

## NEBRASKA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING NOTIFICATION AND AGENDA

- Meeting Date:** Thursday, December 1, 2022 1:30 PM
- Meeting Title:** State Board of Education Work Session Meeting and Notification and Agenda
- Location:** The Lincoln Marriott Cornhusker Hotel  
Yankee Hill III  
333 South 13th Street  
Lincoln, NE 68508
- Web Streaming:** Live web streaming will be available through the State Board of Education website: [www.education.ne.gov/StateBoard/](http://www.education.ne.gov/StateBoard/)
- Agenda:** Except for emergency items added at the time of the meeting, the agenda will not be changed less than 24 hours prior to the start of the meeting and any changes will be immediately posted on the website. The Board will attempt to adhere to the sequence of the published agenda, but reserves the right to adjust the order of items if necessary and may elect to take action on any of the items listed.
- Interpreter:** If you need interpreter services or other reasonable accommodations, please contact the Nebraska Department of Education at (402) 471-5059 five (5) days prior to the meeting to coordinate arrangements.
- Website:** An electronic version of the agenda and support materials are available on the State Board of Education's Agenda page: [www.education.ne.gov/StateBoard/Agendas.html](http://www.education.ne.gov/StateBoard/Agendas.html)
- Lunch:** On Friday Thursday, December 1, 2022, the State Board of Education may also take a recess for lunch. The Board may resume work on the agenda at approximately 1:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER  
President Koch Johns
  - 1.1. Roll Call  
President Koch Johns
  - 1.2. Pledge of Allegiance  
President Koch Johns
  - 1.3. Announcement of the placement of the Open Meetings Act information  
President Koch Johns
2. BUSINESS  
President Koch Johns

2.1. Vendor Proposal Presentations for the Commissioner of Education Search Process  
President Koch Johns

3. ADJOURNMENT  
President Koch Johns

The regularly scheduled meeting of the State Board of Education will reconvene at 9:00  
a.m. tomorrow in this room.

*A Proposal Prepared for*

**Nebraska State  
Board of Education  
Lincoln, Nebraska**

*for*

*The Search and Selection of  
Nebraska Commissioner of  
Education*

*submitted by*

**MCPHERSON  JACOBSON, LLC**

EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

11725 Arbor St., Suite 220

Omaha, Nebraska 68144

Phone: 888-375-4814/402-991-7031

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# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>A. Cover Letter</b> .....	3
1) <i>Executive Summary</i> .....	3
2) <i>Our contact information</i> .....	4
3) <i>Signature</i> .....	4
<b>B. Qualifications</b> .....	5
1) <i>Qualifications and Background of McPherson &amp; Jacobson, L.L.C.</i> .....	5
<i>McPherson &amp; Jacobson, L.L.C. Non-Discrimination Policy</i> .....	5
2) <i>Organizational Chart</i> .....	6
3) <i>Nebraska Searches Conducted by McPherson &amp; Jacobson, L.L.C. (since 1991)</i> ... 7	
4) <i>Vendor Capabilities</i> .....	11
<i>Consultants</i> .....	11
<i>Additional Resources</i> .....	11
5) <i>Project Staff</i> .....	12
<i>Search Team</i> .....	12
<i>Bios</i> .....	12
<i>Resumes</i> .....	15
<b>C. Project Plan</b> .....	25
<i>Phases of an Administrator Search</i> .....	25
1) <i>Preliminary Search Activities</i> .....	25
2) <i>Solicit Stakeholder Input</i> .....	25
3) <i>Public Relations</i> .....	26
4) <i>Marketing and Recruiting</i> .....	26
5) <i>Scoring Applicants</i> .....	29
6) <i>Coordinate Interview</i> .....	30
7) <i>Screen Applicants</i> .....	32
8) <i>Verify Applicants</i> .....	32
9) <i>Assistance with Discussions and Deliberations</i> .....	32
10) <i>Communication with the Candidates</i> .....	33
11) <i>Potential Conflict of Interest</i> .....	33
12) <i>Transition</i> .....	33
<i>Timeline</i> .....	35

*D. Cost of Proposed Services* ..... 36

*Services available to select from*..... 36

*McPherson & Jacobson Guarantees* ..... 37

*Client Satisfaction* ..... 37

*Price Match*..... 37

*Recruiting the Selected Candidate* ..... 38

*Additional Services:* ..... 38

*E. References*..... 39

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## A. Cover Letter



**MCPHERSON *MJ* JACOBSON, LLC**

EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

11725 ARBOR STREET, SUITE 220 ♦ OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68144 ♦ 402-991-7031/888-375-4814  
FAX: 402-991-7168 ♦ EMAIL: [MAIL@MACNJAKE.COM](mailto:MAIL@MACNJAKE.COM) ♦ WEBSITE: [WWW.MACNJAKE.COM](http://WWW.MACNJAKE.COM)

October 24, 2022

Nebraska State Board of Education  
500 S. 84<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68510

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your RFP. The enclosed proposal describes the professional services McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. will provide the Nebraska State Board of Education in ensuring your Commissioner of Education search secures quality leadership for your organization.

Our firm has designed a protocol allowing the organization to concentrate on the most important segments: the interview and selection of the successful candidate. Our team of consultants, working in conjunction with the organization and diverse stakeholder groups you identify, will implement a systematic, comprehensive process culminating in the hiring of the most qualified candidate for your organization.

### *1) Executive Summary*

McPherson & Jacobson L.L.C. provides a comprehensive search process. Below are some of the highlights of our process:

- 1) Our process is comprehensive and provides critical support for the most time-consuming aspects of recruiting and screening the candidates, so the Search Committee can focus on interviewing and selection.
- 2) Transparency is a hallmark of our protocol. Stakeholder participation emphasizes the transparency of our process.
- 3) We take the entire Search Committee through a consensus decision-making process to identify the top criteria for the selection of the new administrator.
- 4) We meet with groups to ensure broad-based stakeholder input in the selection process. In addition, we provide an online survey to reach out to anyone who could not attend a stakeholder meeting. The consultants will present a comprehensive written report to the organization, which includes all of the comments recorded during the input sessions.

- 5) McPherson & Jacobson's consultants actively recruit candidates that meet the selection criteria. If desired, we will recruit non-traditional candidates.
- 6) Applicant confidentiality is important to attract top candidates. Names remain confidential until the organization selects their finalists.
- 7) We continue to work with your organization until an administrator is hired and in place.
- 8) The Transition Phase provides a continued commitment to work with your organization and new administrator for one year. We help you collaboratively establish annual performance objectives for the new administrator's first year. Evidence from previous searches shows this phase to be very positive as it fosters a good transition.
- 9) We are so confident of our ability to identify the organization's criteria, recruit and screen applicants against those criteria, and assist during the transition period, that we guarantee our service. If your administrator leaves for whatever reason during the guarantee period, we will repeat the process for no charge except for actual expenses.

**Our mission is to ensure your search results in quality leadership for education excellence.**

With over 130 consultants across the United States, McPherson & Jacobson has been successfully conducting searches for public entities since 1991.

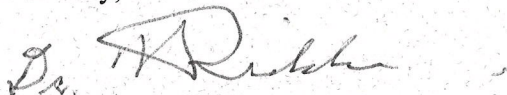
*2) Our contact information*

McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C.  
11725 Arbor St., Suite 220  
Omaha, Nebraska 68144  
Telephone: 402-991-7031/888-375-4814  
Fax: 402-991-7168  
Email: [mail@macnjake.com](mailto:mail@macnjake.com)

We welcome the opportunity to meet with your organization to present our proposal and discuss our proven search process.

*3) Signature*

Sincerely,



Dr. Norman Ridder  
Owner, McPherson & Jacobson L.L.C.

## *B. Qualifications*

### *1) Qualifications and Background of McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C.*

#### **Leading National Search Firm**

McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. has been conducting national searches for governing boards since 1991. The firm has placed **over 940 administrators** and other officials in public and non-profit organizations across the United States. **McPherson & Jacobson is one of the leading national search firms.**

#### **Nationwide Network of Experienced Consultants**

McPherson & Jacobson has **over 130 consultants** across the nation, with 17 located in Nebraska. Over one-fourth of McPherson & Jacobson consultants are minorities or female. Our diverse group of consultants has extensive backgrounds in public service. Their diversity and expertise ensures your search results in quality leadership.

#### **Sustainability in Leadership**

Organizations using the McPherson & Jacobson protocol have enjoyed sustainability of leadership. Over the last five years, **over eighty five percent** of administrators are in the position for which they were hired. **Almost sixty percent** of administrators are still in the position for which they were hired within the past ten years. **Over forty percent** of the administrators selected by governing boards within the past 15 years continue in the position for which they were hired.

### *McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. Non-Discrimination Policy*

McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. is dedicated to serving organizations by supporting all candidates regardless of cultural and ethnic diversity

As an organization, we are committed to equitable practices that will ensure the equal access for all candidates. This commitment means that success will not be predicted nor predetermined by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, cognitive/physical ability, language, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or religion.

Every decision McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. makes will be committed to the following foundational beliefs:

1. Consultants share the moral imperative and collective ownership to identify and eliminate disparities to ensure all candidates have an equal opportunity regardless

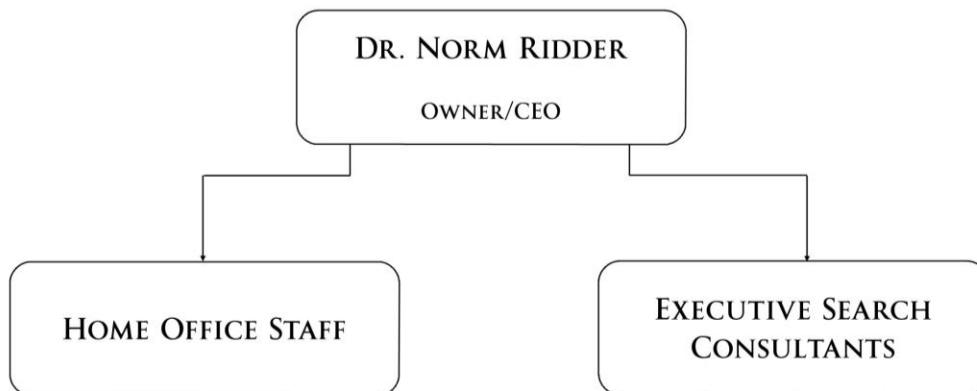
- of their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, cognitive/physical ability, language, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or religion;
2. Eliminate barriers in recruitment, hiring, retention, and internal processes;
  3. Utilize culturally relevant practices that do not discriminate based upon language, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, cognitive/physical ability, or religion;
  4. Promote catalytic leadership for educational and community partners;
  5. Support the continuing development of all personnel with a focus on their mindset, beliefs, knowledge, and skills, including an understanding of implicit bias and racial identity;
  6. Incorporate the voices, cultures, and perspectives of diverse students, families, and communities into decision making to create a sense of belonging for all;
  7. Support and comply with State and Organization policies.

## 2) Organizational Chart



### ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

SEPTEMBER 2022



*3) Nebraska Searches Conducted by  
McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. (since 1991)*

Year	District	City	Enrollment
2000/01	Adams Central Jr.-Sr. High School	Hastings	452
2003/04	Ainsworth Community Schools	Ainsworth	548
1997/98	Ainsworth Community Schools	Ainsworth	
2001/02	Allen Consolidated School District	Allen	225
2012/13	Alliance Public Schools	Alliance	1,700
2008/09	Alliance Public Schools	Alliance	1,737
1997/98	Alliance Public Schools	Alliance	2,300
2000/01	Alma Public Schools	Alma	371
2006/07	Anselmo-Merna Public Schools	Merna	257
1994/95	Anselmo-Merna Public Schools	Merna	170
2018/19	Arlington Public Schools	Arlington	660
1999/00	Arlington Public Schools	Arlington	597
1994/95	Arnold Public Schools	Arnold	
1997/98	Auburn Public Schools	Auburn	1,028
2016/17	Axtell Community School	Axtell	264
2011/12	Axtell Community School	Axtell	301
2003/04	Banner County Public School District	Harrisburg	168
1994/95	Banner County Public School District	Harrisburg	209
1997/98	Battle Creek Public Schools	Battle Creek	461
2012/13	Beatrice Public Schools	Beatrice	2,200
1999/00	Beatrice Public Schools	Beatrice	2,320
2011/12	Blair Community Schools	Blair	2,400
2008/09	Blair Community Schools	Blair	2,416
1994/95	Bloomfield Community Schools	Bloomfield	435
2004/05	Boone Central Schools	Albion	654
2013/14	Bridgeport Public Schools	Bridgeport	500
2007/08	Bridgeport Public Schools	Bridgeport	510
2003/04	Bridgeport Public Schools	Bridgeport	533
1998/99	Bridgeport Public Schools	Bridgeport	580
2014/15	Broken Bow Public Schools	Broken Bow	810
2001/02	Brunning-Davenport Unified School District	Davenport	208
2013/14	Central City Public Schools	Central City	690
2001/02	Central City Public Schools	Central City	800
2006/07	Centura Public School	Cairo	550
2017/18	Centura Public Schools	Cairo	486
2003/04	Chadron Public Schools	Chadron	866
2009/10	Chambers Public School	Chambers	203

Year	District	City	Enrollment
2004/05	Chambers Public School	Chambers	203
2017/18	Chase County Schools	Imperial	620
1994/95	Clarks Public Schools		
2009/10	Columbus Public Schools	Columbus	3,600
1997/98	Crawford Public Schools	Crawford	270
2014/15	Creek Valley Public Schools	Chappell	252
2015/16	Crete Public Schools	Crete	1,800
2005/06	Crete Public Schools	Crete	1,465
1998/99	David City Public Schools	David City	597
1996/97	Doniphan Public Schools	Doniphan	
2020/21	Doniphan-Trumbull Public School	Doniphan	426
2017/18	Doniphan-Trumbull Public School	Doniphan	465
2005/06	Doniphan-Trumbull Public School	Doniphan	517
2004/05	Dorchester Public Schools	Dorchester	218
1994/95	Dorchester Public Schools	Dorchester	251
2004/05	Douglas County West Community Schools	Waterloo	720
2011/12	Dundy County Stratton Public Schools	Benkelman	403
1992/93	Elba Public Schools	Elba	141
1998/99	Elkhorn Valley School District No. 80	Tilden	483
1997/98	Elm Creek Public Schools	Elm Creek	358
1997/98	ESU #11--Executive Director	Holdrege	
2007/08	ESU #13--Executive Director	Scottsbluff	14,400
2001/02	ESU #6--Executive Director	Milford	12,850
2011/12	ESU #8--Executive Director	Neligh	
1998/99	ESU #9--Executive Director	Hastings	
2003/04	Eustis-Farnam School District	Eustis	252
2014/15	Fairbury Public Schools	Fairbury	901
1997/98	Fairbury Public Schools	Fairbury	1,068
1994/95	Fairmont Public Schools	Fairmont	
2009/10	Franklin Public Schools	Franklin	350
2002/03	Franklin Public Schools	Franklin	350
1999/00	Franklin Public Schools	Franklin	350
2000/01	Fremont High School (principal)	Fremont	1,350
2005/06	Garden County Public Schools	Oshkosh	289
1994/95	Geneva Public Schools	Geneva	
2000/01	Gering Public Schools	Gering	1,828
2016/17	Gibbon Public Schools	Gibbon	598
2003/04	Gibbon Public Schools	Gibbon	545
2000/01	Gothenburg Public Schools	Gothenburg	860
2015/16	Grand Island Public Schools	Grand Island	9,607

Year	District	City	Enrollment
2010/11	Grand Island Public Schools	Grand Island	8,820
1996/97	Guide Rock Public Schools		
2018/19	Hastings Public Schools	Hastings	3,740
2000/01	Hastings Public Schools	Hastings	3,327
1994/95	Hemingford Public Schools	Hemingford	475
1998/99	Hershey Public Schools	Hershey	476
2004/05	Holdrege Public Schools	Holdrege	943
1999/00	Humboldt Public Schools	Humboldt	
2002/03	Humphrey Public Schools	Humphrey	222
2000/01	Kearney Public Schools	Kearney	4,526
2012/13	Kimball Public Schools	Kimball	543
2008/09	Lakeview Community Schools	Columbus	200
2008/09	Lakeview Community Schools	Columbus	750
2008/09	Laurel-Concord Public Schools	Laurel	351
2015/16	Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties	Omaha	
2000/01	Leigh Community Schools	Leigh	288
2005/06	Lexington Public Schools	Lexington	2,762
2000/01	Lexington Public Schools	Lexington	2,519
2000/01	Lodgepole Public Schools	Lodgepole	163
2011/12	Logan View Public Schools	Hooper	527
2003/04	Logan View Public Schools	Hooper	634
2004/05	Madison Public Schools	Madison	566
1998/99	Madison Public Schools	Madison	584
2001/02	McCook Public Schools	McCook	1,401
1997/98	McCook Public Schools	McCook	1,597
2013/14	Meridian Public Schools	Daykin	200
2010/11	Meridian Public Schools	Daykin	200
2006/07	Meridian Public Schools	Daykin	200
2003/04	Morrill Public Schools	Morrill	457
2010/11	Mount Michael Benedictine--Head of Schools	Elkhorn	200
1998/99	Mullen Public Schools	Mullen	194
1996/97	Neligh-Oakdale, NE	Neligh	538
2002/03	Newcastle Public Schools	Newcastle	175
2009/10	Norris School District 160	Firth	2,040
2011/12	North Platte Public Schools	North Platte	4,100
1997/98	Ord Public Schools	Ord	622
2019/20	Palmyra Bennet District OR-1 Schools	Palmyra	581
1997/98	Palmyra District OR 1	Palmyra	244
2015/16	Pawnee City Public Schools	Pawnee City	297
2008/09	Pawnee City Public Schools	Pawnee City	280

Year	District	City	Enrollment
1996/97	Paxton Consolidated Schools	Paxton	
2004/05	Pender Public Schools	Pender	353
2001/02	Plattsmouth Community School District	Plattsmouth	1,678
2014/15	Potter-Dix Public Schools	Potter	191
2022/23	Ralston Public Schools	Ralston	4,000
1997/98	Ralston Public Schools	Ralston	3,000
1997/98	Randolph Public Schools	Randolph	
1996/97	Red Cloud Community Schools	Red Cloud	
1992/93	Rising City Public Schools	Rising City	120
1999/00	Rushville Public Schools--District I & VI	Rushville	273
1996/97	Sandy Creek Public Schools		500
1999/00	Schuyler Central Public Schools	Schuyler	
2003/04	Scottsbluff Public Schools	Scottsbluff	2,700
1992/93	Scribner-Synder Community Schools	Scribner	382
2016/17	Seward Public Schools	Seward	1,406
2019/20	Shelton Public Schools	Shelton	300
2015/16	Shelton Public Schools	Shelton	300
2010/11	Shelton Public Schools	Shelton	300
1994/95	Shelton Public Schools	Shelton	362
2006/07	Silver Lake Public Schools	Roseland	254
2017/18	South Central Nebraska Unified #5	Fairfield	681
2000/01	South Central Nebraska Unified School District #5	Fairfield	1,249
2009/10	South Sioux City Community Schools	South Sioux City	3,800
1998/99	South Sioux City Community Schools	South Sioux City	3,130
2016/17	Southern Public Schools	Wymore	395
2000/01	Stanton Community Schools	Stanton	454
2020/21	Summerland Public Schools	Ewing	402
1994/95	Sumner-Eddyville-Miller Public School	Sumner	201
2017/18	Superior Public Schools	Superior	435
1995/96	Superior Public Schools	Superior	
2010/11	Tekamah-Herman Community Schools	Tekamah	579
2002/03	Tri County Public Schools	DeWitt	480
2013/14	Twin River Public Schools	Genoa	480
1999/00	Valentine Rural High School	Valentine	280
1997/98	Wahoo Public Schools District #39	Wahoo	865
1997/98	Wakefield Community Schools	Wakefield	467
2016/17	Waverly School District 145	Waverly	1,920
1997/98	Wayne Community Schools	Wayne	934

Year	District	City	Enrollment
1999/00	Weeping Water Public Schools	Weeping Water	435
2003/04	West Point Public Schools	West Point	694
2010/11	Westside Community Schools	Omaha	5,990
1997/98	Wheeler Central Schools	Bartlett	553
2009/10	Wilber Clatonia Public Schools	Wilber	
2002/03	Wilber-Clatonia Public Schools	Wilber	548
2000/01	Wisner-Pilger Public Schools	Wisner	518
2013/14	Wood River Rural Schools	Wood River	549
1999/00	York Public Schools	York	1,400
2014/15	Yutan Public Schools	Yutan	477

## 4) Vendor Capabilities

### Consultants

The consultants proposed are not engaged in any searches or other projects that would affect the timeline of a Commissioner of Education search for the Nebraska State Board of Education.

