



## PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

**DATE:** September 3, 2024

**TO:** Brian L. Maher  
Commissioner of Education

**FROM:** Allyson DenBeste  
Academic Officer

Lane Carr  
Administrator, Office of Policy and Strategic Initiatives

**PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM:** Accept the US Department of Education Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) Grant funds and authorize the Commissioner to enter into contracts and subawards to carry out grant activities.

**AGENDA ITEM TYPE:** Action

### RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

*Context:*

CLSD is a discretionary grant program of the US Department of Education designed to create a comprehensive literacy program to advance literacy skills for children from birth through grade 12, with an emphasis on disadvantaged children, including children living in poverty, English learners, and children with disabilities. The program provides five-year grants to states to identify and address literacy gaps.

Nebraska is one of the few states that has not accessed a CLSD grant. As such, the NDE applied for the CLSD grant for \$11 million per year, for the next five years. As part of the application process, the NDE was able to secure gubernatorial consultation and a signature from Governor Pillen.

*Approach and Focus:*

As NDE was considering statewide activities, reviewing data, consulting with stakeholders, and aligning to current work, a focus on NeMTSS framework emerged, allowing NDE to differentiate ourselves in what is likely to be a competitive funding cycle. Utilizing the NeMTSS regions for professional learning opportunities, literacy coaching, and feedback necessary for continuous improvement and literacy planning updates, NDE proposes to align the literacy ecosystem by establishing an Office of Literacy and set a long-term goal of a 50% increase in grade-level proficiency, based on Nebraska's ELA assessments.

The US Department of Education set funding allocation restrictions noted in the table below. The final column indicates NDE’s proposed focus areas within those restrictions.

<b>% Allocated</b>	<b>Total \$ Allocated</b>	<b>Restrictions</b>	<b>Competitive Sub-award Focus Areas</b>
15% +	\$ 8,250,000.00	Birth-Kindergarten Entry	Professional Development, Family Literacy
40% +	\$ 22,000,000.00	Equitably among K-5	HQIM, Professional Development, Extended Learning Opportunities, Tutoring, Reducing Chronic Absenteeism
40% +	\$ 22,000,000.00	Equitably among 6-12	

The remaining five percent is reserved for statewide administrative costs.

*Timeline:*

- August – Information Item with Budget and Finance Committee
- September – State Board acceptance of funds, contracting, and granting pending notification from the USDOE, anticipated by September 27, 2024.

**PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR):** September 2024

**ESTIMATED COST:** \$55 million in Federal funding

**FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:**

- Indicate the Funding Source: Federal Funds
- 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:**

- Describe the grantee selection process: Competitive granting process
- New or Renewal: New
- If renewal, date of first approval: N/A