



# Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association

*Member Update*

*July 9, 2026*



*Photo Credit: Harvard Public Schools*



[www.nrcsa.net](http://www.nrcsa.net)



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# NRCSA Calendar

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## **NRCSA Events**

### **NRCSA Golf Tournament**

July 28, 2026

Meadowlark Hills Golf Course in Kearney

**[More about this event](#)**

### **NRCSA Superintendent Lunch**

July 29, 2026

12:00 PM

Holiday Inn in Kearney

## **NRCSA District Meetings (September & October 2026)**

### **Northeast District Meeting**

11:00 AM September 21, 2026

Wayne State College

### **Southeast District Meeting**

10:00 AM September 28, 2026

NCSA Office in Lincoln

### **NRCSA Legislative Forum**

February 24, 2027

Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln

**[More about this event](#)**

### **NRCSA Spring Conference**

April 1 & 2, 2027

Crowne Plaza & Younes North Convention Center in  
Kearney

**[More about this event](#)**

## **Committee Meetings**

### **2026-27 NRCSA Executive Committee**

July 29, 2026

1:00 PM

Holiday Inn in Kearney

## *NRCSA Search Service*



**Please let Jack Moles know where superintendent vacancies occur, so that NRCSA Superintendent Search can make direct contact. We need to hear as soon as possible in anticipation of getting promotional materials specific to that board of education ready. It is critical that Board Presidents have the NRCSA contact information so that if they choose to consider a Superintendent Search Service, NRCSA is one they hopefully will consider.**



**Axtell Community Schools**  
Search Complete



**Potter-Dix Public Schools**  
Search Complete



**Bancroft-Rosalie Community Schools**  
Search Complete



**Red Cloud Community Schools**  
Interim Search Complete



**Blue Hill Community Schools**  
Interim Search Complete



**Sandy Creek Public Schools**  
Search Complete



**Hampton Public Schools**  
Search Complete



**Superior Public Schools**  
Search Complete



**Hayes Center Public Schools**  
Search Complete



**Newman Grove Public Schools**  
Search Complete

Access the Members area of [www.nrcsa.net](http://www.nrcsa.net) anytime.

**Login: member Password: learning**

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## ***NRCSA Updates***

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**FROM JACK MOLES: One of my goals in the early phase of my upcoming retirement is to work on a project I've had in mind for a few years.** My intention is to look at a way to highlight success stories from our rural schools in Nebraska. What I'd like to ask for your help in is to provide me with names of alumni from your school (or other schools if you have people in mind) who have been successful. Of course, success can be defined in many, many ways and I'd like to include as many of those ways as possible.

I'd like to focus on any alumni who graduated from 1980 to recent years. I am only going to use NRCSA-member schools. Some of these schools may no longer exist, but are part of consolidated districts that do belong to NRCSA. Examples of successes might include alumni who:

- Became outstanding educators and made contributions to education.
- Received recognition for their military experiences/leadership
- Experienced notable success in athletics
- Have achieved prominence in the arts (music, visual arts, literature, graphic arts, theater, film, television, etc)
- Became noted for their community involvement and leadership.
- Became great parents and family members
- Became leaders in their church or faith
- Have been prominent in government, politics, or advocacy
- Dealt with physical or mental disabilities but attained success.
- Became successful in spite of social disadvantages (socio-economic, language, cultural disadvantages)
- Have been involved in philanthropy or given back to their hometown/school/college
- Experienced great academic success.
- Became very successful in business and/or finance (i.e. corporate, small business, entrepreneurship, etc)
- Became great leaders in their chosen fields.
- Other ways in which you might showcase success.

If you know of such alumni (again, does not have to be just from your own school), would you please pass on their names to me. I would ask for a few things from you:

1. Name, including both current name and maiden name.
2. Contact information if you have it (phone and/or email)
3. A short description of the success you would highlight for each person submitted.

I cannot promise that all names submitted will be used in my project.

## **NRCSA Leadership**

Chris Kuncel, President.  
Mullen Public Schools

Dr. Heather Nebesniak, Past Pres.  
Ord Public Schools

Stephanie Kaczor, Pres-Elect.  
Riverside Public Schools

Jeremy Braden, Secretary.  
Doniphan-Trumbull Public Schs

## **District Representatives:**

Ginger Meyer, West  
Chadron Public Schools

Dale Hafer, North Central  
Ainsworth Community Schools

Daryl Schrunk, Northeast  
Randolph Public Schools

Andrew Havelka, Southeast  
Freeman Public Schools

Jon Davis, South Central  
Alma Public Schools

Jane Davis, Southwest  
Hershey Public Schools

## **Executive Director:**

Jack Moles

## **Lobbyists:**

Jon Edwards  
Scott Moore  
Russell Westerhold

## **Legislative Co- Chairs:**

Dr. Jason Dolliver  
Pender Public Schools

Bryce Jorgenson  
Southern Valley Schools

## **Scholarship & Recognition Co Chairs:**

Jessica Bland,  
Oakland-Craig Public Schools

Jim Widdifield  
Minden Public Schools

Please feel free to share this with others in your district, including teachers/coaches/sponsors/Board members/School Foundation members/Alumni groups (especially those who are more veteran in your district).

Thanks in advance for providing help for me in this project. It will be greatly appreciated.

Ideas for the project may be forwarded to Jack Moles at [jmoles@nrca.net](mailto:jmoles@nrca.net) or [jackdmoles@gmail.com](mailto:jackdmoles@gmail.com).

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**Hope, Perspective, and the Year Ahead**  
**By Paul Sheffield, Executive Director-Elect**



As I begin my first year as Executive Director of the Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association, I've spent a great deal of time thinking about one simple word: **hope**.

Webster defines hope as *"to cherish a desire with anticipation; to want something to happen or be true."* Hope often means different things depending on where we are in life. A year ago, as I entered retirement, I hoped I wouldn't drive everyone around me a little crazy. Today, my hope has shifted. My focus is on how I can best serve Nebraska's rural schools by providing meaningful resources, building strong relationships, and creating opportunities that help our students, educators, and communities thrive.

It would be easy to become discouraged by the challenges surrounding us. Headlines often highlight division, uncertainty, and conflict. In education, we face our own share of obstacles—from staffing shortages and funding concerns to increasing expectations placed on our schools. At times, it can feel as though darkness receives far more attention than light.

But hope is often found in perspective.

Our oldest son serves as a Navy rescue swimmer. Before joining the fleet, he spent more than two years preparing for a job that most of us can scarcely imagine. He once described his role this way: *"My best day at work will come because someone else is experiencing one of the worst days of their life."* That simple statement has stayed with me. The same situation can look completely different depending on where you're standing. The same is true in our schools.

Every day, educators across rural Nebraska choose to see possibilities where others see obstacles. They choose to invest in children, strengthen communities, and prepare the next generation of leaders. They understand that perspective shapes outcomes. When we focus on opportunities instead of limitations, and replace "have to" with "get to," our outlook—and often our results—begin to change.

I've also been encouraged by watching people come together in unexpected ways. Acts of kindness, hospitality, and service remind us that there is still far more good in the world than the headlines often suggest. Hope isn't passive; it's an expectation that our actions matter. It requires intention, responsibility, and a commitment to making a positive difference wherever we are.

As we begin another school year, I encourage each of us to be that difference in our schools and communities. Whether you're a superintendent, board member, principal, teacher, support staff member, or community leader, never underestimate the impact of a kind word, a thoughtful decision, or a willingness to serve others.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve the Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association. I look forward to listening, learning, and working alongside each of you as we continue to advocate for the outstanding students, educators, and communities that make rural Nebraska such a special place.

I'll leave you with a lyric that captures this message well:

*"In a world full of hate, be a light."*

May we all strive to be that light for our students, our colleagues, and our communities.

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**There were a few NRCSA leadership spots available for the 2026-27 school year.** President Elect and the North Central District Representative to the Executive Committee were open. Ballots were sent via email on April 2, 2026.

**PRESIDENT ELECT**—this position is part of a three year Presidency cycle (President-Elect, President, Past-President). This is a state-wide election with each member entity having one vote. Michael Eldridge, Supt. at East Butler and Dale Hafer, Supt. at Ainsworth were the two candidates. Dale Hafer was elected President-Elect.

**NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**—Current North Central District rep Dale Hafer is term-limited, thus the position would be open. The position has a term of three years, with the ability to run for a second term. This position was voted on by member entities in the North Central District. Heather Nebesniak, Supt. at Ord, was the lone candidate and was elected as the North Central District Representative.

There were a few spots open on NRCSA committees. The Executive Committee approved the recommendation of Executive Director Jack Moles to appoint (or re-appoint) the following to committees:

#### **LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

- Trevor Anderson, Superintendent at Kimball, was re-appointed for a second term.
- Mike Rotherham, Superintendent at O'Neill, was appointed to a first term.