McPherson & Jacobson has over 130 consultants located across the United States and 17 in Nebraska; this allows us to tailor each search to the timeline that best meets the needs of the organization—while still giving the search our utmost attention.

### Additional Resources

McPherson & Jacobson will be working with K12 *Insight* to analyze the stakeholder input obtained through the in-person meetings, online meetings, and online stakeholder survey. The stakeholder report the organization receives will contain the input received during the stakeholder meetings in addition to an analysis of the data obtained from the input.

K12 *Insight* is the only all-in-one, experience-wide customer experience and intelligence platform purpose-built for education.

#### **K12 *Insight***

2291 Wood Oak Drive, Suite 300

Herndon, Virginia 20171

703-542-9600

<https://www.k12insight.com/>

## *5) Project Staff*

### Search Team

The search team for the Nebraska State Board of Education Commissioner of Education search will be Dr. Steve Joel, Dr. Michelle Hamilton, Dr. Walt Cooper, Dr. Randy Gilson, and Mr. Darren Toby. The bios and resumes for the consultants follow.

Dr. Joel and Dr. Hamilton are just completing the State Superintendent Search for the Mississippi Department of Education. Dr. Cooper recently completed the search for Colorado Springs D-11 and is currently leading the search for the Executive Director for the Colorado Association of School Boards. Dr. Gilson and Mr. Toby are both successful Nebraska school district superintendents.

### Bios

#### **Dr. Steve Joel—Lead Consultant**



Dr. Steve Joel has been with McPherson and Jacobson since 1996 and serves as a member of the Executive Board as well as on the Board of Directors.

A native of Long Island, NY his entire career has been in education beginning as a teacher in a small rural Nebraska School District followed by 36 years as a school administrator; the last 34 serving as a superintendent. In 2022, after serving 12 years, Dr. Joel retired as the superintendent in Lincoln, Nebraska which has more than 41,000 students. He has attained a number of state and national awards including the Nebraska Superintendent of the Year.

Dr. Joel is a member of AASA and has recently served as a mentor/teacher with the Urban Superintendent's Academy and serves on the Board of the Urban Superintendent's Association of America. Dr. Joel is also a frequent national presenter on topics such as the superintendent search, leadership development, board and administrative goal setting and operating principles.

Dr. Joel has degrees from Doane College, The University of Nebraska, and Kansas State University.

Dr. Joel has conducted over 50 superintendent searches and is McPherson & Jacobson's primary recruiter; for Clark County Schools District, Las Vegas, Nevada, he recruited over 30 applicants. Dr. Joel has also extensively recruited candidates and/or been the consultant for: Little Rock School District, Little Rock, Arkansas; Orange County Public Schools, Orlando, Florida; Jefferson County Public Schools, Louisville, Kentucky; Fayette County Public Schools, Lexington, Kentucky; Duval County Schools, Jacksonville, Florida; Wake County Public School System, Cary, North Carolina; Sunnyside Unified School District, Tucson, Arizona; Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Charlotte, North Carolina; Dysart Unified School District, Surprise, Arizona; Peoria Unified School District, Glendale, Arizona, Mesa Public Schools, Mesa, Arizona; Scottsdale Unified School District, Scottsdale, Arizona; Fox Chapel Area School District, Pittsburgh, PA, North Allegheny School District, Pittsburgh, PA Gardner Edgerton USD

231 in Kansas; Patricia A. Hannaford Career Center in Vermont, and the Mississippi State Superintendent. Dr. Joel was the lead consultant for many of these searches.

### **Dr. Michelle Hamilton--Consultant**



Dr. Michelle Hamilton joined McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. in 2018.

Dr. Hamilton has thirty years of experience in public education. She recently retired from the position of area assistant superintendent and has served as an assistant principal, principal, and chief academic officer.

Dr. Hamilton has extended her professional growth by participating in the Harvard National Institute for Urban School Leaders, National Alliance of Black School Educators Aspiring Superintendent Institute, National Institute for School Leadership Instructor Certification Training, and the Millsaps Principal's Institute. She has been a presenter for Southwest Mississippi Education Consortium, Jackson Public Schools' Leadership Development Academy, and the Southern Minority Leadership Council's regional conference.

Dr. Hamilton earned her bachelor and master's degrees in education from Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi, and a doctoral degree in early childhood education from Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi.

Dr. Hamilton has participated in the Mississippi State Superintendent and Alexandria City Public Schools superintendent searches.

### **Dr. Walter Cooper—Consultant**



Dr. Walt Cooper joined McPherson & Jacobson in 2021.

Dr. Cooper started his public education career as a high school teacher and coach in Hill City, Kansas in 1984. He later served as middle school principal in Hill City before returning to Colorado as principal of North Valley Middle School in LaSalle. Following a two-year term as Assistant Superintendent in Weld County, Colorado, he was named superintendent of the Ellicott, Colorado School District in 1998. He served in this role for four years before moving to the Cheyenne Mountain School District as assistant superintendent for business operations in 2002. Dr. Cooper was selected by his peers across the state as the 2018 Colorado Superintendent of the year. He retired in 2021 after serving 15 years as superintendent of the Cheyenne Mountain School District in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Dr. Cooper is a native of Lakewood, Colorado. He holds a bachelor's degree in physical education from the University of Northern Colorado, a master's degree in educational administration from Ft. Hays (Kansas) State University, and a doctorate in educational leadership from Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

Dr. Cooper has participated in numerous searches since joining McPherson and Jacobson, serving as lead consultant for many of them. He has been involved in superintendent searches for Summit School District RE-1, Edison School District 54JT, Springfield

School District, East Grand School District, Moffat Consolidated School District #2, Colorado Springs School District 11, and Archuleta School District. He has also been the lead consultant for the Executive Director searches for Colorado Association of School Boards and South Central BOCES.

### **Dr. Randall Gilson—Consultant**



Dr. Randy Gilson joined McPherson & Jacobson L.L.C. in 2015. He currently serves as the Superintendent of Blair Community Schools, Blair, Nebraska.

Dr. Gilson has been employed in school administration in Phoenix, Arizona, Eastern Nebraska and Central Nebraska as an Activities Director, Elementary Principal, Middle School Principal, Director of Human Resources, and Superintendent.

Dr. Gilson earned his Doctorate degree in Leadership and Innovation from Arizona State University. He holds a specialist and master's degree from the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

Dr. Gilson has participated in or lead superintendent searches for Arlington Public Schools, NE; Superior Public Schools, NE; South Central Nebraska Unified #5, NE; Seward Public Schools, NE; and Maize Unified School District 266, KS.

### **Mr. Darren Tobey--Consultant**



Mr. Darren Tobey joined McPherson & Jacobson L.L.C. in 2019. He currently serves as superintendent of Broken Bow Public Schools in Broken Bow, Nebraska.

Prior to becoming the superintendent of schools at Broken Bow in July 2018, Mr. Tobey served as superintendent and high school principal at Southern Valley Schools in Oxford, Nebraska. HE started his educational career at Brady Public Schools, Nebraska in 2006.

Mr. Tobey earned his Ed. Specialists from Wayne State College and his M.A. from Chadron State College.

Mr. Tobey has participated in superintendent searches for Summerland Public Schools in Nebraska, and Wall School District 51-5 in South Dakota.

## Resumes

**Dr. Steve Joel**  
**5524 S. 88<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Lincoln, NE 68526**  
**Email: s\_joel@macnjake.com**  
**Phone: 402-525-3221**

### **Educational Background**

Ed.D.	1991	Kansas State University	Ed. Admin.
M.Ed.	1981	University of Nebraska-Lincoln	Ed. Leadership
B.A.	1976	Doane College	History Education

### **Professional Experience**

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
2010 to 2022	Superintendent	Lincoln Public School District	Lincoln, NE	42,000
2005 to Present	Instructor	Doane University	Crete, NE	
2000 to 2010	Superintendent	Grand Island Public School District	Grand Island, NE	9,000
1996 to Present	Consultant/ Executive Dir.	McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C.	Omaha, NE	
1992 to 2000	Superintendent	Beatrice Public School District	Beatrice, NE	2,000
1990 to Present	Professor	Benedictine College	Atchison, KS	

### **Professional Recognition/Awards**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name of Award</b>	<b>State</b>
2000-2001	Nebraska Superintendent of the year	NE

### **Related Involvements**

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Name of Organization</b>
2016 to Present	Instructor/Mentor	AASA Urban Superintendent Academy
	Member and Past President	Urban Superintendents Association of America – 100 Districts
	Advisory Member	National Route to Management (RTM)

### **Community/Service/Fraternal Organizations**

<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Offices Held</b>
McPherson & Jacobson Executive Board	2000 to Present	Member
Rotary International	1992 to Present	Past President
United Way		Past President
Foundation of Lincoln Public Schools		Member
Lincoln Chamber of Commerce		Member
Commissioner's Advisory for Educational Leadership		Member
Advisory Board for ERDI		Member

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**Educational Background**

Ed.D.	1997	Jackson State University
M.S.Ed.	1993	Mississippi College
B.S.Ed.	1991	Mississippi College

**Professional Experience**

Dates		Title	District	Location	Enrollment
2018	to Present	Consultant	McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C.	Omaha, NE	
2018	to Present	District Effectiveness Specialist	Georgia Dept. of Education	Atlanta, GA	
2017	to 2018	Area Assistant Superintendent	Jackson Public School District	Jackson, MS	26,000
2009	to 2017	Assistant Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer	Jackson Public School District	Jackson, MS	26,000
2005	to 2013	Part-time instructor	Walden University	Minneapolis, MN	
2000	to 2009	Elementary Principal	Jackson Public School District	Jackson, MS	26,000
1996	to 2000	Assistant Principal	Jackson Public School District	Jackson, MS	26,000
1991	to 1996	Teacher	Jackson Public School District	Jackson, MS	26,000

**Professional Organization Memberships**

Name of Organization	Offices Held
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development	Member
National Association for Elementary School Principals	Member
Partners in Education	Advisory Board Member
National Alliance of Black School Educators	Member

### **Professional Recognition/Awards**

<b>Name of Award</b>	<b>Awarding Organization</b>
Value Added Award in Language Arts and Math	Program of Research and Evaluation for Public Schools
Woman of Status Award	
Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Outstanding Educator Award	
Principal of the Year	Junior Achievement
African-American Doctoral Teacher Scholarship	
Eisenhower Grant Recipient	

### **Community/Service/Fraternal Organizations**

<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Offices Held</b>
United Way of America	Alignment Jackson Operating Board Member
MS American Heart Association	Board Member
Salvation Army	Advisory Board Member
Junior League of Jackson	Advisory Board Member
Lynch Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church	Member
Board of Christian Education	Director
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.	Member

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**Educational Background**

Ed.D.	1999	Southeastern University, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Educational Leadership
M.S.	1990	Fort Hays State University, Hays, KS	Educational Administration
B.A.	1984	University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, CO	Physical Education

**Professional Experience**

Dates	Title	District	Location
2021 to Present	Consultant	McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C	Omaha, NE
2006 to 2021	Superintendent of Schools	Cheyenne Mountain School District 12	Colorado Springs, CO
2002 to 2006	Assistant Superintendent for Business Operations	Cheyenne Mountain School District 12	Colorado Springs, CO
1998 to 2002	Superintendent of Schools	Ellicott School District 22	Ellicott, CO
1996 to 1998	Assistant Superintendent of Schools	Weld County School District RE-1	Gilcrest, CO
1993 to 1996	Principal – North Valley Middle School	Weld County School District RE-1	Gilcrest, CO
1990 to 1993	Principal – Longfellow Middle School	Unified School District 281	Hill City, KS
1984 to 1990	Physical Education and English Teacher – Hill City High and Longfellow Middle Schools	Unified School District 281	Hill City, KS

**Professional Organization Memberships**

Name of Organization	Dates	Offices Held
Colorado Association of School Executives Legislative Committee	2016 to 2018	Chair
Department of Business Officials Board of Directors	2004 to 2006	Director
Colorado Association of Superintendents and Senior Administrators	2001 to 2003	Director

### **Professional Organization Memberships (continued)**

<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Offices Held</b>
Pikes Peak BOCES Superintendent Advisory Council	2001 to 2002	Chair
Northwest Evaluation Association	1999 to 2003	Facilitator, Interpreting Assessment Reports
Colorado Partnership for Educational Renewal	1996 to 1998	Governing Board

### **Professional Recognition/Awards**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name of Award</b>	<b>Awarding Organization, Committee, etc.</b>
2018	Colorado Superintendent of the Year	American Association of School Administrators
2017	Colbert Cushing Award	Colorado Association of Superintendents and Senior Executives
2012	Policy Leadership Award	Colorado Association of School Executives
1996	Administrator of the Year	Colorado Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance

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**Phone: 402-999-6224**

**Educational Background**

Ed. D	2009	Arizona State University	Educational Leadership, Policy, and Innovation
Ed. S	2005	University of Nebraska at Lincoln	Assessment Specialist in Curriculum Endorsement
Ed. S	2003	University of Nebraska at Kearney	Specialist in Education Administration - Superintendency
M. Ed	2000	University of Nebraska at Kearney	Educational Administration-Principalship
A. B.	1996	University of Nebraska at Kearney	Business Education and Physical Education

**Professional Experience**

<b>Dates</b>		<b>Title</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>
2018	to Present	Superintendent	Blair Community Schools	Blair, NE
2015	to Present	Consultant	McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C.	Omaha, NE
2014	to Present	Adjunct Professor	Concordia College	Seward, NE
2011	to 2018	Superintendent	South Central Nebraska USD 5	Fairfield, NE
2009	to 2011	Director of Human Resources	Buckeye Elementary School District	Buckeye, AZ
2006	to 2009	K-8 Principal	Buckeye Elementary School District	Buckeye, AZ
2002	to 2006	K-6 Principal	Gothenburg Elementary School	Gothenburg, NE
2000	to 2002	K-8 Principal & Activities Dir.	Eustis - Farnam Public School	Eustis & Farnam, NE
1997	to 2000	Teacher / Coach	Loomis Public School	Loomis, NE

## **Professional Organization Memberships**

<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Offices Held</b>
CHI Health Community Board Member	Governance Chair
Washington County Economic Development - Gateway	Member-Treasurer
Rotary	Member
American Association of School Administrators	Member
Nebraska Council of School Administrators Association	Member
Learning Forward	Member
Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association	Member
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Develop	Member
Arizona School Personnel Administrators Association	Member
Arizona School Administrators Association	Member
International Reading Association	Member
STANCE for Children's Education	Member

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**618 Hillcrest Drive**  
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**Phone: (308) 920-0651**

**Educational Background**

	2016	Wayne State College, Wayne, NE	Ed. Specialists
	2011	Chadron State College, Chadron, NE	K-12 Education Admin.
B.S.	2005	Peru State College, Peru, NE	

**Professional Experience**

<b>Dates</b>		<b>Title</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
2019	to Present	Consultant	McPherson & Jacobson, LLC	Omaha, NE	
2018	to Present	Superintendent	Broken Bow Public Schools	Broken Bow, NE	822
2014	to 2018	Superintendent	Southern Valley Schools	Oxford, NE	380
2011	to 2016	7-12 Principal	Southern Valley Schools	Oxford, NE	380
2010	to 2014	Activities Director	Southern Valley Schools	Oxford, NE	380
2006	to 2010	Title I/K-12 P.E./Activities Director	Brady Public Schools	Brady, NE	225

**Professional Recognition/Awards**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name of Award</b>	<b>Awarding Organization, Committee, etc.</b>
2019	Closing Achievement Gap ACT - Broken Bow Spring 2019	NRCSA
2017	Awards and Scholarships	NRCSA Board Member
2016	Cornerstone Award	Nebraska FFA
2016	Elected	School Masters Member
2014	Administrator of the Year	District V

**Community/Service/Fraternal Organizations**

**Name of Organization**

Oxford Baseball/Softball Association

Board Member Chamber of Commerce – Broken Bow

Board Member Capable – Broken Bow

Economic Development

Implemented Teammates mentoring program that serves 5<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students

## *C. Project Plan*

### *Phases of an Administrator Search*

#### *1) Preliminary Search Activities*

- ✓ **Using a group process with the Search Committee, identify the most important characteristics of the future administrator.**

Using Nominal Group Technique, the consultants will assist the Search Committee in identifying the most important characteristics the Search Committee would like the new administrator to possess. These characteristics will be used as a template for recruiting and selecting candidates.

- ✓ **Establish appropriate timelines and target dates for the selection process.**

The consultants will prepare a proposed calendar for the search process. Dates for advertising the announcement of vacancy, closing date, dates for interviewing, a target date for selecting the new administrator, and a date for the new administrator to begin will be determined.

- ✓ **Identify the point of contact for the organization.**

The organization will identify an appropriate staff person to work with the consultants to coordinate the logistics of the search. This includes tasks such as assisting with information for the promotional brochure and coordinating details for stakeholder input and other meetings within the organization.

