Meeting. ☐ Publish/Post a (PDF) of the proposed contract or amendment. ☐ Publish in a newspaper **or** post the proposed contract or amendment and proposed costs on the school district website in a prominent location that is accessible to the public.
Step II. **Board Notice to Public**	**REQUIRED TIMELINE AND ACTION OF THE BOARD**
(Following Board Action.) **RETURNING & NEW HIRE** of the Superintendent or ESU Administrator	At least **two days** following board action to approve the contract or amendment: ☐ Publish/Post a (PDF) of the approved contract or amendment. ☐ Publish/Post the contract/amendment costs for current year and estimate of costs for future years of the contract. ☐ Publish in a newspaper **or** post the contract or amendment and complete proposed cost information on the school district website in a prominent location that is accessible to the public.
Step III. **Administrator**	**DISTRICT/ESU ADMINISTRATOR** **RESPONSIBILITIES FOLLOWING BOARD ACTION.**
Annually, on or before **August 1st**	The school district Superintendent or ESU Administrator will submit a (PDF) copy of the approved contract or contract with amendment through the Consolidated Data Collection (CDC) in the NDE Portal. *Instructions for filing may be found at:* https://cdc.education.ne.gov/STPA/Instructions/STPA_Instructions.pdf
Annually, on or before **September 20th**	The school district Superintendent or ESU Administrator will submit Budget Schedule D with the budget documents.

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Note: If the school district and/or ESU has a change in the superintendent or ESU Administrator during the school year, the respective district or ESU must update the information with NDE and post according to the guidelines outlined above. Remove the old information including contracts and/or amendments and update with the new contract.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION

The board will conduct an ongoing evaluation of the superintendent's skills, abilities, and competence. At a minimum, the board will formally evaluate the superintendent twice in the first year and annually thereafter. The goal of the superintendent's formal evaluation is to ensure the education program for the students is carried out, promote growth in effective administrative leadership, clarify the superintendent's role, clarify the immediate priorities of the board, and develop a working relationship between the board and the superintendent.

The formal evaluation will be based upon the following principles:

1. The evaluation criteria shall be in writing, clearly stated and mutually agreed upon by the board and the superintendent. The criteria will be related to the job description and the school district's goals;
2. At a minimum, the evaluation process will be conducted annually at a time agreed upon;
3. Each board member shall have an opportunity to individually evaluate the superintendent, and these individual evaluations will be compiled into an overall evaluation by the entire board;
4. The board as a whole shall discuss its evaluation with the superintendent in open or closed session as appropriate; and
5. The board will complete the evaluation process by reaching consensus on goals or priorities for the superintendent for the next period of evaluation.

Any thorough evaluation of the Superintendent will likely have both positive and negative comments interspersed throughout the discussion. If the board enters into closed session it must clearly be to prevent needless harm to the reputation of an individual or for the protection of the public interest. Policy 204.06 Closed Session should be followed in all respects when going into or coming out of closed session.

The board president will develop a written summary of the individual evaluations, including both the strengths and the weaknesses of the superintendent, and place it in the superintendent's personnel file to be incorporated into the next cycle of evaluations.

This policy supports and does not preclude the ongoing, informal evaluation of the superintendent's skills, abilities and competence.

Legal Reference: Neb. Statute 79-828

Cross Reference: 202.03 Board Self-Evaluation
204.06 Closed Sessions

Approved **5/8/2023** Reviewed **G.C. May 2023** Revised _____

ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION

The superintendent shall conduct an ongoing process of evaluating the administrators on their skills, abilities, and competence. At a minimum, the administrators will be evaluated annually, and twice during the first year. Administrators who are new or probationary certificated employees shall be evaluated at least once each semester. The goal of the formal evaluation process is to ensure that the educational program for the students is carried out, promote growth in effective administrative leadership for the school district, clarify the administrator's role as defined by the board and the superintendent, determine areas in need of improvement, clarify the immediate priorities of the responsibilities listed in the job description, and develop a working relationship between the superintendent and the administrator.

The superintendent is responsible for designing an administrator evaluation instrument. The formal evaluation shall include written criteria related to the job description. The superintendent, after receiving input from the administrators, shall present the formal evaluation instrument to the board for approval.

The formal evaluation shall also include an opportunity for the administrator and the superintendent to discuss the written criteria, the past year's performance and the future areas of growth. The evaluation shall be completed by the superintendent, signed by the administrator and filed in the administrator's personnel file.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to conduct a formal evaluation of all administrators prior to April 15.

This policy supports and does not preclude the ongoing informal evaluation of the administrator's skills, abilities and competence.

Legal Reference: Neb. Statute 79-828
NDE Rule 10-007.06

Approved **5/8/2023** Reviewed **G.C. May 2023** Revised _____

CERTIFICATED EMPLOYEE EVALUATION

Evaluation of certificated employees on their skills, abilities, and competence shall be an ongoing process supervised by the building principals and conducted by approved evaluators. The goal of the formal evaluation of certificated employees, other than administrators, but including extracurricular employees, shall be to improve the education program, to maintain certificated employees who meet or exceed the board's standards of performance, to clarify the certificated employee's role, to ascertain the areas in need of improvement, to clarify the immediate priorities of the board, and to develop a working relationship between the administrators and other employees.

The formal evaluation criteria shall be in writing. The formal evaluation shall provide an opportunity for the evaluator and the certificated employee to discuss the past semester's performance and the future areas of growth. The formal evaluation shall be completed by the evaluator, signed by the certificated employee and filed in the certificated employee's personnel file. This policy supports, and does not preclude, the ongoing informal evaluation of the certificated employee's skills, abilities and competence.

The Superintendent will create an administrative regulation describing the procedure to be used for evaluations and including the evaluation instrument. At a minimum this will provide for evaluation of instructional performance, classroom organization and management, professional conduct, and personal conduct. It will provide for a written description of all noted deficiencies, specific means for the correction of the noted deficiencies and an adequate timeline for implementing the concrete suggestions for improvement. The teacher will be allowed to offer a written response. The regulation will also specify what training will be provided by the district for evaluators.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent and the building principal to ensure permanent certificated employees are evaluated at a minimum annually. The evaluation shall include at least one classroom observation for one period. Periodic or partial evaluations may be done more frequently at the superintendent’s or principal’s discretion.

New and probationary certificated employees shall be evaluated at least once each semester. This evaluation procedure will include at least one classroom observation for one period each semester.

In the event a district changes its policies or procedures for certificated-employee evaluation, it shall submit the revised policies and procedures to the Commissioner or designee for approval.

The requirements stated in the Negotiated Contract between employees in the certified collective bargaining unit and the board regarding evaluation of such employees shall be followed.

Approved **12/11/2023** Reviewed **G.C. Dec 2023** Revised _____

Legal Reference: Neb. Statute 79-828
NDE Rule 10-007.06

Cross Reference: 408.05 Certificated Employee Reduction-In-Force

SUPPORT STAFF EVALUATION

Evaluation of support staff on their skills, abilities, and competence shall be an ongoing process supervised by the superintendent. The goal of the evaluation of support staff shall be to maintain support staff who meet or exceed the board's standards of performance, to clarify each support staff member's role, to ascertain the areas in need of improvement, to clarify the immediate priorities of the board, and to develop a working relationship between the administrators and other employees.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to ensure support staff are periodically evaluated.

Approved **2/12/2024** Reviewed **G.C. Feb 24** Revised _____

Policy No. 2230 - Evaluation of Principals and Other Certificated Administrative Personnel

Administration

1. Objectives

The Board recognizes that the roles of a school Superintendent, principal, assistant principal, and other certificated administrative personnel of the School District (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Administrators") are varied and complex requiring an appraisal process that accurately measures performance and provides support for the continued growth and improvement of the Administrator. The general job description and an evaluation instrument with performance standards for each administrative position shall be promulgated under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools and approved by the Board of Education, and provided to the affected Administrator. The District will train and continue to provide training and support to its evaluators by encouraging and sponsoring evaluators to attend professional training opportunities, such as those opportunities offered through professional organizations and associations. The appraisal process for each Administrator and administrative position shall serve these purposes:

a. To raise the quality of administration and educational service to the students of the School District.

b. Clarify for the Administrators their respective role in the school system as seen by the Board.

c. Clarify for all Board members the role of the administration and the immediate priorities among each Administrator´s responsibilities.

d. Develop harmonious working relationships between the Board and administrative supervisors and each Administrator.

e. Aid the individual Administrator to grow professionally.

The evaluation of administrative performance is intended to be a cooperative and continuing process designed to improve the quality of the educational program.

2. General Procedures

The formal Administrator appraisal is based primarily upon the procedures and processes defined below. The procedures provide for a consistent and equitable appraisal of important aspects of the Administrator´s duties and responsibilities. They do not, however, specifically include the total range of expectations of the effective performance of the administrative duties of each administrative position or the Administrator assigned to such position. As a result, additional data and information related to the respective administrative role may be utilized to generate a comprehensive appraisal.

3. Appraisal Cycle

Probationary Administrators shall be observed and evaluated at least once each semester, except the Superintendent, who shall be observed and evaluated by the Board of Education once each semester in the first contract year of employment, and once per year each contract year thereafter. Permanent (tenured) Administrators shall be evaluated at least once each school year. Observations and evaluations of greater frequency or number than required may be conducted and made at the request of the Administrator or in the discretion of the appraiser. Administrators who will be evaluated shall receive a copy of the evaluation procedure at least annually and prior to their evaluation.

The appraisal cycle and appraisal process for a permanent Administrator is intended for the direction of the responsible appraiser. A failure to complete evaluations within the designated cycle or in the manner directed by this policy shall not give the permanent Administrator rights, but may be addressed in evaluating the responsible appraiser´s performance.

The entire instructional period for Administrators cannot be defined in terms of an instructional period and shall be satisfied by the actual observation of an Administrator's work for no less than fifty (50) minutes (cumulative) during the time periods being evaluated. It is understood and anticipated that, over the course of a semester, the Administrator´s immediate supervisor (or, in the case of the Superintendent, the Board of Education) will continually observe the Administrator for at least an instructional period in the handling of day-to-day functions.

4. Appraisal Process

The Administrator´s immediate supervisor—designated by the Board of Education or the Superintendent—has responsibility for conducting the appraisal process. The Board of Education serves as the Superintendent´s supervisor. If the responsible appraiser does not initiate the appraisal within the required time or manner, the Board may take appropriate action to ensure the process is completed.

The performance standard categories contained in the Board-approved evaluation instrument for each administrative position form the basis for both the informal, job-target formative appraisal and the formal summative appraisal. During the summative appraisal, the supervisor collects the data needed to evaluate each performance category. Data may include, but is not limited to, surveys or other feedback from staff, students, parents, community members, or other administrators; routinely reported statistics; data generated specifically for evaluation purposes; review of written materials produced by the Administrator (such as a Principal´s teacher evaluations); and direct observations of performance. These criteria also include personal and professional conduct. The Administrator may be asked to assist in gathering data and must provide such assistance when requested.

The final appraisal report is based on the collected data and the professional judgment of the responsible appraiser.

5. Final Formal Summative Evaluation

The appraisal process culminates in a final formal summative evaluation. The final formal summative evaluation consists of a rating of each performance category identified in the evaluation instrument, identification of whether the Administrator´s performance meets or does not meet district standards of performance, a list of deficiencies in the Administrator´s performance, suggestions and plans for improvement to assist the Administrator in overcoming such deficiencies, and follow-up evaluations as appropriate in order to correct performance below district standards. As a professional, the Administrator may be assigned responsibility to provide suggestions for improvement plans or similar job growth strategies and shall have the duty of complying with such requests. Further, in the event improvement plans or other similar performance measures are implemented, the Administrator shall have the duty to comply with such plans. The timeline for implementing any suggested improvements will depend on the situation and should be discussed and agreed upon with the Administrator. However, in any event, the timeline for implanting suggested improvements shall occur as soon as necessary to remedy any of the Administrator´s noted deficiencies. The Administrator is expected to be cooperative, professional, and to exhibit a willingness to improve performance and to accept the constructive criticisms and suggestions of the appraiser.

Date of Adoption: Wednesday, May 6, 2026

Policy No. 4150 - Evaluation of Teachers

Personnel - Certificated Employees

These evaluation procedures are applicable to certificated staff.

1. Communication of Evaluation Process.

Each year, the evaluation process shall be communicated to certificated staff at the beginning of each school year.

2. Duration and frequency of observations and written evaluations

The duration and frequency of observations and written evaluations for probationary and permanent (tenured) teachers are to be as follows:

a. Probationary Teachers.

i. Formal observations of probationary teachers shall be based upon actual classroom observations for an entire instructional period.

ii. Probationary teachers shall be formally observed and evaluated at least once each semester.

iii. The responsible evaluator is expected to complete the second semester evaluations of probationary teachers prior to April 15 of each year.

b. Permanent Teachers.

i. Formal observations and evaluations of permanent teachers are to be based upon actual classroom observations for an entire instructional period.

ii. Permanent teachers are to be formally observed and evaluated at least once each school year.

c. Teachers´ Responsibility. Teachers are expected to inform the responsible evaluator of instructional periods that would be conducive to an evaluation and to make themselves readily available for evaluations.

d. Informal Observations and Evaluations. Informal observations and evaluations may be conducted as the administration determines to be appropriate.

e. Additional Observations and Evaluations. The duration and frequency of observations and written evaluations is specified as a minimum. Observations and evaluations of greater frequency or number than required may be conducted and made at the request of the teacher or at the discretion of the evaluator.

f. Conferences. The evaluator is expected to meet with each teacher within five school days of the formal observation to address the observation and any concerns observed during said observation. The evaluator may need to meet with a teacher more frequently if the evaluator determines that follow-up conferences would benefit the teacher.

3. Evaluation Criteria

Teachers shall be evaluated based upon the following district-defined evaluation criteria:

- Instruction, which includes:
  - § Instructional Process
  - § Instructional Climate, which includes Classroom Organization and Management
- Professionalism, which includes:
  - § Professional Conduct
  - § Personal Conduct

Certificated staff will also be evaluated based upon the descriptors set forth in the evaluation instrument approved by the Board of Education and Nebraska Department of Education.

In preparing summative evaluations, evaluators are to consider not only the formal observations conducted, but also informal observations and other relevant information concerning the performance of the teacher in each of the evaluation criteria.

4. Communication of Deficiencies

The evaluation process shall include written communication and documentation to the evaluated teacher specifying all noted deficiencies, specific means for the correction of the noted deficiency, and an adequate timeline for implementing the concrete suggestions for improvement.

As professionals, teachers may be assigned responsibility to provide suggestions for improvement plans or job growth strategies and shall have the duty of complying with such requests. Further, in the event improvement plans or other similar performance measures are implemented, teachers shall have the duty to comply with such plans. Teachers are expected to be cooperative, professional, and to exhibit a willingness to improve performance and to accept the constructive criticisms and suggestions of the evaluator.

5. Teacher Responses to Evaluations

Teachers shall be provided seven calendar days from receipt of an evaluation in which to give a written response to the evaluation.

6. Plan for Training Evaluators

All evaluators shall possess a valid Nebraska Administrator´s Certificate and be trained to use the evaluation system used in the District. Training sessions in the use of the District´s teacher evaluation system will be provided by the Superintendent or designee to all evaluators prior to their participation in teacher evaluations. Refresher training is to be conducted as the Superintendent determines to be needed.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 79-828 (Evaluation of Probationary Teachers)

NDE Rule 10

Date of Adoption: Wednesday, May 6, 2026

Policy No. 4260 - Standards of Performance for Non-Certified Employees

Personnel

In fulfillment of the employee's minimum responsibilities, the employee:

1. Shall not interfere with the exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities of students, other employees, parents, school patrons, or school Board members.

2. Shall not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, sexual orientation or gender identity, or other protected status.

3. Shall not use coercive means, or promise or provide special treatment to students, other employees, school patrons, or school Board members in order to influence professional decisions.

4. Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact for which the employee is responsible.

5. Shall not exploit relationships with students, other employees, parents, school patrons, or school Board members for personal gain or private advantage.

6. Shall not harass in any manner students, parents or school patrons, employees, or Board members.

7. Shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in the performance of duties.

8. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable student or employee information that has been obtained in the course of service to the district, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

9. Shall not discipline students using corporal punishment.

10. Shall not engage in physical or sexual abuse of students, including engaging in inappropriate sexual behaviors with students.

11. Shall not misrepresent the school district, and shall take added precautions to distinguish between the employee´s personal and institutional views.

12. Shall abide by policies and regulations of the Board of Education and the rules and standards established by the administration and the employee´s supervisor.

13. Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported a violation of these standards.

Date of Adoption: Wednesday, May 6, 2026

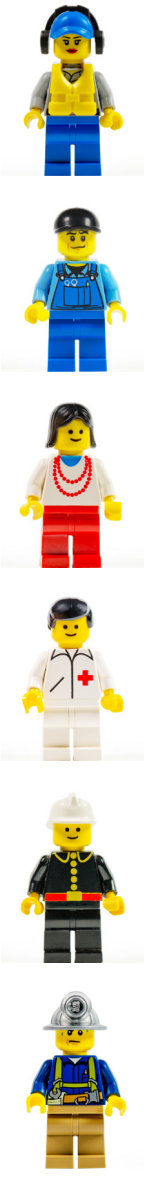


2026 State Education Conference

November 18-20 - CHI Health Center - Downtown Omaha



Building Strong Futures



NASB Nebraska Association of School Boards

Co-Sponsored by the Nebraska Association of School Boards and the Nebraska Association of School Administrators



Registration & Reservations



REGISTRATION FOR THE
2026 STATE EDUCATION CONFERENCE
WILL OPEN
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2026

To register, go to
www.NASBonline.org

Log in using your email and password, and click the 'Events' tab to register.

Registration fees for the conference are as follows:

REGISTRATION SEPTEMBER 16 to NOVEMBER 6	**$360**	LATE-REGISTRATION NOVEMBER 7 to ON-SITE	**$410**
PRE-CONFERENCE REGISTRATION	**$110**	NON-MEMBER	**$900**
CANCELLATION FEE (PRIOR TO 11/6)	**$175**	*Substitutions are done at no charge*	
No refunds after the registration deadline			

Hotel Reservations

TO RESERVE ACCOMMODATIONS AT THE CONFERENCE HOTELS YOU MUST FIRST REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE AS DESCRIBED ABOVE.

To qualify for a room, you must first register for the Conference!

Once your conference registration is complete, you will receive an email with your NASB Registration code and a Conference Hotel reservation link. The code will not be activated until 10:00 AM CT, Wednesday, September 30, 2026

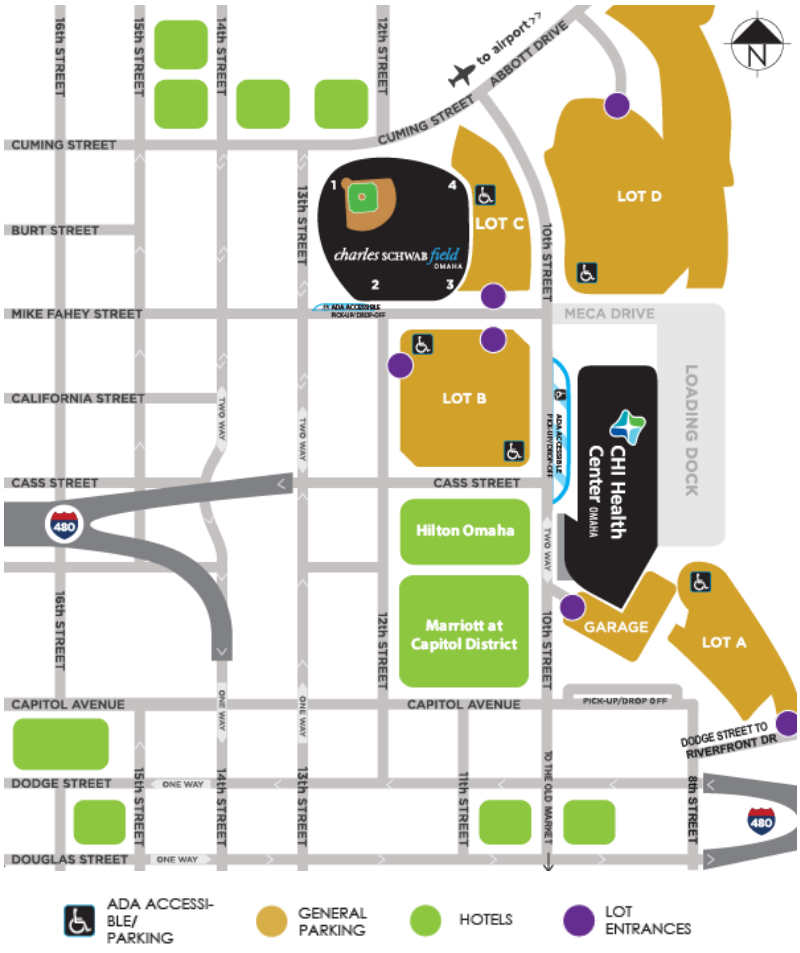
SUBMIT YOUR CONFERENCE HOTEL ROOM REQUEST
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2026.

THE OMAHA CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU WILL ACT AS THE HOUSING AGENT FOR ALL PROPERTIES.

Hilton Omaha - 1001 Cass Street
$162 per night
ROOM REQUESTS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL OCTOBER 28, OR UNTIL FULL

Omaha Marriott Downtown - 222 North 10th Street
$169 per night
ROOM REQUESTS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL OCTOBER 27, OR UNTIL FULL

A RESERVATION AT ONE OF THE ABOVE IS NOT REQUIRED TO ATTEND THE STATE EDUCATION CONFERENCE



2026 Schedule At A Glance

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18

Pre-Conference Session
1:00 to 4:00 PM

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19

Board Member Boot Camp
7:00 to 8:15 AM

Opening General Session
8:30 to 9:45 AM

A - Breakout Sessions
10:00 to 10:45 AM

B - Breakout Sessions
11:15 AM to 12:00 PM

Thursday Luncheon Session
12:15 to 1:45 PM

C - Breakout Sessions
2:00 to 2:45 PM

D - Breakout Sessions
3:00 to 3:45 PM

Super Session 1
4:00 to 5:00 PM

Exhibitor Reception
5:00 to 6:30 PM

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20

Classroom Showcase
8:00 to 11:30 AM

NASB Delegate Assembly
8:00 to 9:30 AM

NASA Membership Meeting
8:00 to 9:30 AM

E - Breakout Sessions
9:15 to 10:00 AM

F - Breakout Sessions
10:15 to 11:00 AM

Super Sessions 2
11:15 AM to 12:00 PM

Friday Luncheon Keynote Speaker
12:15 to 1:30 PM

Wed DAY 1
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18

NASB LEGISLATION COMMITTEE MEETING
NASA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
PRE-CONFERENCE SESSION
NASB BOARD MEETING

Thurs DAY 2
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19



BOARD MEMBER BOOT CAMP
OPENING & LUNCHEON KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER OF THE YEAR PRESENTED
BREAKOUT SESSIONS A, B, C & D
SUPER SESSION (NEW!)
EXHIBITOR RECEPTION **(NEW DAY!)**



FriYAY DAY 3
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20



NASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY
NASA MEMBERSHIP MEETING
CLASSROOM SHOWCASE
EXHIBITORS **(NEW DAYS!)**
BREAKOUT SESSIONS E & F
SUPER SESSIONS (NEW!)
SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR RECOGNIZED
CLOSING KEYNOTE SPEAKER
ADJOURN





Register Now at www.NASBonline.org

Keynote Speakers



WHAT'S YOUR MVP? LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE COACH WHO INSPIRED TED LASSO

Donnie Campbell

THURSDAY MORNING OPENING SPEAKER - 8:30 TO 9:45 AM

When you create better people, you create winning teams. Meet Coach Donnie Campbell, the real-life inspiration behind the beloved character Ted Lasso, and discover the leadership lessons that helped shape a young Jason Sudeikis and ultimately inspired one of television's most memorable coaches. In this engaging and uplifting keynote, Campbell introduces his MVP - Mission, Values and Principles - and challenges leaders to discover their own. Through humor, stories, and hard-earned wisdom from decades in education and coaching, he'll share how leading with purpose, authenticity, and a genuine belief in people can bring out their best, strengthen teams, and create a lasting impact on the people you serve.



BE RELENTLESS

Hamish Brewer

THURSDAY LUNCHEON SPEAKER - 12:15 TO 1:45 PM

Get ready to be inspired, challenged, and energized by Hamish Brewer! The award-winning, tattooed, skateboarding principal known for his relentless leadership style is bringing his powerful message to our conference. A Nationally Distinguished Principal, Virginia Principal of the Year and bestselling author of *Relentless - Disrupting the Educational Norm*, Hamish has earned global recognition for turning around challenging schools and championing students and communities. With his high-energy style and "Be Relentless" message, he will challenge you to rethink leadership, disrupt the status quo and discover what's possible when you refuse to give up on people. Mr. Brewer is also featured in the skateboarding humanitarian movie documentary "Humanity Stoked."



I AM THE DIFFERENCE

Danny Steele

FRIDAY LUNCHEON SPEAKER - 12:15 TO 1:30 PM

Danny Steele spent 31 years in education serving as a teacher, coach, and administrator. Throughout his career he developed a passion for supporting and inspiring educators, helping them build positive school cultures where both students and teachers thrive. Steele's leadership was recognized statewide when he was named Alabama's Assistant Principal of the Year in 2005 and Alabama's Secondary Principal of the Year in 2016. As a longtime principal, author, and the voice behind the popular blog, "SteeleThoughts", Danny has built a national following by reminding educators of what really matters: relationships, belonging, and the small, human moments that shape school culture. His message is simple but lasting - when students feel like they belong, they learn. When teachers feel supported, they lead. And when schools focus on relationships, everything changes.



Pre PRE-CONFERENCE SESSION
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18 - 1:00 TO 4:00 PM

LEGAL SHOWCASE: THE LEGAL ISSUES EVERY SCHOOL BOARD NEEDS TO KNOW!

School law is constantly changing, and knowing what matters can make all the difference. Join legal experts for a fast-paced, practical look at the latest issues facing Nebraska school districts - from special education and student discipline to due process and emerging legal developments. We'll also tackle the critical legal aspects of the superintendent-board relationship, including contracts, evaluations, renewals, grievances, personnel complaints, investigations, and leadership transitions. You'll gain practical strategies to help your board make sound decisions, avoid common legal missteps, and confidently navigate challenging situations before they become bigger problems. Whether you're a new board member or a seasoned school leader, you'll walk away with useful guidance, timely information - and maybe a few laughs along the way. Bring your questions and your sense of humor for a legal session that's anything but ordinary!

PRESENTERS: Perry Law Firm & KSB School Law

Super SUPER SESSIONS (NEW!)
THURSDAY & FRIDAY



HOT TOPICS WITH KAREN & JIM
PRESENTERS: Karen Haase - KSB School Law; Jim Gessford - Perry Law Firm



A LISTENING SESSION WITH MEMBERS OF THE STATE BOARD OF ED
PRESENTERS: President Elizabeth Tegtmeier, Commissioner Brian Maher, & Asst Commissioner Grant Norgaard - NDE



SCHOOL FINANCE REVIEW COMMISSION UPDATE
PRESENTERS: Members of Finance Review Commission



JOIN US THURSDAY!!! - EXHIBITOR RECEPTION
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19 - 5:00 TO 6:30 PM



Recognition & Tracks

ANN MACTIER - SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER OF THE YEAR WILL BE PRESENTED AT THE THURSDAY LUNCHEON

Previous Winners Include:

2025 - JIM VLACH, LYONS DECATUR NORTHEAST
2024 - BRAD WILKINS, AINSWORTH
2023 - ALLISON WELCH, CONESTOGA
2022 - MARCIA MAHON, SOUTH SIOUX CITY
2021 - STEVE KOCH, HERSHEY
2020 - MARIAN HOLSTEIN, WINNEBAGO
2019 - VALERIE FISHER, PAPILLON-LA VISTA
2018 - KATHY DANEK, LINCOLN
2017 - BONNIE HINKLE, GRAND ISLAND
2016 - TERRI HAYNES, CHADRON
2015 - LINDA RICHARDS, RALSTON
2014 - BRAD KRIVOHLAVEK, NORFOLK
2013 - PATTY BENTZINGER, NORRIS
2012 - KATHY BARTEK, FALLS CITY
2011 - JULIE AGARD, KEARNEY
2010 - KIM FASSE, ELKHORN
2009 - RON PEARSON, ESU #3
2008 - SANDRA JENSEN, OMAHA
2007 - JOHN HANSEN, BELLEVUE
2006 - FRED TAFOYA, PAPILLON-LA VISTA
2005 - WAYNE ERICKSON, WISNER-PILGER
2004 - ANN MACTIER, OMAHA

SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR WILL BE RECOGNIZED AT THE FRIDAY LUNCHEON

Previous Winners Include:

2025 - JOHN SCHWARTZ, MILLARD
2024 - MELISSA POLONCIC, DC WEST
2023 - ANDY RIKLI, PAPILLION LA VISTA
2022 - MARK LENIHAN, WAYNE
2021 - TERRY HAACK, BENNINGTON
2020 - JIM SUTFIN, MILLARD
2019 - MARK ADLER, RALSTON
2018 - MIKE TEAHON, GOTHENBURG
2017 - JOHN SKRETTA, NORRIS
2016 - CAROLINE WINCHESTER, CHADRON
2015 - JAY BELLAR, BATTLE CREEK
2014 - BRIAN MAHER, KEARNEY
2013 - STEVE BAKER, ELKHORN
2013 - KEVIN RILEY, GRETNA
2012 - BILL MOWINKEL, GRAND ISLAND NW
2011 - MIKE CUNNING, HERSHEY
2010 - KEITH LUTZ, MILLARD
2009 - STEVE RECTOR, SOUTH SIOUX CITY
2008 - LARRY RAMAEKERS, AURORA
2007 - ROGER BREED, ELKHORN
2006 - RICHARD EISENHAUER, LEXINGTON
2005 - ROY BAKER, NORRIS
2004 - DAN ERNST, WAVERLY
2003 - RANDY NELSON, NORFOLK
2002 - PHILIP SCHOO, LINCOLN
2001 - KEITH ROHWER, NEBRASKA CITY
2000 - STEVE JOEL, BEATRICE
1999 - KENNETH ANDERSON, HASTINGS
1998 - KEN BIRD, WESTSIDE
1997 - RICK BLACK, CONESTOGA
1996 - GARY HAMMACK, KEARNEY
1995 - MARTIN PETERSEN, ALLIANCE
1994 - VANDLE PHILLIPS, SOUTH SIOUX CITY
1993 - FRED BELLUM, COLUMBUS
1992 - GLENN LARSEN, ADAMS CENTRAL
1991 - NORBERT SCHUERMAN, OMAHA
1990 - DOUG CHRISTENSEN, NORTH PLATTE
1989 - DONALD STROH, MILLARD

BREAKOUT SESSION TRACKS

- BOARDSMANSHIP
- CAREER & COLLEGE READINESS
- COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- CURRICULUM
- ESU
- FACILITIES
- LEGAL & POLICY
- LEGISLATIVE & ADVOCACY
- MANAGEMENT/ADMINISTRATION
- NEW BOARD MEMBER/NEW SUPERINTENDENT
- SAFETY
- STUDENTS/EARLY CHILDHOOD
- TECHNOLOGY
- WELLNESS & RETENTION

Breakout Sessions - Quick Glance

THURSDAY 11/19

A1 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE
A2 ADULT EDUCATION: A CATALYST FOR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT
A3 PUBLIC COMMENT DONE RIGHT
A4 LET'S GET FISCAL
A5 WHY YOU'RE IN THE DARK & WHY WE KEEP YOU THERE
A6 NAVIGATING A SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL BOND ELECTION
A7 EQUIPPING NEBRASKA'S WORKFORCE PIPELINE
A8 SO YOU ARE A NEW BOARD MEMBER
A9 RETENTION IS THE NEW RECRUITMENT
A10 BEYOND BUZZWORDS: LAYERED SECURITY ARCHITECTURE
A11 FROM LOW ACHIEVING TO BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

B1 WHAT BOARDS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE NSAA
B2 SUPERINTENDENT PANEL
B3 MANAGING YOUR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT
B4 THE ADVOCACY PLAYBOOK
B5 STRATEGIC VALUE OF STUDENT BOARD REPS
B6 CAREER EXPLORATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
B7 CAN THEY SUE ME FOR THAT?
B8 AT THE BOARD TABLE
B9 CULTIVATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TEACHERS
B10 HOW-TOS FOR HAL PROGRAMS
B11 THE BRADY LEARNING CENTER

C1 STUDENT VOICES
C2 17 THINGS TO KNOW AS AN ESU BOARD MEMBER
C3 ATHLETICS, BOOSTER CLUBS, AND TITLE IX
C4 HOW NEBRASKA IS TELLING ITS STORY
C5 PRACTICAL STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE EFFECTIVENESS
C6 WHEN CRISIS STRIKES
C7 NEGOTIATIONS FOR BOARD MEMBERS
C8 GOAL SETTING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
C9 DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT ENSURES YOUTH WELL-BEING
C10 EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY FROM A SBM PERSPECTIVE
C11 EDUCATOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

D1 REDUCING ABSENTEEISM & INCREASING ATTENDANCE
D2 A SNAPSHOT OF CONSOLIDATION
D3 LEGAL GUIDANCE IN AWKWARD MOMENTS
D4 CO-TEACHING: CHATGPT & ME
D5 CONTRACT CONFUSION: THE BOARD'S ROLE
D6 EHA PLAN UPDATES
D7 THE DISTRICT BOND EXPERIENCE ROUNDTABLE
D8 NAVIGATING CONFLICT, CULTURE, & COMMUNICATION
D9 BEYOND THE TAX LEVY
D10 TEACHER APPRENTICESHIPS

