

Educational Resources Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, April 6, 2022 1:45 PM  
ESU No. 3  
6949 South 110th Street  
Omaha, NE 68128

1. Call to Order  
Committee Chair
2. Roll Call  
Committee Chair
3. Agenda Item  
Committee Chair
  - 3.1. School Safety Priorities  
Jolene Palmer
  - 3.2. Special Populations  
Committee Chair
    - 3.2.1. NDE Special Education Update  
Amy Rhone
    - 3.2.2. ESPD Report  
Ruth Miller
    - 3.2.3. Mental Health and Wellness  
Committee Chair
      - 3.2.3.1. NDE Mental Health Grant  
Committee Chair
    - 3.2.4. ESSER - Preschool Program  
Committee Chair
    - 3.2.5. SRS Staff Report
  - 3.3. PDO (Professional Development Organization)  
Committee Chair
    - 3.3.1. High Quality Instructional Materials Support (HQ-IM)  
Committee Chair
    - 3.3.2. PDO Workgroups Rule 84 Updates  
Committee Chair
    - 3.3.3. SDA Report  
SDA Affiliate Chair
    - 3.3.4. TLT Special Project and Social Studies Cadre  
Hicks and McKiver
    - 3.3.5. PDO Meetings  
Committee Chair
      - 3.3.5.1. Administrator Video - PDO Celebration Dinner. Video's are due  
by April 27th.

3.3.5.2. Bowling Outing

3.3.6. NDE Updates

Russ Masco

3.3.7. Monthly Talking Points

Executive Director

4. Next Meeting Agenda Items

Committee Chair

5. Adjournment

Committee Chair

# NEBRASKA OPEN MEETINGS ACT

**84-1407. Act, how cited.** Sections 84-1407 to 84-1414 shall be known and may be cited as the Open Meetings Act.

**84-1408. Declaration of intent; meetings open to public.** It is hereby declared to be the policy of this state that the formation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret. Every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public in order that citizens may exercise their democratic privilege of attending and speaking at meetings of public bodies, except as otherwise provided by the Constitution of Nebraska, federal statutes, and the Open Meetings Act.

**84-1409. Terms, defined.** For purposes of the Open Meetings Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1)(a) Public body means (i) governing bodies of all political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska, (ii) governing bodies of all agencies, created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, of the executive department of the State of Nebraska, (iii) all independent boards, commissions, bureaus, committees, councils, subunits, or any other bodies created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, (iv) all study or advisory committees of the executive department of the State of Nebraska whether having continuing existence or appointed as special committees with limited existence, (v) advisory committees of the bodies referred to in subdivisions (i), (ii), and (iii) of this subdivision, and (vi) instrumentalities exercising essentially public functions; and

(b) Public body does not include (i) subcommittees of such bodies unless a quorum of the public body attends a subcommittee meeting or unless such subcommittees are holding hearings, making policy, or taking formal action on behalf of their parent body, except that all meetings of any subcommittee established under section 81-15.175 are subject to the Open Meetings Act, and (ii) entities conducting judicial proceedings unless a court or other judicial body is exercising rulemaking authority, deliberating, or deciding upon the issuance of administrative orders;

(2) Meeting means all regular, special, or called meetings, formal or informal, of any public body for the purposes of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action of the public body; and

(3) Virtual conferencing means conducting or participating in a meeting electronically or telephonically with interaction among the participants subject to subsection (2) of section 84-1412.

**84-1410. Closed session; when; purpose; reasons listed; procedure; right to challenge; prohibited acts; chance meetings, conventions, or workshops.**

(1) Any public body may hold a closed session by the affirmative vote of a majority of its voting members if a closed session is clearly necessary for the protection of the public interest or for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual and if such individual has not requested a public meeting. The subject matter and the reason necessitating the closed session shall be identified in the motion to close. Closed sessions may be held for, but shall not be limited to, such reasons as:

(a) Strategy sessions with respect to collective bargaining, real estate purchases, pending litigation, or litigation which is imminent as evidenced by communication of a claim or threat of litigation to or by the public body;

(b) Discussion regarding deployment of security personnel or devices;

(c) Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct;

(d) Evaluation of the job performance of a person when necessary to prevent needless injury to the reputation of a person and if such person has not requested a public meeting;

(e) For the Community Trust created under section 81-1801.02, discussion regarding the amounts to be paid to individuals who have suffered from a tragedy of violence or natural disaster; or

(f) For public hospitals, governing board peer review activities, professional review activities, review and discussion of medical staff investigations or disciplinary actions, and any strategy session concerning transactional negotiations with any referral source that is required by federal law to be conducted at arms length.

Nothing in this section shall permit a closed meeting for discussion of the appointment or election of a new member to any public body.

(2) The vote to hold a closed session shall be taken in open session. The entire motion, the vote of each member on the question of holding a closed session, and the time when the closed session commenced and concluded shall be recorded in the minutes. If the motion to close passes, then the presiding officer immediately prior to the closed session shall restate on the record the limitation of the subject matter of the closed session. The public body holding such a closed session shall restrict its consideration of matters during the closed portions to only those purposes set forth in the motion to close as the reason for the closed session. The meeting shall be reconvened in open session before any formal action may be taken. For purposes of this section, formal action shall mean a collective decision or a collective commitment or promise to make a decision on any question, motion, proposal, resolution, order, or ordinance or formation of a position or policy but shall not include negotiating guidance given by members of the public body to legal counsel or other negotiators in closed sessions authorized under subdivision (1) (a) of this section.

(3) Any member of any public body shall have the right to challenge the continuation of a closed session if the member determines that the session has exceeded the reason stated in the original motion to hold a closed session or if the member contends that the closed session is neither clearly necessary for (a) the protection of the public interest or (b) the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual. Such challenge shall be overruled only by a majority vote of the members of the public body. Such challenge and its disposition shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require that any meeting be closed to the public. No person or public body shall fail to invite a portion of its members to a meeting, and no public body shall designate itself a subcommittee of the whole body for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act. No closed session, informal meeting, chance meeting, social gathering, email, fax, or other electronic communication shall be used for the purpose of circumventing the requirements of the act.

(5) The act does not apply to chance meetings or to attendance at or travel to conventions or workshops of members of a public body at which there is no meeting of the body then intentionally convened, if there is no vote or other action taken regarding any matter over which the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

**84-1411. Meetings of public body; notice; method; contents; when available; right to modify; duties concerning notice; videoconferencing or telephone conferencing authorized; emergency meeting without notice; appearance before public body.**

(1)(a) Each public body shall give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting as provided in this subsection. Such notice shall be transmitted to all members of the public body and to the public.

(b) (i) Except as provided in subdivision (1)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's web site.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village or such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published by:

(A) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's web site; or

(B) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city or village. Such notice shall be posted in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (1) (b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(c) In addition to a method of notice required by subdivision (1)(b) (i) or (ii) of this

section, such notice may also be provided by any other appropriate method designated by such public body or such advisory committee.

(d) Each public body shall record the methods and dates of such notice in its minutes.

(e) Such notice shall contain an agenda of subjects known at the time of the publicized notice or a statement that the agenda, which shall be kept continually current, shall be readily available for public inspection at the principal office of the public body during normal business hours. Agenda items shall be sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the meeting. Except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda shall not be altered later than (i) twenty-four hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting or (ii) forty-eight hours before the scheduled commencement of a meeting of a city council or village board scheduled outside the corporate limits of the municipality. The public body shall have the right to modify the agenda to include items of an emergency nature only at such public meeting.

(2) (a) The following entities may hold a meeting by means of virtual conferencing if the requirements of subdivision (2)(b) of this section are met:

(i) A state agency, state board, state commission, state council, or state committee, or an advisory committee of any such state entity;

(ii) An organization, including the governing body, created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, the Joint Public Agency Act, or the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act;

(iii) The governing body of a public power district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(iv) The governing body of a public power and irrigation district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(v) An educational service unit;

(vi) The Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council;

(vii) An organization, including the governing body, of a risk management pool or its advisory committees organized in accordance with the Intergovernmental Risk Management Act;

(viii) A community college board of governors;

(ix) The Nebraska Brand Committee;

(x) A local public health department;

(xi) A metropolitan utilities district;

(xii) A regional metropolitan transit authority;

(xiii) A natural resources district; and

(xiv) The Judicial Resources Commission.

(b) The requirements for holding a meeting by means of virtual conferencing are as follows:

(i) Reasonable advance publicized notice is given as provided in subsection (1) of this section, including providing access to a dial-in number or link to the virtual conference;

(ii) In addition to the public's right to participate by virtual conferencing, reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend at a physical site and participate as provided in section 84-1412, including reasonable seating, in at least one designated site in a building open to the public and identified in the notice, with: At least one member of the entity holding such meeting, or his or her designee, present at each site; a recording of the hearing by audio or visual recording devices; and a reasonable opportunity for input, such as public comment or questions, is provided to at least the same extent as would be provided if virtual conferencing was not used;

(iii) At least one copy of all documents being considered at the meeting is available at any physical site open to the public where individuals may attend the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act; and

(iv) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision or subsection (4) of section 79-2204, no more than one-half of the meetings of the state entities, advisory committees, boards, councils, organizations, or governing bodies are held by virtual conferencing in a calendar year. In the case of an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas at wholesale on a multistate basis or an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, the organization may hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if such organization holds at least one meeting each calendar year that is not by virtual conferencing. The governing body of a risk management pool that meets at least quarterly and the advisory committees of the governing body may each hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if the governing body's quarterly meetings are not held by virtual conferencing.

(3) Virtual conferencing, emails, faxes, or other electronic communication shall not be used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act.

(4) The secretary or other designee of each public body shall maintain a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and shall make reasonable efforts to provide advance notification to them of the time and place of each meeting and the subjects to be discussed at that meeting.

(5) When it is necessary to hold an emergency meeting without reasonable advance public notice, the nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes and any formal action taken in such meeting shall pertain only to the emergency. Such emergency meetings may be held by virtual conferencing. The provisions of subsection (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting emergency meetings. Complete minutes of such emergency meetings specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available to the public by no later than the end of the next regular business day.

(6) A public body may allow a member of the public or any other witness to appear before the public body by means of virtual conferencing.

(7) (a) Notwithstanding subsections (2) and (5) of this section, if an emergency is declared by the Governor pursuant to the Emergency Management Act as defined in section 81-829.39, a public body the territorial jurisdiction of which is included in the emergency declaration, in whole or in part, may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing during such emergency if the public body gives reasonable advance publicized notice as described in subsection (1) of this section. The notice shall include information regarding access for the public and news media. In addition to any formal action taken pertaining to the emergency, the public body may hold such meeting for the purpose of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action by the public body.

(b) The public body shall provide access by providing a dial-in number or a link to the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act. Reasonable arrangements shall be made to accommodate the public's right to hear and speak at the meeting and record the meeting. Subsection (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting such meetings.

(c) The nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes. Complete minutes of such meeting specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available for inspection as provided in subsections (5) and (6) of section 84-1413.

**84-1412. Meetings of public body; rights of public; public body; powers and duties.**

(1) Subject to the Open Meetings Act, the public has the right to attend and the right to speak at meetings of public bodies, and all or any part of a meeting of a public body, except for closed sessions called pursuant to section 84-1410, may be videotaped, televised, photographed, broadcast, or recorded by any person in attendance by means

of a tape recorder, a camera, video equipment, or any other means of pictorial or sonic reproduction or in writing.

