



Nebraska strong....I am so proud to be a Nebraskan. Our recent flooding devastation has only strengthened my pride as I have witnessed our schools and communities rally around each other for strength and support.

Our hearts go out to all of those impacted by our weather incidents. Staff members and students who were, and even those who were not directly impacted by the disaster, may have questions or concerns. It is important we provide compassion and offer support where needed. Here are some resources that you may find useful:

*Helping Children After a Natural Disaster: Information for Families and Educators <http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/natural-disaster>

*Returning to School After a Disaster <https://www.cdc.gov/features/coping-after-disaster/index.html>

*Talking to Children about Severe Weather <https://go.unl.edu/igw3>

*Helping Children Cope with Emergencies <https://go.unl.edu/nt6f>

*Dealing with Flood Damage <https://flood.unl.edu>

*Disaster Distress Helpline <https://go.unl.edu/53g6>

At ESU 10, our focus is on serving you. Please do not hesitate to let us know how we can provide support and assistance as we work together during this difficult time. We are Nebraska Strong!

Our annual visits with member school districts are nearing completion. We will use this information to develop a plan to provide positive support as “Educational Service Unit 10 partners with our stakeholders to meet changing needs through professional expertise in providing services, learning opportunities, and support.” We are also reviewing the successful completion of goals while beginning the process of planning for our next school year.

I will close with the words of my college friend, Trooper Dan Klimek, “We have the most generous, tough, good people you will find anywhere. We are Nebraska! Love thy neighbor isn’t a quote..it’s what we do!” GO 10! GO NEBRASKA!

April

- 03 Social Studies Workshop
- 04 Instructional Coaches Cadre
- 10 NASA Region IV School Administrators
- 11 Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders
- 11 LAN Manager Meeting
- 11 Art Teachers' Workshop
- 12 Pre-K Meeting
- 12 Strategies for Working With Children Exposed to Substances
- 16 PowerSchool - PowerScheduler Prepare to Load
- 17 Title I Spring Meeting
- 18 Title III Spring Meeting
- 23 Youth Mental Health First Aid
- 25 Interventions for MTSS Social Emotional Behavior, Session 4

May

- 01 Invention Convention
- 23 Standards, Curriculum & Instructional Materials: Putting It All
- 24 CTE Laser Engraver Training
- 28 NE Reading Improvement Act Overview & Planning w/ Marissa Pazant
- 29 Toolkit for the Educational Identification of Autism - No. Platte
- 29 Strategic Leadership Conference - Todd Whitaker
- 30 Get Ready, Get Set, Plan!
- 31 Cultivating Resilience



The ESU 10 Teaching and Learning Department continues to support our school districts through professional learning opportunities and on-site consultation. We pride ourselves on staying up-to-date with educational research and local, state and federal mandates. Most days of the week our department can be found in school districts facilitating professional learning to administrators, teachers and staff. A service that occasionally goes unnoticed is our educational partnerships.

In September 2018 and January 2019, Dr. Wheelock and the three department directors hosted the Teacher Education 100 students from the University of Nebraska Kearney in our building. We talked to over 200 college students during these visits. The TE100 class at UNK is the students' first exposure to the field of education. We were asked to share the purpose of ESUs and what services we provide to our school districts in ESU 10. We took the students on tours and then provided an opportunity for question and answer. Our main focus with the students was to communicate that there are resources and support for teachers once they graduate college.



The Teaching and Learning Department partners with UNK to host our Academic Quiz Bowl for middle school and high school students. Our Science Olympiad is also held on UNK's campus. ESU 10 does not have the capacity to host more than 200 students in our facility at one time so the partnership with UNK allows us to meet more student needs. We host over 300 students during each quiz bowl and over 500 students during our annual Science Olympiad.

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When requested, ESU 10 staff supports our school districts during evening meetings and community outreach. We have facilitated parent meetings on interpreting NWEA MAP test scores. School districts have asked us to facilitate community meetings to gather input for continuous school improvement initiatives and goal setting. Most recently, Dr. Wheelock and I assisted Callaway Public Schools with their community meeting to discuss their AQuESTT Classification and Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) designation.