SS1 HOT TOPICS WITH KAREN & JIM

FRIDAY 11/20

E1 RULE 10: HOW SBMS CAN SUPPORT THEIR SUPT
E2 BEYOND THE BELL: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS
E3 A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO BULLYING & HARASSMENT
E4 PARTNERING WITH YOUR PUBLIC SCHOOL FOUNDATION
E5 'AI'M STRAIGHT: ADDRESSING AI IN SCHOOLS
E6 STRENGTHENING LITERACY ACROSS NEBRASKA
E7 CLOSED SESSION WITHOUT LEGAL MISSTEPS
E8 POLICY WITH PURPOSE
E9 WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT HIGHER ED PATHWAYS
E10 POLICY VISIBILITY, AND STAFF NEGOTIATIONS

F1 STUDENT ENGAGEMENT & INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP
F2 APPRENTICESHIPS PAY OFF
F3 SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SECTION 504 ISSUES
F4 BEYOND THE AI BASICS
F5 PAIN IN THE APP, V. 12.0
F6 FREEMAN'S STUDENT-LED WELLNESS CREW
F7 FROM PASTURE TO PLATE
F8 ACCOUNTABILITY IN ACTION
F9 NEBRASKA LEADS LITERACY

SS2A A LISTENING SESSION WITH THE STATE BOARD OF ED
SS2B SCHOOL FINANCE REVIEW COMMISSION UPDATE

BOARD MEMBER BOOT CAMP

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19 - 7:00 TO 8:15 AM

ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Start your day with a continental breakfast and an interactive Bootcamp for all board members and superintendents too! Move through the eight engaging stations, each highlighting a key characteristic of an effective board from governance vs. management to fostering accountability and actionable tools to take back to your district. This session serves as a warmup for Breakout Session A8: So You Are A New Board Member, where we move from the "what" of board work to the "how" of focusing on measured student success. Register for the Bootcamp through the QR Code:

8 Thursday Breakouts (A-B-C-D-SS1)

A - BREAKOUTS - 10:00 TO 10:45 AM
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19

A1 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: A 2026 RECAP AND A LOOK TO 2027
Join Colby and Mike for a look into the 2027 legislative session and how we got here. With a looming budget deficit, new faces at the Capitol, and new leadership, K-12 education faces both significant challenges and promising opportunities. Gain insight into the key issues expected to shape the upcoming session and what they could mean for Nebraska schools.
PRESENTERS: Colby Coash - NASB, Mike Dulaney - NCSA

A2 BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: ADULT EDUCATION AS A CATALYST FOR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT
At Crete Public Schools, our approach to family engagement transcends traditional models through a strategic "pre-birth through adult" framework that strengthens the entire community by serving both students and their parents. By integrating adult education with early childhood and K-12 programming, we empower caregivers to achieve their personal goals while becoming confident, active partners in their children's educational journeys. Attendees will explore how this multigenerational investment builds deep community trust, removes barriers to access, and fosters a district-wide culture of lifelong learning that directly supports student success.
PRESENTER: Josh McDowell - Crete Public Schools

A3 NAVIGATING PUBLIC COMMENT AND THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT AT BOARD MEETINGS
Public comment can be one of the most unpredictable parts of a meeting. This session explains what the Open Meetings Act requires, what it allows boards to regulate, and where the legal guardrails really are. Using real-world scenarios, we'll walk through both routine and high-tension situations and how boards can respond calmly, consistently, and lawfully.
PRESENTER: Justin Knight - Perry Law Firm

A4 LET'S GET FISCAL
The learning curve for school finance is never-ending. Take a closer look at long-standing practices and recent changes that can impact your district's financial position. This session will help board members better understand the numbers, recognize the questions worth asking, and build stronger financial conversations with their superintendent and administrative team. Don't assume - dig deeper, ask questions, and make informed decisions with confidence.
PRESENTERS: Carl Dietz - Finance Expert & Justin Patterson - Wilcox-Hildreth Public School

A5 WHY YOU'RE IN THE DARK, AND WHY WE KEEP YOU THERE
Without fail, the largest issues in schools involving student discipline and personnel matters become sources of gossip and Facebook posts in every community. Yet, as board members, you get the least amount of information. Huh?! This presentation will explain why, walk through what's happening behind the scenes, and discuss things like discipline disparity because of special education laws. While we can't bring you into the light, we can at least explain when the lights may be turned on!
PRESENTERS: Bobby Truhe, Jordan Johnson & Amanda Dabney - KSB School Law

A6 FROM VISION TO VICTORY: NAVIGATING A SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL BOND ELECTION
School bond elections are multifaceted - equal parts vision, strategy, and community trust. In this practical session, we candidly share our journey, including the successes and missteps learned along the way. We will explore how intentional relationship-building and transparency lay the foundation for success, from conducting facility studies to selecting architects and bond counsel. Participants will gain insight into maintaining community trust and navigating the practical realities of timelines while providing factual information to the public. Grounded in real-world experience, this session offers actionable strategies and cautionary tales to help you turn your district's vision into voter support.
PRESENTERS: Josh Fields, Matt Dominy & members of the Seward Public Schools BOE,
Mitch Bartholomew & members of the York Public Schools BOE

Thursday Breakouts (A-B-C-D-SS1) 9

A7 EQUIPPING NEBRASKA'S WORKFORCE PIPELINE: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP IN CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE)

Nebraska's economic vitality depends on strong, aligned Career and Technical Education (CTE) systems. Designed for school board members and district leaders, this session examines federal and state policy, funding structures, accountability measures, and statewide systems that support CTE programing in each district. Participants will gain insight into the opportunities within CTE, along with the policy considerations and strategic decisions needed to expand access, ensure responsible fiscal stewardship, and maintain high-quality programs across districts.

PRESENTERS: Sydney Kobza & Katie Graham - NDE

A8 SO YOU ARE A NEW BOARD MEMBER

How do I prepare to serve as a new board member? What are the demands of the role and responsibilities of the board? Welcome to board service! This session will cover frequently asked questions, highlight the NASB Board Governance Standards, will engage you in interactive discussion, and present scenarios to challenge your understanding of proper board oversight.

PRESENTERS: Marcia Herring, Stephanie Summers & Stacie Higgins - NASB Board Leadership Team

A9 RETENTION IS THE NEW RECRUITMENT: STRENGTHENING BOARD / SUPERINTENDENT PARTNERSHIPS FOR LEADERSHIP SUSTAINABILITY

Superintendent turnover remains a significant challenge in Nebraska, where average tenure is approximately 3.7 years. Burnout, crisis demands, and strained board/superintendent relations contribute to frequent transitions. In an era of educator shortages, retention has become the central leadership issue. This session highlights findings from the University of Nebraska Kearney's research titled: An Interdisciplinary Study on School Administrator Stress and Mental Health. Emphasis will be placed on establishing a team approach in strengthening board/superintendent relationships as a central strategy for improving leadership retention, promoting administrator well-being, and ensuring long-term district stability.

PRESENTERS: Doug Tilman & Michael Teahon - UNK, Troy Loeffelholz - NCSA

A10 BEYOND THE BUZZWORDS: ELKHORN'S LAYERED SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

As the field of school safety burgeons, districts are using security jargon and novel buzzwords to describe school safety. Beyond the buzzword, what is layered security? How is a comprehensive security architecture designed and implemented? This presentation will offer a fresh perspective on these challenging questions and showcase how Elkhorn's school safety program is crafted to enhance the protection of our school community. The approach is grounded in proven security principles supported by data from real-world events. Elkhorn's school safety program focuses on implementation guided by deliberate strategy to avoid common pitfalls of many security programs.

PRESENTERS: Bary Habrock & Brian Kempf - Elkhorn Public Schools

A11 FROM LOW ACHIEVING TO BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

How the West Point Public School changed its culture, attitudes, and teaching effectiveness from the PLAS list (Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools) to a Blue Ribbon School.

PRESENTERS: Douglas Gross & DJ Weddle - West Point Public Schools



B - BREAKOUTS - 11:15 AM TO NOON

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19

B1 BEHIND THE RULES: WHAT SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE NSAA

This session will provide an overview of the NSAA, its purpose, and its governance structure.

PRESENTERS: Jennifer Schwartz, Darren Tobey & Bob Drews - NSAA

B2 SUPERINTENDENT PANEL - DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE BOARD, WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

For Board Members and Superintendents. Come hear from veteran Superintendents as they discuss and answer questions regarding their efforts in developing positive and personal work relationships with their board of education.

PRESENTERS: Dawn Lewis - Arlington Public Schools, Chip Kay - Columbus Public Schools, Heather Nebesniak - Ord Public Schools, Mike Sieh - Wayne State University, Troy Loeffelholz & Kevin Wingard - NCSA

B3 STEEL, STONE, & STEWARDSHIP: MANAGING YOUR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

In this session, Perry Law Firm attorneys will discuss the ins and outs of school capital construction projects.

PRESENTER: Derek Aldridge - Perry Law Firm

B4 THE ADVOCACY PLAYBOOK: HOW LEGISLATIVE GUIDELINES EMPOWER BOARD MEMBER & DISTRICT ADVOCACY

The Lincoln Public Schools Board of Education annually adopts legislative guidelines through a Board Committee process in order to elevate key priorities for educational policymaking and inform the district's advocacy efforts. This session will share how the LPS Board navigates governmental relations at the state and federal level. Learn how the LPS BOE legislative guidelines provide direction to the Board, Superintendent and LPS team, affirming the fundamentals of local control and the school district's commitment to quality educational opportunities for all students.

PRESENTERS: Brad Jacobsen, Piyush Srivastav & John Skretta - Lincoln Public Schools

B5 BRIDGING THE GAP: THE STRATEGIC VALUE OF STUDENT BOARD REPRESENTATIVES

This session explores how a Student Board Representative can transform district governance by providing insights into the student experience. We will move beyond the theory of "student voice" to provide a practical framework for implementation. Attendees will learn how to develop a transparent selection process, effective onboarding, and mentorship strategies. You will leave with the tools to turn students from passive observers into strategic partners in leadership.

PRESENTERS: Matt Fisher & Lisa Albers - Grand Island Public Schools

B6 WRITING THEIR STORY: EXPANDING LEARNING THROUGH CAREER EXPLORATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

In 2021, we asked a question that every Nebraska district, large or small, must wrestle with: How do we expand learning in ways that truly prepare students for the future? That question sparked the creation of an 8th grade careers course and a hands-on exploratory program built through a partnership with SCC-Milford. What started as a simple idea has now become part of our system. We'll share what worked and what didn't, and how this work has connected students to a Nebraska workforce that needs them.

PRESENTERS: Brandon Mowinkel, Shelly Mowinkel & Mitch Kubicek - Milford Public Schools

B7 CAN THEY SUE ME FOR THAT?

Yes, they can sue you for that. Anyone can sue anyone else for just about any reason. In this session, we will address some of the more common reasons school districts are sued and provide practical guidance to address and mitigate these potential risks. This will include real world examples of recent lawsuits filed against Nebraska political subdivisions.

PRESENTER: Josh Schauer - Perry Law Firm

Thursday Breakouts (A-B-C-D-SS1) 11

B8 AT THE BOARD TABLE

This breakout takes you beyond the "what" of board roles and responsibilities into the "how" of using those roles to drive student success. Through scenarios, discussion, and practical resources, learn how to connect governance leadership to student outcomes, align board work with district improvement goals, and foster a culture of continuous growth. Leave equipped to move from understanding your role to leveraging it for maximum impact on student success.

PRESENTERS: Marcia Herring, Stephanie Summers, Stacie Higgins & Ben Anderjaska - NASB

B9 CULTIVATING NEBRASKA'S NEXT GENERATION OF TEACHERS

Districts across Nebraska are seeking sustainable solutions to strengthen the educator workforce. The "Grow Your Own Education Pathway" provides a proactive strategy by introducing high school students to careers in education. This session will highlight a four-course Education & Training program of study that includes free, ready-to-use curriculum, dual-credit opportunities allowing students to earn up to 12 college credits, and alignment to Nebraska CTE standards. Participants will learn how districts can implement this pathway, support aspiring educators, and build a long-term pipeline of future teachers.

PRESENTER: Katie Soto - ESU 9

B10 HOW-TOS FOR HAL PROGRAMS: PRACTICAL, COST-EFFECTIVE & DOABLE

Providing High Ability Learner (HAL) services doesn't have to be overwhelming - even in a small district with a limited staff and a tight budget. Learn how Perkins County Schools in Grant, Nebraska, has successfully served 3rd-12th grade HAL students for nearly a decade. Leave with concrete, ready-to-use ideas for identification criteria, staffing, funding and programming at all levels - and a clearer path to meeting HAL requirements.

PRESENTER: Deanne Bishop - Perkins County Schools

B11 THE BRADY LEARNING CENTER: A PLACE IN OUR COMMUNITY FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Rural communities often struggle to sustain libraries, technology access, and shared learning spaces. Brady Public Schools partnered with the Village of Brady and the Brady School Foundation to create the Brady Learning Center - an innovative space that combines the school and community libraries. This session will highlight how local leadership and collaboration brought this vision to life by providing books, technology, multimedia tools, and internet access for both students and residents. Participants will learn how the project was planned, funded, and implemented, and will leave with practical strategies and actionable steps to develop similar community-centered learning spaces in their own districts.

PRESENTERS: Ann Foster & Ryan Stearns - Brady Public Schools



C - BREAKOUTS - 2:00 TO 2:45 PM

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19

C1 STUDENT VOICES

Students from Nebraska high schools share their perspectives on issues that are important to the leaders of tomorrow.

C2 17 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW AS AN ESU BOARD MEMBER

This session will equip ESU board members with essential updates, insights, and strategies that will impact statewide and regional educational services. Topics Include: the work of ESUCC and ESUs; new and expanding services; updates from NDE and NASB; legislative priorities; system and network alignment; funding and accountability.

PRESENTERS: Colby Coash - NASB, Larianne Polk - ESUCC, Brad Dirksen - NDE

C3 SCOREBOARD UPDATE: ATHLETICS, BOOSTER CLUBS, AND TITLE IX

In this session, the attorneys from Perry Law Firm will discuss various aspects of athletics, the pitfalls that booster clubs can create, and how to navigate the equity concerns under Title IX.

PRESENTERS: Josh Schauer & Derek Aldridge - Perry Law Firm

C4 HOW NEBRASKA IS TELLING ITS STORY: A DECADE OF THE NCSA AMBASSADOR PROGRAM AND NEBRASKA PUBLIC SCHOOL ADVANTAGE

Since 2016, NCSA has made it a priority to advocate for Nebraska's public schools, one story at a time. Nebraska Public School Advantage is an online magazine where more than 500 feature stories are housed. In this session we take you across the state, from the panhandle to the metro, sharing stories of student success and educator innovation that serve as testaments to the power of public education. You'll dive into the importance of school advocacy and explore the power of a story.

PRESENTERS: Kevin Wingard & Tyler Dahlgren - NCSA

C5 PRACTICAL STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATION, COLLABORATION, AND EFFECTIVENESS

Great governance doesn't happen by accident. Effective board/superintendent relationships require intentional communication, clear expectations, and shared accountability. This session offers practical, real-world strategies boards and superintendents can use to strengthen collaboration, improve productivity, and function as a unified leadership team driving district success.

PRESENTERS: Karen Haase - KSB School Law, Mike Lucas - Westside Community Schools

C6 WHEN CRISIS STRIKES

Kearney Public Schools was struck by a cybersecurity attack in October 2025. Five months earlier, Cozad Community Schools dealt with a triple-murder/suicide on high school graduation day. In each case, the immediate, short-term, and long-term district responses to these incidents were critical to the students, staff, and entire communities. During this session, leaders from each district will share their story and provide advice and first-hand experience for fellow administrators that may deal with future emergencies of their own.

PRESENTERS: Jason Mundorf & Troy DeHaven - Kearney Public Schools,
Corey Fisher, Kiley Goff & Dan Endorf - Cozad Community Schools

C7 NEGOTIATIONS FOR BOARD MEMBERS: LAW, STRATEGY, AND CURRENT TRENDS

Personnel costs are the largest line item in most district budgets, which makes negotiations one of a board's most important responsibilities. This session covers the legal framework governing negotiations, the board's role at the table, and emerging trends affecting bargaining. We'll also highlight timely "hot topics" and practical strategies for the upcoming negotiations cycle.

PRESENTER: Justin Knight - Perry Law Firm

C8 ALIGNING VISION TO ACTION: GOAL SETTING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Effective governance depends on meaningful engagement and strategic alignment. This session covers the facilitation of productive community meetings, gathering authentic stakeholder input, and reaching busy or disengaged audiences. Participants will explore how setting realistic, measurable goals that align board priorities, district initiatives, and community expectations transform community voice into focused, purposeful action.

PRESENTERS: Marcia Herring, Avary Pansing-Brooks & Ben Anderjaska - NASB

C9 ACQUIRE DIGITAL WISDOM & RESILIENCY... BY FINDING DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT THAT ENSURES YOUTH WELL-BEING

Chatbots, A.I., and social media continue to create tension between maximizing digital engagement and ensuring youth safety. Digital platforms use surveillance and personal privacy tools with focused optimizing algorithms to capture personal data, time, and attention with insignificant regard to young users' health & well-being. The digital platforms activate emotionally charged responses from youth exposing them to toxic and often harmful content with inadequate safeguards to protect them. Building digital wisdom and resilience is needed for youth tech engagement but they must learn to SMILE first to improve their digital health and well-being. Security, Management, Identity, Literacy, and Empathy.

PRESENTER: Jay Martin - NDE

C10 THE MANY PATHS TO EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY FROM A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER PERSPECTIVE

Hear from a panel of current school board members - from urban to rural and east to west - who have advocated at multiple levels, both in Lincoln and from home. They will share practical ways to engage locally, including building relationships, navigating difficult conversations, understanding the legislative process, and finding an advocacy approach that fits your comfort level. From testifying and hosting a community lunch or school visit to becoming your Senator's trusted resource on education and local control, you'll gain actionable ideas to strengthen your advocacy efforts.

PRESENTERS: Matt Belka - NASB, Members of the NASB Board, Legislation Committee, and Legislative Bench

C11 EDUCATOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: PRACTICAL TOOLS AND DATA FOR DISTRICT LEADERS

Introducing the Coalition of Education Workforce Development. Convened by NRCSA, the coalition supports districts with actionable solutions and timely data to address ongoing workforce challenges. Learn about its formation, key partnerships, and progress, with a focus on how the work directly benefits local schools. We will highlight practical tools, including educator workforce data reports, regional and statewide analysis, and a growing collection of recruitment, preparation, and retention strategies adaptable to local needs. Administrators will leave with a clear understanding of how to access and use these resources to inform decisions, strengthen their educator pipeline, and support long-term staffing stability.

PRESENTERS: Stephanie Kaczor - Riverside Public Schools, Sara Skretta - UNL



D - BREAKOUTS - 3:00 TO 3:45 PM

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19

D1 REDUCING CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM AND INCREASING AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE

Ralston Public Schools is working to improve average daily attendance and reduce our number of chronically absent students. This presentation will include a panel from our school district highlighting our data, steps we are taking to identify root causes of chronic absenteeism, and how were able to create an actionable plan to improve attendance across our district.

PRESENTER: Jason Buckingham - Ralston Public Schools

D2 A SNAPSHOT OF CONSOLIDATION

The dreaded "C" word can lead to anxiety and possible fear. But, all of this work was done to provide more curricular and extracurricular opportunities for students. Learn how the newly formed EMF Public School District went through this process. They will tell their story and be open to questions for those who may be looking to go through this process as well. Consolidation doesn't have to be a dirty word, it can be an agent for positive change.

PRESENTERS: Members of the Board & Administration - Exeter-Milligan-Friend Public Schools

D3 CAN WE DO THAT? LEGAL GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENTS IN AWKWARD MOMENTS

Board Presidents are usually the first to receive the toughest calls, including surprise public outbursts, emergency meetings, social media controversies, and internal disagreements. This session will cover a legal roadmap for navigating confusing and unique situations that may arise throughout the year, as well as a quick overview on board authority, the Open Meetings Act, public comment rules, superintendent relations and contracts, and more.

PRESENTER: Justin Knight - Perry Law Firm

D4 CO-TEACHING: CHATGPT & ME (CONSIDERATIONS, TOOLS, & USE-CASES FOR EDUCATORS AND DISTRICTS)

In this forward-leaning exploration, we will consider questions about Artificial Intelligence, focusing primarily on educational applications (NotebookLM, SchoolAI, and many others) and use cases (differentiation, productivity, vibe coding, etc.), as well as more fundamental issues such as ethical considerations and implications for classrooms and students. This session will be both upbeat and honest, and you will leave with valuable insights, tools, and protocols for navigating the future that has skipped our doorstep and is already in our classroom.

PRESENTER: Christopher Knoell - UNK

D5 CONTRACT CONFUSION: THE BOARD'S ROLE

Whether it's the contract renewal process, Superintendent Pay Transparency posting, evaluation, or other requirements tied to the superintendent's employment, everyone has to understand these obligations. Relatedly, while the board doesn't evaluate other administrators or teachers, they are required by law to contract with all certificated employees. This presentation will cover the fundamentals all board members need to know with a focus on administrator contracts and a short bonus section on teacher contract renewals in the staffing arms race.

PRESENTERS: Karen Haase & Steve Williams - KSB School Law

D6 EHA PLAN UPDATES

Come learn more about upcoming changes and enhancements to the EHA Health and Dental plan! In addition, hear about enhanced technology functions and programs the plan has to offer.

PRESENTERS: Cortney Ray - Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska, Greg Long - EHA

Thursday Breakouts (A-B-C-D-SS1) 15

D7 THE DISTRICT BOND EXPERIENCE ROUNDTABLE

School bond initiatives can shape the future of a district, but gaining community support is rarely straightforward. This roundtable brings together Nebraska districts to share candid insights from their bond journeys - from multiple attempts to successful first passes. Through an interactive discussion, they will highlight challenges, strategies, and lessons learned in community engagement, communication, and trust-building. Attendees will gain practical advice on preparing for a bond campaign, responding to setbacks, and building the support needed to move major facility initiatives forward.

PRESENTERS: Mark Reckmeyer - Boyd Jones, Nichole Baugh - Springfield Platteview Community Schools, Kolin Haecker - Louisville Public Schools

D8 CRISIS TO CLARITY: NAVIGATING CONFLICT, CULTURE, AND COMMUNICATION

Strong board culture is the foundation of effective leadership. This session will provide practical tools for building positive board culture, improving communication, resolving conflict, managing difficult conversations, and responding constructively to public feedback. Participants will gain strategies for navigating high-pressure situations, fostering trust, and leading with clarity, confidence, and purpose.

PRESENTERS: Marcia Herring, Stacie Higgins & Stephanie Summers - NASB

D9 BEYOND THE LEVY: BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR GREATER STUDENT OPPORTUNITY

School Boards are under pressure to balance budgets, manage tax levies, and meet growing student needs. Learn how a strong school foundation can expand opportunities through private philanthropy and community partnerships without raising taxes. Explore practical strategies for aligning district and foundation priorities, strengthening governance, engaging community leaders, and building momentum. Discover how the Nebraska Association of Public School Foundations can help your district learn, connect, and grow.

PRESENTER: Terri Burchell - North Platte Public Schools

D10 SEEING TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP THROUGH MULTIPLE LENSES

What does a Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program look like from the perspectives of those living it every day? This engaging session brings together a panel of voices from across the partnership to share authentic experiences, successes, and lessons learned. Hear from an apprentice, mentor teacher, school principal and NDE as they discuss how this innovative pathway to teaching is strengthening educator pipelines. Participants will gain practical insights, partnership strategies, and examples of how the apprenticeship model is working in Nebraska to support future educators.

PRESENTERS: Brad Dirksen, Kelly Baehr, Jessica Javorsky - NDE; Lisa Epp - UNO

Super SUPER SESSION - 4:00 TO 5:00 PM

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19

SS1 HOT TOPICS WITH KAREN & JIM



Join veteran school attorneys Jim from Perry Law and Karen from KSB for an insightful and entertaining session on the latest "Hot Topics" in school law. This dynamic duo will break down key legal issues that Nebraska school board members need to understand, whether they're already on your radar or just around the corner. Expect valuable takeaways... and a bit of lively banter between Jim and Karen along the way!

PRESENTERS: Karen Haase - KSB School Law; Jim Gessford - Perry Law Firm

EXHIBITOR RECEPTION - 5:00 TO 6:30 PM

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19



Register Now at www.NASBonline.org

E - BREAKOUTS - 9:15 TO 10:00 AM

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20

E1 RULE 10: REQUIREMENTS, REGULATIONS, REPORTS, AND COMPLIANCE. HOW BOARD MEMBERS CAN SUPPORT THEIR SUPERINTENDENT

Rule 10 has several sections, numerous statutes, and over 200 regulations. This session is for board members who want to support their superintendent through having a better understanding of what it means to be accredited through Rule 10.

PRESENTERS: Decua Jean-Baptiste, Sandra Suiter, Todd Wolverton - NDE

E2 BEYOND THE BELL: BOARD STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE AFTERSCHOOL & SUMMER SUCCESS

Afterschool and summer programs are essential drivers of student achievement and family economic stability in Nebraska, yet local demand continues to outpace supply. Drawing on new research from the Michelle Arehart Fellows alongside superintendent, parent, and community perspectives, this session unpacks Nebraska's post-pandemic funding landscape and current funding challenges. Board members will walk away with a unified advocacy message and concrete strategies related to policy alignment and sustainable partnerships in order to effectively scale and fund high-quality programs across any district size.

PRESENTERS: Carrie Lienemann - North Platte Public Schools, Tamma Zulkoski - Kearney Public Schools, Chelsea Sidel - Crete Public Schools, Nicole Everingham - Collective For Youth, Nola Bennett - Lincoln Public Schools, Karmen Morse - Cozad Community Schools, Maggie Pilar - Norfolk Public Schools

E3 ZERO TOLERANCE, REAL SOLUTIONS: A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

This session goes beyond discipline policies to explore effective prevention strategies, legal obligations, and best practices for handling bullying and harassment cases. We will give participants insight into federal and state laws, recent case rulings, and proactive measures that promote a positive school climate while reducing legal risks. Designed for school leaders, this presentation provides actionable solutions that move beyond zero-tolerance policies to create lasting change.

PRESENTER: Haleigh Carlson - Perry Law Firm

E4 FOUNDATION FANATICS: HOW PARTNERING WITH YOUR PUBLIC SCHOOL FOUNDATION FOSTERS BETTER STUDENT OUTCOMES

We can't do it alone! This session offers high-utility, actionable takeaways for school districts to elevate partnerships with their public school foundations to enhance student outcomes. Learn how initiatives like Fund-A-Need and Student Emergency Funds empower donors by allowing them to choose how their contributions make a difference. Attendees will discover strategies for defining needs, aligning messaging, and celebrating success to attract donors and ensure sustained giving. In a time of scarce resources, leveraging philanthropic support is more critical and impactful than ever for public education.

PRESENTERS: John Skretta, Natalia Wiita & Marilyn Johnson-Farr - Lincoln Public Schools

E5 'AI'M STRAIGHT: ADDRESSING AI IN SCHOOLS

As board members and administrators, it's got to feel overwhelming. So many AI sessions guilt you into feeling bad for how "little" you're doing to leverage AI. In reality, most board members and administrators we talk to know AI is a powerful tool; they just want to know the right way to frame its uses for their school or ESU. What should our AI policies say for students? For staff? What legal issues might bore us, but need to be addressed in our buildings regarding AI? This presentation is designed to give attendees the practical guidance they need to address AI in their buildings, regardless of whether they feel love, hate, or terror about AI.

PRESENTERS: KSB School Law

E6 STRENGTHENING LITERACY ACROSS NEBRASKA: THE IMPACT OF REGIONAL LITERACY COACHES

Nebraska's statewide literacy initiative represents a significant investment in improving reading outcomes for all students. Central to this effort is the work of regional literacy coaches who partner with educators to implement evidence-based literacy practices, support instructional improvement, and strengthen systems that ensure every student becomes a proficient reader. This presentation will provide participants with an overview of the Nebraska Literacy Project, including its goals, structure, and implementation across the state. Presenters will highlight how literacy coaches work within districts to support principals and teachers, build instructional capacity, and translate research-based practices into classroom instruction.

PRESENTERS: Caryn Ziettlow - ESU 2, Claudine Kennicutt - ESU 10, Angie Dickey - ESU 15, Erin Trusty - ESU 4, Jayme Schroeder - ESU 11, Kelli Gibson - ESU 17

E7 CLOSED SESSION WITHOUT LEGAL MISSTEPS

Closed session is one of the most legally sensitive parts of board governance. This session breaks down when a board may enter closed session, what can (and cannot) be discussed, and how to properly return to open session. We'll also explore real-world case studies involving improper discussions, accidental disclosures, and corrective steps when things go wrong.

PRESENTER: Justin Knight - Perry Law Firm

E8 POLICY WITH PURPOSE: CREATING CLARITY, CONSISTENCY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Effective policy governance provides clarity, consistency, and direction for school districts. This session explores best practices for purposeful policy governance including district handbook alignment, structured administrative guidelines, and a policy review cycle. Participants will learn how to improve operational effectiveness, strengthen governance systems, and ensure policy supports district goals.

PRESENTERS: Marcia Herring & Josh Wall - NASB

E9 EARLY COLLEGE, EARLY DEGREE: WHAT K-12 LEADERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HIGHER ED PATHWAYS

As more students graduate high school with college credentials, the definition of "college and career ready" is evolving. Yet, this acceleration raises important questions about transferability, credential meaning, and student readiness. This session unpacks the realities of earning college credits while still in high school, from understanding how credits transfer to recognizing the developmental differences between adolescent and adult learners. Participants will explore data-informed insights, hear practical examples from dual-credit programs, and discuss how K-12 and higher education leaders can collaborate to ensure accelerated students achieve long-term success, not just early milestones.

PRESENTERS: Abigail Ott, Amy Mancini & Marni Danhauer - Central Community College

E10 BOARD GOVERNANCE, POLICY VISIBILITY, AND STAFF NEGOTIATIONS: HOW TECHNOLOGICAL CAN YOUR BOARD BE?

Join us for an informative session on Board and Policy Management, as well as Staff Negotiations. We will cover the importance of utilizing technology to enhance your board processes and provide greater visibility to your district.

PRESENTERS: Darion Miller & Nicole Kobus - Sparq Data Solutions



F - BREAKOUTS - 10:15 TO 11:00 AM

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20

F1 STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

This session highlights how one Nebraska high school is shifting instruction to better prepare students for success in today's world. As society places greater value on critical thinking, communication, problem solving, and adaptability, the school is moving beyond compliance and recall toward student thinking, discussion, and visible learning. Using the Instructional Practice Guide as a shared framework, the school has clarified expectations for learning and raised the expectation of instructional leadership. Board members will leave with a clearer understanding that strong instructional systems make student expectations visible and require alignment from the board table to the classroom.

PRESENTERS: Brittney Kuhr - Fremont Public Schools, Ryan Ricenbaw - NDE

F2 APPRENTICESHIPS PAY OFF: A HIGH-RETURN MODEL FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION & INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD STAFFING

UNL's teacher apprentice model strategically aligns district investment with workforce stability focused on student outcomes. This session focuses on how paid, on-the-job training with expert faculty, competency-based instruction and guided classroom practice reduces recruitment costs, minimizes reliance on temporary or alternative permits, and accelerates teacher effectiveness. Data consistently shows high teacher retention rates with candidates and student academic benefits. Learn how UNL's model yields a robust pipeline of fully certified, district-ready teachers through a scalable, adaptable and cost-effective solution that strengthens and stabilizes staffing for measurable student results.

PRESENTERS: Sara Skretta, Kelley Goecke & Sue Kemp - UNL, Barbara Miller - Lincoln Public Schools

F3 WAKE UP CALL: SPECIAL EDUCATION & SECTION 504 ISSUES FOR BOARDS & ADMINISTRATORS

The fastest developing areas for school litigation surround students with disabilities. The rights of parents with students that have disabilities are actively enforced by government agencies such as the Department of Education, the Office of Civil Rights, and the Department of Justice. In this session we will go through best practices and common pitfalls under the IDEA and Section 504 to help your district develop specialized plans, respond to parent complaints, create plans for difficult behaviors, and more!

PRESENTER: Haleigh Carlson - Perry Law Firm

F4 BEYOND THE AI BASICS: WHAT SCHOOL LEADERS NEED TO KNOW NOW

Many have attended an AI session - but have you paused to examine what has changed and which leadership decisions now matter most? We will highlight an evolving approach to AI literacy, including statewide resources, pilot efforts, and guidance housed within Nebraska's SupportED site. Explore how AI intersects with digital citizenship, media literacy, academic integrity, and student wellbeing. Leaders will leave with a roadmap that clearly illustrates next steps along with the trusted repository of resources needed to support responsible implementation.

PRESENTERS: Andrew Easton & Dorann Avey - ESUCC

F5 PAIN IN THE APP, V. 12.0

Like a fine wine, this presentation gets better (and crazier) with each passing year, yet somehow the presenters haven't aged at all. Unsurprisingly, we have a whole host of new and evolving legal issues related to social media, AI, technology, and other key topics for administrators and board members. Come join us for year 12!

PRESENTERS: Bobby Truhe, Sara Rogers & Amanda Dabney - KSB School Law

F6 FREEMAN'S STUDENT-LED WELLNESS CREW

This is Freeman's 5th year of promoting mental health awareness throughout our K-12 building, focusing on mental wellness. This is a student-led group and includes weekly and monthly messages as well as school-wide activities. Examples of these messages and school-wide activities will be provided through a slideshow and artifacts.

PRESENTERS: Trish Alexander & Freeman Wellness Crew student members - Freeman Public Schools; Jamie Mapp & Tate Mazour - ESU 5

F7 FROM PASTURE TO PLATE: BUILDING A LOCAL BEEF PROGRAM THAT CONNECTS STUDENTS, SCHOOLS, AND COMMUNITY

Norris School District 160 transformed a simple idea, serving locally sourced beef in school meals, into a powerful educational and community partnership initiative. This session will walk participants through how our district developed and implemented a sustainable local beef program that supports local producers, enhances student nutrition, and creates authentic learning opportunities. Attendees will learn how Norris partnered with a local cattle producer, aligned the program with federal school nutrition guidelines, developed improved recipes, and more. Practical steps will be shared related to budgeting, processing logistics, delivery options, and collaboration with food service staff.

