



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

FROM: Mary Ann Losh, Administrator Equity & Instructional Strategies

SUBJECT: Contract with American Institutes for Research

**Proposed Board Action:**

Grant the Commissioner the authority to continue to contract with the American Institutes for Research for assistance with implementation of the federally funded Nebraska Positive Behavioral interventions & Supports (NPBiS) grant.

**Background Information:**

In October 2011 NDE was awarded from federal funds a State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) to continue efforts to implement Positive Behavioral interventions and Support in Nebraska for five years. NPBiS schools have requested assistance to strengthen their staff skills in classroom management. There are a limited number of evidence based classroom management programs available. Good Behavior Game (GBG) is an elementary program which has strong evidence to reduce undesired behavior in the classroom and also shows evidence in reducing other risky behaviors as the students get older. It is a universal strategy which has been shown to have direct impact on preventing tertiary level (highly disruptive) behavior. The American Institutes for Research (AIR) is the only source for the GBG approach that is evidence based. The evidence base has been established from several studies including a long term randomized trial. First and second grade students were followed until they were young adults at ages 19-21. In addition, AIR’s GBG training design is grounded in effective practices of coaching and professional development for sustainability. Because of this strong evidence base and interest from PBiS schools GBG has been selected as the first classroom strategy to make available to NPBiS schools.

This proposed contract to American Institutes for Research will provide Year 2 support for:

1. Training, coaching, fidelity checks, and technical assistance for schools working on improving classroom behavior management through implementation of the Good Behavior Game (GBG) an evidence based behavior strategy using evidenced based professional development practices. NDE contracted staff will be trained as coaches in GBG to provide consultative assistance.
2. Presentations at regional NPBiS school meetings on using evidence based practice implemented with fidelity.
3. Technical Assistance to the NPBiS State Leadership Committee on developing strategies to expand and improve PBiS implementation sustainability with fidelity in Nebraska schools.

**Estimated Cost:**

Up to \$99,500.00  
Source: Federal State Personnel Development Grant Funds & Federal SPED Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)

**Supporting Documentation Included:**

INTRODUCTION:  
A network of Nebraska schools implementing NPBiS has been formed. PBiS is a school-wide decision making framework that guides the selection and implementation with fidelity of evidenced based behavioral practice for improving behavioral outcomes for all students. Some of the core principles of PBiS include: setting clear expectations, teaching appropriate behavior, prevention philosophy, tiered support services, use of evidence based practice and data based decision making to inform changes. Overviews of the GBG have been presented to Nebraska PBiS schools. These overviews

have resulted in requests to receive training on this universal strategy. The American Institutes for Research (AIR) is the source for the GBG strategy that is evidence based and uses an evidenced based training model, i.e. qualified trainers, coaches, on-site support, technical assistance, & fidelity measures. AIR, a not-for-profit organization, is recognized nationally for their research work and bringing research into the classroom to improve teaching and learning. The evidence base for GBG has been established from several studies including a long term randomized trial. AIR's model of training and support evolved from the professional development provided to teachers as part of the randomized field trials and established the evidence base for GBG (AIR, 2012). Because of this strong evidence base and Nebraska school interest, this contract would provide year 2 training in GBG to develop pilot school demonstration sites, NPBiS/GBG coaches and training options for other Nebraska PBiS schools.

#### CLASSROOM BASED STRATEGY - GBG

The GBG is a classroom behavior management strategy that helps students be successful at the key demands of the classroom, including: sitting still, paying attention, and completing schoolwork. Through GBG, children work together to create a positive learning environment by monitoring their own behavior as well as that of their classmates. As a strategy but not a curriculum, GBG does not compete with instructional time; teachers infuse GBG into the school day. In GBG classrooms, there is less off-task and disruptive behavior, and teachers have more time to devote to teaching. As tested in randomized field trials, GBG is built around four core elements: integrating classroom rules, team membership, monitoring of behavior, and positive reinforcement to individuals and groups (AIR, 2012). AIR works with schools to develop capacity to implement and sustain GBG with fidelity. Future plans include development of an on-line training option for GBG using the demonstration sites and coaches being developed through this contract for on-site support of the on-line option. An AIR grant application which would provide resources for the development and evaluation of a state-wide implementation of the GBG has been submitted. The implementation would include training and on-line coaching support to accommodate the needs of schools in rural and remote areas of the state. NPBiS Schools have been introduced to this possibility and 19 schools have shown interest by writing letters to AIR supporting a Nebraska partnership in grant proposals to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). NIDA has deemed the grant fundable as resources become available. Another grant proposal is in progress to the Institute for Education Sciences (IES).

#### PRESENTATIONS AT REGIONAL MEETINGS

A major focus of the SPDG program as funded by OSEP (Office of Special Education Programs) is increasing the implementation of evidence based behavioral practices with fidelity using evidence based systemic processes. Regional meetings will be held with all NPBiS principals and team leaders in January 2014. At these regional meetings implementing evidence based practices with fidelity measures using evidence based systemic processes will be presented and discussed. This contract will provide presentations by AIR staff at these meetings.

#### CONSULTATION & SUPPORT

The SPDG provides for collaboration by various stakeholders. The NPBiS State Leadership Committee held 4 meetings to discuss NPBiS features and the use of evidence base practices in the 2012-13 contract year. Dr. Poduska, AIR staff member, facilitated and presented at these meetings composed of NPBiS school staff, parents, higher education staff, and professional development providers and began discussion about the use of evidence based practices and NPBiS. These stakeholders requested further information and discussion at future meetings. This contract would continue to provide support and assistance from Dr. Poduska in continued action planning for implementing NPBiS with sustainability and fidelity at their meetings during the 2013-14 contract year.

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

Call Mary Ann Losh, Administrator, Equity & Instructional Strategies (402) 471-4357 or e-mail [maryann.losh@nebraska.gov](mailto:maryann.losh@nebraska.gov) or Jolene Palmer (402) 471-2944, [jolene.palmer@nebraska.gov](mailto:jolene.palmer@nebraska.gov).