#### *2) Solicit Stakeholder Input*

- ✓ **Identify appropriate stakeholder groups.**

The organization will identify the various stakeholder groups that they want McPherson & Jacobson's consultants to meet with to solicit input into the process.

- ✓ **Work with the organization to schedule the stakeholder input meetings.**

The consultants will work with the organization's point of contact to determine the stakeholder input schedule and coordinate notifying the stakeholders about the meetings.

- ✓ **Meet with groups identified by the organization to provide stakeholder input into the selection process.**

The consultants will meet with the stakeholder groups identified by the organization and solicit their input into the selection process. Each group is asked to identify the strengths of the organization and community, the issues facing the new administrator,

and the characteristics they would like to see the new administrator possess. The organization chooses which groups it would like the consultants to meet with. The consultants will assist the organization in choosing which groups it wishes to include.

For any unable to attend a stakeholder meeting, we provide an online version of the questions we ask the groups. At the request of the organization, the survey can be available in multiple languages.

✓ **K12 *Insight* Analysis.**

McPherson & Jacobson will work with K12 *Insight* to analyze the input received from the stakeholder meetings and online input.

✓ **Stakeholder Input Results.**

The results of the stakeholder meetings and online stakeholder input are summarized by the consultants and presented to the organization. The K12 *Insight* Analysis will also be included in the final report to the organization.

### *3) Public Relations*

McPherson & Jacobson will prepare press releases for the organization to use as they deem necessary.

### *4) Marketing and Recruiting*

#### Advertising/Marketing the Vacancy

✓ **Determine, with the Search Committee, appropriate advertising venues.**

The consultants will discuss with the organization the advertising options available and the pricing for them. The minimum advertising we recommend are the following online venues: AASA, *TopSchoolJobs.org*, ALAS (Association of Latino Administrators & Superintendents), NABSE (National Alliance of Black School Educators), and posting on Nebraska Council of School Administrators website.

McPherson & Jacobson will not place any media advertising without approval from the organization.

Additional advertising/recruiting tools provided at no additional cost to the organization:

- The opening and application materials will be posted on the McPherson & Jacobson website which averages 225,000 hits per month
- Information regarding the position will be sent to the over 130 McPherson & Jacobson consultants located nationwide asking for names of potential applicants
- The over 1,000 potential applicants registered with McPherson & Jacobson will receive an email giving them opportunity to apply

- Posted on McPherson & Jacobson's social media accounts: Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter
- Vacancy announcements sent to school board and school administrator associations

✓ **Develop promotional literature and brochures announcing the vacancy.**

In order to attract quality applicants, it is important to promote your organization and community. With assistance from the organization, the consultants will prepare an announcement of vacancy that highlights the strengths of your organization and community. Our graphic artist will prepare a professional color brochure that highlights the organization and community, including the selection criteria, the application procedures, and timelines.

✓ **Prepare and place announcement of vacancy.**

McPherson & Jacobson's staff will prepare and place the announcement of vacancy. It will be sent media venues selected by the organization. Additionally, McPherson & Jacobson maintains an interactive website ([www.macnjake.com](http://www.macnjake.com)) that allows applicants to access all the application materials and apply online. The website averages over 250,000 hits per month.

✓ **Develop an application unique to your vacancy that reflects the selection criteria determined by the Search Committee.**

McPherson & Jacobson's staff will create an application form requiring applicants to describe their strengths and experiences relating to each criterion identified by the Search Committee. This will be one of the preliminary screening devices used by the consultants when assessing potential candidates.

✓ **Post application information and notify interested applicants.**

McPherson & Jacobson's staff contacts potential applicants and manages all the application materials using our online application software. Our office staff handles this task without assistance from your organization.

**Identifying and Recruiting Applicants**

✓ **Actively recruit applicants who meet the organization's needs.**

While McPherson & Jacobson does not represent candidates, we keep a data base of quality candidates. Once the Selection Committee identifies the characteristics it desires in its new superintendent, the consultants from McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. will identify and aggressively recruit, on a national level, candidates who match the Selection Committee's identified criteria.

Over one-fourth of McPherson & Jacobson consultants are minorities or female. We use our consultant network to track the careers of successful administrators. We also work closely with universities, colleges, and professional organizations that represent and promote minority and female applicants.

McPherson & Jacobson stays current with trends in educational leadership by being an active participant and presenter at many national and state education conferences. We participate in Job Central at the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Conference, the National School Boards Association annual conference, and others such as the AASA Women's & Minority Leadership Conference. In addition, McPherson & Jacobson consultants are members of the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NASBE), and the Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS).

Once the Selection Committee has identified its selection criteria, the consultants of McPherson & Jacobson will immediately begin to identify potential applicants both locally and nationally. McPherson & Jacobson has over 130 consultants across the United States; we will send the information to all of our consultants across the United States, asking them to nominate candidates who would be a good match. Those candidates will be invited to apply. Some of our best candidates may not be actively seeking another position and will need to be recruited.

We do not maintain a stable of candidates, but we do follow the careers of successful administrators. Individuals who are currently looking to take a new position are encouraged to register with us so they can receive notification of the vacancies we are representing. We have over 1,000 potential applicants currently registered with McPherson & Jacobson who will receive notification of the administrator opening. Additionally, we will vigorously pursue current or emerging leaders through personal contact.

We have maintained an ongoing presence at the American Association of School Administrators' Job Central at their annual conference where we have an opportunity to meet and interact with potential applicants. We maintain an ongoing presence at the National Association of School Boards' annual conference. We represent two state school board associations as their superintendent search process; therefore, we are the only private firm allowed to participate in their Job Central.

Our searches draw applicants from across the United States. Most searches have applicants from 10 to up to 25 states apply. Some of our searches also have applicants from outside the United States.

✓ **Assist the organization in determining compensation parameters.**

In order to recruit and select top candidates, compensation packages need to be competitive. Our consultants will present data indicating what organizations in the same geographic region and similar size are paying administrators. Whenever possible, they will also present compensation information for organizations that recently hired an administrator. This information is provided for the organization's consideration of compensation parameters.

Final compensation decisions will be determined by the organization and the selected candidate.

✓ **Keep all applicants informed of their status in the selection process.**

During the application process, McPherson & Jacobson staff monitors applicants and notifies them of what is still needed to complete the process.

## Applicant Diversity

While McPherson & Jacobson does not represent candidates, we keep a data bank of quality candidates. Once the Selection Committee identifies the characteristics it desires in its new superintendent, the consultants from McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. will identify and aggressively recruit, on a national level, candidates who match the Selection Committee's identified criteria.

McPherson & Jacobson has **over 130 consultants** across the nation. Our diverse group of consultants has extensive backgrounds in education and public service including current and former superintendents, assistant superintendents, university professors, and school board members. Over fifty percent have a doctorate degree. Their diversity and expertise ensures your search results in quality leadership for education excellence.

We use our consultant network to track the careers of successful administrators. We also work closely with universities, colleges, and professional organizations that represent and promote minority and female applicants.

For the past five years, approximately **one-third** of our applicants have been female and almost **one-fourth** of our applicants have been ethnically diverse.

In the past ten years, **one-third** of the boards we have represented have placed women or ethnically diverse candidates.

McPherson & Jacobson recruits from a diverse pool of applicants. **McPherson & Jacobson lead the search for the first black woman superintendent hired in Nebraska.**

## Progress Reports

With each search, McPherson & Jacobson identifies a Lead Consultant who will coordinate the search process, and the organization will identify a Point of Contact. The Lead Consultant and the Point of Contact communicate on a regular basis during the search. Typically, the organization's Point of Contact communicates regularly with the Search Committee; however, the Lead Consultant is available to all Search Committee and State Board members if they have a question or concern.

### *5) Scoring Applicants*

- ✓ **Review candidates with the Search Committee and assist Search Committee members in determining which candidates they will interview.**

The consultants will present a complete list of applicants, who completed the application process, to the Search Committee for its review. We do not eliminate any applicants; however, a short list will be submitted of those applicants who we found most closely met the organization's criteria. The consultants will present a reference profile demonstrating the consistent feedback for each short list applicant. A short video interview of each short list applicant will be provided for the Search Committee to view.

Upon reviewing the recommendations, the consultants will assist the Search Committee in identifying which applicants they wish to consider as candidates for interviews.

✓ **Pre-Interview and Video of Shortlist Applicants.**

The consultants will pre-interview applicants to be submitted on the shortlist. We will have these applicants submit a video which the consultants will share with the Search Committee.

*6) Coordinate Interview*


✓ **Assist the Search Committee in developing a set of interview questions that reflect the identified selection criteria and characteristics.**

The consultants will present an extensive list of potential interview questions that reflect the selection criteria and characteristics desired by the Search Committee. The Search Committee members choose interview questions that reflect their criteria and priorities.

If the organization chooses to conduct two rounds of interviews, the consultants will assist in developing interview questions for both rounds of interviews.

✓ **Scoring Rubric.**

Sample of a rubric that could be tailored to meet the needs of the organization.



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**McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C.**  
Commissioner of Education Vacancy Screening Form  
Nebraska State Board of Education

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Years in current position: \_\_\_\_\_

Points Possible	Points Awarded	Item
<input type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> Specialist <input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate	N/A	Degree
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	N/A	Certified in state to which applying
10		Years of Other Job Experience _____
10		Years of Superintendent Experience _____
10		Years of Assistant Superintendent Experience _____
10		Years of Principal/Assistant Principal Experience _____
10		Criteria 1: (write out criteria #1)
10		Criteria 2: (write out criteria #2)
10		Criteria 3: (write out criteria #3)
10		Criteria 4: (write out criteria #4)
10		Criteria 5: (write out criteria #4)
10		Quality of References
<b>100</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>

✓ **Contact all finalists and schedule their interview dates.**

The consultants will contact the final candidates, notifying them they are finalists for the position and scheduling their interview dates. The consultants will be the contact for answering any questions and coordinating the candidates' visits to the organization.

✓ **Notify all applicants not selected for an interview.**

Once the Search Committee has selected its final candidates, all other applicants will receive, on behalf of the organization, a personalized notification thanking them for taking the time to complete the application materials and notifying them that they are not a finalist.

✓ **Assist the organization in determining interview procedures.**

After the Search Committee selects their final candidates to interview, the names of these candidates will be made public upon confirming the interviews. During the interview process, the stakeholder groups will have an opportunity to meet the individual candidates.

If the Search Committee chooses to conduct semi-finalist interviews, the candidates will only meet with the Search Committee. The names of the semi-finalist candidates will remain confidential (in states where an executive session is allowed), and stakeholders will not meet the semi-finalists. The finalist interviews will be conducted as described in the paragraph above.

✓ **Coordinate interview and visitation procedures.**

If the Search Committee chooses, McPherson & Jacobson will schedule semi-finalist interviews. Semi-finalist interviews are typically conducted with the Search Committee only. After the semi-finalist interviews, the Search Committee will select their finalists.

If the Search Committee chooses to involve stakeholder groups in the interview process, the consultants will assist in establishing the finalist interview schedule that includes organization staff, stakeholders, and community groups. A typical interview day will include a tour of the organization and community, meeting with stakeholder groups, and a formal interview with the Search Committee.

✓ **Coordinate visitation procedures for the candidate's spouse/significant other.**

We encourage organizations to invite spouses/significant others to attend the interview day. The consultants will coordinate, with the point of contact, a portion of the interview day for the spouse/significant other to have an expanded visitation of the community. Tours typically include available educational facilities, housing, medical facilities, churches, recreational opportunities, and areas of interest unique to your community.

✓ **Assist the organization in making final arrangements for each candidate's visit.**

It is common practice for the organization to pay interview expenses for the candidates and their spouses/significant others. In order to ensure that expenses stay

within established guidelines, the consultants will assist the point of contact in making lodging and travel arrangements for each candidate.

### *7) Screen Applicants*

✓ **Evaluate each applicant against the selection criteria.**

The consultants will read and evaluate all of the completed files submitted by applicants. They will read the application form and all of the additional material in each file and begin reviewing against the selection criteria.

✓ **Conduct reference checks.**

We understand that applicants do not submit references who will not speak highly of them. We begin with the references given and ask them a list of questions relevant to the selection criteria. After asking those questions, we ask each reference to give us the names of other people who can speak of the applicant's qualifications. We then call those individuals and ask them the same set of questions, including asking them to give us the names of other people who could speak of the applicant's qualifications. We go a minimum of three people removed from the primary references. What we are looking for is consistency of answers that will verify the applicant's strengths and weaknesses.

In addition to contacting references, the consultants conduct an extensive Internet search of the applicants.

### *8) Verify Applicants*

✓ **Conduct background checks.**

Included in the expenses are criminal/financial/educational degree verification background checks for the finalists selected to be interviewed.

✓ **Pre-Interview and Video of Shortlist Applicants.**

The consultants will pre-interview applicants to be submitted on the shortlist. We will have these applicants submit a video which the consultants will share with the Search Committee.

✓ **Reports on the applicants.**

The consultants will present a complete list of applicants to the Selection Committee for its review. We do not eliminate any applicants. We will submit a short list of those applicants who we feel most closely meet the organization's criteria and will present a written analysis for each.

### *9) Assistance with Discussions and Deliberations*

If requested, McPherson & Jacobson's consultants can be present at the meeting(s) when the Search Committee and State Board conduct discussions and deliberate. If

the first round of candidates do not meet the needs of the Search Committee and State Board, our consultants will assist in identifying additional candidates.

## 10) *Communication with the Candidates*

### ✓ **Contacting applicants during the application and screening process.**

The consultants will monitor the submitted applications for the position. If an applicant that is very qualified hasn't completed their application close to the closing date for application, the consultants will reach out to the applicant and encourage them to complete their application.

During the screening process, the consultants will verify the applicants are interested in the position and are willing to take the position if it is offered to them.

### ✓ **Contact all finalists and schedule their interview dates.**

The consultants will contact the final candidates, notifying them they are finalists for the position and scheduling their interview dates. The consultants will be the contact for answering any questions and coordinating the candidates' visits to the organization.

### ✓ **Notify all applicants not selected for an interview.**

Once the Search Committee has selected its final candidates, all other applicants will receive, on behalf of the organization, a personalized notification thanking them for taking the time to complete the application materials and notifying them that they are not a finalist.

### ✓ **Personally contact each finalist who was not offered the position.**

Once a contract has been offered by the organization and accepted, the consultants will call each of the other final candidates and thank them on behalf of the organization for interviewing for the position. *These candidates are not notified until an offer has been accepted.* If by chance you lose your top candidate, we want to keep viable candidates available.

## 11) *Potential Conflict of Interest*

McPherson & Jacobson does not have any conflict of interest in providing services to the State Board and the Nebraska Department of Education.

## 12) *Transition*

### ✓ **Establish performance objectives for new administrator.**

Working with the organization and new administrator, the consultant will assist in establishing two or three performance objectives the organization wants the administrator to focus on during the first year. These objectives are beyond the day-to-day organization operations.

Once the performance objectives have been identified, the organization will be asked what they will accept as evidence of progress towards the accomplishment of the identified objectives.

The administrator will take the information generated from this session and develop an action plan for achieving the performance objectives. The action plan will be presented to the organization for formal approval and forwarded to McPherson & Jacobson's home office.

✓ **Provide a guarantee.**

If the organization chooses to use our complete service, we will guarantee our process for two (2) years. If the person selected leaves the position, *FOR WHATEVER REASON*, within the guarantee period, we will repeat the process at no charge except actual expenses.

We are convinced that our process of identifying your most important selection criteria, meaningfully involving stakeholders, screening candidates against the criteria, and working with you during the critical first year, will ensure your search results in quality leadership for education excellence.

## *Timeline*

The timeline for the search process is established when we meet with the organization so we can address the unique needs of the organization. However, the time from our first meeting with the organization until the finalist is selected is typically a minimum of two to three months.

**Possible timeline:** *(can be adjusted to meet the needs of the organization)*

- At the beginning of the search (**December 2022**)
  - The qualities for the new administrator are identified
  - A formal timeline is established
  - Advertising decisions are made
  - Application information is posted
  - A brochure is created to advertise the organization and the vacancy
  
- At the time designated by the organization (**January 2023**)
  - Stakeholder group meetings are held
  - A summary of stakeholder input is presented to the Search Committee
  
- As applications arrive in our office
  - Applications are monitored and applicants are notified of the deadlines to submit their materials
  
- After the closing date (**late February 2023**)
  - All the completed applicant files are forwarded to the consultants
  - The consultants begin the review and pre-interview process
  
- Approximately two to four weeks after the closing date (**late March 2023**)
  - Consultants provide information to the Search Committee on all applicants who completed the process
  - Consultants present summary profiles and video interviews of qualified candidates to the Search Committee
  - The Search Committee selects the candidates it wants to interview
  - Criminal/financial/educational degree verification background checks are conducted on the selected finalists
  - McPherson & Jacobson notifies each applicant not selected for an interview
  
- Soon after the Search Committee selects their candidates (**April 2023**)
  - Semi-finalist interviews are conducted (if chosen by the Search Committee)
  - The Search Committee interviews its final candidates
  - The Search Committee selects their new superintendent
  - McPherson & Jacobson's consultants contact each candidate who was interviewed to notify them of their status

## *D. Cost of Proposed Services*

The investment for conducting the Nebraska Commissioner of Education is dependent upon the service selected by the organization.

*McPherson & Jacobson has the tools to conduct all or some components of the search process electronically. We can work with the Search Committee to determine the best practices as the search progresses to determine if in-person or online meetings will best meet the needs of the organization.*

McPherson & Jacobson is committed to working with the organization until an administrator is identified and hired. If a second round of candidate selection is necessary, the only cost to the organization would be the additional expenses, there is not an additional fee.

**Expenses in addition to the consulting fee are:** cost of media advertisement selected by the organization; office expenses; telephone charges for reference checks; travel and expenses for consultants in organization visits; consultants' attendance at the interviews or additional meetings. All expenses will be explained and agreed to prior to the commitment of the search process.

### *Services available to select from*

Activity	Fee	Estimated Expenses
Preliminary Search Activities	<b>\$ 3,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,400</b>
Solicit Stakeholder Input*	<b>\$12,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,200</b>
Advertise Vacancy**	<b>\$ 100</b>	<b>\$ 2,000</b>
Recruit Applicants	<b>\$ 6,000</b>	<b>\$ 400</b>
Screen Applicants***	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,650</b>
Coordinate Interview	<b>\$ 1,900</b>	<b>\$ 500</b>
Transition	<b>\$ 2,500</b>	<b>\$ 250</b>
TOTAL	<b>\$35,500</b>	<b>\$ 7,400</b>
<b>TOTAL (not to exceed)</b>	<b>\$42,900</b>	

**\*Stakeholder meetings**      Included in the fees and expenses are

- Two (2) consecutive days of in-person stakeholder meetings (conducted in Lincoln, Nebraska) [*One (1) team of two (2) consultants*]. If the organization requests more than two (2) consecutive days of in-person stakeholder meetings, the fee is \$750/day per consultant plus expenses.
- Fifteen (15) online stakeholder sessions
- [K12 Insight](#) analysis

- Online stakeholder input survey (in English and Spanish)
- Complete report summarizing all of the information gathered from the input sessions and analysis.