PRESENTERS: Derrick Joel, Gary Kubicek & Sean Molloy - Norris School District 160

F8 ACCOUNTABILITY IN ACTION: EVALUATIONS, SELF-ASSESSMENT, AND HIGH-IMPACT GOVERNANCE

This session explores how intentional superintendent evaluation and board self-assessment processes create clarity, trust, and accountability across the district. Participants will learn how to establish measurable and meaningful goals, provide constructive feedback, set clear standards of conduct, and foster a culture of continuous improvement. Attendees will walk away with practical strategies to strengthen governance effectiveness, improve leadership performance, and positively influence district culture.

PRESENTERS: Marcia Herring, Stacie Higgins & Stephanie Summers - NASB

F9 NEBRASKA LEADS LITERACY: THE BOARD'S ROLE IN SYSTEMWIDE SUCCESS

Nebraska Leads Literacy: The Board's Role in Systemwide Success highlights the current progress of raising state literacy proficiency across Nebraska and the critical role school boards play in improving outcomes. Participants will review statewide literacy efforts, including the Nebraska Literacy Project, the Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) Grant, and Nebraska Leads Literacy. The session will introduce the Nebraska Leads Literacy leadership cohort and outline actionable ways boards can support district literacy efforts and strengthen leadership accountability. Attendees will leave with clear system-level levers that strengthen district efforts and advance literacy achievement for all students.

PRESENTERS: Jamie Cook & Jane Stavem - NDE

Super SUPER SESSIONS - 11:15 AM TO NOON

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20

SS2A A LISTENING SESSION WITH MEMBERS OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



Share your thoughts on statewide education policy with members of the State Board of Education. State Board members are particularly interested in what is currently affecting local school boards and districts, and the solutions you have to offer for these issues. Topics may include school accountability, accreditation, and approval; educator certification; and statewide assessment, among others. Attending this session is a great opportunity for you to have your voice heard among members of the State Board of Education.

PRESENTERS: President Elizabeth Tegtmeier, Commissioner Brian Maher, & Asst Commissioner Grant Norgaard - NDE



SS2B SCHOOL FINANCE REVIEW COMMISSION UPDATE

Representatives of the School Finance Review Commission will provide an update on the progress of the Commission, including an overview of any recommendations made in its most recent report to the Nebraska legislature. Panelists will then answer questions from the audience regarding the work of the Commission.

PRESENTERS: Members of Finance Review Commission

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NEW BOARD MEMBER WORKSHOPS

Leadership Innovation Vision Engagement #liveNASB

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2,000,000 Nebraskans 329,000 Students 1,700 Locally Elected School Board Members 260 Member Districts/ESUs ONE NEBRASKA

DECEMBER 2026 & JANUARY 2027



JOIN US ...

Congratulations, and welcome to the board table! The NASB New Board Member Workshops will help you be a driver for student success by strengthening your understanding of board governance and superintendent leadership. Content is designed for newly elected and first-term board members and superintendents, but individuals of all experience levels will benefit.

CALL TO ORDER:

WELCOME TO THE BOARD TABLE

Ainsworth - Alliance - Beatrice - Bellevue - Hastings - Kearney - McCook - Ogallala - O'Neill - Wayne

Workshops begin Monday, December 7th



www.NASBonline.org

REGISTRATION

REGISTER NOW FOR THE WORKSHOP NEAREST YOU

Monday, December 7	Ainsworth	Register by December 1
Monday, December 7	Alliance	Register by December 1
Monday, December 7	Kearney	Register by December 1
Tuesday, December 8	O'Neill	Register by December 1
Wednesday, December 9	Ogallala	Register by December 1
Wednesday, December 9	Beatrice	Register by December 1
Tuesday, January 5	McCook	Register by December 23
Tuesday, January 5	Wayne	Register by December 23
Wednesday, January 6	Hastings	Register by December 23
Wednesday, January 6	Bellevue	Register by December 23

TO REGISTER

Contact your school district office and ask them to register you.

Registration fee for the workshop and lunch are as follows:

NASB Member Registration Fee	$160*
Cancellation Fee (After Registration Deadlines)	$50

*Fee includes one copy of the NASB "Standards of Effective Board Governance" publication.

Onsite Registration is available at each location.

No refunds after the registration deadlines.

Dietary restrictions can be emailed to **bsmith@NASBonline.org**
15 awards of achievement points will be earned for attending

SUGGESTED AUDIENCE

Newly Elected Board Candidates
School or ESU Board Members in their First Term
Experienced Board Members
Superintendents, and ESU Administrators

NASB Nebraska Association of School Boards
Better for Being There

AGENDA

THIS WILL BE AN INTERACTIVE WORK SESSION FOR NEWLY ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS COVERING BOARD GOVERNANCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND MORE. THE SESSION ALSO PROVIDES A GREAT REVIEW FOR THOSE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCE SERVING ON THE BOARD.

I. MISSION, VISION, AND GOALS
Content to be covered: District-Board Vision, Goals, and Strategic Planning

II. POLICY GOVERNANCE
Content to be covered: Monthly Policy Review, Adopted Policy Review Schedule, Handbooks, and Public Access

III. STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Content to be covered: Purposeful Engagement of Staff, Students, Parents, Community, and Business Leaders, to Sustain Long-Term Partnerships to Serve Education and Community Alignment

IV. ACCOUNTABILITY AND STUDENT SUCCESS
Content to be covered: District Data Review, Board's Commitment to Improved Instruction and Learning for all Students

V. ADVOCACY
Content to be covered: Advocacy at the State and Local Community Level, Engaging Patrons to Better Understand the Challenge or Value of Legislative Initiatives

VI. DISTRICT RESOURCES
Content to be covered: Finance Committee, Budget Development and Monthly Review of District Financials, and Negotiations

VII. BOARD OPERATIONS
Content to be covered: Open Meetings Law, Board Meeting Protocol and Procedures, Committee Assignments, Board Member Conduct

VIII. BOARD – SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONS
Content to be covered: Board-Superintendent Relations, Superintendent Evaluation, Transparency Act, Board Self-Assessment, and Effective and Collaborative Leadership

IX. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Content to be covered: NASB Calendar of Events, Learning Workshops, and NASA/NASB State Education Conference

8:00 AM
Registration

8:30 AM
Welcome & Introductions

8:45 AM
Board Role & Responsibilities

10:00 AM
Break

10:15 AM
Board Role & Responsibilities (continued)

11:30 AM
Lunch

12:15 PM
Standards of Effective Board Governance
Board Standards I through IX
I: Mission, Vision, & Goals
II: Policy Governance
III: Community & Stakeholder Engagement
IV: Accountability & Student Achievement

1:30 PM
Break

1:45 PM
Board Standards I through IX (continued)
V: Advocacy
VI: District Resources
VII: Board Operations
VIII: Board-Superintendent Relations
IX: Professional Development

3:00 PM
NASB Event Calendar, Workshop Evaluation, Dismissal

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NEW BOARD MEMBER WORKSHOPS

CALL TO ORDER:
WELCOME TO THE BOARD TABLE

Ainsworth - Alliance - Beatrice - Bellevue - Hastings - Kearney - McCook - Ogallala - O'Neill - Wayne

Workshops begin Monday, December 7th



www.NASBonline.org

TITLE 92 - NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CHAPTER 10 - REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF SCHOOLS

001 General Provisions

001.01 Statutory Authority. This Chapter is adopted pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 79-101, 79-214, 79-215, 79-2,141, 79-305, 79-318, 79-703, 79-704, 79-719 to 79-727, 79-758, 79-760.01 to 79-760.07, 79-762, 79-801 to 79-804, 79-828, 79-1603, and 79-2102.

001.02 Accreditation Classification. Accredited school systems must comply with all the numbered provisions of this Chapter except that the items identified as Quality Indicators are not requirements. No violations will be cited under Section 014 of this Chapter for any Quality Indicator. School systems will be classified as accredited if they meet all of the applicable requirements of this Chapter. All of the statements herein, with the exception of the Quality Indicators, are requirements of accredited school systems. Quality Indicators may be used by school systems to help in designing local programs. Nonpublic schools that are classified as accredited must meet all of the requirements of this Chapter except when specifically excluded or when a requirement is for public school districts only.

001.03 Accreditation Requirement. All public school districts in Nebraska that provide elementary and/or secondary instruction to children of compulsory attendance age are required to be accredited under the provisions of this Chapter. Accredited school systems are also considered to be approved for legal operation for purposes of state law. Approved private or parochial schools are eligible to apply for and maintain accreditation under the provisions of this Chapter.

001.04 Related Regulations. In addition to the requirements of this Chapter, public school districts must also comply with procedures for enrollment of students as found in 92 NAC 19. Provisions applicable to both public and nonpublic schools regarding teacher certification and endorsement are contained in 92 NAC 21 and 92 NAC 24.

001.05 Implementation of this Chapter. This Chapter will initially be used during the 2023-24 school year to determine future accreditation status.

001.06 Duration of Accreditation. Accreditation is granted for one school year from each July 1 through the following June 30. Renewal is based upon the school system's compliance with this Chapter during the prior school year. As detailed in this Chapter, failure to comply with mandatory requirements for legal operation in Section 003 of this Chapter may cause a school system to lose its accreditation during the school year.

001.07 Unified School System. For purposes of compliance with this Chapter, a unified school system must meet the requirements as though the schools were part of one single public school district. A unified system means two or more Class III school districts participating in an interlocal

agreement under the provisions of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-4,108.

001.08 Any public school district's reopening must follow the application procedures as provided for nonpublic schools in Section 015 of this Chapter.

002 Definitions. As used in this Chapter:

002.01 AQuESTT (Accountability for a Quality Education System Today and Tomorrow) means a system designed to measure the performance of public schools and public school districts and establish performance classifications through a framework that describes quality and accountability. The framework addresses two broad categories of quality education systems: 1.) Student Success and Access to include the following tenets: Positive Partnerships, Relationships and Student Success; Transitions; and Educational Opportunities and Access; and 2.) Teaching and Learning, to include the following tenets: College and Career Ready; Assessment; and Educator Effectiveness.

002.02 AQuESTT Tenet means a statement used in this Chapter to describe conditions which contribute to quality education systems for public schools and public school districts. AQuESTT tenets are not requirements of this Chapter.

002.03 Board means the State Board of Education.

002.04 Commissioner means the State Commissioner of Education.

002.05 Core Curriculum means a curriculum which includes language arts, social studies, science, mathematics, career and technical education, world language, visual and performing arts, and personal health and physical fitness and which, in public schools, incorporates multicultural education in all areas.

002.06 Course means a particular subject, subject area, or defined sequence of learning experiences scheduled during the school day with a certificated teacher assigned and with one or more students enrolled and in attendance.

002.07 Department means the State Department of Education, which is comprised of the Board and the Commissioner.

002.08 Elementary Grades means those grades designated by the school system as elementary, but not to include any above grade eight.

002.09 Governing Body means the school board of a public school district, a board elected or appointed to provide direction to a nonpublic school or a nonpublic school system, or an individual or corporate owner.

002.10 High School Grades means grades 9 through 12 in a school system organized with a four-year high school and grades 10 through 12 in a school system organized with a three-year high school. School systems organized with a three-year high school may include the ninth grade in determining

compliance with this Chapter.

002.11 Integrated Course or Curriculum means a course or curriculum that is organized by concepts, themes, or ideas and includes content from two or more subjects or fields.

002.12 Instructional Unit means 15 clock hours (900 minutes) of classroom instruction in a course offered in the secondary school. As an example, a course which meets for 50 minutes a day for 180 days generates 10 instructional units. Instructional units are computed to the nearest one-tenth.

002.13 Learning Community means a political subdivision which shares the territory of member public school districts and is governed by a learning community coordinating council established pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2102.

002.14 Middle Grades means grade(s) designated by the school system as middle and may include any grades from four through nine. The middle grades typically include at least grades seven and eight. Common middle grade configurations are grades six through eight or grades seven through nine.

002.15 National Assessment Instrument means a nationally norm-referenced test developed and scored by a national testing service.

002.16 Performance Level Classifications means categories of public schools and public school districts established by the Board based upon public school and public school district performance as indicated by graduation rates, by student growth and student improvement on state assessment instruments as provided in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-760.03 and by status and participation in statewide assessment. Additional indicators of public school and public school district performance based on AQuESTT tenets will be specified by the Commissioner and adopted by the Board in future revisions of this Chapter.

002.17 Priority School means a public school selected from the lowest performance level classification and designated as being one of three schools in greatest need of assistance to improve student achievement as provided in this Chapter.

002.18 Public School District means the territory under the jurisdiction of a single school board as authorized in Chapter 79 of the Revised Statutes of Nebraska.

002.19 Quality Indicators means statements used in this Chapter to describe conditions which contribute to high performance learning. These statements express the intent of the regulations which follow. Quality Indicators are not requirements of this Chapter.

002.20 School means an individual attendance center within a school system which provides either elementary, middle, secondary and/or high

school education.

002.21 School System means a public school district or a nonpublic school or group of nonpublic schools under a governing body organized to provide education in elementary, middle, secondary, and/or high school grades as provided in this Chapter.

002.22 Secondary Grades means those grades designated by the school system as secondary, but not to include any below grade seven.

002.23 State Assessment Instrument means a test aligned with state standards that is designed to measure student progress and achievement. This definition applies to the statewide system of assessment and reporting for reading, mathematics, and science.

002.24 Statewide Assessment means the process of measuring student achievement and progress on state-adopted standards. This definition applies to the statewide system of assessment and reporting for reading, mathematics, and science.

002.25 Teach has the same meaning as in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-101.

003 Mandatory Requirements for Legal Operation. To be eligible for accreditation or to continue as an accredited school system, the following requirements must be met when applicable. Failure to comply with Sections 003.01 through 003.11 of this Chapter will be just cause for the Commissioner to initiate proceedings before the Board to terminate accreditation and end legal operation during the school year.

003.01 Teacher and Administrator Certification. The school system must use only persons certificated pursuant to 92 NAC 21 to be a teacher or administrator. Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-1603, persons conducting religion or prekindergarten classes in nonpublic schools which are not counted as a part of the school's courses for purposes of complying with the requirements of this Chapter are excluded from this requirement. Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-802.01, American Indian language teachers who are approved by the tribe to teach their native language are also excluded from this requirement when conducting native language classes.

003.02 Grade Levels. The school system must operate, offer instruction in, and give credit in only the grades for which the school system is accredited.

003.03 Required Instruction. Instruction in English, mathematics, science, and social studies must be available each school year for all grades.

003.04 Required Programs and Procedures. Each school system must ensure its teachers arrange and present instruction in the manner specified in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-725 to promote and develop an upright and desirable citizenry. Each school system must also meet the applicable statutory provisions contained in Sections 004.02A3, 004.03A4, 004.04B2, 008.05B, and 008.05C of this Chapter. Each public school district must incorporate multicultural education in all areas of the curriculum of grades kindergarten

through twelve, as provided in Section 004.01F of this Chapter. Each public school district must meet the certificated-employee evaluation requirements as provided in Sections 007.06A through 007.06B of this Chapter. Each public school district must comply with the requirements contained in 92 NAC 15 (Regulations and Procedures for the Education of Students with Limited English Proficiency in Public Schools) and in 92 NAC 19 (Regulations Regarding School Enrollment). Each public school must meet statutory provisions contained in Sections 004.01B, 004.02B, 005.02 through 005.02C, 011.01F, and 011.01G of this Chapter. These requirements are based on statute and cannot be waived through Section 013.01 of this Chapter.

003.05 Graduation Requirements. Each high school must require from grades nine through twelve at least 200 credit hours for graduation, for which at least 80 percent must be from the core curriculum. The number of credit hours given for a course may be less than the number of instructional units and may be increased up to 25 percent above the number of instructional units.

003.05A By the 2014-15 school year, public school districts must adopt and implement graduation requirements that meet the highest level of rigor of the standards as specified in the state standards adopted by the Board, including, but not limited to the following:

003.05A1 Language Arts. Forty credit hours of Language Arts with course content that includes composition, verbal communication, literature, research skills, and technical reading and writing.

003.05A2 Mathematics. Thirty credit hours of mathematics with course content that includes algebraic, geometric, data analysis, and probability concepts.

003.05A3 Science. Thirty credit hours of science with course content that includes biological, earth/space, and physical science concepts with corresponding science inquiry skills and laboratory experience.

003.05A4 Social Studies/History. Thirty credit hours of social studies/history with course content that includes civics/government, geography, United States and world history, and economic concepts.

003.05B School systems may adopt a policy allowing high school credit to be awarded to students enrolled in a middle grades course if the course content and requirements are equivalent to a course offered in the high school.

003.05C As required in 92 NAC 18, school systems accept the academic credit earned at Interim Program Schools and issue diplomas to students transferring from Interim Program Schools who have met the requirements for graduation from their own accredited high school.

003.06 School Year. Each school system must provide at least the following instruction annually between July 1 and June 30 for the grades it offers: (a)

for grades up through grade eight, the time equivalent to 1,032 hours; (b) for grades nine through twelve, the time equivalent to 1,080 hours; and (c) for kindergarten, the time equivalent to 400 hours. When a school is dismissed for any reason, such as tournaments or contests, parent/teacher conferences, funerals, parades, and school picnics, such time may not be counted in meeting the 400/1,032/1,080 hour school year requirement. Time scheduled for the school lunch period may not be counted in meeting the school year requirements. Pursuant to the provisions of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-213, school systems unable to meet the minimums for instructional hours due to epidemic sickness, severe storm conditions, or destruction of the school house may request permission from the Board to offer fewer than the minimum hours by submitting an affidavit sworn to by the secretary of the school board and explaining the circumstances resulting in the request.

003.07 Assurance Statement. Each school system must, by November 1 of each year, submit to the Department an Assurance Statement, as prescribed by the Department, signed by a representative of the school system governing body affirming compliance or specifically noting any noncompliance with the regulations contained in this Chapter.

003.08 Reports. The following reports must be submitted to the Department each school year.

003.08A On or before September 15 of each school year, the head administrator of each school system must submit electronically, via the Department's reporting system, a Fall Personnel Report. Additions of certificated staff after submission of the Fall Personnel Report must be reported to the Department at the time of contracting.

003.08B On or before June 30 of each school year, the head administrator of each public school district must submit electronically, via the Department's reporting system, data elements required by Sections 005.02 thru 005.02C of this Chapter.

003.08C On or before the last day of February of each school year, the head administrator of each nonpublic school system must submit electronically, via the Department's reporting system, a Curriculum Report.

003.09 Contracting Public School Districts. Public school districts that contract under the provisions of state statute with another public school district or districts to provide all educational services for all students in the secondary grades may be considered accredited but may operate only elementary grades. Public school districts must notify the Department upon approval of the patrons of the district for contracting all elementary students and/or all secondary students with other public school districts. Any public school district reopening after contracting all students must follow the same application procedures as provided for nonpublic schools in Section 015 of this Chapter.

003.10 School Site Review. The State Department of Education staff may conduct periodic on-site visits to school systems to review and determine

compliance with the provisions of this Chapter.

003.11 Contested Case Orders. In a contested case, any school system receiving an order entered by the Board under the Administrative Procedures Act must comply with the conditions of the order, unless a judicial stay has been entered.

003.12 Each public school district must require each such district's schools to establish a period of time during the school day, when a majority of pupils are scheduled to be present, during which pupils will be led in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in the presence of the flag of the United States of America, in grades kindergarten through twelve. Pupil participation in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance must be voluntary. Pupils not participating in the recitation of the Pledge must be permitted to silently stand or remain seated but must be required to respect the rights of those pupils electing to participate.

004 Curriculum and Standards

004.01 K-12 Curriculum. **Quality Indicator: The curriculum is comprehensive, coordinated, and sequential and is directed toward locally approved goals and standards for student learning. The instructional program focuses on achievement and provides for the needs of all students including learners with disabilities and high ability learners. It draws upon research, best practice, and reputable theory.**

AQuESTT Tenet: Every student is prepared to pursue postsecondary educational opportunities and career goals upon completion of secondary education.

AQuESTT Tenet: Every student has access to coordinated and comprehensive instructional opportunities to be prepared for learning, earning, and living.

AQuESTT Tenet: All students experience success through a continuous improvement process that builds student, parent/guardian/family, and community engagement in order to enhance educational experiences and opportunities for all students.

004.01A The instructional program of the school system is based on written purposes or standards and is approved by the governing body. These documents are on file in each school building and each certificated staff member is provided a copy.

004.01B Public school districts adopt academic content standards in the subject areas of reading and writing (language arts), mathematics, and science determined by each such district to be measurable quality standards that are the same as, equal to, or more rigorous than the state academic content standards adopted by the Board pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-760.01. The deadline for public school districts to

adopt replacement academic content standards will not extend past one year following the Board's adoption of new content standards. Nonpublic schools have local academic content standards for reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies/history approved by the governing body.

004.01C The school system has written guides, frameworks, or standards for all other areas of the curriculum. In connection with this requirement, school systems are encouraged to adopt the Fine Arts Standards adopted by the Board on March 4, 2014. The school system also has a written description of the library media and guidance programs.

004.01D Writing experiences are incorporated in all curricular areas K-12.

004.01E Educational/computer technology is incorporated in the instructional program at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels.

004.01F The instructional program in public schools incorporates multicultural education in all curriculum areas at all grades. Multicultural education includes, but is not limited to, studies relative to the culture, history, and contributions of African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans and European Americans with special emphasis on human relations and sensitivity toward all races. The regulation is based on statute and cannot be waived through Section 013.01 of this Chapter.

004.01F1 The public school district has a statement of philosophy or mission for the multicultural education program. Local program goals address multicultural education.

004.01F2 The public school district curriculum guides, frameworks, or standards incorporate multicultural education.

004.01F3 The public school district multicultural education program includes a process for selecting appropriate instructional materials.

004.01F4 The public school district has a process for provision of staff development in multicultural education including professional development for administrators, teachers, and support staff which is congruent with public school district and program goals.

004.01F5 The public school district has a process for periodic assessment of the multicultural education program. An annual status report is provided to the school board.

004.02 Elementary Curriculum. **Quality Indicator: The elementary instructional program is based on state or locally approved standards for student learning and helps each student acquire knowledge, skills, and understanding in all subject areas. The instruction is appropriate for the grade level of the students.**

Teaching and learning activities and the general environment stimulate, nurture, and encourage involvement in a wide range of learning experiences. The program helps students apply and extend basic skills by integrating topics throughout the curriculum. The schedule is sufficiently flexible to encourage teachers and students to address emergent needs and topics.

AQuESTT Tenet: Quality educational systems focus on supports for students transitioning between grade levels, programs, schools, public school districts, and ultimately, college and career.

004.02A The Elementary Instructional Program. The elementary school has a representative weekly schedule for each classroom teacher encompassing experiences in the following subject areas:

004.02A1 Reading and Language Arts. The curriculum includes development and practice of skills and understanding in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. It helps children develop appreciation of literature, creativity, and expression.

004.02A2 Mathematics. The curriculum includes development, practice, and application of numeration, computation, estimation, problem solving, geometry/spatial concepts, measurement and related topics.

004.02A3 Social Studies. The curriculum helps children to develop an understanding of the world and its people. It includes experiences drawn from geography, history, economics, government, citizenship, career awareness, human relations, current affairs, and cultural studies. This includes instruction required pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-724.

004.02A4 Science. The curriculum helps children develop an understanding of science concepts and processes, and includes science as inquiry. It includes experiences drawn from physical science, life science, earth and space science, science and technology, and history and nature of science.

004.02A5 Health. The curriculum helps children develop an understanding of the body systems, nutrition, wellness (including physical activity), and healthy living habits.

004.02A6 Physical Education. The curriculum helps children develop and maintain physical coordination, large and small muscle control, physical fitness, leisure activities, and healthy behaviors.

004.02A7 Visual Arts. The curriculum helps children understand and apply a variety of media, techniques, and processes within a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas. The curriculum includes reflection upon and assessment of art and study of art in relation to history, culture, and other curricular areas.

004.02A8 Music. The curriculum helps children to sing and play a variety of music, read and notate music, listen to and describe music, and evaluate music. The curriculum includes music in relation to history, culture, and other curricular areas.

004.02B Kindergarten. For school year 2012-2013 and each school year thereafter, admission to public school kindergarten is on an unqualified basis to all resident children who will reach age 5 by July 31 of the calendar year in the school year for which the child is seeking admission begins. Testing prior to school entrance, if any, is conducted only to identify children with disabilities under 92 NAC 51 or to meet requirements of subdivision (1)(b) of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-214.

004.02B1 Pursuant to subdivision (1)(b) of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-214, the school board must admit a child who will reach the age of 5 years on or after August 1 and on or before October 15 of such school year under the following circumstances:

004.02B1a The parent or guardian requests such entrance and provides an affidavit stating that:

004.02B1a(i) The child attended kindergarten in another jurisdiction in the current school year, or

004.02B1a(ii) The family anticipates relocation to another jurisdiction that would allow admission within the current year, or

004.02B1a(iii) The child has demonstrated through a recognized assessment procedure approved by the school board that he or she is capable of carrying the work of kindergarten.

004.02B2 Each school board must approve and make available a recognized assessment procedure for determining if a child is capable of carrying the work of kindergarten.

004.02C Pupils in kindergarten through sixth grade do not participate in any kinds of athletic contests between schools within a school system or between school systems except that elementary school systems having seventh and eighth grade athletics may include sixth grade boys or girls when combined enrollment for seventh and eighth grade becomes fewer than 12 boys or 12 girls and if the governing body has a policy regulating participation for sixth graders. Annual field or play days are excluded from this regulation.

004.03 Middle Grades Curriculum. **Quality Indicator: The middle grades instructional program is based upon state or locally approved standards for student learning. It builds upon the content of the elementary grades, extends the depth of learning experiences, and provides exploratory experiences throughout the curriculum. The**

program incorporates vocational technical education, foreign language, career education, and technology education. The instructional activities and schedule are designed to meet the developmental needs of middle grade learners.

AQuESTT Tenet: Quality educational systems focus on supports for students transitioning between grade levels, programs, schools, public school districts, and ultimately, college and career.

004.03A Middle Grades Instructional Program. The program in the middle grades includes instruction for each grade each year in the following subject areas. Instruction may be provided through separate courses, integrated blocks of time, and/or through exploratory programs.

004.03A1 Reading. The curriculum includes experiences designed to help students expand, develop and apply reading skills introduced in the elementary grades. It includes reading for both information and enjoyment.

004.03A2 Language Arts. The curriculum includes activities that engage students in using language for a variety of reading, writing, speaking, and listening purposes.

004.03A3 Mathematics. The curriculum includes practice in numeration, computation, estimation, problem solving, geometry/spatial concepts, and measurement. It introduces algebraic and statistical concepts and provides opportunities for students to develop understanding of the structure of mathematics.

004.03A4 Social Studies. The curriculum includes content and experiences drawn from geography, history, economics, citizenship, government, cultural studies, and current events. This includes instruction required pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-724. All history courses stress contributions of all ethnic groups in the development and growth of America.

004.03A5 Science. The curriculum includes elements of life, physical, earth and space sciences, science as technology, and history of science. Learning activities emphasize science as inquiry and scientific processes and concepts.

004.03A6 Health. The curriculum includes the study of body systems and those factors which affect health, including natural and man-made threats and individual health choices.

004.03A7 Art. The curriculum includes activities and experiences designed to develop skills in working with a variety of artistic techniques, processes, and media. The curriculum relates art to history and culture and to other curricular areas.

004.03A8 Music. The curriculum includes experiences that involve students in singing and playing musical instruments and provides

opportunities for students to pursue individual musical interests and to develop individual talents. It includes the study of a varied repertoire of music and its relation to history and culture.

004.03A9 Physical Education. The curriculum includes active involvement in health-related physical fitness activities designed to develop cardiorespiratory endurance, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility. It encourages students to develop habits of physical exercise through individual and team activities and by emphasizing involvement rather than competition. Practice for and participation in interscholastic activities cannot substitute for any part of physical education.

004.03B Career education is included in the middle grades program.

004.03C No student in grades seven or eight participates in interscholastic athletic contests between schools within a school system or between school systems which exceed six games in football, fourteen matches in volleyball, twelve games in basketball, eight meets in wrestling, eight meets in track and field, and eight contests in all other activities. Contest limits must be based upon the total number of contests played. Each game, match or meet played in a tournament must count as one of the contests permitted within these contest limits.

004.04 Secondary Curriculum. **Quality Indicator: The secondary instructional program is based upon state or locally approved standards for student learning. It provides breadth and depth of subject areas which enable students to achieve knowledge and skills necessary to continue post-secondary education or enter a career field. Instruction builds upon knowledge acquired in previous grades and helps students acquire the learning goals of the school, builds 21st century skills, and prepares students for living in a global society. Schools provide required instructional units on site or through a combination of local and distance learning programs.**

AQuESTT Tenet: Quality educational systems focus on supports for students transitioning between grade levels, programs, schools, public school districts, and ultimately, college and career.

004.04A Required High School Program. The high school program consists of courses totaling at least 400 instructional units.

004.04B The instructional program in grades 9-12 includes as a minimum the following subject fields and the number of instructional units shown for each:

004.04B1 Language Arts - 60 instructional units. The curriculum includes written composition, critical reading, interpretation of fiction and non-fiction, oral presentation, and application of listening skills.

004.04B2 Social Science - 40 instructional units. The curriculum includes content drawn from American and world history, geography, economics, civics, government and citizenship and may also include content from other social science areas such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology. This includes instruction required pursuant to § 79-724. All history courses stress contributions of all ethnic groups in the development and growth of America.

004.04B3 Mathematics - 40 instructional units. The curriculum includes communicating, reasoning, problem solving, numeration, computation, estimation, measurement, geometry, data analysis, probability and statistical concepts, and algebraic concepts

004.04B4 Science - 40 instructional units. The curriculum includes science concepts and processes, science as inquiry, physical science, life science, earth and space science, science and technology, and history and nature of science.

004.04B5 World Language - 20 instructional units or two years of daily classes in the same language. The curriculum includes reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills for communicating in one or more languages other than English, knowledge and understanding of other cultures, and developing insight into the nature of language and culture.

004.04B6 Career Education. The curriculum includes 80 instructional units in Career Education that include instruction in any of the following career fields: (1) Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, (2) Business, Marketing, and Management, (3) Communication and Information Systems, (4) Health Sciences, (5) Human Services and Education, (6) Skilled and Technical Sciences.

004.04B6a Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. The curriculum in this career field includes areas such as animal, plant, and soil sciences, agribusiness, food science, power, structural and technical systems, leadership and human resource development, natural resources, biotechnology and environmental science.

004.04B6b Business, Marketing, and Management. The curriculum in this career field includes areas such as e-commerce, business communication, finance, business and consumer law, entrepreneurship, accounting, business economics, personal finance, consumer economics, financial services marketing, retailing, fashion marketing/merchandising, international marketing, sports and entertainment marketing, hospitality and tourism.

004.04B6c Communication and Information Systems. The curriculum in this career field includes areas such as advertising, public relations, commercial photography, journalism, graphic

design, broadcasting, scriptwriting, radio/TV production, information technology applications, web design, interactive media, networking, e-commerce, computer science, and information technology.

004.04B6d Health Sciences. The curriculum in this career field includes areas such as nutrition and food, family health, medical terminology, health informatics, therapeutic services, diagnostic services, certified nursing assistant, and health care sciences.

004.04B6e Human Services and Education. The curriculum in this career field includes areas such as independent/adult living, home management, housing and home furnishings, family health, clothing and textiles, parenting and child development, human resource development, criminal justice, human growth and development, interpersonal relationships, and applied psychology.

004.04B6f Skilled and Technical Sciences. The curriculum in this career field includes areas such as housing and home furnishings, woods and construction, construction/ electricity, construction/home maintenance, computer aided drafting, metals and welding, manufacturing/metalworking, manufacturing/woodworking, millwork and cabinetmaking, electronics, technology engineering education, Principles of Technology, technology education, transportation power/auto mechanics, automotive services, and energy.

004.04B6g Nonpublic college preparatory schools may substitute additional courses in language arts, foreign language, science, mathematics, and/or social science for up to 40 instructional units in career and technical education.

004.04B7 Personal Health and Physical Fitness - 20 instructional units or two years of daily classes in personal health and physical fitness. The personal health and physical fitness curriculum includes content to emphasize life-long wellness habits including the knowledge and psychomotor skills applicable to cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The curriculum emphasizes non-participation in high risk behavior. The physical fitness curriculum includes an active program of health-related physical fitness, including cardiorespiratory endurance, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and body composition. Practice for and participation in interscholastic athletic activities are not accepted as a substitute for any part of the personal health and physical fitness requirement.

004.04B8 Visual and Performing Arts - 40 instructional units which include each year instruction in vocal music, instrumental music, and visual arts. It may also include dance and theater. The visual and performing arts curriculum includes performance, interpretation, and evaluation.

004.04B8a Music. The curriculum includes singing and playing a varied repertoire of music, improvising melodies and accompaniments, reading and notating music, listening to and describing music, evaluating music and music performances, recognizing relationships between music and the other disciplines, and the study of music in relation to history and culture.

004.04B8b Visual Arts. The curriculum includes media, techniques, and processes; choice and evaluation of a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas; assessment of characteristics and merits of student work and the work of others; and the visual arts in relation to other disciplines.

004.04C Local Options for Providing High School Courses.

004.04C1 High schools may meet the instructional unit requirements of Section 004.04B of this Chapter through integrated courses, as defined in Section 002.11 of this Chapter, if the school has on file locally a description of the curriculum or course including a list of the goals, an explanation of the subjects included, and the rationale for allocating instructional units to appropriate subject fields in Section 004.04B of this Chapter.

004.04C2 High schools may count instructional units for two courses in a subject field taught in the same classroom at the same time if the courses are primarily individualized wherein all students do independent projects or practice. (Examples: Spanish 3 and 4, Accounting 1 and 2, Art 1 and 2)

004.04C3 Schools may use performance based curriculum or courses as an option in place of any subjects in Section 004.04B of this Chapter if they have a written description of the curricula or course which includes the goals, representative instructional experiences, expected student performance for accomplishment of the goals, and the rationale for allocating instructional units for the course. The written description is approved by the school board and is on file in the school. Performance based curriculum provides learning opportunities for students equivalent to or greater than those through the course(s) under Section 004.04B of this Chapter, but may take less than the time required in Section 002.12 of this Chapter for determining instructional units.

004.04C4 Instructional units may be counted each year for two courses taught in alternating years not to exceed one course in each of four subject fields, as listed in Section 004.04B of this Chapter, provided schedules verifying alternating courses are kept on file in the school system. As an example, a high school that alternates a course that generates 10 instructional units in World Language II in the current year, with a course that generated 10 instructional units in World Language I the previous year, may count 20 instructional

units each year. A school board of a public school district may not establish an alternating biennial secondary course offering in any subject area for which the State Board of Education has adopted content standards pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-760.01.

004.04D Multi-site and Distance Learning Options for Providing High School Courses. Up to a total of 200 instructional units of the total 400 instructional unit requirement for the high school may be provided through one or more of the following course options (instructional units beyond the required 400 instructional units may be delivered in any of the following methods):

004.04D1 Synchronous Course Option: Synchronous courses are those multi-site or distance learning courses in which the teacher and student(s) are simultaneously present; can both see and hear one another; and questions may be answered and instructional accommodations made immediately. This includes:

004.04D1a Teacher Sharing. Instructional units provided through contractual or cooperative arrangements with other school systems, educational service units, and/or postsecondary institutions in which either the teacher(s) or student(s) move to be located at the same site to provide classroom instruction may be counted in meeting a portion of the instructional unit requirement provided: (a) each course is taught by a teacher holding a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate; (b) each course is shown on the high school class schedule along with the name of the teacher; (c) at least one high school student is enrolled and participating in each course; and (d) each course is made available to all students at the school's expense. A copy of the written agreement with the cooperating school/agency is on file in the school.

004.04D1b Interactive Audio-Visual Options. Up to 100 of the allowable 200 multi-site or distance learning instructional units may be met through synchronous interactive audio-visual instruction provided: (a) each course is taught by a teacher holding a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate; (b) each course is shown on the high school class schedule along with the name of the teacher; (c) at least one high school student is enrolled and participating in the course; (d) each course is made available to all students at the school's expense; and (e) a teacher holding a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate monitors student progress and general appropriateness of the course and is present in the classroom while the course is being taught unless:

004.04D1b(1) The off-site interactive teacher holds a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate and a public school district employee is present in the receiving classroom, or

004.04D1b(2) The off-site interactive teacher holds a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate, maintains two-way audio and

video communication with the distance learning classroom, and has a direct telephone connection with a supervising adult in the school.

004.04D2 Asynchronous Course Options: Asynchronous courses are those multi-site or distance learning courses in which communication between teacher and student is delayed, as are the cases, for example, with written correspondence courses and many computer-delivered courses. This includes:

004.04D2a University of Nebraska High School Options. Up to 50 of the allowable 200 distance learning multi-site instructional units may be met through the use of courses taught by teachers of the University of Nebraska High School provided that (a) each course is shown on the high school class schedule; (b) at least one high school student is enrolled and participating in the course; (c) each course is made available to all students at the school's expense; and (d) a teacher holding a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate is present during the assigned period (one teacher may supervise more than one course) to monitor and assist with instruction.

004.04D2b Other Distance Learning Technology Options. Up to 30 of the allowable 200 distance learning multi-site instructional units may be met through courses delivered by other methods of distance technology provided that each course is reviewed in advance and recommended for school use by a committee of at least one local teacher and one local school administrator and is approved by the governing body, and the written review and statement of approval are on file in the school system; and provided (a) each course is shown on the high school class schedule; (b) at least one high school student is enrolled and participating in each course; (c) each course is made available to all students at the school's expense; (d) a teacher holding a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate is present during the assigned period (one teacher may supervise more than one course) to monitor and assist with instruction; and (e) each student enrolled in such a course is assigned to a teacher holding a Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an appropriate endorsement who monitors student progress and general appropriateness of the course.

004.04E Secondary Schools With Grades Seven and Eight. Secondary schools including grades seven and eight provide an instructional program for those grades in accordance with Sections 004.03A through 004.03C of this Chapter.

004.04F New Schools. A school adding high school grades must provide at least one-fourth of the total instructional unit requirements and one-fourth of the individual subject matter requirements for each grade that it offers.

005 Statewide System for Assessment of Student Learning and for Reporting the Performance of Public School Districts

005.01 Quality Indicator: Assessment procedures and results assist teachers in planning and providing appropriate instruction for all students. Assessment results also provide information for monitoring program success, and for reporting to parents, policy makers, and the community. Schools periodically review procedures to improve assessment quality and increase student learning. The information assists schools in establishing and achieving improvement goals.

AQuESTT Tenet: The results of multiple assessment sources (national, state, and classroom-based) are used to measure student achievement of college and career ready standards and be used as an integral part of the instructional process.

005.01A All public school districts participate annually in statewide assessments in compliance with the schedule adopted by the Board. Nonpublic schools have an assessment plan which includes a schedule and procedures for assessing success in achieving their academic content standards. Student success in achieving their standards is reported to the head administrator or governing board of the nonpublic school.

005.01B Whole grade norm-referenced assessment using a national assessment instrument begins no earlier than grade two and is conducted annually in at least one grade in each of the following two levels: grades 2-5; grades 6-8. A national assessment instrument is administered at least once in the high school grades.

005.02 Each school year, for the purpose of implementing a statewide system of tracking student achievement as required by Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-760.05, public school districts must report by June 30 of each school year the following data to the Department electronically via the Department's reporting system using the Department's student identifier system:

005.02A Individual student demographics including each student's race, poverty status, high mobility status, attendance, and limited English proficiency;

005.02B Individual student achievement including individual student achievement data from the state assessment instruments required in Section 005.01A of this Chapter and scores and subscores available to the public school district on national assessment instruments administered by such district; and

005.02C Individual student educational input characteristics including class size, teacher education, teacher experience, special education, early childhood programs, federal programs, and targeted education programs.

005.03 Student Assistance. Each school has a student assistance process of its own design to provide problem solving and intervention strategies.

006 Media and Technology Resources

006.01 Quality Indicator: The library/media/technology program provides a wide range of accessible print and electronic resources that expand opportunity for learning, contribute to information literacy, support the local curriculum, and enhance and enrich learning experiences for all students.

006.01A Each school has a library media area(s) which is available to students during the entire school day. All library media resources are properly cataloged, marked, and shelved according to a standard classification system. Each school has at least one set of encyclopedia available in either print or electronic format with copyright dates in the past five years.

006.01B Each elementary school acquires a minimum of 25 new library media resources in print format, exclusive of textbooks and encyclopedia, of different titles, per teacher per year, up to 150 titles during one year. The minimum number of new titles in print format is 75 if library media resources are also available through electronic format. Each middle and high school acquires a minimum of 150 titles each year in either print or in full text electronic format.

006.01C Each middle level school subscribes to at least ten periodicals either in print or in full text electronic format.

006.01D Each secondary school subscribes to at least 25 periodicals in print or in full text electronic format.

007 Instructional Staff

007.01 Elementary Staff. **Quality Indicator: Instructional staff members have appropriate training and preparation to work with elementary school children. They are knowledgeable of principles of child growth and development, the scope of the elementary school curriculum, and cross-disciplinary instructional strategies. They establish a positive and supportive learning environment for all students.**

AQuESTT Tenet: Students are surrounded by effective and qualified educators throughout every learning experience, and every school and public school district develops effective teachers and leaders to establish a culture of success.

007.01A Computed on a full-time equivalency basis, a minimum of 95 percent of the teachers in the elementary grades are assigned to areas for which they hold certificates having appropriate endorsements pursuant to 92 NAC 24.

007.01B Pre-kindergarten programs operated by public schools are coordinated by a staff member who holds a Nebraska Teaching Certificate with at least 9 college credit hours in early childhood education.

007.02 Middle Grades Staff. **Quality Indicator: Staff members at the middle grades are knowledgeable of the growth and development of middle grades students. They have knowledge of the curriculum content for which they are responsible and they use teaching strategies that engage students actively in learning, that build upon elementary content and skills, and that help students understand and apply content across subject areas.**

AQuESTT Tenet: Students are surrounded by effective and qualified educators throughout every learning experience, and every school and public school district develops effective teachers and leaders to establish a culture of success.

007.02A Computed on a full-time equivalency, at least 90 percent of the teachers in middle grades hold one of the following endorsements or meet the provisions of Sections 007.02A1a or 007.02A4 of this Chapter:

007.02A1 In grades seven and eight, any middle grades endorsement or an appropriate secondary endorsement.

007.02A1a Teachers holding an elementary endorsement may teach in grades seven and eight if they acquire six credit hours per year toward the middle grades endorsement or participate in staff development in accordance with a local mission and plan for education of middle grade students.

007.02A2 In grades four through six, an elementary endorsement or any middle grades endorsement.

007.02A2a Teachers holding a content area endorsement at the secondary level may teach grade six in that content area if they acquire six credit hours per year toward the elementary or middle grades endorsement or participate annually in staff development in accordance with a local mission and plan for education of middle grade students.

007.02A3 In grade nine, an appropriate secondary endorsement or any middle grades endorsement.

007.02A4 Teachers not holding an appropriate endorsement may be assigned to the middle grades if they acquire six credit hours per year toward a middle grades endorsement.

007.02A5 Secondary teachers assigned to integrated courses or curriculum in grades seven through nine are considered appropriately endorsed if they hold an endorsement for any of the

subjects or fields included in the course.

007.03 Secondary Staff. **Quality Indicator: Instructional staff members in the secondary grades have specialized preparation in a subject area or field and knowledge of the developmental level of students. Staff members use strategies that help students become actively involved in the learning process through in-depth study of subjects and through experiences that use and apply knowledge, skills, and understanding across the curricular areas.**

AQuESTT Tenet: Students are surrounded by effective and qualified educators throughout every learning experience, and every school and public school district develops effective teachers and leaders to establish a culture of success.

007.03A At least 80 percent of the instructional units offered in secondary grades during the regular school term are assigned to teachers who hold certificates having appropriate endorsements issued pursuant to 92 NAC 24. If 92 NAC 24 does not provide an endorsement designated for a particular course or subject area, any teacher holding a regular certificate may instruct such course without penalty to the school system. Teachers holding a subject endorsement are considered appropriately endorsed for any other subject within the broad field if they annually acquire, prior to the opening of school, six credit hours toward the subject endorsement or the broad field endorsement.

007.03A1 Teachers assigned to integrated courses or curriculum in accordance with Sections 002.11 and 004.04C1 of this Chapter are considered appropriately endorsed if they hold an endorsement for any of the subjects or fields included in the course.

007.03B Secondary schools including grades seven and eight may assign the teachers as provided in Section 007.02A of this Chapter.

007.04 Media/Technology Staff. **Quality Indicator: The library/media/technology programs and services are an integral part of the instructional program. Library/media staff provide leadership and assistance in selection, provision, and use of library/media resources. Technology staff and services are available locally or in collaboration with other agencies to provide support, maintenance, consultation, and training for meaningful use of technology resources.**

AQuESTT Tenet: Students are surrounded by effective and qualified educators throughout every learning experience, and every school and public school district develops effective teachers and leaders to establish a culture of success.

007.04A Each K-12 school system and each secondary school system has a person holding a Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an endorsement appropriate for library science or educational media specialist, or meeting Section 007.04B of this Chapter, assigned on at

least a one-half time basis to provide library media services to the school system.

007.04A1 Each school building having an enrollment of from 70 to 249 students has a person holding a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an appropriate endorsement for library science or educational media specialist assigned on at least a one-fifth time basis or has a library media paraprofessional assigned on at least a one-half time basis under the supervision of a certificated staff member.

007.04A2 Each school building having an enrollment of at least 250 students has a person holding a Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an appropriate endorsement for library science or educational media specialist assigned on at least a one-half time basis, or has such person assigned on a one-fourth time basis and a full-time library media paraprofessional also assigned. Buildings with 500 or more students have at least a full-time educational media specialist or a one-half time educational media specialist and a full-time library media paraprofessional. Buildings with 750 or more students have a full-time educational media specialist.

007.04B A school system may assign a person holding a Nebraska Teaching Certificate with no endorsement appropriate for library science or educational media specialist to fulfill the requirements for Sections 007.04A, 007.04A1, and 007.04A2 of this Chapter if such person acquires at least six (6) credit hours each year toward an appropriate endorsement pursuant to 92 NAC 24. Persons employed by a Nebraska school prior to July 1, 1989, to provide library media services and who hold a Nebraska Special Services Certificate with an endorsement appropriate for library media services may fulfill the requirements of these regulations.

007.05 Guidance Staff. **Quality Indicator: A comprehensive, developmental, K-12 guidance and counseling program assists all students in learning skills needed for academic success and for personal, social, and career development. The guidance program includes planned classroom and group activities, counseling services responsive to individuals and small groups, and assistance to students in academic planning and placement. The school and community work cooperatively to provide appropriate support for students, families, and teachers. Guidance and counseling programs are directed by professional staff with appropriate endorsements in guidance and counseling. Professional staff are assigned based upon local needs determined through a formal process documenting the needs.**

AQuESTT Tenet: Quality educational systems focus on supports for students transitioning between grade levels, programs, schools, public school districts, and ultimately, college and career.

AQuESTT Tenet: Students are surrounded by effective and qualified educators throughout every learning experience, and every school and public school district develops effective teachers and leaders to establish a culture of success.

007.05A Each K-12 and each secondary school system assigns at least a one-half time equivalency person to conduct a guidance and counseling program. The level of assignment is determined by the school system and the person assigned holds a guidance and counseling endorsement appropriate for the level(s) assigned. When enrollment in a school system exceeds 400, the system assigns at least one full-time equivalency appropriately endorsed person.

007.05B School systems having a total of 300 or more students in the middle grades, secondary grades, or high school grades assign at least a one-half time appropriately endorsed person to provide guidance and counseling for the level. When the total enrollment in any of those levels reaches 450, one full-time equivalent appropriately endorsed person is assigned. Thereafter, an additional one-half time appropriately endorsed person is assigned for each 225 students at any of those levels.

007.05C Public school districts having 300 or more students in the elementary grades have guidance programs or services available for the elementary students. The procedures and time allotment are determined by the public school district.

007.05D A person holding a Nebraska Teaching Certificate with no endorsement appropriate for guidance and counseling may be assigned to fulfill the requirements of Sections 007.05A and 007.05B of this Chapter if such person has two years of teaching experience and acquires at least six credit hours each year toward an endorsement appropriate for guidance and counseling pursuant to 92 NAC 24. Persons employed by a Nebraska school prior to July 1, 1989, to provide guidance and counseling services and who hold a Nebraska Special Services Certificate with an endorsement appropriate for guidance and counseling services may fulfill the requirements of this regulation.

007.05E In nonpublic schools, clergy holding a Nebraska teaching or administrative certificate may be assigned to fulfill the requirement of Sections 007.05A and 007.05B of this Chapter.

007.06 Certificated-Employee Evaluation. **Quality Indicator: The primary purpose of certificated-employee evaluation is to improve student learning. The procedures are clear, equitable, and systematic.**

AQuESTT Tenet: Students are surrounded by effective and qualified educators throughout every learning experience, and every school and public school district develops effective teachers and leaders to establish a culture of success.

007.06A The public school district has a written school board policy for the evaluation of certificated-employees. The policy is approved by the Commissioner or designee as required by subdivision (5)(h) of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-318. Sections 007.06A through 007.06B of this Chapter are based on statute and cannot be waived under the provisions of Section 013 of this Chapter.

007.06A1 The policy is implemented by written procedures that include:

007.06A1a Annual written communication of the evaluation process to those being evaluated;

007.06A1b A description of the duration and frequency of observations and written evaluations for probationary and permanent certificated-employees;

007.06A1c Specific district-defined evaluation criteria, which include, at a minimum:

007.06A1c(1) Instructional performance (applicable to teachers only),

007.06A1c(2) Classroom organization and management (applicable to teachers only), and

007.06A1c(3) Personal and professional conduct.

007.06A1d Provision for written communication and documentation to the evaluated certificated-employee specifying all noted deficiencies, specific means for the correction of the noted deficiency, and an adequate timeline for implementing the concrete suggestions for improvement;

007.06A1e Provision for the certificated-employee to offer a written response to the evaluation; and

007.06A1f A description of the district plan for training evaluators.

007.06A2 In the event a public school district changes its policies or procedures for certificated-employee evaluation, it must submit the revised policies and procedures to the Commissioner or designee for approval. If the Commissioner or designee finds the policies and procedures in compliance with the requirements of Sections 007.06A through 007.06A1f of this Chapter, it notifies the district in writing that such policies and procedures are approved. Such approval must remain in effect until there is a change in the policies or procedures by the district, or the amendment of state law or regulations relating to such approval. In the event the Commissioner or designee does not find the revised policies and procedures of the district in

compliance with the provisions of this Chapter, the Commissioner or designee will notify the district in writing and the district may resubmit amended policies and procedures.

007.06B All evaluators, with the exception of the school board when it evaluates the superintendent, possess a valid Nebraska Administrative Certificate and are trained to use the evaluation system used in the public school district.

007.07 Staff Development. **Quality Indicator: Staff development supports instructional improvement, the local school improvement plan, and accomplishment of school and/or school system goals.**

007.07A The school system annually conducts or arranges staff development sessions. Each teacher participates in at least ten hours of staff development activities each year.

008 Administrative Staff.

008.01 **Quality Indicator: Building administrators provide leadership to curriculum, instruction, assessment, and school improvement. They guide staff and students in achieving goals and fulfill other functions supportive of quality learning.**

AQuESTT Tenet: Students are surrounded by effective and qualified educators throughout every learning experience, and every school and public school district develops effective teachers and leaders to establish a culture of success.

008.02 Elementary Administration.

008.02A Each elementary school has a principal assigned who holds a Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory Certificate with an endorsement appropriate for serving as an elementary principal or for superintendent. When the number of full-time equivalency teachers supervised by a principal in one or more school systems reaches 10, the principal is assigned at least one-half time for administration and supervision. The principal is assigned full-time when the number of full-time equivalency teachers reaches 20 or more.

008.02B An elementary principal who is the head administrator of a school system meets with the governing body at least four times each year to provide leadership in the development of school goals, policies, budgets, instructional programs, staff evaluation, and other administrative and instructional matters.

008.03 Middle Grades Administration.

008.03A Each middle grades school has a principal who holds a Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory Certificate with an endorsement for middle grades principal, elementary principal, secondary principal or for superintendent.

008.03A1 Middle grades schools having only grades four through six have a principal holding an endorsement for elementary principal, middle grades principal, or superintendent.

008.03A2 Middle grades schools having only grades seven through nine have a principal holding an endorsement for middle grades principal, secondary principal, or superintendent.

008.03B When the number of full-time equivalency teachers supervised by the principal reaches 10, the principal is assigned at least one-half time for administration and supervision. The principal is assigned full-time when the number of full-time equivalency teachers reaches 20 or more.

008.04 Secondary School Administration.

008.04A Each secondary school has a principal assigned who holds a Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory Certificate with an endorsement for serving as a secondary principal or for superintendent. When the number of full-time equivalency teachers reaches 10 or more, the principal is assigned at least one-half time for administration and supervision. The principal is assigned full-time for administration and supervision when the number of full-time equivalency teachers reaches 20 or more.

008.05 School System Administration. **Quality Indicator: The school administration exercises leadership in the development and implementation of school goals and policies. Administrators demonstrate leadership in management and operation of the school system and in the improvement of curriculum and instruction.**

008.05A Each K-12 and each secondary school system having grades ten through twelve has a head administrator who holds a Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory Certificate with an endorsement for serving as a superintendent. Nonpublic systems may share an area or diocesan head administrator.

008.05B Any person assigned to administrative and/or supervisory duties holds a Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory Certificate with an appropriate endorsement for the position held in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-801.

008.05C A copy of the certificate or permit of each staff member who is required to have a certificate is on file in the school or school system's administrative office. Upon initial employment or acquisition of a new certificate, the certificate or permit is registered by the head administrator of the school system in accordance with subsection (1) of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-804.

008.05D Two or more school systems may jointly contract with a person holding a Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory Certificate with the appropriate endorsement to fulfill administrative responsibilities.

009 Continuous School Improvement.

009.01 **Quality Indicator: A systematic on-going process guides planning, implementation, and evaluation and renewal of continuous school improvement activities to meet local and statewide goals and priorities. The school improvement process focuses on improving student learning. The process includes a periodic review by visiting educators who provide consultation to the local school/community in continued accomplishment of plans and goals.**

AQuESTT Tenet: All students experience success through a continuous improvement process that builds student, parent/guardian/family and community engagement in order to enhance educational experiences and opportunities for all students.

009.01A The school system develops and implements a continuous school improvement process to promote quality learning for all students. This process includes procedures and strategies to address quality learning, equity, and accountability. In public schools, the process incorporates multicultural education as described in Section 004.01F of this Chapter. In all school systems, the continuous school improvement process includes the following activities at least once within each five years.

009.01A1 Review and update of the mission and vision statements.

009.01A2 Collection and analysis of data about student performance, demographics, learning climate, and former high school students.

009.01A3 Selection of improvement goals. At least one goal is directed toward improving student academic achievement.

009.01A4 Development and implementation of an improvement plan which includes procedures, strategies, actions to achieve goals, and an aligned professional development plan.

009.01A5 Evaluation of progress toward improvement goals.

009.01B The school improvement process includes a visitation by a team of external representatives to review progress and provide written recommendations. A copy of the school system’s improvement plan and the written recommendations of the external representatives are provided to the Department. The external team visits are conducted at least once each five years.

009.01B1 The Commissioner may approve the use of a third party external review of a school system to fulfill the requirement for an on-site visitation if all the requirements of Section 009 of this Chapter are met.

009.01B2 The Progress Plan developed by a public school designated as a priority school as outlined in Subsection 010.02D of this Chapter must be included within the continuous improvement requirements of Section 009 of this Chapter for the public school district in which the priority school is located.

010 Accountability Reporting for School Systems and Accountability System for Public Schools and Public School Districts

010.01 **Quality Indicator: The school system demonstrates accountability to the residents of the school community. School staff periodically assess and report student progress toward accomplishment of academic content standards. Results are used to plan and make needed changes to improve instruction for all students.**

010.01A The school system annually prepares a written report which includes at least student academic performance as required in Section 005.02 of this Chapter, school system demographics, school improvement goals and progress and, in the case of public schools, financial information. School systems report the information in accordance with the policy in Section 010.01B of this Chapter.

010.01B The school system has a written policy for annually preparing and distributing the performance report(s) required in Section 010.01A of this Chapter to the residents of the public school district or, in the case of nonpublic schools, to the appropriate body. The policy assures that individual test scores are kept confidential. If the school has fewer than ten students in the grades being reported, or if reporting would allow for the identification of students because they all had comparable scores, no public reports of student performance are provided for those grades.

010.02 Accountability System for Public Schools and Public School Districts

010.02A Accountability System to Measure Public School and Public School District Performance. The Board must establish an accountability system to be used to measure the performance of individual public schools and public school districts as set forth in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-760.06.

010.02A1 The accountability system must combine multiple indicators, including graduation rates, student growth and student improvement on the assessment instruments provided in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-760.03, and status and participation in statewide assessment. Other indicators of the performance of public schools

and public school districts must be specified by the Commissioner and approved by the Board in future revisions of this Chapter.

010.02A2 The indicators must be combined into a school performance score and public school district performance score. The Board must establish performance level classifications based upon school performance scores and public school district performance scores in order to classify the performance of public schools and public school districts beginning with the reporting of data from school year 2014-15.

010.02B Designation of Priority Schools. The Board must, at its discretion, designate no more than three (3) public schools as priority schools based on recommendations from the Commissioner or his or her designee.

010.02B1 Schools designated as priority schools must be in the lowest performance level classification at the time of the initial designation as a priority school.

010.02B2 Schools designated as priority schools must remain priority schools until such designation is removed by the Board as provided in Subsection 010.02D4 of this Chapter.

010.02B3 In making recommendations to the Board for the designation of priority schools, the Commissioner or his or her designee must take into consideration public school and public school district performance in meeting the requirements specified in this Chapter, based on the following:

010.02B3a Data required to be reported to the Department for all public schools and public school districts pursuant to Subsections 005.02 through 005.02C, 009.01A and 009.01B of this Chapter; and,

010.02B3b Public school or public school district improvement plans or accreditation site visit reports available to the Department pursuant to Subsections 009.01A and 009.01B of this Chapter.

010.02C Intervention Team.

010.02C1 The Commissioner must appoint an Intervention Team for each priority school as set forth in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-760.07.

010.02C2 The Intervention Team must assist the superintendent and staff of the public school district containing the priority school with the following:

010.02C2a Diagnosing issues that negatively affect student achievement in the priority school;

010.02C2b Designing strategies to address issues that negatively affect student achievement in the priority school through a Progress Plan; and

010.02C2c Developing measurable indicators of progress in addressing issues that negatively affect student achievement in the priority school.

010.02D Development and Implementation of the Progress Plan.

010.02D1 The Intervention Team, in collaboration with the priority school staff and the administration and the school board of the public school district containing the priority school, must develop a Progress Plan for approval by the Board. The Progress Plan must include the following:

010.02D1a The issues diagnosed as negatively affecting student achievement in the priority school;

010.02D1b Strategies designed to address issues that negatively affect student achievement in the priority school;

010.02D1c Specific actions to be taken by the priority school and the public school district containing the priority school to address issues that negatively affect student achievement in the priority school that are required in order to remove the school's classification as a priority school;

010.02D1d The measurable indicators of progress in addressing issues that negatively affect student achievement in the priority school developed pursuant to Subsection 010.02C2a of this Chapter; and

010.02D1e The level of progress, as indicated by the measurable indicators developed pursuant to Subsection 010.02C2c of this Chapter, that is required in order to remove the school's designation as a priority school.

010.02D2 Upon approval of the Progress Plan by the Board, the Intervention Team must assist the superintendent and staff of the public school district containing the priority school in implementing strategies to address issues that negatively affect student achievement in the priority school through the Progress Plan developed pursuant to this section.

010.02D3 Approval of the Progress Plan. A Progress Plan for each newly designated priority school must be approved by the Board at its discretion based on the recommendation of the Commissioner or his or her designee. In making his or her recommendation, the Commissioner or his or her designee must consider whether the Progress Plan is reasonably designed to address issues that

negatively affect student performance in the priority school.

010.02D4 Annual Review of Progress Plans. The Commissioner must annually review and make a recommendation to the Board on each priority school's Progress Plan. The Board must determine, based on the recommendation of the Commissioner or his or her designee, whether any modifications to the plan are needed. Such modifications must be incorporated into the plan immediately upon such a determination. The school's priority designation must be removed when the Board determines, based on the recommendation of the Commissioner or his or her designee, that the school has substantially met all of the requirements in its Progress Plan.

010.02E Schools Designated as Priority Schools for Five Consecutive School Years. If a school has been designated as a priority school for the fifth consecutive school year, the Board must reevaluate the Progress Plan to determine, based on the recommendation of the Commissioner or his or her designee, if:

010.02E1 A significant revision to the school's Progress Plan is necessary, in which case the process in Subsection 010.02D1 of this chapter must be used to significantly revise the Progress Plan subject to approval by the Board as provided in Subsection 010.02D3 of this Chapter; or

010.02E2 An entirely new Progress Plan needs to be developed, in which case the process in Subsection 010.02D1 of this Chapter must be used to develop a new Progress Plan subject to approval by the Board as provided in Subsection 010.02D3 of this Chapter; or

010.02E3 An alternative administrative structure is warranted, in which case the process in Subsection 010.02D1 of this Chapter must be used to develop a new Progress Plan subject to approval by the Board as provided in Subsection 010.02D3 of this Chapter that includes, but is not limited to, an alternative administrative structure.

010.02F Reports. Beginning in school year 2016-2017 and annually thereafter in September, each public school district containing a priority school must annually report to the Board on the level of progress made on the measurable indicators of progress.

011 School Environment.

011.01 **Quality Indicator: The school facilities and the general environment are safe, orderly, and supportive of quality learning for all students. A positive atmosphere for learning supports and reflects the work of students.**

AQuESTT Tenet: All students experience success through a continuous improvement process that builds student, parent/guardian/family and community engagement in order to

enhance educational experiences and opportunities for all students.

011.01A Each school system maintains safe, healthful, and sanitary conditions within the school building(s) and on the school grounds and meets fire, safety, and health codes.

011.01B Each school system has a safety and security plan for the schools in the system. The plan addresses the safety and security of students, staff, and visitors. The plan is approved by the governing body.

011.01C Each school system has a school safety and security committee which includes representatives of faculty, parents, and the community. The committee meets at least annually to prepare and/or review safety and security plans and procedures, including emergency plans and procedures.

011.01D The school system's safety and security plan(s) are reviewed annually by one or more persons not on the school system safety committee and not an employee of the school system. This review will include a visit to school buildings to analyze plans, policies, procedures, and practices and provide recommendations. Any recommendations made as a result of the analysis are forwarded to the head administrator and to the school safety and security committee to be considered in making revisions to the plan.

011.01E Each school system has a seclusion and restraints policy approved by the governing body.

011.01F Each school system must develop and adopt a policy concerning bullying prevention and education for all students. The school system must review the policy annually.

011.01G Pursuant to subsection (2) of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2,141, each public school district must develop and adopt a specific policy to address incidents of dating violence involving students at school. This policy must include a statement that dating violence will not be tolerated.

012 School System Governance.

012.01 Quality Indicator: The governing body governs through orderly procedures which focus efforts of the school upon quality learning, result in equitable opportunities for learning for all students, and insure accountability to the local community.

012.01A The governing body has a written set of policies for the school system. These policies are accessible in each school building.

012.01B The school system has a written policy which assures that each school will meet the statutory requirement of at least 400 hours for kindergarten, at least 1,032 hours for students up through grade eight, and at least 1,080 hours for students in grades nine through twelve. The

policy(ies) or regulations stipulate the conditions for which individual students may be excused from the regular school day.

012.01C The ratio of pupils to certificated staff members, computed on a full-time equivalency basis, in each school does not exceed 25 to 1.

012.01D For public school districts, the school board has, at the beginning of each calendar year, appointed three members to a committee on American civics, and the committee has carried out its duties as specified in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-724.

013 Waivers and Plans.

013.01 School systems, in order to better meet local goals, may submit a request for a waiver of one or more regulations found in Sections 004 through 012.01C of this Chapter. Section 003 of this Chapter and sections identified in Section 003.04 of this Chapter are based on statute and may not be waived. The waiver request must include at least the following:

013.01A A copy of the local improvement plan developed in accordance with Section 009.01A of this Chapter. The plan must contain local improvement objectives and must address quality learning, equity, and accountability.

013.01B A description of the program or process to be substituted for the regulation to be waived.

013.01C An explanation indicating how the local program or process will provide equivalent or improved opportunities for students and will accomplish the quality indicator.

013.01D If appropriate, how resources would be reallocated or used differently to provide programs or services.

013.01E Length of time for the requested waiver, not to exceed three years.

013.01F Procedures for providing an annual progress report to the Board.

013.02 The Commissioner will submit the waiver request to the Board with his or her recommendations. The Board may approve the requested waiver if the components of the plan substituted for the waived provisions will promote quality learning, equity, and/or accountability. The Board must reject the waiver if, in its opinion, the plan and requested waivers would not provide improvement in quality learning, equity, and/or accountability.

013.03 At the end of the waived time period, school systems may request and be granted Board approval of the same waiver for a period of up to three additional years if it can be demonstrated that the system is meeting the objectives for which the waiver was granted.

013.04 The Board recognizes the need for public special purpose school systems, such as schools operated expressly for students with disabilities or schools operating within the confines of correctional facilities. If such a school system can demonstrate that a requirement of this Chapter is not educationally necessary or appropriate for the students in attendance, or is in conflict with state or federal laws or regulations governing facilities operation, the Board may waive such requirement.

013.05 Public school districts which exist in unique circumstances due to population sparsity, geographic barriers, or other similar factors may submit a request to the Board for a modification of this Chapter to better meet the need of the students. Schools seeking such modification must submit: (1) an explanation of the unique circumstances leading to this request, (2) proposed modifications to better meet the needs of the students in the school, (3) an explanation of how the modifications will provide quality learning, equity, and accountability, (4) a copy of the local improvement plan developed in accordance with Section 009.01A of this Chapter, and (5) procedures for annually reporting to the Commissioner. Upon approval by the Board, the modifications must remain in effect unless changed by a revision of this Rule or change in status of the public school district.

014 Loss of Accreditation.

014.01 Quality Indicator: Schools comply fully and continuously with all accreditation requirements in order to provide for all students the learning opportunities described herein. Schools experiencing unfulfilled requirements make concerted efforts to achieve compliance or to provide alternative programs generating equivalent or improved programs and services. Schools not fulfilling accreditation requirements deprive students of opportunities for learning and may be subject to probation or loss of accreditation.

014.02 Section 003 of this Chapter lists requirements that must be met at all times by school systems as a condition of accreditation. Failure to meet those provisions may result in the Board terminating the legal operation of the school system during the school year. Noncompliance with other regulations in this Chapter will result in the assessment of violations which, if not corrected, will result in a recommendation to the Board for probation or loss of accreditation.

014.03 Violations. In determining the future accreditation status of a school system, each failure to meet a numbered regulation other than those contained in Section 003 of this Chapter constitutes a separate violation.

014.04 Reporting Violations. A school system must report any existing violations to the Department on its annual Statement of Assurance.

014.05 Correction of Violations. A school system will have until February 1 to correct violations or to prepare a written plan for correction of a violation that existed at the time of submission of the Statement of Assurance. Written evidence of the correction of the violations or a written plan

developed in accordance with Section 014.05A of this Chapter must be submitted to the Department.

