

**Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS)  
Executive Council Business Meeting Notification and Agenda**

April 27, 2022 1:30 p.m.

Varner Hall Boardroom, 3832 Holdrege Street, Lincoln, NE 68583

Publicized notice of the Executive Council meeting was given by posting the date, time, and location on the NSWERS.org website.

**1. CALL TO ORDER** – President Paul Turman called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

**1.1 Roll Call**

Roll Call showed the following NSWERS members in attendance:

Chancellor Paul Turman, President  
Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt, Secretary/Treasurer  
President Paul Illich, Member

Roll Call showed the following NSWERS member absent:

President Ted Carter, Member

President Paul Turman stated that President Ted Carter had indicated that he would not be able to attend today's business meeting and they both decided it was best to go ahead with the meeting, as there is a quorum, and not reschedule.

**1.2 Announcement of the placement of the Open Meetings Act information**

President Turman announced that information regarding the Open Meetings Act is posted on the wall in the Varner Hall Boardroom and is available on the NSWERS.org website.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

No public comment.

**3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**3.1 Additions or corrections to agenda**

No agenda items were removed, added or corrected.

Approval of the agenda as presented passed with a motion by President Paul Illich, second by Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt.

President Paul Illich	Yea
Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt	Yea
Chancellor Paul Turman	Yea
President Ted Carter	Absent

#### 4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Matthew Hastings, Executive Director, NSWERS made a presentation on behalf of himself and the Management Team. (See attached PowerPoint.)

**Budget Update.** Dr. Hastings reported that for fiscal year 2023, NSWERS is projecting a 4% overall increase from FY 2022, which includes a 1.5% COLA for NSWERS staff; increased costs for insurance premiums; increased costs for travel expenses for NSWERS staff professional development; and anticipated costs for operating expenses, equipment and software.

**Legislative Update.** Dr. Hastings stated that LB 1130 was signed into law April 9, 2022. NSWERS will be responsible to provide a report to the Clerk of the Legislature and Governor by December 1 each year providing an overview of research and analysis conducted; additional data needs for future analysis and report on organizational structure and needs.

NSWERS' next move is to formulate a strategy for an appropriation request to the Legislature as part of the 2022 request process.

NSWERS legal counsel outlined options for an entity in an Interlocal Agreement circumstance such as NSWERS for revenue generation to supplement budget. When and if the circumstance may arise, these options can be discussed further.

**Insurance Update.** Dr. Hastings reported that NSWERS has secured insurance for Public Officials with an annual premium of \$3,000; a 7.8% increase over the annualized expiring premium.

Coverage for the Cyber Liability Policy has been challenging. Axis withdrew their proposal because of NSWERS affiliation with higher education. With the current policy expiring at the end of April, NSWERS, with the support of AON Risk Solutions and KSB Law, received two offers and these are being analyzed for NSWERS needs and hopefully one will be chosen and signed off on by the end of April. Dr. Hastings will report to each Executive Council Member the two offers and recommendation by the end of the week before acquiring same.

**Data Collection Update.** Dr. Hastings stated that NSWERS continues to build on the success of the POC project with the first batch including 10-years of data, which is a tremendous amount of data. Thereafter, data will be collected, unless another preference by partners: PK-12 data annually (fall); Two year postsecondary data annually (fall); Four year postsecondary data triannually (Feb 1, June 1, Oct 1); and Workforce data quarterly.

NSWERS is exploring options to gain more data on students that fail to fit into a group of the POC to gain more available data to support matching processes. Dr. Hastings reported that on April 20, he met with representatives from the USDE Student Privacy Policy office of the Privacy and Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) to have them review NSWERS data sharing agreements to see if they are in line with FERPA requirements and they reported that NSWERS is in line with FERPA. NSWERS will also look into expanding and automating agreement to support inter-partner data sharing.

Dr. Hastings announced that the first NSWERS Advisory Committee will meet May 4, 2022 at the Nebraska Innovation Campus. Dr. Hastings anticipates that this will bring a lot of critical questions from the private entities and will be a good meeting to start new relationships.

President Turman thanked Dr. Hastings for his report. President Turman also indicated that he appreciates the NSWERS Quarterly Update and the weekly meetings he and Dr. Hastings have in keeping each other well-informed of NSWERS activities, so they in turn can keep the Executive Council members up to date as well.

## **5. COMMITTEE REPORTS (NONE)**

## **6. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **6.1 NSWERS Systems Architecture (Data System v1.0) - David Hefley**

David Hefley, NSWERS Assistant Director, IT Application Development introduced himself and gave a presentation on how NSWERS is ensuring effective and secure application operations, support and maintenance of legacy applications, developing new technical solutions and providing successful application integration with NSWERS partners. This system has a lot of moving parts and will always be a work in progress.

Mr. Hefley stated that the main goals are:

- 1. Security.** Restrict PII exposure (i.e. DOB); yet maintain essential information for the organization (maybe report how old the student was when graduated), use an “NSWERS ID.” Encrypt as early as possible and isolate data matching process.
- 2. Flexibility.** Pivot and provide; being able to add and remove data as necessary and building a specific cloud for NSWERS data.
- 3. Maintainability.** Bring in data; clean up data and deliver data while maintaining a small staff size; ensuring low technical debt and having the system automated for easy deployment.

Commissioner Blomstedt inquired what mechanism should Department of Education; UNL; State Colleges; and Community Colleges be thinking about to help reach these goals. Mr. Hefley suggested that an investment into a cloud infrastructure wherein all entities are in the same cloud and connected would be ideal. The technical debt at this time is not affected but over time cloud services will increase in cost and hopefully NSWERS has a system in place to only pay as the service is used, these services would more than likely be acquired through a third party contract.

**7. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**8. ACTION ITEMS**

**8.1** Approve Minutes of NSWERS business meeting, March 2, 2022.

Motion to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2022 NSWERS Executive Council Business meeting passed with a motion by Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt, second by President Paul Illich.