**\*\*Advertising expenses** Included in the expenses are

- Thirty (30) days on AASA (American Association of School Administrators)
- Thirty (30) days on TopSchoolJobs (Ed Week online)
- Thirty (30) days of advertising on NABSE (National Alliance of Black School Educators)
- Six (6) weeks of advertising on ALAS (Association of Latino Administrators & Superintendents)
- Posting on Nebraska Council of School Administrators website

**\*\*Screening applicants' expenses** Includes video interviews of the short-list candidates and criminal/financial/degree verification background checks on candidates selected to be interviewed.

**NOTE:**

- Interview expenses for the candidates are not included in the expenses listed above.
- There is an additional fee and expenses for the consultants to attend the interview sessions.

## *McPherson & Jacobson Guarantees*

### *Client Satisfaction*

McPherson & Jacobson is committed to working with the organization until an administrator is identified and hired. If a second round of candidate selection is necessary, the only cost to the organization would be the additional expenses, there is not an additional fee.

If the organization chooses to use our complete service, we will guarantee our process for **two (2) years**. If the person selected leaves the position, for whatever reason, within the guarantee period, we will repeat the process at no charge except actual expenses.

We are convinced that our process of identifying your most important selection criteria, meaningfully involving stakeholders, screening candidates against the criteria, and working with you during the critical first year, will ensure your search results in quality leadership for education excellence.

### *Price Match*

McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. will match the search fee for comparable services.

### *Recruiting the Selected Candidate*

McPherson & Jacobson consultants do not actively recruit administrators that have been placed in our searches. We would not have the retention rates for our placements if we recruited the administrators from our searches. Over the last five years, **over eighty-five percent** of administrators are in the position for which they were hired. **Almost sixty percent** of administrators are still in the position for which they were hired within the past ten years. **Forty percent** of the administrators selected by governing boards within the past 15 years continue in the position for which they were hired.

### *Additional Services:*

In addition to the basic services provided, McPherson & Jacobson can provide at no additional charge the following services:

- Assist the organization in revising and updating the administrator's job description.
- Assist the organization in developing an effective contract.
- Provide assistance in negotiating the contract with the finalist.
- Schedule an on-site visitation to the finalist's home organization.

## *E. References*

### **Mississippi Department of Education--State Superintendent**

PO Box 771

Jackson MS 39205-0771

Phone: 601-359-3513

Contact: Dr. Felicia Galvin, Chief of Operations, 601-359-5254, [fgavin@mdek12.org](mailto:fgavin@mdek12.org)

Board Contact: Rosemary Aultman, Board Chair, 601-359-1750,

[rosemary.aultman@mdek12.org](mailto:rosemary.aultman@mdek12.org)

Search Year: 2021/22

### **Kansas State Department of Education--Commissioner of Education**

900 SW Jackson St.

Topeka KS 66612

Contact: Peggy Hill, Board Secretary, 785-296-3203, [plhill@ksde.org](mailto:plhill@ksde.org)

Board Contact: Jana Shaver, Former Board Chair, 620-926-0740

Search Year: 2013/14

### **Colorado Association of School Boards--Executive Director**

2253 S. Oneida St., Suite 300

Denver CO 80224

Phone: 303-832-1000

Board Contact: Dr. Richard Martyr, Board President, 303-808-1433,

[martyr\\_richard@svvsd.org](mailto:martyr_richard@svvsd.org)

Search Year: 2022/23

### **South Central BOCES--Executive Director**

323 S. Purcell Blvd

Pueblo West CO 81007

Phone: 719-647-0023

Contact: Denille LePlatt 719-859-0038 [leplatt-d@sc-boces.org](mailto:leplatt-d@sc-boces.org)

Search Year: 2020/21

Enrollment: 34,000

### **WSSDA (Washington State School Directors' Association)--Executive Director**

221 College St. NE

Olympia WA 98516

Phone: 360-252-3002

Search Year: 2015/16

### **Idaho Association of School Administrators--Executive Director**

777 S. Latah St.

Boise ID 83705

Phone: 208-345-1171

Search Year: 2010/11



**MCPHERSON** *M J* **JACOBSON, LLC**

EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

Nebraska State Board of Education  
Lincoln, Nebraska  
Search Firm Responses to Questions  
December 1, 2022

**1. Describe two or three strengths your organization would bring to this search process, if selected to conduct the search.**

- Well established, national search firm with access to candidates and consultants across the county combined with a strong Nebraska connection and local search consultants.
- A history of conducting successful state-level executive searches (Mississippi State Superintendent of Instruction; Colorado Association of School Boards).
- Proven search tools and protocols that produce outstanding candidates while allowing significant flexibility to meet the needs of individual organizations.

**2. Provide retention rates or percentages for educational leaders secured through your search firm services**

- 5 Years: Over 85% of selected candidates remain in the position for which they were hired.
- 10 Years: Nearly 60% of selected candidates remain in the position for which they were hired.
- 15 Years: Over 40% of selected candidates remain in the position for which they were hired.

**3. Describe how you would engage stakeholders in the development of the position profile.**

Our firm's flexibility and the desires of the organization are critical components to designing stakeholder engagement opportunities...no two stakeholder processes are identical.

- Facilitate in-person and/or virtual focus groups and pose either standard or custom stakeholder questions.

- Utilize a McPherson & Jacobson designed online tool to select/rank desired characteristics or collect narrative responses.
- Engage our partner, *K-12 Insight*, to provide more detailed qualitative and quantitative analysis of stakeholder feedback.

A comprehensive report, prefaced with an executive summary, will be provided after all stakeholder feedback has been collected.

#### **4. Explain the process you would use to solicit candidates.**

- Determine desired and appropriate advertising venues (print and online) with the search committee (i.e., AASA, Ed Week *Top Jobs*, state administrator associations, etc.)
- Utilize McPherson & Jacobson's presence on popular social media platforms (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter).
- Post on the McPherson & Jacobson website (approx. 225,000 hits per month).
- Email invitations to apply to over 1,000 potential candidates who register for McPherson & Jacobson vacancy announcements.
- Distribute the vacancy announcement to over 130 McPherson & Jacobson nationwide consultants for distribution among their networks.
- Leverage personal relationships with state-level leaders across the country.
- Encourage informal and personal referrals.

#### **5. Describe the data (qualitative and quantitative) and the processes you would use to narrow a pool of candidates to a smaller group of finalists.**

- Evaluate all candidates' submitted materials against the desired characteristics (rubric).
- Engage in preliminary conversation with candidates whose profile matches a majority (or all) of the desired characteristics.
- Conduct typical reference checks and seek feedback from a deeper network (ideally three people removed) of references.
- Engage consultants nationwide who may know candidates in their region or connect us with those who do.
- Invite selected candidates to provide video responses to questions designed to further evaluate their match to the position.
- Evaluate each candidates' video responses against the desired characteristics (rubric).
- Develop a shortlist of candidates to review (application materials, video responses, reference checks, consultant vetting) with the search committee and select finalists.
- At the organization's request, we can arrange administration of the Birkman International Signature Report™ to provide detailed personality and professional behavior analysis.

**6. Explain the strategies you would use to build consensus in decision making.**

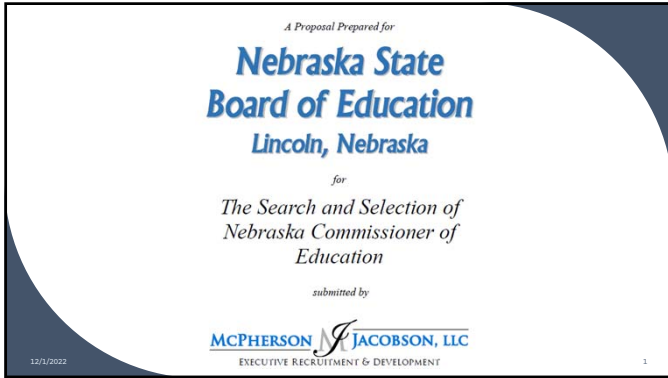
McPherson & Jacobson consultants facilitate the *Nominal Group Technique* to identify priorities and build consensus in decision-making.

Primary benefits of utilizing the *Nominal Group Technique* include:

- Each participant having equal opportunity to provide ideas or suggest outcomes without influence from others.
- Clearly defining the decision that needs to be made.
- Moving toward consensus through initial numeric values assigned to ideas or outcomes, followed by discussion and confirmation by the group.

**7. Describe how you would advise the board on a public relations plan through the search process.**

- Early engagement with David Jespersen and the public information and communications team.
- Encourage a commitment to full transparency of all non-confidential information and processes.
- Ensure consistent messaging among all printed materials, posted information, and correspondence.
- Establish a protocol and timeline for updating the Department's website.
- Collaborate with department staff on all press releases, media kits, and statement/interview requests.
- Ensure our lead consultant is available for interview and other media requests.



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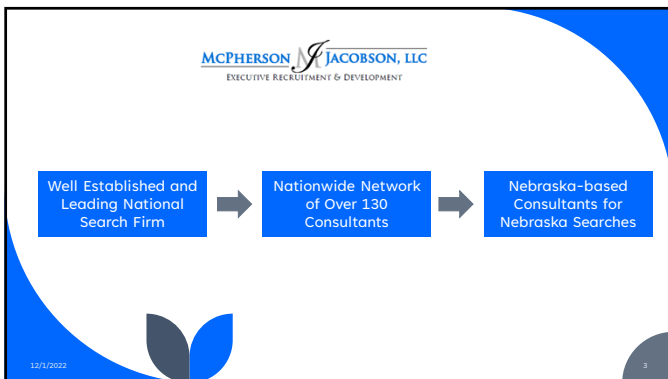
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**Nebraska Commissioner of Education Search Team**

Dr. Steve Joel, Lead Consultant  
Lincoln, NE

Dr. Michelle Hamilton  
Marietta, GA

Dr. Randall Gilson  
Blair, NE

Dr. Walt Cooper  
Colorado Springs, CO

Mr. Darren Toby  
Broken Bow, NE

**MCPHERSON JACOBSON, LLC**  
EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

12/1/2022

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**MCPHERSON JACOBSON, LLC**  
EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

Well Established and Leading National Search Firm → Nationwide Network of Over 130 Consultants → Nebraska-based Consultants for Nebraska Searches

Transparency With Clients and Their Constituents → Authentic Engagement of Stakeholders → Track Record of Successful Placements

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- A history of conducting successful state-level executive searches (Mississippi State Superintendent of Instruction; Colorado Association of School Boards).
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EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

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2. Provide retention rates or percentages for educational leaders secured through your search firm services.

- **5 Years**
  - Over 85% of selected candidates remain in the position for which they were hired.
- **10 Years**
  - Nearly 60% of selected candidates remain in the position for which they were hired.
- **15 Years**
  - Over 40% of selected candidates remain in the position for which they were hired.

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3. Describe how you would engage stakeholders in the development of the position profile.

Our firm's **flexibility** and the **desires of the organization** are critical components to designing stakeholder engagement opportunities...no two stakeholder processes are identical.

- Facilitate in-person and/or virtual focus groups and pose either standard or custom stakeholder questions.
- Utilize a McPherson & Jacobson designed online tool to select/rank desired characteristics or collect narrative responses.
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4. Explain the process you would use to solicit candidates.

- ✓ Determine desired and appropriate advertising venues (print and online) with the search committee (i.e., AASA, Ed Week Top Jobs, state administrator associations, etc.)
- ✓ Utilize McPherson & Jacobson's presence on popular social media platforms (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter).
- ✓ Post on the McPherson & Jacobson website (approx. 225,000 hits per month).
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- ✓ Distribute the vacancy announcement to over 130 McPherson & Jacobson nationwide consultants for distribution among their networks.
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5. Describe the data (qualitative and quantitative) and the processes you would use to narrow a pool of candidates to a smaller group of finalists.

The most critical components in evaluating and selecting candidates are the **desired characteristics** (skills, experiences, and characteristics) the organization identifies in the earliest stages of the search process. Our team will then:

- I. Evaluate all candidates' submitted materials against the desired characteristics (rubric).
- II. Engage in preliminary conversation with candidates whose profile matches a majority (or all) of the desired characteristics.
- III. Conduct typical reference checks **and** seek feedback from a deeper network (ideally three people removed) of references.
- IV. Engage consultants nationwide who may know candidates in their region or connect us with those who do.

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12/1/2022 10

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5. Describe the data (qualitative and quantitative) and the processes you would use to narrow a pool of candidates to a smaller group of finalists (continued).

The most critical components in evaluating and selecting candidates are the **desired characteristics** (skills, experiences, and characteristics) the organization identifies in the earliest stages of the search process. Our team will then:

- V. Invite selected candidates to provide video responses to questions designed to further evaluate their match to the position.
- VI. Evaluate each candidates' video responses against the desired characteristics (rubric).
- VII. Develop a shortlist of candidates to review (application materials, video responses, reference checks, consultant vetting) with the search committee and select finalists.
- VIII. At the organization's request, we can arrange administration of the Birkman International Signature Report™ to provide detailed personality and professional behavior analysis.

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EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

12/1/2022 11

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6. Explain the strategies you would use to build consensus in decision making.

McPherson & Jacobson consultants facilitate the **Nominal Group Technique** to identify priorities and build consensus in decision-making.

Primary benefits of utilizing the **Nominal Group Technique** include:

- Each participant having equal opportunity to provide ideas or suggest outcomes without influence from others.
- Clearly defining the decision that needs to be made.
- Moving toward consensus through initial numeric values assigned to ideas or outcomes, followed by discussion and confirmation by the group.

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EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

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7. Describe how you would advise the board on a public relations plan through the search process.

- Early engagement with David Jespersen and the public information and communications team.
- Encourage a commitment to full transparency of all non-confidential information and processes.
- Ensure consistent messaging among all printed materials, posted information, and correspondence.
- Establish a protocol and timeline for updating the Department's website.
- Collaborate with department staff on all press releases, media kits, and statement/interview requests.
- Ensure our lead consultant is available for interview and other media requests.

**MCPHERSON & JACOBSON, LLC**  
EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

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**Questions...**

**MCPHERSON & JACOBSON, LLC**  
EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

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October 21, 2022

Nebraska State Board of Education  
Search Committee  
c/o Dr. Ryan Foor, Administrative Officer  
Nebraska Department of Education  
P.O. Box 94987  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4987

Dear Friends,

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) is pleased to submit this proposal in response to the solicitation by the Nebraska State Board of Education (Ad Hoc Search Committee) for executive search services supporting the recruitment and selection of the Nebraska Commissioner of Education.

A highly effective and talented Commissioner working with the Board of Education, Department of Education and the entire education and policymaking communities can chart a course for Nebraska's education system that will lead to greater success for students and greater prosperity for individuals, communities and the state. Selecting a new Commissioner of Education presents the Nebraska State Board of Education with an excellent opportunity to advance the mission of Nebraska's State Board and Department of Education, *"To lead and support the preparation of all Nebraskans for learning, earning, and living."*

Many individuals will be attracted to the opportunity to lead the state in building momentum toward education excellence. NASBE's goal for the Commissioner search process is to recruit candidates who have the knowledge, skill set and drive to build on current strengths, bolster areas for improvement, and take advantage of opportunities that will lead the Nebraska education system to the next level.

NASBE will conduct a quality search that will not only attract the best candidates but will bring credit to the Nebraska State Board of Education for the manner in which the process is conducted.

### **Executive Summary of the Proposal**

NASBE proposes a Scope of Work for Nebraska detailed in the attached proposal. In summary, the proposal includes these phases:

- ***Phase 1: Pre-Search Preparation and Development of Position Profile.*** This phase focuses on preparing for the search and engaging the state board and stakeholders in developing the Position Profile. It includes development of a public relations plan to assist the Board and Search Committee. (This phase includes items 1-3 of the Project Plan requirements.)

- **Phase 2: Candidate Recruitment:** This phase involves the initiation and conduct of the application solicitation process designed to yield a pool of highly qualified candidates for the position of Commissioner of Education. (This phase includes items 4-6 of the Project Plan requirements.)
- **Phase 3: Finalist Identification – Screening, Reference Checks, Interviews, List Preparation:** This phase includes the screening, review and interview processes that lead to identifying the most qualified and appropriate finalists (3-5 individuals) to recommend to the board for consideration. (This phase includes items 7-8 of the Project Plan requirements.)
- **Phase 4: Final Selection:** This phase includes supporting the state board through the interview and selection process among finalist candidates. It involves the design of a full interview processes for the state board, including the development of a rating instrument based on the job description and core competencies. (This phase includes items 9-11 of the Project Plan requirements.)

The proposal also includes information about NASBE’s experience, qualifications and capacity, how we will manage the project, and a detailed timeline.

### **Contact Information**

You may contact me as follows:

**Email:** [paolo.demaria@nasbe.org](mailto:paolo.demaria@nasbe.org)

**Phone/Text:** 614-357-8545 (cell)

**Mail:** 123 N. Pitt St., Ste. 350  
Alexandria, VA 22314

We look forward to the opportunity to work with the Nebraska Board of Education to conduct the search for the state’s next Commissioner. As President & CEO of NASBE, I am authorized to commit NASBE to a potential contract with the Nebraska Department of Education for the purposes specified in this proposal

Sincerely,

Paolo DeMaria  
President & CEO.

# NASBE

National Association of  
State Boards of Education

## Executive Search – Nebraska Commissioner of Education

### PROPOSAL

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) is pleased to submit this proposal in response to the solicitation by the Nebraska State Board of Education (Ad Hoc Search Committee) for executive search services.

NASBE's goal is to conduct a quality search that will not only attract the best candidates but bring credit to the Nebraska State Board of Education for the manner in which the process is conducted.

*(Note: In the sections below, specific activities requested in the solicitation for proposals are highlighted in yellow, and referenced with the respective number (e.g., B.1, B.2, C.1, etc.). Additional activities are also included, but not highlighted, and referenced using an "x" (e.g., C.x). These activities constitute part of the proposal and are included in the quoted cost.)*

### A. Cover Letter

The cover letter is presented as the first page (above) of this proposal document.