014.05A School systems having an uncorrected violation may submit a written plan to the Department by February 1 for correcting the violation before the following school year. Such plans may be approved by the Board if evidence provided indicates that the violation occurred after August 1, and the violation could not reasonably be corrected immediately before or during the current school year. Written evidence of the correction must be submitted to the Department by the following September 1.

014.06 Effect of Violations on Public School Systems. All public school systems are required by state statute to be accredited. If, after consultation with school officials, the Commissioner determines that public school systems have any uncorrected violations, he or she must make the applicable following recommendations to the Board:

014.06A A PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM having an uncorrected violation of a requirement with no written plan under Section 014.05A of this Chapter must be recommended for ACCREDITATION ON PROBATION for the following school year.

014.06B A PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM having a written plan under Section 014.05A of this Chapter and having the same uncorrected violation after September 1 must be recommended for ACCREDITATION ON PROBATION for the current school year.

014.06C A PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM ON PROBATION continuing to have the same uncorrected violation after February 1 must be recommended for NONACCREDITATION for the following school year and must be subject to loss of authority to operate and reassignment of territory to other public school districts.

014.07 Effect of Violations on Nonpublic School Systems. Nonpublic schools may operate either as accredited or approved school systems. If, after consultation with school officials, the Commissioner determines that nonpublic school systems have any uncorrected violations, he or she must make the applicable following recommendations to the Board:

014.07A An ACCREDITED NONPUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM having a plan under Section 014.05A of this Chapter and having the same uncorrected violation after September 1 of a requirement must be recommended for ACCREDITATION ON PROBATION for the current school year.

014.07B An ACCREDITED NONPUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM having an uncorrected violation of a requirement and having no written plan under Section 014.05A of this Chapter must be recommended for ACCREDITATION ON PROBATION for the following school year.

014.07C An ACCREDITED NONPUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM ON PROBATION having an uncorrected violation after February 1 of a requirement must

be recommended for APPROVAL for the following school year.

014.08 Provisions for Notice and Hearing.

014.08A When the Commissioner makes a recommendation to the Board for a school system to be placed on probation or for denial or revocation of accreditation or approval, notice of the recommendation and of the right to request a hearing must be given to the school system by certified mail sent at least 30 calendar days prior to the date of the Board meeting at which the recommendation is to be considered. Copies will be sent to the superintendent, head administrator, or head teacher of the school system, and to the presiding officer of the governing body, if known. This notice must specify the basis for the recommendation.

014.08B If the school system notifies the Commissioner at least seven (7) days prior to the date the recommendation is to be considered by the Board that it requests a hearing, the Board must schedule a hearing date.

014.08C All hearings arising under this Chapter must be conducted in accordance with the hearing procedures of 92 NAC 61, including provisions of that Chapter relating to evidence. Any action taken or recommended by the Commissioner adverse to the school system may be the subject of a petition by such school system under 92 NAC 61, in which case all the provisions of 92 NAC 61 apply to such appeal.

014.09 Action by the Board. Upon review of the Commissioner's recommendation, and following any hearing, the Board must make a determination of the future accreditation status of the system and must inform the system in writing of its determination.

015 Procedures for Nonpublic Schools Applying for Initial Accreditation or Adding Grades to Previously Accredited Schools.

015.01 The Department recognizes the contribution made by the nonpublic schools to the state system of education by extending alternatives and opportunities to the citizens of the state. Nonpublic schools seeking accreditation must notify the Department of their intent to seek accreditation by letter or email no later than July 1 prior to the school year of the application process.

015.02 By November 1, each applicant nonpublic school must submit to the Department a report documenting compliance with this Chapter.

015.03 By March 1, each applicant nonpublic school must be visited by a representative of the Department or a designee to verify the school's compliance with the provisions of this Chapter. Reports of such visitations must be reviewed by the State Accreditation Committee, which must make recommendations to the Commissioner relative to accreditation for the following school year.

015.04 Upon favorable review by the State Accreditation Committee, the Commissioner will make a recommendation to the Board that the applicant nonpublic school be granted accreditation.

015.05 Upon favorable action by the Board, accreditation is granted for one school year from each July 1 through the following June 30. Renewal is granted based upon the school's compliance with this Chapter during the prior school year.

015.06 When an approved nonpublic school is added to an accredited school system, the approved school must follow the procedures for applying for initial accreditation as provided in this Chapter.

015.07 Accredited nonpublic schools intending to add new grades must inform the Department of such intent, by letter or email, no later than May 1 prior to the year in which the new grades will operate. If it is determined through visitation or reporting that the intended new grades can comply with the provisions of this Chapter, the Commissioner will submit a recommendation to the Board that the school be granted conditional accreditation to add new grades. Schools having conditional accreditation to add new grades must follow procedures established in Sections 015.02 through 015.05 of this Chapter for obtaining accreditation.

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
RULE 10 COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST FOR
ACCREDITED PUBLIC SCHOOLS K-12

School Name: **School Year:**

CODE SECTION	REGULATORY AND STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	MEETS COMPLIANCE	COMMENTS Required Actions Recommendations
003	**MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR LEGAL OPERATION**		
003.01 Certification	**003.01** Teacher and Administrator Certification. The school system must use only persons certificated pursuant to 92 NAC 21 to be a teacher or administrator. Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-1603, persons conducting religion or prekindergarten classes in nonpublic schools which are not counted as a part of the school's courses for purposes of complying with the requirements of this Chapter are excluded from this requirement. Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-802.01, American Indian language teachers who are approved by the tribe to teach their native language are also excluded from this requirement when conducting native language classes.		
003.05 Graduation Requirements	**003.05** Graduation Requirements. Each high school must require from grades nine through twelve at least 200 credit hours for graduation, for which at least 80% must be from the core curriculum. The number of credit hours given for a course may be less than the number of instructional units and may be increased up to 25% above the number of instructional units. **003.05A** By the 2014-15 school year, public school districts must adopt and implement graduation requirements that meet the highest level of rigor of the standards as specified in the state standards adopted by the Board, including, but not limited to the following: **003.05A1** Language Arts. Forty credit hours of Language Arts with course content that includes composition, verbal communication, literature, research skills, and technical reading and writing. **003.05A2** Mathematics. Thirty credit hours of mathematics with course content that includes algebraic, geometric, data analysis, and probability concepts.		

	003.05A3 Science. Thirty credit hours of science with course content that includes biological, earth/space, and physical science concepts with corresponding science inquiry skills and laboratory experience. **003.05A4** Social Studies/History. Thirty credit hours of social studies/history with course content that includes civics/government, geography, United States and world history, and economic concepts. **FINANCIAL LITERACY -** Meet the Financial Literacy component as outlined in NE Revised Statute 79-3001 through 79-3004. **COMPUTER SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY -** Meet the Computer Science and Technology component as outlined in NE Revised Statute §§ 79-3301 to 79-3305		
003.06 School Year	**003.06** School Year. Each school system must provide at least the following instruction annually between July 1 and June 30 for the grades it offers: (a) for grades up through grade eight, the time equivalent to 1,032 hours; (b) for grades nine through twelve, the time equivalent to 1,080 hours; and (c) for kindergarten, the time equivalent to 400 hours. When a school is dismissed for any reason, such as tournaments or contests, parent/teacher conferences, funerals, parades, and school picnics, that time may not be counted toward meeting the 400/1,032/1,080-hour school year requirement. Time scheduled for the school lunch period may not be counted in meeting the school year requirements. Pursuant to the provisions of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-213, school systems unable to meet the minimums for instructional hours due to epidemic sickness, severe storm conditions, or destruction of the schoolhouse may request permission from the Board to offer fewer than the minimum hours by submitting an affidavit sworn to by the secretary of the school board and explaining the circumstances resulting in the request.		
003.07 Assurance Statement	**003.07** Assurance Statement. Each school system must, by November 1 of each year, submit to the Department an Assurance Statement, as prescribed by the Department, signed by a representative of the school system governing body affirming compliance or		

	specifically noting any noncompliance with the regulations contained in this Chapter.		
003.08 Reports	**003.08** Reports. The following reports must be submitted to the Department each school year. **003.08A** On or before September 15 of each school year, the head administrator of each school system must submit electronically, via the Department's reporting system, a Fall Personnel Report. Additions of certificated staff after submission of the Fall Personnel Report must be reported to the Department at the time of contracting. **003.08B** On or before June 30 of each school year, the head administrator of each public school district must submit electronically, via the Department's reporting system, data elements required by Sections 005.02 through 005.02C of this Chapter. **003.08C** On or before the last day of February of each school year, the head administrator of each nonpublic school system must submit electronically, via the Department's reporting system, a Curriculum Report.		
003.12 Pledge of Allegiance	**003.12** Each public school district must require each such district's schools to establish a period of time during the school day, when a majority of pupils are scheduled to be present, during which pupils will be led in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in the presence of the flag of the United States of America, in grades kindergarten through twelve. Pupil participation in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance must be voluntary. Pupils not participating in the recitation of the Pledge must be permitted to silently stand or remain seated but must be required to respect the rights of those pupils electing to participate.		
004	**CURRICULUM AND STANDARDS**		
004.01A-B Instructional Program and Standards	**004.01A** The instructional program of the school system is based on written purposes or standards and is approved by the governing body. These documents are on file in each school building and each certificated staff member is provided a copy. **004.01B** Public school districts adopt academic content standards in the subject areas of reading and writing (language arts), mathematics, and science determined by each such district to be measurable quality standards that are the same as, equal to, or more rigorous than the state		

	academic content standards adopted by the Board pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-760.01. The deadline for public school districts to adopt replacement academic content standards will not extend past one year following the Board's adoption of new content standards. Nonpublic schools have local academic content standards for reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies/history approved by the governing body. **Nonpublic schools have local academic content standards for reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies/history approved by the local governing body.**		
004.01C Curriculum and Standards	**004.01C** The school system has written guides, frameworks, or standards for all other areas of the curriculum. In connection with this requirement, school systems are encouraged to adopt the Fine Arts Standards adopted by the Board on March 4, 2014. The school system also has a written description of the library media and guidance programs.		
004.01D Writing	**004.01D** Writing experiences are incorporated in all curricular areas K-12.		
004.01E Technology	**004.01E** Educational/computer technology is incorporated in the instructional program at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels.		
004.01F Multicultural Education	**004.01F** The instructional program in public schools incorporates multicultural education in all curriculum areas at all grades. Multicultural education includes, but is not limited to, studies relative to the culture, history, and contributions of African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans and European Americans with special emphasis on human relations and sensitivity toward all races. The regulation is based on statute and cannot be waived through Section 013.01 of this Chapter. **004.01F1** The public school district has a statement of philosophy or mission for the multicultural education program. Local program goals address multicultural education. **004.01F2** The public school district curriculum guides, frameworks, or standards incorporate multicultural education. **004.01F3** The public school district multicultural education program includes a process for selecting appropriate instructional materials.		

	004.01F4 The public school district has a process for the provision of staff development in multicultural education, including professional development for administrators, teachers, and support staff, which is congruent with public school district and program goals. **004.01F5** The public school district has a process for periodic assessment of the multicultural education program. An annual status report is provided to the school board.		
004.02A Elementary Instructional Program	**004.02A** The Elementary Instructional Program. The elementary school has a representative weekly schedule for each classroom teacher encompassing experiences in the following subject areas: **004.02A1** Reading and Language Arts. The curriculum includes development and practice of skills and understanding in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. It helps children develop appreciation of literature, creativity, and expression. **004.02A2** Mathematics. The curriculum includes development, practice, and application of numeration, computation, estimation, problem solving, geometry/spatial concepts, measurement, and related topics. **004.02A3** Social Studies. The curriculum helps children to develop an understanding of the world and its people. It includes experiences drawn from geography, history, economics, government, citizenship, career awareness, human relations, current affairs, and cultural studies. This includes instruction required pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-724. **004.02A4** Science. The curriculum helps children develop an understanding of science concepts and processes, and includes science as inquiry. It includes experiences drawn from physical science, life science, earth and space science, science and technology, and history and nature of science. **004.02A5** Health. The curriculum helps children develop an understanding of the body systems, nutrition, wellness (including physical activity), and healthy living habits.		

	004.02A6 Physical Education. The curriculum helps children develop and maintain physical coordination, large and small muscle control, physical fitness, leisure activities, and healthy behaviors. **004.02A7** Visual Arts. The curriculum helps children understand and apply a variety of media, techniques, and processes within a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas. The curriculum includes reflection upon and assessment of art and study of art in relation to history, culture, and other curricular areas. **004.02A8** Music. The curriculum helps children to sing and play a variety of music, read and notate music, listen to and describe music, and evaluate music. The curriculum includes music in relation to history, culture, and other curricular areas.		
004.02B Kindergarten Admissions	**004.02B** Kindergarten. For school year 2012-2013 and each school year thereafter, admission to public school kindergarten is on an unqualified basis to all resident children who will reach age 5 by July 31 of the calendar year in the school year for which the child is seeking admission begins. Testing prior to school entrance, if any, is conducted only to identify children with disabilities under 92 NAC 51 or to meet requirements of subdivision (1)(b) of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-214.		
004.02C K-6 Athletic Limitations	**004.02C** Pupils in kindergarten through sixth grade do not participate in any kinds of athletic contests between schools within a school system or between school systems except that elementary school systems having seventh and eighth grade athletics may include sixth grade boys or girls when combined enrollment for seventh and eighth grade becomes fewer than 12 boys or 12 girls and if the governing body has a policy regulating participation for sixth graders. Annual field or play days are excluded from this regulation.		
004.03A Middle Grade Instruction	**004.03A** Middle Grades Instructional Program. The program in the middle grades includes instruction for each grade each year in the following subject areas. Instruction may be provided through separate courses, integrated blocks of time, and/or through exploratory programs.		

	004.03A1 Reading. The curriculum includes experiences designed to help students expand, develop, and apply reading skills introduced in the elementary grades. It includes reading for both information and enjoyment. **004.03A2** Language Arts. The curriculum includes activities that engage students in using language for a variety of reading, writing, speaking, and listening purposes. **004.03A3** Mathematics. The curriculum includes practice in numeration, computation, estimation, problem solving, geometry/spatial concepts, and measurement. It introduces algebraic and statistical concepts and provides opportunities for students to develop understanding of the structure of mathematics. **004.03A4** Social Studies. The curriculum includes content and experiences drawn from geography, history, economics, citizenship, government, cultural studies, and current events. This includes instruction required pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-724. All history courses stress the contributions of all ethnic groups in the development and growth of America. 004.03A5 Science. The curriculum includes elements of life, physical, earth, and space sciences, science as technology, and history of science. Learning activities emphasize science as inquiry and scientific processes and concepts. **004.03A5** Science. The curriculum includes elements of life, physical, earth, and space sciences, science as technology, and history of science. Learning activities emphasize science as inquiry and scientific processes and concepts. **004.03A6** Health. The curriculum includes the study of body systems and those factors that affect health, including natural and man-made threats and individual health choices. **004.03A7** Art. The curriculum includes activities and experiences designed to develop skills in working with a variety of artistic techniques, processes,		

	and media. The curriculum relates art to history, culture, and other curricular areas. **004.03A8** Music. The curriculum includes experiences that involve students in singing and playing musical instruments and provides opportunities for students to pursue individual musical interests and to develop individual talents. It includes the study of a varied repertoire of music and its relation to history and culture. **004.03A9** Physical Education. The curriculum includes active involvement in health-related physical fitness activities designed to develop cardiorespiratory endurance, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility. It encourages students to develop habits of physical exercise through individual and team activities and by emphasizing involvement rather than competition. Practice for and participation in interscholastic activities cannot substitute for any part of physical education.		
004.03B Middle Grade Career Education	**004.03B** Career education is included in the middle grades program.		
004.03C Middle Grade Athletic Competitions	**004.03C** No student in grades seven or eight participates in interscholastic athletic contests between schools within a school system or between school systems which exceed six games in football, fourteen matches in volleyball, twelve games in basketball, eight meets in wrestling, eight meets in track and field, and eight contests in all other activities. Contest limits must be based upon the total number of contests played. Each game, match or meet played in a tournament must count as one of the contests permitted within these contest limits.		
004.04A High School Instructional Units	**004.04A** Required High School Program. The high school program consists of courses totaling at least 400 instructional units.		
004.04B1 Language Arts Units	**004.04B1** Language Arts **60 instructional units.** The curriculum includes written composition, critical reading, interpretation of fiction and non-fiction, oral presentation, and application of listening skills.		
004.04B2 Social Science Units	**004.04B2** Social Science **40 instructional units.** The curriculum includes content drawn from American and world history, geography, economics, civics, government, and citizenship, and may also include content from other social		

	science areas such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology. This includes instruction required pursuant to § 79-724. All history courses stress the contributions of all ethnic groups in the development and growth of America.		
004.04B3 Math Units	**004.04B3** Mathematics **40 instructional units.** The curriculum includes communicating, reasoning, problem solving, numeration, computation, estimation, measurement, geometry, data analysis, probability and statistical concepts, and algebraic concepts.		
004.04B4 Science Units	**004.04B4** Science **40 instructional units.** The curriculum includes science concepts and processes, science as inquiry, physical science, life science, earth and space science, science and technology, and history and nature of science.		
004.04B5 World Languages Units	**004.04B5** World Language **20 instructional units or two years of daily classes in the same language**. The curriculum includes reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills for communicating in one or more languages other than English, knowledge and understanding of other cultures, and developing insight into the nature of language and culture.		
004.04B6 Career Education Units	**004.04B6** Career Education. The curriculum includes 80 instructional units in Career Education that include instruction in any of the following career fields: (1) Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, (2) Business, Marketing, and Management, (3) Communication and Information Systems, (4) Health Sciences, (5) Human Services and Education, (6) Skilled and Technical Sciences. **004.04B6a** Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources The curriculum in this career field includes areas such as animal, plant, and soil sciences; agri-business; food science; power, structural, and technical systems; leadership and human resource development; natural resources; biotechnology; and environmental science. **004.04B6b** Business, Marketing, and Management The curriculum in this career field includes areas such as e-commerce, business communication, finance, business and consumer law, entrepreneurship, accounting, business economics, personal finance, consumer		

	economics, financial services marketing, retailing, fashion marketing/merchandising, international marketing, sports and entertainment marketing, hospitality and tourism. **004.04B6c** Communication and Information Systems. The curriculum in this career field includes areas such as advertising, public relations, commercial photography, journalism, graphic design, broadcasting, scriptwriting, radio/TV production, information technology applications, web design, interactive media, networking, e-commerce, computer science, and information technology. **004.04B6d** Health Sciences. The curriculum in this career field includes areas such as nutrition and food, family health, medical terminology, health informatics, therapeutic services, diagnostic services, certified nursing assistant, and health care sciences. **004.04B6e** Human Services and Education. The curriculum in this career field includes areas such as independent/adult living, home management, housing and home furnishings, family health, clothing and textiles, parenting and child development, human resource development, criminal justice, human growth and development, interpersonal relationships, and applied psychology. **004.04B6f** Skilled and Technical Sciences. The curriculum in this career field includes areas such as housing and home furnishings, woods and construction, construction/ electricity, construction/home maintenance, computer-aided drafting, metals and welding, manufacturing/ metalworking, manufacturing/woodworking, millwork and cabinetmaking, electronics, technology engineering education, Principles of Technology, technology education, transportation power/auto mechanics, automotive services, and energy. **004.04B6g** Nonpublic college preparatory schools may substitute additional courses in language arts, foreign language, science, mathematics, and/or social science for up to 40 instructional units in career and technical education.		
004.04B7 Health/ Physical Education Units	**004.04B7** Personal Health and Physical Fitness - 20 instructional units or two years of daily classes in personal health and physical fitness. The		

	personal health and physical fitness curriculum includes content to emphasize life-long wellness habits including the knowledge and psychomotor skills applicable to cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The curriculum emphasizes non-participation in high-risk behavior. The physical fitness curriculum includes an active program of health-related physical fitness, including cardiorespiratory endurance, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and body composition. Practice for and participation in interscholastic athletic activities are not accepted as a substitute for any part of the personal health and physical fitness requirement.		
004.04B8 Visual and Performing Arts	**004.04B8** Visual and Performing Arts - 40 instructional units, which include each year instruction in vocal music, instrumental music, and visual arts. It may also include dance and theater. The visual and performing arts curriculum includes performance, interpretation, and evaluation.		
005	**ASSESSMENT**		
005.01A-B Assessment Plan	**005.01A** All public school districts participate annually in statewide assessments in compliance with the schedule adopted by the Board. Nonpublic schools have an assessment plan that includes a schedule and procedures for assessing success in achieving their academic content standards. Student success in achieving their standards is reported to the head administrator or governing board of the nonpublic school. **005.01B** Whole grade norm-referenced assessment using a national assessment instrument begins no earlier than grade two and is conducted annually in at least one grade in each of the following two levels: grades 2-5; grades 6-8. A national assessment instrument is administered at least once in the high school grades.		
005.02A-C Statewide Assessment	**005.02** Each school year, for the purpose of implementing a statewide system of tracking student achievement as required by Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-760.05, public school districts must report by June 30 of each school year the following data to the Department electronically via the Department's reporting system using the Department's student identifier system: **005.02A** Individual student demographics including each student's race, poverty status,		

	high mobility status, attendance, and limited English proficiency; **005.02B** Individual student achievement including individual student achievement data from the state assessment instruments required in Section 005.01A of this Chapter and scores and sub scores available to the public school district on national assessment instruments administered by such district; and **005.02C** Individual student educational input characteristics including class size, teacher education, teacher experience, special education, early childhood programs, federal programs, and targeted education programs.		
005.03 Student Assistance Process	**005.03** Each school has a student assistance process of its own design to provide problem-solving and intervention strategies.		
006	**LIBRARY AND MEDIA**		
006.01A Library/ Media Area	**006.01A** Each school has a library media area(s) **which is available to students during the entire school day.** All library media **resources are properly cataloged, marked, and shelved** according to a standard classification system. Each school has **at least one set of encyclopedias available in either print or electronic format** with copyright dates in the past five years.		
006.01B New Library Resources	**006.01B** Each elementary school acquires a minimum of 25 new library media resources in print format, exclusive of textbooks and encyclopedia, of different titles, per teacher per year, up to 150 titles during one year. The minimum number of new titles in print format is 75 if library media resources are also available through electronic format. Each middle and high school acquires a minimum of 150 titles each year in either print or in full-text electronic format.		
006.01C Middle School Periodicals	**006.01C** Each middle level school subscribes to at least ten periodicals either in print or in full-text electronic format.		
006.01D Secondary School Periodicals	**006.01D** Each secondary school subscribes to at least 25 periodicals in print or in full-text electronic format.		
007	**INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF**		

007.01A Elementary Endorsed	**007.01A** Computed on a **full-time equivalency basis, a minimum of 95 percent** of the teachers in the elementary grades are assigned to areas for which they hold certificates having appropriate endorsements pursuant to 92 NAC 24.		
007.01B Pre-K Coordinator	**007.01B** Pre-kindergarten programs operated by public schools are **coordinated by a staff member who holds a Nebraska Teaching Certificate** with at least 9 college credit hours in early childhood education.		
007.02A Middle Grades Endorsed	**007.02A** Computed on a full-time equivalency, at least 90 percent of the teachers in middle grades hold one of the following endorsements or meet the provisions of Sections 007.02A1a or 007.02A4 of this Chapter: **007.02A1** In grades seven and eight, any middle grades endorsement or an appropriate secondary endorsement. **007.02A1a** Teachers holding an elementary endorsement may teach in grades seven and eight if they acquire six credit hours per year toward the middle grades endorsement or participate in staff development in accordance with a local mission and plan for education of middle grade students. **007.02A2** In grades four through six, an elementary endorsement or any middle grades endorsement. **007.02A2a** Teachers holding a content area endorsement at the secondary level may teach grade six in that content area if they acquire six credit hours per year toward the elementary or middle grades endorsement or participate annually in staff development in accordance with a local mission and plan for education of middle grade students. **007.02A3** In grade nine, an appropriate secondary endorsement or any middle grades endorsement. **007.02A4** Teachers not holding an appropriate endorsement may be assigned to the middle grades if they acquire six credit hours per year toward a middle grades endorsement. **007.02A5** Secondary teachers assigned to integrated courses or curriculum in grades seven through nine are considered appropriately		

	endorsed if they hold an endorsement for any of the subjects or fields included in the course.		
007.03A Secondary School Endorsed	**007.03A** At least **80 percent of the instructional units offered** in secondary grades during the regular school term are assigned to teachers who hold certificates having appropriate endorsements issued pursuant to 92 NAC 24. If 92 NAC 24 does not provide an endorsement designated for a particular course or subject area, any teacher holding a regular certificate may instruct such course without penalty to the school system. Teachers holding a subject endorsement are considered appropriately endorsed for any other subject within the broad field if they annually acquire, prior to the opening of school, six credit hours toward the subject endorsement or the broad field endorsement. **007.03A1** Teachers assigned to integrated courses or curriculum in accordance with Sections 002.11 and 004.04C1 of this Chapter are considered appropriately endorsed if they hold an endorsement for any of the subjects or fields included in the course.		
007.04A System Library/ Media Staffing	**007.04A** Each K-12 school system and each secondary school system has a person holding a Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an endorsement appropriate for library science or educational media specialist, or meeting Section 007.04B of this Chapter, assigned on at least a one-half time basis to provide library media services to the school system.		
007.04A1 Building Media Staffing	**007.04A1** Each school building having an enrollment of from 70 to 249 students has a person holding a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an appropriate endorsement for library science or educational media specialist assigned on at least a one-fifth time basis or has a library media paraprofessional assigned on at least a one-half time basis under the supervision of a certificated staff member.		
007.05A Guidance Staffing	**007.05A** Each K-12 and each secondary school system assigns at least a one-half-time equivalency person to conduct a guidance and counseling program. The level of assignment is determined by the school system and the person assigned holds a guidance and counseling endorsement appropriate for the level(s) assigned. When enrollment in a school system exceeds 400, the system assigns at least one full-time equivalency appropriately endorsed person.		
007.05B	**007.05B** School systems having a total of 300 or more students in the middle grades, secondary		

Guidance Staffing Middle and High School	grades, or high school grades assign at least a one-half-time appropriately endorsed person to provide guidance and counseling for the level. When the total enrollment in any of those levels reaches 450, one full-time equivalent appropriately endorsed person is assigned. Thereafter, an additional one-half time appropriately endorsed person is assigned for each 225 students at any of those levels.		
007.05C Elementary Guidance Program	**007.05C** Public school districts having 300 or more students in the elementary grades have guidance programs or services available for the elementary students. The procedures and time allotment are determined by the public school district.		
007.06A Certificated Staff Evaluation	**007.06A** The public school district has a written school board policy for the evaluation of certificated employees. The policy is approved by the Commissioner or designee as required by subdivision (5)(h) of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-318. Sections 007.06A through 007.06B of this Chapter are based on statute and cannot be waived under the provisions of Section 013 of this Chapter. **007.06A1** The policy is implemented by written procedures that include: **007.06A1a** Annual written communication of the evaluation process to those being evaluated; **007.06A1b** A description of the duration and frequency of observations and written evaluations for probationary and permanent teachers; **007.06A1c** Specific district-defined evaluation criteria, which include, at a minimum: **007.06A1c(1)** Instructional performance, **007.06A1c(2)** Classroom organization and management, and **007.06A1c(3)** Personal and professional conduct. **007.06A1d** Provision for written communication and documentation to the evaluated teacher specifying all noted deficiencies, specific means for the correction of the noted deficiency, and an adequate timeline for implementing the concrete suggestions for improvement; **007.06A1e** Provision for the teacher to offer a written response to the evaluation; and		

	007.06A1f A description of the district plan for training evaluators. **007.06A2** In the event a public school district changes its policies or procedures for certificated-employee evaluation, it must submit the revised policies and procedures to the Commissioner or designee for approval. If the Commissioner or designee finds the policies and procedures in compliance with the requirements of Sections 007.06A through 007.06A1f, of this Chapter, it notifies the district in writing that such policies and procedures are approved. Such approval shall remain in effect until there is a change in the policies or procedures by the district, or the amendment of state law or regulations relating to such approval. In the event the Commissioner or designee does not find the revised policies and procedures of the district in compliance with the provisions of this Chapter, the Commissioner or designee will notify the district in writing and the district may resubmit amended policies and procedures.		
007.07A Staff Development	**007.07A** The school system annually conducts or arranges staff development sessions. Each teacher participates in at least ten hours of staff development activities each year.		
008	**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**		
008.02 Elementary Grades Endorsement Options	**008.02A** Each elementary school has a principal assigned who holds a Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory Certificate with an endorsement appropriate for serving as an elementary principal or for superintendent. When the number of full-time equivalency teachers supervised by a principal in one or more school systems reaches 10, the principal is assigned at least one-half time for administration and supervision. The principal is assigned full-time when the number of full-time equivalency teachers reaches 20 or more.		
008.03A Middle Grades Endorsement Options	**008.03A** Each middle grades school has a principal who holds a Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory Certificate with an endorsement for middle grades principal, elementary principal, secondary principal or for superintendent. **008.03A1** Middle grades schools having only grades four through six have a principal holding an endorsement for elementary principal, middle grades principal, or superintendent.		

	008.03A2 Middle grades schools having only grades seven through nine have a principal holding an endorsement for middle grades principal, secondary principal, or superintendent.		
008.03B Middle Grades Principal Staffing	**008.03B** When the number of full-time equivalency teachers supervised by the principal reaches 10, the principal is assigned at least one-half time for administration and supervision. The principal is assigned full-time when the number of full-time equivalency teachers reaches 20 or more.		
008.04A Secondary Grades Principal Staffing	**008.04A** Each secondary school has a principal assigned who holds a Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory Certificate with an endorsement for serving as a secondary principal or for superintendent. When the number of full-time equivalency teachers reaches 10 or more, the principal is assigned at least one-half time for administration and supervision. The principal is assigned full-time for administration and supervision when the number of full-time equivalency teachers reaches 20 or more.		
008.05A Head Administrator Endorsement	**008.05A** Each K-12 and each secondary school system having grades ten through twelve has a head administrator who holds a Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory Certificate with an endorsement for serving as a superintendent. Nonpublic systems may share an area or diocesan head administrator.		
008.05B Administrative Positions Endorsement	**008.05B** Any person assigned to administrative and/or supervisory duties holds a Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory Certificate with an appropriate endorsement for the position held.		
008.05C Certificates Filed	**008.05C** A copy of the certificate or permit of each staff member who is required to have a certificate is on file in the school or school system's administrative office. Upon initial employment or acquisition of a new certificate, the certificate or permit is registered by the head administrator of the school system in accordance with 79-804(1) R.R.S.		
009	**CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**		
009.01A Continuous Improvement Plan	**009.01A** The school system develops and implements a school improvement process to promote quality learning for all students. This process includes procedures and strategies to address quality learning, equity, and accountability. In public schools, the process incorporates multicultural education as described in 004.01G. In all school systems, the school improvement process includes the following activities at least once within each five years.		

	009.01A1 Review and update of a mission or vision statement. **009.01A2** Collection and analysis of data about student performance, demographics, learning climate, and former high school students. **009.01A3** Selection of improvement goals. At least one goal is directed toward improving student performance. **009.01A4** Development and implementation of a plan which includes procedures, strategies, or actions to achieve goals. **009.01A5** Evaluation of progress toward improvement goals.		
009.01B External Visit	**009.01B** The school improvement process includes a visitation by a team of external representatives to review progress and provide written recommendations. A copy of the written recommendations is provided to the Department. The external team visits are conducted at least once every five years.		
010	**ACCOUNTABILITY REPORTING**		
010.01A Annual Written Report	**010.01A** The school system annually prepares a written report which includes at least student academic performance as required in Section 005.02, school system demographics, school improvement goals and progress and, in the case of public schools, financial information. School systems report the information in accordance with the policy in 010.01B.		
010.01B Policy for Performance Report(s)	**010.01B** The school system has a written policy for annually preparing and distributing the performance report(s) required in Section 010.01A to the residents of the district or, in the case of nonpublic schools, to the appropriate body. The policy assures that individual test scores are kept confidential. If the school has fewer than ten students in the grades being reported, or if reporting would allow for the identification of students because they all had comparable scores, no public reports of student performance are provided for those grades.		
011	**SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**		
011.01A Building Safety	**011.01A** Each school system maintains safe, healthful, and sanitary conditions within the school building(s) and on the school grounds and meets fire, safety, and health codes.		
011.01B Safety Plan	**011.01B** Each school system has a safety and security plan for the schools in the system. The plan addresses the safety and security of		

	students, staff, and visitors. The plan is approved by the local governing body.		
011.01C Safety Committee	**011.01C** Each school system has a school safety and security committee which includes representatives of faculty, parents, and the community. The committee meets at least annually to prepare and/or review safety and security plans and procedures, including emergency plans and procedures.		
011.01D Safety and Security Visit	**011.01D** The school system's safety and security plan(s) are reviewed annually by one or more persons not on the local school system safety committee and not an employee of the school system. This review will include a visit to school buildings to analyze plans, policies, procedures, and practices and provide recommendations. Any recommendations made as a result of the analysis are forwarded to the head administrator and to the school safety and security committee to be considered in making revisions to the plan.		
011.01E Seclusion and Restraints	**011.01E** Each school system has a seclusion and restraints policy approved by the school board or local governing body.		
011.01F Bullying	**011.01F** Each school system shall develop and adopt a policy concerning bullying prevention and education for all students. The school system shall review the policy annually.		
011.01G Dating Violence Policy	**011.01G** Pursuant to 79-2,141 (2) R.R.S., each school district shall develop and adopt a specific policy to address incidents of dating violence involving students at school. This policy shall include a statement that dating violence will not be tolerated.		
012	**SCHOOL SYSTEM GOVERNANCE**		
012.01A Written Board Policies Accessible	**012.01A** The governing body has a written set of policies for the school system. These policies are accessible in each school building.		
012.01B Policy on Instructional Hours	**012.01B** The school system has a written policy which assures that each school will meet the statutory requirement of at least 400 hours for kindergarten, at least 1,032 hours for students up through grade eight, and at least 1,080 hours for students in grades nine through twelve. The policy(ies) or regulations stipulate the conditions for which individual students may be excused from the regular school day.		
012.01C Ratio of Pupils to Certificated Staff	**012.01C** The ratio of pupils to certificated staff members, computed on a full-time equivalency basis, in each school does not exceed 25 to 1.		
012.01D American Civics Committee	012.01D For public school districts, the school board has, at the beginning of each calendar year, appointed three members to a committee		

	on American civics, and the committee has carried out its duties as specified in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79 724.		