#### **SCHOLARSHIP AND RECOGNITION COMMITTEE**

- Keri Homan, Superintendent at Crawford, was appointed to a three-year term.
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**We urge you to consider participation in the NRCSA Partner OneCard program** as a tool for you in managing school expenditures, both large and small. Certainly, the card can help reduce/eliminate any issues relative to unverified cash expenditures. You decide who uses it, can get cards for each of those users, keep all cards wherever you wish, determine the amount to load on each individual card, and how long the time frame of use is. It is a terrific management tool and clearly identifies each expenditure/name/date/amount. Whether small purchases or very large purchases, the card is a terrific tool. NRCSA owns the state contract, so liability for misuse falls to NRCSA, not the district user. We have only had three circumstances of fraud and all three have been the theft of the card number information, not any district employee misuse. For 2025-26, over 100 districts/ESUs participated in the program. We currently have 111 entities using the program. In talking with some districts, there is a chance there could be upwards of 115 entities participating. Great job by all participating districts in protecting the card and program! Don't forget, the NRCSA rebate from the transaction fee paid by businesses that choose to accept plastic is used for scholarship, awards, and special needs. For 2025-26, the rebate was over \$40,000 to NRCSA, showing that use is increasing, and large purchases are being included. WIN, WIN, WIN! If you are considering joining the program and need more information, please contact Jack Moles ([jmoles@nrdsa.net](mailto:jmoles@nrdsa.net)) or Jeff Bundy ([jbundy@nrdsa.net](mailto:jbundy@nrdsa.net)).

U.S. Bank personnel will present two webinars covering the basics of the Commercial Card program. Please note these meetings will use Microsoft Teams.

Option 1

Monday July 20, 2026 at 11:00 AM Central Time (MS Teams Meeting)

Option 2

Tuesday August 4, 2026 at 10:00 AM Central Time (MS Teams Meeting)

Invitations to these informational meetings will be sent to superintendents and business office personnel in July.

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**NRCSA has partnered with the Holocaust Learning Experience to provide free curriculum for the teaching of the Holocaust and other genocides.** LB888, which was adopted into law in 2022, requires school districts to teach about the Holocaust and other forms of genocide. This has been a growing move in many states. The Holocaust Learning Experience, based out of Florida, developed FREE on-line curriculum, which features interviews with survivors of the Holocaust, for Florida school districts.. The lessons are tiered for 5th and 6th grades, 7th and 8th grades, and high school grades. The group has now made it possible for schools in other states to access the materials for the same price: FREE!

*From Leigh Routman:* I've attached a digital flyer that you can share with your newsletter as well as the link to our website for more information.

**[Impactful Lessons from the Holocaust | The Holocaust Learning Experience](#)**

Additionally, here is the link to the video with teachers and students in their own words:

**[Holocaust Learning Experience | Empowering Classrooms to Combat Hate](#)**

And a link to the Heroes of the Holocaust montage:

**[Heroes of the Holocaust Demo with Hal\\_07072025.mov](#)**

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**NRCSA's annual membership drive has begun!** Membership notices were sent to all of our members earlier in the week. We also contacted several non-members who we believe would be great fits in NRCSA. Annual Dues remain at \$850. Notices will be sent in time for July board meetings. You are welcome to pay your dues in this fiscal year or the next. Last year, we had 222 school districts, ESU's, and State colleges and we expect to continue to grow. Thanks to you for being a member. This energizes our representation and advocacy for rural Nebraska, no matter who we are engaged with on education, legislation, or community issues. Without your support, there is less rural advocacy. Whether we like it or not, the outstate and rural population does not create a legislative majority anymore. In fact, rural Nebraska lost another seat in the Unicameral in the most recent redistricting. Finding success, whether passing, amending, or stopping legislation comes from membership, relationships, and focus. Thanks to your membership in NRCSA, rural is at the table and making a difference on behalf of our rural students, schools, and communities.

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## **2026 NRCSA Joe Toczek Golf Tournament**

The 2026 NRCSA Joe Toczek Golf Tournament will be held on Tuesday, July 28, 2026 at Meadowlark Hills Golf Course in Kearney. The event is open to administrators, both active and retired, board members and vendors. Registration opened in late May. We are planning for up to 50 teams (200 golfers) to participate in the tournament. Registration materials were sent via email later this month. At the time of this writing, we have spots for a few more teams.

## **2026 NRCSA Joe Toczek Golf Tournament Team Registration Form**

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## **NRCSA New Superintendent Lunch**

To provide some insight as to what NRCSA does, and can offer school districts and ESU's, NRCSA annually holds a "New Superintendent Lunch". During Administrator Days. The event will be held at 11:45 a.m. at the Kearney Holiday Inn on Wednesday, July 29. A lunch buffet will be provided, courtesy of NRCSA. The plan would be to finish by 1:00 p.m. so that you can continue your Administrator Days activities. Invitations to any administrators who are new to their district will be sent in early July.

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**The NRCSA Spring Conference was another success!** The conference, which was held at the Younes Conference Center North in Kearney on March 19 & 20, brought together Board members and administrators to reconnect and refresh. The free pre-conference, courtesy of Franklin-Covey, provided NRCSA members with the access to a very valuable experience, centered around the work of Steven Covey. In addition to 35 high-quality breakout sessions of importance to rural education, we also hosted two featured speakers: Adrienne Bulinski and Michelle Oberg. Also in attendance was Dr. Melissa Sadorf, Executive Director of the National Rural Education Association. And, of course, everyone was well fed!

We continue to celebrate our 2026 NRCSA Award winners! They are:



*ALLIE SCHLIEFER,  
FORT CALHOUN*



*DAWN METSCHKE,  
JOHNSON-BROCK*



*DR. JEAN ANDERSON,  
ESU 10*



*JIM CRILLY,  
MADISON*



*KATHY HOUSER,  
MERIDIAN*



*KRISTI HILES-SMITH,  
KIMBALL*



*RUSTY RHYNALDS,  
MINDEN*



*JANE DAVIS,  
HERSHEY*

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**Partnerships to Build Readiness for Implementing Trauma-Informed Programs and Practices for Schools (TIPPS).** We seek school partners for a two-phase initiative that includes measurement development and in-person or online personalized training and professional development.

In **PHASE 1**, we will partner with selected rural schools in Michigan and Nebraska to develop and test a readiness assessment that will determine a school's preparedness to implement the 10 core pillars of the Trauma-Informed Programs and Practices for Schools (TIPPS) framework. TIPPS helps schools create safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments by building relationships, increasing trauma awareness, and shifting from punitive to restorative discipline. To develop and test the readiness assessment, we will use a structured interview protocol that solicits input on identified priorities and existing strategies within each school that align with TIPPS objectives; determining professionals' knowledge of trauma and trauma supports; and exploring each school's capacity to onboard new trauma-informed strategies relevant to each core pillar.

In **PHASE 2** of the project, we will provide a 4-part professional training series tailored to the learning needs of each school, drawing on materials from our TIPPS toolkit, which includes a comprehensive assessment tool, program guide, implementation guide, and supplementary case materials designed to deepen understanding of trauma-informed principles and strategies. Content experts from the TIPPS team will provide ongoing consultation and coaching to each school at no cost. Pre-post assessments of the training series will document progress toward established learning goals, as well as school professionals' knowledge and confidence in implementing TIPPS strategies.

Program Information: <https://tipps.ssw.umich.edu/>

Project Period/Milestones: 2026-2027 Academic Year

Spring 2026 – Develop school partnerships

Summer 2026 – Prepare for project launch

Fall 2026 – Phase I

Spring 2027 – Phase II

Contact Information:

Alex Mason

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

[amason19@unl.edu](mailto:amason19@unl.edu)

Todd Herrenkohl

University of Michigan

[tih@umich.edu](mailto:tih@umich.edu)



**The Nebraska Unicameral ended its session on Friday, April 17.** On the final day, Senators needed to vote on overriding the Governor's vetoes of a few bills. On the whole, education came out fairly well in this year's session (in my opinion). There were a few bills passed that were not what NRCSA may have supported, but for the most part the Education community was effective in helping to kill or soften bills that were opposed.

A list of the bills that affect education that were passed this session can be accessed here:

**[NRCSA Bill Summaries 2026](#)**

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**Ideas on how to deal with cancellations for NRCSA events were shared with the Executive Committee several months ago.** After receiving input from the Committee members, a policy was presented at the November meeting of the Executive Committee and adopted. Following is the policy that will be followed moving forward:

#### **POLICY ON CANCELLATIONS FOR NRCSA EVENTS**

When planning for a large event (i.e. NRCSA Spring Conference or NRCSA Legislative Forum), NRCSA must make financial commitments such as facility rental and costs of meals. Weather sometimes causes a decision to be made by NRCSA in the form of a cancellation or postponement of the event, or for registrants to decide whether or not they can attend the event. Sometimes registrants need to make a decision not to attend due to other reasons. NRCSA has weighed the issues of its financial commitments versus registrants not being able to attend for various reasons. Thus, the following policy has been adopted:

#### **WEATHER CANCELLATION DECISION MADE BY NRCSA:**

All registrants, including vendors, will be offered a full refund or to have the registration fee carried forward to the next year's event.

#### **WEATHER POSTPONEMENT DECISION MADE BY NRCSA:**

All registrants, including vendors, will be offered a full refund or to have the registration fee carried forward to the re-scheduled event.

