

**State Accreditation Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**May 17, 2022**

The Nebraska State Accreditation Committee met at the Lincoln Marriott Cornhusker Hotel on May 17, 2022. Chair Travis Miller called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m., declared a quorum present, and established the legality of the meeting.

Members present were the following: LeeAnn Amm, Mary Anderson, Susan Christopherson, Josie Floyd, Dale Fornander, Dale Hafer, Pat Hoehner, Vickie Kauffold, Travis Miller, Boris Moore, Joe'l Ruybalid, Sarah Salem, Bess Scott, and Amy Shane. (Mitch Kubicek joined at 10:10 a.m.)

Members absent: Wayne Brown, Brad Dirksen, Judi gaiashkibos, Mitch Kubicek, Marco Pedroza and Dan Schnoes.

NDE staff members present during all or some of the meeting were the following: Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt, Micki Charf, Todd Wolverton, Shirley Vargas, and Lane Carr.

Following greetings and introductions, Chair Travis Miller reviewed the agenda. Dale Fornander moved to approve the agenda and Amy Shane seconded the motion.

Voting yes: LeeAnn Amm, Mary Anderson, Susan Christopherson, Josie Floyd, Dale Fornander, Dale Hafer, Pat Hoehner, Vickie Kauffold, Travis Miller, Boris Moore, Joe'l Ruybalid, Sarah Salem, Bess Scott, and Amy Shane.

Voting no: none

Approval carried 14-0 with 6 absent.

Members reviewed the minutes of the July 22, 2021, meeting. Pat Hoehner moved to accept the minutes and Josie Floyd seconded the motion.

Voting yes: LeeAnn Amm, Mary Anderson, Susan Christopherson, Josie Floyd, Dale Fornander, Dale Hafer, Pat Hoehner, Vickie Kauffold, Travis Miller, Boris Moore, Joe'l Ruybalid, Sarah Salem, Bess Scott, and Amy Shane.

Voting no: none

Approval carried 14-0, with 6 absent.

## **Presentation of the Annual Report for Accreditation**

Dr. Micki Charf, Director of Accreditation and Todd Wolverton, Accreditation Specialist, reviewed some key points from the 2022 Annual Report.

## **CIP Support Days**

Partnerships and dates of the 21-22 CIP Support Days.

## **External Visits**

The school improvement process includes a visitation by a team of external representatives to review progress and provide written recommendations. External team visits are conducted at least once every five years.

## **Implementation of Accreditation in Nebraska**

-Properly Endorsed Staff

-Monitoring Processes

- Assurance Statement
- Personal Report
- Curriculum Report
- Counselor / Media Collection
- Compliance Visits

## **Compliance Visits**

Current number of compliance visits completed.

## **Overview of schools recommended for Accreditation**

244 Class II through V School Districts, 5 Special Purpose Schools, and 82 Nonpublic Schools.

## **Action on Accreditation of School Systems**

Travis Miller, Chair, asked for a motion to recommend continued accreditation in 2022-2023. Dale Hafer moved to approve accreditation for the 2022-23 school year and Dale Fornander seconded the motion.

Voting yes: LeeAnn Amm, Mary Anderson, Susan Christopherson, Josie Floyd, Dale Fornander, Dale Hafer, Pat Hoehner, Vickie Kauffold, Travis Miller, Boris Moore, Joe'l Ruybalid, Sarah Salem, Bess Scott, and Amy Shane.

Voting no: none

Approval carried 14-0, with 6 absent.

## **ESSA Updates**

Dr. Shirley Vargas, School Transformation Officer Lane Carr, Administrator of Policy & Strategic Initiatives, shared updates on ESSA. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) represents the law guiding the use of federal funding. The NDE blends both federal and state supports in its classification and designation system.

### State Classifications (Every Public School District):

Excellent

Great

Good

Needs Improvement

### Federal Designations:

Comprehensive Support & Improvement (CSI):

- Lowest 5% of Title I schools
- High schools with grad rates below 67%
- Consistently low-performing student group

Priority Schools:

- Among the lowest performing schools AND demonstrate the greatest need to implement and sustain school improvement efforts

Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) & Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI):

- Consistently low-performing student group

Fall 2022 Key Themes and Philosophy: A Different Year Requires Different Accountability; Resetting & Rebaselining; Focus on Schools Serving Students with the Greatest Need

Fall 2022 Considerations: We are required to redesignate schools in the fall of 2022; School has not been “normal” due to the pandemic; Accountability cannot simply return to “normal” this year; The AQuESTT system has received significant criticism for its “moving target”