(2) It shall not be a violation of subsection (1) of this section for any public body to make and enforce reasonable rules and regulations regarding the conduct of persons attending, speaking at, videotaping, televising, photographing, broadcasting, or recording its meetings, including meetings held by virtual conferencing. A body may not be required to allow citizens to speak at each meeting, but it may not forbid public participation at all meetings.

(3) No public body shall require members of the public to identify themselves as a condition for admission to the meeting nor shall such body require that the name of any member of the public be placed on the agenda prior to such meeting in order to speak about items on the agenda. The body shall require any member of the public desiring to address the body to identify himself or herself, including an address and the name of any organization represented by such person unless the address requirement is waived to protect the security of the individual.

(4) No public body shall, for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act, hold a meeting in a place known by the body to be too small to accommodate the anticipated audience.

(5) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds its meeting in its traditional meeting place which is located in this state.

(6) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds a meeting outside of this state if, but only if:

(a) A member entity of the public body is located outside of this state and the meeting is in that member's jurisdiction;

(b) All out-of-state locations identified in the notice are located within public buildings used by members of the entity or at a place which will accommodate the anticipated audience;

(c) Reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend, hear, and speak at the meeting, including making virtual conferencing available at an in-state location to members, the public, or the press, if requested twenty-four hours in advance;

(d) No more than twenty-five percent of the public body's meetings in a calendar year are held out-of-state;

(e) Out-of-state meetings are not used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act; and

(f) The public body publishes notice of the out-of-state meeting at least twenty-one days before the date of the meeting in a legal newspaper of statewide circulation.

(7) Each public body shall, upon request, make a reasonable effort to accommodate the public's right to hear the discussion and testimony presented at a meeting.

(8) Public bodies shall make available at the meeting or the in-state location for virtual conferencing as required by subdivision (6)(c) of this section, for examination and copying by members of the public, at least one copy of all reproducible written material to be discussed at an open meeting, either in paper or electronic form. Public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room at a location accessible to members of the public. At the beginning of the meeting, the public shall be informed about the location of the posted information.

**84-1413. Meetings; minutes; roll call vote; secret ballot; when.**

(1) Each public body shall keep minutes of all meetings showing the time, place, members present and absent, and the substance of all matters discussed.

(2) Any action taken on any question or motion duly moved and seconded shall be by roll call vote of the public body in open session, and the record shall state how each member voted or if the member was absent or not voting. The requirements of a roll call or viva voce vote shall be satisfied by a public body which utilizes an electronic voting device which allows the yeas and nays of each member of such public body to be readily seen by the public.

(3) The vote to elect leadership within a public body may be taken by secret ballot, but the total number of votes for each candidate shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) The minutes of all meetings and evidence and documentation received or disclosed in open session shall be public records and open to public inspection during normal business hours.

(5) Minutes shall be written, except as provided in subsection (6) of this section, and available for inspection within ten working days or prior to the next convened meeting, whichever occurs earlier, except that cities of the second class and villages may have an additional ten working days if the employee responsible for writing the minutes is absent due to a serious illness or emergency.

(6) Minutes of the meetings of the board of a school district or educational service unit may be kept as an electronic record.

(7) Beginning July 31, 2022, the governing body of a natural resources district, the city council of a city of the metropolitan class, the city council of a city of the primary class, the city council of a city of the first class, the county board of a county with a population greater than twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and the school board of a school district shall make available on such entity's public web site the agenda and minutes of any meeting of the governing body. The agenda shall be placed on the web site at least twenty-four hours before the meeting of the governing body. Minutes shall be placed on the web site at such time as the minutes are available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of this section. This information shall be available on the public web site for at least six months.

**84-1414. Unlawful action by public body; declared void or voidable by district court; when; duty to enforce open meeting laws; citizen's suit; procedure; violations; penalties.**

(1) Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be declared void by the district court if the suit is commenced within one hundred twenty days of the meeting of the public body at which the alleged violation occurred. Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in substantial violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be voidable by the district court if the suit is commenced more than one hundred twenty days after but within one year of the meeting of the public body in which the alleged violation occurred. A suit to void any final action shall be commenced within one year of the action.

(2) The Attorney General and the county attorney of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets shall enforce the Open Meetings Act.

(3) Any citizen of this state may commence a suit in the district court of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets or in which the plaintiff resides for the purpose of requiring compliance with or preventing violations of the Open Meetings Act, for the purpose of declaring an action of a public body void, or for the purpose of determining the applicability of the act to discussions or decisions of the public body. It shall not be a defense that the citizen attended the meeting and failed to object at such time. The court may order payment of reasonable attorney's fees and court costs to a successful plaintiff in a suit brought under this section.

(4) Any member of a public body who knowingly violates or conspires to violate or who attends or remains at a meeting knowing that the public body is in violation of any provision of the Open Meetings Act shall be guilty of a Class IV misdemeanor for a first offense and a Class III misdemeanor for a second or subsequent offense.

Revised  
06/2021



PERRY, GUTHERY, HAASE & GESSFORD, P.C., L.L.O.  
233 South 13th Street, Suite 1400,  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
(402) 476-9200  
perrylawfirm.com



Nebraska Council  
of School Administrators  
455 South 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite A  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
(402) 476-8055  
ncsa.org

*How NDE School Safety  
can support your  
mental health efforts.*

April 6, 2022

Jolene Palmer, Director of School Safety  
Nebraska Department of Education



*Policies and Procedures*



# *Curriculum*

*Just data*



*Suicide Screener*



*Video presentations:*

- Policy & Procedure development
- Re-Entry for staff
- Re-Entry for case management team

The logo features the text "SAFE 2 HELP" in a bold, sans-serif font. "SAFE" and "HELP" are blue, while the number "2" is green. The text is enclosed in a green speech bubble outline. Below the speech bubble, the word "NEBRASKA" is written in a smaller, green, sans-serif font.

**SAFE 2 HELP**

NEBRASKA

Giving a voice to the voiceless



## A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN



+



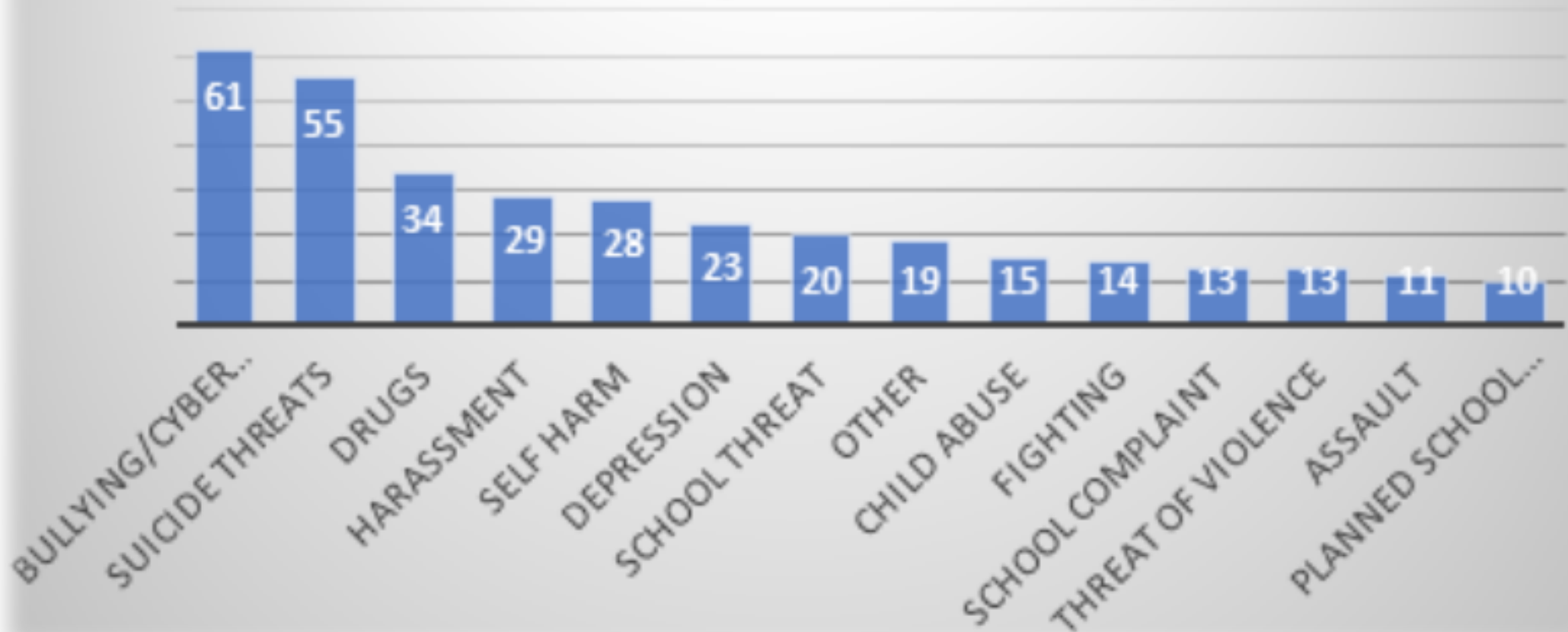
Diana Schmidt, Boys Town  
Safe2HelpNE Manager

Dr. Jolene Palmer, NDE  
Director of School Safety



# Concerning behaviors reported:

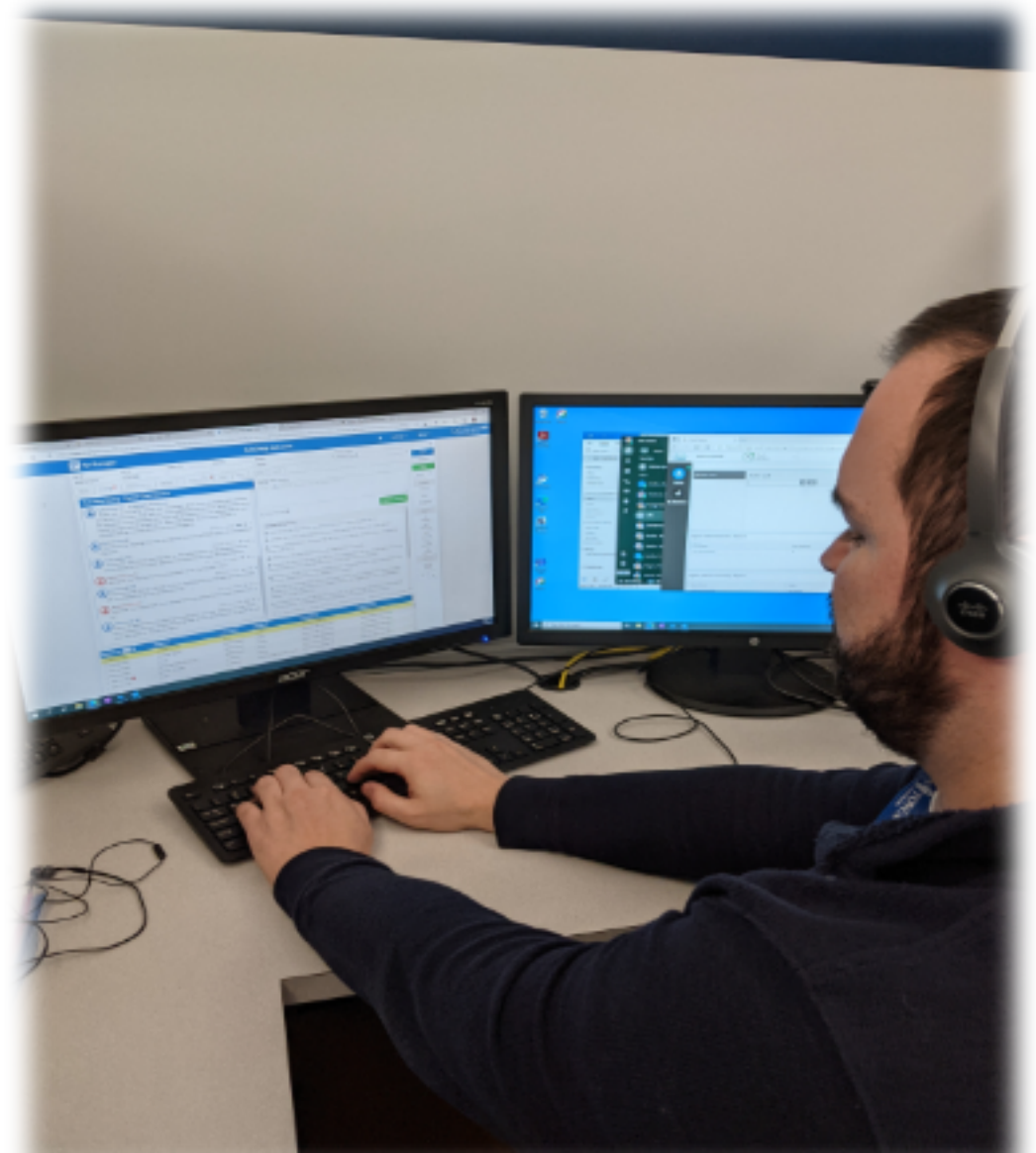
## 2021 Top 15 Event Types





# Report-line specifics drive the data

- Responded to 24/7/365
- Live person – interactive –
  - Dialog \*
  - Capability to upload images
- Anonymous
- Multi-modal
- Info immediately given to  
local TA team members
- Reports can easily run from the data





