



## NEWS RELEASE

For additional information, please contact David Jespersen by phone (402-471-4537) or email ([david.jespersen@nebraska.gov](mailto:david.jespersen@nebraska.gov))

AUGUST 22, 2018

### NEBRASKA EDUCATION PARTNERS COLLABORATE ON HUMAN DIGNITY STATEMENT

Students in our schools too often experience negative, harassing, or bullying conduct during the school day and at school activities. It is the responsibility of leaders in education to promote and respect the best interests of all students and ensure that common courtesy is shown to everyone.

The education leaders of Nebraska's school system firmly support Nebraska schools and communities in proactively involving teachers, boards, administrators, students, parents, and community members in developing and maintaining a positive school and community culture that supports learning opportunities for all. Members of several educational organizations have signed a Statement of Principle to affirm a commitment to the basic tenets and values upon which the United States and the State of Nebraska were founded.

"My call to action is that Nebraska will lead the way in addressing inequities of the past by focusing on opportunities to learn for all students and by adopting a relentless focus on outcomes that ensure all stakeholders deliver on the promise of equity," said Commissioner of Education Matthew L. Blomstedt.

Equity requires that opportunities and outcomes exist for all across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background, adverse events, and/or family income.

"Nebraska's teachers aspire to teach all children in an environment of courtesy, equity, and dignity. We must make certain that environment extends from the stadium to the study hall, from the library to the lunch room. When all children can attend school in such an environment, without fear of harassment and bullying, our citizenry and our state are the better for it," said Maddie Fennell, Nebraska State Education Association Executive Director.

The eight organizations who collaborated on the Statement of Principle are available to provide support, resources, and ideas on addressing this important moral issue. We urge each school to become strongly involved in its own programs and the programs of other schools in fostering procedures that provide a wholesome atmosphere, an attitude of sportsmanship at activities, and a safe experience for all students.

"As educators and coaches we must be intentional about creating an environment that is safe and positive for young people to learn and compete. We must be clear in our values and expectations that competition and kindness can, and will, co-exist. Education-based athletics and activities are the front porches of our community. The front porch must be appealing and welcoming for all students and their families," said Darin Boysen, Executive Director of the Nebraska Coaches Association.

The attached [Statement of Principle on Human Dignity](#) has been adopted by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA), the Nebraska Council of School Administrators (NCSA), the Nebraska Association of School Boards (NASB), the Nebraska State Education Association (NSEA), the Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association (NRCSA), the Nebraska Coaches Association (NCA), and the Nebraska State Athletic Administrators Association (NSAAA) collectively.

####

*David Jespersen*  
*Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Education*  
*402-471-4537*  
*david.jespersen@nebraska.gov*  
*@NDE\_News*