DECISION BY A REGISTRANT, INCLUDING VENDORS, TO NOT ATTEND THE EVENT AND COMMUNICATED TO NRCSA AT LEAST A WEEK PRIOR TO THE EVENT:

Two options will be provided to the registrant, including vendors: A full refund OR carry the registrant amount forward to the following year.

DECISION BY A REGISTRANT, INCLUDING VENDORS, TO NOT ATTEND THE EVENT AND COMMUNICATED TO NRCSA WITHIN A WEEK PRIOR TO THE EVENT:

For members, an option will be provided to have the registration fee carried forward to the next year's event OR a refund minus the costs to NRCSA for meal(s). (NOTE: In 2026, for the Spring Conference this would be \$105, for the Legislative Forum the cost is \$45.)

For vendors, the option to carry the registration amount to the following year will be provided.

DECISION BY A REGISTRANT TO NOT ATTEND THE EVENT, BUT FAILS TO COMMUNICATE WITH NRCSA PRIOR TO THE EVENT:

No refund will be provided.

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**The NRCSA Executive Committee has made a positive move to assist non-traditional educators move toward full teaching certification.**

As a result of this move, new scholarship opportunities were created for paras who are in a "para to teacher program" and for transitional educators. NRCSA will provide three \$1,000 scholarships for the fall semester and three \$1,000 scholarships for the spring semester each school year. Applicants for the scholarships must be current employees of a NRCSA-member district or ESU. Applicants must be enrolled for that semester in one of two types of programs: (1) in a recognized "para to teacher" program such as is offered by the three State Colleges (Chadron State, Peru State, or Wayne State), or (2) a transition to teaching program in which a person with a minimum of a bachelor's degree who is employed to teach in a member school while working through a transitional program, such as offered by the University of Nebraska-Kearney. The applicant could currently be teaching under a transitional certificate. Applications for the Spring, 2027 Semester will be forwarded to Superintendents later in the fall.

Applications for the Summer/Fall semester were received and the three recipients were selected. They were:

- Jemma DeNaeyer, Thedford
- Veronica Schiffbauer, HTRS
- Chelsey Georges, District OR-1, Palmyra-Bennet



*Thedford Principal Adam Kuntz, Brooklyn Denaeyer, Jemma Denaeyer, Kloeey Denaeyer, Jack Moles*



*Director of Student Programs Linde Walter, Dylaney Georges, Justin Georges, Brea Georges, Chelsey Georges, Jack Moles, Logan Georges, Supt. Michael Hart, Elementary Principal Jared Haag*



*Jack Moles, Veronica Schiffbauer, HTRS Supt. George Griffith*

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## **SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH & PLANNING**

**As Boards of Education and Superintendents start to plan for the future, there may be a change in Superintendent approaching your district.** We would like to remind you that NRCSA has an outstanding Superintendent Search Service and I would encourage your Board of Education to closely consider these services if you are in need of a Superintendent.

NRCSA has already helped the Axtell, Bancroft-Rosalie, Hampton, Hayes Center, Newman Grove, Potter-Dix, Sandy Creek and Superior Boards of Education identify their next Superintendent. We also assisted Red Cloud and Blue Hill in searches for Interim Superintendents.

One of the more outstanding features of the NRCSA Superintendent Search Service is that the consultants who assist Boards of Education with their searches are all retired rural school Superintendents who experienced great success in their careers. They know what it takes to be successful in a rural school district and community, and how to work closely with a rural school Board of Education. Our consultants for the coming year will include: Dan Bird, Fred Helmink, Caroline Winchester, Curtis Cogswell, Mo Hanks, Jay Bellar, Holly Herzberg, Jon Cerny, and Jack Moles.

If your district finds a need to locate your next school leader, please be sure to keep the NRCSA Superintendent Search Service in mind. For more information you can contact Executive Director Jack Moles at [jmoles@nrdsa.net](mailto:jmoles@nrdsa.net) or by phone at 402-335-7732 or Executive Director Elect Paul Sheffield at [psheffield@nrdsa.net](mailto:psheffield@nrdsa.net) or by phone at 402-759-1609.

Another service that is offered is a planning service. It is a common practice for Boards of Education and the Superintendent to develop short and long-term plans. We are currently assisting Anselmo-Merna in their planning process. NRCSA does provide a quality service using experienced consultants. If you are interested in more information, please contact Executive Director Jack Moles or Executive Director Elect Paul Sheffield.

### [NRCSA Search Service Brochure](#)

### [NRCSA Planning Support Brochure](#)

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**Board of Education meeting visits.** Beginning in December, 2019, I started attending Board of Education meetings in member school districts/ESUs. Since then, I have attended 148 such meetings. I most recently attended the Board meeting at Wallace on Monday, April 13. I would really like to get to at least 150 meetings before my time in NRCSA's Executive Director role ends at the end of August.

I am not currently scheduled to attend any Board of Education meeting in the near future, but could work some in if the dates were available to me.

I have really enjoyed this venture and am willing to attend Board meetings when I can. I take a few minutes to cover NRCSA news and offerings, as well as a legislative update. When I am going to be in a specific area on Board meeting days I may send out a notice to near-by Superintendents to make an offer to visit. I'd like to be able to schedule two or three in the same evening if I can.

If you would be interested in me attending a future Board meeting, please contact me to start the arrangements. I would also be willing to "attend" your Board meetings via Zoom if you preferred. I would still only do one at a time but would be able to do several in the same evening. Let me know and we will try to make the connection.



WALLACE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND ADMINISTRATION

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**NRCSA was well-represented at the National Rural Education Association's Federal Advocacy Conference in Washington DC.** The Conference was held on March 23-25. Representing NRCSA were Executive Director Jack Moles, Legislative Co-Chair Bryce Jorgenson, and Executive Director-Elect Paul Sheffield.



NREA created documents that outlined our Federal legislative agenda. Those documents may be accessed here:

[Download NREA Policy Agenda](#)

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**The Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS)** has released a new research brief examining chronic absenteeism in Nebraska's K–12 schools and its effect on student outcomes, including assessment scores, graduation rates, and college enrollment.

The analysis highlights that chronic absenteeism—defined as missing 10 percent or more of the school year for any reason—has risen sharply in Nebraska since the COVID-19 pandemic and remains persistently high. Rates jumped from 10 percent in 2019–2020 to nearly 24 percent the following school year and have since remained above 20 percent statewide.

Key Findings from the NSWERS brief:

- Nebraska's chronic absenteeism rate has stabilized but remains elevated at more than one in five students.
- Disparities exist across student race/ethnicity, with Indigenous/Native American and Black students showing the highest rates of chronic absenteeism.
- Chronically-absent students consistently score lower on statewide assessments (NSCAS and ACT) compared to their peers.
- Chronic absenteeism greatly reduces the likelihood of graduating on time; students with regular attendance are nearly six times more likely to graduate high school than their chronically-absent peers.

- College-going rates show a significant divide: nearly 71 percent of non-chronically absent graduates enroll in postsecondary education compared to just 49 percent of chronic absentees.

*“These findings underscore the lasting impact of chronic absenteeism on students’ academic progress and future opportunities,” said Dr. Jay Jeffries, author of the brief. “Addressing absenteeism requires not only monitoring the type of absence but also understanding the characteristics of students who are chronically absent.”*

The full report, NSWERS Brief on the Impact of Chronic Absenteeism on Academic Outcomes in Nebraska, is available at:

<https://insights.nswers.org/briefs/2025-chronic-absenteeism>

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**A year ago, NRCSA introduced a new initiative to assist rural schools in educating their communities about digital citizenship.** Our partnership with A.Plum Creative will provide members with ready-to-use, research-based resources designed to help districts promote responsible technology use among students and families.

The program has its origins out of a goal by the Hershey Board of Education and Superintendent Jane Davis to work on digital citizenship in their district. The district worked with A.Plum Creative on the initiative, then shared information on the program with the NRCSA Executive Committee.

This research based, legally vetted campaign includes monthly social media graphics and captions that focus on key topics like online safety, respectful communication, digital wellness and appropriate tech use. All content is designed to engage school communities and support districts in meeting digital citizenship education goals.

We offer a set of tiered service options for NRCSA Member Districts:

- Tier 1 – NRCSA Branded Content (\$2,500/school year): Monthly graphics and captions with NRCSA branding, aligned to seasonal themes and events.
- Tier 2 – District-Branded Content (\$5,000/school year): Customized graphics and captions tailored to your district’s brand and messaging.
- Tier 3 – Custom Content + Consultation (\$7,500/school year): District-branded content plus three planning calls per year with A.Plum Creative.
- Tier 4 – Full Social Media Management (\$10,000/school year): District-branded content, full posting and scheduling, community engagement and monthly performance reports.