# Benefits of Safe2HelpNE

- Get info to keep your students and staff safe
- Local control – threat assessment team drives
  - Investigation
  - Follow-up
  - District/school owns their data
- Life Safety reports addressed immediately
  - Coordinated by Report-line Crisis Counselors
  - Districts/Schools working together with Crisis Counselors
- Data specific to your school

The logo for 'SAFE 2 HELP' is enclosed in a light green speech bubble shape. The word 'SAFE' is in blue, '2' is in green, and 'HELP' is in blue. Below it, the word 'NEBRASKA' is written in green.

SAFE 2 HELP

NEBRASKA

81.9%

Giving a voice to the voiceless

GRAND ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

8555 SUICIDE AWARENESS

The purpose of this policy is to protect the health and well-being of all the Grand Island Public Schools students by having procedures in place to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide.

The district:

- a. recognizes that physical, behavioral, and emotional health is an integral component of a student's educational outcomes,
- b. further recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among young people,
- c. has an ethical responsibility to take a proactive approach in preventing deaths by suicide, and
- d. acknowledges the school's role in providing an environment which is sensitive to individual and societal factors that place youth at greater risk for suicide and one which helps to foster positive youth development.

The Grand Island Public Schools superintendent or designee shall develop a suicide intervention protocol and monitor a district suicide prevention team. This team will be responsible for planning and coordinating the implementation of this policy for the Grand Island Public Schools. The building administrator shall report students they believe to be at elevated risk for suicide to the district suicide prevention team.

Developmentally-appropriate, student-centered education materials will be integrated into the PreK-12 curriculum. All staff will receive annual professional development of at least one hour on risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, postvention, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention.

In situations where a student is assessed at risk for suicide or has made a suicide attempt, the student's parent or guardian will be informed as soon as practicable by the principal, designee, or mental health professional. GIPS staff will seek parental permission to communicate with outside mental health care providers regarding their child.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the district suicide prevention team and distributed in all student/parent and teacher handbooks and on the school website.

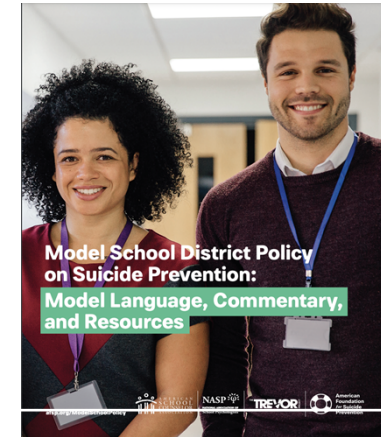
Legal Reference: Nebraska Revised Statute 79-2,146  
2014 LB 923 § 4

Policy Adopted: 05.14.2015 – Public Hearing  
Policy revised: 03.16.2020

## NDE - Process for Developing School Suicide Policy and Procedures



*The Model School District Policy on Suicide Prevention* has been utilized in the development of this example for Nebraska schools. The model policy is a collaborative project of the American School Counselor Association, the National Association of School Psychologists, The Trevor Project, and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. The model is based on suicide prevention research about the best way for schools to help those students who live with suicidal ideation. The *Model School District Policy on Suicide Prevention* provides a template for school districts to use as a guide when developing their own policies.



**This model policy is free and available to the public. Schools should keep in mind when adopting a policy and procedural plan, you are assuming responsibility for making sure it is followed with fidelity. Therefore, the provisions of the policy and procedures should be carefully considered to determine the best route for your particular school setting and ensure that the policy meets legal specifications. The policy includes an implementation checklist for schools to review as part of the process.**

**The following sections contain the text from the *Model School Policy on Suicide Prevention* example. It is offered as a template that can be adapted for schools. In an effort to make the policy/procedures relevant and practical for individual Nebraska schools, considerations and/or questions to explore during development are noted in the column to the right of each section.**



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From [The Model School District Policy on Suicide Prevention](#) p.26

### ***Implementation Considerations for Schools***

*After reviewing this Model School District Policy, you may be interested in implementing it in your own school district. If your district has policies and procedures in place, you should examine them to determine if they are comprehensive and address the components outlined in the Model School District Policy. District policies should include the following:*

- *Requirement for training — ideally at least one hour every year for all school staff, including bus drivers, cafeteria staff, coaches, security, etc. — on suicide prevention, including education about mental health and warning signs or risk*
  - *Consideration of populations at high risk for suicide, such as LGBTQ youth*
  - *Requirement for a designated school suicide prevention coordinator*
  - *Description of all suicide prevention team member roles and responsibilities, and the flow of communication and tasks*
  - *Designation of the process for suicide risk assessments (either with school-employed mental health professionals or by arrangement with a community mental health professional)*
  - *Requirement for continuously-updated referral list that has, at the minimum, emergency contacts such as local hospitals and their mental health clinics and referral numbers*
  - *Procedures for in-school suicide attempt, including re-entry processes*
  - *Consideration of out-of-school suicide attempts and how parents should be informed and involved*
- Postvention procedures that follow the After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools recommendations and safely discuss a suicide attempt or death with the school community.*

## NDE - Process for Developing School Suicide Policy and Procedures



<p><b><u>Model School Policy on Suicide Prevention</u> FRAMEWORK:</b>  <b>This framework is a template to guide the development of school suicide policies and procedures and should be adapted for each district.</b></p>	<p><b>CONSIDERATIONS FOR NEBRASKA SCHOOLS:</b>  <i>Clarifications or questions to assist schools in developing policy and procedures to fit the district’s resources, needs, and capacity.</i></p>
<p><b>PURPOSE (EXAMPLE):</b></p> <p>The purpose of this policy is to protect the health and well-being of all students by having procedures in place to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide.</p> <p>The district:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes that physical and mental health are integral components of student outcomes, both educationally and beyond graduation</li> <li>• Further recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among young people</li> <li>• Has an ethical responsibility to take a proactive approach in preventing deaths by suicide</li> <li>• Acknowledges the school’s role in providing an environment that is sensitive to individual and societal factors that place youth at greater risk for suicide and helps to foster positive youth development and resilience</li> <li>• Acknowledges that comprehensive suicide prevention policies include prevention, intervention, and postvention components</li> </ul> <p>This policy is meant to be paired with other policies supporting the overall emotional and behavioral health of students.</p>	<p><b>PURPOSE Considerations:</b></p> <p><i>The purpose helps lay the groundwork for the general responsibilities of the district related to suicide. Your district can take much of the content of this model policy and build into your district’s policy introduction.</i></p> <p><i>If your district has other policies that connect with this policy (such as school safety policies or staff development policies), you could list those policies here.</i></p>

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<p><b>SCOPE (EXAMPLE):</b></p> <p>This policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• covers actions that take place in the school, on school property, at school-sponsored functions and activities, on school buses or vehicles and at bus stops, and at school-sponsored out-of-school events where school staff are present.</li> <li>• applies to the entire school community, including educators, school and district staff, students, parents/guardians, and volunteers,</li> <li>• also covers appropriate school responses to suicidal or high-risk behaviors that take place outside of the school environment.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>SCOPE Considerations:</i></b></p> <p><i>The scope makes it clear that this policy encompasses all areas and all staff in the school.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Are there additional sites that your district uses (such as off-campus work or career sites, after-school programs, etc.)</i></li> <li>• <i>Are there other groups that need to be included, such as student-teachers or practicum students?</i></li> <li>• <i>Does your district have other policies that cover suicide threats on social media? If not, consider adding here.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>DEFINITIONS (EXAMPLE):</b></p> <p><b>At-Risk:</b> Suicide risk is not a dichotomous concern, but rather, exists on a continuum with various levels of risk. Each level of risk requires a different level of response and intervention by the school and the district. A student who is defined as high-risk for suicide is one who has made a suicide attempt, has the intent to die by suicide, or has displayed a significant change in behavior suggesting the onset of potential mental health conditions or a deterioration of mental health. The student may have thoughts about suicide, including potential means of death, and may have a plan. In addition, the student may exhibit behaviors or feelings of isolation, hopelessness, helplessness, and the inability to tolerate any more pain. This situation would necessitate a referral, as documented in the following procedures. The type of referral, and its level of</p>	<p><b><i>DEFINITIONS Considerations:</i></b></p> <p><i>Your district may want to consider including a section with definitions, since some terms associated with suicide support may not be familiar to the general community. Defining the terms also gives school staff a common language to use when addressing suicide concerns.</i></p> <p><b><i>At-Risk:</i></b> <i>Screening procedures in the district's procedures will help determine the level of risk and necessary response. Do you have a process in place and staff trained in completing a screening?</i></p>

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urgency, shall be determined by the student's level of risk — according to local district policy.

**Crisis Team:** A multidisciplinary team of administrative staff, mental health professionals, safety professionals, and support staff whose primary focus is to address crisis preparedness, intervention, response and recovery. Crisis Team members often include someone from the administrative leadership, school psychologists, school counselors, school social workers, school nurses, resource police officers, and others including support staff and/or teachers. These professionals have been specifically trained in areas of crisis preparedness and take a leadership role in developing crisis plans, ensuring school staff can effectively execute various crisis protocols, and may provide mental health services for effective crisis interventions and recovery supports. Crisis team members who are mental health professionals may provide crisis intervention and services.

**Mental Health:** A state of mental, emotional, and cognitive health that can impact perceptions, choices and actions affecting wellness and functioning. Mental health conditions include depression, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and substance use disorders. Mental health can be impacted by the home and social environment, early childhood adversity or trauma, physical health, and genes.

**Postvention:** Suicide postvention is a crisis intervention strategy designed to assist with the grief process following suicide loss. This strategy, when used appropriately, reduces the risk of suicide contagion, provides the support needed to help survivors cope with a suicide death, addresses the social stigma associated with suicide, and disseminates factual information after the death of a member of the school community. Often a community or school's healthy postvention effort can lead to readiness to engage further with suicide prevention efforts and save lives.

