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

AGENDA

- 1. **CALL TO ORDER**
 - 1.1 Roll Call
 - 1.2 Announcement of the placement of the Open Meetings Act information
- 2. **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**
 - 2.1 Public Comment (5 minutes)
- 3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT
 - 3.1 Additions or Corrections to Agenda
- 4. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
- 5. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**
- 6. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
- 7. **ACTION ITEMS**
 - 7.1 Approve Minutes of the NSWERS Business Meeting June 9, 2021
 - 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
- 8. **ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**
- 9. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS
- 10. INFORMATION ITEMS AND REPORTS
- 11. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

June 9, 2021 2:30 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 Dr. Susan Fritz called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.
 - 1.1 Roll Call

Roll Call showed the following NSWERS members in attendance:

- Dr. Susan Fritz, President
- Dr. Paul Turman, Vice President
- Dr. Matthew Blomstedt, Secretary/Treasurer
- Dr. Paul Illich, Member
- 1.2 Announcement of the placement of the Open Meetings Act information

President Fritz 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 Dr. Matthew Blomstedt, second by Dr. Paul Illich.

Dr. Paul Illich	Yea
Dr. Matthew Blomstedt	Yea
Dr. Paul Turman	Yea
Dr. Susan Fritz	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.)

Dr. Hastings provided an unaudited draft NSWERS Treasurer's Report. Dr. Hastings would appreciate Council members looking over and see if this format is acceptable or if changes are to be made. Once in final format, it is expected this report will be available at each NSWERS Executive Council Business meeting moving forward.

Dr. Hastings gave an update of the progress of implementing the Strategic Plan. Dr. Hastings and the Management Council are identifying specific measures around the tactics, strategies and objectives of the Strategic Plan to begin the implementation July 1, 2021.

Goal 1 – Establishing a Data System. Dr. Hastings reported that he and the Management Council are building out a specific resource plan, roadmap, and concept model around how NSWERS will actualize the work that is outlined in the Strategic Plan. A concept model will be presented to the Executive Council at a later date.

The Legislative Report LB 1160 is due to the Legislature on December 1. Dr. Hastings reported that the Strategic Plan, NSWERS budget and NSWERS Information and Research Agenda will be the key pieces to the LB 1160 report. The report is to outline what NSWERS needs from the Legislature in funding and support in encouraging other agencies to support and provide data to NSWERS. Drafts of the Report will be coming to the Executive Council in the coming months.

Dr. Hastings reported that continued work building out the NSWERS Communication Plan is vital. With the POC coming online hopefully in a few weeks there is a lot of interest from funders, philanthropic partners, and friends/advocates about the work NSWERS is doing and they really want to contribute, report and help. The NSWERS has been a long time coming and they are starting to see things come together and we want to keep an open communication with them about NSWERS. Dr. Hastings conveyed that getting a plan on paper to define how to collectively work with the Legislature, work with policymakers, etc. will help sustain a funding plan.

Dr. Hastings and the Management Council continue the development and establishment of an organizational structure. This includes creating the Advisory Committee, which is built into NSWERS bylaws. There is a lot of interest from funders, philanthropic partners and friends/advocates to be on the NSWERS Advisory Committee. This is an opportunity to have them in a role to be engaged in discussions and have the NSWERS be actively aware of saliant workforce topics.

Dr. Hastings stated that next month the expenditures for FY 2021 will be discussed as well as considering a waiver from the Nebraska State Auditor while continuing to have private audits.

Dr. Turman inquired about the Data and Technical Committee and their members. Dr. Hastings reported that all entities on the Executive Council have an IT and IR representative on the Committee. State colleges has one from Lincoln, and two each at Chadron, Peru and Wayne State Colleges; each Community College campus have two representatives; and, the University System office as well as each campus have representation on the Committee. This Committee meets every other week and are instrumental as NSWERS builds out the work, sharing the data and doing the matching of the data for the POC project.

Dr. Hastings reported that work continues with the Policy and Standard Operating procedures. One product of that work is the Data Sharing and Management Policy which each of the Executive Council members have reviewed and offered feedback as well as from the Management Council and legal counsel. This Policy includes a decision-making matrix (Appendix A) which offers a shorthand version of what the Policy puts into play when a request for data is received by NSWERS. Data can be received by the requestor in two options: Online and export. Export is that NSWERS allows you to go into the system and download file to do your work and online means NSWERS will make the data available to you but not available in downloadable form but by a virtual machine in which you have a secure login and password managed by NSWERS. NSWERS will make the data available under contractual time period and when that contractual period is over, the system will automatically have data credential decertified and no access after that point. NSWERS is purposely starting off more conservative on the sharing policy knowing that as time goes along and it will be re-evaluated as implementation moves forward.