In all of these partnerships, our focus is to provide service and support. Most of our stakeholders know that we provide teacher training. We wanted to highlight to the Board of Education that we seek out partnerships with UNK and our school districts. We consistently rise up to new challenges to meet the unique needs of our school districts. We truly live our motto, "Our focus is on serving you", through educational partnerships.

Spring is almost here and that means the annual NETA (Nebraska Educational Technology Association) Conference is just around the corner! This year, the conference will be held March 28-29, 2019. This is a month earlier than usual.

I have had the privilege of serving on the NETA board of directors for the past three years. A major responsibility of the board is to plan for and organize the conference. This year, we have a huge line-up of speakers that teachers and administrators will not want to miss! The keynote speaker Thursday is Kayla Delzer, a third grade teacher and blogger with a passion for creating global learning opportunities for her students. Friday's keynote will be Mike Smith, a Nebraska native who has made an impact with his entrepreneurship and youth outreach.

In addition to the keynote speakers, we also have five featured speakers who have been invited to speak: Eric Curts (Google Education Trainer), Lori Gracey (Executive Director from Texas Computer Education Association), Gwyneth Jones (ISTE board of directors and advocate for school librarians), Joe Sanfelippo (Superintendent from Fall Creek, WI), and Tony Vincent (fifth grade teacher and long-time NETA presenter).

This year, we are excited for an additional opportunity for school leaders. The Leadership Summit will be March 27 and 28 and will feature Dr. Mike Lucas, Superintendent of York Public Schools and Dr. Joe Sanfelippo, Superintendent of Fall Creek School District in Wisconsin. This two-day event will include school visits in Omaha and hands-on workshops to help administrators build their capacity as the instructional leaders of their districts.

School Board members can attend NETA free of charge.



Nebraska Educational Technology Association

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Reading Improvement Act (Nebraska READS)

by Dallas Lewandowski, Teaching & Learning Coordinator

The state of Nebraska is committed to a vision of literacy for Nebraska students, therefore, the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act became effective for the 2019-2020 school year. The ability to read is critical to a student's academic and lifelong success. The goal of this act is to ensure that all Nebraska students are reading at, or above, grade level by the end of third grade. When students transition from early to upper elementary grades, reading instruction shifts from learning to read to reading to learn. Children who are not proficient readers by the end of third grade will continue to struggle academically as they engage with increasingly complex texts across content areas. The Nebraska Reading Improvement Act will strive for early identification of students who need extra help through targeted interventions.

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The following are the key components to this act:

- NDE will provide a list of approved reading assessments and the threshold level of performance for each assessment. It is specifically stated as follows within the act that on or before each March 1, the department shall make public the list of approved reading assessments for the subsequent school year and the threshold level of performance for each such assessment. A student performing below the threshold level shall be identified as having a reading deficiency for purposes of the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act.
- School Boards will have the option to develop policies for reading instruction and intervention services to address reading needs in their districts.
- K-3 teachers must be effective based on classroom observations and student improvement in reading, or will receive specialized training in early literacy.
- Assessments will be given to all K-3 students three times per year with an approved reading assessment to measure their progress and to support teachers with targeted instruction.
- Early identification will require schools to assess students in kindergarten through third grade within the first 30 days of school to identify those who may be struggling with reading skills.
- Parents or guardians of K-3 students will be notified no later than 15 days after identification.
- Supplemental Reading Interventions will be implemented during regular school hours in addition to reading instruction in the classroom unless other agreements are made with the parent or guardian.
- Students with individual reading plans will begin receiving services no later than 30 days after identification. These plans will be created in collaboration with the parent or guardian and will include the interventions and support the student will receive through the supplemental reading intervention program.
- Summer reading programs will need to be available for any student in grades 1-3 who has been identified as continuing to need reading intervention services. These programs can be community-based or offered online.

As an ESU, we are committed to helping our school districts as they implement the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act. This information has been shared with both our principal and superintendent groups and we will continue to provide updates and information as it arises. On May 28th, we have invited Marissa Payzant, NDE English Language Arts Education Specialist, to provide our schools with an overview of the act and opportunities to field questions from administrators and school staff who will be responsible for implementation. There will be time devoted during this workshop for collaboration on how schools will plan to address the components of the act.



