



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

**FROM:** Donlynn Rice, Administrator, Curriculum and Instruction  
Richard Katt, Director CTE, Curriculum and Instruction

**SUBJECT:** Grant to Nebraska Community Foundation, Partnerships for Innovation Fund

**Proposed Board Action:**

Authorize the Commissioner to issue a grant to the Nebraska Community Foundation, Partnerships for Innovation Fund to complete the work of the Nebraska Department of Labor SyNErgy project.

**Background Information:**

The Nebraska State Board of Education granted the Commissioner the authority to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the Nebraska Department of Labor to receive funds associated with this Department of Labor grant at the May 5, 2010 State Board Meeting. This memorandum of understanding (#61000) was signed on July 15, 2010. The grant expires on June 30, 2013.

The Nebraska Department of Education will grant \$199,999 to the Nebraska Community Foundation, Partnerships for Innovation Fund to complete the work of the original Department of Labor grant. The NCF Partnerships for Innovation Fund contracts with Kudor, Inc. to deliver the Nebraska Career Connections Website free of charge to Nebraska schools, community colleges, workforce development offices and other sites as requested. The NDE grant to NCF-PFI has been approved by the Nebraska Department of Labor for the intent of completing the required work as outline in the original grant. As outlined in the Department of Labor Grant, NCF-PFI will work with Kuder, Inc. to make the changes on the Nebraska Career Connections website.

Details of the Department of Labor Grant:

The Nebraska State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) in partnership with the Nebraska Department Of Labor applied for and received a U.S. Department of Labor State Energy Sector Partnership and Training Grant ("syNErgy") in the amount of \$4,839,511.

Grant Title: Building a 'Green' Economy: Nebraska Workforce Development in New and Emerging Industries

Purpose: The mission of this State Energy Sector Partnership (SESP) is part of a greater statewide effort to move Nebraska toward creating economic growth and environmental stainability.

The Nebraska Department of Education and the Career and Technical Education office will be a partner in this grant. NDE's work will be to:

- Develop accessory enhancements to the Nebraska Career Education (NCE) Model aimed at highlighting emerging "green" careers for each career cluster and career pathway depicted in the Model. The NCE Model serves as a visual representation of the organizational structure of courses designed to prepare student for college and career readiness.
- Develop and implement modifications to the Nebraska Career Connections (NCC) online career planning system to reflect the accessory enhancements developed for the NCE Model aimed at highlighting emerging "green" career opportunities. Modifications to the NCC system will serve as a resource for Nebraska businesses, schools, one stop's and others dedicated to providing career guidance information, planning and preparation services across the state.

- Provide statewide professional development activities for both secondary and postsecondary education teachers/instructors, as well as for Nebraska school counselors, detailing accessory enhancements to the NCE Model, as well as the modifications to the NCC system, highlighting newly developed “green” career information.
- Produce instructional resources and/or curricular materials detailing accessory enhancements to the NCE Model, as well as modifications to the NCC system, highlighting newly developed “green” career information. These resources and materials will be disseminated to education professionals across Nebraska in coordination with the aforementioned professional development efforts.

**Estimated Cost:**

The Nebraska Department of Education will grant \$199,999 of Federal dollars from the Department of Labor SyNErgy grant to NCF-PFI.

**Supporting Documentation Included:**

Nebraska State Energy Sector Partnership and Training Grant (“syNErgy”)

The Nebraska State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) in partnership with the Nebraska Department Of Labor applied for and received a U.S. Department of Labor State Energy Sector Partnership and Training Grant (“syNErgy”) in the amount of \$4,839,511.

Grant Title: Building a ‘Green’ Economy: Nebraska Workforce Development in New and Emerging Industries

Purpose: The mission of this State Energy Sector Partnership (SESP) is part of a greater statewide effort to move Nebraska toward creating economic growth and environmental sustainability.

Abstract: The Nebraska State Energy Sector Partnership specifically aligns the Governor’s Workforce Vision with the State’s Energy plan. The plan intends to provide workforce development, business development and public education and outreach in three (3) energy industry sectors that the State of Nebraska is uniquely positioned to provide as a regional and national leader. These sectors include: renewable wind and bio-fuels, and ‘green’ sustainable building technologies. The short-term goal of this program is to preserve and create new jobs in the power generation, transportation, building, agriculture and waste management markets while reducing the environmental footprint of these energy-intensive industries. The long-term goal of this proposed, collective effort is to build a ‘green’ economy in Nebraska, and, to serve as a model for the development of a skilled workforce ready to meet the demands of energy efficiency and renewable energy industries unique to the U.S. Midwest region.

The State of Nebraska will use the SESP grant to ignite and bring together training partners, business partners, workforce developers, leaders and other stakeholders to create a system, which identifies: employer needs; job seeker development needs; training curriculum utilizing the employment exchange system to act as the facilitator between the two.

The grant proposes to form three (3) regionally geographic projects which will develop and implement successful training and employment strategies in the three energy industry sectors. These projects will be located in Western Nebraska for wind, Northeast Nebraska for wind and bio-fuels, and Metro Nebraska for ‘green’ sustainable building technologies

The purpose of the grant is to develop a State Energy Sector Plan that includes the following:

- An aggressive outreach methodology will be used to identify employer needs and acts as a catalyst for curriculum development, as necessary. The end result will be a Nebraska State Energy Sector Strategy that is sustainable and creates a stronger labor market system that benefits employers and workers for years to come.
- An analysis and determination will be made of the targeted populations and their characteristics. Specific strategies and training activities that address the needs and demands of the target populations will be developed.
- Strategies for incumbent workers affected by changes in the energy industry.
- Energy sector strategies for training workers in the targeted energy efficiency and renewable energy industries, and proposed training activities that lead to employment in targeted industry sectors. The strategy will include delivery of training services through local community colleges, secondary and post-secondary education, apprenticeship, customized training and other industry specific training vendors
- For each energy and renewable energy industry, a determination will be made as to which occupations to focus training

resources upon. Guidelines will be set as to how resource opportunities will be distributed geographically and how local input will be incorporated. Project teams will be determined at the executive level as to which agencies will lead different components.

For the purposes of this grant project, NDE will provide the following under a budget limit of \$200,000.

**NDE Description of work:**

1. Dedicate personnel to provide administration, support, and oversight for NDE's portion of the Nebraska State Energy Sector Partnership and Training (syNErgy) Grant.
2. Develop accessory enhancements to the Nebraska Career Education (NCE) Model aimed at highlighting emerging "green" careers for each career cluster and career pathway depicted in the Model. The NCE Model serves as a visual representation of the organizational structure of courses designed to prepare student for college and career readiness.
3. Develop and implement modifications to the Nebraska Career Connections (NCC) online career planning system to reflect the accessory enhancements developed for the NCE Model aimed at highlighting emerging "green" career opportunities. Modifications to the NCC system will serve as a resource for Nebraska businesses, schools, one stop's and others dedicated to providing career guidance information, planning and preparation services across the state.
4. Provide statewide professional development activities for both secondary and postsecondary education teachers/instructors, as well as for Nebraska school counselors, detailing accessory enhancements to the NCE Model, as well as the modifications to the NCC system, highlighting newly developed "green" career information.
5. Produce instructional resources and/or curricular materials detailing accessory enhancements to the NCE Model, as well as modifications to the NCC system, highlighting newly developed "green" career information. These resources and materials will be disseminated to education professionals across Nebraska in coordination with the aforementioned professional development efforts.

**For Additional Information on this item:**

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