### B. Qualifications – Information About NASBE

#### B.1. Description of NASBE – Experience, Competencies and Capabilities

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) develops, supports, and empowers citizen leaders on state boards of education to strengthen public education systems so students of all backgrounds and circumstances are prepared to succeed in school, work, and life. NASBE prides itself on being the only association singularly focused on meeting the needs of state boards of education. NASBE offers to its members a wide range of services designed to support success in board activity, policy development, system improvement and impact. To this end NASBE's competencies and capabilities are centered on the following.:

- Creating opportunities for state board members to network and learn from each other, and share interests, advice, lessons and goals as they seek to advance equity and excellence in education;
- Building state board members' understanding of key education issues, practices, and challenges and the role of state boards in addressing them;

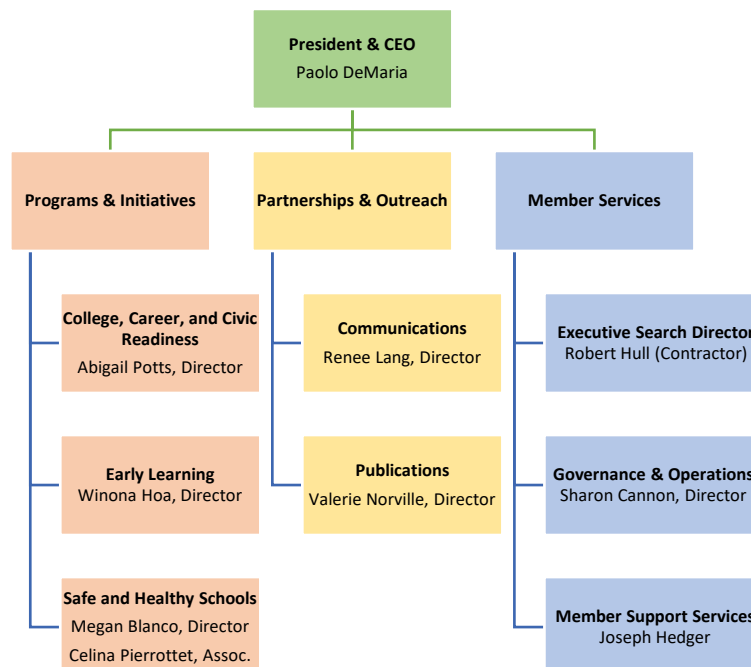
- Inspiring boards to identify priorities, engage partners, ask questions, examine data and evidence, identify strategies and actions, and support implementation to improve state education systems; and
- Providing direct services and training to boards to build their capacity to operate effectively through strategic planning, board self-assessment and chief state school officer searches and evaluations.

We have successfully completed and advised on executive searches for high-level education talent, including the recent chief state school officer (state superintendent) selection in Hawaii. Our strength in providing executive search services is grounded in the following:

- NASBE has a unique understanding of state boards of education, state departments of education and state Commissioners. We know the processes, the needs and the checkpoints that are important to a board-led search for a state Commissioner and that lay the foundation for sustained success in the Commissioner’s position.
- NASBE values collaboration and views the state board, or those designated by the state board, as essential partners at each step of the search process.
- NASBE understands the political environment in states, state education policies and their implementation, and the unique attributes that state commissioners must have to be successful in each state context.
- NASBE’s search activities are exclusively focused on leadership positions in state education agencies. This means the organization’s resources and attention are not diluted by scores of searches spanning multiple fields.
- NASBE has a proven track record of successful project management and is committed to delivering high-quality services on time and within budget.

## **B.2. Organizational Chart**

NASBE’s organizational chart is as follows:



More detailed information about the experience and qualification of the project team can be found in element **B.5 at page 8**.

### **B.3. Operating History, Experience and Prior Searches**

NASBE has been in operation for over 60 years, since 1958, and has multiple years of successful experience recruiting for state commissioners and other high level executive positions in state education agencies. Most recently, we have supported the following clients:

- **State of Hawaii (2022):** NASBE recently completed an engagement with the Hawaii State Board of Education that led to the hiring of a new State Superintendent. NASBE worked extensively with the board, including through comprehensive stakeholder engagement, to determine core competencies and create the Position Profile. NASBE then led the search process, narrowed the applicant pool to a small number of finalists, worked with the Board to develop an interview protocol and process, and supported the work of the board to make a final selection.
- **State of Georgia (2017):** NASBE supported the Georgia State Board of Education in its search for a Chief Turnaround Officer (CTO). The search attracted over 60 highly qualified candidates from across the nation. Specifically, NASBE worked to build consensus among the board on the key attributes of a CTO, recruit exceptional applicants, support the board throughout the interview process, and through to final selection. The successful candidate was chosen by unanimous vote of both the selection committee of stakeholders and the state board of education.
- **State of West Virginia (2017):** NASBE served as an executive advisor to the West Virginia State Board of Education on the development of the search process and selection criteria for the state superintendent. Informed by this work, the board decided to proceed with an individual who had previously served as state superintendent.
- **State of New York (2015):** NASBE served in an advisory capacity to the New York Board of Regents for the development of the search process and selection criteria for the New York Chancellor of Education. The work consisted of several consultations, providing advice on both the process of the search and the criteria for selection of the successful candidate.

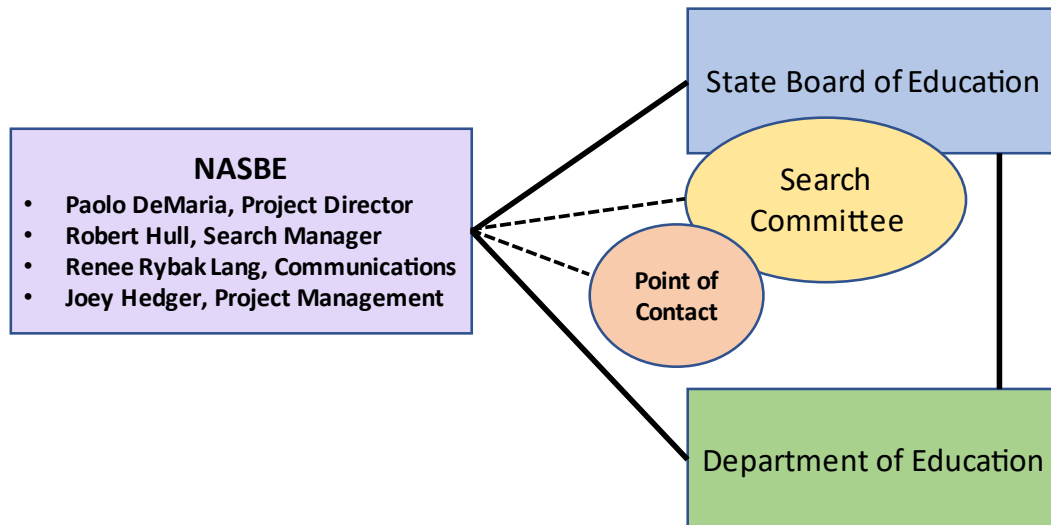
NASBE has not conducted any searches in Nebraska education settings.

### **B.4. Executive Search Capabilities**

NASBE's capability to provide the requested services is evidenced by its approach to executive search project management. This process has served NASBE and state boards well to recruit exemplary leaders for state education systems and set the context for their sustained success in the role. The fundamental concepts are sound, and can be configured to the particular context and circumstances of each search.

NASBE’s approach begins with a clear delineation of the project structures and accountability features, and includes essential project management routines.

**Project Management Structures:** The following graphic reflects the key components of the project’s structure and accountability features:



Each unit represented in the graphic performs certain functions integral to the successful accomplishment of the project, as follows:

- **NASBE:** NASBE is the lead contractor and is responsible for performing all the activities included in the Project Plan. For effective management purposes, NASBE is ultimately responsible to, and held accountable by the State Board of Education and the Board’s Search Committee. In cases where services are deemed to be unresponsive, either of these entities can engage to seek information and course correction. It is to these two entities that services are being rendered, and from whom ultimate approval of project deliverables and assessment of project performance is obtained.

NASBE will enter into a **contract** with Strategic Advantage, LLC for the services of **Robert Hull**. Mr. Hull previously served as NASBE’s President and CEO, and led the superintendent search project in Hawaii. Mr. Hull’s qualifications are specified in element **B.5 at page 8**. Contact information for Strategic Advantage and Mr. Hull is as follows:

Address: 1507 Robin Road, Maryville, TN 37803  
Phone: 304-546-1651  
Email: [robert.hull@nasbe.org](mailto:robert.hull@nasbe.org)

- **State Board of Education:** The State Board is the ultimate decision maker for the selection of the State Commissioner. Throughout the course of the project NASBE will keep the Board informed of project progress in the manner determined as part

of the Project Launch process. There will be times during the project when the full State Board may be involved in development and approval of various deliverables. This will also be determined as part of the detailed workplan development process and managed through the normal Board approval and engagement processes in use. Additional review and engagement may be requested by the board at any time.

- **Search Committee:** The Search Committee is a subset of the full Board and plays a pivotal role in supporting the recruitment process while representing the Board's perspective. NASBE will keep the Committee apprised of the progress and will be consulted at various points relative to particular project deliverables to ensure ideas, suggestions and recommendations are reflected in NASBE's work products. The Committee holds NASBE accountable to executing its responsibilities appropriately.
- **Department of Education:** The Department is an important partner and operates on behalf of the Board. The Department, along with the State Board, is involved in informing the detailed workplan, and in the regular monitoring of the project's progress.
- **Point of Contact:** Complex projects benefit from having an individual who serves as a liaison and guide on behalf of the contracting entity. Nebraska should designate an individual as the primary Point of Contact. This person serves as a liaison on behalf of the State Board and the Department, and is the conduit for information on the executive search. The point of contact also facilitates decision making by the Search Committee and helps to arrange for logistical support by the Department as appropriate. This person helps to ensure that project activity proceeds smoothly and that processes are responsive to the needs and desires of the State Board and the Department.

***Project Management Routines:*** NASBE has extensive experience in managing projects, including state chief school officer searches. NASBE key routines to ensure successful project implementation and high-quality deliverables involve the following mechanisms:

- **Project Launch:** NASBE invests early in success by taking the time at the beginning of a project to clearly establish expectations, roles, responsibilities and processes. Through a Project Launch meeting, NASBE creates a common vision for project success. Participants will review the scope of work, workplan, deliverables and set shared expectations for activities and outcomes. Details and refinements will be discussed and accommodated. Roles, responsibilities and expectations will be discussed and defined. NASBE will design and execute processes that are collaboratively developed and involve review and receiving feedback and input from the Nebraska team throughout the project.
- **Detailed Workplan:** The general contours of the NASBE work plan are identified in the timeline found ***on page 18***. This will serve as the foundation for the preparation of a more detailed workplan. The Project Launch meeting will build the scaffolding needed to frame the project in greater detail. As part of the Project Launch process, the exact manner in which certain activities will be conducted will be defined. A

detailed workplan ensures that there is a shared understanding among all project participants relative to the manner in which the work will proceed, and the time frames involved. A detailed workplan also serves as an effective monitoring tool to ensure the project is proceeding as expected and meeting deadlines.

- **Communications:** Successful project management centers on clear communication internally and externally. NASBE has internal routines to drive success and ensure that all NASBE team members involved contribute their expertise to efficiently deliver the highest quality service. Internal communication structures allow team members to proactively identify potential risks and creatively brainstorm solutions that may arise during project implementation.

Effective, clear and frequent external communication among the various parties to a project is also fundamental to project success. For this reason, NASBE's proposal builds in bi-weekly check in calls to ensure all parties are updated on the progress of the work. More frequent call can also be arranged when needed. Regular email communications also support the process from start to finish.

NASBE's project management structure and routines coupled with a highly capable staff with deep experience in finding the right match for state commissioner demonstrates NASBE's extensive capacity to deliver.

### **B.5. Project Staff Structure**

The following individuals will be assigned to the project:

- **Paolo DeMaria:** *Mr. DeMaria is NASBE's President & CEO, a position he has held for one year. He is a former State Superintendent of Public Instruction in Ohio (2016-2021) and served for 30 years in Ohio state government including as Executive Vice Chancellor of the Department of Higher Education, Associate Superintendent of School Options and Finance at the Department of Education and Chief Policy Advisor to Ohio Governor Bob Taft. He has a strong grasp of the attributes that lead to success in public sector executive roles. He has worked with numerous other state superintendents, commissioners, and education leaders. He also has extensive experience working with state departments of education and boards of education. In his various leadership roles in public service, he has managed many hiring processes for high level talent. Mr. DeMaria will serve as the Project Manager. He will oversee all aspects of the project and be the primary point of contact for the NASBE team. He will also actively engage in recruitment activities, and in supporting the Search Committee and the State Board throughout the project.*
- **Robert Hull:** *Mr. Hull will serve as Search Manager. He is NASBE's former President & CEO. He has a long career in public education ranging from classroom teacher to Assistant Superintendent at the West Virginia Department of Education. He continues to serve as a collaborator and project administrator with NASBE. He was the lead project director for NASBE's successful engagement with the Hawaii State Board of Education for their state superintendent search. He has extensive knowledge and experience about state departments of education, state boards of education and state commissioners.*

- **Renée Rybak Lang:** *Ms. Lang is NASBE’s Director of Communications. She has been with NASBE for eight years, and has over 20 year of communications experience in positions of increasing importance and responsibility across a range of education focused organizations. In her capacity she provides exceptional leadership to meet a wide range of communications needs. This includes but, is not limited to, strategic communications planning, media relations, managing publications releases, hosting webinars, overseeing the organization’s website, and guiding NASBE’s social media presence. She provided communications support for the NASBE-led Hawaii state superintendent search. She will lead all communications and public relations activity for the proposal.*
- **Joey Hedger:** *Mr. Hedger is a NASBE project manager. He has been with NASBE for four years. In this role, he is involved in supporting various organization projects ranging from publications development and issuance to study group management. He has a proven track record of ensuring effective administration of projects and programs, and will serve in that capacity for this proposal. He will assist in managing applications processing, inquiry response, candidate screening, and developing written project deliverables.*

Additional staff will be engaged as needed to effectively conduct the Project Plan described below.

## **C. Project Plan**

The following are the major activities, events and key deliverables for this project. For each phase, responsibilities for NASBE and the Nebraska team are listed. A detailed timeline presentation is found on **page 18**.

### **Phase 1: Pre-Search Preparation and Development of Position Profile**

**This phase includes the necessary preparation for a successful recruitment process. It results in the development of a detailed workplan and timeline, clearly delineated roles and responsibilities, and a high-quality Position Profile. The profile reflects a consensus among the state board on key attributes of an effective commissioner with intentional feedback from stakeholders.**

The Position Profile is pivotal to defining the desired qualifications, core competencies, and attributes, as well as application requirements. With NASBE’s support, Nebraska’s Position Profile will spotlight the commissioner’s role to advance the mission of Nebraska’s State Board and Department of Education, *“To lead and support the preparation of all Nebraskans for learning, earning, and living.”*

Engaging broad and diverse constituents to answer the question of “what attributes and characteristics do you value in the next Nebraska state commissioner” supports the selection of a candidate with the requisite skills to succeed in the role long-term and to deepen Nebraska’s already established positive relationships with education constituents.

**NASBE Responsibilities:** NASBE will perform the following activities:

- ***C.x Project Management:***
  - Organize and conduct a project launch meeting with appropriate NASBE staff, the Nebraska point of contact, and the chair of the Search Committee (and others as may be desired). Participants will review the scope of work, workplan, and deliverables, and set shared expectations for success. Details and refinements will be discussed and accommodated. Roles, responsibilities, and expectations will be discussed and defined.
  - With the counsel of the Nebraska point of contact and input from the Search Committee, identify the process for reviewing and approving the Position Profile, and specify who will be involved and the approvals required.
  - Schedule bi-weekly check-in meetings with the Nebraska point of contact and others as appropriate.

- ***C.1 Development and Finalization of the Position Profile:***

- Conduct the stakeholder engagement process as described in element C.2 below.
- Engage the Search Committee and State Board in discussions and reflections relative to minimum and preferred qualifications, attributes, and core competencies for the position of State Commissioner. These discussions will be informed by stakeholder engagement outcomes.
- With the Nebraska point of contact, Search Committee, and others as specified, identify information to be requested from applicants as part of the application process including three to five key questions that each applicant will be asked to address in their application letter.
- Prepare a draft Position Profile which will include the position description as well as information about the position, Nebraska's education system, core competencies, minimum and preferred qualifications and attributes, application requirements, process description and other information as appropriate.
- Receive feedback from the Nebraska point of contact, Search Committee and others as specified on the draft Position Profile. Revise and finalize the Position Profile for use and dissemination.

- ***C.2 Stakeholder Engagement for Position Profile***

- With the counsel of the Nebraska point of contact and input from the Search Committee, design a stakeholder engagement process that yields actionable insights from the education community. This will include virtual listening sessions with 5-8 focus groups. Groups will be determined collaboratively and may be comprised of students, parents, teachers, principals, community organizations, district leaders, philanthropies, statewide education entities and advocacy groups, employees of the state department, and others. Determine who will conduct the focus groups and how they will be conducted.
- Prepare a draft of a focus group protocol including discussion questions and facilitation guide. The draft will reflect prior successful focus group practices conducted by NASBE for similar searches and appropriately modified for the Nebraska context.

- Receive feedback on the draft protocol from the Nebraska point of contact, Search Committee and others as specified. Revise and finalize the protocol based on feedback received.
  - Train Nebraska facilitators to on the use of the focus group protocol, and on noting focus group responses and input. (Preference is for NASBE to train Department of Education staff to serve as facilitators, and for facilitators to conduct the focus groups. Alternatively, NASBE can conduct the focus groups if desired.)
  - Support the conduct of focus groups with stakeholder groups. Focus groups are expected to be 75 minutes in duration. NASBE anticipates relying on the Department of Education to arrange, schedule and provide logistical support for focus group meetings.
  - Facilitate a conversation with state legislative leaders regarding their views on the commissioner position to ensure the Position Profile includes valued by policy makers.
  - Synthesize results of focus groups. Incorporate feedback into discussions with the Search Committee and the State Board, and reflect input in the draft Position Profile (see **C.1 above**).
  - *Note: If desired, NASBE can also support a broad, online public survey relative to the attributes and characteristics of the next commissioner.*
- **C.x Dissemination Preparation:**
    - Compile an extensive list of national and Nebraska-based organizations and individuals that will receive the posting through broad and targeted outreach, in collaboration with the Nebraska point of contact and Department of Education.
    - Identify the key media outlets through which the posting will be disseminated.
    - Identify the online websites for position posting, including NASBE and the Nebraska Department of Education websites.
    - Specify an email address for the submission of all applications and a contact phone number for questions from potential applicants and others interested in the position.
    - Prepare the NASBE online portal for posting and application processes.
    - Make provision for the timely acknowledgement of all applications received.
- **C.3 Public Relations Assistance**
    - Identify points within the timeline that require press releases, or other forms of information dissemination. Identify key audiences and key messages over the course of the project. Collaborate with the Nebraska point of contact and the Search Committee to identify critical public relations and communications needs.
    - Develop a draft public relations/communications plan to guide the communications work from start to finish.
    - Gather feedback and input related to the plan. Revise the draft to reflect feedback and input.
    - Incorporate public relations and communications activities into the overall project workplan.