***Crisis/PFA Team:** Your district may identify your crisis team as your Psychological First Aid for Schools team. This team should meet on a scheduled basis and have regular training opportunities. NDE provides opportunities for PFA training on eight core actions.*

*This provides an opportunity to revisit the composition of your PFA/Crisis team and the ongoing training and preparation needed to be prepared for crises, including suicide attempts and completions.*

*Your procedures need to address suicide contagion.*



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**Suicide Attempt:** A self-injurious behavior for which there is evidence that the person had at least some intent to die. A suicide attempt may result in death, injuries, or no injuries. A mixture of ambivalent feelings, such as a wish to die and a desire to live, is a common experience with most suicide attempts. Therefore, ambivalence is not a reliable indicator of the seriousness or level of danger of a suicide attempt or the person’s overall risk.

**Suicidal Behavior:** Suicide attempts, injury to oneself associated with at least some level of intent, developing a plan or strategy for suicide, gathering the means for a suicide plan, or any other overt action or thought indicating intent to end one’s life.

**Suicidal Ideation:** Thinking about, considering, or planning for self-injurious behavior that may result in death. A desire to be dead without a plan or the intent to end one’s life is still considered suicidal ideation and shall be taken seriously.

**Suicide Contagion:** The process by which suicidal behavior or a suicide completion influences an increase in the suicide risk of others. Identification, modeling, and guilt are each thought to play a role in contagion. Although rare, suicide contagion can result in a cluster of suicides within a community.

### **PREVENTION PROCEDURES (EXAMPLE):**

#### **District Policy Implementation:**

A district-level suicide prevention coordinator shall be appointed by the superintendent or designee. The district suicide prevention coordinator and building principal shall be responsible for planning and coordinating implementation of this policy for the school district. Each school principal shall

### ***PREVENTION Considerations:***

*Who is assigned to be your district suicide prevention coordinator? This will depend on the size of your district and staff who would be most appropriate to be the coordinator (student services or safety department chair, PFA/crisis team leader)*

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designate a school suicide prevention coordinator to act as a point of contact in each school for issues relating to suicide prevention and policy implementation. This may be an existing staff person. All staff members shall report students they believe to be at-risk for suicide to the school suicide prevention coordinator or appropriate school mental health professional if the coordinator is unavailable.

### **Staff Professional Development:**

All staff shall receive, at minimum, annual professional development on risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, postvention, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention. The professional development shall include additional information regarding groups of students at elevated risk for suicide, including those living with mental and/or substance use disorders, those who engage in self-harm or have attempted suicide, those in out-of-home settings (e.g., youth in foster care, group homes, incarcerated youth), those experiencing homelessness, American Indian/Alaska Native students, LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning) students, students bereaved by suicide, and those with medical conditions or certain types of disabilities. Additional professional development in risk assessment and crisis intervention shall be provided to school-employed mental health professionals and school nurses.

### **Youth Suicide Prevention Programming:**

Developmentally appropriate, student-centered education materials shall be integrated into the curriculum of all K-12 health classes and other classes as

*Which staff members will be the initial contact for suicide risk in each building? Typically would be those trained in your screener - school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, LMHP, etc.*

- *What will be the involvement of your crisis team/PFA personnel? Who would be your contact?*

*Does your school have a reporting system for staff and students, such as Safe to Help?*

*Your school will minimally provide the one hour annual training as per LB 923 Suicide Awareness for School Staff - (requirement since 2015-16).*

- *Is this training required in your school to be completed by a certain date?*
- *Who in the district will conduct the training?*
- *Some approved trainings can be accessed here: [Suicide Prevention – Nebraska Department of Education](#)*
- *Does training include support for higher risk groups?*

*Does your school provide additional staff development for mental health professionals?*



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school-employed mental health professional, such as a school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker, within the same school day to assess risk and facilitate referral if necessary. Educators shall also be aware of written threats and expressions about suicide and death in school assignments. Such incidences require immediate referral to the appropriate school-employed mental health professional. If there is no mental health professional available, a designated staff member (e.g., school nurse or administrator) shall address the situation according to district protocol until a mental health professional is brought in.

### **For At-Risk Youth:**

- School staff shall continuously supervise the student to ensure their safety until the assessment process is complete
- The principal and school suicide prevention coordinator shall be made aware of the situation as soon as reasonably possible
- The school-employed mental health professional or principal shall contact the student's parent or guardian, as described in the Parental Notification Involvement section and in compliance with existing state law/ district policy (if applicable), and shall assist the family with urgent referral
- Urgent referral may include, but is not limited to, working with the parent or guardian to set up an outpatient mental health or primary care appointment and conveying the reason for referral to the healthcare provider; in some instances, particularly life-threatening situations, the school may be required to contact emergency services, or arrange for the student to be transported to the local Emergency Department, preferably by a parent or guardian

- *Who is designated to assess risk/administer screener?*
- *What screener will you use?*
- *Do all staff know how to recognize warning signs and risk factors?*
- *Do they know who to report concerns to and the process to be followed?*
- *Do all staff know how to build protective factors?*

*Follow your PFA/Crisis Plan and make sure it is aligned to your school policies/procedures*

- *Are there specific populations in your school that are most at risk for suicide?*
- *Who will contact the parents? (Make sure your procedures include a personal phone call to arrange an immediate meeting.)*
- *If you need to make an urgent referral, what are the community agencies in your school district that you would refer students to?*

*This is a good time to remind the staff that we are all mandatory reporters; follow your school procedures for reporting.*

- *Have all staff been trained in minimal facts reporting?*

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If parental abuse or neglect is suspected or reported, the appropriate state protection officials (e.g., local Child Protection Services) shall be contacted in lieu of parents as per law</li> <li>• Staff will ask the student’s parent or guardian, and/or eligible student, for written permission to discuss the student’s health with outside care providers, if appropriate</li> </ul> <p><b>When School Personnel Need to Engage Law Enforcement</b></p> <p>A school’s crisis response plan shall address situations when school personnel need to engage law enforcement. When a student is actively suicidal and the immediate safety of the student or others is at-risk (such as when a weapon is in the possession of the student), school staff shall call 911 immediately. The staff calling shall provide as much information about the situation as possible, including the name of the student, any weapons the student may have, and where the student is located. School staff may tell the dispatcher that the student is a suicidal emotionally disturbed person, or “suicidal EDP”, to allow for the dispatcher to send officers with specific training in crisis de-escalation and mental illness.</p>	<p><i>You do not need written permission when there is credible concern for the student’s life or the lives of others.</i></p> <p><i>Your flow-chart/procedures should include conditions that will require law enforcement involvement.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Have you collaborated with your local law enforcement agencies to ensure common language is used?</i></li> <li>• <i>Is law enforcement involved with your PFA/Crisis team?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>PARENTAL NOTIFICATION AND INVOLVEMENT (EXAMPLE):</b></p> <p><i>Disclaimer: Reporting requirements, parental rights and school responsibilities related to referrals may vary from state to state. For example, if a school district advises a parent that the child must be examined by a mental health professional prior to returning to school, then the district may be required to pay for the costs of such medical treatment. School districts</i></p>	<p><b><i>PARENT NOTIFICATION AND INVOLVEMENT (considerations):</i></b></p> <p><i>Your district procedures flowchart should be followed, with parents immediately notified when there is a suicide concern. .</i></p>

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*should consult with their board attorney regarding parental notification and involvement and school responsibility for referrals.*

The principal, designee, or school mental health professional shall inform the student's parent or guardian on the same school day, or as soon as possible, any time a student is identified as having any level of risk for suicide or if the student has made a suicide attempt (pursuant to school/state codes, unless notifying the parent will put the student at increased risk of harm). Following parental notification and based on initial risk assessment, the principal, designee, or school mental health professional may offer recommendations for next steps based on perceived student need. These can include but are not limited to, an additional, external mental health evaluation conducted by a qualified health professional or emergency service provider.

*When a student indicates suicidal intent, schools shall attempt to discuss safety at home, or "means safety" with parent or guardian, limiting the student's access to mechanisms for carrying out a suicide attempt e.g., guns, knives, pills, etc. In addition, during means counseling, which can also include safety planning, it is imperative to ask parents whether or not the individual has access to a firearm, medication or other lethal means.*

**Lethal means counseling shall include discussing the following:**

### **Firearms**

- Inquire of the parent or guardian if firearms are kept in the home or are otherwise accessible to the student
- Recommend that parents store all guns away from home while the student is struggling — e.g., following state laws, store their guns with a relative, gun shop, or police

*This district's suicide procedures flow-chart can help guide the next steps.*

*You will want to provide parents with educational materials and problem solve with them about ways to keep the student's environment safe. include a discussion about means. This guide through the Nebr. Dept of Health & Human Services is an example of a resource (link below).*



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- Discuss parents' concerns and help problem-solve around offsite storage, and avoid a negative attitude about guns — accept parents where they are, but let them know offsite storage is an effective, immediate way to protect the student
- Explain that in-home locking is not as safe as offsite storage, as children and adolescents sometimes find the keys or get past the locks

If there are no guns at home:

- Ask about guns in other residences (e.g., joint custody situation, access to guns in the homes of friends or other family members)

If parent won't or can't store offsite:

- The next safest option is to unload guns, lock them in a gun safe, and lock ammunition separately (or don't keep ammunition at home for now)
- If guns are already locked, ask parents to consider changing the combination or key location — parents can be unaware that the student may know their "hiding" places

### **Medications:**

- Recommend the parent or guardian lock up all medications (except rescue meds like inhalers), either with a traditional lock box or a daily pill dispenser
- Recommend disposing of expired and unneeded medications, especially prescription pain pills
- Recommend parent maintain possession of the student's medication, only dispensing one dose at a time under supervision
- If parent won't or can't lock medication, advise they prioritize and seek specific guidance from a doctor or pharmacist regarding the following:

*Remind parents to monitor the student's social media accounts for warning signs as well.*

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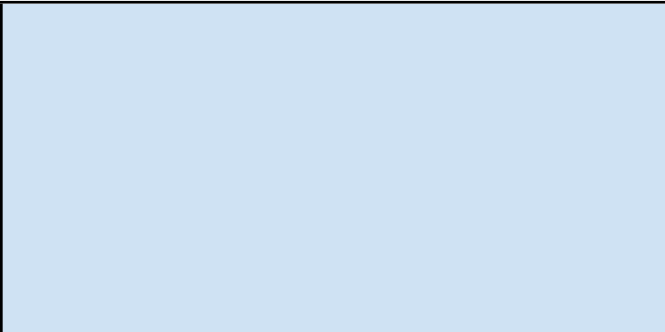


- Prescriptions, especially for pain, anxiety or insomnia
  - Over-the-counter pain pills
  - Over-the-counter sleeping pills
- Staff will also seek parental permission, in the form of a Release of Information form, to communicate with outside mental health care providers regarding the student's safety plan and access to lethal means.

**RE-ENTRY PROCEDURE (EXAMPLE):**

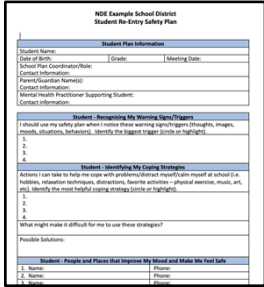
For students returning to school after a mental health crisis (e.g., suicide attempt or psychiatric hospitalization), whenever possible, a school-employed mental health professional, the principal, or designee shall meet with the student's parent or guardian, and if appropriate, include the student to discuss re-entry. This meeting shall address next steps needed to ensure the student's readiness for return to school and plan for the first day back. Following a student hospitalization, parents may be encouraged to inform the school counselor of the student's hospitalization to ensure continuity of service provision and increase the likelihood of a successful re-entry.

