NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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MEMORANDUM

To: Clerk of the Legislature
Education Committee of the Legislature
State Board of Education
School District Superintendents

From: Scott Swisher, Ed.D., Deputy Commissioner of Education

RE: Report of Implementation of Multicultural Education

Date: October 29, 2013

This report is a compilation of the implementation data and the baseline survey data required by the enacting legislation, §79-721 thru §79-723 R.R.S. The attached report consists of the following: 1) Introduction with history of the multicultural statute and development of the survey, 2) Procedure for administration, 3) Results of the survey with comparisons to the 2008 survey, and 4) Recommendations based on the survey results.

1. History of the Multicultural Mandate:

- Multicultural statutes were enacted in the spring of 1992.
- The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) promulgated rules for implementation, outlining the minimum compliance requirements that are now incorporated in Rule 10, Regulations and Procedures for the Accreditation of Schools.
- Each school district developed a plan and timeline for infusing multicultural education into all subject areas of the core curriculum, grade K-12. Those plans were submitted to the Department of Education.
- Plans and timelines were approved for all districts by NDE, and all districts have approved plans and timelines.
- Annually, school districts must submit a multicultural implementation status report for approval to their boards of education.
- The statutes required the Department of Education to design a process for evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of each multicultural education program, including the collection of baseline data. With assistance from the Bureau of Sociological Research, a survey was developed to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of districts' multicultural education plans. The survey was first conducted in the fall of 1997, the second in the spring of 2003, and the third in the spring of 2008. The fourth and most recent survey was conducted in the spring of 2013, and was done in conjunction with the Data, Research, and Evaluation team of the Nebraska Department of Education.

2. **Technical Assistance Provided to Districts:**
   - Since the 2008 survey, ongoing technical assistance has been made available through workshops, seminars, conferences, specialized training programs, and on-site in-services. These are provided in conjunction with educational associations across the state, local school districts, and Educational Service Units (ESUs).
   - Each year the Department of Education multicultural education program coordinator interacts with over 1,000 administrators, teachers, students, and other school staff through these activities. Participants are provided information on curriculum development, classroom practices, program evaluation, and school improvement strategies.
   - Due to a decreasing budget for multicultural activities, the professional development provided to educators by the Department of Education multicultural education program coordinator has been made possible through the extensive development of partnerships. These partnering agencies and organizations supply both financial support and the opportunity to create and present programming. Some of these partner agencies and organizations include, but are not limited to: the Nebraska Middle Level Academy; UNMC Science Education Partnership Award grant program; University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Journalism and Mass Communication; Vision Maker Media (formerly Native American Public Telecommunications); Humanities Nebraska; Midwest Equity Assistance Center from Kansas State University; Educational Service Unit 1; Educational Service Unit 13; Nebraska Council of School Administrators; the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL in Denver, CO; the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs; and the Nebraska Latino American Commission.

3. **2013 Multicultural Education Survey**
   - The 2013 survey was adapted, with permission, from the *Multicultural Awareness Project for Institutional Transformation (MAP IT)* developed in 2003 by the Multicultural Concerns Committee (MCC) and the Center for Research on Developmental Education and Urban Literacy (CRDEUL) at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. MAP IT, and subsequently this survey, is based upon *Diversity Within Unity: Essential Principles for Teaching and Learning in a Multicultural Society* (Banks et al., 2001). Selected questions from the 2008 survey were retained and included in the 2013 survey so that comparisons could be made.
   - A list of eligible participants was generated based on the "Position Assignment Code" submitted by school districts via the Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS) of NDE. From this list, 450 principals and 450 teachers from public and state-operated districts were randomly selected to participate. All Nebraska public and state-operated superintendents were invited to participate in the survey.
   - The anonymous survey was constructed and administered using the SurveyMonkey web application. Surveys were disseminated via an email message from Commissioner Roger Breed on April 17, 2013. Two additional emails were sent on May 24th, 2013 and June 27th, 2013 serving as reminders to complete the survey if they had not done so already. Data collection was closed on the morning of July 1, 2013. The table below displays response rates.

Table 1. Response Rate

	Sample size	Valid emails	Responses	Response rate
Total	**1138**	**1103**	**705**	**63.9%**
Superintendent	238	238	210	88.2%
Principal	450	439	334	76.1%
Teacher	450	426	161	37.8%

[1]SOURCE: Surveying the Effectiveness of Multicultural Education

4. Findings – Comparison to the 2008 Survey

A similar survey was administered to Nebraska public school districts in 2008. While the 2013 survey underwent extensive revision, some of the questions were retained. Below are tables showing comparisons between the 2008 and 2013 surveys.