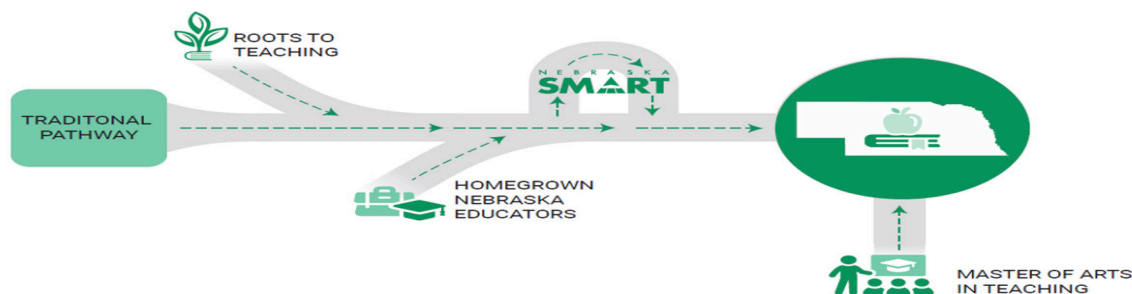
A few more NRCSA-member districts have since started working with A-Plum Creative. This campaign is available exclusively to NRCSA member districts. To learn more or reserve your spot, contact Anna Weber at [anna@a-plum.com](mailto:anna@a-plum.com) or visit [www.a-plum.com](http://www.a-plum.com).

**Good Life EDU Podcast Featuring Anna Weber & Jane Davis**

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## Expanding the Educator Pipeline through Innovative Nebraska State College Initiatives.

### Educator Preparation Pathways



The Nebraska State Colleges (Chadron, Peru, and Wayne) are proactively addressing the growing teacher shortage across the state, particularly in rural communities. With their evolution beginning as Normal Schools to present, and approximately 28% of undergraduate students majoring in teacher education (the largest comprehensive major system-wide), the Colleges have long played a central role in preparing future educators.

However, as Nebraska faces increasingly urgent staffing shortages in K–12 classrooms, especially in high-need areas such as special education, early childhood, and STEM, the State Colleges continue to evolve to meet this challenge through four strategic initiatives.

**Nebraska Roots to Teaching (NRT)**, seeks to offer a high school-to-career educator pathway modeled after Washington State’s successful Recruiting Washington Teachers (RWT) program. Anchored in Wayne State College’s STEP (Students to Teachers through Educator Pathways) program, NRT is expanding dual credit options in education across the three colleges. High school students (especially first-generation and underrepresented learners) will be able to complete introductory education courses for dual credit, participate in campus-based experiences, and receive mentorship from teacher-mentors and college “navigators” throughout their transition into college and early teaching careers. Flexible modalities, financial incentives, and future paraeducator credentialing further broaden access for rural students.

The **Homegrown Nebraska Educators Apprenticeship Program** seeks to leverage new flexibility under Nebraska Department of Education Rules 20 and 21 to provide an alternative pathway to certification for paraprofessionals and place-bound adults. Building on Chadron State College’s pilot model, this initiative allows candidates to remain employed in their local districts while completing a bachelor’s degree and teacher certification. Courses are fully online and asynchronous, ensuring flexibility for working adults. The program emphasizes district-identified endorsement areas, such as special education and elementary education, and uses a competency-based credit model to reward relevant experience.

The **Nebraska SMART (Success Made Accessible through Rural Tutoring)** initiative connects teacher education candidates from the three State Colleges with K–12 students in their home districts through virtual tutoring. Focused on supporting rural schools, SMART offers academic help during afternoons and evenings while providing early, meaningful field experience for teacher candidates. By allowing candidates to serve students in their own communities, the program strengthens local ties and broadens access to educational support. SMART not only improves outcomes for K–12 learners but also enhances the preparation of future educators committed to serving Nebraska’s rural schools and communities.

Lastly, the **Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT)** is a distinct, graduate-level program designed for individuals who hold a bachelor’s degree in a core content area and seek teacher certification in Nebraska. Delivered fully online, the 18-credit core of the program ensures that individuals fully meet certification requirements and provides a flexible path to licensure, while the additional 18 credits of the graduate program provide options to complete the required content courses to qualify for teaching dual credit courses or work toward specific endorsement requirements. Individuals can choose to complete the core course which lead to certification without committing to the MAT; however, the completion of the MAT graduate program assists individuals in

completing elective coursework that moves them toward their career goals. Unlike the Homegrown Nebraska Educators apprenticeship model, which supports paraprofessionals pursuing a bachelor's degree, the MAT serves adult career changers and professionals seeking a direct, advanced entry into the teaching profession. Together, these initiatives form a comprehensive ecosystem of entry points into the teaching profession. From high school dual credit options and rural tutoring roles to full apprenticeship models and flexible graduate pathways, the Nebraska State Colleges are creating scalable solutions to address Nebraska's critical teacher shortage, ensuring every community has access to well-prepared, locally rooted educators for years to come.

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**Chris Prososki, formerly the Superintendent at Southern and Hastings, shared a sample Superintendent Checklist that he has used.** The checklist has not been updated, but still could be of great help to Superintendents. I thought this was a great instrument, one that I wished I had available to me when I was in the Superintendency. It can be especially helpful as you head into the new school year! Thanks to Chris for sharing this! You can access the updated checklist here:

### **[Superintendent Check List](#)**

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**NRCSA has had the great privilege to work closely with Open Sky Policy Institute over the years.** They provide great information on the fiscal impact of legislation that is very helpful to me in my work as NRCSA's chief lobbyist. I would encourage Superintendents and Board of Education members to sign up to receive Open Sky's email updates.

Open Sky has developed some awesome **Nebraska Public School District Profiles** instruments. The instruments provide much information that can be used to tell the story of your district in comparison to other districts when discussing school finance. The instruments can be accessed at:

**<https://www.openskypolicy.org/school-district-profile/>**

The mission of OpenSky Policy Institute is to provide impartial and precise research, analysis, education and leadership on fiscal policy-improving opportunities for all Nebraskans. Subscribe to their email updates at **<https://bit.ly/OpenSkyUpdates>** or contact Todd Henrichs at **[thenrichs@openskypolicy.org](mailto:thenrichs@openskypolicy.org)**.

As we head into the new legislative session, Open Sky has shared a few more tools that can be especially helpful. A message from Rebecca Firestone, Executive Director for Open Sky shares:

### **[Open Sky TEEOSA Guide](#)** **[Open Sky Budget Process Guide](#)**

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**NRCSA is pleased to be in a partnership with New Leaf Teletherapy.** New Leaf provides mental health teletherapy services for both staff and students. I became very interested in this possibility especially in terms of staff services. I know our members are working hard to provide services for their students, but there does not appear to be that same capability when looking at staff services.

I look at this service as helping to bolster what your district is already doing, not to take the place of those efforts. I believe this can be a cost effective means of furthering your efforts.

NRCSA hosted three introductory Zoom meetings with Mark Goldman and Deb Romano of New Leaf to have them explain what the program would look like. Below you can access the slide show from those meetings, as well as a recording of one of the meetings.

[New Leaf PowerPoint Presentation](#)

[New Leaf Zoom Meeting \(recording\)](#)



[New Leaf Flyer](#)

If you would like to be in contact with Mark Goldman or Deb Romano, please feel free to call or email me and I can help make that happen.

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**NRCSA has developed a “resource” document to assist members when they want insight on a particular topic.** Often we are contacted and asked if we know of a school that has experience in a topic of interest. Many times we can point them in the right direction, but often we need to put out a request for information to the members. We have developed a list to begin from and already have some contact information on some of the topics. The plan is to feature this list in each of our monthly updates. Below is a link to a copy of the list. If you would be willing to be listed as a resource or if you would like to suggest other topics for inclusion, please contact Jack Moles.

[NRCSA School Programs](#)

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**NRCSA wishes to share in the celebration of the special accomplishments and recognitions going on in our member schools and ESUs.**

**July 2026:**

**\* Hadassah Rankin of Central City was elected Governor at Cornhusker Girls State.**



**\* The Omaha World-Herald (OWH) and Lincoln Journal-Star (LJS) recently announced their All State Baseball teams. Athletes from NRCSA-member districts who were named First Team All-State include:**

**CLASS B:**

Carson Hollst, Platte Valley (OWH, LJS)

**CLASS C:**

Conner Erickson, Central City/Centura (OWH, LJS), Jaxson Kneifl, Wayne (OWH, LJS), Alex Meinecke, St. Paul/Palmer (OWH, LJS), Jackson Warner, Auburn (OWH, LJS), Nolan Duzik, Malcolm (OWH), Nick Mousel, Adams Central (OWH, LJS), Colbyn Peters, Central City/Centura (OWH, LJS), Kowen Rader, Adams Central (LJS), Dom Joe, Fairbury (LJS), Brixen Meyer, Malcolm (LJS), Wyatt Jelinek, Raymond Central (LJS), Chase Smith, Malcolm (LJS)

**\* Canon Allen of Aurora was named the Offensive MVP in the Nebraska Shrine Bowl Game. Rhodee Hill of Hershey was honored as the Defensive MVP.**

**\* Several players and coaches were recently selected to the Nebraska Eight Man Football Hall of Fame. Players from NRCSA-member districts (or former districts that are now part of merged districts that belong to NRCSA) include:**

Adam Broders (Bloomfield), Ben Ideus (Lewiston), Brett Kaczor (Ewing), Clint Belina (Howells), Justin Swedburg (Axtell), Kole Ficken (Bruning-Davenport), Lance Thorell (Loomis), Mark Olsen (Hampton), Nate Most (Giltner), Shannon Messersmith (Hayes Center), Taylor Dixon (Wauneta-Paalisade), Jerry Mlinar (Greeley) and Rich Mlinar (Greeley)

**\* The Nebraska Department of Education recently recognized students who had achieved perfect scores of 36 on the ACT. Students from NRCSA-member schools who were thus recognized include:**

Carter Buell (Rock County), Isaac Hamilton (Southern Valley), Jack Hayes (Auburn), Stewart Umberger (Randolph), and Grace Zhang (Auburn)

**\* Grace Ellis, of Meridian, received the Nebraska Writing Project's Outstanding Early Career Teacher Award.**



**\* Jordan Larson, a graduate of Logan View, was recently inducted into the National High School Hall of Fame**



**\* Jim Weeks, Boys Basketball Coach at Auburn, was named the National High School Athletic Coaches Association (NHSACA) Coach of the Year.**



**\* Shayla Rautenberg, of Milford, was honored as the Girls Athlete of the Year by both the Lincoln Journal-Star and the Omaha World-Herald.**



**\* The NSAA and the Nebraska Department of Transportation have partnered in sponsoring the “Buckle Up, Phone Down Cup” for high schools. This year’s cup winners include:**

CLASS C: Yutan was the All-School Division and Girls Division cup winners.