1. A school-employed mental health professional or other designee shall be identified to coordinate with the student, their parent or guardian, and any outside health care providers. The school-employed mental health professional shall meet with the student and their parents or guardians to discuss and document a re-entry procedure and what would help to ease the transition back into the school environment (e.g., whether or not the student will be required to make up missed work, the nature of check-in/check-out visits, etc.). Any necessary accommodations shall also be discussed and documented.



**RE-ENTRY PROCEDURE (Considerations):**

[See example policy](#)  
*Procedural re-entry videos available on NDE website through the Nebraska School Suicide Resource Guide to assist with providing support for students during re-entry.*



*Consider:*

- Does your school have check in-check out as part of MTSS/PBiS? This could be utilized for students during re-entry.
- Which staff members will play key roles in re-entry safety planning?

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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. While not a requirement for re-entry, the school may coordinate with the hospital and any external mental health providers to assess the student for readiness to return to school.</li> <li>3. The designated staff person shall periodically check-in with the student to help with readjustment to the school community and address any ongoing concerns, including social or academic concerns.</li> <li>4. The school-employed mental health professional shall check-in with the student and the student’s parents or guardians at an agreed upon interval depending on the student’s needs either on the phone or in person for a mutually agreed upon time period (e.g. for a period of three months). These efforts are encouraged to ensure the student and their parents or guardians are supported in the transition, with more frequent check-ins initially, and then fading support.</li> <li>5. The administration shall disclose to the student’s teachers and other relevant staff (without sharing specific details of mental health diagnoses) that the student is returning after a medically-related absence and may need adjusted deadlines for assignments. The school-employed mental health professional shall be available to teachers to discuss any concerns they may have regarding the student after re-entry.</li> <li>6.</li> </ol> <p>For more detailed information on Points to Consider When Developing Re-Entry Policies, please visit the Commentary section of this document.</p>	<p><i>What school mental health professionals will be assisting the student and family during re-entry?</i></p> <p><i>How will needs &amp; accommodations be communicated with teachers?</i></p> <p><i>May want to include that FERPA supports sharing of information when there is a student danger</i></p>
<p><b>IN-SCHOOL SUICIDE ATTEMPTS (EXAMPLE):</b></p> <p>In the case of an in-school suicide attempt, the physical and mental health and safety of the student are paramount. In these situations:</p>	<p><b><i>IN-SCHOOL SUICIDE ATTEMPTS (Considerations):</i></b></p>

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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. First aid shall be rendered until professional medical services and/or transportation can be received, following district emergency medical procedures</li> <li>2. School staff shall supervise the student to ensure their safety</li> <li>3. Staff shall move all other students out of the immediate area as soon as possible</li> <li>4. The school-employed mental health professional or principal shall contact the student’s parent or guardian. (Note: See Parental Notification and Involvement section of this document).</li> <li>5. Staff shall immediately notify the principal or school suicide prevention coordinator regarding the incident of in-school suicide attempt</li> <li>6. The school shall engage the crisis team as necessary to assess whether additional steps should be taken to ensure student safety and well-being, including those students who may have had emotional or physical proximity to the victim</li> <li>7. Staff shall request a mental health assessment for the student as soon as possible.</li> </ol> <p><i>Since self-harm behaviors are on a continuum of level and urgency, not all instances of suicidal ideation or behavior warrant hospitalization. A mental health assessment, including a suicide risk assessment, can help determine the best treatment plan and disposition.</i></p>	<p><i>Follow PFA/Crisis Plan.</i></p> <p><i>Which staff member will be responsible to contact parents?</i></p> <p><i>Who will be providing supervision of the student?</i></p> <p><i>What resources do you have available for an immediate mental health referral?</i></p>
<p><b>OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUICIDE ATTEMPTS (EXAMPLE):</b></p> <p>If a staff member becomes aware of a suicide attempt by a student that is in progress in an out-of-school location, the staff member shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Call 911 (police and/or emergency medical services)</li> <li>2. Inform the student’s parent or guardian</li> </ol>	<p><b><i>OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUICIDE ATTEMPTS (Considerations):</i></b></p> <p><i>What steps do you want staff to take if a threat is indicated through social media?</i></p>

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<p>3. Inform the school suicide prevention coordinator and principal</p> <p>If the student contacts the staff member and expresses suicidal ideation, the staff member shall maintain contact with the student (either in person, online, or on the phone) and then enlist the assistance of another person to contact the police while maintaining engagement with the student.</p>	
<p><b>AFTER A SUICIDE (POSTVENTION) (EXAMPLE):</b></p> <p><b>Development and Implementation of a Crisis Response Plan:</b></p> <p>The crisis response team, led by a designated crisis response coordinator, shall develop a crisis response plan to guide school response following a death by suicide. This plan may be applicable to all school community related suicides whether it be student (past or present), staff, or other prominent school community member. Ideally, this plan shall be developed long before it is needed. A meeting of the crisis team to implement the plan shall take place immediately following word of the suicide death, even if the death has not yet been confirmed to be a suicide. For more detailed information on responding to a suicide death, please see the document After A Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools, which was revised in 2018.</p> <p><b>Action Plan Steps</b></p> <p><b>Step 1: Get the Facts</b></p> <p>The crisis response coordinator or other designated school official (e.g. the school’s principal or superintendent) shall confirm the death and determine the cause of death through communication with the student’s parent or guardian, the coroner’s office, local hospital, or police department. Before the death is officially classified as a suicide by the coroner’s office, the death</p>	<p><b>POSTVENTION Considerations:</b></p> <p><i>Each school district has established a Psychological First Aid/Crisis Team. Your team has established procedures for your district.</i></p> <p><i>Here is the link to the toolkit:</i>  <a href="#">After A Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools</a></p> <p><i>Name the community health providers in your community who may help provide support?</i></p> <p><i>Your district’s Psychological First Aid/Crisis</i></p>

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shall be reported to staff, students, and parents or guardians, with an acknowledgement that its cause is unknown. When a case is perceived as being an obvious instance of suicide, it shall not be labeled as such until after a cause of death ruling has been made. If the cause of death has been confirmed as suicide but the parent or guardian prefers the cause of death not be disclosed, the school may release a general statement without disclosing the student's name (e.g., "We had a ninth-grade student die over the weekend"). If the parents do not want to disclose cause of death, an administrator or mental health professional from the school who has a good relationship with the family shall be designated to speak with the parents to explain the benefits of sharing mental health resources and suicide prevention with students. If the family refuses to permit disclosure, schools may state "The family has requested that information about the cause of death not be shared at this time." Staff may also use the opportunity to talk with students about suicide.

### **Step 2: Assess the Situation**

The crisis response team shall meet to prepare the postvention response according to the crisis response plan. The team shall consider how the death is likely to affect other students, and determine which students are most likely to be affected. The crisis response team shall also consider how recently other traumatic events have occurred within the school community and the time of year of the suicide. The team and principal shall triage staff first, and all teachers directly involved with the victim shall be notified in-person and offered the opportunity for support.

***Another consideration related to communication after a suicide death involves educating parents and other adults on suicide grief, since adult***

*Team has probably developed messages that you could include.*

*Identify students in your school who may be significantly affected.*

- *Who are those students?*
- *How can you check in with them?*
- *How can you provide the resources they may need?*

*How can you and your staff monitor student reactions and emotional well-being in school or via social media?*

*Again, consult with your school's PFA/crisis team and determine how they plan to be involved in assessing and assisting staff and students.*

- *Who will be involved in educating adults?*

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*behavior following a suicide death can have a great impact on students, particularly elementary school-aged students.*

### **Step 3: Share Information**

Inform the faculty and staff that a sudden death has occurred, preferably in an all-staff meeting. The crisis response team shall provide a written statement for staff members to share with students and also assess staff's readiness to provide this message in the event a designee is needed. The statement shall include the basic facts of the death and known funeral arrangements (without providing details of the suicide method), recognition of the sorrow the news will cause, and information about the resources available to help students cope with their grief. Staff shall respond to questions only with factual information that has been confirmed. Staff shall dispel rumors with facts, be flexible with academic demands, encourage conversations about suicide and mental health, normalize a wide range of emotional reactions, and know the referral process and how to get help for a student. Avoid public address system announcements and school-wide assemblies in favor of face-to-face notifications, including small-group and classroom discussions. The crisis response team may prepare a letter — with the input and permission from the student's parent or guardian — to communicate with parents which includes facts about the death, information about what the school is doing to support students, the warning signs of suicidal behavior, and a list of resources available. If necessary, a parent meeting may also be planned. Staff shall direct all media inquiries to the designated school or district spokesperson.

### **Step 4: Avoid Suicide Contagion**

- *Do you have educational resources prepared and ready to go?*
- *Will your PFA/Crisis Team assist with this?*

*Make sure that your PFA/Crisis Team has included plans in case of a suicide and has the resources prepared.*

*You can follow your district PFA/Crisis Team protocols for releasing information.*

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Actively triage particular risk factors for contagion, including emotional proximity (e.g., siblings, friends, or teammates), physical proximity (witness, neighbor) and pre-existing mental health issues or trauma. Explain in an all-staff meeting that one purpose of trying to identify and provide services to other high-risk students is to prevent another death. The crisis response team shall work with teachers to identify students who are most likely to be significantly affected by the death, or who exhibit behavioral changes indicating increased risk. In the staff meeting, the crisis response team shall review suicide warning signs and procedures for referring students who present with increased risk. For those school personnel who are concerned that talking about suicide may contribute to contagion, it has been clearly demonstrated through research that talking about mental health and suicide in a nonjudgmental, open way that encourages dialogue and help-seeking does not elevate risk.

### Step 5: Initiate Support Services

Students identified as being more likely to be affected by the death will be assessed by a school mental health professional to determine the level of support needed. The crisis response team shall coordinate support services for students and staff in need of individual and small group counseling as needed. School-employed mental health professionals will provide on-going and long term support to students impacted by the death of the student, as needed. If long term intensive services by a community provider are warranted, the school-employed mental health professional will collaborate with that provider and the family to ensure continuity of care between the school, home, and community. Together with parents or guardians, crisis response team members shall provide information for partner community mental health providers, or providers with appropriate expertise, to ensure a

*Contagion is a real concern.*

- *How will your school take intentional steps to review risks/warning signs with staff?*
- *Who will be involved in identifying students and risk and providing triage?*
- *Does your school have a presentation and resources prepared?*

- *Will your school use your screening procedures to assess students who are potentially at risk?*
- *What types of resources do you have available in your school and community to provide on-going support?*
- *Will your mental health professionals offer grief/trauma groups following a suicide?*
- *How can you also support staff?*

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smooth transition from the crisis intervention phase to meeting underlying or ongoing mental health needs. These discussions may include debriefing (orientation to the facts), reflection on memories, reminders for and re-teaching of coping skills, and encouraging spending time with friends and caregivers as soon as possible. Students and staff affected by the suicide death shall be encouraged to return to a normal routine as much as possible, understanding that some deviation from routine is to be expected.

