



Friday News Blast



5-15-2020

Please see our website at www.education.ne.gov/sped for all the updated guidance and information related to special education and early intervention during the COVID-19 pandemic. We will continuously be updating our page with the most recent guidance and adding resources.

Professional Learning Series

The Nebraska Department of Education, in partnership with [SchoolKit](#), is excited to announce a ten-session, virtual professional learning series designed to provide instructional leaders with knowledge and skills related to unfinished learning, instructional equity, and remote instruction. This professional learning series is a component of Launch Nebraska, a roadmap of essential actions to help district and school leaders plan and implement a safe, efficient, and equitable return to school.

The attached flyer provides schedule, session focus, and [registration information](#). The targeted audience includes district/school/ESU leaders, teacher leaders, instructional coaches, and those involved in planning for summer learning and beyond. Each virtual learning session will be 60 minutes in length and held at 4:30 p.m. CST (3:30 p.m. MST) on the date indicated on the flyer. All sessions will be recorded and available after the live event.

In particular, we are excited to have Lacey Robinson, President and CEO of [UnboundEd](#) provide our kick-off keynote on May 14th. Lacey has more than 20 years in education as an educator, teacher, principal, and staff development specialist with a focus on literacy, equity and school leadership. Her life's work focuses on eradicating the student achievement gap, predictable by race, in addition to creating adult learning experiences that honor us as professionals in school system leadership, teaching, and learning.

Call for Proposals

The Nebraska Department of Education is seeking proposals for sessions for the 2020 Paraeducator Conference: The Link to Meaningful Connections to be held at the Younes Center, in Kearney, November 10, 2020. Please submit your offer to present by 5:00 p.m. on June 1, 2020. Lead presenters will be notified regarding the status of their submission by July 1, 2020.

Priority will be given to those proposals that disseminate evidence-based practices, actively engage participants, and present topics relevant to improving the practices of paraeducators, increasing their knowledge base, and helping to improve and strengthen the many important relationships paraeducators have.

Request for proposals- 2020 Paraeducator Conference: The Link to Meaningful Connections <https://forms.gle/fQVaBgaEt9AgRE8q7>

Participating in Virtual IEP Meetings: Tips for IEP Team Members

Did you know that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) allows individualized education program (IEP) teams to use “alternative means of meeting participation, such as video conferences and conference calls” (34 CFR §300.328)? No matter the format of the meeting, all required participants⁶—including parents⁷—should be present and/or appropriately excused from the meeting [if mutually agreed upon in writing; 34 CFR §300.321(e)(2)]. *Attached* are tips for IEP team members for participating in virtual IEP meetings.

Early Childhood Resources

The [National Center for Children in Poverty \(NCCP\)](#) has added new content to [PRISM](#), an online resource that helps policymakers, advocates, and other early childhood leaders learn about **promising infant-early childhood mental health policies and scaled initiatives**. Nebraska’s [Circle of Security-Parenting \(COS-P\)](#) program is being highlighted in the new content, with information contributed by Amy Bunnell, NDE Part C Coordinator; Lynne Brehm and Sami Bradley of Nebraska Children and Families Foundation. **Check it out!!**

Students with Additional Needs in Remote Learning Environments (a free event) May 20th

Benetech, Bridge Multimedia and CAST are joining forces to bring you this very special "unconference" with support from the Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs and the Institute of Education Sciences. Throughout the day participants will have the chance to experience lightning presentations and panel discussions from field experts on how to support students with additional needs as they navigate distance learning and take on summer vacation in these turbulent times. If you are a student, parent or teacher, then this unconference is for you.

Check out the line-up of events at the site below.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/students-with-additional-needs-in-remote-learning-environments-tickets-104687422900?ref=estw>

PEaK Project Package

The PEaK Project Package is available and can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/PEAK20-21>. As in the past, the link allows for view access to the package. In order to complete the application, please save a copy locally to fill in the required information. The PEaK Project applications are due electronically **today**.

IDEA MOE for Compliance Standard – OPEN: April 1 – DUE DATE: TODAY

IDEA Part B Special Education Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Application for Compliance Standard for school year 2018-2019 opened on April 1. The report may be accessed within the NDE Portal under the Data Collection tab.

School district receipt of IDEA dollars is contingent upon maintaining fiscal effort for Special Education. Districts must expend a greater or equal amount of local or local/state funds from a previous year highest level to meet the MOE requirement. Final calculations based on actual special education school district expenditures/receipts/data obtained from the 2018-2019 AFR, GMS and

ADVISER are available and have been compared to the highest levels of fiscal effort. As a result, calculations for meeting the IDEA MOE Compliance Standard may have resulted in a MOE excess or shortage that requires school district review for determination of adjustments or credits that could modify the MOE level.

Contact: Greg Prochazka at 402-471-4314 or greg.prochazka@nebraska.gov

SPI Coding

Special Education State (SPEDFRS) and Federal (GMS IDEA Application) reimbursement is contingent upon accurate reporting of NDE Staff Reporting System SPI codes For SY2019-20 State and Federal Reimbursement, all instructional special education staff will require the appropriate SPED Specific Position Indicator (SPI) codes reported in the NDE Staff Reporting System. No later than **June 30**. Staff serving school age special education students are to be reported using the SPI "I" (IDEA-federal) and/or SPI "S" (State/Local), and sped staff serving below age five students are to reported using SPI of "7" (federal/local).

Amy Rhone - Administrator