



NDE: Announcements/Reminders from School Finance & Organization Services (October)

Upcoming Due Dates/Dates of Importance

2020/21 School District Annual Financial Report (AFR), Audit Report & Related Information

- **Annual Financial Report (Portal; Due November 1)**
The **Annual Financial Report – 2020-2021** collection is now open in the NDE Portal. Portal activation codes for the AFR are available to superintendents through the “Admin” tab. **Each user must have their own activation code.**
 - Districts are encouraged to upload their AFR file as soon possible to allow time to address any issues before the November 1st deadline. The file can be revised and re-uploaded as needed to pass through the validation steps and to match the Audit. The final AFR submission must match the District’s 2020/21 Audit before the submission is approved by the district representative. If the AFR and Audit do not match, districts will be contacted and have two business days to upload a corrected AFR file.
 - Resources – all needed materials can be found here:
 - <https://www.education.ne.gov/fos/annual-financial-report-school-district/>
 - 2020/21 Accounting Structure & Users’ Manual
 - 2020/21 Master Account Code List
 - AFR Online Submission Instructions
 - Flex Funding School Age Support Services Funding (new)
- **School District Audit Report Submission (Portal; Due November 5)**
 - Audits must be submitted through the NDE Portal via the **Annual Financial Report – 2020-2021** collection. E-mails and mailed copies will not be accepted.
- **2020/21 Audit Confirmation Lookup**
 - <http://www.education.ne.gov/FOS/adss/auditconfirmation/auditconfirmation.aspx>
 - Payments may also be accessed from the “Program Payment Lookup” website at <http://www.education.ne.gov/edpays/edpaymentlookup.asp> (note - the payment information on this site is not in the audit confirmation format).
 - Payments from grants issued prior to September 1, 2018 will reflect the old coding. Grants issued after September 1, 2018 should reflect the new coding system.
- **Response to the Letter to Management (Due January 31, 2022)**
 - Districts must respond to any audit findings included in the Auditor’s Letter to Management or noted in the audit.
 - The district response can be included in the audit schedule that details the non-compliant item along with the district response. No other response would be required by the district.
- **Contacts:**
 - Michelle Cartwright at (402) 450-0867 or michelle.cartwright@nebraska.gov
 - Stephanie DeGroot at (402) 540-0649 or stephanie.degroot@nebraska.gov

FCC Funding for Wi Fi on School Buses (Application closes on October 13, 2021)

In May, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) expanded funding through the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) to include Wi-Fi hotspots on school buses along with broadband connections for off-campus use by school students and staff. Applicant schools must certify the support is for eligible equipment/services for students/staff that otherwise lack access to engage in remote learning.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) recently announced they will open a second application period for assistance with Wi-Fi on school buses. The application period will open on September 28, 2021 and close on October 13, 2021 and will be for funds for the current school year (2021-2022). Here's a link to an FCC FAQ page for additional information: <https://www.fcc.gov/emergency-connectivity-fund-faqs>.

CDC Data Collections for 2022/23 State Aid (Due October 15, 2021)

Includes: Assessed Valuation and Levies, Elementary Site Allowance, PK Instructional Program Hours/K Program, Student Growth Adjustment, Summer School Student Unit, and Two-Year New School Adjustment.

- Contact: Kevin Lyons at (402) 450-1418 or kevin.lyons@nebraska.gov.

Estimated Expenditure for LEP and Poverty (CDC Collection, Due October 15, 2021)

The Estimated Expenditure for LEP and Poverty will open in the CDC on September 1. This collection is due October 15 with the audit window from October 16 through October 31; and is for public schools only. Each school district shall designate a maximum Poverty and Limited English Proficiency Allowance.

- Contact: Kevin Lyons at (402) 450-1418 or kevin.lyons@nebraska.gov.

Expenditure Exclusions Requiring State Board Approval [Due October 19 for the November Board Meeting]

The expenditure exclusions requiring State Board Approval, due dates for succeeding State Board meetings, and template letters are available on the School District Budgeting webpage at <https://www.education.ne.gov/fos/budgeting-school-district/>.

- Email exclusion requests to Stephanie DeGroot at stephanie.degroot@nebraska.gov.
- Requests for the November 5, 2021 State Board Meeting must be received **by October 19, 2021**.