ESU 10 is embarking on an exciting new project with NDE called the NeMTSS Regional Facilitator Cooperative Agreement. This joint project will be run through the special education and teaching and learning departments. As part of a statewide network, we will be building a framework and providing supports to schools that are implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). NDE will provide an NeMTSS Statewide Coordinator to provide oversight to the project. In order to cover the state geographically, regional facilitators will be located in ESUs 10, 13 (Scottsbluff), and 3 (Omaha). The primary goal of this project is to coordinate efforts statewide around MTSS and School Improvement.

The NeMTSS Regional Facilitator will provide coordination, technical assistance, training and support to Nebraska schools and ESUs through a regional support network. The ESU 10 facilitator will serve on the NeMTSS State Team, as well as develop needed trainings and technical assistance throughout the region and state. The coordination, technical assistance, training and support will be provided through on-site trainings, building meetings, module development, webinars, etc. All of these resources will be available to Nebraska school districts and ESU personnel.

Other goals of the project are to build the local capacity of regional school districts and ESUs within the NeMTSS framework by:

- providing districts with regional service so they can provide a continuum of supports to students
- building collaborative relationships within districts and ESUs to create network learning opportunities
- further developing awareness and promote evidence-based practices in the area of MTSS
- maintaining an active voice in the NeMTSS Framework support build-out by collaborating with State and local entities.

A state team at NDE will provide the direction and support needed to build the Facilitator's role and NeMTSS project into a sustainable project to benefit all districts. Through feedback from NEMTSS Builders and Stakeholders continued build out will be rolled out in additional year-long cooperative agreements to provide fiscal support to this position. We are excited to partner with NDE for a systematic, sustained introduction to MTSS and building of the framework for long term school reform. We believe MTSS is meaningful education reform that will have a positive impact on all students.

MTSS has a structure of tiered support. All students need and receive Tier 1 support. It is universal. For students in need of a little support beyond Tier 1, Tier 2 supports are added. An even smaller group of students need even more support, sometimes at a very intense level. These students receive all three tiers of support. This model is based on individual student data and how much instruction and the intensity of the instruction is based on what each student's data indicates is needed. This framework for systematically providing student supports works in the academic world, as well as addresses the social-emotional needs of students.

A signed cooperative agreement from NDE ensures that funding has been committed for the project. We are excited to embark on this new journey!

The Task Force has met almost every month as we continue on the path of learning and preparing a report to the Legislature in November. On December 10, we heard public comment about the need for better bandwidth in public libraries and I learned about the lack of use of E-Rate Category 2 funds in these libraries. This prompted me to reach out to several libraries in the area and our Helpdesk was able to assist Grand Island Public Library in filing an E-Rate CAT 2 application. The Task Force also heard panel discussions on Public-Private partnerships and middle-mile bandwidth carriers. One concern in Nebraska is the differing rates across the state for similar bandwidth, especially in the northeast counties, and school districts' costs were used as an example of that disparity.

The Task Force met on February 25 and listened to panel discussions about rights-of-way, funding for broadband and recent speed test surveys. This was a very enlightening meeting as I heard topics related to deployment issues around new technologies for broadband access. UNK also presented their data from two broadband surveys they are conducting.

On March 29, we will meet at the University of Nebraska Eastern Nebraska Research and Extension Center near Mead and hear a series of presentations on agricultural technologies and broadband from University of Nebraska faculty and conclude with a demonstration of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). I anticipate the upcoming meeting in May will focus on broadband in education and I am working with organizers to help plan the meeting agenda.

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E-Rate News

Out of 33 ESU 10 districts, 24 are in the process of applying for Category 2 E-Rate funds. We are also assisting with Category 2 applications for five other districts outside of the ESU 10 area. Exact amounts of funding requested won't be available until after the March 27th filing deadline.

This is the final year of the five year period to apply for Category 2 funds. The FCC is strongly recommending that the program be continued, however, until they make a ruling we have no idea what that may look like in the future.



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