Dr. Hastings offered the multi-tier approach for staffing of NSWERS. The University has an alternate approach that is for consideration as well. In addition to the core staffing NSWERS also acquires specialty contract services and these are for positions that either NSWERS did not have from the beginning and needed to get things moving and it is Dr. Hastings deduction that as time moves on, there will always be some things that will need specialty contract services, i.e. legal services, etc.

Dr. Hastings reports that the Proof of Concept (POC) continues to evolve. The NDE has shared their data and now the postsecondary entities are doing their matching. Some postsecondary entities are experiencing different nuances and the NSWERS Data and Technical Committee members are reaching out to these entities with resources of support for the uncovering nuances in the data to help them in downloading their files. Once that data is matched, the next step is to send to the Department of Labor (DOL).

Dr. Hastings updated the Executive Council on the Nebraska Person ID System. There are a lot of conversations across public education entities regarding how a K-12 space, the Early Childhood space, higher ed space would be able to share electronic high school transcripts. Many organizations use Parchment but not all and as the data matching process continues it is becoming clear that the Nebraska Person ID System was created for purposes of having a unique identifier for the K-12 space. It has been extended to support some of the pieces for postsecondary but there are likely enhancements that NSWERS will need to make in the system in order to take this data sharing process across the whole spectrum from Early Childhood all the way to the workforce.

Dr. Hastings communicated that work is being undertaken to design and execute data acquisition implementing a secured web-based portal. Thinking about how best to exchange data, SFTP process, secure API and web services, and quality control processes. NSWERS working with NU IT services making sure working with robust security around all data. Dr. Hastings is also conveyed plans to have annual staff security training for NSWERS staff.

Goal 2 – Evaluate Efficacy. Dr. Hastings reported that this goal is further behind as this goal cannot go into play until the data system is established. In the meantime, NSWERS will adopt solutions for timeliness, relevance and accuracy. Dr. Hastings and Management Council, along with Magnolia, are working on a NSWERS Information Agenda. It is the goal of NSWERS to work out a process that has a 90-day cycle, from the time that the data element or question is actually identified, to completion of request. A draft of the NSWERS Information Agenda will be brought before the Executive Council next month.

Dr. Hastings stated that with data now flowing for the POC project, it is time to bring in some core staff to move this operation forward. A NSWERS position announcement is posted now for an Assistant Director, Research and Evaluation. This position will have highly advanced technical skills and expertise in simulation-based methods to support NSWERS operations.

Dr. Hastings reported on how NSWERS will release data and disseminate findings. This will involve a NSWERS data clearinghouse, offer a suite of services and focus on making the data product available.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS (none)

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

6.1 Receive, review, and discuss legal advice from the organization's attorney regarding NU-NSWERS Service Agreement.

Motion for the Council to enter closed session to receive, review, and discuss the legal advice from the organization's attorney as the motion is clearly necessary to protect the public's interest and to maintain the attorney-client privilege passed with a motion by Dr. Matthew Blomstedt, second by Dr. Paul Turman.

Dr. Matthew Blomstedt Yea
Dr. Paul Illich Yea
Dr. Susan Fritz Yea
Dr. Paul Turman Yea

Executive Session began 3:15 p.m.

Motion for the Council to end the closed session to receive, review, and discuss the legal advice from the organization's attorney passed with a motion by Dr. Paul Illich, second by Dr. Paul Turman.

Dr. Paul Illich Yea
Dr. Susan Fritz Yea
Dr. Paul Turman Yea
Dr. Matthew Blomstedt Yea

Executive Session ended 4:20 p.m.

7. ACTION ITEMS

7.1 Approve Minutes of NSWERS business meeting, April 26, 2021.

Motion to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2021 NSWERS Business meeting passed with a motion by Dr. Matthew Blomstedt, second by Dr. Paul Illich.

