

August 8, 2017

Jeremy Heneger, Assistant Director of State Assessment
Nebraska Department of Education
301 Centennial Mall South
PO Box 94987
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4987

Dear Mr. Heneger:

DRC is submitting for your review revised program pricing for DRC's contract with the Nebraska Department of Education for the 2017-2018 Nebraska Alternate Assessments.

ALTERNATE MATHEMATICS ALD SUPPORT

BACKGROUND

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) requested pricing from DRC for support for the development of Achievement Level Descriptors for the newly transitioned Mathematics Alternate Assessment. This pricing memo reflects this additional scope. A detailed plan is also included with this submittal.

DETAIL

The details of the study can be found in the attached document entitled *Mathematics Achievement Level Descriptors Development Plan for the Nebraska Alternate Assessment Mathematics for Grades 3-8 and 11*. DRC reviewed the ALD process document provided by NDE for the Florida testing program. DRC would like to propose a pared-down approach for these alternate ALDs. DRC's plan is based on the following assumptions.

- DRC will write math RANGE (formerly "draft") ALDs for four levels, as per the Florida model. DRC will start with Level 2 and go through Level 5; Level 3 is the level at which the standard is found. For math, it is the content limits that change from level to level and not so much the standard wording.
 - If NDE chooses to have three achievement levels instead of four, this plan can be adjusted.
- DRC does not feel that the Target (Just Barely or Threshold) ALDs, Summary Report ALDs, and a full 200+ page summary report is necessary for the Nebraska Mathematics Alternate Assessment. As such, costs for these items are not included in this cost proposal.

PRICING

The changes impact DRC’s scope of work and corresponding pricing for 2017-2018. The pricing listed in the table below reflects increases to the Nebraska Alternate Assessment contract.

	2017-2018
Alternate Mathematics ALD Development	\$35,575

Please let me know your decision so that we can prepare accordingly.

Regards,

Shaundra Sand
Data Recognition Corporation

Cc: John Moon Lonny Wittnebel Doug Russell Jennifer Eastman Ross Christenson
John Born

Mathematics Achievement Level Descriptors Development Plan for Nebraska Alternate Assessment Mathematics Grades 3–8 and 11

Submitted by DRC

Overview of the Development Plan

The Nebraska Achievement Level Descriptors (NEALDs) is the document that describes the knowledge and skills expected at different achievement levels with respect to the academic content standards for a grade. Descriptors must be clearly written to ensure that all stakeholders have a common understanding of what describes expected achievement at the various levels. NEALDs will be developed, reviewed, and finalized by committees of Nebraska Alternate Assessment - Mathematics content experts and educators, special education educators, and the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) prior to standard setting activities occurring in the spring of 2018.

Study Participants and Meeting Logistics

For the development of the NEALDs, DRC proposes that one committee convenes for the Nebraska Alternate Assessment - Mathematics, which will be represented by two members for each respective grade level. As a result, 14 Nebraska educators will be convened for the meeting, and the committee members will be divided into groups of 6 and 8 educators for each grade span. Committee members will work individually and in concert to develop NEALDs, taking special care to promote articulation across grades, when needed. DRC proposes that the meeting will last two days and will be held in Nebraska.

The educators chosen for the NEALD meeting will include special educators who have taught mathematics to the population intended for the Nebraska Alternate Assessment - Mathematics.

Per this proposal, the chart below shows the breakdown of committees by grade span, number of committee members, and the number of facilitators needed for the meeting.