### ***Phase 1 Key Deliverables***

- Recommendations and guidance on the job posting.
- Detailed project workplan and clear specification of roles and responsibilities.
- Stakeholder engagement plan and up to eight completed focus groups. Written report on the outcomes of the focus group activity to inform and guide the state board's discussion on necessary qualifications and attributes for the Nebraska commissioner position.
- Discussion with Search Committee and Board on Commissioner qualifications, core competencies and attributes.
- Position Profile document including application requirements, position description and other information. Document will reflect stakeholder input.
- Lists of posting recipients, planned media placements and job search outlets.

### ***Phase 1 Nebraska Responsibilities:***

- Designate point of contact to serve as the key locus of all communications and serve as project liaison. This individual would also manage processes that involve seeking Board or Search Committee input or approval during the project.
- Commit to check-in meetings and participation in such meetings.
- Respond to requests for information within two business days.
- Provide other information about legal requirements applicable to candidates for the position and the process.
- Provide feedback and input on draft versions of deliverables including focus group protocol and Position Profile.
- Arrange and provide logistical support for all focus group meetings.
- Provide one or more individuals to be trained as focus group facilitators.
- Conduct focus groups and provide documentation of focus group comments and input.
- Provide timely approval of all final products.
- Provide available information regarding contact lists for dissemination of the posting and Position Profile.

### **Phase 2: Candidate Recruitment**

**Initiate and conduct a search process that will yield a pool of highly qualified candidates for the position of Commissioner of Education.**

***NASBE Responsibilities:*** NASBE will perform the following activities:

#### ***C.4.1 Recruitment Strategy - National:***

- Distribute the Position Profile and posting through a coordinated outreach strategy ensure widespread national awareness and recognition. The posting period will be a minimum of 21 calendar days. The national strategy will make discerning use of NASBE's extensive network to achieve broad awareness of the position among organizations and individuals with the competencies, qualifications and attributes that align with Nebraska's definition of success for the role.

- Engage in targeted and active outreach to NASBE’s extensive network of contacts in the education community, state education agencies, and research and advocacy organizations across the nation. This will include organizations as well as individuals. Organizations will be requested to share widely among their membership.
- Conduct virtual conversations with education insiders seeking leads and suggestions of qualified individuals. Follow-up on leads with personal outreach to expand national recruitment among qualified individuals actively and passively pursuing job change.
- Feature the Position Profile on the NASBE website and on social media, and encourage sharing of the posting across social networks.
- Place advertisements in key education publications including *Education Week*, as well as on job posting sites such as LinkedIn, Indeed, Glassdoor and other online professional networking and social media outlets targeted to education practitioners.
- Engage in specific outreach strategies to ensure that diverse applicants are aware of the position including through organizations like the National Association of Black Educators, the National Urban League, National Indian Education Association, Unidos, and others jointly identified with the Nebraska point of contact and others as appropriate.
- Progress reports will be provided weekly during the recruitment process.

● **C.4.2 Recruitment Strategy - Nebraska:**

- Distribute the Position Profile and posting to Nebraska-specific education-focused and other organizations and associations and request dissemination among their respective members. Collaborate with Nebraska Department of Education to assemble a list of recipients and appropriate contact information.
- Conduct targeted outreach to key state-based organizations seeking leads and suggestions of qualified individuals. Follow-up on leads and suggestions received to build widespread within-state awareness of the position.
- Work with the Department of Education to ensure information is available on the Department’s website.
- Engage in specific outreach strategies to ensure intentional efforts are made to recruit a diverse applicant pool.
- Progress reports will be provided weekly during the recruitment process.

● **C.5 Scoring Rubric for Applications**

- Using the position description and the Position Profile as starting points, develop a *draft* scoring rubric for applications. Various types of selection criteria will be reflected in the rubric including:
  - Criteria that, if not met, eliminate a candidate from consideration.
  - Criteria that are quantifiable and measurable (e.g., years of experience, etc.)
  - Criteria that are qualitative and reflective of core competencies and attributes (e.g., responses to application questions and interview questions, etc.).

- For each element of the rubric, develop a draft rating methodology or approach.
- Determine collaboratively with the Nebraska point of contact, Search Committee and others as appropriate, the individuals to be involved in the scoring rubric development process, including the extent to which the Search Committee or full Board of Education will participate.
- Share the draft rubric and rating approaches with those who will provide comments and feedback.
- Revise and refine the rubric based on input and feedback received.
- Finalize the rubric based on one additional round of input and feedback.
- Prior to each stage of the process during which the rubric is used, ensure a review of the criteria and, with the Nebraska point of contact, the Board of Education, and others as appropriate, make any adjustments or modifications as may be necessary.

- **C.6 Interview Process – Suggestions and Scoring Rubric**

- Using the position description and the Position Profile as starting points, develop a *draft* interview protocol covering both the process and content of the interview to allow NASBE to learn more about a candidate’s career success and discern the candidates best suited for Nebraska’s role. This will draw upon interview questions previously used by NASBE that successfully draw out a candidate’s capabilities, accomplishments, lesson learned and approach to dealing with challenges.
- Determine collaboratively with the Nebraska point of contact, Search Committee and others, as appropriate, the individuals to be involved in defining and developing the interview process, including the extent to which the Search Committee or full Board of Education will participate.
- Share the draft interview protocol with those who will provide comments and feedback.
- Revise and refine the interview protocol based on input and feedback received.
- Finalize the interview based on one additional round of input and feedback.
- Once the interview protocol is established, provide a draft rubric for scoring interview responses.
- Share the draft rubric with those who will provide comments and feedback.
- Revise and refine the rubric based on input and feedback received.
- Finalize the rubric based on one additional round of input and feedback.

- **C.x Process Management:**

- Respond to all phone and email inquiries about the position within two business days.
- Acknowledge all applications received and verify completeness of submissions. Follow-up with applicants for additional information as may be required.
- Receive and process all applications, reviewing them to ensure they are complete. Incomplete applications will be rejected.

### ***Phase 2 Key Deliverables***

- Project management activities including bi-weekly check-in calls. Weekly progress reports during the recruitment process.
- Completed national and intensive in-state dissemination of the position posting to all targeted outlets and organizations.
- Completed targeted active outreach to identify prospective individual applicants.
- Completed review of all applications received for completeness.
- Fully developed scoring rubric for use in narrowing the applicant pool to leading candidates and then finalists.
- Fully developed interview protocol and scoring rubric for interview responses.

### ***Phase 2 Nebraska Responsibilities:***

- Participate in check-ins and project management activity.
- Provide input and feedback on identification of organizations to receive the Position Profile and position posting. Provide assistance with identifying contact information.
- Provide timely and clear input into the development of the scoring rubric for application evaluation, and final approval upon completion.
- Provide timely and clear input into the development of the interview protocol, and the scoring rubric for interview questions, and final approval upon completion.

### **Phase 3: Finalist Identification – Screening, Reference Checks, Interviews, List Preparation**

**Carry out a full review and interview process to identify the most qualified and appropriate finalists to recommend to the board for consideration.**

***NASBE Responsibilities:*** NASBE will perform the following activities:

- ***C.7 Initial Review - Identify Leading Candidates (8-10 individuals):***
  - On initial application review identify issues that require clarification with regard to experience, qualifications or other pertinent information. Contact applicant to receive appropriate clarification.
  - In collaboration with the Nebraska point of contact and Search Committee, engage in a process to review and refine, if necessary, the criteria developed in ***C.5 above*** to ensure appropriateness prior to commencing the identification of leading candidates from the applicant pool.
  - In collaboration with the Nebraska point of contact and Search Committee, identify who will be involved in the process of identifying leading candidates.
  - From the applications received, using the criteria in ***C.5 above***, conduct an evaluation and ranking to identify eight to ten leading candidates.
- ***C.8 First-round Interviews, Verify Background, Conduct Checks - Identify Finalists (3-5 individuals):***
  - In collaboration with the Nebraska point of contact and Search Committee, identify who will be involved in the finalist identification process.

- Conduct interviews using approved interview protocol developed during **C.6 above** with the leading candidates identified. Document answers to interview questions in writing. Score interview responses, and document scores. On average, interviews will be one-hour in length.
- Rank leading candidates based on scores.
- Confirm educational background and conduct criminal, financial, media, and civil litigation checks for highest scoring leading candidates based on rankings (3-5 individuals). In the event politically sensitive or potentially embarrassing issues arise from the checks, conduct in-depth interviews with principal parties to clarify the events.
- Facilitate a discussion with the Nebraska point of contact and Search Committee, and others as specified, to identify three to five applicants as finalists for purposes of being interviewed by the board.
- Provide detailed reports on each finalist to the Search Committee or State Board as directed. Prepare an information packet for each finalist including original application, documentation of interview questions and scores, results of background and reference checks, and other information as appropriate.

***Phase 3 Key Deliverables***

- Project management activities including bi-weekly check-ins.
- Compilation of ratings of leading candidates, and interview responses.
- Results of background, reference and other checks.
- List of finalists, and compilation and delivery of information packet for each finalist

***Phase 3 Nebraska Responsibilities:***

- Provide timely and clear feedback and input on finalization of interview questions and rating approach for the identification of leading candidates and finalists.
- Provide input and specifications relative to the process of developing the list of finalists and who will participate in it.
- Provide appropriate, clear and timely input and feedback at all points during the finalist identification process.

**Phase 4: Final Selection**

**Support the state board in the interview and selection process among finalist candidates.**

***NASBE Responsibilities:*** NASBE will perform the following activities:

***C.9 Leadership/Involvement in Search Committee and State Board Consideration***

- Collaborate with the Nebraska point of contact, and members of the Search Committee and state board as appropriate, on the development of the interview and selection process to be used by the board. Gather initial thoughts on the board process.

- Develop draft interview questions and a possible performance task or set of scenario-based questions reflective of the responsibilities of the Commissioner. Develop a draft rating tool to support the selection process.
- Share the draft interview questions and tasks and the draft rating tool with those who will provide comments and feedback.
- Revise and refine the interview questions and rating tool based on input and feedback received. Circulate for additional comments.
- Finalize the interview questions and rating tool based on one additional round of input and feedback.
- Prior to the first interview, conduct a review of finalists and an orientation to the interview process for state board members.
- In the case where the finalist review process reveals a need for additional candidates, identify additional candidates for board consideration.
- Support the interview process and provide advice and guidance as may be requested throughout the selection process.
- Support finalists with travel logistics to attend final interviews.

- **C.10 Communication and Notification:**

- Coordinate and communicate with all finalist candidates who are invited to interview with the board.
- Coordinate with the Nebraska point of contact to determine an interview schedule and set up interviews.
- Notify unsuccessful candidates that they have not been selected. This will be completed prior to the announcement of the new Commissioner.

- **C.11 Conflict of Interest**

To the best of our knowledge, there is no potential conflict of interest in NASBE providing services to the State Board and the Nebraska Department of Education. In the interest of full disclosure, the Nebraska State Board of Education is a dues-paying member of NASBE.

**Phase 4 Key Deliverables**

- Project management activities including bi-weekly check-ins.
- Interview protocol and rating approach to be used by the board.
- Facilitated board discussion presenting information on finalists and reviewing board selection process.
- Scheduling of interviews.
- Identification of additional candidates as desired.
- Support for board interviews and discussions leading to selection.
- Notification of applicants and finalists not selected.

**Phase 4 Nebraska Responsibilities:**

- Participate in check-ins and project management activity.
- Provide timely and clear feedback and input on finalization of interview questions and rating approach for use by the Board in identifying from among finalists the individual to whom the position of State Commissioner will be offered.
- Collaborate on the scheduling of interview dates and time.

- The Nebraska Department of Education will be responsible for arranging and paying for interviewee travel, and will compensate interviewees for travel expenses incurred consistent with state requirements.
- Conduct the finalist interviews and use the developed rating tool.
- Make final decisions to select the new Commissioner.

**Timeline:**

The timeline, presented below, reflects the project plan described above. NASBE is prepared to begin the work as soon as a contract can be executed, and complete the deliverables within five months (20 weeks).

Nebraska State Commissioner Search Timeline																				
Activity	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Week 13	Week 14	Week 15	Week 16	Week 17	Week 18	Week 19	Week 20
Project launch meeting	█																			
Bi-weekly status calls			█		█		█		█		█		█		█		█		█	
Develop/agree to timeline+workplan	█	█	█																	
Position Profile preparation & approval (C.1)			█	█	█	█	█	█												
Stakeholder Engagement (Focus Groups) for Position Profile (C.2)			█	█	█	█	█													
Public Relations Planning & Assistance (C.3)			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Position posted; Position Profile dissemination (C.4)								█												
Application window (C.4)								█	█	█	█									
Recruitment, inquiry response (C.4)								█	█	█	█									
Scoring Rubric Development (C.5)							█	█	█	█										
Interview Process Development (C.6)								█	█	█	█	█								
Screening and ranking; identify leading candidates (C.8)								█	█	█	█									
Leading candidate interviews; identify finalists (C.8)											█	█	█							
Background/reference checks (C.8)											█	█	█							
Develop finalist portfolios; submit to board													█	█	█	█				
Develop board interview protocol and scoring tool (C.9)													█	█	█	█	█			
Board interviews (C.9)																		█	█	
Score processing (C.9)																				█
Selection (C.9)																				█
Notification (C.10)																				█

**D. Cost of Proposed Services**

NASBE proposes to complete the work described in the workplan above for the amount of **\$38,000**. (This amount includes a 20% member discount reflecting Nebraska’s membership in NASBE.) This price includes the following.

- All labor, materials, supplies and associated overhead costs necessary to execute all elements of the above workplan as well as prepare, produce and deliver the described deliverables.
- The cost of background and reference checks performed as indicated in the workplan.
- The cost of one trip (travel and related expenses) for NASBE representatives to be present in Nebraska as may be required to support the project and meet the needs

of the process. This would likely be for the Board's interview process. Additional in-person participation can be negotiated, if desired.

Payment is preferred to be made in four parts as follows, which total to \$38,000:

- Upon completion of Phase 1: \$7,600
- Upon completion of Phase 2: \$7,600
- Upon completion of Phase 3: \$7,600
- Upon completion of Phase 4: \$15,200

### **Assurance and Guarantee**

Should the search fail or be incomplete, NASBE agrees to provide such additional services at no additional cost until a satisfactory result is achieved. If the search fails or is incomplete and the State Board chooses to terminate the process, NASBE agrees to forego the final Phase 4 payment.

NASBE guarantees that if the Nebraska State Board of Education is dissatisfied with the new Commissioner within one year from the date of employment and either party dissolves that relationship by resignation or termination within a one-year period of the initial employment, NASBE will conduct a new search at no cost to the State, except for expenses.

## **E. References**

### **State of Hawaii – State Superintendent Search**

Hawaii Department of Education; 1039 S. King St., Honolulu, HI 96814

***Contacts:***

Alison Kunishige, Executive Director, Hawaii State Board of Education

PH: 808-586-3334; Email: [Alison.Kunishige@boe.hawaii.gov](mailto:Alison.Kunishige@boe.hawaii.gov)

Bruce Voss, Chair, Hawaii State Board of Education

PH: (808) 523-9000 Email: [bvoss@legalhawaii.com](mailto:bvoss@legalhawaii.com)

### **State of Georgia – Chief Turnaround Officer Search**

Georgia Department of Education; 205 Jesse Hill Jr. Dr. SE, Atlanta, GA 30334

***Contact:***

Mike Royal, Member, Georgia State Board of Education

PH: (404) 657-7410; (404) 401-7185 Email: [mroyal@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:mroyal@doe.k12.ga.us)

### **State of Mississippi – State Superintendent Evaluation**

Mississippi Department of Education; P.O. Box 771, Jackson, MS 39205

***Contact:***

Sonya Amis, Deputy State Superintendent, Mississippi State Board of Education

PH: 601-359-9715; Email: [sonya@mdek12.org](mailto:sonya@mdek12.org)

# Nebraska State Commissioner Search

## *Proposal Presentation - NASBE*

NEBRASKA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

DECEMBER 1, 2022

PAOLO DEMARIA, PRESIDENT AND CEO

**NASBE**

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National Association of  
State Boards of Education

# Opportunity

- **Most important action**
- **Set stage for effective governance and leadership**
  - *Superintendent Openings* – Alaska, Ohio, Illinois
  - *New Year* – Additional openings (new governors, etc.)
  - *Employment cycle* - People looking for new opportunities (end of school year)



# Our Strengths

- Focused
- Knowledgeable
- Experienced
- We're staying around
  - Search isn't just a search



## Past Successes

- **Hawaii:** Newly hired
- **Georgia:** Chief Turnaround Officer (2+ years)
- *Success* is also.....
  - Relationship building
  - Collaboration
  - Strategic planning



# Position Profile

## Begin with the end in mind.....

- What we want - Describing
- What candidates can tell us
  - Application & Resume
  - Leading candidate questions/interview
  - Finalist interview
- Communication/signaling



# Position Profile-Stakeholder Engagement

- **Profile Importance:** For Board, for Stakeholders, for Nebraska
  - *Not just about the candidate*
  - **Timeline:** 6 weeks
- **Stakeholder Engagement**
  - Focus Groups (5-8)
    - 75 minutes each
    - Protocol and facilitator training
  - Legislators and Governor's Office
  - Options
    - Public Survey



# Position Profile-Stakeholder Engagement

- **Profile Categories**

- Education policy & practice, vision, knowledge
- Large organizational management
- Board partnership
- Other partnerships/relationships/collaboration
- Communication



# Candidate Solicitation

- **Who?**
  - Local Superintendents (in state)
  - Other education practitioners (in state)
  - Other non-education practitioners (in state)
  - Out of State (connected, not connected)
  - Many candidates already know (85%)
- **Hiring vs. Recruiting** - Who doesn't know?
- **Make the Case:** Why is this a great job?
- Nebraska + Nationally