Table 2. In matters related to multicultural education, overall, I feel this school district is doing a job best characterized as:

	2008				2013			
Demographic	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Total	**3.9%**	**25.2%**	**53.6%**	**17.3%**	**1.5%**	**13.1%**	**60.0%**	**25.4%**
Position type								
Superintendent	0.0%	18.0%	65.7%	16.3%	0.5%	8.6%	65.8%	25.1%
Teacher/Principal	5.4%	27.8%	49.2%	17.6%	2.0%	15.1%	57.3%	25.6%

[1]SOURCE: Surveying the Effectiveness of Multicultural Education

- A higher percentage of respondents in 2013 rated that their school district is doing a "good" or "excellent" job overall in matters relating to multicultural education. Over 85 percent of 2013 respondents indicated "good" or "excellent" compared to 71 percent in 2008. The percentage of respondents reporting "poor" or "fair" is down to 14.6 percent in 2013 from 29.1 percent in 2008.

Table 3. Does your school improvement process include and incorporate multicultural education?

	2008			2013		
Demographic	(DK or NA)	No	Yes	(DK) or (NA)	No	Yes
Total	**16.9%**	**18.7%**	**64.4%**	**14.1%**	**18.1%**	**67.8%**
Position type						
Superintendent	10.3%	14.7%	75.0%	13.9%	16.6%	69.5%
Teacher/Principal	19.2%	20.1%	60.7%	14.1%	18.8%	67.1%

[1]SOURCE: Surveying the Effectiveness of Multicultural Education

- A total of 64.4 percent of respondents in 2008 indicated that their school improvement process includes and incorporates multicultural education, compared to 67.8 percent in 2013.

Table 4. The district curriculum frameworks, guides, or standards incorporate multicultural education.

	2008				2013			
Demographic	Str. Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Str. Agree	Str. Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Str. Agree
Total	**0.7%**	**5.2%**	**67.1%**	**27.0%**	**1.0%**	**4.7%**	**64.2%**	**30.0%**
Position type								
Superintendent	0.9%	2.6%	74.2%	22.3%	0.0%	2.2%	71.4%	26.5%
Teacher/Principal	0.6%	6.2%	64.5%	28.7%	1.6%	5.9%	60.8%	31.7%

[1]SOURCE: Surveying the Effectiveness of Multicultural Education

- Table 4. shows little change between the years but does indicate that over 94 percent of 2013 respondents agree that district curriculum frameworks, guides, or standards incorporates multicultural education.

5. Findings – 2013 Multicultural Education Survey

Cross-tabular Analysis

Participants were asked a number of demographic questions to allow survey responses to be disaggregated and display any discrepancies or patterns between groups. This section will highlight some of the questions that had noticeable differences in response patterns between groups. These differences are of a descriptive nature and further analysis is needed to determine if any of the discrepancies are statistically significant. Please note that these demographic questions were self-reported by the participant and no effort was made to verify the accuracy of the anonymous responses.

Table 5. Are you directly involved in efforts to create a supportive learning environment for students from diverse backgrounds?

Demographic	(DK) or (NA)	Never or almost never	Occasionally	Often	Almost always or always
Total	**1.3%**	**3.0%**	**17.8%**	**24.1%**	**53.8%**
Position Type					
Superintendent	2.7%	1.6%	19.7%	23.4%	52.7%
Principal	0.3%	3.1%	12.9%	22.6%	61.0%
Teacher	1.6%	4.7%	26.0%	28.3%	39.4%

[1]SOURCE: Surveying the Effectiveness of Multicultural Education

- Teachers were less likely to respond that they are "almost always or always" directly involved in efforts to create a supportive learning environment for students from diverse backgrounds; 39.4 percent of teachers compared to 61.0 percent of principals and 52.7 percent of superintendents.

Table 6. Do students from a variety of social and cultural groups succeed proportionately in your school district?

Demographic	(DK) or (NA)	Never or almost never	Occasionally	Often	Almost always or always
Total	**5.3%**	**1.6%**	**12.7%**	**43.3%**	**37.2%**
Position Type					
Superintendent	3.2%	0.0%	10.6%	41.0%	45.2%
Principal	4.8%	2.1%	11.4%	45.5%	36.2%
Teacher	9.2%	3.1%	18.5%	41.5%	27.7%

[1]SOURCE: Surveying the Effectiveness of Multicultural Education

- Superintendents were much more likely to say that students from a variety of social and cultural groups "almost always or always" succeed proportionately in their district. 45.2 percent of superintendents chose "almost always or always" compared to 36.2 percent of principals and 27.7 percent of teachers.