President Ted Carter	Absent
Chancellor Paul Turman	Yea
Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt	Yea
President Paul Illich	Yea

**8.2** Discuss, consider and take all necessary action regarding proposed Budget for NSWERS Fiscal Year 2022-2023.

Motion to approve proposed Budget for NSWERS Fiscal Year 2022-2023 as presented today passed with a motion by President Paul Illich, second by Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt.

Chancellor Paul Turman	Yea
Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt	Yea
President Paul Illich	Yea
President Ted Carter	Absent

**8. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

**9. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**10. INFORMATION ITEMS AND REPORT**

**10.1** NSWERS Treasurer's Report – Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt

Commissioner Blomstedt presented Treasurer's Report. If members would like this report in some other format, please let him know. Dr. Hastings reports the Treasurer's Report at least annually to foundation contributors, or as they request.

The Executive Council members conveyed their appreciation to Dr. Hastings of visiting with them individually and keeping them informed of all activities of NSWERS and answering their questions.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Blomstedt noted that the next scheduled meeting is July 27, 2022, which is the date for NDE Administrator Days. He will not be able to attend the meeting.

Motion to adjourn the NSWERS Executive Council Business Meeting passed with a motion from President Paul Illich, second by Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt.

President Ted Carter	Absent
Chancellor Paul Turman	Yea
Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt	Yea
President Paul Illich	Yea

President Turman adjourned the meeting at 2:31 p.m.

At this time, a NSWERS Executive Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on July 27, 2022, at a time and place to be determined.

# Executive Director's Report

April 27, 2022

Matthew J. Hastings, Ph.D.  
Executive Director, NSWERS  
NSWERS Executive Council – Quarterly Meeting  
Varner Hall, Lincoln, NE



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# Budget Update

- Fiscal Year 2023
  - 4% overall increase from FY22
    - 1.5% COLA NSWERS Staff
      - Consolidate FTE from 9 to 8
      - Salaries and benefits of all staff for the full FY
    - Increased costs for insurance premiums and travel expenses
    - Decreased costs for operating expenses, equipment and software
- Estimated carryover from FY21 & FY22
  - \$2,628,138.00
- FY 23 partner commitments
  - \$354,486.00

# Legislative Update

- LB 1130 Signed into law April 19, 2022
  - On or before December 1 each year, NSWERS shall issue a report to the Clerk of the Legislature and the Governor:
    - Provide an overview of research and analysis conducted
    - Additional data needs for future analysis
    - Organizational structure and needs
- NSWERS Appropriation Request
  - Needs to be pursued as part of 2022 request processes
    - Current commitments through Fiscal Year 2026
  - Other revenue generation options

# Insurance Update

- Secured Public Officials policy
  - Annual premium about \$3,000
    - 7.8% increase over the annualized expiring premium
    - Since NSWERS does not currently have any direct employees, this policy does not include any employment practices liability or third-party discrimination coverage.
- Cyber Liability Policy
  - Axis withdrew proposal due to our affiliation with higher education.
  - Late last and on Monday we received two additional offers
    - Working with Aon Risk Solutions and KSB Law (Coady Pruett) to secure needed coverage by end of the week.

# Data Collection Update

- Initiating Data Collection for v1.0 NSWERS Data System
  - Building on the success of our proof-of-concept project
  - First batch will include 10-years of data
    - 2012 – 2022
  - Thereafter, on the following schedule...
- Periodicity of NSWERS Data Collection
  - PK-12
    - Annually (fall)
  - 2-Year Postsecondary Data
    - Annually (fall)
  - 4-Year Postsecondary Data
    - Triannually (February 1, June 1, October 1)
  - Workforce Data
    - Quarterly

# Data Collection Update (continued)

- Lexis Nexis
  - Exploring publicly available data to support matching processes
- National Student Clearinghouse
  - Exploring contract options for NSWERS and partners
- Privacy & Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)
  - Meeting on April 20<sup>th</sup> with representatives from USDE Student Privacy Policy Office
    - Our data sharing agreements (partners/affiliates to NSWERS) are right in line with what we are able to do as per FERPA
    - Expanding and automating agreements to support inter-partner data sharing

# Advisory Committee Update

## Kick-Off Meeting

- May 4th at Nebraska Innovation Campus
- Discussion of critical questions
  - Data needed to answers those questions



## AGENDA

<b>9:00 AM</b>	Refreshments and Networking
<b>9:15 AM</b>	Welcome <i>Paul Turman, NSWERS Executive Council President</i>
<b>9:30 AM</b>	NSWERS History & Background <i>Matt Hastings, NSWERS Executive Director</i>
<b>9:45 AM</b>	Participant Introductions
<b>10:45 AM</b>	Break
<b>11:00 AM</b>	Proof of Concept Showcase and Discussion
<b>12:00 PM</b>	Working Lunch <i>NSWERS Six Stages of Analysis</i>
<b>1:00 PM</b>	Answering Critical Questions
<b>1:30 PM</b>	1, 2, All: Local Community Needs
<b>3:00 PM</b>	End-of-Day Wrap-up

# Upcoming Executive Council Meetings

July



October



January



Connecting Data.  
Producing Insights.  
Informing Decisions.

