



PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

DATE: January 22, 2026

TO: Dr. Brian L. Maher
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Amy Rhone – Office of Special Education

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: Action Item: Contract Renewal to Build-Out Data Collection Processes to Meet Federal Post-School Outcome Data Report Requirements. (BF.012026.001)

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

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The Office of Special Education proposes to renew a contract with The Board of Regents of University of Nebraska dba University of Nebraska–Lincoln to enable them to continue assisting NDE with meeting federal post-school outcome data report requirements, in accordance with 34 CFR § 300.601 and 34 CFR § 300.602.

The Office of Special Education (OSE) has contracted with the Bureau of Sociological Research (BOSR) at UNL for several years to conduct post-school outcome surveys on behalf of NDE. These services have consistently supported the state in meeting federal reporting requirements. For the current contract period, the proposed budget increases the total cost of services to an amount exceeding the \$50,000 approval threshold, necessitating formal board consideration and approval.

Federal regulations at 34 CFR § 300.601 and 34 CFR § 300.602 require state educational agencies to monitor performance and report annually on indicators included in the IDEA Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR). One of these required indicators, Indicator 14 – Post-School Outcomes, measures the percentage of youth with individualized education programs (IEPs) who are engaged in higher education, competitive employment, or other postsecondary education or training within one year of exiting high school.

Through this contract, BOSR conducts valid and reliable post-school outcome surveys with adults with disabilities who previously received special education services. BOSR's established expertise ensures data collection methods meet federal requirements for accuracy, representativeness, and compliance with IDEA reporting standards. The data collected enables NDE to assess the effectiveness of special education services in preparing students with disabilities for successful adult outcomes, including participation in postsecondary education, competitive employment, or vocational training.

Continuation of this contract allows NDE to maintain compliance with federal monitoring and reporting requirements, ensure continuity and integrity of post-school outcome data, and meet IDEA Part B accountability expectations. Approval of this contract is recommended to support ongoing compliance and continuous improvement efforts while formalizing board oversight due to the increased contract amount.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

Strategic Priority 3: Equip Learners for the Workforce

- *Strategic Outcome 3.1: Increased Postsecondary Access and Attainment*
- This contract directly supports **Strategic Priority 3: Equip Learners for the Workforce** by ensuring Nebraska has valid, reliable data on post-school outcomes for students with disabilities, including participation in competitive employment, postsecondary education, and training. The post-school outcome data collected through this contract enables NDE to evaluate how effectively special education services prepare students for workforce readiness and successful transitions to adult life. Maintaining this data capacity supports continuous improvement efforts that strengthen pathways from school to employment and postsecondary opportunities for learners with disabilities.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING (MONTH/YEAR): February 2026

ESTIMATED COST: \$56,178

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS:

- Indicate the Funding Source: Federal IDEA Part B – 611 Funds
- New or Renewal: Renewal
- If renewal, date of first approval: 6/10/2010

FOR NEW CONTRACTS OR OTHER CONTRACTS REQUIRING PROCUREMENT:

- Indicate the method of procurement: Initially, this contract was selected through competitive negotiation (RFP NDE 07-017).
- Rationale for method of procurement: Competitive Negotiation was used to ensure a high quality of services and use of resources for this project.
- Rationale for contractor selection: This contractor has the knowledge and background required to fulfill these duties effectively and efficiently. In recent years, they've doubled the survey response rate. This data collection project most benefits from the continuity afforded from renewing this contract with this particular contractor.

