



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

**FROM:** Donlynn Rice, Senior Administrator, Rich Katt CTE Director

**SUBJECT:** McREL Contract

**Proposed Board Action:**

Grant the Commissioner the authority to contract with McREL to conduct an alignment study between Nebraska's new career education standards and Nebraska's academic standards.

**Background Information:**

The Nebraska Department of Education career education staff have been working in partnership with Nebraska secondary and postsecondary career technical education instructors to revise and/or write new career education standards for the sixteen career clusters. This work will be completed this July.

This contract will engage McREL to conduct an alignment or crosswalk study between the career education standards and Nebraska's academic standards to determine points of support or alignment. NDE has received numerous requests for this study to be completed to assist schools in analyzing where support and instruction occurs for the academic standards. This study could also help to increase the academic content of career education courses by identify the alignment of key points of connection between the standards.

**Estimated Cost:**

This contract is for \$47,900.00 paid from Federal Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Act funds.

**Supporting Documentation Included:**

Initial proposal from McREL

Academic Crosswalks for Nebraska Career Education Courses

Scope: Review & develop alignments

McREL will review existing crosswalk alignments, making recommended additions and deletions and providing the rationale for these changes using the MSWord track changes and comments feature. Existing alignments are available in these documents:

- Skilled and Technical services
- Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources

McREL will develop academic crosswalks for the following areas for which standards have been developed:

- Education & Training

- Health Services
- Business, Finance, Marketing
- Law, Public Safety and Security

McREL will develop academic crosswalks for the following areas, once standards have been developed:

- IT
- Arts, A/V, and Communication
- Hospitality and tourism
- STEM
- Human Services and Family Consumer Sciences

Alignment review and development of crosswalks will identify the academic content that best aligns to the content of the Career Education courses and ensure that grade level matches are appropriate (high school courses will be mapped to high school standards; middle school to grades 6–8). For the review of existing crosswalks, McREL’s alignment report will show recommended revisions to alignments in track changes, along with a rationale. For both the existing crosswalks that are to be reviewed, and for the crosswalk documents to be developed, comments will be provided through the use of endnotes where there are noteworthy implications for the alignment. These comments will be listed within a supplementary appendix that makes clear for instructors the nature of these alignments.

In English language arts there will be some over-arching notes that apply to the course as a whole. These include inferences made about which communication skills are required when sample performance indicators use verbs such as summarize, discuss, or describe. Detailed footnotes may be warranted when particular inferences were made about the delivery or assessment of technical content. For example, the sample performance indicator, “Review the history and predict the future of the agribusiness industry” could require research if students were required to gather information about the history of the industry. If the information is provided to students in a text, then reading skills are required. If the information is presented to students orally, then listening skills are required.

In mathematics notes will be added to clarify inferences made, and when the aligned academic benchmark includes specific requirements that are not clear based on the technical standard or Sample Performance Indicators (SPIs). For example, the benchmark “The student will understand fraction, decimal and conversions” is unclear about what types of conversions are required. The SPIs require only that students convert inches and millimeters. In order to align the benchmark to a high school mathematics benchmark, the “conversions” referenced in the technical benchmark must include conversions of area and volume. This inference would be clearly noted in order to clarify alignments.

McREL will provide alignments and notes within the MSWord files provided to McREL for each area and course.

Cost for this work, which includes review of crosswalks to approximately 1,900 sample performance indicators and the development of academic crosswalks for approximately 3,700 indicators: \$47,900.00

### **For Additional Information on this item:**

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