



NEBRASKA

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PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM RATIONALE

TO: Matthew L. Blomstedt, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Beth Wooster and Dr. Jolene Palmer, Student and Client Success and Services Division

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM: Grant the Commissioner the authority to approve a continuation grant to the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska to assist the School Security & Safety Director to build the capacity of Nebraska public schools in the area of emergency management.

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Dr. Jolene Palmer, School Security & Safety Director applied for and received a grant from the US Department of Education to assist with School Emergency Management. With this grant, she plans to expand the capacity of the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) to provide training and technical assistance to local educational agencies so they may produce and maintain high-quality emergency operations plans (EOPs). Once NDE's capacity is improved, the two areas of local capacity we wish to impact: 1) increase the number of high quality EOPs in LEA, and 2) increase the capacity for schools to participate in collaborative planning with community partners.

The University of Nebraska Public Policy Center is the best source for staff to help carry forth the vision for school safety in Nebraska. They have been partners in visioning and writing the School Emergency Management Grant, have assisted in Threat Assessment training, and are experts in collecting and analyzing data. The NDE staff worked with the UNPPC on a National Institute of Justice grant to conduct a study of rural school safety. This resulted in a self-assessment for school officials to complete an on-site physical vulnerability assessment. The results showed gaps in local capacity that will require additional training and technical assistance from the state to remedy. This grant from the US Department of Education will help us close the emergency management gap in Nebraska schools.

The UNPPC staff are researchers who team with others by bringing expertise in strategic consulting and planning, communications, data collection and analysis, evaluation, events and seminars, facilitations, and research. They collaborate with the NDE School Security & Safety Director on a daily basis.

ESTIMATED COST: Year 2 cost for the UNPPC is \$180,193.00.

FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS INDICATE THE FUNDING SOURCE: The funding source is a US Department of Education grant received by Dr. Jolene Palmer. The second year grant funds are \$586,507.00. This contract with the UNPPC is for year two of the grant.