	APPENDIX		
Character Education	Character education instruction emphasis in public and nonpublic classrooms 79-725		
Dyslexia Screening, Instruction, and Intervention	Students who exhibit characteristics of dyslexia or related reading difficulties receive appropriate screening or identification processes, evidence-based reading instruction, and interventions aligned to structured literacy practices, including explicit, systematic, and multisensory instruction as appropriate, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 79-2601 to 79-2607. Student progress is monitored, and instructional decisions are informed by student data		
Student Reading Support and Family Communication	Students identified with a reading deficiency receive an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP), progress monitoring, and interventions aligned to student needs. Parents/guardians are notified regarding reading deficiencies, interventions, and student progress pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 79-2601 to 79-2607		
Professional Learning Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction	Teachers of children ages four through grade three receive adequate training in evidence-based literacy instruction aligned to the Science of Reading pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2607.		
Seizure Safe Schools	Public, private, denominational, and parochial schools educate staff as outlined in the Seizure Safe Schools Act 79-3201		
Computer Science & Technology	Meet the Computer Science and Technology component as outlined in NE Revised Statute §§ 79-3301 to 79-3305		

If you have any questions, feel free to contact us by email or phone.

Accreditations Team

nde.accreditation@nebraska.gov

402-405-4098

Accreditation Specialist

- Dr. Decua Jean-Baptiste - decua.jean-baptiste@nebraska.gov
- Todd Wolverton - todd.wolverton@nebraska.gov
- Dr. Sandra Suiter - sandra.suiter@nebraska.gov

Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association

Member Update *October 8, 2026*



Photo Credit: Morrill Public Schools

www.nrcsa.net | www.twitter.com/NRCSA1980 | www.facebook.com/nrcsahome/

NRCSA Calendar

NRCSA Events

NRCSA District Meetings (September & October 2026)

South Central District Meeting
1:00 PM, September 2, 2026
At ESU 11 in Holdrege

Northeast District Meeting
11:00 AM, September 21, 2026
At Wayne State College

Southwest District Meeting
12:00 PM, September 24, 2026
At Hershey Public Schools

Southeast District Meeting
11:00 AM, September 28, 2026
At the NCSA office in Lincoln

North Central District Meeting
10:30 AM, October 14, 2026
At Jubilee Catering in Ord

West District Meeting
1:30 PM (MT), October 28, 2026
At ESU 13 in Scottsbluff

NRCSA Legislative Forum
February 24, 2027
Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln
More about this event

NRCSA Spring Conference
April 1 & 2, 2027
Crowne Plaza & Younes North Convention Center in Kearney
More about this event

NRCSA Golf Tournament
July 27, 2027
Meadowlark Hills Golf Course in Kearney
More about this event

Committee Meetings

NRCSA Committee Meetings
November 18, 2026
CHI Center in Omaha

9:00 AM - NRCSA Executive Committee
10:00 AM - NRCSA Scholarship & Recognition Cmte
11:00 AM - NRCSA Closing the Achievement Gap Cmte
12:00 PM - NRCSA Leaders Lunch
1:00 PM - NRCSA Legislative Committee
3:00 PM - NRCSA Rural Teacher Committee

NRCSA Search Service

Please let Paul Sheffield know where superintendent vacancies occur, so that NRCSA Superintendent Search can make direct contact. We need to hear as soon as possible in anticipation of getting promotional materials specific to that board of education ready. It is critical that Board Presidents have the NRCSA contact information so that if they choose to consider a Superintendent Search Service, NRCSA is one they hopefully will consider.

Arapahoe Public Schools
Application Process Complete
Finalists Selected: **Oct. 12, 2026**
Interviews: **Oct. 24, 2026**
Contract Starts: **July 1, 2027**

Clarkson Public Schools
Announcement of Vacancy
Apply for this Vacancy
Application Deadline: **Oct. 30, 2026**
Finalists Selected: **Nov. 11, 2026**
Interviews: **Nov. 14, 2026**
Contract Starts: **July 1, 2027**

Douglas Co West Community Schools
Search starting soon!

Educational Service Unit 17
Announcement of Vacancy
Apply for this Vacancy
Application Deadline: **Oct. 9, 2026**
Finalists Selected: **Oct. 12, 2026**
Interviews: **Oct. 19, 2026**
Contract Starts: **July 1, 2027**

Red Cloud Community Schools
Search starting soon!

Resources for Schools

NRCSA has developed a "resource" document to assist members when they want insight on a particular topic. Often we are contacted and asked if we know of a school that has experience in a topic of interest. Many times we can point them in the right direction, but often we need to put out a request for information to the members. We have developed a list to begin from and already have some contact information on some of the topics. The plan is to feature this list in each of our monthly updates. Below is a link to a copy of the list. If you would be willing to be listed as a resource or if you would like to suggest other topics for inclusion, please contact Jack Moles.

NRCSA School Programs

The ESUCC and ESU 3 have shared a document which outlines all of the trainings and mandates that are required of districts. The document, "School District Plans, Policies, and Annual Trainings Requirements", is a handy reminder for districts. Thanks to ESUCC Executive Director Kraig Lofquist and ESU 3 Administrator Dan Schnoes for developing and distributing this handy tool. The document may be accessed here:

School District Plans, Policies, & Annual Trainings

Dr. Jeremy Braden, Superintendent at Doniphan-Trumbull, has developed a useful agenda for on-boarding new Board of Education members. Many of our districts will bring on new Board members in January. Jeremy's instrument could be a nice template for Superintendents and Board Presidents to use in working with new Board members. It may be accessed here:

Board Member Onboarding

Access the Members area of **www.nrcsa.net** anytime.
Login: *member* Password: *learning*

From the Executive Director



From the Oath to the Ballot: Answering the Call in Rural Nebraska

Having a child in the military is a deeply personal experience, and it feels even more so in a world that seems increasingly unsettled. Every time we turn on the news, it seems another conflict is unfolding somewhere around the globe. As families across rural Nebraska know well, it is so often our young men and women who step forward to answer the call. Our son, along with many others from our local communities, has taken an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. Their dedication and sacrifice help safeguard the freedoms we too easily take for granted, among them freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of the press.

These freedoms can spark passionate debate and occasionally test our patience, but they are the bedrock of our democracy. The Founders enshrined them so that every voice could be heard. Closely tied to them is one of the most fundamental rights we hold: the right to vote. With Election Day on November 3, setting aside time in our busy schedules to cast a ballot is both a privilege and a civic responsibility. Whatever our political differences, the true strength of our nation lies in our shared commitment to the democratic process and the peaceful transfer of power.

As autumn settles over Nebraska and Thanksgiving draws near, we have much to be grateful for in our rural communities. We won't always agree with every policy or decision made by leaders in Lincoln or Washington, but each of us has the opportunity, and the responsibility, to help shape what comes next. Rather than dwelling on what's wrong, we can each ask a simple but powerful question: "What can I do to be part of the solution?"

That question matters especially for those of us who serve in rural public education. In his 1961 inaugural address, President John F. Kennedy issued a challenge that still resonates: "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country." Earlier in that same speech, he reminded Americans where responsibility ultimately rests: "In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than in mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course." Those words ring as true today as they did more than six decades ago. The future of our rural schools, our communities, and our nation is in our collective hands. Thank you for your unwavering dedication to the students and families of rural Nebraska.

NRCSA and outgoing Executive Director Jack Moles were honored to receive the Friend of Education Award at Administrator Days. NRCSA has been a long-time tenant of the Nebraska Council of School Administrators. We were included in the plans for NCSA's new building, which opened up last summer. NRCSA truly appreciates the partnership that

NRCSA Leadership

Stephanie Kaczor, President.
Riverside Public Schools

Chris Kuncl, Past President.
Mullen Public Schools

Dale Hafer, Pres-Elect.
Ainsworth Community Schools

Dr. Jeremy Braden, Secretary.
Doniphan-Trumbull Public Schs

District Representatives:

Ginger Meyer, West
Chadron Public Schools

Dr. Heather Nebesniak, North Central
Ord Public Schools

Daryl Schrunk, Northeast
Randolph Public Schools

Andrew Havelka, Southeast
Freeman Public Schools

Jon Davis, South Central
Alma Public Schools

Jane Davis, Southwest
Hershey Public Schools

Executive Director:

Paul Sheffield

Lobbyists:

Jon Edwards
Scott Moore
Russell Westerhold

Legislative Co- Chairs:

Dr. Jason Dolliver
Pender Public Schools

Bryce Jorgenson
Southern Valley Schools

Scholarship & Recognition Co Chairs:

Jessica Bland,
Oakland-Craig Public Schools

Jim Widdifield
Minden Public Schools

has developed with Dr. Mike Dulaney and his entire staff. Both organizations benefit from the other in many ways. The award from NCSA was in recognition of "distinguished advocacy, counsel and support to Nebraska public schools and school administrators."



L-R: Jeff Bundy (NRCSA Office Manager), Jack Moles, NRCSA President Stephanie Kaczor, new NRCSA Executive Director Paul Sheffield

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NRCSA's annual membership drive is nearing conclusion! Membership notices were sent to all of our members in July. We also contacted several non-members who we believe would be great fits in NRCSA. As of this writing membership stands at 219. Annual Dues remain at $850.. You are welcome to pay your dues in this fiscal year or the next. Last year, we had 222 school districts, ESU's, and State colleges and we expect to continue to grow. Thanks to you for being a member. This energizes our representation and advocacy for rural Nebraska, no matter who we are engaged with on education, legislation, or community issues. Without your support, there is less rural advocacy. Whether we like it or not, the outstate and rural population does not create a legislative majority anymore. In fact, rural Nebraska lost another seat in the Unicameral in the most recent redistricting. Finding success, whether passing, amending, or stopping legislation comes from membership, relationships, and focus. Thanks to your membership in NRCSA, rural is at the table and making a difference on behalf of our rural students, schools, and communities.

The NRCSA Executive Committee has made a positive move to assist non-traditional educators move toward full teaching certification. As a result of this move, new scholarship opportunities were created for paras who are in a "para to teacher program" and for transitional educators. NRCSA will provide three $1,000 scholarships for the fall semester and three $1,000 scholarships for the spring semester each school year. Applicants for the scholarships must be current employees of a NRCSA-member district or ESU. Applicants must be enrolled for that semester in one of two types of programs: (1) in a recognized "para to teacher" program such as is offered by the three State Colleges (Chadron State, Peru State, or Wayne State), or (2) a transition to teaching program in which a person with a minimum of a bachelor's degree who is employed to teach in a member school while working through a transitional program, such as offered by the University of Nebraska-Kearney. The applicant could currently be teaching under a transitional certificate. **Applications for the Spring, 2027 Semester will be forwarded to Superintendents on October 9, 2026. The application deadline for the Spring semester will be November 13, 2026.**

Applications for the Summer/Fall semester were received and the three recipients were selected. They were:

- Jemma DeNaeyer, Thedford
- Veronica Schiffbauer, HTRS
- Chelsey Georges, District OR-1, Palmyra-Bennet



Thedford Principal Adam Kuntz, Brooklyn Denaeyer, Jemma Denaeyer, Kloey Denaeyer, Jack Moles



Director of Student Programs Linde Walter, Dylaney Georges, Justin Georges, Brea Georges, Chelsey Georges, Jack Moles, Logan Georges, Supt. Michael Hart, Elementary Principal Jared Haag



Jack Moles, Veronica Schiffbauer, HTRS Supt. George Griffith

Current Happenings

October is bullying prevention month. Here is a resource you or your staff may find helpful.

FIGHT! CHILD ABUSE .ORG

Barbara Sinatra CHILDREN'S CENTER

Barbara Sinatra CHILDREN'S CENTER FOUNDATION

Free Bullying Prevention resources for Educators and School Counselors

October is National Bullying Prevention Month, a time that is dedicated to raise awareness about the harmful impacts of bullying and cyberbullying while promoting kindness, acceptance, and inclusion.

Fightchildabuse.org is a free abuse prevention initiative that provides animated educational resources for grades K-3, grades 4-6 and teens.

We have developed 3 animated lessons to specifically address bullying.

For grades 4-6 we have two lessons: *Protect Yourself Rules* - ***Bullying*** and *Protect Yourself Rules* - ***Cyberbullying***.

For teens we offer the award winning short titled ***"Are You Okay?"*** that was featured in our September mental health flyer.

The three animations encourage students to understand if someone is teasing you, hurting you, spreading rumors, or even talking about hurting you that is bullying. Remember, a bully can be anyone. You can be bullied in person or online. When being bullied, walk away and tell an adult. If you see someone being bullied, stand up for them, be kind, and tell an adult. If someone does this, no matter who it is, you must tell. Our lessons encourage students to talk to teachers or counselors.

Scan the QR codes below to watch each lesson and share them with students.

The resources were created by leading child advocates, therapists, and researchers. Discover more child abuse prevention lessons at FightChildAbuse.org.



This link takes you to the video
"Protect Yourself Rules - Bullying"



This link takes you to the video
"Protect Yourself Rules - Cyberbullying"



This link takes you to the video
"Are You Okay?"

Mike Nelson
Vice President, Education and Strategic Parternships
Barbara Sinatra Children's Center Foundation
in Partnership with Wonder Media
Cell: 801 368 5580 · Voice: 800 675 4123
Email: mnelson@wondermediagroup.net

The Fight Child Abuse campaign was developed by the Barbara Sinatra Children's Center Foundation, in partnership with Wonder Media and the Joshua Center on Child Sexual Abuse at the University of Washington.

Congratulations to Keye Paha County Schools

Keya Paha COunty Schools and the Nebraska FFA Foundation received a grant.

Who: Nebraska FFA Foundation + Keya Paha County Schools
What: Announcing recipient of Local Chapter Grant Program, totaling more than $101,000 in grant funding for an Agricultural Kitchen Expansion Project

When: The Nebraska FFA Foundation and other project partners toured the completed kitchen expansion project Wednesday, September 16. Project was completed last August 2025 for start of the 2025-26 school year.

Why: Based on an application process, the Local Chapter Grant Program supports Nebraska agricultural education classrooms, FFA programs, and school-based enterprises.







Nebraska FFA Foundation

Leadership. Tradition. True Blue.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 18, 2026

Contact:
Linne Vavrina, Marketing & Communications Director
Nebraska FFA Foundation
Phone:402.480.4905
Email: linne@neffafoundation.org

Keya Paha County Schools Expands Agricultural Education Through $101,000 in Grant Funding

Springview, NE – What began with a challenge experienced by students during the COVID-19 pandemic has now come full circle at Keya Paha County Schools. During the pandemic, there were times when the school faced shortages of fresh food because of food supply disruptions and the distance food-service trucks had to travel. The experience gave FFA members a firsthand look at the importance of having reliable access to fresh, locally available food.

Agriculture teacher and FFA advisor Ellen Trahan challenged students to think about possible solutions. Their ideas centered on a simple concept: Students could learn to grow their own food, starting with healthy soil and seeds, harvesting it fresh, preserving what they could and ultimately using that food to help feed their community.

That idea began taking shape in spring 2024, when seventh-grade students planted and raised fruits and vegetables as part of the school's Farm-to-School program. The garden gave students an opportunity to put their ideas into practice and led them to consider how they could process and preserve the food they grew.

The project gained momentum through grant support and has now become a fully equipped learning space for agricultural education.

Keya Paha County Schools received $101,000 in grant funding through the Nebraska FFA Foundation grant program. The funding was provided through the Nebraska FFA Foundation's general fund, industry partner grants from CVA and FMNE, and a large project grant through Growing a Brighter Future for Nebraska FFA & Agricultural Education, funded by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation.

The completed kitchen represents more than a remodeled classroom. It is the culmination of a multi-year effort to give Keya Paha students hands-on opportunities to grow, process and preserve food while developing skills in nutrition, food safety and agriculture, as well as exploring careers in food processing.

The Agricultural Kitchen Expansion Project transformed an existing space into a functional kitchen within the school's agricultural education classroom. The renovation included upgraded

electrical and plumbing systems, flooring improvements, cabinetry, sinks, a dishwasher and kitchen appliances. The project also upgraded the stove to a gas-burning unit, allowing students to learn multiple canning and food-preservation techniques.

The project also builds on a long-standing tradition within the Keya Paha FFA chapter. Each year, the chapter purchases additional Colorado peaches through its peach sale fundraiser. Students preserve more than 40 boxes of peaches annually by freezing them for use in the school cafeteria. That experience helped demonstrate the value of preserving food for later use and became another part of the vision for the agricultural kitchen.

Students were involved throughout the remodeling process, helping move materials and equipment into a storage container purchased by the district in fall 2024. The renovation included removing a wall between the kitchen and ag classroom and adding the necessary electrical, plumbing and flooring infrastructure.

The kitchen was completed for the start of the 2025 school year, giving students the opportunity to use the new equipment to process and preserve food harvested from the school garden. The school kitchen also uses fresh produce grown in the FFA garden, helping address some of the food-access challenges students experienced during the pandemic.

The space provides a setting for students to develop critical-thinking and problem-solving skills as they make decisions involving soil and plant health, recipe measurements and food-preservation techniques. Students are also learning basic food preservation and meat processing as part of their agricultural education classes.

“We believe it is important for students to be inspired and educated about nutrition, how to grow your own food, and how to process food for later use,” said Trahan.

This week, the Nebraska FFA Foundation team visited Keya Paha County Schools to see the completed kitchen firsthand and witness the impact of the investment. The visit offered a full-circle moment for a project that grew from challenges experienced during the pandemic, developed through student ideas and hands-on learning, and has now become a lasting resource for agricultural education.

The project demonstrates how agricultural education can connect classroom instruction with real-world experiences—giving students the opportunity to grow, process and preserve food while learning about nutrition, agriculture and career opportunities in the food and agricultural industries.

###

About the Nebraska FFA Foundation

The Nebraska FFA Foundation invests in agricultural education and FFA for more than 12,000 FFA members and their advisors in Nebraska by growing leaders, building communities, and creating career connections. For more information, visit neffafoundation.org.

From Sam Stetcher, Franklin Covey Education

There is a free workshop on the FranklinCovey goal attainment framework. It is research proven to help students reach individual academic goals, specifically in literacy, at a statewide scale. Super relevant and valuable to our statewide literacy goals.

It will not be a sales pitch. It will be 3 to 4 hours of PD from my team as well as school tours and presentations from Columbus Public School's students and staff.

It's legit for sups, principals, teachers, *and board members*.

Registration Link



What Changes with *4DX* for Educators

Aligned Leadership
Everyone moves in the same direction with clarity and purpose.

Focused Execution
Teams stay focused on what matters most and execute with discipline.

Shared Ownership
Everyone understands their role and works together to drive results.

Stronger Outcomes
Sustained progress that improves outcomes for students every day.

Key Outcomes

- Build a system that keeps your priorities front and center
- Create alignment across leadership, staff, and students
- Empower teams to own their role in the results
- Sustain momentum from the first day of school to the last
- See measurable, meaningful improvements for students

$399 Value - Complimentary registration while seats remain.

> "The *4DX* framework transformed how our leaders approach goal setting and execution. It provided a clear, powerful structure to identify our Wildly Important Goals and track the daily actions that drive real progress. Our team left inspired, focused, and fully equipped to succeed."
>
> ***—Rhonda Henry, Assistant Superintendent of Innovation & Strategic Initiatives, Farmington Public Schools, MI***

Event Details

Columbus, NE | Kramer Education Center
2410 16th Street, Columbus, NE 68601

October 15, 2026

7:30am - 3:00pm
Materials & lunch provided

Scan to register

FranklinCovey Education

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From Suzanne Kemp, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Building Nebraska's Special Education Workforce Through Apprenticeship

In 2023, the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL) was invited by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) to serve as one of the pilot institutions for Nebraska's newly approved apprenticeship pathway to special education teacher certification. Recognizing the critical need to address the statewide shortage of special education teachers, faculty in UNL's Special Education Program embraced the opportunity to design an innovative preparation model grounded in the core principles of apprenticeship.

UNL's program was intentionally developed to provide aspiring special educators with a comprehensive, practice-based learning experience. Apprentices are employed as paraeducators or teacher apprentices while completing coursework that is directly connected to their daily classroom experiences. Throughout the program, apprentices receive ongoing coaching from expert mentor teachers and university supervisors, assume increasing instructional responsibilities through a gradual release model, and participate in competency-based assessments that measure their professional growth. Strong partnerships among UNL, Educational Service Units (ESUs), and local school districts ensure that apprentices are supported from recruitment through certification and licensure.

At the heart of the program is the belief that educators learn best by doing. During an intensive six-week summer institute, offered both online and in person, apprentices build foundational knowledge in reading, mathematics, and behavior management. Rather than learning these concepts solely through lectures, apprentices immediately apply evidence-based instructional practices by tutoring students who need additional academic support. This combination of instruction, supervised practice, and timely feedback allows apprentices to develop confidence and competence before entering classrooms in the fall.

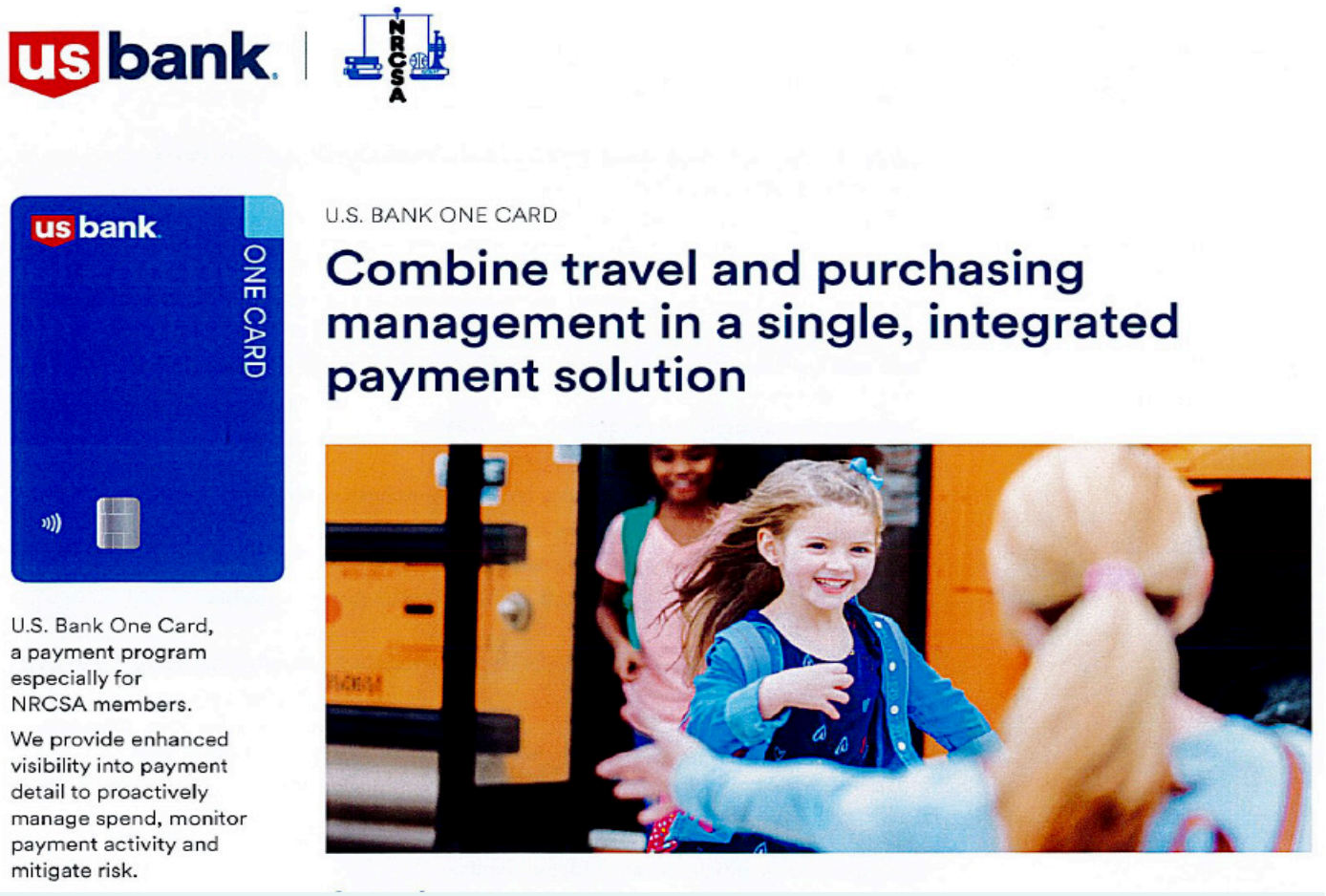
Learning continues throughout the apprenticeship year. Weekly seminars provide opportunities for apprentices to deepen their understanding of evidence-based practices, reflect on their classroom experiences, receive individualized coaching from university faculty, and collaborate with fellow apprentices. This ongoing cycle of instruction, application, feedback, and reflection is a defining feature of the apprenticeship model and prepares apprentices to become highly effective special educators.

Since its launch, UNL's apprenticeship program has demonstrated remarkable success. The inaugural pilot cohort included eight apprentices employed by Lincoln Public Schools. All eight successfully completed the program, were hired as special education teachers, and have now completed their first year in the classroom.

Building on the success of the pilot, UNL received additional funding to expand the program into rural Nebraska through partnerships with Educational Service Units 5 and 6. The expanded program now includes school districts in Crete, Waverly, Norris, Centennial, Bruning-Davenport, Beatrice, Seward, and York. Today, approximately 60% of the apprentices serve rural communities, strengthening the special education workforce where shortages are often the greatest. Of the 23 apprentices who entered the expanded program, 21 have accepted positions and will begin their careers as special education teachers during the 2026–2027 school year. The current cohort continues this momentum, welcoming additional district partners from Gothenburg, Fairbury, and Superior.

As UNL prepares to recruit the next cohort of apprentices for the program beginning in January 2027, the goal remains clear: expand access to high-quality teacher preparation while strengthening Nebraska's special education workforce. Although NDE grant funding has enabled many aspiring teachers to participate, available funding is limited and cannot support every qualified paraeducator. To continue growing this successful initiative, UNL welcomes partnerships with school districts interested in sponsoring one of their paraeducators through the apprenticeship program. Together, we can create additional pathways into the profession and ensure that Nebraska's students with disabilities are served by well-prepared, highly effective special education teachers.

NRCSA Services



We urge you to consider participation in the NRCSA Partner OneCard program as a tool for you in managing school expenditures, both large and small. Certainly, the card can help reduce/eliminate any issues relative to unverified cash expenditures. You decide who uses it, can get cards for each of those users, keep all cards wherever you wish, determine the amount to load on each individual card, and how long the time frame of use is. It is a terrific management tool and clearly identifies each expenditure/name/date/amount. Whether small purchases or very large purchases, the card is a terrific tool. NRCSA owns the state contract, so liability for misuse falls to NRCSA, not the district user. We have only had three circumstances of fraud and all three have been the theft of the card number information, not any district employee misuse. For 2025-26, over 100 districts/ESUs participated in the program. We currently have 111 entities using the program. In talking with some districts, there is a chance there could be upwards of 115 entities participating. Great job by all participating districts in protecting the card and program! Don't forget, the NRCSA rebate from the transaction fee paid by businesses that choose to accept plastic is used for scholarship, awards, and special needs. For 2025-26, the rebate was over $40,000 to NRCSA, showing that use is increasing, and large purchases are being included. WIN, WIN, WIN! If you are considering joining the program and need more information, please contact Paul Sheffield (**psheffield@nrcsa.net**) or Jeff Bundy (**jbundy@nrcsa.net**).

U.S. Bank Commercial Card Flip Booklet



SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH

As Boards of Education and Superintendents start to plan for the future, there may be a change in Superintendent approaching your district. We would like to remind you that NRCSA has an outstanding Superintendent Search Service and I would encourage your Board of Education to closely consider these services if you are in need of a Superintendent.

NRCSA is already assisting Arapahoe Public Schools, Clarkson Public Schools, and Educational Service Unit 17 with searches so far this year.

One of the more outstanding features of the NRCSA Superintendent Search Service is that the consultants who assist Boards of Education with their searches are all retired rural school Superintendents who experienced great success in their careers. They know what it takes to be successful in a rural school district and community, and how to work closely with a rural school Board of Education. Our consultants for the coming year will include: Jay Bellar, Dan Bird, Curtis Cogswell, Jon Cerny, Eugene "Mo" Hanks, Jim Havelka, Fred Helmink, Holly Herzberg, Jeff Messersmith, Jack Moles, and Caroline WInchester.

If your district finds a need to locate your next school leader, please be sure to keep the NRCSA Superintendent Search Service in mind. For more information you can contact Executive Director Paul Sheffield at **psheffield@nrcsa.net** or by phone at 402-759-1609.

Another service that is offered is a planning service. It is a common practice for Boards of Education and the Superintendent to develop short and long-term plans. NRCSA does provide a quality service using experienced consultants. If you are interested in more information, please contact Executive Director Elect Paul Sheffield.

About the Service

NRCSA operates the Superintendent Search Service as part of our commitment to maintaining the vitality of rural schools and communities.

Finding the right Superintendent for your rural school and community is one of the most important tasks a Board of Education will ever undertake, and selecting the right Superintendent search service is a crucial part of that task. Fortunately, you can have a partner at your side with more than 40 years of experience in serving the needs of rural community schools – NRCSA.

Why Choose NRCSA ? Not all Superintendent search services are the same. NRCSA can make a difference for you!

- **Since 1980, NRCSA has represented Nebraska's rural community schools.** We represent the Board-Superintendent teams that lead rural schools and the rural communities they serve.
- **NRCSA's focus is solely on rural schools and communities.** Your schools are the reason we exist and we are dedicated as an organization to serving them effectively. You are our priority!
- **NRCSA understands rural school leadership.** Our Superintendent Search consultants are

experienced, successful former rural community school Superintendents. They know what it takes to be an effective educational leader in a Nebraska community.

- **NRCSA isn't done when your Superintendent search is completed.** We'll work with your new Superintendent and Board to bring about a smooth transition.
-

Our Consultants… We'll assign two NRCSA consultants to your search and they'll work with you from the initial planning meeting to the post-selection transition. Our consultants actively recruit and personally screen all applicants, assist you in selecting finalists, help with your interview and selection process, and facilitate the transition to new leadership.

A NRCSA Search… We will help your Board carry out a five-phase search plan, including:

- **Comprehensive** planning with the Board, faculty/staff and community. We'll work with you to develop a community engagement plan, build district and candidate profiles, and analyze comparable salary and contract language.
- **Active** recruiting and screening. We broadly advertise your vacancy, actively seek out candidates that fit your profile, use our consultants' extensive personal networks to effectively screen candidates, check for proper certification, and handle the paperwork burden of a search.
- **Finalist** selection. Our consultants provide your Board with each applicant's materials, make recommendations on those best suited to the position, and arrange for a formal background check of finalists chosen by the Board.
- **Interviews.** We help your Board and faculty/community groups develop interview questions and facilitate the interview day. We'll be there to assist you throughout.
- **Transition.** Our consultants meet with the Board and new Superintendent once he/she is on duty to get your new leadership team off to a great start.

NRCSA Search Service Brochure

PLANNING SUPPORT

Another service that is offered is a planning service. It is a common practice for Boards of Education and the Superintendent to develop short and long-term plans. NRCSA does provide a quality service using experienced consultants. If you are interested in more information, please contact Executive Director Elect Paul Sheffield.

About the Service

NRCSA operates the Planning Support Service as part of our commitment to maintaining the vitality of rural schools and communities.

Why NRCSA…Long-range planning is an important task for the school district and community to undertake. A school board is most effective when members work together in reaching common district goals. Developing these goals can be challenging. Fortunately, you can have a partner at your side with more than 40 years' experience in serving the needs of rural community schools: NRCSA. Why choose NRCSA?

- Since 1980, NRCSA has represented Nebraska's rural community schools. We understand rural schools, the Boards and Superintendents that lead them, and the rural communities they serve.

- NRCSA's focus is solely on rural schools and communities. They are the reason we exist and we are dedicated as an organization to serving them effectively.

- NRCSA's process has been developed by studying the best practices of experts and is designed to meet the needs of the district and community wherever they are in the planning process.

-

The NRCSA Process…two consultants will deliver two (2) sessions over two (2) days for approximately two to two and one-half hours each session. During the sessions, school and community participants will work in small and large group activities to:

- Identify strengths

- Identify issues & explore essential needs to carry them out

- Create S.M.A.R.T goals with a focus on:
    1. Strategies
    2. Assigned responsibility
    3. Timelines
    4. Evidence of success

What are S.M.A.R.T. goals…This activity will create S.M.A.R.T. goals that will be:

- **Specific –** customized and flexible to fit your school and community

- **Measurable –** data-driven and totally understandable to all

- **Agreeable –** broad-based support because all populations are involved in the decision-making process

- **Realistic –** breaks down or accepts barriers to success

- **Time-Based –** stakeholders are held accountable by the district within a defined completion date

Outcomes…This activity will generate the following for your district.

- SMART Goals Map for your district
- School board buy-in
- Pass resolutions to demonstrate support
- Schedule presentations and written reports to ensure successful follow-through
- Evaluation of the NRCSA process and facilitators; we always strive to improve
- Constant and consistent 2-way communication with consultants

NRCSA Planning Support Brochure

Three years ago, NRCSA began a Principal Search Service. This service is patterned after our successful Superintendent Search Service. Two options are available. Both options will involve NRCSA consultants recruiting candidates for the position. One option will involve the NRCSA consultant making background calls, while the reduced version of the service will place that role with the Superintendent. If you are interested in getting more information about the service now, please contact Jack. Here is a brochure outlining the service.

