



TEL 402.471.2295  
FAX 402.471.0117



P.O. Box 94987  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4987



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## PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

**DATE:** March 22, 2023

**TO:** Deborah A. Frison, Ed.D.  
Deputy Commissioner of Education

**FROM:** Marissa Payzant, Ed.D.  
Assistant Administrator, Office of Teaching, Learning & Assessment

**PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM:** Authorize the Commissioner to accept funds from the Nebraska Arts Council to administer the Arts NOW Grant Program to Nebraska school districts.

**AGENDA ITEM TYPE (contract/grant/rule/program/other):** GRANT

### RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- The Nebraska Arts Council (NAC) wishes to grant the Nebraska Department of Education's Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment a total amount of \$180,000 for the creation and administration of an Arts NOW Grant Project to provide project funds to school districts to help them achieve excellence in arts education while implementing Nebraska's Fine Arts Education Standards.
- The Arts NOW Grant is a partnership between the Nebraska Arts Council and in turn their partner, the Nebraska Cultural Endowment. The NAC has invited NDE to submit an MOU requesting a sum amount \$180,000 for a one-year commitment to fund the Arts NOW Grants.
- The grant funds will be for a one-time competitive grant and will be awarded to K-12 public schools school districts and could be used at multiple school buildings. We anticipate reaching between 9 and 27 school districts depending on funding requests.
- The Office of Teaching, Learning & Assessment will administrate the Arts NOW Grant project. Schools will complete a written application demonstrating how the project will help them achieve artistic excellence while implementing Nebraska's Fine Arts Standards and working to achieve high quality instruction in fine arts education. Applicant school districts need to describe how the grant project will impact students, teachers, and the school/community. At the request of the NAC, the grants will be equitably distributed geographically throughout the state. To achieve this request, we will use the five Nebraska MTSS regions. Projects up to \$9,999 will impact 999 or fewer students. Projects between \$15,000 and \$14,999 will impact 1,000-4,999 students. Project between \$15,000 and \$20,000 will impact 5,000 students or more.
- Announcement of the Arts NOW Grant Project will begin this summer and at NDE Day at the NCSA Administrators' Days in Kearney. Announcements will also be made through



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NDE communications with school superintendents and through the NDE Fine Arts Education Mailing List and website. School districts that are awarded Arts NOW Grants will be required to share their grant project and impact the grant project has had. These stories will be collected and shared by both the Nebraska Department of Education, Nebraska Arts Council, and other stakeholders. Proposed Timeline:

- April – June 2023, vote and ratification by Nebraska Arts Council
- July 2023 – Announcement of Grant, Application period opens.
- October 13, 2023 – Application period closes.
- October – December 2023 – Applications are reviewed.
- December 15, 2023 – Award Notifications
- February 15, 2024 – Financial Reports are due.
- February – May 2024 – Reimbursements are made to school districts.
- May 1, 2024, Final Narrative Reports are due.
- By June 20, 2024 – Grant Reimbursements are made. Final report made to NAC.
- September 30, 2024 – Elimination period ends.

**PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR):** April 2023

**ESTIMATED COST:** N/A

**FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:**

- Indicate the Funding Source: Nebraska Arts Council
- New or Renewal: New
- If renewal, date of first approval: N/A

**FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT:**

- Indicate the method of procurement: N/A
- Rationale for method of procurement: N/A
- Rationale for contractor selection: N/A

**FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS:**

- (See above). The grant administration team, consisting of NDE staff, will review grant applications for eligibility requirements. Eligible grants will be forwarded to a grant review panel who will review and rate the grant based on the Arts NOW Grant Scoring Rubric. Grant awards will be made following a scoring process that has been developed in consultation with the Nebraska Arts Council, encompassing their expertise in grant processes and procedures.

*\*Updated 02.07.2023*