Grade Range Committees by Content	# of Nebraska In-State Content Experts	DRC Content Experts	DRC Facilitators
Math-Alternate grades 3-6	8	1	2
Math-Alternate grades 7-8, 11	6	1	

Total	14	2	2
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Development of the NEALDs

DRC proposes that guiding documents designed to help educators develop descriptors for each assessment will be created by DRC Mathematics test development specialists and special education test development specialists. These guiding documents will include a draft of each descriptor (range descriptors) arranged in a bulleted list. The documents will serve as a starting point to guide committee members in the development of the descriptors. In creating the guiding documents, DRC test development staff will first do an in-depth review of the standards, indicators and the extensions in order to determine what students should know and be able to do. The focus will be upon how students will demonstrate the knowledge and the skills as noted in the indicators and extensions for each achievement level. The process DRC staff will use when developing the guiding documents will include making an initial determination as to:

- The necessary characteristics/concepts of achievement at each achievement level
- The categorization of the characteristics/concepts,
- The definition in clear and easily understood language of each characteristic/concept, and
- The description of the achievement continuum.

The guiding documents or range descriptors will be prepared for review by a committee of Nebraska educators during a review meeting. DRC proposes that this meeting will take place in Nebraska. At this meeting, educators will first receive a general training on how to develop range descriptors, using the guiding documents prepared by DRC’s test development staff as a starting point for discussion. The training will also include providing educators with a general overview of each assessment (e.g., number of items and item types included on a particular assessment). Definitions of key terms will also be provided.

Following the general training, Nebraska educators will focus specifically on the task at hand— development of the range descriptors for a given grade. To begin the process, the Table of Specifications (including the extensions for Nebraska Alternate Assessment - Mathematics) for each grade, the DRC-developed guiding documents, and the Nebraska policy definitions will be distributed and explained. Nebraska educators will then be given time to familiarize themselves with the extended standards and the guiding documents developed by DRC. After review of the extended standards committee members will be asked to develop the range descriptors at each level. They will use the guiding documents (bulleted list) prepared by DRC to guide this work. Specifically, the committee members will be asked to consider the following questions as they write the descriptors:

1. Does each NEALD clearly summarize the knowledge and skills required for a given achievement level? If not, what revisions need to be made?
2. Does each NEALD provide an appropriate description of the achievement level? In other words, does each provide an overview or summary of the knowledge and skills appropriate for a given achievement level? If not, what revisions need to be made?
3. Does each NEALD provide any information that should not be included in the description of the achievement level? If so, what revisions need to be made?
4. Does any NEALD include information that might be inconsistent with the knowledge and skills as defined by the content standards? If so, what revisions need to be made?
5. Does any NEALD include information describing achievement that might be too demanding or too easy? If so, what revisions need to be made?
6. Does each NEALD show a clear progression from one achievement level to another? If not, what revisions should be made?
7. Do the NEALDs for a given subject area show a clear progression from one grade to the next, as needed? If not, what revisions should be made?

Meeting Preparation

DRC proposes that the DRC test development specialists will develop the agenda, prepare all meeting materials, and provide the initial training on how to develop descriptors. DRC test development specialists will also facilitate the committee process. The role of the facilitator will be to ensure that a fair and orderly consensus process is followed, that committee-work product is adequately documented, and that the process stays on schedule. The facilitators will also serve as resources, answering questions pertaining to the content of the standards. The goal of the meeting is to have committees develop the first draft of the achievement-level descriptors. NDE team members will support the facilitation process and/or serve as observers of the process.

Finalizing the NEALDs

After the committee meeting, the range descriptors for the Nebraska Alternate Assessment - Mathematics will be finalized by DRC and prepared for review by NDE. Upon approval by NDE, the descriptors will be prepared for use during the standard setting.

Milestone Tasks and Timeline

The chart below provides a high-level overview of the tasks to be accomplished. Dates and timelines associated with each task will be determined by NDE and DRC upon approval.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Responsible Party</u>
NDE approves the plan for the development of the NEALDs	NDE
DRC drafts working documents (e.g., agenda, Power Point)	DRC
Documents provided to NDE for review and approval	DRC/NDE
Documents prepared for Committee Review	DRC
Committee Review	DRC/NDE/NE content experts/educators
Descriptors revised based upon Committee feedback	DRC
Final descriptors prepared for review by NDE	DRC
NDE approves descriptors	NDE
Descriptors prepared for Standard Setting	DRC
Angoff Standard Setting	DRC