NRCSA offers a Principal Search Service. This service is patterned after our successful Superintendent Search Service. NRCSA consultants will assist superintendents in client districts in hiring a principal. If you are interested in getting more information about the service, please contact Jack Moles.

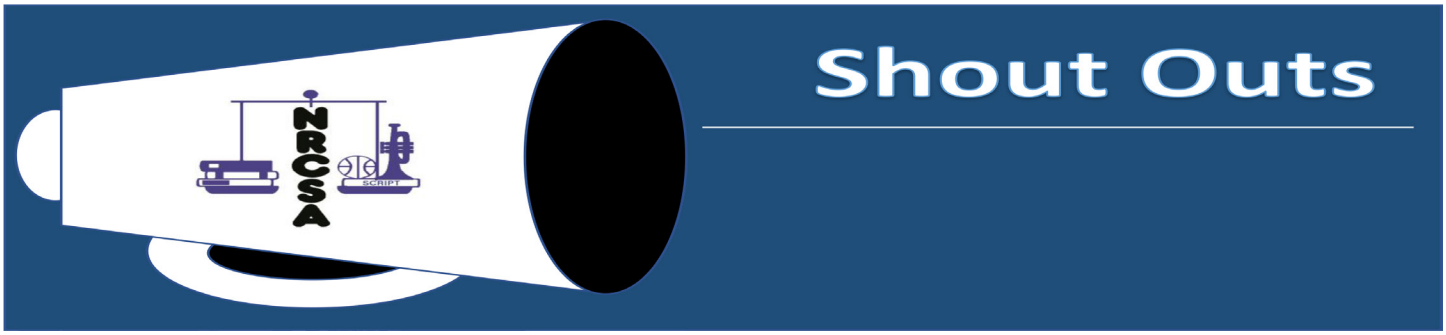
NRCSA operates the Principal Search Service as part of our commitment to maintaining the vitality of rural schools and communities.

Why Choose NRCSA ? Not all search services are the same. NRCSA can make a difference for you!

- Since 1980, NRCSA has represented Nebraska's rural community schools. We represent the Board-Superintendent teams that lead rural schools and the rural communities they serve.
- NRCSA's focus is solely on rural schools and communities. Your schools are the reason we exist and we are dedicated as an organization to serving them effectively. You are our priority!
- NRCSA understands rural school leadership. Our consultants are experienced, successful former rural community school Superintendents. They know what it takes to be an effective educational leader in a Nebraska community.

Our Consultants... We'll assign an experienced consultant to your search and they'll work with you from the initial planning meeting through the hiring process. Your consultant will actively recruit applicants and will personally assist with screening to the extent the client desires. Your consultant will also assist you in the selection of finalists and advise the interview process.

NRCSA Principal Search Brochure



NRCSA wishes to share in the celebration of the special accomplishments and recognitions going on in our member schools and ESUs.

October 2026:

* **Nebraska Department of Education and the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy Advisory Committee recently announced that 247 Seals of Biliteracy have been awarded to Nebraska students in August of 2026. These prestigious awards recognize high school students who have achieved a high level of proficiency in English and at least one other language. Students at NRCSA-member districts who were recognized, all in Spanish, include:**

- Aleigha Ogden – West Holt High School
- Alexis Kleckner – David City Secondary School
- Aylhin Castro Rodriguez - Exeter Milligan Friend High School
- Berkleigh Dvorak – West Holt High School
- Brandon Hardin - Mullen Public Schools
- Daleni Knust - West Holt High School
- Gabriel Covarrubias - Exeter Milligan Friend High School
- Gabriel Zavala Castro - Superior Sr High School
- Jeremy Rodriguez-Padron – Lexington High School
- Kayli Monasterio - West Holt High School
- Lindsey Landis - Exeter Milligan Friend High School
- Madilynn Mullen - Paxton High School
- Morgan Mitchell – West Holt High School
- Morgan Schaaf - West Holt High School
- Nicholas Gonzalez - Mullen Public Schools
- Peyton Olberding - West Holt High School
- Taylor Schaaf - West Holt High School

* **Jodi Meyer, of Fillmore Central Public Schools, was honored as the Nebraska Speech, Communication, and Theatre Association's John Thurber Distinguished Teacher Award recipient for 2026.**



Jodi Meyer

*** Mitch Glesinger, of the Riverside/Spalding Academy co-op, was presented with the Dale E. Black Outstanding Young Teacher Award at the Nebraska Speech, Communication, and Theatre Association's annual conference.**

*** McCool Junction High School was named the Class D Girls, Boys, and All-School Division Champions of the 2025-2026 Nebraska Department of Transportation/NSAA Buckle Up Phone Down Cup!**



McCool Junction

*** The NSAA recently released the names of the 48 students who are the statewide recipients of the 2026-27 Currency Believers and Achievers Award. Those from NRCSA-member schools include:**

- Alicia Bedlan, Fairbury
- Riley Benish, Leyton
- Kara Brockman, Elwood
- Paz Cody, Alliance
- Grady Faimon, Alma
- Faith Galvin, Laurel-Concord-Coleridge
- Max Hanson, Wallace

- Rogan Hoesing, Wausa
- Meg Hoffschneider, Centennial
- Thomas Jay, Paxton
- Jonathan Kohout, Milford
- Frank Kovacs, Minden
- Emerson Lorenzo, Lexington
- Emerson McIntyre, Northwest
- Madilynn Nolan, Boyd County
- Lainey Paulk, Wood River
- Miley Pinkelman, Bloomfield
- Katelyn Preister, Twin River
- AJ Rautenbach, Johnson County Central
- Christian Shaw, Sandy Creek
- Garrett Smidt, Tri County
- Owen Standage, Ravenna
- Emilia Perez Tellez, Dorchester
- Garrett Tollman, Crawford
- Sonja Warner, Shelton
- Ava Wenzel, Arthur County

* **Chadron teacher Craig Nobling was presented with the Nebraska School Safety and Security Award at NCSA's Heartland School Safety and Security Summit. Others from NRCSA-member districts that were nominated for the award include:**

- Riverside Public Schools
- Officer Chris Engel with Yutan
- Franklin Public Schools School Safety/Crisis/TA Teams
- Daren Hatch, Superintendent at Elwood
- Nurse Tracy Anderson of Conestoga
- Jen McNally of ESU #5

National Updates

Federal Education Freedom Tax Credit:

Effective for the 2027 tax season, part of the "OBBB" created a new federal tax credit of up to $1,700 for contributions to a Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO). NRCSA is working on gathering information on how public schools can utilize this resource. Your local foundation may also have information. Stay tuned as the rules and regulations were just released on October 2nd.

The rules and regulations are now available at:

https://www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection/2026-20277/federal-scholarship-tax-credit

EDGAR Amendments Proposed

This week, ED posted in the Federal Register an NPRM that seeks to amend the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). The proposed rule would, among other provisions, increase ED's authority to terminate discretionary grants "for convenience" and add a requirement for state grantees and subgrantees to comply with Executive Orders. Comments on this proposed rule are due by Sep. 23.

NTIA Listening Session on Screen Time and FCC NPRM

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) at the U.S. Department of Commerce has posted in the Federal Register a Notice of Open Meeting for a virtual listening session on screen use in schools on Sept. 15, from 7-8:30 p.m. EDT. NTIA's listening session relates to the FCC's recent Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) on E-Rate. Topics may include screen-based instruction and school internet safety policies. The link to register for this listening session is available here, and this session is open to all who wish to participate. NTIA may provide feedback from this session with the FCC as part of the public NPRM record.

The FCC published in the Federal Register on Aug. 14 an NPRM on the E-Rate program, which provides discounts for broadband service for K-12 schools and libraries. Among other questions, the FCC asks whether the program should be terminated or significantly pared back. Stakeholders have until Oct. 13, 2026, to provide comments for FCC consideration. The Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband Coalition created a website on this specific E-Rate issue before the FCC that includes estimates of funding by state.

From the NREA:

As we hear concern from rural districts concerning moves in the national front regarding the Department of Education, the National Rural Education Association (NREA) and the National Education Association (NEA) have combined to share a website outlining the amount of federal funding that goes to public schools. The website can be accessed here:

How Much Funding Does My Public School Get from the Federal Government

Dr. Steven Johnson, a member of the NREA Executive Committee, provided a document entitled, "Strengthening Rural Communities Through Public Education". Many of you had an opportunity to meet Steve at the NRCSA

Spring Conference. His article may be accessed here:

Strengthening Rural Communities Through Public Education

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, along with the Food Research and Action Center, has drawn attention to the possibility that the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) might be substantially altered. This change could have a negative impact on several school districts in Nebraska. The following website provides a great overview of the concern and allows the viewer to go specifically to Nebraska to see how the change could affect districts.

State by State Fact Sheet

The National Rural Education Association (NREA) is proud to release Why Rural Matters 2025—the 11th edition in a long-standing series of reports that examine the contexts and conditions of rural education across all 50 states. This report continues the critical mission of drawing attention to the urgent need for policymakers, educators, and communities to address rural education challenges and opportunities within their own states.

Since its inception, the Why Rural Matters series has sought to make publicly available data more accessible and actionable. The overarching goal remains clear: to promote informed, civil dialogue about our shared civic responsibility to ensure that every student—rural or urban—has access to high-quality educational opportunities.

New in this year's edition is the inclusion of Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools. In his topical essay, Alex Red Corn provides critical insights into the significance of BIE schools, which educate students from multiple tribes and nations with unique histories and cultures. The report carefully distinguishes between "states" proper and BIE schools while underscoring their shared place in the broader rural education landscape. The analyses and data presented in Why Rural Matters 2025 are intended to inform policy discussions, guide decision-making, and inspire action. The report highlights states that have demonstrated measurable progress over time, highlighting examples where thoughtful policy interventions have led to improved outcomes for rural students. These stories of progress offer valuable lessons and serve as evidence that strategic, context-sensitive policies can make a tangible difference in the lives of rural learners.

Data used in Why Rural Matters 2025 come from public sources: the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the United States Department of Education, the U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration, and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The National Rural Education Association is proud to launch the 2025 Why Rural Matters report, a project with a more than 20-year history of shaping the conversation about rural education. First conceptualized by the Rural Schools and Community Trust, the report has evolved into a vital resource for policymakers, educators, and communities. Today, NREA carries this important work forward, ensuring that the voices, needs, and strengths of rural schools and students remain at the forefront of education policy and practice nationwide. We are also grateful to the Rural Schools Collaborative, whose continued support strengthens NREA's work on behalf of rural schools, educators, and students across the country.

I would encourage you to take a look at WHY RURAL MATTERS, which can be accessed here:

Why Rural Matters 2025

The National Rural Education Association (NREA) partnered with AASA in producing a report on REAP. REAP is a program that benefits many of our smaller districts. The report can be accessed here:

https://www.aasa.org/docs/default-source/resources/reports/rural-education-achievement-program-survey-report.pdf

Understanding REAP

Updates from Members & Other Entities

NRCSA has partnered with the Holocaust Learning Experience to provide free curriculum for the teaching of the Holocaust and other genocides. LB888, which was adopted into law in 2022, requires school districts to teach about the Holocaust and other forms of genocide. This has been a growing move in many states. The Holocaust Learning Experience, based out of Florida, developed FREE on-line curriculum, which features interviews with survivors of the Holocaust, for Florida school districts.. The lessons are tiered for 5th and 6th grades, 7th and 8th grades, and high school grades. The group has now made it possible for schools in other states to access the materials for the same price: FREE!

From Leigh Routman: I've attached a digital flyer that you can share with your newsletter as well as the link to our website for more information.

Impactful Lessons from the Holocaust | The Holocaust Learning Experience

Additionally, here is the link to the video with teachers and students in their own words:

Holocaust Learning Experience | Empowering Classrooms to Combat Hate

And a link to the Heroes of the Holocaust montage:

Heroes of the Holocaust Demo with Hal_07072025.mov

UNL Extension Center: Embracing Innovation: Exploring the Dynamics of New Partnerships
Developing business & Industry, organizational, and postsecondary partnerships with school districts can play a pivotal role in enriching the educational experience, supporting student achievement, and strengthening connections between schools and their communities. By leveraging external resources, expertise, and support, schools can create a more inclusive, engaging, and supportive learning environment for all students. While partnerships within school districts can bring numerous benefits, there are also challenges that may be encountered. These can be overcome by fostering a culture of collaboration, prioritizing communication and relationship-building, seeking creative funding solutions, and promoting equity and inclusivity in partnership efforts. Additionally, leveraging support from district leadership, community stakeholders, and external resources can help schools overcome obstacles and maximize the benefits of collaborative partnerships.

We in the Institute of Agriculture and National Resources (IANR), specifically the College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources (CASNR) and Nebraska Extension 4-H, believe this strategy for K-12 partnerships will result in a strong learning innovation network of support for every learner and every educator in the state of Nebraska. The world of higher education is evolving, driven by changes in technology, demographics, workforce demands, and societal expectations. To meet the needs of today's learners in the 21st century and prepare them for the challenges of tomorrow, we are embracing innovation, collaboration, and a student-centered approach.

In recent years, CASNR has created two new positions to help in this work. Dr. Tammy Mittelstet (**tmittelstet@unl.edu**) is serving as the CASNR Statewide Education and Career Pathways Coordinator and Bailey Feit (**bailey.feit@unl.edu**) serves as the LPS/CASNR Early College and Career Pathways Coordinator. They engage in co-creating education and career pathways for students and supporting teachers by:

- creating opportunities and minimizing barriers for all learners in the exploration of education and career pathways,
- investing in and supporting teachers to innovate and integrate cross-curricular concepts of Food, Energy, Water, and Societal Systems (FEWSS) throughout K-12 education,
- encouraging our higher education institutions to share content expertise to build curriculum that will inform best practices in the areas of FEWSS and mentor future systems thinkers for the continuum of learners through our higher education institutions,
- connecting and developing a team of community leaders to build partnerships that combine resources to support student and teacher innovation, and
- building a workforce of tomorrow with the support of the industry of today by developing work-based learning opportunities.

If you would like to get monthly updates, consider signing up for the L.I.N.K.S. newsletter at **https://casnr.unl.edu/k-12-partners**.

Nebraska Extension brings University of Nebraska expertise and research in 8 key areas of impact directly to Nebraskans from all walks of life in each of the state's 93 counties. Nebraskans turn to Nebraska Extension to strengthen their families, inspire their communities, empower young people, conserve and protect natural resources and advance their farms, ranches and businesses. Nebraska 4-H represents one of the eight key areas, and has been a leader in the career and college readiness field by being one of the first in the country to support a statewide educator position and team to provide leadership in program development and delivery.

Two years ago, NRCSA introduced a new initiative to assist rural schools in educating their communities about digital citizenship. Our partnership with A.Plum Creative will provide members with ready-to-use, research-based resources designed to help districts promote responsible technology use among students and families.

The program has its origins out of a goal by the Hershey Board of Education and Superintendent Jane Davis to work on digital citizenship in their district. The district worked with A.Plum Creative on the initiative, then shared information on the program with the NRCSA Executive Committee.

This research based, legally vetted campaign includes monthly social media graphics and captions that focus on key topics like online safety, respectful communication, digital wellness and appropriate tech use. All content is designed to engage school communities and support districts in meeting digital citizenship education goals.

We offer a set of tiered service options for NRCSA Member Districts:

- Tier 1 – NRCSA Branded Content ($2,500/school year): Monthly graphics and captions with NRCSA branding, aligned to seasonal themes and events.
- Tier 2 – District-Branded Content ($5,000/school year): Customized graphics and captions tailored to your district's brand and messaging.
- Tier 3 – Custom Content + Consultation ($7,500/school year): District-branded content plus three planning calls per year with A.Plum Creative.
- Tier 4 – Full Social Media Management ($10,000/school year): District-branded content, full posting and scheduling, community engagement and monthly performance reports.

A few more NRCSA-member districts have since started working with A-Plum Creative. This campaign is available exclusively to NRCSA member districts. To learn more or reserve your spot, contact Anna Weber at **anna@a-plum.com** or visit **www.a-plum.com**.

Good Life EDU Podcast Featuring Anna Weber & Jane Davis

The Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS) has released a new research brief examining chronic absenteeism in Nebraska's K–12 schools and its effect on student outcomes, including assessment scores, graduation rates, and college enrollment.

The analysis highlights that chronic absenteeism—defined as missing 10 percent or more of the school year for any reason—has risen sharply in Nebraska since the COVID-19 pandemic and remains persistently high. Rates jumped from 10 percent in 2019–2020 to nearly 24 percent the following school year and have since remained above 20 percent statewide.

Key Findings from the NSWERS brief:

- Nebraska's chronic absenteeism rate has stabilized but remains elevated at more than one in five students.
- Disparities exist across student race/ethnicity, with Indigenous/Native American and Black students showing the highest rates of chronic absenteeism.
- Chronically-absent students consistently score lower on statewide assessments (NSCAS and ACT) compared to their peers.
- Chronic absenteeism greatly reduces the likelihood of graduating on time; students with regular attendance are nearly six times more likely to graduate high school than their chronically-absent peers.
- College-going rates show a significant divide: nearly 71 percent of non-chronically absent graduates enroll in postsecondary education compared to just 49 percent of chronic absentees.

"These findings underscore the lasting impact of chronic absenteeism on students' academic progress and future opportunities," said Dr. Jay Jeffries, author of the brief. "Addressing absenteeism requires not only monitoring the type of absence but also understanding the characteristics of students who are chronically absent."

The full report, NSWERS Brief on the Impact of Chronic Absenteeism on Academic Outcomes in Nebraska, is available at:

https://insights.nswers.org/briefs/2025-chronic-absenteeism

NRCSA has had the great privilege to work closely with Open Sky Policy Institute over the years. They provide great information on the fiscal impact of legislation that is very helpful to me in my work as NRCSA's chief lobbyist. I would encourage Superintendents and Board of Education members to sign up to receive Open Sky's email updates.

Open Sky has developed some awesome **Nebraska Public School District Profiles** instruments. The instruments provide much information that can be used to tell the story of your district in comparison to other districts when discussing school finance. The instruments can be accessed at:

https://www.openskypolicy.org/school-district-profile/

NRCSA is pleased to be in a partnership with New Leaf Teletherapy. New Leaf provides mental health teletherapy services for both staff and students. I became very interested in this possibility especially in terms of staff services. I know our members are working hard to provide services for their students, but there does not appear to be that same capability when looking at staff services.

I look at this service as helping to bolster what your district is already doing, not to take the place of those efforts. I believe this can be a cost effective means of furthering your efforts.

NRCSA hosted three introductory Zoom meetings with Mark Goldman and Deb Romano of New Leaf to have them explain what the program would look like. Below you can access the slide show from those meetings, as well as a recording of one of the meetings.

New Leaf PowerPoint Presentation

New Leaf Zoom Meeting (recording)

New Leaf Flyer

If you would like to be in contact with Mark Goldman or Deb Romano, please feel free to call or email me and I can help make that happen.

Chadron State College Special Education Para-to-Teacher Program Initiative.

Purpose: This **"Grow Your Own"** Special Education Teacher program is designed to provide school districts with the opportunity to cultivate and participate in the training of their para-professionals who wish to continue their education to become special education teachers.

Who: Any individual who holds a minimum of an Associate's Degree (or equivalent credit hours) from an accredited higher education institution, and who is employed as a para-professional within a school district.
What: Chadron State will provide required course work and enrichment activities via online, face-to-face (via Zoom), and on the job experiential learning, leading to a Bachelor's in Education Degree, and a Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an endorsement in Special Education (grades PK-12). With administrator input, program course work will be tailored to best fit your district practices and expectations. Each course will be offered in an 8-week format, with 12-13 credit hours to be completed each 16 week semester.
How: Program participants will be advised, monitored, and supported by CSC faculty/staff, and a CSC Education Program liaison is specifically assigned to facilitate their progress. District para-professionals may enter the program at any time in the academic year.

When: once participants reach their senior academic year they will embark on completing their capstone course work, via online and Zoom class sessions. This course work has been pared down considerably with the understanding and assumption that these student teachers will be learning "on-the-job". For example, one section covers classroom management practices. Clearly, one can argue and attest that these student teacher interns are learning more about managing a classroom from being mentored by veteran teachers within your school, and observing them in action. This is the belief and learning approach embraced during this senior year. However, to ensure and assess concept learning, Chadron State faculty will be meeting with your student teacher cohort twice per week for 1.5 hours, via Zoom conferencing technology.

Graduation: At the completion of this program students/candidates graduate from Chadron State College, and apply for teaching licensure resulting in a valid initial teaching certificate with and endorsement in PK-12 Special Education. Chadron State's education program in nationally and State accredited. As such, interstate certification reciprocity is not a problem.

Things for your consideration:

1) To qualify for this program participants must hold at least an Associate's Degree or the equivalent in college credit hours. *(CSC will work with those applicants to provide them with the needed coursework leading up to program entry).*

2) Districts must agree to maintain para-professional employment throughout the course of the program—including during the student teaching experience.

Please contact Dr. Adam Fette for more program information, at **afette@csc.edu.**

NRCSA developed a corporate sponsorship/partnership program. The program is designed to provide our corporate partners with more opportunities for contact with the decision makers in our member school districts, ESUs, and the colleges through increased exposure. Corporate partners are able to choose among three levels of sponsorship: Purple Ribbon Partners, Blue Ribbon Friends, and Red Ribbon Sponsors. Different forms of contact with our members are made available in each of the three levels.

We are very pleased to partner with our corporate sponsors, and NRCSA is so very thankful that each of you has chosen to partner with us.

Charting a Course for the Future:

Developing Comprehensive, Actionable PK-12 Master Plans

Clark & Enersen

Improving education and our communities through thoughtful school planning and design has been of great importance to our firm since our founding in 1946. Among our staff of more than 185 talented professionals is a team that specializes in PK-12 design. Dedicated members of this team are involved in organizations including Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association, Nebraska Council of School Administrators, and the Association for Learning Environments, to stay current with evolving pedagogy trends and challenges faced by administrators, teachers, and students.

Founded and headquartered in Lincoln, Neb., our firm has been fortunate to become a trusted partner to numerous school districts across the state. Through these relationships we have successfully completed hundreds of projects over the course of 80 years, and have developed a strong understanding of how school district needs constantly evolve. For that reason, it is important to analyze existing conditions of facilities; identify and prioritize facility needs; develop multiple options based on feasibility and available funding; and ultimately chart a course through master planning for the future to help ensure school districts can continue supporting their communities for years to come.

Thoughtful, Evidence-Based Master Planning

Our firm finds PK-12 school projects to be among the most rewarding work we do, as they present an opportunity to strengthen our communities through impactful education. We strongly believe that advanced teaching and learning is dependent upon well designed facilities where achieving safety, wellness, and growth are key considerations. Typically, these basic fundamental needs are identified early in master planning – taking into consideration facility deficiencies that prevent realization of these goals. Through a clear, interactive, and thorough process our specialized PK-12 design team develops actionable master planning roadmaps that lead to the best outcomes for dynamic teaching and learning. Our planning process is rooted in holistic viewpoints that consider not only the physical nature of the district's facilities and space needs, but mission-driven components including quality of education, student culture, and staff retention.

Our structured, evidence-based process utilizes our full-service approach to help ensure thorough planning for a district's future by reviewing not only the building architecture but also site considerations, and structural, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical infrastructure condition, capacities, and capabilities. Our process encompasses an interactive visioning session with district and community stakeholders to establish quantifiable goals, in-depth facility tours and condition assessments, and review of relevant data, including space utilization and enrollment shifts. Multiple plan iterations are tested and refined with stakeholders, culminating in a final packaged report of prioritized recommendations supported by diagrams, renderings, and narratives.

Master Planning Applied

David City Public Schools

Over the past two decades, Clark & Enersen has completed 21 projects with the David City Public Schools District, which stemmed from the development of a master plan. The goal of the master plan was to identify facility needs of the district based on the district's mission and vision for their future. Through a highly collaborative process involving in-depth stakeholder discovery interviews and facility analyses our team delivered a comprehensive, 20-year master plan that included a series of phased facility improvements for projects that could be completed without the need of a bond referendum.

The first phase included an 11,000-square-foot addition featuring a new entrance for the competition gymnasium, a commons area with concessions, and a weight room. Subsequent phases included an elementary school addition; an existing high school facility assessment; and a 31,236-square-foot addition to the high school to provide classrooms and administration space. David City Public Schools District has identified several phases of projects -- each phase is reviewed and updated to meet the current needs of the district as they advance through the 20-year master plan. Future planned phases include a gymnasium, locker room, wrestling, family consumer science, and pre-K additions, as well as a classroom addition or renovations, a bus barn, and additional parking.

"The staff at Clark & Enersen have always been professional and easy to work with, making them a great partner," says Dr. Chad Denker, superintendent of David City Public Schools. *"They understand that their goal is to design a project that helps us improve the learning environment for students and staff and prepares us for future success in both academic and activity settings."*



Photo Caption: David City Public Schools space planning axonometric.



Photo Caption: David City Public Schools Activities Entrance in David City, Nebraska.

District OR-1 Public Schools

Another example of master planning resulting in successful projects is represented by our firm providing planning and design services to District OR-1. Clark & Enersen provided pre-bond design services for two bonds in 2015 and 2022, both of which successfully passed for a total of $34.4 million in funding, resulting in numerous improvements to Bennet Elementary School and Palmyra Jr./Sr. High School. Additionally, the Village of Palmyra and District OR-1 received a substantial private donation, and our firm provided design services for a new athletics complex with a football field, track, concession and restrooms, baseball field, walking trail, as well as improvements to the existing city park.

The education-focused projects included multiple additions and renovations to Bennet Elementary School to create a new school entry, classrooms, preschool and kindergarten wing, and expanded kitchen and commons/dining area. Our team also updated building infrastructure throughout. Improvements to Palmyra Jr./Sr. High School included the demolition of a wing built in 1935 to accommodate a new agricultural career center addition, family consumer science, information technology classrooms, a competition gym with a fine arts stage, music room, secure visitor entrance, and expanded commons/dining area to provide more space for special events.

Clark & Enersen continues to collaborate with the Village and District OR-1 to make important improvements to the community.

"Clark and Enersen did an excellent job of being present during the pre-bond project planning periods all the way through the completion of the projects," says Michael Hart, superintendent of District OR-1 Public

Schools. *"The consistency and structure of our project team meetings helped assist with proactive planning and resolution of challenges as they occurred. Our team and the Board of Education greatly appreciated the professionalism, attention to detail, and collaboration demonstrated during the projects."*



Photo Caption: District OR-1 Jr./Sr. High School renovated secure entry in Palmyra,

Nebraska. For more information about Clark & Enersen's PK-12 projects, please visit

PK-12 Education - Clark & Enersen or scan the code below.

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Tremco Roofing
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Voss Lighting
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mike.little@vosslighting.com

Wilkins Architecture, Design, Planning
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Kearney, NE 68845
Phone: (308) 237-5787
jsertich@wilkinsadp.com

Nebraska School Administrators & School Board Members,

The Nebraska Coaches Association (NCA) is excited to announce a partnership with Proactive Coaching to bring Coach Bruce Brown's legendary insights about **"The Role of Parents in Education-Based Athletics"** to your school and community. Please see the attached flyer for highlights/focus of the in-person presentation.

NCA Executive Director, Darin Boysen, will begin travel across Nebraska multiple times throughout the 2024-2025 school year to deliver this powerful and passionate message. The NCA, Proactive Coaching and Darin are partnering to bring this message to your school at a **50% discounted rate from the standard Proactive Coaching in-person booking fee.**

Presentation Details:
45-Minute Parent Presentation with One School or Combined Schools
- Single school presentations are recommended but not required
- One presentation = one fee (no additional fee for schools merging)

Audio/Visual Requirements from the Host School:
- Overhead Projector with HDMI Connection
- Screen or Scoreboard Display
- Microphone

Cost – Payable the Day of Presentation:
- Within 75 miles of Lincoln/150 miles Round Trip
  - $750 flat rate
- Beyond 75 miles of Lincoln/150 miles Round Trip
  - $750 flat rate
  - 50 Cents per mile Round-Trip -OR- Cost of a Rental Vehicle/Gas
  - In some cases, a rental car may be cheaper for longer distances
  - Hotel Expense – if needed
- ***Please Note:*** *Working together with other area schools to book separately on consecutive days of the week can greatly save travel and lodging expenses*

The following booklets authored by Bruce Brown will be available for purchase for $5 each (15% discount) after the presentation or ordered by the school in advance:
- *The Role of Parents in Athletics*
- *Playing with Confidence*
- *Life Lessons for Athletes*

Please let us know if you have any questions regarding the presentation or booking a date.
All the best,

Darin Boysen

Darin Boysen
Nebraska Coaches Association

Official Association Endorsements – as of September 1

nebraska coaches association

PROACTIVE COACHING



The NCA & Proactive Coaching partner to bring Coach Bruce Brown's legendary insights about the parent's role in education-based athletics to your school & community.

Book your School's Presentation

Parent Meetings or Special Events

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN EDUCATION-BASED ATHLETICS

PRESENTED BY DARIN BOYSEN, NCA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"Outstanding information, well delivered. There were times I thought he was talking directly to me, which is a sign of a great communicator. I personally feel I'm better today than yesterday as a sports parent because I was able to listen to this message." – Parent & School Board Member

Before the Season

What do Athletes/Kids Really Want?

Releasing Your Son/Daughter to the Experience

Parental Red Flags

During the Game/Event

Modeling Appropriate Behavior

Big Picture

One Instructional Voice

After the Game/Event

Time & Space

Confidence Building

Relationship Building

Six Powerful Words

NEBRASKA COACHES ASSOCIATION
500 Charleston St, Ste 2, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508
402-310-5472 | darin@ncacoach.org

Official Association Endorsements as of September 1

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Jeff Bundy, Office Manager
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Legislative Contacts

U.S. Senators

Deb Fischer

Pete Ricketts

U.S. House of Representatives

Don Bacon

Mike Flood

Adrian Smith

Nebraska Governor

Jim Pillen

NE State Senators

Bob Andersen, Dist 49

John Arch, Dist 14

Christy Armendariz, Dist 18

Beau Ballard, Dist 21

Carolyn Bosn, Dist 25

Eliot Bostar, Dist 29

Tom Brandt, Dist 32

Tom Brewer, Dist 43

John Cavanaugh, Dist 9

Machaela Cavanaugh, Dist 6

Robert Clements, Dist 2

Stan Clouse. Dist 37

Danielle Conrad, Dist 46

Wendy DeBoer, Dist 10

Barry DeKay, Dist 40

Myron Dorn, Dist 30

Robert Dover, Dist 19

George Dugan, Dist 26

John Fredrickson, Dist 20

Dunixi Guereca, Dist 7

Bob Hallstrom, Dist 1

Ben Hansen, Dist 16

Brian Hardin, Dist 48

Rick Holdcroft, Dist 36

Jana Hughes, Dist 24

Megan Hunt, Dist 8

Teresa Ibach, Dist 44

Mike Jacobson, Dist 42

Margo Juarez, Dist 5

Kathleen Kauth, Dist 31

Loren Lippincott, Dist 34

Dan Lonowski, Dist 33

Dan McKeon, Dist 41

Terrell McKinney, Dist 11

Glen Meyer, Dist 17

Mike Moser, Dist 22

Dave Murman, Dist 38

Jason Prokop, Dist 27

Dan Quick, Dist 35

Jane Raybould, Dist 28

Merv, Riepe, Dist 12

Victor Roundtree, Dist 3

Rita Sanders, Dist 45

Tony Sorrentino, Dist 39

Ashlei Spivey, Dist 13

Tonya Storer, Dist 43

Jared, Storm, Dist 23

Paul Strommen, Dist 47

Brad Von Gillern, Dist 4

Dave Wordekemper, Dist 15

NRCSA Programs

New Leaf Teletherapy

Planning Support Service

Scholarship and Awards Programs

Superintendent Search Service

USBank OneCard Program

NRCSA Rural Community Schools Association
440 S 13th St, Suite B
Lincoln, NE 68508

www.nrcsa.net *www.twitter.com/NRCSA1980* *www.facebook.com/nrcsahome/*

SEPT 2026

NASB BOARD NOTES

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FROM THE NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

NASB Nebraska Association of SCHOOL BOARDS

Leadership | Innovation | Vision | Engagement | #liveNASB

2,000,000 Nebraskans | 329,000 Students | 1,700 Locally Elected School Board Members | 260 Member Districts/ESUs | ONE NEBRASKA

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This Month In ... Photos





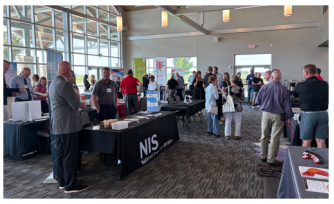












The NASB provides programs, services, and advocacy to strengthen public education for all Nebraskans. Learn more at www.NASBonline.org

THIS MONTH IN ...

A quick snapshot of the various programs, services, support and events NASB has planned for its members in the coming month!

Leadership Innovation Vision Engagement

https://members.nasbonline.org/

ADVOCACY & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS ... With the November election roughly 6 weeks away, get to know who you're voting for at our Candidates page within the NASB GR section of our website. Keep tabs with our GR page as interim hearings are being scheduled as well. Stay engaged. Share your stories. Call Colby & Matt any time!

ALICAP ... Reminder to ALICAP Members, All 2026-27 annual contribution payments are due September 30th. ALICAP's Membership has grown to 235 schools/ESUs. Let's make the 2026-27 year a great one!!!

AWARDS OF ACHIEVEMENT ... Congratulations to all the award recipients from the 2025-26 points year. At our recent Area Membership Meetings, we were able to recognize numerous individuals and boards with awards including six Level X Awards, thirteen Board of Excellence Awards, and two President's Board Awards. See Page 10 for a rundown!

BOARD LEADERSHIP ... Check out "At the Board Table" on Page 4 to learn about all things Board Leadership!

EDUCATION LEADERSHIP SEARCH SERVICE ... Is your district or ESU facing a leadership vacancy? Are you an applicant considering a specific position or two? We can prepare a proposal to outline the steps of a search process, answer questions about the process or talk to you about the vacancies we are facilitating. Give Shari a call.