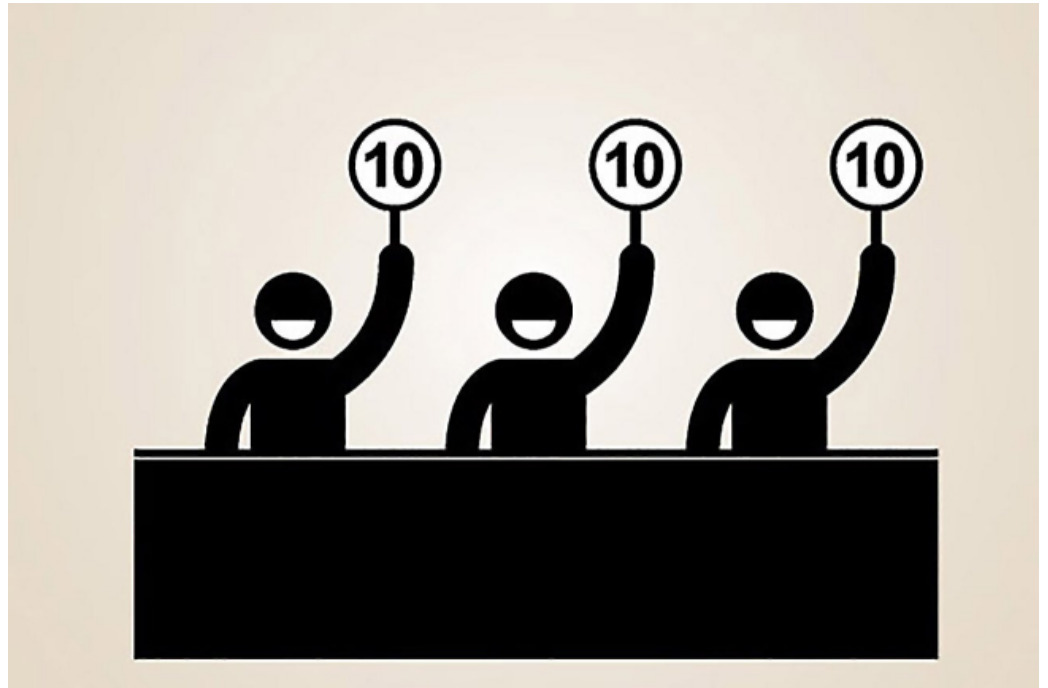
# Finalist Identification

- Identify leading candidates: Letter, resume – high-level qualifications (tiers)
- For leading candidates:
  - Profile elements matter most
  - Letter/resume *details*
  - Answers to written questions
  - Interviews
- Search Committee consultation
- Background Checks



# Decision Making Support

- Always come back to the Profile
- Collective voices
- What we need at this time
- Non-negotiables



# Public Relations

- Transparency
- Timeline & process
- Regular updates
- Board meeting briefings
- No surprises



# Questions and Clarifications

**Paolo DeMaria**

**President and CEO**

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**Mobile - (614) 357-8545**



Nebraska  
State Board  
of Education

# Members of the State Board

Patsy Koch Johns, President  
District 1

Lisa Fricke  
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District 4

Kirk Penner  
District 5

Maureen Nickels  
District 6

Robin Stevens  
District 7

Deborah Neary  
District 8

# Nebraska Department of Education State Board of Education

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## **Mission Statement**

*To lead and support the preparation of all Nebraskans  
for learning, earning, and living.*

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## **Nebraska Association of School Boards**

*Our Mission...through Leadership, Innovation, Vision and  
Engagement, the Nebraska Association of School Boards  
Provides programs, services, and advocacy to strengthen  
public education for all Nebraskans. #liveNASB*

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# Table of Contents

## A. Cover Letter

1. Executive Summary .....	5
2. Vendor Contact Information.....	6
3. Signature .....	6

## B. Qualifications

1. Nature of Business .....	7
2. Organization Chart.....	8
3. Experience and Description of Searches .....	9
4. Third Party Services .....	10
5. Project Staff Structure.....	11

## C. Project Plan..... 13

1. Position Profile .....	14
2. Engage Stakeholders.....	14
3. Public Relations .....	15
4. Marketing and Recruiting .....	15
5. Develop Applicant Rubric .....	16
6. Interview Process and Interview Rubric.....	16
7. Review Applications .....	17
8. Screening and Background Checks of Applications .....	17
9. Attend Meetings and Debrief After Interviews .....	18
10. Communicate with Candidates .....	19
11. Conflict of Interest .....	19

## D. Cost of Proposed Service..... 21

## E. References .....

# A. Cover Letter

## Executive Summary

The NASB Search Service has conducted a variety of searches for educational leadership over the past 40 years. The service is carefully designed to provide the board accountability and control throughout the search process. The Association provides the service as part of our continued commitment to enhance educational leadership in Nebraska.

This proposal contains information highlighted below:

- NASB is a leader in education across Nebraska and beyond. We have the staff and qualifications to conduct a professional and detailed search process.
- With each process we facilitate, we take the board and stakeholders through the development of a position profile. We are familiar with a process that engages and seeks input from a variety of stakeholders.
- NASB has a Director of Marketing and Communications who has had the opportunity to work with various entities who request press releases throughout the phases of the process. We have also worked with school districts and boards who need assistance with media for public relations purposes.
- NASB will actively market the position and recruit quality individuals who meet the requirements. Regular progress reports to the committee or contact person will be provided on a pre-determined schedule.
- We currently provide our boards a rubric for scoring the application materials and the interview process with candidates. NASB will utilize the position profile to create a unique rubric to be used in this process.
- NASB will review all applications to ensure they have the experience and qualifications necessary to move forward in the process. We will communicate with all interested applicants, interview candidates and finalists. NASB conducts an extensive reference check process, while balancing the confidential nature of an applicant's materials.
- We will be available for any in person meetings or arrange for any video meetings that are necessary throughout the process. NASB has the benefit of being local to Lincoln and Nebraska. Our availability will be an advantage for this process.

*The proposal contained herein was developed exclusively by NASB for the Nebraska State Board of Education for the 2022 Commissioner Search. The proposal content and pricing are considered by NASB to be of a proprietary nature. In this respect, the State Board of Education must honor our proprietary rights to the content of this proposal and refrain from disclosing its contents to our competitors or any third party. Any proprietary information obtained from the client during Search would remain confidential.*



November 2, 2022

State Board of Education  
Nebraska Department of Education  
P.O. Box 94987  
Lincoln NE 68509-4987

Dear Members of the Board,

On behalf of the Nebraska Association of School Boards, I would like to express our thanks and appreciation for the opportunity to provide the State Board of Education with the Education Leadership Search Service Proposal.

The role of the NASB Search Service is to facilitate the search for an individual fitting of the responsibilities the Commissioner must lead and carry out to ensure excellence in education for *all* Nebraska students. The State Board of Education will receive customized services through this collaborative process.

The NASB Search Service approach is flexible, and the staff will work in cooperation with designated parties to administer a course of action on behalf of the board. Our goal is to conduct a highly professional search that will not only attract the very best applicants but will bring credit to the board for the manner in which the search is conducted.

It would be an honor to have the opportunity to partner with the State Board of Education on this critical process. Please feel free to contact me at your convenience with questions regarding the process and/or service. The address is NASB, C/O Shari L. Becker, 1311 Stockwell Street, Lincoln NE 68502. My office number is (402) 817-0114, my cell number is (402) 416-4483 and email address is [sbecker@NASBOnline.org](mailto:sbecker@NASBOnline.org)

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shari L. Becker". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Shari L. Becker  
NASB Director of Education Leadership Search Service

1311 Stockwell Street | Lincoln, NE 68502 | 800-422-4572 | [www.NASBOnline.org](http://www.NASBOnline.org) | [@NASBOnline](https://twitter.com/NASBOnline)

## B. Qualifications

### 1) Nature of Business

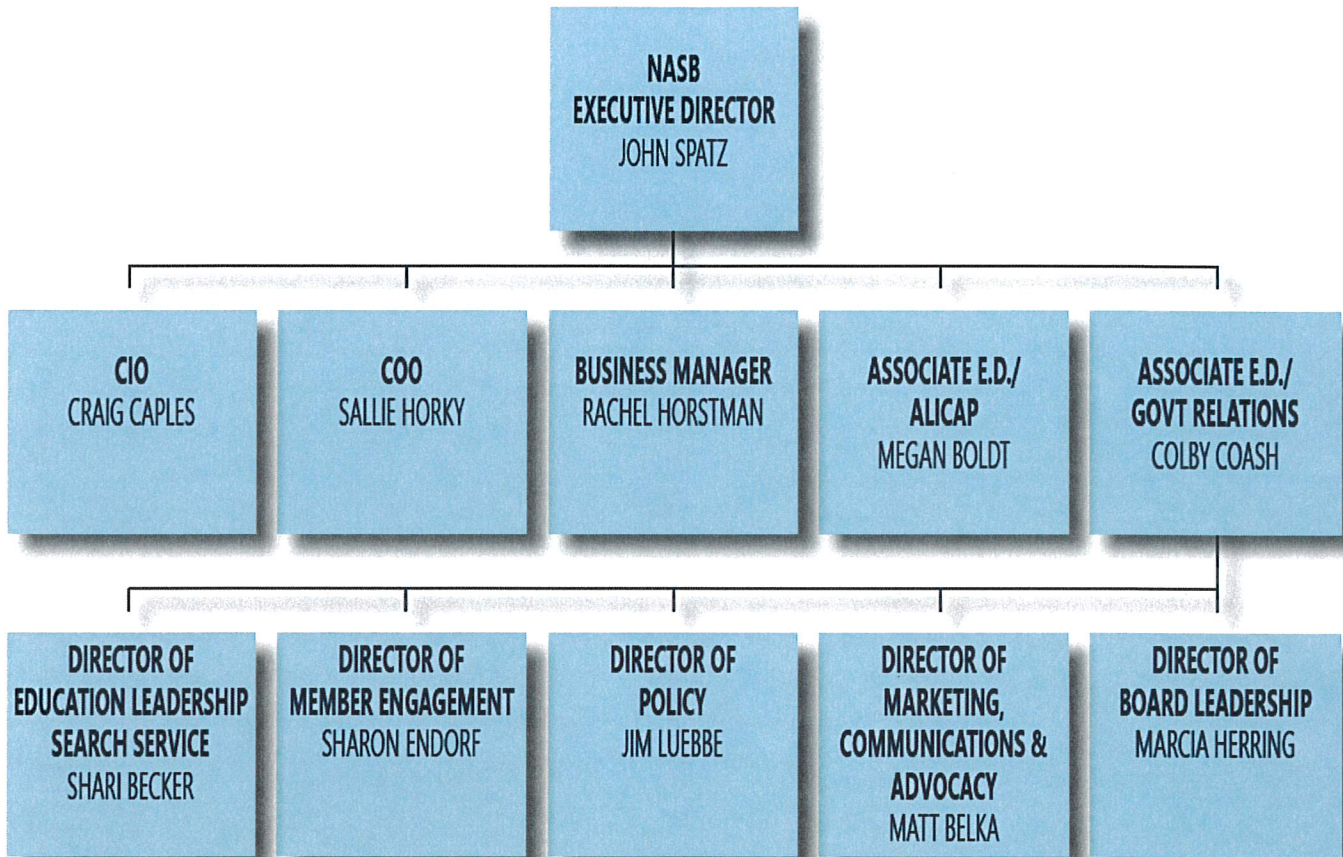
The role of the NASB Search Service is to assist your board in the procurement of a quality Commissioner to provide leadership to the board. The State Board of Education will receive customized services through a collaborative process with the search service as we design the timeline to embrace complete commitment to the search. The NASB Search Service approach is flexible; recognizing the expectations and needs of the Board are unique. Our work is reflective of a committed mission of excellence and what is in the best interest of the board.

The key attribute that makes NASB most qualified to conduct this search is our experience and expertise working directly with boards of education in Nebraska. The NASB staff includes individuals with expertise in the business of educational leadership in Nebraska. We also have staff who specialize in Marketing and Communications and Board Leadership. We are extremely knowledgeable with the Open Meetings Law in Nebraska. Our search protocol and procedures on presenting applicants to the board is a process we have shared with the Attorney General's office to ensure compliance.

NASB is connected across the state and throughout the surrounding states with leaders in education. We are familiar and available for anyone in a Nebraska educational leadership position to reach out and have a candid conversation about an open position, their potential alignment with the position profile, and any challenges they may face if hired for the position.

Our staff members will communicate with the board or appointed contact throughout the process. We often receive high praise on our frequency of communication and our communication style. Once a new hire has been made, NASB staff will be available to assist throughout the transition of the new Commissioner.

## 2) Organization Chart



### 3) Experience and Description of Services

NASB began the Search Program in November of 1982 in response to our members' requests for assistance. For more than 40 years, staff has successfully completed a multitude of leadership searches. The service is carefully designed to provide the board accountability and control throughout the search process. The association provides the service as part of our continued commitment to foster strong relationships and to enhance educational leadership in Nebraska.

The NASB experience in Nebraska education settings can be described as robust and diverse. We have facilitated searches for the following positions within Nebraska schools: Principal, Curriculum Coordinator, Associate Superintendent of Business Operations, Executive Director of Human Resources and Administrative Operations, Associate Superintendent, and Superintendent. In addition, we have assisted several Educational Service Units in the search for an Administrator. In 2020, NASB staff provided support to the Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties for their most recent search for a Chief Executive Officer.

The NASB Search Service has frequently been called upon amid extremely turbulent times to quickly guide a district in finding leadership. A couple of specific examples include a district whose superintendent was unexpectedly terminated immediately and a district whose superintendent passed away days before beginning employment with their district. In both instances, and many others, NASB has stepped in to find the district excellent options within a very short period of time.

The NASB Search Service provides board leadership along with our process. At times throughout a search timeline, there are internal, external, and political issues that arise and need to be managed. NASB staff have been tested many times with curveballs of various magnitudes. We are prepared to maneuver through any challenges and have the experience to do so.

#### 4) Third Party Services

NASB is a leader in education in Nebraska. We have the staff and qualifications to conduct a professional and detailed search process, as described above.

NASB proposes to use third party services for background checks and advertising.

#### Background Checks

The background checks will be conducted through One Source the Background Check Company. The Association will request that One Source perform a criminal background search, credit report, civil litigation, media, and child/adult abuse search on all finalists.

Contact information: Becca Green, Client Relations Specialist

10842 Old Mill Rd Ste 6, Omaha NE 68154, Phone (800) 608-3645, Email [rgreen@onesourcebackground.com](mailto:rgreen@onesourcebackground.com)

Website [www.onesourcebackground.com](http://www.onesourcebackground.com)

#### Fee Based Advertising

Omaha World Herald

1314 Douglas Street, Suite 600, Omaha, NE 68102 Phone (402) 444-1325

Website [www.owhjobs.com](http://www.owhjobs.com)

American Association of School Administrators (AASA)

The Association utilizes this venue and is a member of AASA. We will post an ad on their Job Bulletin.

1615 Duke Street, Alexandria VA 22314, Phone (703) 528-0700

Website [www.asaa.org](http://www.asaa.org)

Education Week

The Association utilizes this venue. We will post an ad on their Top School Jobs website.

6935 Arlington Road suite 100, Bethesda MD 20814, Phone (301) 280-3100

Website [www.recruiters.topschooljobs.org](http://www.recruiters.topschooljobs.org)

## 5) Project Staff Structure

### Shari Becker, Director of Education Leadership Search Service



Shari started with the Association Search Service in 2007 as a field consultant and has served as the Director of the Search Service since April 2013. Shari handles recruiting of quality educators, facilitating stakeholder engagement, leading board work sessions, and screening applicants. Shari is knowledgeable in Open Meetings Law. She has worked on over 100 searches, taking the lead on over 70. Shari is active with the National Affiliation of Superintendent Searches. She is currently serving as Chair Elect on the leadership team.

Shari brings a wide range of background experience to her role with the Association. Prior to her employment with NASB, Shari was employed as a Chief Operating Officer in charge of staff at a financial institution, including recruiting and hiring at all levels for 13 years. She has her Bachelor's degree in Administrative Resource Management as well as a Post-Baccalaureate in Education. Shari is also a Gallup Certified Strengths Coach and an ODR Approved Mediator.

For the Commissioner Search, Shari will be the Lead Consultant and involved in each phase of the search from proposal preparation to the conclusion of the search.

### John Spatz, NASB Executive Director



John began his work at NASB as legal counsel in 2003. He was named Executive Director of NASB in 2012. His initial position primarily focused on providing legal information to the many members of the Association. John has written a book entitled, "Guide Book to Nebraska's Public Meetings Laws". John is active as one of seven commissioners on the Education Commission of the States. John will serve as oversight on the search and advisor to the Lead Consultant on issues that arise. John will also be involved as we engage statewide stakeholders.

### Colby Coash, NASB Associate Executive Director and Director of Government Relations



Colby Coash was hired at NASB in 2018 to ensure that NASB has a strong voice of advocacy for public schools within the halls of the Capitol. Colby spent eight years in the Nebraska Unicameral serving southwest Lincoln, where he became known as a Senator who brought people together. His emphasis in his legislative service was in supporting Nebraska's most vulnerable populations. Colby will serve as oversight on the search and will be involved as we engage stakeholders across the state.

## Marcia Herring, NASB Director of Board Leadership



Marcia began her service to public education as a school board member on the Waverly School District Board of Education, completing 12 years. She began her work as a superintendent search consultant more than 20 years ago. Marcia served as Director of the NASB Search Service for 8 years and Marcia now serves as the Director of Board Leadership. She leads districts through a comprehensive Strategic Planning process, Community Engagement, Board Self-Assessment, Superintendent Evaluation, board retreats and various other services provided through NASB. Marcia has worked with various departments at NDE in her role at NASB.

She will provide valuable insight on the search process. She will be involved in developing rubrics for the search. Marcia will also advise on board meeting protocol and questions that might arise.

## Matt Belka, NASB Director of Marketing and Communications



Matt is responsible for marketing various programs and services to NASB members. Matt handles the creative aspect of NASB, branding, editorial, design, and manages distribution. Matt assists the search service in designing marketing materials, press releases and other communications. NASB has a recording studio onsite and has the ability to create print and video media. We will utilize Matt in any capacity necessary to create seamless communications to the public.

## Abi Carlson, NASB Event & Search Service Associate



Abi has worked as the NASB Event & Service Search Associate since 2021. She assists with recruiting and advertising, as well as communicating with applicants who apply through the NASB Search Service. Abi carries out a variety of duties to help boards find suitable superintendent candidates. Abi will be the Lead Consultant for screening applicant files, contacting references, and building a summary of background information on the applicants to share with the board.

## C. Project Plan

Proposed Timeline – *May be adjusted based on date of selection of Search Firm*

1. Position Profile	January 2023
2. Engage Stakeholders	January 2023
3. Public Relations	Throughout the search process
4. Marketing and Recruiting	Mid-January – February 2023
5. Develop Applicant Rubric	February 2023
6. Interview Process and Interview Rubric	March 2023
7. Review Applications	End of February – March 2023
8. Screening and Background Checks of Applications	As applications are received
9. Attend Meetings and Debrief After Interviews	Throughout the process
10. Communicate with Candidates	Throughout the process
11. Conflict of Interest	N/A

### Identify the Search Timeline (January 2023)

The search service is tailored to meet the Board’s priorities and timetable. NASB works collaboratively with the Board to distinguish a timeline to meet the needs of the Board. The timeline is also developed to allow sufficient time to recruit quality individuals, meet with identified stakeholder groups, screen applicants and conduct planning meetings.

With the election coming up in November 2022, it would be the recommendation of NASB to wait until the results of the election are finalized and the new board members are seated in January of 2023. Preliminary work can begin but the majority of the process should include new board members to ensure the process and final result are supported by the members of the board who will be working directly with the new Commissioner.