### **Step 6: Develop Memorial Plans**

The school shall develop policy regarding memorialization due to any cause and strive to treat all deaths the same way. Avoid planned on-campus physical memorials (e.g. photos, flowers, locker displays), funeral services, tributes, or flying the flag at half-staff, because it may inadvertently sensationalize the death and encourage suicide contagion among vulnerable students. Spontaneous memorials may occur from students expressing their grief. Cards, letters, and pictures may be given to the student's family after being reviewed by school administration. If items indicate that additional students may be at increased risk for suicide and/or in need of additional mental health support (e.g. writing about a wish to die or other risk behavior), outreach shall be made to those students to help determine level of risk and appropriate response. The school shall also leave a notice for when the memorial will be removed and given to the student's family. Online memorial pages shall use safe messaging, include resources to obtain information and support, be monitored by an adult, and be time limited. School shall not be canceled for the funeral or for reasons related to the death. Any school-based memorials (e.g., small gatherings) shall include a focus on how to prevent future suicides and prevention resources available. For more information on memorials after a death, please refer to the

*Follow PFA/crisis team training guidelines. Each district is encouraged to set up specific guidelines for temporary memorials and share that information with students and parents in handbooks and on websites.*

*These guidelines can then be referenced in your suicide policy/procedures. If this is not in place, the school will want to consider getting these developed since the time to do it is not when the school is in the middle of a crisis.*

## NDE - Process for Developing School Suicide Policy and Procedures



Memorialization section (pgs. 25-31) of the document *After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools*.

*It is noteworthy that even articles that are inappropriate to share with families may have been therapeutic for the students to create. Allowing for these memorials to stay in place for a brief period up to the funeral (up to approximately five days), and monitoring memorials while in place, is recommended to avoid hostile and glamorizing messaging and to monitor for at-risk students.*

### **Step 7: Postvention as Prevention**

Following a student suicide, schools may take the initiative to review and/or revise existing policies.

### **External Communication**

The school or district-appointed spokesperson shall be the sole media spokesperson. Staff shall refer all inquiries from the media directly to the spokesperson. The spokesperson shall:

- Keep the district superintendent and school crisis response coordinator informed of school actions relating to the death
- Prepare a statement for the media, which may include the facts of the death, postvention plans, and available resources — the statement shall not include confidential information, speculation about victim motivation, means of suicide, or personal family information

The school or district-appointed spokesperson shall answer all media inquiries. If a suicide is to be reported by news media, the spokesperson shall encourage reporters to follow safe messaging guidelines (e.g. not to make it a front-page story, not to use pictures of the suicide victim, not to use the word suicide in the caption of the story, not to describe the method of suicide, and not to use

*Here is the link to the toolkit:*

[After A Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools](#)

*Your district postvention procedures following a student suicide should include a review of your district policy and procedures.*

*Identify your district spokesperson and make sure all school staff are aware of communication protocols.*

*Again, PFA/crisis team has possibly developed example statements that can be used as part of the communication process.*

## NDE - Process for Developing School Suicide Policy and Procedures



the phrase “suicide epidemic”) to mitigate the risk of suicide contagion. The spokesperson shall encourage media not to link bullying to suicide, and not to speculate about the reason for suicide and instead offer the community information on suicide risk factors, warning signs, and resources available.

### **SAMPLE LANGUAGE FOR STUDENT HANDBOOK (EXAMPLE):**

Protecting the health and well-being of all students is of utmost importance to the school district. The school board has adopted a suicide prevention policy which will help to protect all students through the following steps:

- Students will learn about recognizing and responding to warning signs of suicide in friends, using coping skills, support systems, and seeking help for themselves and friends. This curricular content will occur in all health classes throughout the school year, not just in response to a suicide, and the encouragement of help-seeking behavior will be promoted at all levels of the school leadership and stakeholders
- Each school or district will designate a suicide prevention coordinator to serve as a point of contact for students in crisis and to refer students to appropriate resources
- When a student is identified as being at-risk, a risk assessment will be completed by a trained school staff member who will work with the student and help connect the student to appropriate local resources
- Students will have access to national resources that they can contact for additional support, such as:

### ***SAMPLE LANGUAGE FOR STUDENT HANDBOOK (Considerations):***

*In your student handbook, you will need to include:*

- *specific steps taken to educate students about suicide risk (including curriculum)*
- *the district and building staff members identified as suicide prevention coordinators (depends on the district size and staff available)*
- *an awareness of warning signs and risk factors and procedures to follow if concerned about another student or oneself*
- *steps that are taken when a student is showing suicidal ideation*

*Determine which support contacts you are going to consistently provide to students. Include the*

## NDE - Process for Developing School Suicide Policy and Procedures



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) <a href="http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org">suicidepreventionlifeline.org</a></li> <li>• The Trevor Lifeline: 1-866-488-7386, <a href="http://thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now">thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now</a>, Trevor Lifeline Text/Chat Services, available 24/7 Text “TREVOR” to 678-678, Crisis Text Line: Text TALK to 741-741 <a href="http://crisistextline.org">crisistextline.org</a></li> </ul> <p>All school personnel and students will be expected to help create a school culture of respect and support, in which students feel comfortable seeking help for themselves or friends. Students are encouraged to tell any staff member if they or a friend are feeling suicidal, or are in need of help.</p> <p>While confidentiality and privacy are important, students should know that when there is risk of suicide, safety comes first.</p> <p>For a more detailed review of policy changes, please see the district’s full suicide prevention policy.</p>	<p><i>National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (becoming text 988) and your local district reporting system (such as Safe2Help Nebraska).</i></p> <p><i>Relationship building and helping all students make connections with school staff are essential.</i></p> <p><i>Student hand-books should include statements about how confidentiality is superseded by safety concerns.</i></p>
<p><b>BEST PRACTICE: SUICIDE PREVENTION TASK FORCE (EXAMPLE):</b></p> <p>It is recommended that school districts establish a suicide prevention task force in conjunction with adopting a suicide prevention policy. Such a task force should consist of administrators, parents, teachers, school-employed mental health professionals, representatives from community suicide prevention services, and other individuals with expertise in youth mental health, under the administration of a district suicide prevention coordinator. The purpose of such</p>	<p><b><i>BEST PRACTICE: SUICIDE PREVENTION TASK FORCE (Considerations):</i></b></p> <p><i>In many Nebraska school districts, this would likely be your PFA/Crisis team members. In a large district you might create a task force and</i></p>

# NDE - Process for Developing School Suicide Policy and Procedures



a task force is to provide advice to the district administration and school board regarding suicide prevention activities and policy implementation, and to keep aware of current research, data, trends, and evolving best practices. In addition, the task force can help to compile a list of community resources to assist with suicide prevention activities and referrals to community mental health providers.

*include representation from your PFA/Crisis team.*

Visit these pages in the [The Model School Policy on Suicide Prevention](#) for additional information:

Commentary.....	15
Parental Involvement .....	16
Importance of School-Based Mental Health Supports .....	17
Risk Factors and Protective Factors .....	17
Referrals and LGBTQ Youth .....	20
Bullying and Suicide .....	21
Points to Consider When Developing Re-Entry Policies .....	21
Relevant State Laws .....	22
District Liability.....	23
Messaging and Suicide Contagion.....	23



## **NDE Mental Health Grant Scope of Work**

### **EXPECTATIONS:**

1. ESU will send at least one staff member to the School Mental Health Institute to become a trainer of the Comprehensive School-Based Mental Health Program Curriculum
2. ESU will plan for and host a School Mental Health Institute each project year for at least 2 schools/districts in their service area
3. ESU will recruit schools/districts in their service area to attend these Institutes
4. ESU will provide ongoing Technical Assistance to schools/districts participating in the School Mental Health Institutes
5. ESU will participate in data collection related to the grant

### **DELIVERABLES:**

1. At least one ESU staff member will participate in the virtual 3-day School Mental Health Institute, in its entirety, to become a trainer of the Comprehensive School-Based Mental Health Program Curriculum. This Institute is scheduled for September 28-30, 2021, from 8am-3pm Central Time.
2. Designated ESU staff member(s) will attend all scheduled Technical Assistance meetings with the State School Mental Health Team, school districts and/or Mid-America Mental Health Technology and Transfer Center (MHTTC). Dates and time for these meetings are to be determined, and should last approximately one hour.
3. Collect and report the data to the Project Evaluation Team. Data will be reported to the Project Evaluation Team at the conclusion of each School Mental Health Institute attended or hosted, and as requested.
4. By March 1, 2022, ESU will complete the SHAPE System Assessment and share results with the NDE School Mental Health Team
5. By March 1, 2022, ESU will submit a plan to host a School Mental Health Institute to the State Mental Health Team. The plan will include:
  - a. How many schools/districts will be invited to attend the Institute
  - b. The ESUs' plan for recruiting schools/district to attend the Institute
  - c. The proposed dates for the Institute
  - d. ESUs plan for providing ongoing Technical Assistance to schools/districts that participate in the Institute
6. By July 31, 2022, ESU will host a School Mental Health Institute for at least 2 districts/schools in their service area
7. Provide ongoing Technical Assistance to schools/districts participating in the School Mental Health Institutes

### **Financial Support for ESUs**

The NDE will provide financial support to ESUs to support this work in the following manner:

- Attend School Mental Health Institute hosted by the NDE and MHTTC - \$5,000 to be paid after attending the Institute in its entirety
- Attend all Technical Assistance calls hosted by the NDE and MHTTC - \$5,000 to be paid after completion of all Technical Assistance calls
- Create and submit to the NDE School Mental Health Team a plan for how and when ESU will host its own School Mental Health Institute - \$45,000 to be paid after submission of plan
- Host School Mental Health Institute for at least 2 school districts/buildings within service area - \$45,000 to be paid upon completion of Institute
  - ESU will be paid \$12,000 for each district/school that completes Institute

**Financial Support for School Districts**

The NDE will also provide financial support on a one-time basis to districts/schools who participate in an ESU hosted School Mental Health Institute. After completion of an ESU hosted School Mental Health Institute, the ESU will submit to the NDE School Mental Health Team the Action Plans and Budgets created by each district/school. The NDE will allocate funds needed for district/school to the ESU upon receipt of these documents. The ESU will then distribute these funds to the identified district/school.

The district/school participating in the School Mental Health Institute may choose up to 2 areas of financial support from the list provided below. Areas chosen must correspond with goals selected from the school/district’s Action Plan.

Stipends for school staff to attend training – to be paid after completion of School Mental Health Institute	\$150 per staff person on the team
Stipends for school staff to attend monthly Technical Assistance (TA) Meetings – to be paid after completion of all TA Meetings	\$150 per staff person to attend all TA Meetings
Universal Screener for students	Limited to \$5 per student that will be screened
Telehealth equipment	up to \$2,000
Evidence Based Curriculum to help support the work	up to \$10,000
FTE/contract position for Mental Health Therapist	up to \$30,000
Tier 2 interventions- small group intervention	up to \$10,000 for staff time
Development of Calm Corners	up to \$6,000

**Expectations for Districts that participate in School Mental Health Institutes**

Below are a set of expectations for each school district that participates in a School Mental Health Institute.

**The purpose of all activities or services is to:**

- Enhance the Local Education Agency's (LEA) ability to identify and immediately respond to the mental health needs of students
- Increase the continuum of school-based and community-based mental health services available to students at the LEA Site.