Information/Documents Recently Made Available

Textbook Loan Program (Rule 4) – 2021/22 Appropriation

Rule 4 ("Regulations for Textbook Loans to Children Enrolled in Private Schools in Nebraska") is the applicable rule for the textbook loan process and the disbursement of the monies. The total 2021/22 appropriation (to be used for book distributions beginning in the 2022/23 school year) is \$1,465,500. Textbook Loan Program documents are available at <http://www.education.ne.gov/FOS/OrgServices/TextbookLoan/Index.html>.

- Contact: Beth Bolte at (402) 471-2795 or beth.bolte@nebraska.gov

Exempt (Home) Schools – 2021/22 School Year [Open in the NDE Portal]

Resident school districts can access their district's 2021/22 Exempt Schools – School District Report" in the NDE Portal. ***Please advise your staff to review the district's report first before contacting parents or checking with NDE on filing status.***

If a particular student or family is not listed at all, more than likely, they have not filed with NDE. The student should remain enrolled and if the student is not attending school, the district will report the student absent, *if the student is of mandatory attendance age.*

For Students who are part of the Enrollment Option Program - if the parents are homeschooling these students, they will be listed on the Resident district's report only. The Resident & Option districts need to communicate this information to each other and the option should be cancelled.

Parents who enroll their students in an online program or school must file for exempt status (if the student is of mandatory attendance age); these online schools are not Nebraska approved or accredited. The only two exceptions are the University of Nebraska High School (UNHS) and the Omaha Virtual School (OVS). Refer to Question C8 of the [Exempt School Program - FAQ document](#) for further information.

If the student returns to an approved or accredited public or private school after "homeschooling" for part of the school year or mid-school year, the parent must promptly notify this office in writing of the enrollment change (the parent can email this notice to beth.bolte@nebraska.gov).

If, after reviewing the report, there is a family listed that does not reside in your school district or if you have questions on the report, send an email to beth.bolte@nebraska.gov. Include in the email the name of the student, date of birth, name of the parents, and the address. Be sure to identify your school district in the email as well.

- Exempt Schools – School District Report (districts enter via the NDE Portal to view this report): <https://portal.education.ne.gov>
- Exempt School Program website: <https://www.education.ne.gov/fos/exempt-schools/>

2021 American Rescue Plan (ARP) Electric School Bus Rebates

The U.S. Environmental and Protection Agency has released an updated website specific to the 2021 American Rescue Plan Electric School Bus Rebate Program ([2021 American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Electric School Bus Rebates | US EPA](#)). EPA will fund \$7 million in electric school bus rebates in underserved communities under this program and it will run concurrent to the annual DERA program rebates. Funding is available for school districts as well as contractors. Of note, the website contains a chart comparing the Electric School Bus Rebate Program with the DERA program. The website is meant to give you advance notice to the opportunity and details as well as relevant documents, information, dates, and deadlines will be updated as they become available.

Upcoming

2021/22 State Aid Recalculation (October 12-14, 2021)

Per Statute 79-1065, State Aid is recalculated each year after data from the most recent school year is finalized and updated figures can be obtained. This information is used to calculate each district's prior year correction. The 2021/22 State Aid Recalculation documents can be reviewed on October 12-14 at <https://www.education.ne.gov/fos/state-aid/recalculation/>. When posted, review your district's components for accuracy. If you find any calculation errors, contact Kevin Lyons while the documents are posted for your review. *Since the data has been finalized, we are no longer able to correct data submission errors at this time.*

- Contact: Kevin Lyons at (402) 450-1418 or kevin.lyons@nebraska.gov

Availability of the Data Components Used in the 2022/23 State Aid Calculations (November 30-December 2, 2021)

On or before March 1, 2022, this office will certify the 2022/23 State Aid to school districts. In preparation of this certification, on November 30-December 2, we plan to post the raw data components (excluding Advisor, CDC, and GMS collections) used in the 2022/23 State Aid calculations on the NDE Portal web site at <http://portal.education.ne.gov.from>. At that time, check your district's information and contact this office immediately if you see any data errors. Corrections will only be accepted through email communication to Kevin Lyons.

This information will be removed from the Portal on Thursday, December 2 at 4:00 p.m. CT. Any corrections received after that time will be incorporated into the year-end recalculation of 2022/23 State Aid.

- Contact: Kevin Lyons at (402) 450-1418 or kevin.lyons@nebraska.gov

This bulletin is sent monthly to ESU administrators, and public school superintendents and business managers. A copy of the most recent bulletin is available on the [FOS website](#). Please forward this email to all appropriate personnel so they are aware of this information.