Answers for Nebraska

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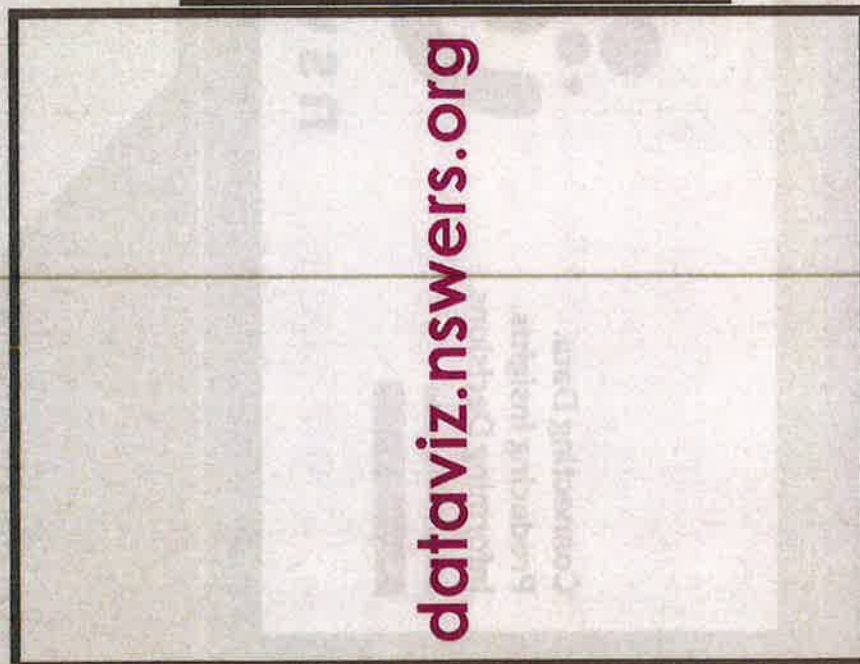
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# Thank You

Next Executive Council Meeting:  
July 27, 2022



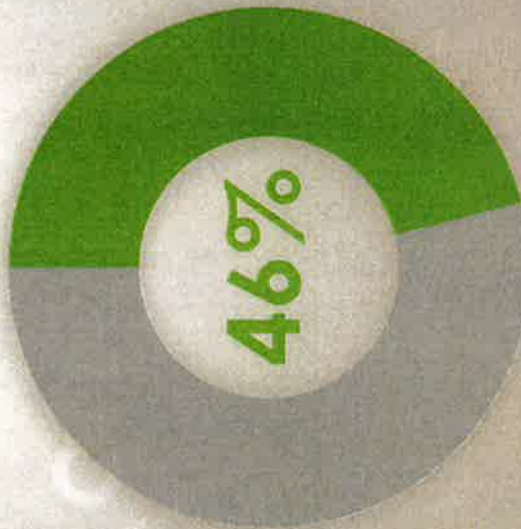
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# Progress

+3%  
since 03/02/22

Overall progress towards  
NSWERS Strategic Plan 2021-23





# Goal 1

Establish Data  
System

Establish NSWERS data system  
for sustainable insights

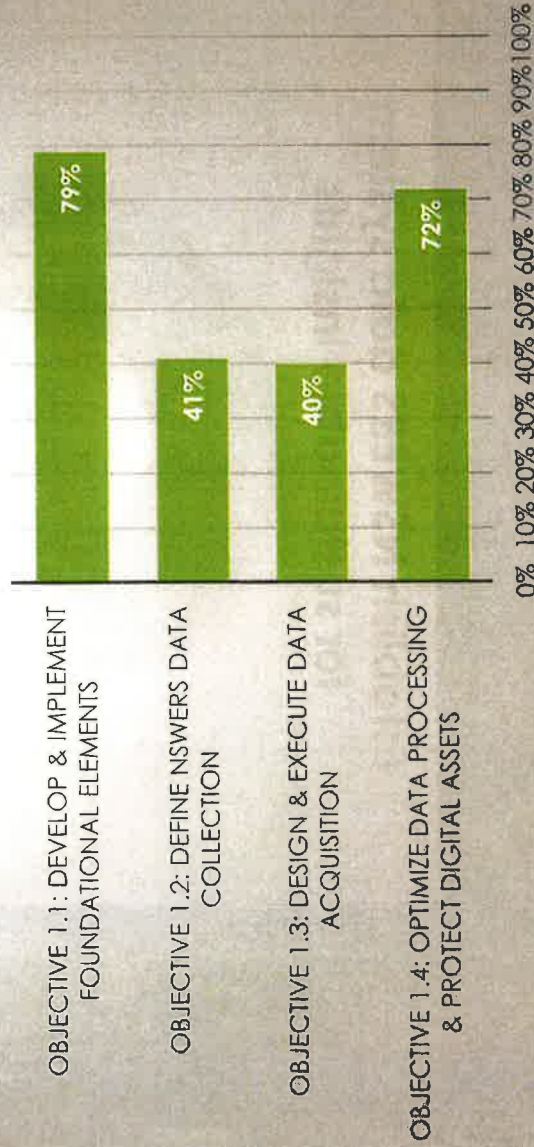


# Goal 1

## Establish Data System

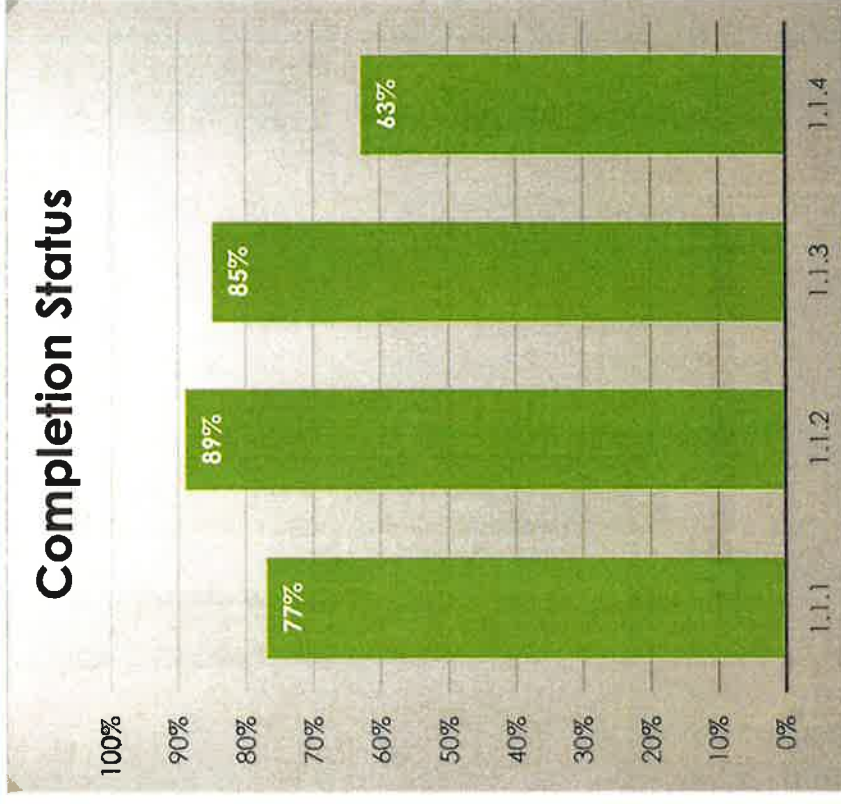
### Objectives

#### Completion Status



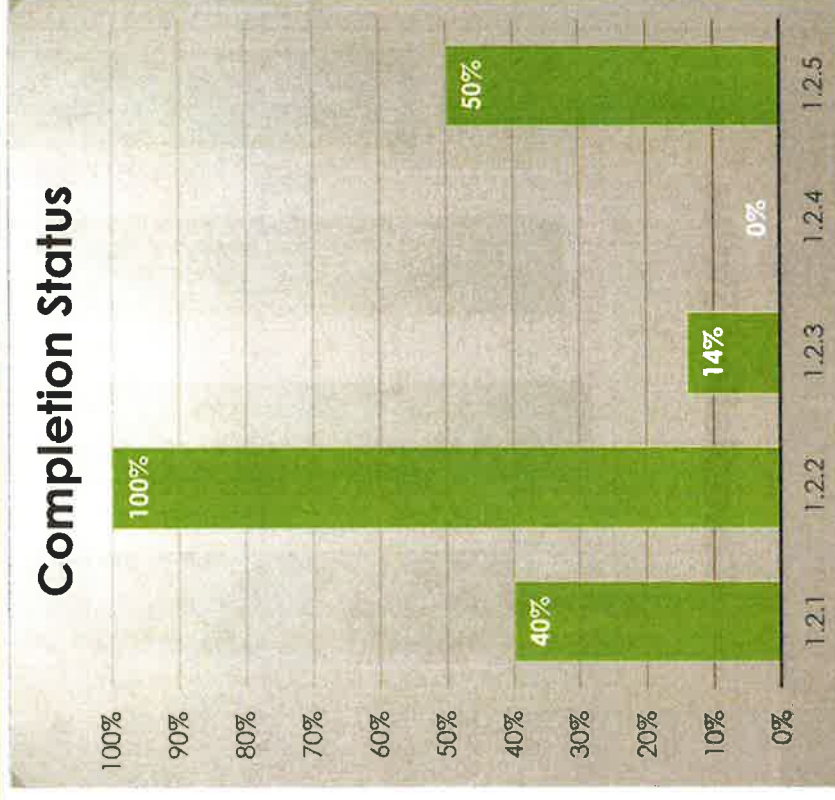
## Objective 1.1 : Develop & Implement Foundational Elements

- Strategy 1.1.1  
**Define Organizational Strategies**
- Strategy 1.1.2  
**Establish Organizational Structures**
- Strategy 1.1.3  
**Create and Implement Organizational System**
- Strategy 1.1.4  
**Acquire & Maintain Organizational Skills**



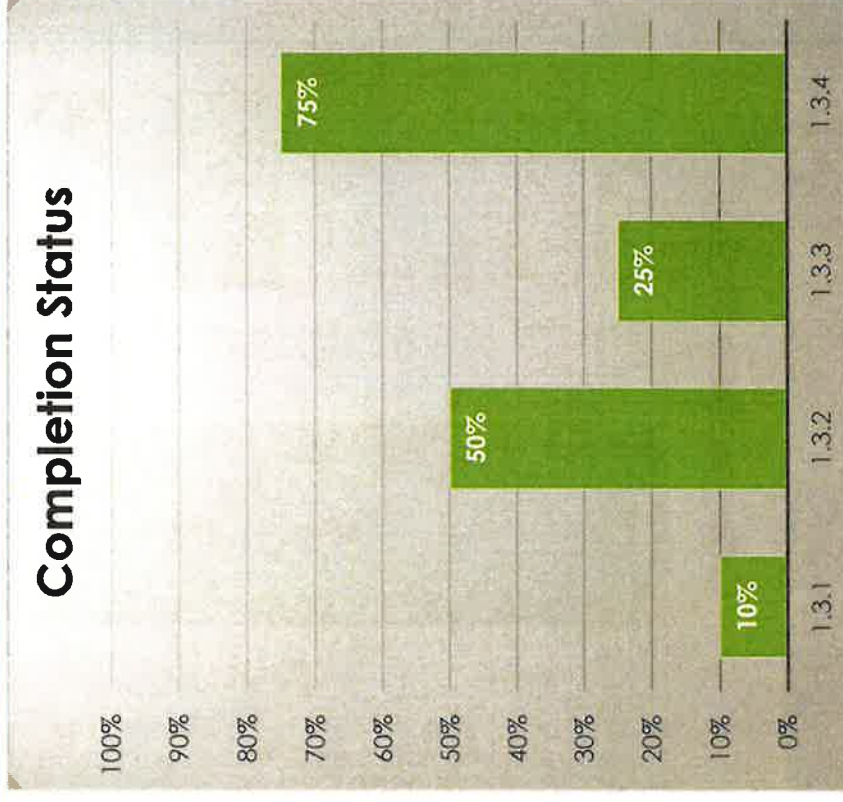
## Objective 1.2 : Define NSWERS Data Collection

- Strategy 1.2.1  
**Ensure the Interoperability of NSWERS Data**
- Strategy 1.2.2  
**Leverage Nebraska Person ID System**
- Strategy 1.2.3  
**Pursue Value-Add Partner Support Activities**
- Strategy 1.2.4  
**Leverage Public Domain Data Repositories**
- Strategy 1.2.5  
**Explore Methodologies for Auxiliary Data Collection**



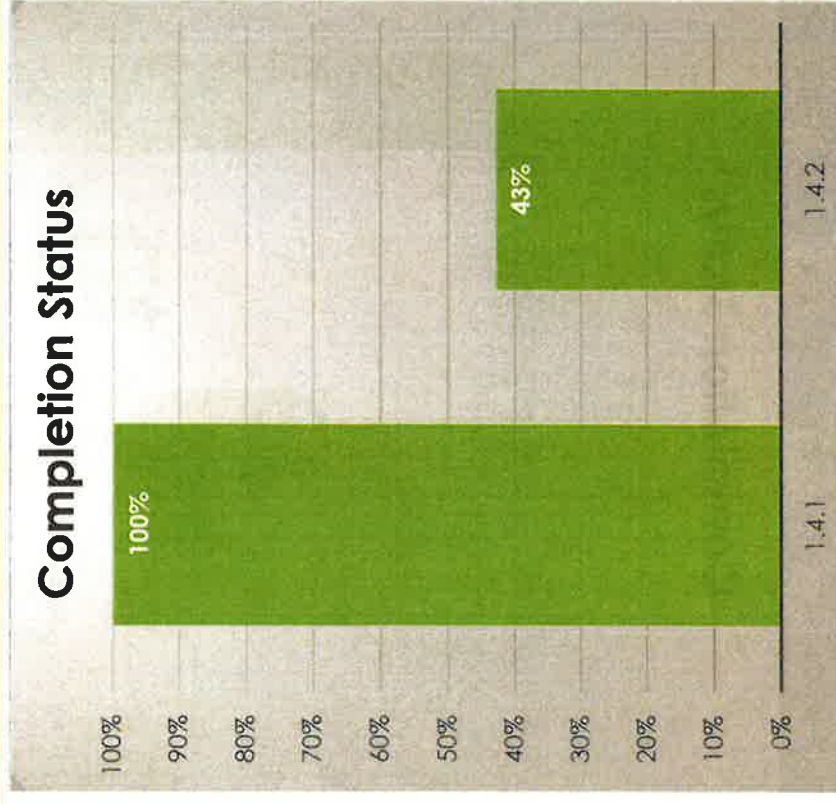
## Objective 1.3 : Design and Execute Data Acquisition

- Strategy 1.3.1  
**Develop and Implement a Secure, Web-Based Portal**
- Strategy 1.3.2  
**Leverage Industry-Standard Data Exchange Technologies**
- Strategy 1.3.3  
**Develop and Implement Quality Control Processes**
- Strategy 1.3.4  
**Establish Annual Calendar**



## Objective 1.4 : Optimize Data Processing and Protect Digital Assets

- Strategy 1.4.1  
**Establish and Maintain a Robust Data Security Program**
- Strategy 1.4.2  
**Implement a Comprehensive Program of Data Governance**





## Goal 2

Evaluate  
Efficacy

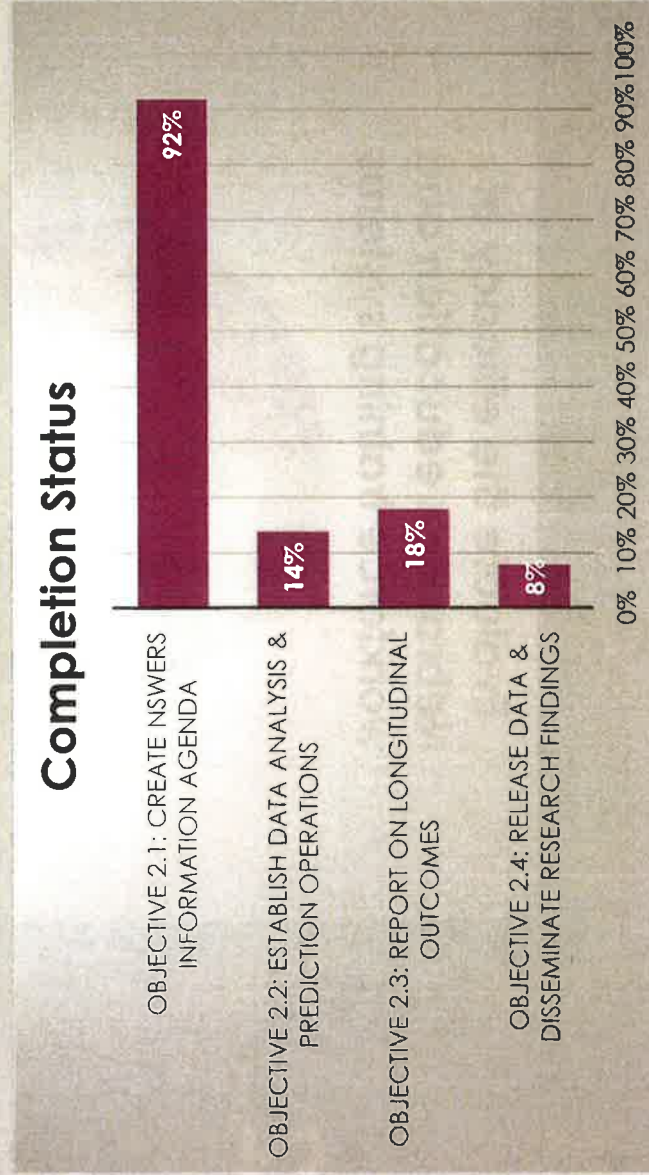
Evaluate the efficacy of  
Nebraska's education and  
workforce training systems



# Goal 2

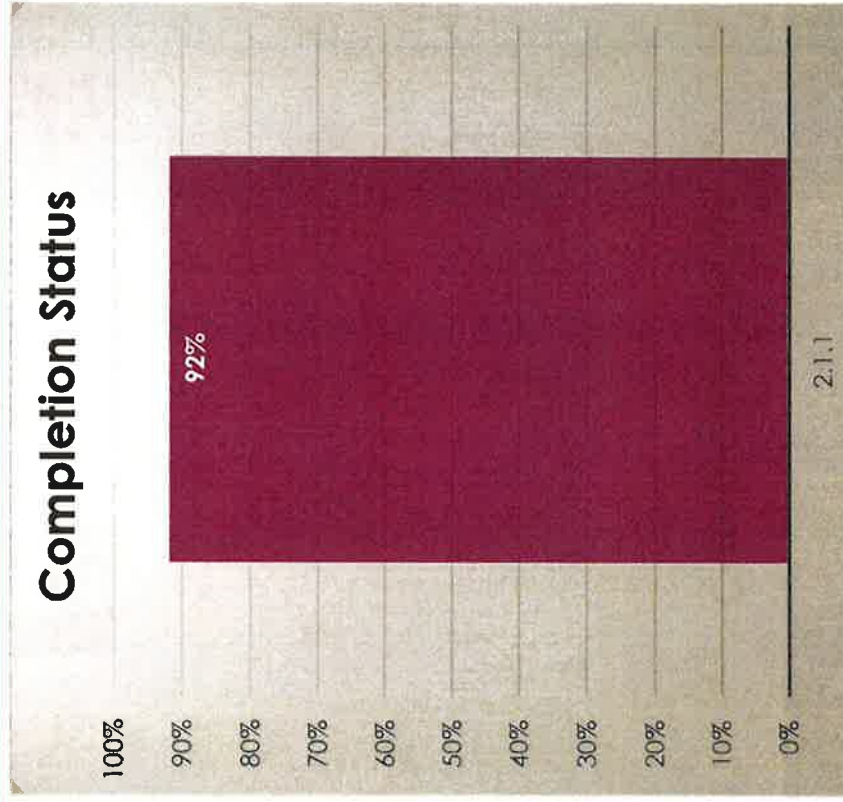
## Evaluate Efficacy

### Objectives



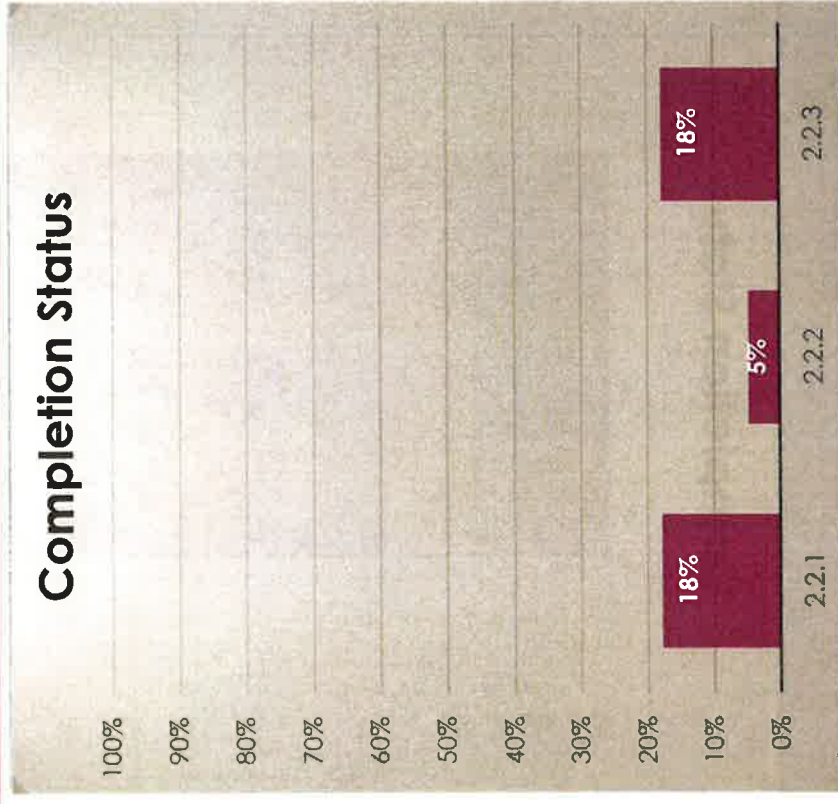
## Objective 2.1 : Create NSWERS Information Agenda

- Strategy 2.1.1  
**Adopt Solutions for Timeliness,  
Relevance and Accuracy**



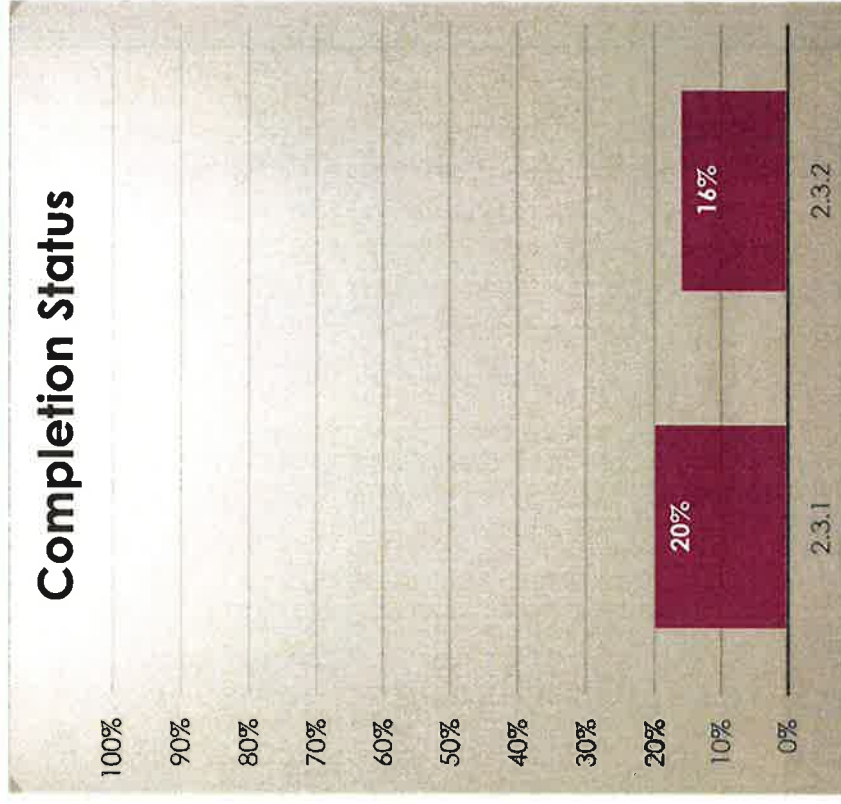
## Objective 2.2 : Establish Data Analysis and Prediction Operations

- Strategy 2.2.1  
**Implement a Modern, Flexible and Scalable Analytics Unit**
- Strategy 2.2.2  
**Establish Collaboration Opportunities and Cultivate Funding**
- Strategy 2.2.3  
**Leverage the Capacity of NSWERS Partners and Affiliates**



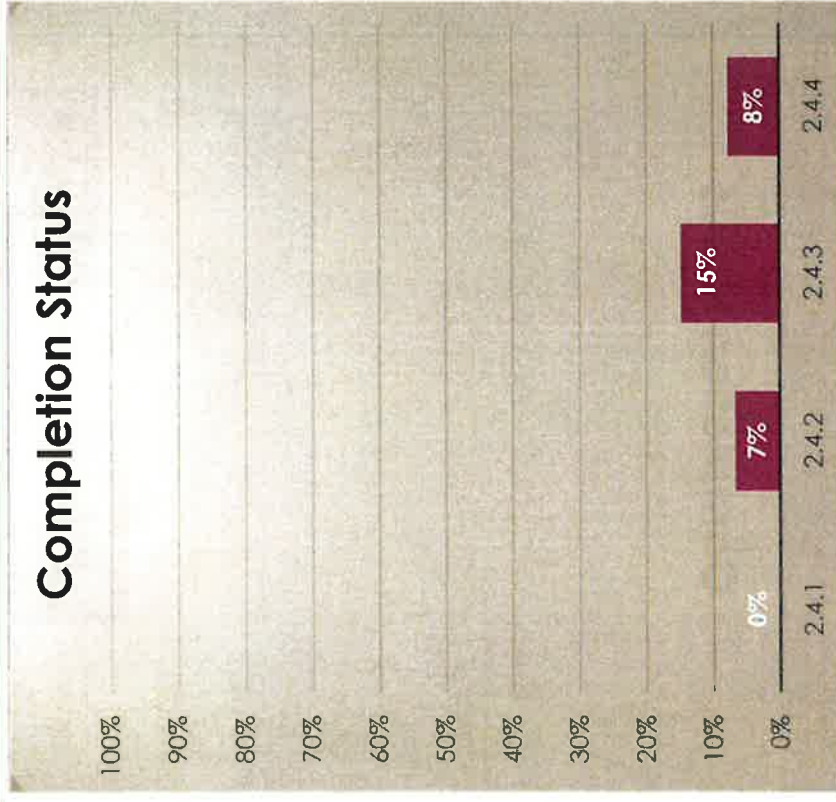
## Objective 2.3 : Report on Longitudinal Outcomes

- Strategy 2.3.1  
**Operationalize and Measure  
Education Outcomes**
- Strategy 2.3.2  
**Operationalize and Measure  
Workforce Outcomes**



## Objective 2.4 : Release Data and Disseminate Research & Evaluation Findings

- Strategy 2.4.1  
**Establish and Maintain a data Clearinghouse to facilitate Data as a Product (DaaP) Enterprise**
- Strategy 2.4.2  
**Establish and Maintain Data as a Service (DaaS) Enterprise**
- Strategy 2.4.3  
**Create or Acquire Communications Methods and Platforms**
- Strategy 2.4.4  
**Strengthen Awareness, Facilitate Collaborations and Drive System Improvements**



# NSWERS Systems Architecture

April 27, 2022

David Hefley  
Assistant Director, IT Application Development  
NSWERS Executive Council – Quarterly Meeting  
Varner Hall, Lincoln, NE



**nswers**

# Main Goals

- Security (Protect PII)
- Flexibility
- Maintainability



# Goal 1

## Security

- Highest risk
- Essential to operations

# Goal 1

## Security

### Operationalization

- Remove from daily operations
  - Use derived data in production
  - Use an "NSWERS ID"
- Restrict PII exposure
  - Encrypt as early as possible
  - Isolate data matching process
  - Operate in GCC High



# Goal 2

## Flexibility

- Easy to add features
- Accommodate new data
- Quickly develop new uses

# Goal 2

## Flexibility

### Operationalization

- Use modular design
  - Upgrade or Update components without a redesign
- Cloud Native (Azure)
  - Mix and match offerings
- Scalable
  - Add resources automatically only when needed



## Goal 3

### Maintainability

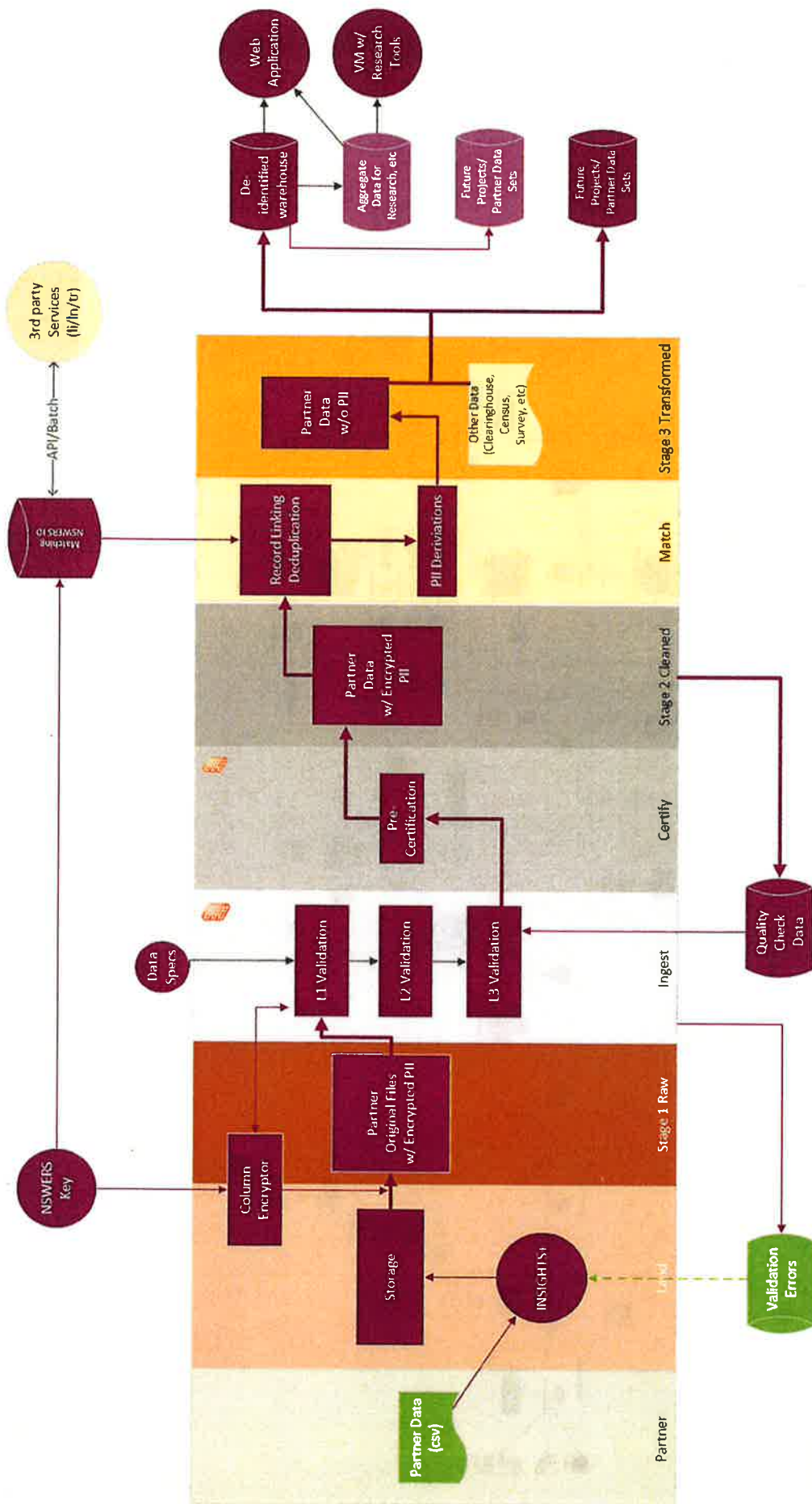
- Keep staff size small
- Ensure low technical debt
- Easy to deploy

# Goal 3

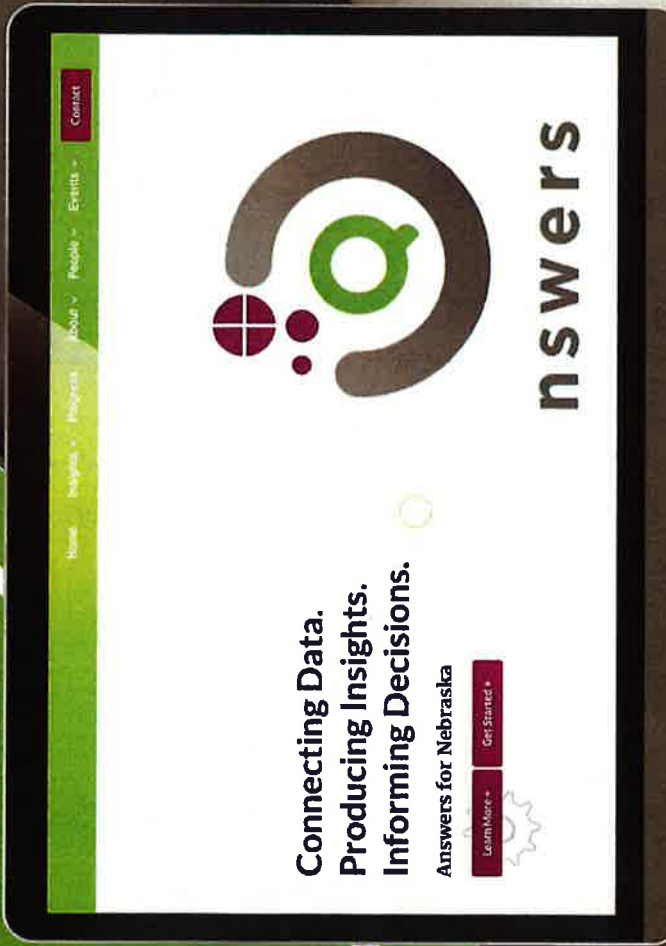
## Maintainability

### Operationalization

- Front load work with a lot of planning
  - Documentation and Requirements
- Automation
  - Scripted processes
  - Repeatable
- Industry standard design
  - Large amount of support







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# Thank You



nswers