**The District will achieve these purposes by:**

1. Establishing a School Mental Health Team consisting of 3-7 members
  - a. At least 1 must be an administrator; other potential team members include school counselor, school social worker, school psychologist, teacher, school nurse and/or parent or family member
2. School Mental Health Team attending a School Mental Health Institute hosted by ESU. During this 3-day Institute, participants will learn how to develop a Comprehensive School-Based Mental Health Program, utilizing modules co-developed by the [Mental Health Technology Transfer Center](#) and the [National Center for School Mental Health](#);
3. Developing an Action Plan for creating a Comprehensive School-Based Mental Health Program at school/district and implement Action Plan throughout the upcoming school year
4. Maintaining the School Mental Health Team, which continues to meet on a regular basis to plan and implement the necessary infrastructure to achieve the goals established in the Site's Action Plan.
5. The School Mental Health Team participating in regularly scheduled Technical Assistance meetings with the ESU
6. Participating in data collection related to the grant, as requested by the Project Evaluation Team
7. Participating in site-specific technical assistance provided by the Project Evaluation Team, tailored to the types of questions the LEA Site seeks to answer through evaluation data.
8. Working collaboratively with the State Mental Health Team, local Educational Service Unit (ESU), University of Nebraska Public Policy Center and key project partners to coordinate the project's implementation.
9. Submitting a **Sustainability Plan** to maintain the LEA Site's Comprehensive School-Based Mental Health Program.

# SRS Staff Report

April, 2022

## Overall Operations

We feel the SRS software is running well and users are having a good experience. Rita McKinney is our helpdesk specialist and she keeps the unanswered help requests at effectively zero. The team continues to work between user reports and requests and the advice of advisory team members to plan fixes and enhancements that keep improving the system.

## 504 Plan Support

Software development work continues on the changes recommended by the advisory team members who tested the software and attended a focus group on the new features. We are aiming to complete work on the system and have it available for early adopters during the summer of 2022, with continued review and testing before then.

## Updates and Revisions

We have drafted a contract for consulting services to update the SRS database and software code. An optimized database will provide faster performance and support additional data reporting and tracking capabilities. A new software framework and streamlined code will speed up our ability to develop future enhancements, perform maintenance and improve usability of the software on a wider variety of devices (computers, tablets, phones and more) and screen dimensions and resolutions. This work is extensive and will need to take place in parallel with maintaining the existing software. Contracted database and software development services will be needed to accomplish this work, with an initial estimated completion in summer, 2023.

**JOIN US FOR A  
LISTENING SESSION!**



# WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

**How are schools serving ALL students, especially those with the greatest need?**

**How can coaching and development on Tier 1 instruction improve student outcomes?**

**Which instructional practices can take teaching and learning to the next level for kids?**

**What are your district's or region's most pressing instructional priorities?**

Join the NDE, in partnership with TNTP, for a virtual listening session to share the needs most pressing for your school, district, or region and learn how the professional learning series *Strong Instruction Through an Acceleration Framework* can support strong Tier 1 instruction for all learners!

**LEARN MORE ABOUT  
THE PROFESSIONAL  
LEARNING SERIES  
[HERE](#)**

OPTION 1  
**TUESDAY, APRIL 19  
3-4PM CT**  
register [HERE](#)

OPTION 2  
**THURSDAY, APRIL 21  
3-4PM CT**  
register [HERE](#)

# HOW CAN WE IMPROVE INSTRUCTION FOR ALL STUDENTS?

THE NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION

in partnership with

TNTP  
presents...

## STRONG INSTRUCTION THROUGH AN ACCELERATION FRAMEWORK

### 2022-2023 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SERIES

#### Overview

The long-term impacts of the last two years of learning disruptions on student learning can't be predicted but educators can invest in high quality professional learning now to be better suited to respond! This yearlong series offers a space for educators across the state to collaborate as well as receive support at the district, school, and classroom level in using learning acceleration as a framework for providing rigorous, grade-level instruction.

#### Year at a glance

##### Session 1: Essential Content

Redefine what rigorous grade-level content looks like to ensure all students have access to the highest quality assignments.

July 26, 2022 | 9am-4pm | Kearney

##### Session 2: Excellent Instruction

Explore the components of strong instruction across content areas and strategize how to deliver or coach for rigorous grade-level instruction.

October 11, 2022 | 9am-4pm | Kearney

##### Session 3: Just-in-Time Scaffolds

Practice integrating just-in-time scaffolds into Tier 1 instruction to accelerate learning for all students and plan for enabling systems.

January 24, 2023 | 9am-4pm | Kearney

#### By the end of the year...



internalize essential content and standards to establish a bar for grade-level rigor



develop a common understanding of excellent instruction across core content areas



practice planning "just-in-time" instructional supports for all students to access grade-level content

#### PLUS!

Virtual application sessions for instructional coaches between in-person modules focused on implementing learning to strengthen coaching and development!

September 6, November 15, and  
February 28 | 3-5pm | Virtual

OPEN TO ALL!

\*Participants who register for application sessions also attend modules 1-3

Learn more about the professional learning series [HERE](#).

Ready to sign up? Register [HERE!](#)



# Nebraska Learning Acceleration Design Team

## Overview

The purpose of Nebraska's Learning Acceleration Design Team is to brainstorm focus areas and provide input on next year's professional learning on learning acceleration, or "just in time" supports. The design team is made up of volunteer representatives from ESUs and schools. NDE asked each ESU to identify 1-3 educators to assist in this work to ensure any statewide professional learning is **responsive** to schools' needs and **aligned** to other statewide work and initiatives. NDE partnered with the national nonprofit TNTF to facilitate collaboration and synthesize the design team's input.

## Process

The goal of the Learning Acceleration Design Team is to collectively create and publish a scope and sequence of statewide PL offerings for SY22-23 focused on learning acceleration by late March.



- **January 2022:** Develop a common vision of learning acceleration and provide regional context to narrow down possible focus areas for a yearlong series of professional learning
- **February 2022:** Provide feedback on an initial draft of a PL scope and sequence
- **March-April 2022:** Provide a second round of feedback on a revised PL scope and sequence and support with planning for implementation

## Participants

NDE is thankful to the following Nebraska educators, organized by ESU, for volunteering their time, expertise, and passion for high-quality instruction for ALL of Nebraska's students.

- ESU 2 - Eileen Barks, Brent Cudly, Kelly Georgius, Sarah Rusk, Allison Stansberry, Caryn Zietlow
- ESU 3 - Scott Blum, Dawn Ferreyra, Debbie Schraeder
- ESU 4 - Lori Broady, Ellen Stokebrand, Jen Madison
- ESU 6 - April Kelly
- ESU 7 - Kendra Gustafson, Larriane Polk
- ESU 8 - Crystal Ernst, Katrina Gotschall
- ESU 9 - Amy Schultz, Kristen Slechta, Lexi Wichelt
- ESU 10 - Sarah Essay, Denise O'Brien, Dianah Steinbrink
- ESU 13 - Deirdre Amundsen, Julie Downing, Sheri Ehler, Nathan Livingston
- ESU 16 - Alison Smith, Lane Swedberg, Deb Paulman
- ESU 17- Tami Cosgrove, Ben Wright, Jeff McQuistan
- ESU 19 - Kanyon Chism, John Chvatal, Justin Thomalla
- NDE - Abby Burke, Trudy Clark, Julie Downing, Cory Epler, Brooke Gebers, Casey Hurner, Kris Kampovitz, Allyson Olson DebBests, Marissa Payzant, Kala Peyton, Ryan Ricenbaw, Deb Romanek, Kim Snyder, Shirley Vargas

# Strong Instruction Through an Acceleration Framework 2022-2023 Professional Learning Overview

[See the full scope & sequence here!](#)

Now more than ever, ‘meeting students where they are’ will not be enough. A mindset of **‘acceleration, not remediation’** is needed so that students are met with grade-level expectations while also addressing students’ social and emotional needs. Leaders and teachers must continue to assess the extent to which the academic and social-emotional needs of historically marginalized student groups are addressed and **ensure all students have equitable access and success in their learning opportunities.**

*–[Nebraska’s Framework for School Renewal & Acceleration](#)*

## Overview

NDE is pleased to offer a yearlong professional learning series focused on improving instruction for ALL students through the framework of learning acceleration, also known as “just in time” instruction. Learning acceleration is an approach to supporting students’ learning needs that strategically embeds essential content/skills from prior grades into grade-level content and [Tier 1 core](#) instruction. [Recent research](#) suggests that students who experience acceleration struggle less and learn more than students who start at the same level but experience remediation instead.

This professional learning series includes two pathways, both of which explore advancing strong Tier 1 instruction with an acceleration framework:

Core PL Sessions	Application Sessions
<p>The core professional learning sessions are <b>open to all educators with a direct impact on instruction</b> at the district- and/or school-level: coaches, department chairs, teachers, leaders, etc. These sessions will be most impactful if participants commit to attending ALL of them. Sessions will focus on achieving grade-level rigor to effectively integrate a learning acceleration approach.</p>	<p>The application sessions are <b>open to leaders who conduct observations and coach/deliver professional learning</b>. These sessions will focus on applying the content from core PL sessions to strengthen observation and coaching habits to build strong instruction. Participants in this series must commit to attending the core PL sessions <u>in addition to</u> the application sessions.</p>

The focus areas and arc of learning for the year were co-created by the [Nebraska Learning Acceleration Design Team](#) and [TNTP](#) to be responsive to schools’ needs and aligned to other statewide works and initiatives. Sessions will be facilitated by TNTP on a monthly basis with a break in December to accommodate end-of-semester activities and winter recess.

## Goals of the Learning Series

By the end of the year, participants will have

- internalized **essential content and standards** to establish a bar for grade-level rigor
- developed a **common understanding for excellent instruction** across core content areas
- practiced planning **“just-in-time” instructional supports** for all students to access grade-level content

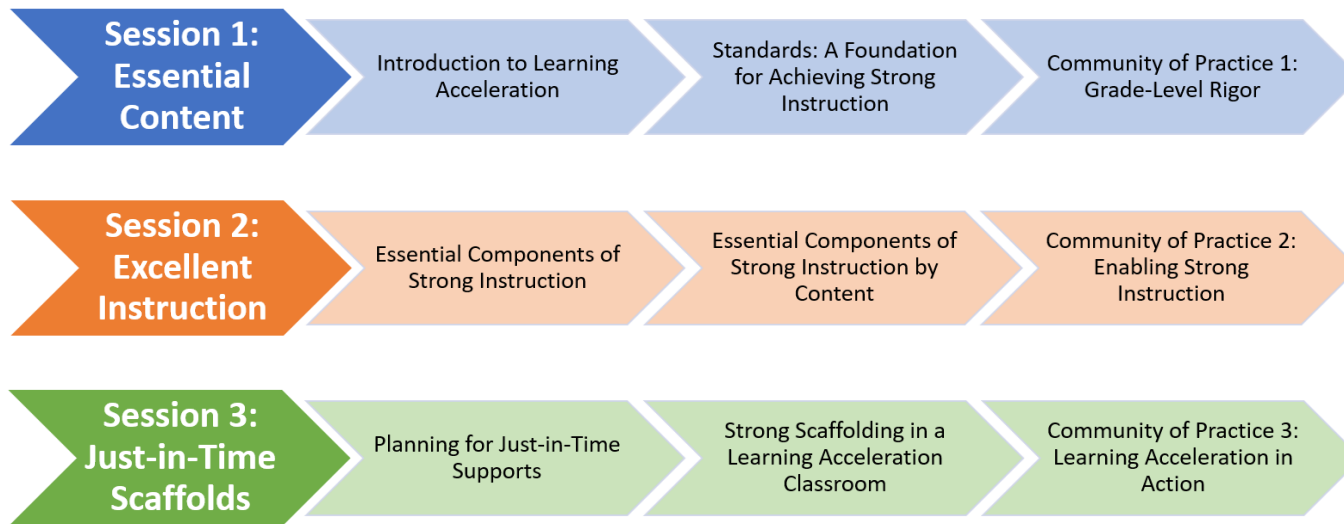
**Year at a Glance** | [See the full scope & sequence here!](#)

Learning is chunked into 3 sessions, each aligned to one of the yearlong objectives. Each session kicks off with a full day of in-person development (core PL) and is followed-up with a virtual application session aligned to the core PL content. The final session is open to all and focused on planning for sustained change.