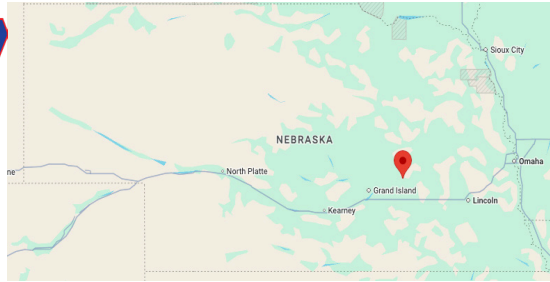
CLASS D: McCool Junction swept the All-School Division, Girls Division and Boys Division cup championships.

**\* Southwest’s Houston Billeter was instrumental in Team USA defeating Team Canada in the annual USA vs Canada Six-Man All Star Game. Houston threw for two touchdown passes and caught a touchdown pass.**

**\* Syracuse Superintendent David Kraus and Syracuse Student Senators Landry Kraus and Jackson Miller will represent a new 2026 Leadership and [Innovation Fellowship at America’s Youth AI Festival](#) in Boston and Cambridge University.**

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## *High Plains Community Schools*



**Mascot:** Storm

**Enrollment:** 184 students

**Location(s):** Clarks, Hordville, & Polk, NE

**Interesting Fact:** High Plains is made up of three communities. Before the school district was High Plains 25 years ago. Polk-Hordville was a school and they were the “Cubs”. Clarks had their own school and they were the “Clarks Bombers”. Each community had strong traditions and took great pride in their schools. That has carried over to High Plains and the Storm. We are grateful for our past, the communities, the schools, and all the alumni that made up our districts.

**Superintendent: Jason Brown**

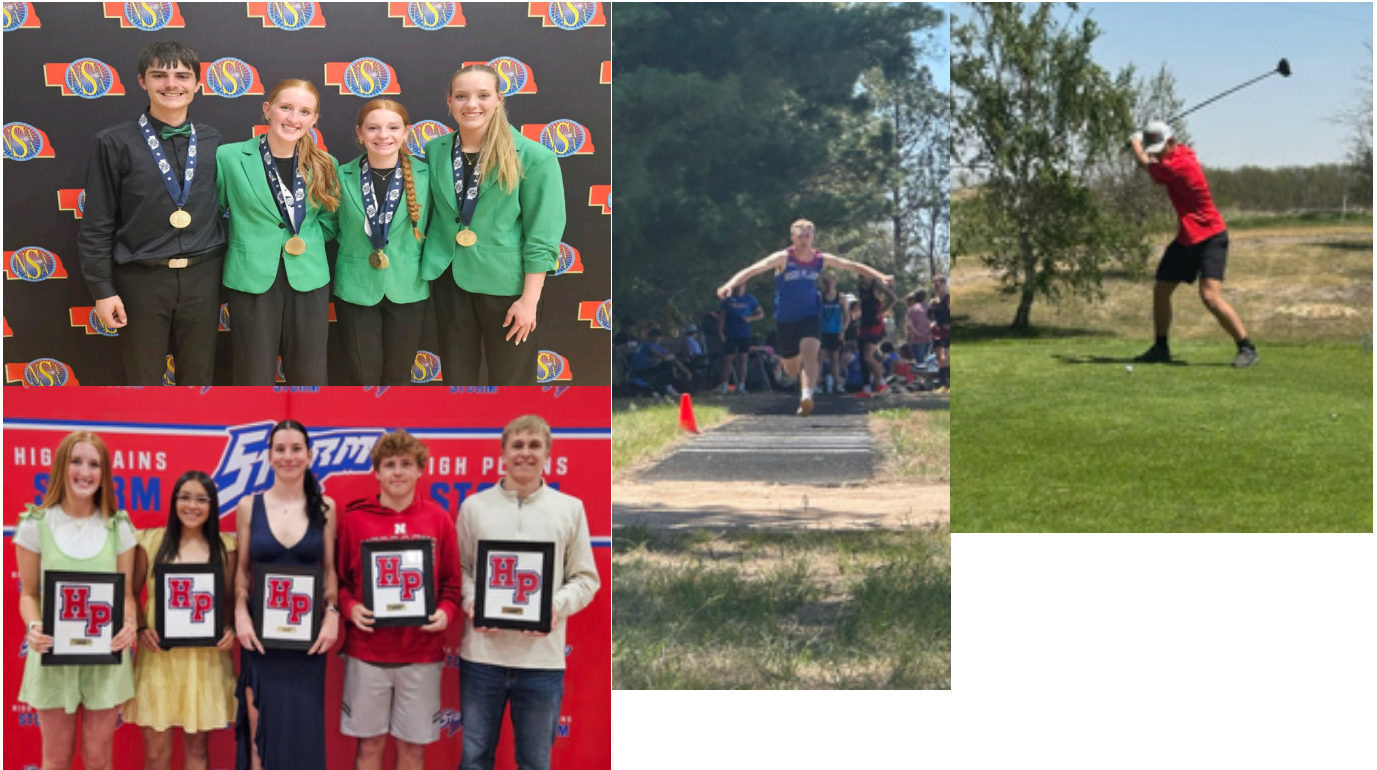
**Principal(s): Breanne Helgoth-(Pk-6),  
Sierra Eastman-(7-12)**

**Board of Education: Shane Van Pelt, Nate Spurling, Megan Pike, Dorinda Brown, Isaac Samuelson, & Chad Hoffman**

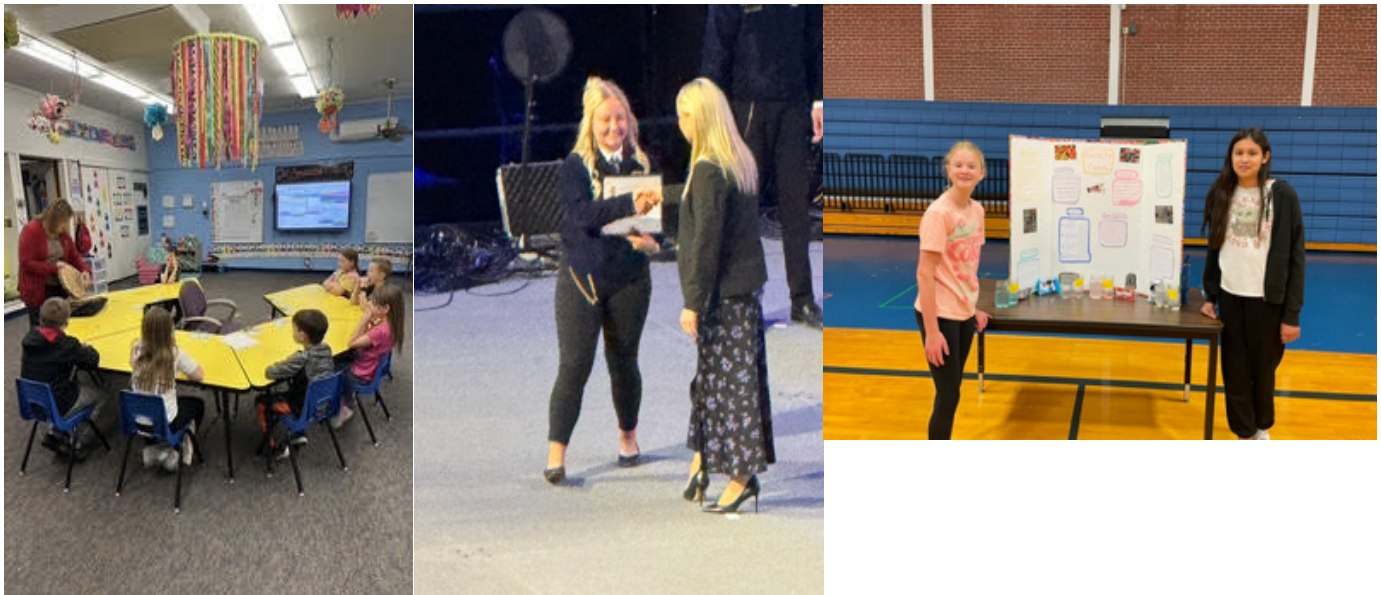


## Programs:

Our athletic and activities programs have done some notable achievements over the past couple of years at the local, conference, and state competitions. They have brought home many awards, medals, and state champions in track and speech. One speech participant has earned seven state medals, one being a state championship. One state track athlete has earned eight state track medals, and on is a state champion. We are proud of all our student-athletes and coaches for their accomplishments and work they have put in to be successful.

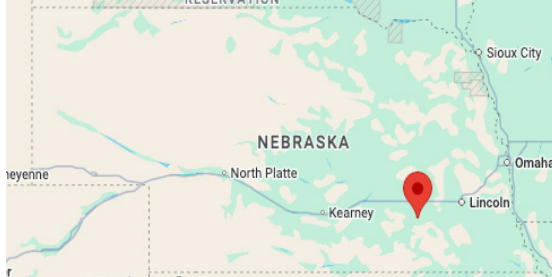


Our students and staff have worked hard to raise the academics at HPC. There has been a focus to improve AQuESTT ratings in our district. Through the CIP process and examining every day teaching styles. The district has been able to raise our AQuESTT scores over the last two year and score several “Excellents” in the elementary and high school and a Great in the middle school. Our goal is to continue to grow and improve the education for the students each year.



# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## *Exeter-Milligan-Friend Public Schools*



**Mascot:** Bobcats

**Enrollment:** 350 students

**Location(s):** Friend & Exeter, NE

**Interesting Fact:** 2025-26 was the inaugural school year as EMF.

**Superintendent:** Derek Anderson

**Principal(s):** PK-5 – Laura Kroll; 6-12 – Liz Stutzman



**Board of Education:** Adam Erdkamp; Jamie Tuttle; Eric Milton; Tyler Bartels; Tiffany Shoner; Kendra Jansky

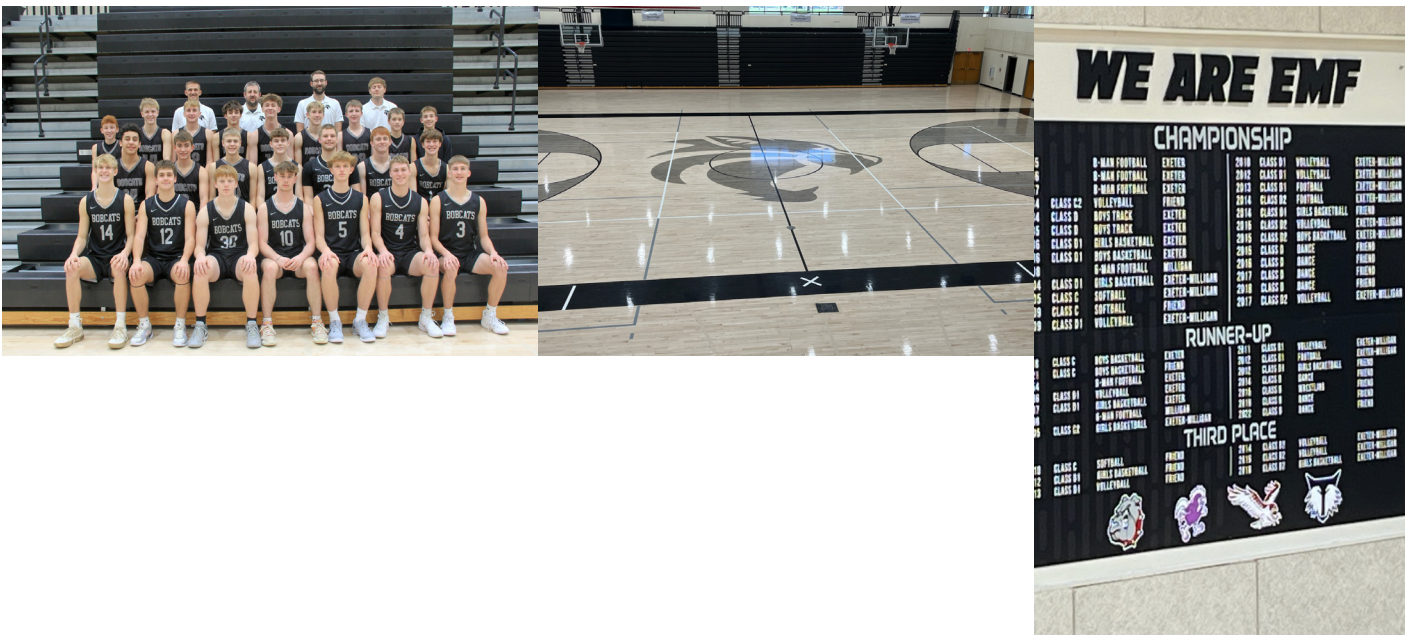


## Programs:

**FFA** - The EMF FFA Chapter, which includes 85 members in 7th-12th grade, is focused on connecting students with agricultural industry knowledge and skills for their future. Highlights from the 25-26 school year include multiple state finalists in Leadership and Career Development events, delivering harvest meals, organizing a gift card drive for UNMC organ transplant patients, conducting greenhouse plant sales, managing a corn seed test plot, and trial testing a monthly floral subscription program.



**Boys Basketball** - Over the past two years, the Exeter-Milligan-Friend boys basketball program has worked really hard to create a culture of competitiveness while instilling responsibility and accountability. Student-athletes have dedicated time and effort that have created lots of success for this program, including two district titles with state appearances. Back-to-back conference runners-up, a MUDECAUS 3rd place finish, and multiple individual awards. The student-athletes have poured into the youth, helping with the youth camp held every summer, and all of them have participated in a youth program that helps provide skills to prepare them for their high school career. This program has built a great culture that takes pride in its community, and is something that the community can be proud of. With the foundation of this culture, the future of Exeter-Milligan-Friend basketball looks promising for years to come.



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## **Updates from Members & Other Entities**

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**As we hear concern from rural districts concerning moves in the national front regarding the Department of Education, the National Rural Education Association (NREA) and the National Education Association (NEA) have combined to share a website outlining the amount of federal funding that goes to public schools.** The website can be accessed here:

### **[How Much Funding Does My Public School Get from the Federal Government](#)**

Dr. Steven Johnson, a member of the NREA Executive Committee, provided a document entitled, “Strengthening Rural Communities Through Public Education”. Many of you had an opportunity to meet Steve at the NRCSA Spring Conference. His article may be accessed here:

### **[Strengthening Rural Communities Through Public Education](#)**

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, along with the Food Research and Action Center, has drawn attention to the possibility that the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) might be substantially altered. This change could have a negative impact on several school districts in Nebraska. The following website provides a great overview of the concern and allows the viewer to go specifically to Nebraska to see how the change could affect districts.

### **[State by State Fact Sheet](#)**

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**The ESUCC and ESU 3 have shared a document which outlines all of the trainings and mandates that are required of districts.** The document, “School District Plans, Policies, and Annual Trainings Requirements”, is a handy reminder for districts. Thanks to ESUCC Executive Director Kraig Lofquist and ESU 3 Administrator Dan Schnoes for developing and distributing this handy tool. The document may be accessed here:

### **[School District Plans, Policies, & Annual Trainings](#)**

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**Jeremy Braden, Superintendent at Doniphan-Trumbull, has developed a useful agenda for onboarding new Board of Education members.** Many of our districts will bring on new Board members in January. Jeremy’s instrument could be a nice template for Superintendents and Board Presidents to use in working with new Board members. It may be accessed here:

### **[Board Member Onboarding](#)**

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### **[From Jay Martin, NDE Director of School Safety & Security](#)**

Hello All,

Time for the home stretch to the end of another school year! I hope it all goes well with all the events planned this spring.

Below you will find the School Safety Newsletter and information. The main question to look for is a Threat Assessment Survey. We are gaging schools’ interest in future Threat Assessment trainings. The last page has a breakdown of the three Threat Assessment trainings offered by UNLPPC. Please take a moment to complete this survey by April 15, 2025.

Remember to apply for your Diamond status Safety Badge to display at your school letting your school community know you “Place School Safety First!”

Thanks for all you do in school safety.

### [School Safety Newsletter Spring 2025](#)

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#### **UNL Extension Center: Embracing Innovation: Exploring the Dynamics of New Partnerships**

Developing business & Industry, organizational, and postsecondary partnerships with school districts can play a pivotal role in enriching the educational experience, supporting student achievement, and strengthening connections between schools and their communities. By leveraging external resources, expertise, and support, schools can create a more inclusive, engaging, and supportive learning environment for all students. While partnerships within school districts can bring numerous benefits, there are also challenges that may be encountered. These can be overcome by fostering a culture of collaboration, prioritizing communication and relationship-building, seeking creative funding solutions, and promoting equity and inclusivity in partnership efforts. Additionally, leveraging support from district leadership, community stakeholders, and external resources can help schools overcome obstacles and maximize the benefits of collaborative partnerships.

We in the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR), specifically the College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources (CASNR) and Nebraska Extension 4-H, believe this strategy for K-12 partnerships will result in a strong learning innovation network of support for every learner and every educator in the state of Nebraska. The world of higher education is evolving, driven by changes in technology, demographics, workforce demands, and societal expectations. To meet the needs of today’s learners in the 21st century and prepare them for the challenges of tomorrow, we are embracing innovation, collaboration, and a student-centered approach.

In recent years, CASNR has created two new positions to help in this work. Dr. Tammy Mittelstet ([tmittelstet@unl.edu](mailto:tmittelstet@unl.edu)) is serving as the CASNR Statewide Education and Career Pathways Coordinator and Bailey Feit ([bailey.feit@unl.edu](mailto:bailey.feit@unl.edu)) serves as the LPS/CASNR Early College and Career Pathways Coordinator. They engage in co-creating education and career pathways for students and supporting teachers by:

- creating opportunities and minimizing barriers for all learners in the exploration of education and career pathways,
- investing in and supporting teachers to innovate and integrate cross-curricular concepts of Food, Energy, Water, and Societal Systems (FEWSS) throughout K-12 education,
- encouraging our higher education institutions to share content expertise to build curriculum that will inform best practices in the areas of FEWSS and mentor future systems thinkers for the continuum of learners through our higher education institutions,
- connecting and developing a team of community leaders to build partnerships that combine resources to support student and teacher innovation, and
- building a workforce of tomorrow with the support of the industry of today by developing work-based learning opportunities.

If you would like to get monthly updates, consider signing up for the L.I.N.K.S. newsletter at <https://casnr.unl.edu/k-12-partners>.

Nebraska Extension brings University of Nebraska expertise and research in 8 key areas of impact directly to Nebraskans from all walks of life in each of the state’s 93 counties. Nebraskans turn to Nebraska Extension to strengthen their families, inspire their communities, empower young people, conserve and protect natural resources and advance their farms, ranches and businesses. Nebraska 4-H represents one of the eight key areas, and has been a leader in the career and college readiness field by being one of the first in the country to support a statewide educator position and team to provide leadership in program development and delivery.

**The National Rural Education Association (NREA) is proud to release Why Rural Matters 2025—the 11th edition in a long-standing series of reports that examine the contexts and conditions of rural education across all 50 states.** This report continues the critical mission of drawing attention to the urgent need for policymakers, educators, and communities to address rural education challenges and opportunities within their own states.

Since its inception, the Why Rural Matters series has sought to make publicly available data more accessible and actionable. The overarching goal remains clear: to promote informed, civil dialogue about our shared civic responsibility to ensure that every student—rural or urban—has access to high-quality educational opportunities.

New in this year’s edition is the inclusion of Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools. In his topical essay, Alex Red Corn provides critical insights into the significance of BIE schools, which educate students from multiple tribes and nations with unique histories and cultures. The report carefully distinguishes between “states” proper and BIE schools while underscoring their shared place in the broader rural education landscape. The analyses and data presented in Why Rural Matters 2025 are intended to inform policy discussions, guide decision-making, and inspire action. The report highlights states that have demonstrated measurable progress over time, highlighting examples where thoughtful policy interventions have led to improved outcomes for rural students. These stories of progress offer valuable lessons and serve as evidence that strategic, context-sensitive policies can make a tangible difference in the lives of rural learners.

Data used in Why Rural Matters 2025 come from public sources: the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the United States Department of Education, the U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration, and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The National Rural Education Association is proud to launch the 2025 Why Rural Matters report, a project with a more than 20-year history of shaping the conversation about rural education. First conceptualized by the Rural Schools and Community Trust, the report has evolved into a vital resource for policymakers, educators, and communities. Today, NREA carries this important work forward, ensuring that the voices, needs, and strengths of rural schools and students remain at the forefront of education policy and practice nationwide. We are also grateful to the Rural Schools Collaborative, whose continued support strengthens NREA’s work on behalf of rural schools, educators, and students across the country.

I would encourage you to take a look at WHY RURAL MATTERS, which can be accessed here:

### **[Why Rural Matters 2025](#)**

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**The National Rural Education Association (NREA) partnered with AASA in producing a report on REAP.** REAP is a program that benefits many of our smaller districts. The report can be accessed here:

**<https://www.aasa.org/docs/default-source/resources/reports/rural-education-achievement-program-survey-report.pdf>**

### **[Understanding REAP](#)**

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**PROACTIVE**  
**COACHING**

*The NCA & Proactive Coaching partner to bring Coach Bruce Brown's legendary insights about the parent's role in education-based athletics to your school & community.*

Book your School's  
Presentation

Parent Meetings  
or Special Events

## **THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN EDUCATION-BASED ATHLETICS**

**PRESENTED BY DARIN BOYSEN, NCA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

*"Outstanding information, well delivered. There were times I thought he was talking directly to me, which is a sign of a great communicator. I personally feel I'm better today than yesterday as a sports parent because I was able to listen to this message." – Parent & School Board Member*



### **Before the Season**

What do Athletes/Kids Really Want?

Releasing Your Son/Daughter to the Experience

Parental Red Flags

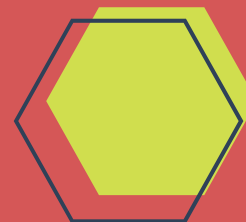


### **During the Game/Event**

Modeling Appropriate Behavior

Big Picture

One Instructional Voice



### **After the Game/Event**

Time & Space

Confidence Building

Relationship Building

Six Powerful Words

#### **NEBRASKA COACHES ASSOCIATION**

500 Charleston St, Ste 2, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

402-310-5472 | [darin@ncacoach.org](mailto:darin@ncacoach.org)

**Official Association Endorsements as of September 1**





**Nebraska School Administrators & School Board Members,**

The Nebraska Coaches Association (NCA) is excited to announce a partnership with Proactive Coaching to bring Coach Bruce Brown's legendary insights about **"The Role of Parents in Education-Based Athletics"** to your school and community. Please see the attached flyer for highlights/focus of the in-person presentation.

NCA Executive Director, Darin Boysen, will begin travel across Nebraska multiple times throughout the 2024-2025 school year to deliver this powerful and passionate message. The NCA, Proactive Coaching and Darin are partnering to bring this message to your school at a **50% discounted rate from the standard Proactive Coaching in-person booking fee.**

**Presentation Details:**

45-Minute Parent Presentation with One School or Combined Schools

- Single school presentations are recommended but not required
- One presentation = one fee (no additional fee for schools merging)

Audio/Visual Requirements from the Host School:

- Overhead Projector with HDMI Connection
- Screen or Scoreboard Display
- Microphone

**Cost – Payable the Day of Presentation:**

- Within 75 miles of Lincoln/150 miles Round Trip
  - \$750 flat rate
- Beyond 75 miles of Lincoln/150 miles Round Trip
  - \$750 flat rate
  - 50 Cents per mile Round-Trip -OR- Cost of a Rental Vehicle/Gas
  - In some cases, a rental car may be cheaper for longer distances
  - Hotel Expense – if needed
- ***Please Note:*** Working together with other area schools to book separately on consecutive days of the week can greatly save travel and lodging expenses

**The following booklets authored by Bruce Brown will be available for purchase for \$5 each (15% discount) after the presentation or ordered by the school in advance:**

- *The Role of Parents in Athletics*
- *Playing with Confidence*
- *Life Lessons for Athletes*

Please let us know if you have any questions regarding the presentation or booking a date.  
All the best,

*Darin Boysen*

Darin Boysen  
Nebraska Coaches Association

**Official Association Endorsements – as of September 1**



**The National Rural Education Association, of which NRCSA is a member, works closely with the the Committee for Education Funding (CEF) on federal policy issues.** Following is an update on education issues on the federal level from CEF:

## **I. Policy Intelligence and Education News**

**Department of Education's website is periodically offline** – The Department of Education's (ED's) website ([www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)) has been repeatedly offline today, with some of the career and technical education and adult education sites down since last night. I asked the education authorizing committee and Appropriations Committee staffers if this is related to the government shutdown and having no staff there to fix a technical problem or is this a statement of the Administration's intention to close ED; apparently it is an inadvertent technical issue. I wouldn't normally assume nefarious intentions, but this year has demonstrated that the Administration is working to dismantle ED from within. The website glitches serve to as a reminder that if there is information on the ED website that you regularly use, you should download it and save it elsewhere.

**Judge extends order halting layoffs of federal employees during the shutdown** – Yesterday a federal judge extended her original order that temporarily stopped the Administration from firing federal employees during the shutdown, which had included about 465 employees at ED. The Administration is now prohibited from making a reduction in force (RIF) during the government shutdown. So those employees given RIF notices in early October now likely have their jobs for the time being but most are furloughed and not being paid. See [CNBC article](#) for details.

**Government shutdown continues** – The government has been mostly shut down for more than four weeks now, with apparently no high-level talks about how to resolve the conflicts; the House has been in recess since mid-September. Proposals to pay specific groups of federal employees – those still working, or those at specific agencies – and to continue funding specific programs – such as SNAP benefits – have not passed the Senate. The impacts of the shutdown will be felt more widely this week as federal employees except for troops get no October paycheck, the Administration is not using a contingency fund to pay SNAP benefits on November 1 so 42 million beneficiaries will be without income for food, some federally supported programs that had been kept open this month with leftover funds will shut down, and Obamacare health care premiums for 2026 get posted that do not include a subsidy that

is expiring. These actions result from choices that Congress and the Administration are making. When there is a will to spend federal funds – for instance, for billions of dollars of tax breaks in Republicans' bill this summer, for an emergency response or financial bailout – or to cut funds – for instance, for student loans, for research, for SNAP benefits or Medicaid – Congress can pass legislation that spends more or cuts funding, or that provides a tax break or tax increase.

