



TO: Roger Breed, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Carol Fichter & Melody Hobson

SUBJECT: Early Learning Connection - Grant to Educational Service Unit #10

Proposed Board Action:

Grant the Commissioner the authority to approve a grant to ESU #10 for the purpose of administration of an Early Learning Connection partnership in the Central region of the state's early childhood professional development delivery system.

Background Information:

The Office of Early Childhood through the Early Childhood Training Center, in concert with the Early Learning Connection regional partnerships, provides the leadership for the state's early childhood professional development system. The grant recipients, seven Educational Service Units, will provide: expanded access to professional development workshops and other activities for early childhood staff across the range of early childhood settings in schools and the community, information and education for parents, public awareness regarding early childhood, coordination and collaboration with other early childhood entities in the region, communication with local, regional and state agency representatives.

These regional entities are designed to support the effectiveness of early childhood professionals/staff in homes, centers, schools and other community based early childhood services in order to provide quality, inclusive environments and settings that promote positive child outcomes. These professional development experiences are intended to also support the implementation of relevant standards contained within Rule 11 Regulations for Early Childhood Education Programs, Rule 51 – Regulations and Standards for Special Education Programs, and Title 391-Child Care Licensing Standards.

Six of the ESU's were awarded continuation grants for 2011-12, approved at the August 11, 2012 Board Meeting. Approval is being sought for a new grant award to Educational Service Unit #10 as this is a newly configured region as defined by the consolidation and restructuring of the state's early childhood professional development partnerships, effective October 1, 2011.

Funding sources: Child Care and Development Funds, IDEA Part C, IDEA Part B-619

Estimated Cost:

Total funded amount: \$91,000

Supporting Documentation Included:

Map of ELC regions	
09.07.11 State Board of Education Work Session Announcement (4/7/11)	2.7-1
Web link for Early Learning Connection http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/elc.html	&
09.08.11 State Board of Education	7.8-1

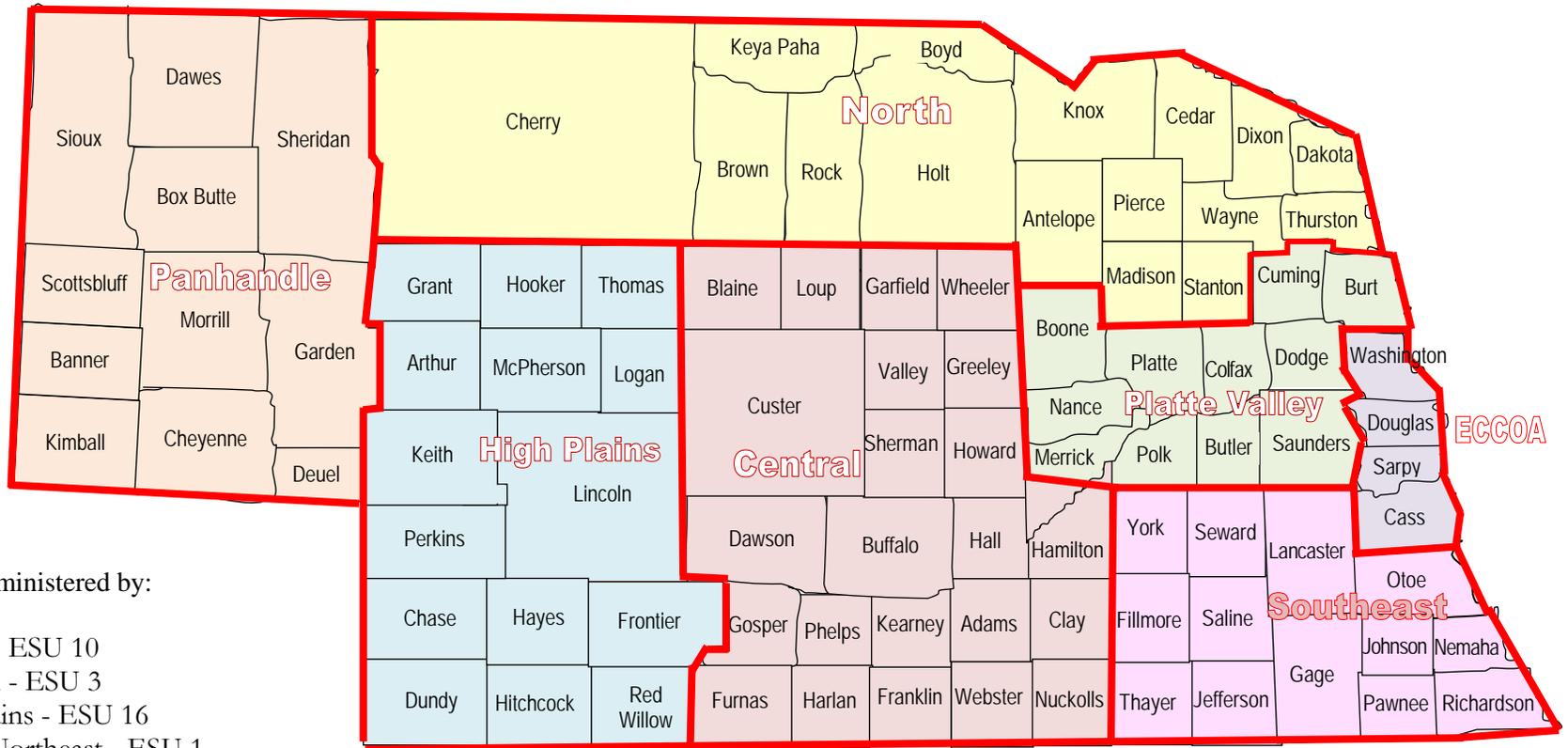
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For Additional Information on this item:

