



## PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

**DATE:** November 26, 2024

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

**FROM:** Melody Hobson

**PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM:** Approve the renewal of a grant to the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation to continue the Nurturing Healthy Behaviors/Rooted in Relationships program for up to three years

**AGENDA ITEM TYPE:** Consent – grant renewal

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

- During the 2014 legislative session, the Nebraska Legislature appropriated \$400,000 within the state budget for the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) to expand the Nurturing Healthy Behaviors (NHB) program across the state.
- This annual appropriation was to be used to expand programs and services for early childhood mental health.
- No funding was appropriated for NDE to administer local grants; therefore, the NDE Office of Early Childhood issued a request for proposals for a single provider with the capacity to coordinate the project and to cultivate programs across the state.
- The Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFF) was the chosen provider based on their application and organizational capacity. The NCFF successfully implemented the Nurturing Healthy Behavior program provider until grant re-competition in 2023.
- The NDE released a Request for Proposals (RFP) in August of 2023 for an entity to operate the Nurturing Healthy Behaviors program.
- One entity (the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation) responded with a proposal that met all requirements of the RFP.
- The proposal outlined the following:
  - Capacity of the organization to meet the requirement of the RFP.
  - Description of the services to be offered.
  - Budget.
- The Nebraska Children and Families Foundation has implemented the program successfully since the funding of the grant. The program is evaluated by the University of Nebraska Medical Center Munro- Meyer Institute.

- The Statewide Nurturing Healthy Behaviors/Rooted in Relationships initiative combines funds from the NDE (both state general funds and federal Child Care and Development Funds) with dollars from other sources (public and private grants).
- Nurturing Healthy Behaviors/Rooted in Relationships uses the Pyramid model for building social and emotional competence in young children.
- The Pyramid Model uses training of early childhood providers, followed by coaching in classroom settings to support the growth of children's learning.
- To ensure high quality coaching, coach consultation is available to the Pyramid coaches.
- Early Childhood providers are also able to join a peer learning community.
- During the 2023 year (the latest year of available data), 40 Pyramid Coaches were trained. There were 16 initiative hubs in communities across the state.
- The classrooms participating in Pyramid are evaluated through several assessments.
  - Benchmarks of Quality – a measure of program quality
  - Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOI)
  - Teaching Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS)
- Evaluation measures showed growth in program quality.

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

**ESTIMATED COST:** \$550,000

**FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:**

- Indicate the Funding Source: State general funds and federal Child Care Development Funds
- New or Renewal: Renewal
- If renewal, date of first approval: 2014

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

- Indicate the method of procurement:
- Rationale for method of procurement:
- Rationale for contractor selection:

**FOR GRANT SUBAWARDS:**

- Describe the grantee selection process: Request for Proposals was issued in 2023, NCFE was the successful respondent. This is a renewal of the grant issued based on the 2023 RFP process.

*\*Updated 08.15.2023*