### USDOE Addendum

- Provides flexibilities for 2022 accountability without the need for more comprehensive ESSA amendment
- The NDE drafted a plan based on input from stakeholders
- State Board and gubernatorial consultation
- It has been approved
- Starting business rules development and communication plans

### Summary of Recommendations

- Remove the Non-Proficiency & Improvement Indicators and rely upon the Growth indicator
- Exclude Science scores from federal accountability designations
- Remove the Evidence-based Analysis (EBA)
- Utilize an absolute measure for chronic absenteeism
- Ensure ATSI and CSI cohorts identified in the fall have the ability to exit each year
- Modify exit criteria for cohort one and cohort two

### **Updates for School Systems**

Dr. Micki Charf and Todd Wolverton

#### Staff Reporting Changes

- Continued flexibility for school systems to apply for additional days
- Addition of long-term substitute position code to the Annual Personnel Report

#### 2022-23 Assurance Statement

- Continued messaging that explains self-reporting, collaborative problem solving, and corrective plans to meet compliance

The following continuous improvement models meet compliance with regulations set forth in Section 009 Continuous Improvement: Nebraska Framework, NeMTSS, and Cognia.

#### Nebraska Framework Updates

- NE Framework “Rebranding”
- Sunset documents
- Timeline
- Participation

#### NE Framework Support for Volunteers

- Updated list and expertise
- Expanding team practices
- Professional materials to guide work

#### NeMTSS Updates

- Expanding process
- Establishing coherence

#### Cognia Updates

- Membership trends
- Continued collaboration
- Joint CIP workdays

## **Working Lunch NSCAS Growth**

Jeremy Heneger, Director of Assessment (Virtual)

Jeremy provided updates on the journey, the details, the experience, the results, and the outcome of NSCAS Growth. Key points include unifying state and district tests to:

- support instruction and
- improve equitable learning opportunity with
- results that are actionable at both the classroom and systems level

The goal from day one has been to make assessment more useful in the classroom, so the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) has been working with Nebraska districts to increase the instructional relevance of summative data and reduce the challenges teachers and students face in managing both interim and summative tests. As part of this effort, Nebraska is transitioning to NSCAS Growth, an adaptive, through-year assessment for grades 3–8 in English language arts and mathematics that produces instructionally-relevant information and also measures proficiency to increase testing efficiency and utility of assessment results.

NSCAS Growth unifies state and district tests in a single through-year approach designed to support instruction and improve equitable learning opportunities with results that are actionable at both the classroom and systems level.

The NDE will continue to support formative instructional practice with professional learning and resources that support educators in connecting students' achievement levels with tangible examples of the skills they are likely ready to learn.

(Public comment was available at 11:50 a.m., no comments were received.)

## **Rule 10 Revision Status**

Dr. Micki Charf

In September 2021, the State Board of Education decided to pause the work on Rule 10 revision. This will allow for additional stakeholder and practitioner engagement. Any implementation of new rules would be no sooner than the 2023-2024 school year which would allow at least a full academic year between adoption of new rules and the implementation of the rules.

Rule 10 and 14 - Technical Amendments required to be incorporated into rule:

- Civics Committee and Civics Education (79-724)
- Character Education (79-725)
- Financial Literacy (79-3001 - 79-3004)
- Computer Science (LB 1112)

The committee members were asked to share their thoughts and interactions on rule revision and restructure. Discussion followed.

### **Commissioner of Education on Rule Revision**

The Commissioner thanked the committee for their continued input and work. He shared his thoughts on the importance of looking around the educational system and recognizing the need for stability. Many things are destabilizing the education environment right now. One of the reasons Rule 10 was put on pause was to have conversations on ways to provide stability and identify the right changes that need to be made. The reality of rule revision is intent, are we making a structural change or a substantive change. Do changes help us improve the educational system and the environment for students. With the proper vision, we can incrementally build something thoughtful.

We need to look at what we have learned over the past two years. Rather than implementing a timeline for rule revision based on pushing policy forward, we need to find middle ground on how we address rule change. We have painted ourselves into a corner with current rules and regulations and need to look at taking some of the flexibilities created during the pandemic and get them into permanent rule.

Part of restoring normal is letting students and teachers get back to their work without creating outside distractions. The last two years have been spent keeping ahead of circumstances that are out of our control and we need to say now, this is our vision, and this is how we move forward together.

### **Membership**

Farewells

Applications

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.