



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

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

SUBJECT: Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education Contract

Proposed Board Action:

Grant the Commissioner the authority to contract with the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) to conduct a research study regarding the ACT Pilot Project.

Background Information:

During the March 8, 2011 meeting, the State Board approved a resolution to support and monitor a three-year pilot of an ACT district choice school-day program for participating school districts beginning in 2012, and to analyze resulting data.

The two major goals of the proposed study are:

- 1) To determine if there is a sufficient correlation between scores on the ACT and the Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) assessments to require all 11th graders to take the ACT as a measure of college readiness, rather than the NeSA assessment, and
- 2) To determine if administering the ACT to all 11th graders in Nebraska's public high schools would increase the college-going rates for Nebraska's public high school graduates, especially for the student groups who, in the past, have been underrepresented among the college-going graduates of the state's public high schools.

Estimated Cost:

It is estimated the cost will be approximately \$100,000.

Supporting Documentation Included:

A Research Proposal for the Nebraska ACT Pilot Project

The Nebraska ACT Pilot Project

For Additional Information on this item:

Roger Breed, roger.breed@nebraska.gov; (402) 471-5020

Evaluation of the ACT Pilot Project Based on College-Going Rates and the Correlation of ACT and NeSA Assessment Scores

A Research Proposal for the Nebraska ACT Pilot Project

Submitted by Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education

October 26, 2012

Introduction

Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) proposes to conduct two statistical studies designed to evaluate the Nebraska ACT Pilot Project based on college-going rates and the correlation of scores on the ACT and the Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) assessment. The CCPE will conduct this research in cooperation with the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) and ACT, Inc.

The major goals of the two proposed studies are:

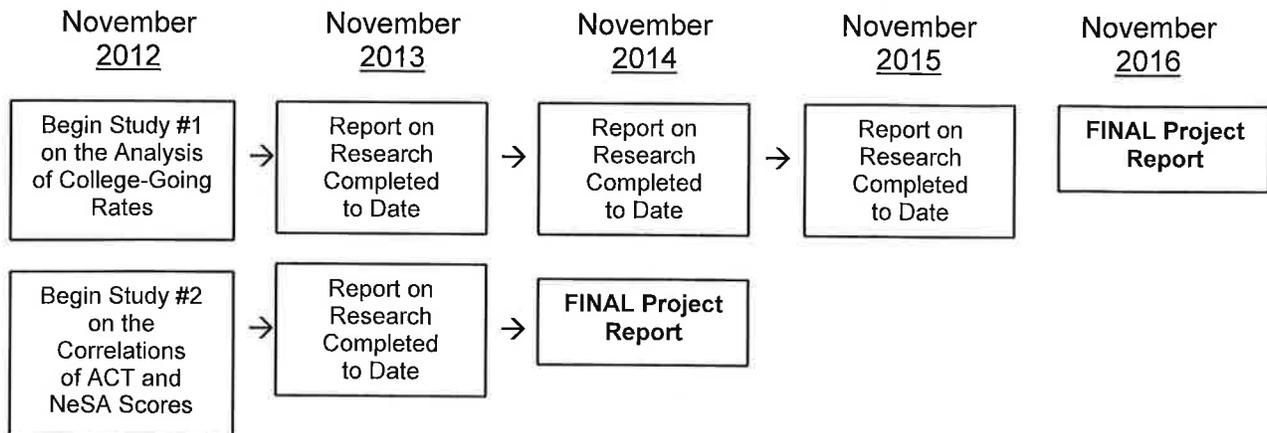
- to determine if administering the ACT to all 11th graders in Nebraska's public high schools would increase the college-going rates for Nebraska's public high school graduates, especially for the student groups who, in the past, have been underrepresented among the college-going graduates of the state's public high schools, and
- to determine if there is a sufficient correlation between scores on the ACT and the Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) assessment to require all 11th graders to take the ACT as a measure of college readiness, rather than the NeSA assessment.

The data required to complete the two studies will be obtained from the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), the National Student Clearinghouse, and ACT, Inc. The CCPE has a long history of work with the Clearinghouse as well as with NDE and ACT, Inc.

All data required for this project will be stored and processed at the Commission offices in a secure database designed to strictly protect student privacy. All reports will be in summary form to further ensure student privacy. It also should be noted that the CCPE has previously received confirmation from the U.S. Department of Education that its operating procedures for processing student-level data comply with FERPA requirements.

The Commission will analyze data and report the findings of the two studies according to the general timeline presented on the next page. All reports will be submitted directly to the Commissioner of Education for distribution to the Nebraska Board of Education.

General Timeline for ACT Pilot Project Research



Research Costs

Summarized by year, the projected costs for the proposed research are as follows:

Year 1: November 2012-November 2013	\$40,733
Year 2: November 2013-November 2014	\$30,451
Year 3: November 2014-November 2015	\$15,200
Year 4: November 2015-November 2016	<u>\$10,416</u>
	<u>\$96,800</u>

Conclusion

The Coordinating Commission looks forward to completing the two research projects described in this proposal. The Commission believes that the reports of these two projects will provide the Commissioner of Education, NDE staff, and the Nebraska State Board of Education with extensive, objective evidence for deciding whether the ACT should be administered to all 11th graders in Nebraska's as a replacement for the NeSA assessment currently administered to all 11th graders or as an additional assessment with state funding.

The Nebraska ACT Pilot Project

Funded by the Nebraska Legislature, the ACT Pilot Project requires all 11th graders in eight selected Nebraska public school districts to take the ACT during a school day in the spring of 2012, 2013, and 2014. During the course of the project, students in the ACT Pilot school districts also are required to take the NeSA assessment in 11th grade. Students may voluntarily take the ACT again at their own expense when they are 12th graders the following year.

As related to this research proposal, the ACT Pilot Project is being conducted to determine if administrating the ACT to all 11th graders in Nebraska's public schools would increase the college-going rate of Nebraska's public high school graduates. Of particular interest is to determine if college-going rates would increase for the groups of students who, in the past, have been underrepresented among the college-going graduates of Nebraska's public high schools. In addition, the ACT Pilot Project is being conducted to determine if there is a sufficient correlation between the scores on the ACT and the NeSA assessment to substitute the ACT for the NeSA assessment that all 11th graders are currently required to take.

The 13 high schools in the eight districts participating in the ACT Pilot Project are as follows:

<u>District</u>	<u>High School</u>
Alliance Public Schools	Alliance High School
Columbus Public Schools	Columbus High School
Gering Public Schools	Gering High School
Hastings Public Schools	Hastings Senior High School
Lincoln Public Schools	Lincoln High School Lincoln Northeast High School Lincoln Southeast High School Lincoln East High School North Star High School Southwest High School
Scottsbluff Public School	Scottsbluff Senior High School
Sidney Public Schools	Sidney High School
South Sioux City Community Schools	South Sioux Senior High School

The following chart summarizes the possible paths of the students in these schools who are being required to take the ACT as 11th graders as they progress over the next two years, assuming that they graduate at or before the end of the 12th grade:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Take the ACT as 11 th graders	Do not retake the ACT as 12 th graders (take the ACT only in the 11 th grade) and graduate from high school	Go to college within one year of high school graduation
		Do not go to college
	Retake the ACT as 12 th graders and graduate from high school	Go to college within one year of high school graduation
		Do not go to college

Administering the ACT to all 11th graders in the participating eight school districts in 2012, 2013, and 2014 is a three-year project. However, as shown in the following diagram, determining the college-going rates of all three classes of high school graduates who took the ACT and NeSA in 11th grade requires an additional two years. Consequently, the time line for the ACT Pilot Project, including the calculation of the college-going rates of the participating schools, extends over a five-year period beginning in 2011-12 and ending in 2015-16.

Time Line for the ACT Pilot Project, including Research on College-Going Rates