ENERGY PURCHASING ... Recent news reports indicate Nebraska, and the USA, could be facing a Winter influenced by a strong Super El Nino, which may bring unusual weather patterns and increased demand for natural gas. NJUMP and CJUMP have been working on behalf of participating school districts to purchase natural gas in preparation for the uncertainty ahead. Through collective purchasing, participating schools can save time and resources while helping provide greater predictability in their natural gas costs. Stay tuned for more information from NASB about NJUMP and CJUMP as we prepare for the winter ahead.

GALLUP STRENGTHS ... Your Gallup strengths (talents) shape how you learn best. With **Responsibility** in the top of your Gallup strengths, you may feel pulled toward activities that come with a commitment to deliver. An obligation you have taken on may give you the best opportunity for rapid learning. Traction shows up when what you promised and what you can deliver move closer together.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT ... Thank you to everyone we have seen at the Area Membership Meetings! What a great opportunity to network, learn, meet vendors, and receive honors. We have one more left in Fremont this week. September has been busy with district visits to: Leyton, Banner County, Potter-Dix, Maywood, Hayes Center, Superior, Silver Lake, Kenesaw, and Harvard. Excited to see more of you at Labor Relations the end of this month, and of course, the State Education Conference!

POLICY SERVICES ... Policy serves as the foundation for effective governance, but strong systems require more than adoption alone. To learn more about what the NASB Policy Support Service offers the board and superintendent contact Lindsey at **lheadrick@NASBonline.org** or Marcia at **mherring@NASBonline.org** or Josh at **jwall@NASBonline.org**. The updated service offers a manual authored by Perry Law Firm, integration into SPARQ Online Publishing, and so much more.

QUORUMS ... Periodically, questions arise when a quorum of a school board attends an NASB workshop, convention, or other educational event. **Is that allowed under the Nebraska Open Meetings Act?** Yes. Nebraska Statute § 84-1410 specifically exempts travel to and attendance at workshops, conferences, and similar events from the definition of a meeting, even when a quorum of the board is present. The important limitation is that board members should not use the occasion to discuss or take action on business that is specifically related to their own school district. Attend, learn, network, and enjoy the opportunity - but save your district's business for a properly noticed board meeting!

TECHNOLOGY ... Negotiations season is here! If you are a new superintendent or someone who needs a refresher, please don't hesitate to reach out to Darion to schedule a training. Join Darion at the Labor Relations Conference as well on September 30 from 9:45 to 10:45 AM in Regents A for his session, "Utilizing Your Data to Facilitate Successful Staff Negotiations." Darion will share how utilizing your data can help support informed and successful staff negotiations.

TRAINING, NETWORKING, ENGAGEMENT & EVENTS

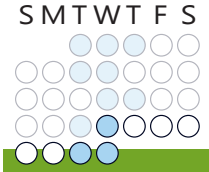


Leadership Innovation Vision Engagement #liveNASB

https://members.nasbonline.org/events

JOIN US For the

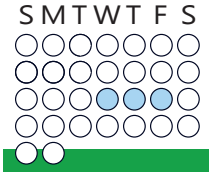
To register for an NASB event, click on the 'My Membership' link, then navigate to the 'Events' dropdown and select 'Register'.
If you do not have an email and password to log in or have forgotten it, please contact NASB at 402-423-4951 for assistance.



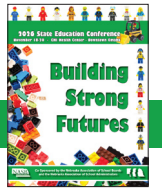
SEPTEMBER

Area Membership Meeting - Wednesday, September 23 - Fremont

Labor Relations - September 29-30 - Lincoln

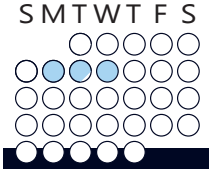


NOVEMBER



State Education Conference - November 18-20 - Omaha

Registration is now Open!

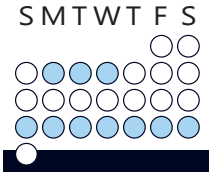


DECEMBER



New Board Member Workshops (2026)

Monday, December 7 - Ainsworth, Alliance & Kearney
Tuesday, December 8 - O'Neill
Wednesday, December 9 - Ogallala & Beatrice





New Board Member Workshops (2027)

Tuesday, January 5 - McCook & Wayne
Wednesday, January 6 - Hastings & Bellevue

2027 Legislative Issues Conference - January 24-25, 2027 - Lincoln ... JOIN US!

School Board Member Week in Nebraska - January 24 to 30!

NASB Nebraska Association of School Boards — Better for Being There

All Dates & Locations Tentative & Subject to Change

AT THE BOARD TABLE

Leadership Innovation Vision Engagement #liveNASB

NASB Nebraska Association of SCHOOL BOARDS

2,000,000 Nebraskans 329,000 Students 1,700 Locally Elected School Board Members 260 Member Districts/ESUs ONE NEBRASKA

YOUR NASB BOARD LEADERSHIP UPDATE

https://members.nasbonline.org/board-leadership

2026

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING AGENDA TEMPLATE

Board Presidents and Superintendents: Please check your inbox for the **[sample] October/November Board Meeting Agenda** that was emailed to you on Wednesday, September 15, 2026, from **shiggins@NASBonline.org**. The agendas are aligned with the NASB Annual Board Calendar. If you have any questions or would like the email resent, please contact Stacie at 402-209-1608.

NASB POLICY SERVICE PARTNERS: PERRY LAW FIRM & SPARQ DATA

Interested in learning more about the NASB Policy Manual/authored by Perry Law Firm and Sparq Online Publishing? Reach out to:

Lindsey - **lheadrick@NASBonline.org** Marcia - **mherring@NASBonline.org** Josh - **jwall@NASBonline.org**

NASB NEGOTIATIONS RESOURCE

Collective Bargaining and Negotiations
Collective bargaining is an important responsibility of the board. Negotiations involve more than determining salaries and benefits; they require the board to understand:

- **What must be negotiated?**
- **What remains a management decision?**
- **How good-faith bargaining works.**
- **What happens when the board and bargaining unit cannot reach an agreement?**

To learn more about collective bargaining and negotiations, scan the QR code to access the NASB Negotiations Resource.

NASB NEW BOARD MEMBER WORKSHOP SCHEDULE - JOIN US!

2026	Community/Site	Registration Deadline
Monday, December 7	Ainsworth - Alliance- Kearney	Tuesday, December 1
Tuesday, December 8	O'Neill	Tuesday, December 1
Wednesday, December 9	Ogallala - Beatrice	Tuesday, December 1
2027	**Community/Site**	**Registration Deadline**
Tuesday, January 5	McCook - Wayne	Wednesday, December 23
Wednesday, January 6	Hastings - Bellevue	Wednesday, December 23



For more information about **NASB Board Leadership Services**, including: Board Retreats, Strategic Planning, Community Engagement and Alignment, Online Survey Services/Superintendent Evaluation, Board Self-Assessment, Board Resources, Communication Support Services or Board Governance publications, please contact:

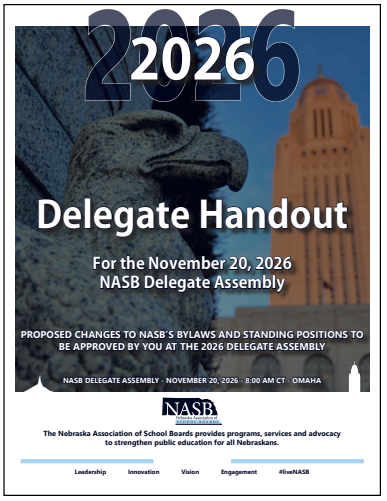
Marcia Herring - Katie Corfield - Stacie Higgins - Ben Anderjaska
Stephanie Summers - Avary Pansing-Brooks - Josh Wall - Galina Slobonyuk

YOUR 'DELEGATE HANDOUT' IS NOW POSTED

Leadership Innovation Vision Engagement #liveNASB

https://members.nasbonline.org/government-relations/nasb-advocacy-handbook

The **NASB Delegate Handout,** containing proposed revisions to the standing positions for consideration at the 2026 Delegate Assembly, has been posted on the NASB website. To better prepare you and your board's voting representative for the Delegate Assembly, please download at the link above, review, and bring this Handout with you to Omaha.



This year's Delegate Assembly will take place ***Friday, November 20, at 8:00 AM***, in conjunction with the State Education Conference, at the CHI Health Center - downtown Omaha. All items within the **Delegate Handout** will be considered by the Delegate Assembly.

If you haven't already, each board should select one board member to represent the district or ESU as the voting delegate, although multiple members from each board may attend. As a school board member, this is YOUR chance to be heard and help craft the 2027 legislative and leadership initiatives for NASB.

This year's agenda includes:

- Who Is Your Delegate?
- Key Legislative Dates & Resources
- Advocacy & Engagement - What is Your Role?
- Your 2026 NASB Legislation Committee
- Your 2027-28 State Senators & Candidates
- Bylaws Relating to the 2026 Delegate Assembly
- Your Proposed NASB Standing Positions
- Your NASB Standing Positions
- Delegate Assembly Rules of Procedure
- Parliamentary Procedure for Delegates

"GOVERNMENT IS RUN BY THE PEOPLE WHO SHOW UP"

ONE DISTRICT/ESU. ONE VOTE.

MAKE SURE YOUR DISTRICT OR ESU VOICE IS HEARD!

If you have questions, you may reach us at 402-423-4951

MARK YOUR CALENDARS - KEY LEGISLATIVE DATES FOR 2026-2027

November 3, 2026 - Statewide General Election
November 20, 2026 - Delegate Assembly
January 6, 2027 - Legislative Session Begins (90-Day)
January 20, 2027 - Day 10: All bills must be introduced
January 24, 2027 - NASB Legislation Committee Meeting
January 24-25, 2027 - Legislative Issues Conference ... JOIN US!
January-February - Committee Hearings take place
Mid-February - Priority Bills are identified
April 25-28 - Federal Advocacy Fly-In - Washington, DC
June 4, 2027 - Final Day of the Session
July 1 - Legislative Proposals for the 2028 Session Due
All dates subject to change.

LR 455 - TEACHER RECRUITMENT & RETENTION STUDY

https://members.nasbonline.org/government-relations

Members: Linked on the NASB GR page is the final report of LR 455 introduced by Senator Margo Juarez examining Teacher Recruitment and Retention. NASB was able to participate in roundtable discussions that resulted in this study.



LOOKING FOR YOUR NEXT LEADER? START WITH NASB

Leadership Innovation Vision Engagement #liveNASB

https://members.nasbonline.org/elss



One of the most important responsibilities of a school board member is hiring and evaluating your ESU Administrator or Superintendent. This fall is already shaping up to be an active one. While boards strive to retain effective leaders for as long as possible, leadership transitions are inevitable. As retirements are announced and leadership transitions begin, it's important to know who you can turn to for guidance and support. NASB can provide expert guidance.

At NASB, leadership searches are a collaborative effort. Our staff and consultants bring expertise in leadership searches, board development, communications, marketing, and school law to provide a professional, well-managed process from start to finish. We work closely with each member district/ESU to customize the search to your unique needs, providing support, from the perspective of a board member, every step of the way.

The process begins with a Leadership Profile, developed with input from the Board of Education. This profile identifies the areas applicants should be experienced in, as well as qualities and leadership characteristics the board is seeking. It becomes a valuable tool throughout the search, helping shape interview questions, compare candidates, and guide conversations during a post-hire retreat.

To attract highly qualified candidates, NASB advertises through the typical channels, but is also able to draw on an extensive professional network, including our membership in the National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers (NASS). Shari Becker, Director of the Education Leadership Search Service and Past Chair of NASS, maintains direct relationships with 39 state school board associations. This network expands our national reach and strengthens our ability to identify candidates and conduct thorough reference checks. In addition, applications are submitted through an online platform shared with 14 other states, providing national visibility for each search.

NASB staff carefully screen every applicant using a detailed protocol, ensuring the board receives a clear picture of each candidate's experience, qualifications, and leadership qualities. Candidate information is presented to the board in both open and closed sessions as appropriate.

Our commitment doesn't end when your new leader is hired. Being a member district allows you access to any of our staff members specializing in various areas to provide support to the board or your new leader as you continue to navigate the new relationship and build trust. NASB can also provide a transition retreat, transition materials, and a board retreat once the new leader is in place.

If you anticipate a leadership vacancy, it's never too early to start the conversation. **Let NASB help you navigate the search process and identify the leadership fit for your district or ESU.**



For information about the application process or to request a proposal, contact:

Shari Becker
Director, Education Leadership Search Service
402-423-4951 - **sbecker@NASBonline.org**

NASB SEARCH MISSION STATEMENT

Through a collaborative working relationship with the Board of Education and district, NASB Education Leadership Search Service ensures a highly professional search process designed to attract the very best applicants, and bring credit to the board for the manner in which the search is conducted.

JOIN US AT LABOR RELATIONS - SEPTEMBER 29-30

Leadership Innovation Vision Engagement #liveNASB



https://members.nasbonline.org/events

2026 Labor Relations - September 29-30 - Embassy Suites – Lincoln

Tuesday, September 29 - Preconference & Social
The ABCs of Negotiations with The Perry Law Firm
7:00 - 9:00 PM - Join us for the conference social at the Bierhaus Rooftop Bar (151 N. 8th Street in the Haymarket).
Sponsored by BVH Architecture and Hausmann Construction

Wednesday, September 30 - Keynote & Concurrent Sessions
Choosing to Care: How Curiosity Creates Community in the Workplace with James Robilotta

Concurrent Session Topics Include: Wages and Payment Collection; Negotiations and Arrays; Communication in Labor Relations; School Retirement Plan; EHA Health Care Member Support; HR Hot Topics; Legal Updates; Workers Comp; FLSA; Federal Labor Case Law; Superintendent Role in Board Relations; And more!

For more information and to register go to **https://members.nasbonline.org/events/labor-relations-conference**

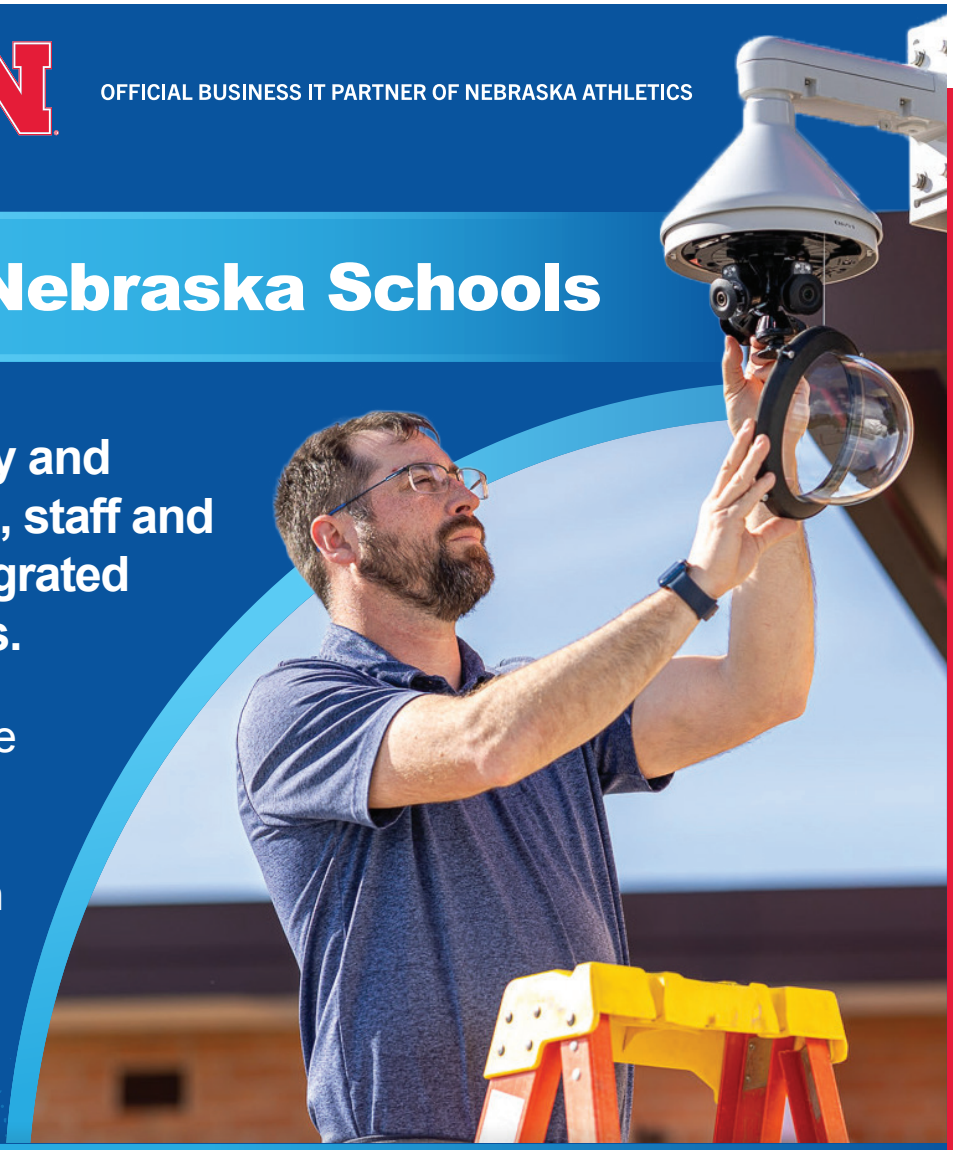
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BUILDING STRONG ... MODERATORS, STUDENTS & MORE

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https://members.nasbonline.org/events/state-education-conference

November 18-20 - CHI Health Center Omaha







DID YOU KNOW?

Registration is OPEN!

Hotel room reservations open at 10:00 AM Central Time on Wednesday, September 30!

Donnie Campbell, the coach who inspired the Ted Lasso character is our opening Keynote!

Breakout sessions will be 45 minutes instead of 60 this year!

Hamish Brewer is our Thursday luncheon keynote. Hamish will share his "Be Relentless" message!

We have 3 Super Sessions!

- Hot Topics with Karen & Jim
- A Listening Session with Members of the State Board of Education
- School Finance Review Commission Update

Danny Steele, our closing keynote speaker will teach us all about school culture!

Vendors will be at Conference on Thursday & Friday this year!

- Exhibitor Reception will be held Thursday, November 19 from 5:00 – 6:30 PM





We Need Your Help!

CLASSROOM SHOWCASE This is an opportunity for students and teachers to demonstrate projects and programs that reflect the integration of technology in curriculum. The Classroom Showcase is scheduled for 8:00 – 11:30 a.m., Friday, November 20. Contact Jackie Ediger **executivedirector@netasite.org** with questions or to sign up.

STUDENT VOICES Nominate a student from your district to participate in the panel discussion where they can offer their perspective on a variety of issues. Our goal is to include students from all levels of High School achievement and participation. We would love to see some students that will pursue a 2-year degree, some that may enter the Military or workforce after graduation, in addition to those who plan to pursue a 4-year degree. Special consideration will be given to nominees who have overcome obstacles to be successful. This breakout session will take place Thursday, November 19 from 2:00 to 2:45 PM. Visit the State Conference link above to download the nomination form. Email nominations to Sharon at **sendorf@NASBonline.org** by October 1.

CALL FOR MODERATORS Board members, superintendents, and administrators are invited to serve as breakout session moderators Thursday and Friday. Please email Sharon by October 1, if you would be interested in helping. All volunteers will receive 5 award points toward their Awards of Achievement. Thanks in advance for your help!

LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATE RESOURCES PRIOR TO NOVEMBER

Leadership Innovation Vision Engagement #liveNASB

https://members.nasbonline.org/government-relations/candidate-questionnaires-videos

HELD 6 MEET & GREETS INCLUDING LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS 2, 6, 20, 30, 32, 38 41, AND SBOE DISTRICT 5

COLBY HAS HAD 1-ON-1'S WITH 19 CANDIDATES:

LD 2: DEAN HELMICK & CAITLIN KNUDSON
LD 6: PATRICK LEAHY
LD 8: ERIN FEICHTINGER
LD 10: CINDY JOHNSON
LD 12: CHRISTY KNOOR
LD 14 SUANN WITT
LD 16: TED JAPP & CINDY CHATT
LD 18: JESS GOLDONI & TAYLOR ROYAL
LD 22: DAWSON BRUNSWICK
LD 28: PATTY PANSING BROOKS
LD 30: CALLY IDEUS
LD 32: MARK SCHOENROCK
LD 36: DARIN TOMPKINS
LD 38: TIM ANDERSON, JANELL EHRKE
SBOE 5: MICHAELA CONWAY
*DOES NOT INCLUDE MEET & GREETS

32 CANDIDATE SURVEYS COMPLETED
SEE THE LINK ABOVE

NASB Nebraska Association of School Boards

VISIT OUR

2026 legislative candidate page



Check out

CANDIDATE THOUGHTS ON:
- LOCAL CONTROL
- SCHOOL FUNDING
- THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN NEBRASKA
- EDUCATIONAL WORKFORCE
- MANDATES

AND

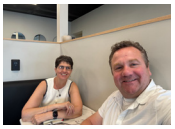
CANDIDATE MEET & GREET
DATES AND LOCATIONS

WWW.NASBONLINE.ORG













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A midwest nonprofit providing at-cost security services for Nebraska schools:

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- Incident Response Plans
- Policy Development
- Fractional Information Security Officer
- Penetration Testing
- Tabletops and Exercises

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filamentsecurity.org

TEACHER/ADMINISTRATOR NEGOTIATIONS MADE EASY

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https://www.sparqdata.com/

GAIN ACCESS TO THE LARGEST COLLECTION OF BARGAINING DATA, NEGOTIATED AGREEMENTS, REPORTS, AND REAL-TIME CALCULATIONS AND WORKFLOWS DESIGNED TO ANALYZE THE IMPACT OF CHANGES TO BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION WHEN BARGAINING.

The negotiating season is here, and it's time to start preparing you and your district for what's to come at the bargaining table. With Sparq Negotiations, you have real-time access to the largest, most comprehensive negotiating tool in the state of Nebraska. Salaries are a top expenditure every year, so make the negotiations process successful and easy!



Sparq Negotiations provides you the tools necessary to stay competitive in your array, remain ahead of the game, and achieve successful negotiations. It provides the resources and knowledge to gain a strategic advantage in all stages of the negotiation process by providing real-time, quick-change calculations while comparing peer districts in your array, which saves tremendous amounts of time in the process! Say goodbye to the days of manual calculation with this user-friendly platform. Schools can run studies of any school in the state and see the comparison reports from other districts. This allows you and your board to work from more accurate data to settle negotiations fair and fast!

To learn more, schedule a demo, and see how Sparq Negotiations can make your life easier, contact Darion Miller at 402-817-0120, or email dmiller@sparqdata.com today!

2026 AREA MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Leadership - Training - RECOGNITION - Networking - Vision

Cody-Kilgore - Gering - Kearney - Nebraska City - South Sioux City - Omaha - North Platte - York - Fremont

https://members.nasbonline.org/programs-services/awards-of-achievement-program

Congratulations to all the award recipients from the 2025-26 points year. At our recent Area Membership Meetings, we were able to recognize numerous individuals and boards with awards.

Six Level X Recipients

Stephanie Summers - David City Public Schools
Sandy Noffsinger - Dundy County Stratton Schools
Brenda Sherman - ESU 3
Jim Vlach - Lyons-Decatur Northeast
Dan Scheer - St. Paul Public Schools
John Mandl - Stanton Community Schools



Two President's Board Award Recipients

Gretna Public Schools
Ralston Public Schools



Thirteen Board of Excellence Award Recipients

Ainsworth Community Schools - Bloomfield Community School District - Brady Public Schools
Cedar Bluffs Public Schools - Cross County Community Schools - ESU 3
Hershey Public Schools - Norris School District 160 - Palmer Public Schools
Randolph Public Schools - Seward Public Schools - St. Paul Public Schools - York Public Schools



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- Surfacing & VersaCourt
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- Fitness Equipment
- Swings
- Dog Parks
- Shelters & Shades
- Sun Shades
- Temporary Fencing

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Andy Forney
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Public Finance
402-392-7988
aforney@dadco.com

Building a Better Future with Nebraska's Public Finance Partner

D.A. Davidson & Co. has long been a leader in innovative debt financing for school districts. What we're most proud of are the relationships we've nourished and the strong community improvements that are made as a result.

Our public finance professionals take a personal interest and a hands-on approach, carrying our deals from start to finish. Because you deserve solutions tailored to fit you.

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- Tax Anticipation / Construction Notes
- Lease-Purchase Financing
- QCPUF Bonds
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https://members.nasbonline.org/about-us/affiliate-members

2026 Platinum Level Affiliates - American Fidelity - American Playground and Recreation - BCDM Architects - Boyd Jones Construction BVH Architecture - Clark & Enersen - CMBA - Cannon Moss Brygger Architects - D.A. Davidson & Co. - Diamond Communications - Envise Facility Advocates - Hamilton Business Technologies - Hausmann - Helm Service - Nebraska Liquid Asset Fund - Northland Securities Piper Sandler & Co. - Public Risk Management - Revolution Wraps - Sampson Construction - Sparq Data Solutions - Third Rail Content Wilkins Architecture Design Planning

2026 Gold Level Affiliates - BD Construction, Inc./Kearney - Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska - Carlson West Povondra Architects Chief Construction - Cornhusker International - Darland - DLR Group - JEO Consulting Group, Inc. - Johnson Controls - Lunchtime Solutions MCL Construction - Navitas - One Source | A Verified Credentials Company - Outdoor Recreation Products

2026 Silver Level Affiliates - Creative Sites, LLC - UNO Innovative Learning-Centric Initiatives

2026 Bronze Level Affiliates - Ameritas Investment Company, LLC - Community Building Solutions - Cunningham Recreation Fisher Tracks, Inc. - James D. Watts & Associates, PC - Mueller Robak Schaefer Hruza & Hassebrook - National Insurance Services Nebraska Safety Center - Opaa! Food Management of Nebraska - Trane U.S. Inc. - Twotrees Technologies, LLC

YOUR 2026 NASB AFFILIATES

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YOUR 2026 PLATINUM AFFILIATES

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prm PUBLIC RISK MANAGEMENT INCORPORATED
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To advertise in Board Notes or become an NASB Affiliate contact Matt Belka at mbelka@NASBonline.org or 402-423-4951

YOUR 2026 NASB AFFILIATES

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View the full, detailed listings with contact info at:
https://members.nasbonline.org/about-us/affiliate-members

ACCOUNTING

James D. Watts & Associates, PC

ARCHITECTS

BCDM Architects
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

BVH Architecture
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

Carlson West Povondra Architects
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

Clark & Enersen
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

CMBA Architects
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

DLR Group
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

JEO Consulting Group, Inc.
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

Wilkins Architecture Design Planning
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

BUILDING CONTROLS AND BUILDING SERVICES

Helm Service
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

Navitas
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

BD Construction
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

Boyd Jones
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

Chief Construction
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

Darland
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

Hausmann Construction
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

MCL Construction
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

Sampson Construction
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

ENERGY SERVICES

Community Building Solutions

Facility Advocates
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

Johnson Controls, Inc.
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

Trane U.S. Inc.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Ameritas Investment Company

D.A. Davidson & CO.
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

Nebraska Liquid Asset Fund
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

Northland
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

Piper Sandler
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

FOOD SERVICE

Lunchtime Solutions
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

Opaa! Food Management

INSURANCE SERVICES

American Fidelity
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

National Insurance Services

Public Risk Management/ALICAP
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

LEGAL SERVICES

Mueller Robak Schaefer Hruza & Hassebrook

PLAYGROUND/SCOREBOARDS/ SURFACING

American Playground and Recreation
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Creative Sites, LLC
SILVER LEVEL AFFILIATE

PLAYGROUND/SCOREBOARDS/ SURFACING(CONTINUED)

Cunningham Recreation/GameTime

Fisher Tracks, Inc.

Outdoor Recreation Products
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

SAFETY & SECURITY

One Source | A Verified Credentials Company
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

STUDENT SERVICES

UNO Innovative Learning-Centric Initiatives
SILVER LEVEL AFFILIATE

TECHNOLOGY/SOFTWARE

Envise
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

Hamilton
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

Sparq Data Solutions
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

Twotrees Technologies, LLC

TRANSPORTATION PRODUCTS

Cornhusker International
GOLD LEVEL AFFILIATE

Nebraska Safety Center

Revolution Wraps
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

VIDEO CREATION & PRODUCTION

Third Rail Content, Inc.
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WIRELESS CONNECTIVITY SERVICES

Diamond Communications
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

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YOUR NASB BOARD OF DIRECTORS & STAFF

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https://members.nasbonline.org/board-of-directors



Region 1 - Neal Kanel
HTRS



Region 2 - Brenda Sherman
ESU 3



Region 3 - Kyle Fisher
Springfield Platteview



Region 4 - Elizabeth Kumru
Ralston



Region 5 - Shavonna Holman
Omaha



Region 6 - Kimara Snipes
Omaha



Region 7 - Viridiana Almanza
Omaha



Region 8 - Bob Rauner
Lincoln



Region 9 - Mara Krivohlavek
Lincoln



Region 10 - Ed Swotek
Malcolm
NASB Vice President



Region 11 - Jim Vlach
Lyons-Decatur Northeast



Region 12 - Lisa Wagner
Central City



Region 13 - Marilyn Bohn
ESU 10



Region 14 - Steve Koch
Hershey



Region 15 - Allison Sandman
Wauneta-Palisade



Region 16 - Suzanne Sapp
Ashland-Greenwood
NASB Secretary



Region 17 - Michelle Reikofski
Osmond



Region 18 - Susan Ernest
Leyton



Region 19 - Stacy Jolley
Millard
NASB President



At-Large - Lisa Albers
Grand Island



At-Large - Steve Blocher
West Point
NASB Treasurer



At-Large - Patti Gubbels
Norfolk



At-Large - Laurie Kohmetscher
Sandy Creek

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https://members.nasbonline.org/about-us/nasb-staff

John Spatz
Executive Director



Ben Anderjaska
Board Leadership
Engagement Associate



Nikhil Annepu
IT Specialist



Shari Becker
Director of Education
Leadership Search Service



Matt Belka
Director of Marketing,
Communications & Advocacy



Megan Boldt
Associate Executive Director
Director of ALICAP



Craig Caples
Director of Technology



Colby Coash
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Katie Corfield
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Sharon Endorf
Director of
Member Engagement



Lindsey Headrick
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Coord/ALICAP Associate



Marcia Herring
Director of Board Leadership



Stacie Higgins
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Engagement Associate



Galina Slobonyuk
Board Leadership
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Yanita Slobonyuk
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Stephanie Summers
Board Leadership Specialist

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Specialist

Josh Wall
Board Leadership
Engagement Associate

View the full directory of the Board and staff bios at www.NASBonline.org

OCT 2026

NASB BOARD QUICKS

A MONTHLY E-UPDATE OF KEY DATES FROM THE NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

2,000,000 Nebraskans | 329,000 Students | 1,700 Locally Elected School Board Members | 260 Member Districts/ESUs | ONE NEBRASKA

JOIN US *for the*

To register for an NASB event, click on the 'My Membership' link, then navigate to the 'Events' dropdown and select 'Register'.
If you do not have an email and password to log in or have forgotten it, please contact NASB at 402-423-4951 for assistance.
All Dates & Locations Tentative & Subject to Change

Events & Networking - https://members.nasbonline.org/events

Where Will NASBe This Month?*

Beatrice; Elba; Fremont; Harrisburg, PA; Kearney; Lincoln; McCool Junction; Milford; Millard; North Platte; Omaha; Plattsmouth; Shelby Rising City; Sutton; Twin River; and Valentine

For ... Board Retreats, Engagement, Events, Regional & National Meetings, Strategic Planning, and more! ***Items currently scheduled**



S M T W T F S

OCTOBER 2026

OCTOBER



Virtual Candidate Forum w/ Gov. Pillen & Lynne Walz - Wednesday, October 21

S M T W T F S

NOVEMBER 2026

NOVEMBER



State Education Conference - November 18-20 - Omaha



Registration is now Open!

S M T W T F S

DECEMBER 2026

DECEMBER

New Board Member Workshops (2026)



Monday, December 7 - Ainsworth, Alliance & Kearney
Tuesday, December 8 - O'Neill
Wednesday, December 9 - Ogallala & Beatrice

NASBetter for Being There

Nebraska Association of School Boards

NASB provides programs, services, and advocacy to strengthen public education for all Nebraskans. Learn more at www.NASBonline.org

NASB BOARD QUICKS

A MONTHLY E-UPDATE OF KEY DATES FROM THE NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

2,000,000 Nebraskans | 329,000 Students | 1,700 Locally Elected School Board Members | 260 Member Districts/ESUs | ONE NEBRASKA

SMTWTFS

JANUARY 2027

JANUARY



New Board Member Workshops (2027)

Tuesday, January 5 - McCook & Wayne
Wednesday, January 6 - Hastings & Bellevue

2027 Legislative Issues Conference - January 24-25, 2027 - Lincoln ... JOIN US!

School Board Member Week in Nebraska - January 24 to 30!

YOUR 2026 PLATINUM AFFILIATES

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ALICAP
AMERICAN FIDELITY a different opinion
AMERICAN PLAYGROUND & RECREATION
BCDM architects
Boyd Jones
BVH ARCHITECTURE
CLARK & ENERSEN
CMBA ARCHITECTS
D|A DAVIDSON FIXED INCOME CAPITAL MARKETS D.A. Davidson & Co. member SIPC and FINRA
Diamond Communications
envise
Facility Advocates
HAMILTON Business Technologies
Hausmann
Helm
NEBRASKA LIQUID ASSET FUND
northland A First National of Nebraska Company
PIPER | SANDLER
prm PUBLIC RISK MANAGEMENT INCORPORATED
REVOLUTION WRAPS
Sampson Construction
SPARQDATA SOLUTIONS
THIRD RAIL CONTENT
WILKINS ARCHITECTURE | DESIGN | PLANNING

Leadership **Innovation** **Vision** **Engagement** **#liveNASB**