



# NEBRASKA'S INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY -

Nebraska's **Department of Education Innovative Grant Fund** and the **Innovation Grant Program** were created with the passage of *Legislative Bill (LB) 519*, effective August 30, 2015. As provided in *Nebraska Revised Statute (NRS) §79-1054*, the State Board of Education is to establish the competitive **Innovation Grant Program**. The Nebraska Department of Education is tasked with administration of the **Innovative Grant Fund**, which consists of:

- Transfers pursuant to *NRS §9-812* (State Lottery Operation Trust Fund and Nebraska Education Improvement Fund);
- Repayments of grant funds; and
- Interest payments received in the course of administering the fund.

Eligible grantees include a school district, Educational Service Unit (ESU), or combination of those.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INNOVATIVE GRANT FUND	
<p><b>FY 2016-17 through FY 2020-21</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>17% of Nebraska Education Improvement Funds</b> (after actual and necessary administrative expenses) are allocated to <b>Department of Education Innovative Grant Fund</b>.</li> <li>▪ Beginning July 1, 2016, <b>Nebraska Education Improvement Fund</b> will receive 44.5% of <b>Nebraska's State Lottery Operation Trust Fund</b> (after payment of prizes and operating expenses).</li> </ul>

The State Board of Education awards **Innovative Grant Funds** to grant projects deemed sufficiently innovative and having a high chance of success. **Selection criteria** for proposed projects include:

- Significance;
- Scope;
- Quality of Project Design;
- Collaborative Nature; and
- Inclusion of a Best or Promising Practice(s).

In addition to the above selection criteria, **priority consideration** is given to projects:

- Serving "High Need" Students;
- Serving "Needs Improvement" Schools;
- Aligned with Nebraska Department of Education's *AQuESTT Tenets*; or
- Leveraging Technology.

On or before July 1, 2019, all funded projects must submit a **Summative Evaluation of Progress Report** to the State Board of Education and Legislature's Education Committee. Based on that report, the State Board of Education will recommend the grant project represents:

- A Best Practice;
- A Model for a State-Supported Program; or
- A Local Issue for Further Study.

The State Board of Education may establish criteria allowing grant projects designated as a best practice(s) to be included in the **Best Practices Allowance to School Districts**, beginning with aid calculated for School Fiscal Year 2021-22. The **Best Practices Dollar Amount** is based on 85% of the estimated costs related to each best practice included in the allowance that would not be incurred without the best practice, that does not replace other such costs, and that is not included in another allowance. On or before November 1, 2020, and on or before November 1st of each year thereafter, the Nebraska Department of Education will certify:

- To each qualifying school district, the amount of the *Best Practices Cost* for that school district; and
- The *Total Best Practices Cost* for all qualifying school districts to be included in next School Fiscal Year's State Aid.

On or before December 1, 2017, and on or before December 1st of each year thereafter, the State Board of Education will electronically submit a **Report on Innovation Grants** to the Clerk of the Legislature, including, but not limited to:

- Evaluation Results for each grant project; and
- *Best Practices Allowance*, if the allowance has been implemented.