July 26	September 6	October 11	November 15	December	January 24	February 28	March 21
Core PL Session 1	Application Session 1	Core PL Session 2	Application Session 2	–	Core PL Session 3	Application Session 3	Where Do We Go From Here?

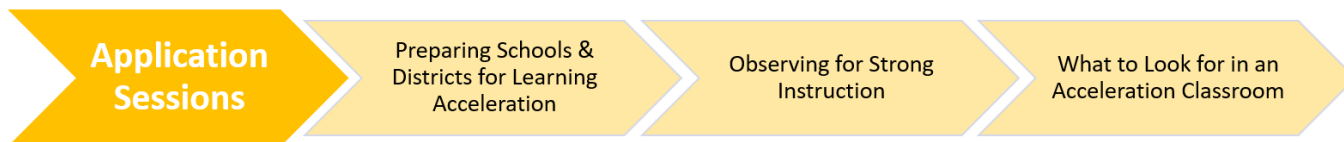
**Core PL Sessions at a Glance (In Person)**

Sessions are sequenced to strategically build the knowledge and skill necessary for effective learning acceleration. Along the way, participants will have opportunities to pause, reflect, and synthesize their learning in role-specific communities of practice:



**Application Sessions at a Glance (Virtual)**

Participants in this series will engage in video observations and debriefs in order to norm on quality instruction and determine high leverage next steps for coaching and development at the classroom, school, and district levels.



## Strong Instruction Through an Acceleration Framework 2022-2023 Professional Learning Scope & Sequence

Now more than ever, ‘meeting students where they are’ will not be enough. A mindset of ‘**acceleration, not remediation**’ is needed so that students are met with grade-level expectations while also addressing students’ social and emotional needs. Leaders and teachers must continue to assess the extent to which the academic and social-emotional needs of historically marginalized student groups are addressed and **ensure all students have equitable access and success in their learning opportunities**.

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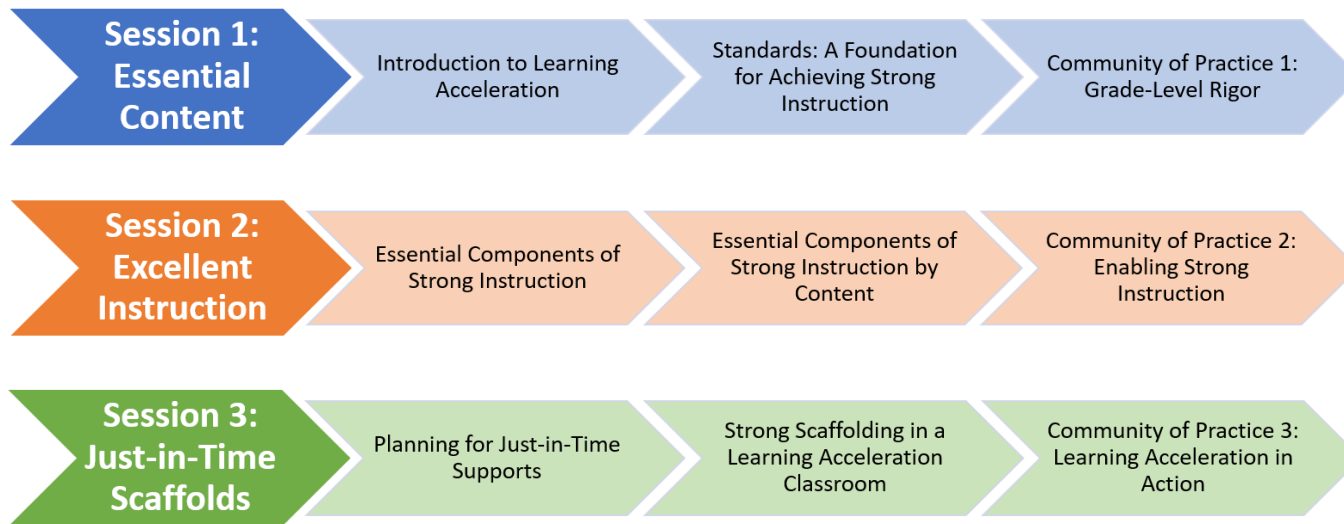
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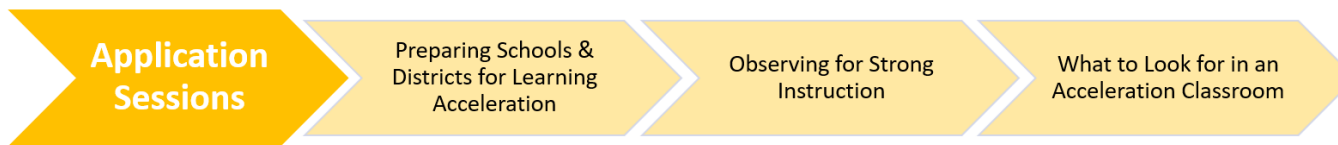
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Participants in this series will engage in video observations and debriefs in order to norm on quality instruction and determine high leverage next steps for coaching and development at the classroom, school, and district levels.



## Scope & Sequence

### CORE PL | Session 1: Essential Content

July 26, 2022 | 9am-4pm | Kearney

TOPIC	OBJECTIVES	
Introduction to Learning Acceleration	Participants will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Articulate</b> the benefits for students of acceleration rather than remediation</li> <li>• <b>Analyze</b> relevant data to contextualize acceleration for their schools</li> <li>• <b>Internalize</b> the key resources that are foundational for learning acceleration</li> </ul>	
Standards: A Foundation for Achieving Strong Instruction	Participants will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Investigate</b> the role standards play in supporting strong instruction</li> <li>• <b>Connect</b> standards, student data, and the planning of just in time supports to accelerate learning</li> <li>• <b>Evaluate</b> tasks for quality, rigor, and standards alignment</li> </ul>	
Community of Practice 1: Grade-Level Rigor	Teachers will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evaluate</b> assignments for grade-level rigor</li> <li>• <b>Reflect</b> on their strengths and areas of growth in terms of deep content knowledge and their expectations of the level of work all students are capable of and should be working toward</li> </ul>	Leaders will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evaluate</b> assignments for grade-level rigor</li> <li>• <b>Interrogate</b> the tools and systems currently in place to ensure ALL students have access to assignments that are engaging, challenging, and aligned to the demands of their grade-level standards</li> </ul>

### APPLICATION | Session 1: Essential Content

September 6, 2022 | 3-5pm |

#### Virtual

TOPIC	GOALS
Preparing Schools and Districts for Learning Acceleration	Leaders will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Conduct</b> an audit that clearly identifies where classrooms are in relation to curriculum adoption and implementation (no curriculum, limited fidelity of implementation, or full fidelity of implementation)</li> <li>• <b>Assess</b> strengths &amp; growth areas of lessons where there is no curriculum or curriculum with limited fidelity of implementation</li> <li>• <b>Create</b> an action plan for targeted development to increase student access to quality, rigorous instructional materials</li> </ul>

**CORE PL | Session 2: Excellent Instruction  
Kearney**

**October 11, 2022 | 9am-4pm |**

TOPIC	OBJECTIVES	
Essential Components for Strong Instruction	Participants will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop</b> or strengthen their understanding of the essential components of strong Tier 1 instruction</li> <li>• <b>Understand</b> the role a rigorous definition of instruction plays in ensuring high-quality classrooms and schools</li> </ul>	
Essential Components for Strong Instruction by Content Area	Participants will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Investigate</b> content-specific components of strong instruction</li> <li>• <b>Understand</b> the role strong instruction plays in ensuring high quality classrooms and schools</li> <li>• <b>Evaluate</b> lesson examples against components of strong instruction</li> </ul>	
Community of Practice 2: Enabling Strong Instruction	Teachers will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reflect</b> on their strengths and areas of growth in the components of strong instruction as evidenced by self-provided video samples</li> <li>• <b>Create</b> professional goals towards excellence in the components of strong instruction in order to prime for learning acceleration</li> </ul>	Leaders will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Interrogate</b> the tools and systems currently in place to evaluate the teaching and learning happening in their schools in pursuit of strong instruction</li> </ul>

**APPLICATION | Session 2: Excellent Instruction**

**November 15, 2022 | 3-5pm | Virtual**

TOPIC	GOALS
Observing for Strong Instruction	Leaders will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Collect</b> 3 different 25 minute video samples of classroom instruction and upload them to a common online platform for review.</li> <li>• <b>“Observe”</b> classroom teaching videos against a common tool (<a href="#">Consider the NTPPS</a>) and engage in norming conversations using the components of strong instruction</li> <li>• <b>Interrogate</b> the tool’s effectiveness in supporting instruction towards excellence in the components of strong instruction</li> <li>• <b>Create</b> an action plan for targeted development to increase student access to quality, rigorous instruction and discuss ways to incorporate more consistent observation-debrief cycles as part of coaching support at the districts/school level</li> </ul>

**CORE PL | Session 3: Just-in-Time Scaffolds**
**January 24, 2023 | 9am-4pm | Kearney**

TOPIC	OBJECTIVES	
Planning for Just in Time Supports	Participants will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Apply</b> the information gathered from the data to make predictions about learning needs in upcoming units</li> <li>● <b>Explore</b> frameworks for internalizing lesson and unit plans in order to effectively plan just in time supports</li> </ul>	
Strong Scaffolding in a Learning Acceleration Classroom	Participants will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Describe</b> the attributes and key planning considerations of strong instructional scaffolding.</li> <li>● <b>Explain</b> how strong instructional scaffolding advances equitable outcomes for all students</li> <li>● <b>Critique</b> examples of instructional scaffolds</li> </ul>	
Community of Practice 3: Learning Acceleration in Action	Teachers will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Practice</b> planning just in time supports and appropriate scaffolds in an upcoming lesson</li> <li>● <b>Interrogate</b> their practice to identify strengths and areas of growth in planning to accelerate learning</li> </ul>	Leaders will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Assess</b> the resources, structures, or systems to implement, build, improve, start, or stop in order to ensure the long term success of learning acceleration in the schools they serve</li> </ul>

**APPLICATION | Session 3: Just-in-Time Scaffolds**
**February 28, 2023 | 3-5pm | Virtual**

TOPIC	GOALS
What to Look for in an Acceleration Classroom	Leaders will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Collect</b> 3 different 25 minute video samples of classroom instruction and upload them to a common online platform for review.</li> <li>● <b>“Observe”</b> classroom teaching videos against a common tool (<a href="#">Consider the NTPPS</a>) and engage in norming conversations using the components of strong instruction and effective use of JITS and grade-appropriate scaffolds</li> <li>● <b>Interrogate</b> the tool's effectiveness in supporting instruction towards excellence in the components of strong instruction</li> <li>● <b>Create</b> an action plan for targeted development to increase student access JITS and rigorous, grade-appropriate scaffolds</li> </ul>

**CORE PL | Planning for Sustained Change**
**March 21, 2023 | 3-5pm |**
**Virtual**

TOPIC	OBJECTIVES
Where Do We Go From Here?	Participants will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Review</b> key learning about essential content, excellent instruction, and just-in-time scaffolds</li> <li>● <b>Discuss</b> ways to carry the learning forward to consistently provide strong instruction for ALL students</li> <li>● <b>Draft</b> an action plan to implement their learning through the rest of the semester and next year</li> </ul>