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Early Learning Connection Partnership Regions

(Effective October 1, 2011)



Grant administered by:

- Central - ESU 10
- ECCOA - ESU 3
- High Plains - ESU 16
- North/Northeast - ESU 1
- Panhandle - ESU 13
- Platte Valley - ESU 7
- Southeast - ESU 6

Early Learning Connection - Nebraska's Early Childhood Professional Development System

Announcing Changes in Regional Partnerships



An already successful system of regional partnerships and coalitions, one that is bringing professional development opportunities to those in early childhood, is now achieving new attention and recognition. After several years of expanding opportunities for professional development, anticipated refinements are expected to bring greater continuity and consistency to the statewide system. It is on this strong foundation that we look toward expanded access to a more fully integrated and comprehensive system of professional development for early childhood, known as Nebraska's Early Learning Connection.

The regional partnerships, some currently coordinated with full-time staffing and others with part-time staff, will now all have full-time staff. Effective October 1, 2011, consolidation will redefine boundaries of the current ten regions into seven Early Learning Connection (ELC) regions, each staffed by a full-time coordinator. Each of these seven ELC partnerships will reside within an Educational Service Unit, recognizing the consistency that can be offered through the ESU's infrastructure of technology and its mission to promote continuous adult learning through professional development.

The ELC partnerships are being organized utilizing the boundaries of the Early Childhood Planning Region Teams. Stronger working relationships are anticipated, particularly regarding professional development activities that support effective practices with young children and their families. The attached map highlights the assignments of multiple PRTs to each of the ELC partnerships.

The ELC partnerships will continue to address the needs of the early childhood professionals working in homes, centers, school-based and community-based programs. Greater priority will be given to those evidence-based practices that contribute to quality inclusive environments and that emphasize positive child and family outcomes. The regional ELC coordinators will work closely with state level partners, as facilitated and grant-funded through the Offices of Early Childhood and Special Education at the Nebraska Department of Education.

For more information, contact Carol Fichter, NDE Office of Early Childhood carol.fichter@nebraska.gov or 402 557 6880. (April 7, 2011)