

EDUCATION COUNCIL

October 15, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
Nebraska Department of Education
500 S 84th Street, Room 204
Lincoln, Nebraska
Host Location: NDE Conference Room 204

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Co-Chair, Mr. Gary Needham, ESU 09
Co-Chair, Mr. Andrew Buker, University of Nebraska
Ms. Elizabeth Kumru, Nebraska Association of School Boards
Mr. Leonard Kwapnioski, Columbus Public Schools
Mr. Greg Robke, ESU 4 (Alt. for Dr. Ted DeTurk)
Mr. Matt Chrisman, Mitchel Secondary School
Dr. Cheri Polenski, Nebraska State College Systems
Mr. Jeremiah Ourada, Nebraska Wesleyan University

LIAISONS PRESENT:

Ms. Christine Struebing, Nebraska Department of Education
Ms. Kathleen Fimple, Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (Alt. for Dr. Paul Turman)

MEMBERS/LIAISONS & ALTERNATES ABSENT:

Dr. Mathew McCarville, Chief Information Officer, State of Nebraska
Mr. Derek Bierman, Doan College
Mr. Brandon Eckmann, Northeast Community College
Mr. Tom Peters, Central Community College
Ms. Cassandra Joseph, South Sioux City Schools
Mr. Stephen Hamersky, Daniel J. Gross Catholic High School
Dr. Jaci Lindburg, University of Nebraska
Ms. Molly Delany, Nebraska Public Media
Mr. Dean Tickle, Loup City Schools

CALL TO ORDER, ELECTRONIC POSTING, LOCATION OF OPEN MEETING LAW DOCUMENTS, ROLL CALL, INTRODUCTIONS

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA FOR THE OCTOBER 15, 2025 MEETING*

Ms. Kumru moved to approve the October 15, 2025 agenda. Mr. Kwapnioski seconded. Roll call vote: Buker-Yes, Chrisman-Yes, Robke-Yes, Kumru-Yes, Kwapnioski-Yes, Needham-Yes, Ourada-Yes, and Polenski-Yes. Results: Yes-8, Abstained-0, No-0. Motion carried.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 3, 2025 MEETING

Ms. Kumru moved to approve the September 3, 2025 meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Robke seconded. Roll call vote: Polenski-Yes, Ourada-Yes, Needham-Yes, Kwapnioski-Yes, Kumru-Yes, Robke-Yes, Chrisman-Yes, and Buker-Yes. Results: Yes-8, Abstained-0, No-0. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

NITC UPDATE

Website Update <https://nitc.nebraska.gov/>. Mrs. Richards informed the Council that the NITC and Education Council websites have a new look. Hopefully, it will be easier to find information on the site. The Office of the CIO is open and welcomes any suggestions and/or feedback.

Personnel Updates. Since the last meeting, there have been more staff changes. Due to the reduction in workforce, Casey DunnGossin is no longer with the Office of the CIO. Rick Becker, OCIO Legal Counsel, has retired.

NETWORK NEBRASKA

Website Update <https://networknebraska.ne.gov/>. The Network Nebraska website has also been revamped. The Office of the CIO is open and welcomes any suggestions and/or feedback.

RFP update. The OCIO is in the 2nd phase of the RFP process. Budget office has requested in-depth information about what to expect from this RFP, including expense details. There are 22 sites so far in the RFP. A few of them have contracts that are expiring. Southeast Community College will be a participant in the RFP. The Stuhr Museum is still being discussed.

CHARTER REVIEW

Vanessa Castro, OCIO Community IT Manager, was not able to attend the meeting to review the document. The Council agreed to go through the document for a preliminary review.

Discussion about the Task Groups occurred. The group agreed that the Council and Network Nebraska participants need to do a better job of communicating the benefits and cost savings that Network Nebraska can provide. It was suggested to do presentations at conferences hosted by the NASB (Nebraska Association of School

Boards), NCSA (Nebraska Council of School Administrators) Administrator Days, NETA (Nebraska Educational Technology Association), and other organizations.

The Network Nebraska brochure was discussed. Two years ago it had been revised and needed the updated Network Nebraska map to be published. The printing never happened. The Network Nebraska map is up to date now. Mrs. Richards will contact Wade for the map, as well as follow-up with the OCIO regarding the Print Shop.

It was recommended to include the Network Nebraska brochure in the correspondence that goes out to superintendents.

MEETING ENGAGEMENT

The Co-Chairs wanted to get feedback from the council members regarding the Education Council meetings – frequency, duration, task groups, presentations, etc. The question was asked if the Council members are learning from the meetings and is the council meeting their expectations.

The current co-chairs have served for several years and encouraged other members to serve in their role. Elections are held in August. Council members like meetings hosted at other locations and felt it was very informative.

There was a lot of discussion regarding Cybersecurity and AI topics that followed: cybersecurity efforts for K-12 versus higher education are different; cybersecurity policy versus guidelines; issues with zoom recording transcribing issues using AI; and bi-lingual interactive boards for diverse populations.

Nate Watson, NITC Commissioner, offered to provide a presentation on AI. It was suggested to invite the OCIO Security Officer to provide a presentation.

If others have other ideas after this meeting, they were asked to send them to the Co-chairs.

SUBSECTOR REPORTS (if time permits)

Updates were given by the following sectors: Nebraska Department of Education; Public K-12 and ESUs; Nebraska Independent Colleges and Universities; Nebraska State Colleges; and University of Nebraska.

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was no other business.

DISCUSS POSSIBLE LOCATION FOR THE DECEMBER 17, 2025 MEETING AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE DECEMBER 17, 2025

Mrs. Richards will check on the location for the next meeting. Due to potential bad weather, the December meeting is usually held as a virtual meeting.

Agenda topics:

- Charter Review
- Discussion of Task Groups (Membership and Role)
- AI Presentation: Nate Watson, NITC Commissioner

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Kumru moved to adjourn. Ms. Polenski seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

Meeting minutes were taken by Lori Lopez Urdiales and reviewed by the NITC staff of the Office of the CIO.