Dr. Susan Fritz Yea
Dr. Paul Turman Yea
Dr. Matthew Blomstedt Yea
Dr. Paul Illich Yea

7.2 Discuss, consider and take all necessary action regarding proposed NSWERS Data Sharing and Management Policy

Motion to approve the proposed NSWERS Data Sharing and Management Policy passed with a motion by Dr. Paul Turman, second by Dr. Matthew Blomstedt.

Discussion: Dr. Turman conveyed his and Dr. Kupper's appreciation of meeting with Dr. Hastings one-on-one and incorporating language that NSWERS has final authority of whatever publications that may surface, and it is important that ultimately NSWERS enter into this that entities will come to NSWERS for data and that NSWERS will still have some ownership of how they utilize that data. Dr. Turman also appreciated adding language in 16 and 17 of NSWERS destroying data which mean other entities cannot replicate it somewhere else and create new publications. Dr. Hastings did a great job in putting this together so that none of the Executive Council members are adversely impacted because of a data project that may surface at a later date.

Dr. Paul Turman Yea
Dr. Matthew Blomstedt Yea
Dr. Paul Illich Yea
Dr. Susan Fritz Yea

7.3 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action regarding the Annual Performance Evaluation for the NSWERS Executive Director

Motion to approve the Annual Performance Evaluation for the NSWERS Executive Director passed with a motion from Dr. Paul Illich, second by Dr. Paul Turman.

Discussion: Dr. Fritz stated that NSWERS is fortunate to have Dr. Hastings as the Executive Director and everything that he shared with the Executive Council in the process of tooling that position we are seeing that coming forward in not only the work products but also in his behavior. Dr. Hastings is clearly our collaborator working with the Management Council and others and his persistence and integrity have been incredible. It is a pleasure to have you with us.

Dr. Illich expressed his appreciation for Dr. Hastings and his good communication skills in reaching out to everyone.

Dr. Turman expressed that he certainly appreciates the collaborative nature of how Dr. Hastings approaches this work and as he sits across these four Council members who understand the complexities of bringing together disparate data silos and ultimately once we can merge them together the first time it will make an easy pathway moving forward. Certainly, looking forward to the Proof of Concept project and then really what phase two will represent down the road, so nice work in your first year.

Dr. Blomstedt added that as hard as this group would be to please, he knows that the group "out there" is even harder to please sometimes. Dr. Blomstedt appreciates how Dr. Hastings has led and managed and has really set a path for where this can go and the vision for it.

Dr. Fritz stated for the record that this Council is following the College University HR Policy and its annual evaluation, and she also engaged with each Executive Council member with a draft of the annual evaluation for Dr. Hastings which then was approved and shared with Dr. Hastings and it is signed and in his HR file.

Dr. Paul Illich Yea
Dr. Susan Fritz Yea
Dr. Paul Turman Yea
Dr. Matthew Blomstedt Yea

7.4 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action regarding NSWERS Fiscal Strategy

Motion to approve the proposed NSWERS Fiscal Strategy passed with a motion from Dr. Paul Turman, second by Dr. Paul Illich.

Discussion: Dr. Turman stated that the Master Service Agreement states that the 5% contribution to the University system is tied to total budget, is it expenditures or what we have allocated toward the budget at the end of the year? Also, the unrestricted funds, what level of commitment was there for the donors for what we produce as outcomes and is the vast majority of that restricted or unrestricted?

Dr. Hastings stated that the agreements basically say that the funds from the private foundations are for purposes of executing against the original NSWERS proposal which, in fact, was a summary version of this plan and is identified in the Strategic Plan. Dr. Hastings stated it is 5% of amount budgeted for Year 4, was \$85,000 then \$100,000.

Dr. Blomstedt wanted to make one point of addressing revenues relative to funds coming from NDE/State Board of Education. Dr. Blomstedt stated that this is a key investment for the NDE to ensure that data is being gathered to be used in the most effective manner and continue future funding commitments for NSWERS and is one of the NDE key strategies to address.

Dr. Matthew Blomstedt	Yea
Dr. Paul Turman	Yea
Dr. Susan Fritz	Yea
Dr. Paul Illich	Yea

7.5 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action regarding the NSWERS Staffing Plan

Motion to approve the proposed NSWERS Staffing Plan passed with a motion from Dr. Matthew Blomstedt, second by Dr. Paul Illich.

Discussion: Dr. Blomstedt stated that this is important to approve, in his view, and to be aware of the importance of the issues we will have and continue to insure that as we go through the staffing.