**Fact sheets from House Appropriations Committee Republicans and Democrats** – Yesterday both House Appropriations Committee Democrats and Republicans posted material that bolster their opposing positions:

Republican press release listing 300+ groups supporting the House-passed funding bill to reopen the government – The [press release](#) lists hundreds of organizations that support the House-passed bill, including many representing agricultural and business interests, the airline industry, chambers of commerce, veterans groups, and conservative interest organizations.

Democratic [fact sheet](#) about how Administration actions “make their shutdown more painful” – The Democratic fact sheet lists three ways that the Administration's actions are making the shutdown more painful for Americans: the mass layoffs announced in early October (now paused due to the District Court judge mentioned above, but I'd expect the Administration to appeal); executive orders to cancel funding to specific cities or state led by Democrats; and delaying or withholding funding for programs that have a source of funding available, like SNAP and some emergency assistance programs.

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**Three years ago, NRCSA began a Principal Search Service.** This service is patterned after our successful Superintendent Search Service. Two options are available. Both options will involve NRCSA consultants recruiting candidates for the position. One option will involve the NRCSA consultant making background calls, while the reduced version of the service will place that role with the Superintendent. If you are interested in getting more information about the service now, please contact Jack. Here is a brochure outlining the service.

[NRCSA Principal Search Brochure](#)

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### **Chadron State College Special Education Para-to-Teacher Program Initiative.**

**Purpose:** This “Grow Your Own” Special Education Teacher program is designed to provide school districts with the opportunity to cultivate and participate in the training of their para-professionals who wish to continue their education to become special education teachers.

**Who:** Any individual who holds a minimum of an Associate’s Degree (or equivalent credit hours) from an accredited higher education institution, and who is employed as a para-professional within a school district.

**What:** Chadron State will provide required course work and enrichment activities via online, face-to-face (via Zoom), and on the job experiential learning, leading to a Bachelor’s in Education Degree, and a Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an endorsement in Special Education (grades PK-12). With administrator input, program course work will be tailored to best fit your district practices and expectations. Each course will be offered in an 8-week format, with 12-13 credit hours to be completed each 16 week semester.

**How:** Program participants will be advised, monitored, and supported by CSC faculty/staff, and a CSC Education Program liaison is specifically assigned to facilitate their progress. District para-professionals may enter the program at any time in the academic year.

**When:** once participants reach their senior academic year they will embark on completing their capstone course work, via online and Zoom class sessions. This course work has been pared down considerably with the understanding and assumption that these student teachers will be learning “on-the-job”. For example, one section covers classroom management practices. Clearly, one can argue and attest that these student teacher interns are learning more about managing a classroom from being mentored by veteran teachers within your school, and observing them in action. This is the belief and learning approach embraced during this senior year. However, to ensure and assess concept learning, Chadron State faculty will be meeting with your student teacher cohort twice per week for 1.5 hours, via Zoom conferencing technology.

**Graduation:** At the completion of this program students/candidates graduate from Chadron State College, and apply for teaching licensure resulting in a valid initial teaching certificate with and endorsement in PK-12 Special Education. Chadron State’s education program is nationally and State accredited. As such, interstate certification reciprocity is not a problem.

### **Things for your consideration:**

1) To qualify for this program participants must hold at least an Associate’s Degree or the equivalent in college credit hours. *(CSC will work with those applicants to provide them with the needed coursework leading up to program entry).*

2) Districts must agree to maintain para-professional employment throughout the course of the program—including during the student teaching experience.

Please contact Dr. Adam Fette for more program information, at [afette@csc.edu](mailto:afette@csc.edu).

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**NRCSA developed a corporate sponsorship/partnership program.** The program is designed to provide our corporate partners with more opportunities for contact with the decision makers in our member school districts, ESUs, and the colleges through increased exposure. Corporate partners are able to choose among three levels of sponsorship: Purple Ribbon Partners, Blue Ribbon Friends, and Red Ribbon Sponsors. Different forms of contact with our members are made available in each of the three levels.

We are very pleased to partner with our corporate sponsors, and NRCSA is so very thankful that each of you has chosen to partner with us.



## Who We Are:

We are more than investment bankers. We are strategic allies for Nebraska's rural school districts, dedicated to delivering exceptional results through customized financial solutions. Whether your district is expanding a classroom wing or building an entirely new school, our team brings deep experience, insightful strategy, and unwavering commitment.

Our Public Finance division is a cornerstone of D.A. Davidson, with 57 investment bankers in 30 offices nationwide, including six right here in Nebraska. This local presence, paired with national reach, allows us to offer big-picture thinking with a homegrown understanding of your unique challenges and opportunities.

As the #1 underwriter for Nebraska K-12 Schools, by par and/or number of negotiated transactions since 2017 and consistently top ten nationwide, our ranking reflects what our clients already know: D.A. Davidson delivers.

## What Sets Us Apart:

- Specialized Expertise – From small-scale improvements to multi-million-dollar construction projects, we've seen it all, and structured it all.
- Responsive, Local Service – Our Nebraska-based bankers are accessible, knowledgeable, and genuinely invested in your success.
- Powerful Market Presence – Our Fixed Income Trading Operations are among the most active in the country, giving your district strong market leverage.
- Personalized Solutions – No cookie-cutter strategies. We listen and build a plan that fits your vision and your voters.

## Proven Results for Rural Schools:

Since 2010, we've completed over 220 bond transactions for more than 80 Nebraska Rural Community School Districts. These long-standing partnerships speak volumes:

- Alliance Public Schools | 11 transactions | \$25.9 million
- Centennial Public Schools | 9 transactions | \$33 million
- Fort Calhoun Community Schools | 11 transactions | \$40.8 million
- Hershey Public Schools | 11 transactions | \$24.3 million
- Minden Public Schools | 7 transactions | \$47 million
- Sidney Public Schools | 9 transactions | \$45.2 million

**These aren't just numbers, they're gymnasiums built, classrooms renovated, money saved through refinancings, and communities enhanced.**

## Big or Small, We're with You All the Way:

From a \$500,000 lease for building upgrades to a \$40 million bond for a new school facility, D.A. Davidson brings the same level of passion, precision, and partnership.

Let us help turn your district's vision into reality, because when Nebraska schools succeed, communities thrive.

**Contact our Nebraska public finance team today.**

**Paul J. Grieger, Managing Director**

402.392.7986 | [pgrieger@dadco.com](mailto:pgrieger@dadco.com)

**Cody Wickham, Senior Vice President**

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**Andy Forney, Senior Vice President**

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## Congratulations to Our NRCSA Clients That Have Recently Passed Bond Elections:

- Centennial Public Schools | \$7,900,000
- Clarkson Public Schools | \$14,950,000
- Logan View Public Schools | \$21,500,000
- Louisville Public Schools | \$37,495,000
- Mead Public Schools | \$18,900,000
- Minden Public Schools | \$27,285,000
- Pierce Public Schools | \$9,905,000
- Sterling Public Schools | \$17,500,000
- Tri County Public Schools | \$17,995,000
- Wausa Public Schools | \$2,150,000

Source: Refinitiv, Date 1/03/2026

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# Purple Ribbon Partners



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CORNHUSKER  
INTERNATIONAL  
TRUCKS

## **Cornhusker International Trucks**

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## **DLR Group**

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## **CMBA Architects**

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# Purple Ribbon Partners



construction | the people you build with

## **MCL Construction**

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## **Network For Educator Effectiveness (NEE)**

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Roofing and Building Maintenance

## **Tremco Roofing**

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## **Voss Lighting**

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Omaha, NE 68137  
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**WILKINS**

ARCHITECTURE | DESIGN | PLANNING

## **Wilkins Architecture, Design, Planning**

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# Blue Ribbon Supporters



Albireo Energy



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Hausmann Construction



Johnson Controls



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K 12 Coalition



Navitas



Northland Securities



Piper Sandler



Rasmussen Mechanical Services



Sparq Data



US Bank

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#### U.S. Senators

[Deb Fischer](#)

[Pete Ricketts](#)

#### U.S. House of Representatives

[Don Bacon](#)

[Mike Flood](#)

[Adrian Smith](#)

#### Nebraska Governor

[Jim Pillen](#)

#### NE State Senators

[Bob Andersen, Dist 49](#)

[John Arch, Dist 14](#)

[Christy Armendariz, Dist 18](#)

[Beau Ballard, Dist 21](#)

[Carolyn Bosn, Dist 25](#)

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[Tom Brewer, Dist 43](#)

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[Machaela Cavanaugh, Dist 6](#)

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[Paul Strommen, Dist 47](#)

[Brad Von Gillern, Dist 4](#)

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# Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association



*“Quality Rural Schools”*

[www.nrcsa.net](http://www.nrcsa.net)



## *NRCSA Programs*

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