Table 7. Do students from a variety of social and cultural groups succeed proportionately in your school district?

Demographic	(DK) or (NA)	Never or almost never	Occasionally	Often	Almost always or always
Total	**5.3%**	**1.6%**	**12.7%**	**43.3%**	**37.2%**
# of students in district					
Less than 100	16.7%	0.0%	5.6%	38.9%	38.9%
100 - 499	5.7%	2.0%	9.8%	40.3%	42.3%
500 - 999	4.9%	0.0%	18.0%	46.7%	30.3%
1,000 or more	0.0%	3.3%	23.0%	57.4%	16.4%

[1]SOURCE: Surveying the Effectiveness of Multicultural Education

- Larger districts were less likely to respond that students from a variety of social and cultural groups succeed proportionately in their school districts.

Table 8. Is the staff appropriately diverse to serve a diverse student body?

Demographic	(DK) or (NA)	Never or almost never	Occasionally	Often	Almost always or always
Total	**16.7%**	**22.0%**	**24.5%**	**18.9%**	**17.9%**
# of students in district					
Less than 100	14.3%	0.0%	35.7%	28.6%	21.4%
100 - 499	19.6%	20.6%	22.0%	18.6%	19.2%
500 - 999	8.8%	31.3%	26.3%	17.5%	16.3%
1,000 or more	10.7%	21.4%	39.3%	21.4%	7.1%

[1]SOURCE: Surveying the Effectiveness of Multicultural Education

- In districts of all sizes, the staff is rarely appropriately diverse to serve a diverse student body. Only 28.5 percent of respondents in districts with 1,000 or more students indicated that the staff is "almost always or always" or "often" appropriately diverse to serve a diverse student body.

Table 9. Is a commitment to multicultural issues central to the mission of your school district?

Demographic	(DK) or (NA)	Never or almost never	Occasionally	Often	Almost always or always
Total	**3.3%**	**2.6%**	**22.3%**	**36.5%**	**35.2%**
Total years' experience					
0 - 3	8.3%	0.0%	33.3%	25.0%	33.3%
4 - 7	8.6%	0.0%	31.4%	40.0%	20.0%
8 - 11	6.7%	0.0%	16.7%	50.0%	26.7%
12 - 15	1.2%	4.9%	29.6%	28.4%	35.8%
16 - 19	6.9%	3.4%	19.5%	34.5%	35.6%
20+	1.9%	2.4%	20.7%	37.8%	37.2%

[1]SOURCE: Surveying the Effectiveness of Multicultural Education

- In general, respondents with more years' experience were more likely to indicate that a commitment to multicultural issues is "almost always or always" central to the mission of their school districts.

6. Recommendations for future Actions:

- Continue the implementation of Rule 10, Sections 004.01G and 009.
- Continue to build capacity for implementing multicultural education providing education and career development opportunities for students, teachers, administrators and other school staff.
- Continue funding to maintain Department leadership, resources and support staff, and staff development opportunities for teachers, administrators, and other school staff.
- Continue updating and development of culturally competent multicultural education materials and resources while continuing to search out ways to recognize innovative practices. Incorporate use of technology applications for resource dissemination.
- Continue providing opportunities for superintendents, principals and teachers to participate in multicultural staff development. At the present time, Department staff networks and seeks partnerships with other entities to provide staff development opportunities. Through both the close-ended and open-ended responses, data supports that educators need and want additional opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills base to implement quality multicultural education programs.
- Continue to update the multicultural education website and provide on-going communications with school districts and supporting educational organizations through the multicultural education newsletter as a means for providing educators with quality resources for their classrooms and schools. These forms of communication can provide timely information for immediate use in the classroom as well as encourage participation in the on-going schedule of professional development opportunities.
- Continue and increase higher education partnerships that provide multicultural education knowledge for education staff.

It is clear that the sponsors and supporters of the multicultural statutes intended that Nebraska school districts be places where there is increased awareness of the value of diversity, and that there be positive change in the attitudes and behavior of students and staff in respecting diversity. The Department will continue to seek out partnerships with educational organizations, ESUs, and local school districts to provide training and/or develop inclusive school curricula and environments. Efforts will also be made to continue addressing the learning needs of all of

Nebraska's diverse students to insure that all students in our state are graduating college and career ready.

For more details regarding the contents of this report, as well as obtaining the full survey report, please contact Carol Rempp (402-471-2960).