



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: July 28, 2022

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

FROM: Cory Epler, Ph.D.
Academic Officer/Administrator of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

Marissa Payzant, Ed.D.
Assistant Administrator of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM:

Consent Agenda Item: Authorize the commissioner to contract with American Institutes for Research (AIR).

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In November 2021, the Nebraska State Board of Education formed an ad hoc committee to review the process used by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) to develop and/or revise content area standards. The final committee report included five recommendations, including “The NDE enlist the services of a contractor.” The contractor will complete a review of current standards development practices and processes and will suggest revisions to enhance and assure quality of content area standards development and implementation processes and procedures. The review process should include research related to standards-based education, a review of other state processes to develop/revise content area standards, and focus group interviews with key stakeholders (e.g. school leaders, teachers, policy makers, parents/families/caregivers, etc.). The final report should include recommendations for consideration. The work may begin as early as July 1, 2022 and the final report and recommendations should be completed by May 1, 2023.

The NDE contacted four organizations regarding this work: (1) Education Commission of the States (ECS), (2) American Institute for Research (AIR), (3) Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and (4) WestEd. AIR and WestEd expressed interest in submitting informal proposals. Upon an internal review of the proposals, AIR was recommended as the contractor. AIR has worked extensively with multiple SEAs, including the NDE, in facilitating the development of common language and processes for standards revision and implementation across divisions and departments. Notably, the proposal from AIR included additional support from the Region 11 Comprehensive Center (R11CC). The R11CC, serving Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming, is one of 19 regional centers across the nation that help state education agencies (SEAs) to implement, scale, and sustain evidence-based programs, practices, and interventions that support improved

educator and student outcomes. The partnership with R11CC allows for focus groups and stakeholder interviews to be conducted to inform the evaluation.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): August 2022

ESTIMATED COST: \$49,999

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:

- Indicate the Funding Source: General Funds (Commissioner's Office)
- New or Renewal: New Contract