We recommend a ten-week timeline. A planning meeting can be conducted in January. Advertising can be posted for approximately four weeks from mid-January through mid-February. The Association search consultants would propose presenting applicants to the Board at the end of February or beginning of March. The structure of the timeline would enable the Board to interview, select a finalist, and begin negotiations by April. You will see the timeline identified throughout the Project Plan. It will be important to be efficient with the timeline to encourage current Nebraska Superintendents to apply for the position. There will be a point where they may not be interested because they do not want to put their current board in a position where they cannot find an adequate replacement.

## 1) Position Profile (January 2023)

NASB will create a profile for the position of Commissioner with input from the board as well as internal/external stakeholders. It is critical to identify specific attributes and background experience the various stakeholders deem as vital to the Commissioner's success. The profile should also include required qualifications and preferred qualifications. A description of how the information will be collected to create the profile is detailed in the next section.

The Position Profile serves as a guiding principle for multiple elements of the search process. The attributes are used to advertise the position (if feedback is collected prior to advertising), screen the applicants, provide a basis to interview candidates, define the hiring guidelines, and formulate the job performance evaluation. In addition, the Profile can provide details for the design of the job description.

## 2) Engage Stakeholders (January 2023)

The engagement of various stakeholders will include an individual survey of board members to identify their personal thoughts and ideas related to the following:

- The strengths of Public Education in Nebraska
- The role of the Department of Education related to the education provided to Nebraska school children
- The issues board members believe may impact education in Nebraska in the next five years
- The attributes necessary to be the successful Nebraska Commissioner of Education

This method of fact-finding allows each board member the opportunity to express his or her thoughts and ideas. After the information is compiled, it will allow for a robust discussion amongst the committee members or the full board in a collaborative setting. The results of the board member surveys will provide the groundwork for the design of the Position Profile.

In addition to board member comments, it will be important to utilize input from various stakeholders. The NASB search process will include the opportunity for staff and educational partners' input. The consultants will hold face-to-face meetings with key groups and individuals. We will also provide an electronic assessment survey that may be completed for those unable to attend an in-person meeting. We compile the feedback and communicate our findings to the State Board of Education.

Groups involved in the assessment may include but are not limited to: NDE Administrators (Administrative Officer, Finance Officer, Information Officer, School Transformation Officer, Academic Officer, and Equity Officer), representatives and members of NCSA, NSEA, NASB, post-secondary institutions, State leadership (i.e., the Governor, other State representatives, U.S. Senate and Congressional leaders), and multiple other educational partners.

Outreach early in the search process is highly recommended to engage and foster an open search process and to learn from stakeholders. A search process can build connections and strengthen the resolve of future working partnerships following the hire of the new Commissioner.

### 3) Public Relations (Throughout the search process)

As mentioned in the Project Staff Structure above, NASB has a Director of Marketing and Communications. Matt Belka has had the opportunity to work with various entities who assistance with media for public relations purposes. We will be involved in the public relations aspect of the search in whatever capacity NDE would like us to partner in this endeavor. A few key instances we would recommend being involved include an initial press release to announce the hiring of NASB as the search firm, communication regarding the engagement of stakeholders, communication regarding the finalists' names, and a final communication announcing the name and bio of the individual hired to be the Commissioner of Education. There may be a couple of bumps in the road that need to be addressed from a public relations standpoint. We will be involved with this at the request of NDE.

### 4) Marketing and Recruiting (Mid-January through February 2023)

NASB will actively market the position and recruit quality individuals who meet the requirements. Regular progress reports to the committee or full board will be provided on a pre-determined schedule. These updates will be given at the preference of the contact person but could include in person communications, verbal updates or email updates.

NASB consultants will provide the Board with several options for advertising. The Board will collectively identify the venues they wish to utilize and authorize all advertising expenditures. Options and a sample advertisement are provided for the Board's consideration on page 21.

In addition, NASB consultants will utilize existing relationships with National professional organizations to recruit highly qualified individuals for this important position. Resources include but are not limited to our memberships with the National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers (NASS), the Federation of Board Development Trainers, American Association of School Administrators, and Executive Directors of the School Boards Associations.

The NASS group is an affiliation that allows us to advertise the opening and connect with individuals in 40 states. We can recruit applicants and validate experience of applicants from those states. Shari Becker is currently on the leadership team of NASS serving in the role of Chair Elect. We will rely on our partners in NASS, as well as our own research to conduct a national effort, focused on the Midwest. We are extremely knowledgeable regarding potential candidates right here in Nebraska. We will follow recommendations from those in the state of who might be good candidates for the Commissioner position. NASB will reach out to numerous current Nebraska superintendents to actively pursue them as a potential applicant. The team at NASB has generated positive results from our recruiting strategies, primarily through one-on-one communications with quality individuals. This phase of the search process will be ongoing for a minimum of 30 days.

#### 5) Develop Applicant Rubric (February 2023)

NASB will utilize the position profile to create a unique rubric to be used in this process. We will begin with a rubric for scoring the application materials. It will give the board members an opportunity to score the application, letter of application, resume and reference letters. In addition, there can be categories added to the rubric, to take into consideration the reference calls and background information collected by the NASB consultants. All of the scores will tally to a total that can be compared and discussed amongst members of the board to ensure the most qualified applicants are invited to interview for the position.

#### 6) Interview Process and Interview Rubric (March 2023)

In addition to the application rubric, NASB will also create a rubric specific to the NDE Commissioner search, to score the interview responses. This will include areas to score board member thoughts on specific answers to questions, communication skills, non-verbal communication expressed, and Leadership Style projected by the candidates.

NASB will assist the board in preparing for the interview including the logistics and the protocol/procedures. It will be important to utilize the Position Profile to create interview questions relevant to the Commissioner position. NASB will create an interview schedule based on feedback from the board and/or committee. The Board may wish to engage stakeholders in the interview process. The search consultants will assist the board in the identification of key stakeholders, work with those identified individuals to establish interview questions, provide appropriate interview instructions and equip each group with an evaluation instrument to complete and provide to the Board to aid in the selection process.

As part of the interview process, NASB recommends the Board hold a public forum that could be broadcast via teleconference or video conference across the state. In this highly structured and professionally facilitated forum, the candidate would answer a list of pre-determined questions.

One additional area of assistance NASB provides to boards is training on the Interview Protocol and Procedures. It will be critical to the integrity of the process that all interview candidates are treated fairly. The board will be equipped to maneuver through the interview process with knowledge of the Open Meetings Law.

## 7) Review Applications (End of February – March 2023)

NASB will review all applications to ensure they have the experience and qualifications necessary to move forward in the process. In order for an applicant to be considered a “completed applicant”, all application criteria must be submitted by a specified deadline. NASB staff members will initiate contact with each applicant by completing a phone interview to validate their experience, qualifications, and intentions to pursue the position.

## 8) Screening and Background Checks of Applicants (As applications are received)

Through the application process, the individual authorizes the release of personal information as requested. All applications received for the Commissioner position will be screened by NASB staff. NASB conducts an extensive reference check process, while balancing the confidential nature of an applicant’s materials. The screening and background checks are fundamentally important to the service we provide and have proven to be a critical feature setting the NASB Search Service apart from other search firms.

In addition, we will conduct certification checks and an online Google search of each completed applicant. In the event politically sensitive or potentially embarrassing issues arise from this background screening, the information will be investigated by NASB Consultants. Details will be provided to the Board or Search Committee as directed.

Once the screening is complete, the board will receive a “confidential” list identifying all completed applicants. NASB will provide the results of the screening information when the list is presented to the board. The board has the option of selecting **any** applicant on the completed list as an interview candidate. In the event there is an internal applicant, the Association would recommend that the board interview the individual only if he/she will receive serious consideration for the position.

In an effort to expose the Board to as many individuals as possible in an interview setting, the Board could consider using video conference to conduct an initial interview of a pre-determined number of candidates. The Board could then narrow the field to three or four to invite for a personal on-site interview. The Search Service will submit a request for a criminal background search, credit report, civil litigation, media, and child/adult abuse search for each interview candidate. We work with One Source the Background Check Company for this service.

#### 9) Attend Meetings and Debrief After Interviews (Throughout the process)

As stated in the beginning of the proposal, it is the intent of NASB to be fully committed to each step in the search process. This will include scheduled work sessions for the search process, stakeholder engagement meetings, candidate interviews, board deliberations, and final selection of the Commissioner. We are prepared to participate in all meetings as requested, during the process. Our location will allow us to attend meetings in person even on short notice if the need arises.

NASB will be onsite to observe the deliberations and be involved as an expert on protocol and procedures throughout, and at the conclusion of, the interview process. It is important to have a candid conversation about the final candidates and whether the board feels they have a match for this critical position. The role of NASB is to work with the board until they are satisfied. Should the need arise for NASB to recruit or identify additional candidates, we will absolutely take on that task.

## 10) Communicate with Candidates (Throughout the process)

We will communicate with all interested applicants, interview candidates and finalists in our role as facilitators of the search process. We will share our methods of communication with each applicant to ensure we are utilizing their preferred method. Personal phone calls will be made to all applicants for a quick review of the expected steps of the process and to ask a few preliminary questions of each applicant.

We use personal phone calls to invite the selected candidates to interview with the board and arrange travel accommodations. Our staff will also call each candidate at the conclusion of their interview, to gauge the candidate's continued interest in the position. We ask if they have questions about the position and their overall thoughts on the interview experience. We pass the results of this communication along to the board to empower them with critical feedback. It is better to know if a candidate has changed their mind about the position before the Board makes an offer. Once the board has successfully negotiated with a candidate, the NASB Search Service Director will communicate personally with the remaining finalists who were not selected.

## 11) Conflict of Interest

The proposal guidelines request organizations identify potential conflicts of interest. There are no conflicts of interest to report.

## Additional Details of Search Process

### Compensation Package

The compensation package is market sensitive. NASB will assemble a cost comparison that allows the board to assess how the current Commissioner's salary compares to other states. This will enable the board to consider how to position itself to attract and hire a quality Commissioner. The consultants will lead the board through discussion of a standard benefit package and other options for consideration.

### 2017 – 2026 NDE Strategic Vision and Direction

Created by Nebraska State Board of Education and Nebraska Department of Education

Potential applicants may want to have information on the status of the current NDE Strategic Plan. The most recent update on the NDE website is from 2019. It will be important to share additional updates with the Search Consultants so we may articulate these updates to potential applicants, upon their request.

### Robust and Diverse Process

The NASB Search Process supports all potential applicants and final candidates for positions. We promote fair practices to ensure all individuals have an equal opportunity.

### Board Leadership Team Planning Session

At the conclusion of the search, NASB will facilitate a team leadership planning session with the State Board of Education and the newly hired Commissioner. A review of key search materials will be utilized as well as identified Board goals, Commissioner job description, and the employment contract. Shari Becker and Marcia Herring will facilitate this collaborative planning session designed to assure the success and focus of the Board and Commissioner as you embark on his/her first year of service to the Department.

## D. Cost of Proposed Service

### Advertising Options and Potential Costs

#### Omaha World Herald

Propose: 4 Sunday ads and 30 days online advertising                      Cost    \$3,265

#### AASA - American Association of School Administrators

Propose: 30 days online advertising

Other Option: Job Flash Package Plus Upgrades                      Cost    \$699

Job Emailed to 5,000 + Superintendents

Posted for 30 Days

Remains High in Search Results

Highlighted to Stand Out

#### Education Week

Propose: 30 days of "Showcase Job" advertising                      Cost    \$1,395

Everything you get with the standard listing

Showcased listing on Education Week's website and in its e-newsletters (300,000+ distribution)

Black and white 2x4 print ad in Education Week Publication

Your logo featured on TopSchoolJobs.org

Total Cost of Proposed Advertising    Total    \$5,359

# Proposal Cost Breakdown

Advertising Costs (including proposed & potential)	\$ 9,000
Consultant and Candidate Travel/Expenses Budget*	\$ 9,000
Search Fee	\$30,000

NASB will arrange for all travel and hotel accommodations for out-of-town interview candidates out of the proposed Association search fee.

\*NASB will bill for exact expenses out of this budget.

Total Proposed Search fee	\$48,000
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## Statement of billing practices should the search fail or be incomplete

It is the policy of NASB to bill sixty percent (60%) of the fee at the onset of the search. The remaining forty percent (40%), plus expenses, will be due once negotiations are successful with a candidate.

If the Board selects a candidate from the search who does not agree to accept the position, the NASB will continue the search process at no additional cost. If the search produces qualified candidates but the Board is unable to decide to hire any of those candidates, the NASB will renew the search upon the Board's request, with those terms to be negotiated between the Board and the NASB.

Once the Board selects a candidate, if the Board completes a Leadership Team session with NASB, the NASB guarantees for two years (upon the date of hire) that if that candidate does not accomplish the needs, the NASB will conduct another search for only incurred expenses and no additional fees.

## E. References

Educational Service Unit 13  
4215 Avenue I, Scottsbluff NE 69361  
Mark Sinner, Board Chair  
[msinner@esu13.org](mailto:msinner@esu13.org)  
(308) 225-3567

Gering Public Schools  
1519 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Gering NE 69341  
BJ Peters, Board Chair  
[bpeters@esu13.org](mailto:bpeters@esu13.org)  
(308) 631-3932

Learning Community of Douglas & Sarpy Counties  
1612 N. 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha NE 68110  
Mark Hoeger, Board Chair  
[mhoeger@learningcommunityds.org](mailto:mhoeger@learningcommunityds.org)  
(402) 630-8128

David Patton, Former CEO  
[David.patton@apsbulldogs.org](mailto:David.patton@apsbulldogs.org)  
(402) 616-0194

North Platte Public School  
301 West F Street, North Platte NE 69103  
Skip Altig, Board Chair  
[saltig@nppsd.org](mailto:saltig@nppsd.org)  
(308) 530-1170

# Recent Searches Conducted

## 2021 - 2022 School Year

Conestoga Public Schools  
Gothenburg Public Schools  
Hay Springs Public Schools  
Hemingford Public Schools  
Kearney Public Schools  
Logan View Public Schools  
Morrill Public Schools  
North Platte Public Schools  
Shickley Public Schools  
Twin River Public Schools  
West Point Public Schools

## Interims

Anselmo-Merna Public Schools  
Boone Central Schools  
Gordon Rushville Public Schools  
Isanti (Santee) Community Schools  
Sumner-Eddyville-Miller Schools

## 2020 - 2021 School Year

Cozad Community Schools  
Dundy County Stratton Public Schools  
Gering Public Schools  
HTRS Public Schools  
Leigh Community Schools  
Lyons Decatur Northeast Schools  
Pleasanton Public Schools  
Ponca Public Schools  
Scottsbluff Public Schools  
Shelby-Rising City Public Schools  
Springfield Platteview Community Schools  
Wakefield Community Schools

## 2019 – 2020 School Year

Auburn Public Schools

Bertrand Community School

Chadron Public Schools

Crawford Public Schools

Elba Public Schools

Elm Creek Public Schools

Fort Calhoun Community Schools

Kimball Public Schools

Nebraska City Public Schools

Rock County Public Schools

Scribner-Snyder Community Schools

Valentine Community Schools

Wood River Rural Public Schools

CEO – Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties



**LEADERSHIP**

**INNOVATION**

**VISION**

**ENGAGEMENT**

**#liveNASB**

**#weLIVEhere**

# NASB Staff

- Shari Becker, Director of Education Leadership Search Service
- John Spatz, Executive Director
- Colby Coash, Associate Executive Director and Director of Government Relations
- Matt Belka, Director of Marketing and Communications
- Marcia Herring, Director of Board Leadership
- Abi Carlson, Search Service Associate

# NASB History & Experience

- Started in 1982
- Service provides board accountability and control
- Positions filled through NASB
  - Cabinet level positions – Directors, Coordinators
  - Superintendent
  - Educational Service Unit Administrator
  - CEO for Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties

# Strengths of NASB Service

- Nebraska experience, National reach
- Network for recruiting quality candidates
- Excellent communication skills

# Search Service Success

- Approximately 1/3 of current Nebraska Superintendents or ESU Administrators
- 4.5 years
- 12 Superintendents with 10+ years in their current district

# Engaging Stakeholders

## Position Profile

Guides multiple elements of the search process

- Advertising
- Screening
- Interviewing
- Hiring
- Development of rubric

# Engaging Stakeholders

## Position Profile

### Areas of Focus

- Strengths
- Challenges (short and long term)
- Areas of improvement
- Background skills
- Personal attributes

# Engaging Stakeholders

## Position Profile

### Who to Engage?

- State Board of Education Members
- NDE Administrators and Staff
- Statewide Educational Partners
- Statewide Community Members

# Engaging Stakeholders

## Position Profile

### How to Engage?

- In person face-to face meetings
- Zoom meetings
- Electronic surveys

Engagement can build connections and strengthen the resolve of future working partnerships.

# Soliciting Candidates

## Within Nebraska

- Traditional advertising
- Solicit recommendations
- Reach out to current and recently retired educational leaders
- Personal communication with quality individuals

# Soliciting Candidates

## National Strategies

- Traditional advertising
- National Affiliation of Superintendent Searches (NASS)
- The School Superintendent's Association (AASA)
  - Howard University/AASA Aspiring Superintendents Academy
- Federation of Board Development Trainers
- Executive Directors of the School Boards Associations
- Education Commission of the States (ECS)

# Narrowing the Pool

- Ensure application is complete
- Ensure applicant meets minimum requirements
- Initiate contact and conduct initial phone interview
- Utilize Position Profile to create a unique rubric
  - Score materials
  - Score reference calls and background check
- Follow pre-determined guidelines set out by Committee or Board

# Building Consensus

- Open communication
- Transparent communication
- Listening skills
- Healthy dialogue
- Rubrics and scoring of applicants/candidates
- Mediation skills

# Public Relations Plan

- Transparency and open communications
- Work with NDE Staff and State Board Members
- NASB Director of Marketing and Communications
  - Initial Press Release announcing NASB as point of contact
  - Communication for engagement
  - Communication with list of finalists
  - Announcement of Commissioner
  - Other public relations

# Other Considerations

## Timeline

- Work begins immediately
- NASB meeting with key personnel at NDE
- Development of timeline
- Engaging board members
- Engaging stakeholders
- Rolling out advertising

# Other Considerations

## Training

- Interview protocol and procedures
- Treat all candidates fairly
- Open Meetings Law

# Cost Breakdown

Advertising	\$9,000
Travel Budget	\$9,000
Search Fee	\$30,000
Total Proposed Fee	\$48,000

# Final Thoughts

## Additional Strengths

- Nebraska experience, National reach
- Network for recruiting quality candidates
- Excellent communication skills
  - Listening, response time, follow up, appropriate, detailed, accurate
- We work for and with boards
- Community engagement