



## PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

**DATE:** May 17, 2021

**TO:** Matthew L. Blomstedt, Ph.D.  
Commissioner of Education

**FROM:** Zainab Rida, Ph.D.  
Equity Officer

**PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM:** Authorize the Commissioner to contract with the CEDARS Youth Services to provide enhanced educational support to young people who have experienced homelessness and those who are served by out-of-home care and community based juvenile justice programs in Lincoln and Lancaster County.

### **RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

CEDARS Youth Services is a nationally accredited, and fully licensed childcaring and child placing agency, serving Nebraska children, youth and families since 1947. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact on education, and the risk of educational failure, CEDARS requests funding to provide enhanced educational support to young people who have experienced homelessness and those who are served by out of home care and community based juvenile justice programs in Lincoln and Lancaster County. Youth in these programs are often at risk for poor educational outcomes, making them more likely to read below grade level, require special education services and transfer between schools during the academic year. CEDARS education team provides tutors, mentoring and advocacy in partnership with local high schools. CEDARS also assists with college access including campus tours, assistance with applications and financial aid, and support while attending area colleges and universities. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic and the move to online, remote school has had an impact on learning and wellbeing for all students. For those living in CEDARS Emergency Shelter or Bridges Transitional Living Program and those participating in Reporting Center and Street Outreach services, the challenges have been significant and sustained.

**PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR):** June 2021

**ESTIMATED COST:** Not to Exceed \$461,000

### **FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:**

- Indicate the Funding Source: ESSER II (CRSSA)
- New or Renewal: New
- If renewal, date of first approval: