

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

July 28, 2021 2:00 p.m.

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

**AND**

**ZOOM:** <https://nebraska.zoom.us/j/92128942261>

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 Ted Carter called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**1.1 Roll Call**

Roll Call showed the following NSWERS members in attendance personally:

President Ted Carter, President  
Chancellor Paul Turman, Vice President  
President Paul Illich, Member

The following member in attendance via ZOOM at approximately 2:18 p.m.

Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt, Secretary/Treasurer

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

President Carter announced that information regarding the Open Meetings Act is posted on the south 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 Chancellor Paul Turman, second by President Paul Illich.

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

#### 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.)

**Goal 1 – Establishing a Data System.** Dr. Hastings reported that this goal is approximately 31% complete. The Legislative Report LB 1160 is due to the Legislature on December 1. A draft of the Report will be coming to the Executive Council at the October business meeting.

Dr. Hastings reported continued interest from funders, philanthropic partners, and friends/advocates about the work NSWERS is doing. He will continue to work building relationships and partnership opportunities. Dr. Hastings reported that he also provides/submit annual reports as requested by these entities.

Dr. Hastings provided an unaudited draft NSWERS Treasurer's Report and expects this to be a permanent report on the agenda beginning with the October Business meeting. NSWERS is closing this past fiscal year on August 5 and he will provide an updated report to Executive Council members.

Dr. Hastings and the Management Council continue the development and establishment of an Advisory Committee. There are approximately 20-30 members and first meeting is anticipated to be scheduled for September/October. Chancellor Turman asked if they could get a copy of the members, which Dr. Hastings will provide to each Executive Council member.

Dr. Hastings stated that Dr. Dean Folkers will be retiring from NDE and Deputy Commissioner Brian Halstead from NDE will be taking his place on the Management Team effectively immediately.

Dr. Hastings reported that one business item today is to consider a motion to authorize a submission of an audit waiver from the Nebraska State Auditor of Public Accounts while continuing to have private audits.

Dr. Hastings asserted that the current Cyber Liability Insurance will need to be revisited in a few months as the NSWERS warehouse is further developed and a better sense of scope and nature of the NSWER data enterprise is established. Currently the existing coverage is \$5 million for cyber liability and \$2 million in Public Official Liability.

Dr. Hastings states that NSWERS continues to hire and contract for services. A Research and Evaluation hire just became effective today, and interviews for Communications and

Applications Development are scheduled. Core services and loaned employee agreement drafts are currently under review by NU attorneys.

Dr. Hastings gave an update on the Proof of Concept (POC) data project. Data has been matched across education and workforce sectors and final edits are being made to animated visual and related analyses. Once in final format, Dr. Hastings will make these available to the Executive Council.

Dr. Hastings reported that even though data has been matched, there is an underestimated postsecondary matriculation. It was assumed that there would be no gaps from the National Clearinghouse, but there is. Instead of using the NDE ID number, and using SSN, there were more matches but also more unaccounted (3,000) than first thought and add the nuance of optional workforce reporting, technical challenges are emerging. Additional conversations are needed regarding the person identity resolution services challenges with establishing a more robust matching scheme to deal with broader set of identifying information. DOL will be involved with these conversations.

Chancellor Turman inquired would these conversations include the historical information or from this point forward. Dr. Hastings responded that that is the question to ask and consider. It would be easier to go forward if using NDE ID but would not be as easy using historical. Historical would be the challenge and probably preferred.

Dr. Hastings reminded the Council of the robust data security process in place. NSWERS, in cooperation with NU ITS, has classified all NSWERS data as high-risk data and as such appropriate security controls are in place.

**Goal 2 – Evaluate Efficacy.** Dr. Hastings reported that this goal is approximately 17% complete, it is further behind as this goal cannot go into play until the data system is established. The core Research and Evaluation staff positions are being posted, interviewed and hired (first hire [Assistant Director] to start August 23).

**5. COMMITTEE REPORTS (none)**

**6. EXECUTIVE SESSION (none)**

**7. ACTION ITEMS**

**7.1 Approve Minutes of NSWERS business meeting, June 9, 2021.**

Motion to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2021 NSWERS Business meeting passed with a motion by Chancellor Paul Turman, second by President Paul Illich.

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

7.2 Consider and take appropriate action related to the submission of an audit waiver request with the Auditor of Public Accounts for the previous fiscal year

Motion to Consider and take appropriate action related to the submission of an audit waiver request with the Auditor of Public Accounts for the previous fiscal year passed with a motion by President Paul Illich, second by Chancellor Paul Turman.

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

**8. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

**9. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**10. INFORMATION ITEMS AND REPORT**

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

President Carter adjourned the meeting at 2:26 p.m.

A NSWERS Executive Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 27, 2021 at a time and place to be determined.



**nswers**

# Executive Director's Report

Matthew J. Hastings, Ph.D.

Executive Director, NSWERS

NSWERS Executive Council – Quarterly Meeting

Varner Hall – Lincoln, NE

July 28, 2021



**nswers**

Object	Description	Status	Change
Overall	Progress Towards Strategic Plan	24% Complete	+5%
Goal 1	Establish NSWERS Data System	31% Complete	+2%
Objective 1.1	Develop and Implement Foundational Elements	56% Complete	+8%
Objective 1.2	Define NSWERS Data Collection	15% Complete	-
Objective 1.3	Design and Execute Data Acquisition	16% Complete	+16%
Objective 1.4	Optimize Data Processing and Protect Digital Assets	74% Complete	+39%



**nswers**

# Goal 1

Establish Data System

# 1.1 Develop & Implement Foundational Elements

- 1.1.1 Define Organizational Strategies
  - Legislative Report (LB 1160)
    - Strategic Plan + Budget + Information/Research Agenda + Data Elements
    - Draft for review at the October 27<sup>th</sup> NSWERS Executive Council Meeting
  - Philanthropic Engagement
    - Submit annual reports as needed to private foundations
    - Continue relationship building and partnership opportunities
  - Review of Quarterly Financial Statement
  - Sustainable Funding Plan



# 1.1 Develop & Implement Foundational Elements

- 1.1.2 Establish Organizational Structures
  - NSWERS Advisory Committee
    - 20-30 Business Executives, Workforce Development Professionals, Education Leaders, Policy Makers
    - First meeting (anticipated) September or October at NIC
  - NSWERS Management Committee
    - Deputy Commissioner Brian Halstead to replace Dean Folkers as NDE rep.
  - Audit Services
    - Business item to consider a motion to authorize the submission of an audit waiver request from the Nebraska State Auditor of Public Accounts
      - Unaudited FY21 expenditures = \$354,721.92 (cash basis)
  - Core Services & Loaned Employee Agreements
    - Drafts currently under review by NU attorneys

# 1.1 Develop & Implement Foundational Elements

- 1.1.3 Create and Implement Organizational Systems
  - Revisit Cyber Liability Insurance Limits
    - As we approach development of v1.0 of NSWERS warehouse
      - Better sense of scope and nature of the NSWERS data enterprise
    - Reminder of existing coverage:
      - \$5M in Cyber Liability
      - \$2M in Public Officials Liability

# Develop & Implement Foundational Elements

- 1.1.4 Acquire & Maintain Organizational Skills
  - NSWERS Staffing
    - Research & Evaluation (offer accepted this morning)
    - Communications (interviews next week)
    - Applications Development (interviews next week)
  - Specialty Contract Support
    - For example:
      - Student1 – IT Professional Services
      - Magnolia – Research & Evaluation Professional Services
      - KSB Law – Legal Services

## 1.2 Define NSWERS Data Collection

- Update on Proof-of-Concept Data Project
  - Data has been matched across education and workforce sectors and final edits being made to animated visual and related analyses
  - Themes:
    - Technical/Methodological
      - Underestimated postsecondary matriculation
      - Ad hoc fuzzy matching independently by each institution/sector unsustainable
        - NDE ID
          - Perhaps as many as 3,000 students' location "unknown" after High School
          - Optional workforce reporting is problematic
    - Substantive
      - Highly mobile population
      - TBD
- 1.2.2 Leverage Nebraska Person ID System
  - Person Identity Resolution Services
    - A robust matching scheme is needed to deal with a broader set of identifying information

## 1.3 Design and Execute Data Acquisition

- 1.3.1 Develop and Implement a Secure Web-based Portal
  - SFTP locations for purposes of pilot project
- 1.3.2 Data Exchange Technologies
  - Person Identity Resolution Service
- 1.3.3 Quality Control Processes
  - Proof of concept is functioning exactly as intended to help uncover items for consideration related to automated QA processes for v1.0
- 1.3.4 Annual Calendar
  - TBD

## 1.4 Optimize Data Processing & Protect Digital Assets

- 1.4.1 Robust Data Security Process
  - NSWERS, in cooperation with NU ITS, has classified all NSWERS data as High-Risk data according to Executive Memorandum 42. As such, appropriate security controls are in place for data management, including:
    - Data in transit between the cloud and the University is encrypted
    - Customers are using set of computer-generated keys instead of passwords, making a brute force login nearly impossible.
    - The database and application receive regular security scans that check for exploitable vulnerabilities and misconfigurations.
    - Malicious traffic, such as frequent probing for vulnerabilities and known malicious IP addresses are blocked as a part of our cloud security package.
    - Changes to cloud resources are logged and are immutable



nswers

Object	Description	Status	Change
Overall	Progress Towards Strategic Plan	24% Complete	+5%
Goal 2	Evaluate Efficacy	17% Complete	+8%
Objective 2.1	Create NSWERS Information Agenda	64% Complete	+30%
Objective 2.2	Establish Data Analysis and Prediction Operations	2% Complete	+2%
Objective 2.3	Report on Longitudinal Outcomes	0% Complete	-
Objective 2.4	Release Data and Disseminate Research Findings	4% Complete	+4%



**nswers**

## **Goal 2**

**Evaluate Efficacy**



## 2.2 Establish Data Analysis & Prediction Operations

- With data now flowing for the Proof-of-Concept project, ready to bring on Research & Evaluation staff
- 2.2.1 Implement a Modern, Flexible and Scalable Analytics Unit
  - Position announcement recently posted
    - Assistant Director, Research & Evaluation
      - Starting August 23<sup>rd</sup>
  - Seeking highly advanced technical skill set to support NSWERS operations



## 2.3 Report on Longitudinal Outcomes

- Eight core longitudinal outcomes:
  - Additions, refinements likely to occur over coming months
- 2.3.1 Education Outcomes:
  - On-Time High School Graduation
  - College-Going
  - Postsecondary Persistence
  - Postsecondary Graduation
- 2.3.2 Workforce Outcomes:
  - Time to Employment
  - Employment Location(s)
  - Industry Placement
  - Employment Gaps



**nswers**

# Thank You

Next meeting October 27, 2021 @ 1:30 p.m. CST  
Location TBD