Dr. Susan Fritz	Yea
Dr. Paul Illich	Yea
Dr. Matthew Blomstedt	Yea
Dr. Paul Turman	Yea

7.6 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action regarding the NU-SNWERS Service Agreement in effect through June 30, 2021.

Motion to give 180-day notice of non-renewal on the NU Service Agreement which is in effect until June 30, 2021 passed with a motion from Dr. Paul Illich, second by Dr. Paul Turman.

Discussion: Dr. Blomstedt stated that this action is required under Item 12 in the Service Agreement and requires that in order for this Council to provide notification of the duration that NSWERS is actually providing notice of termination of the current Agreement under this Motion, so Dr. Blomstedt just wanted Council members to be aware and understand that that is what the motion intended.

Dr. Paul Illich	Yea
Dr. Matthew Blomstedt	Yea
Dr. Susan Fritz	Yea
Dr. Paul Turman	Yea

Motion to direct Dr. Hastings, in his capacity as Executive Director, to lead the revisions of the Service Agreement between NU and NSWERS passed with a motion from Dr. Turman, second by Dr. Matthew Blomstedt,

Discussion: Dr. Turman stated that essentially when certain points of the Service Agreement were first negotiated almost a year ago, the Council had envisioned some initial challenges and hurdles so this action is warranted to continue to have those conversations and ask NSWERS legal counsel to engage collectively with all of the Council member's legal staff so the Service Agreement essentially meets how the Executive Council envisions NSWERS moving forward.

Dr. Blomstedt added that he thinks parts of the dynamics within the current Service Agreement is too general relative to the work that NSWERS now knows, and it is important to have the proper foundation to make sure that this body, as the Executive Council and the University, functioning in a fiscal agent responsibility, are sufficiently clear. Dr. Blomstedt looks forward to seeing a draft.

Dr. Susan Fritz Yea
Dr. Matthew Blomstedt Yea
Dr. Paul Illich Yea
Dr. Paul Turman Yea

8. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

9. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

As the Executive Council acknowledges Dr. Susan Fritz retiring from the University, the Council submits a Resolution to recognize Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reports System (NSWERS) Executive Council Member, Dr. Susan M. Fritz. Dr. Turman read the Resolution and it is made a part of this record. (See attached)

10. INFORMATION ITEMS AND REPORT

8. ADJOURNMENT

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

Dr. Susan Fritz	Yea
Dr. Paul Turman	Yea
Dr. Matthew Blomstedt	Yea
Dr. Paul Illich	Yea

President Fritz adjourned the meeting at 4:42 p.m.

A NSWERS Executive Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 28, 2021 at a time and place to be determined.



nswers

Executive Director's Report

Matthew J. Hastings, Ph.D.

June 6, 2021



nswers

Object Goal 1 Overall Objective 1.1 Objective 1.4 Objective 1.3 Objective 1.2 Design and Execute Data Acquisition **Define NSWERS Data Collection** Develop and Implement Foundational Elements Establish NSWERS Data System Progress Towards Strategic Plan Description Optimize Data Processing and Protect Digital Assets 35% Complete 0% Complete 48% Complete 29% Complete 19% Complete Status 15% Complete



Goal 1 Establish Data System

1.1 Develop & Implement Foundational Elements

- 1.1.1 Define Organizational Strategies
- Strategic Direction
- Concept Model "NSWERS Engine"
- Roadmap Gantt Chart with Target Dates
- Resource Plan Staffing Assignments/Responsibilities
- Legislative Report (LB 1160)
- Strategic Plan + Budget + Information/Research Agenda
- Communications Plan
- Partners + Funders + Friends/Advocates
- Philanthropic Engagement
- 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
- Role in helping evaluate and refine salient topics
- **Audit Services**
- At the next Executive Council meeting (07/28/21) review FY21 fiscal position
- Consider requires for waiver of public audit from the Nebraska State Auditor of **Public Accounts**

1.1 Develop & Implement Foundational Elements

- 1.1.3 Create and Implement Organizational Systems
- Board Policies & Standard Operating Procedures
- NSWERS Data Sharing & Management Policy and Procedures

		NSWERS	NSWERS Data Request Decision Matrix	Decision Matr	х			
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	Student		Source Directory					
Requestor	Relationship	Relationship Data Use Classification	Information	NSWERS Approval	al IRB Approval	Appendix E	Financial	Access
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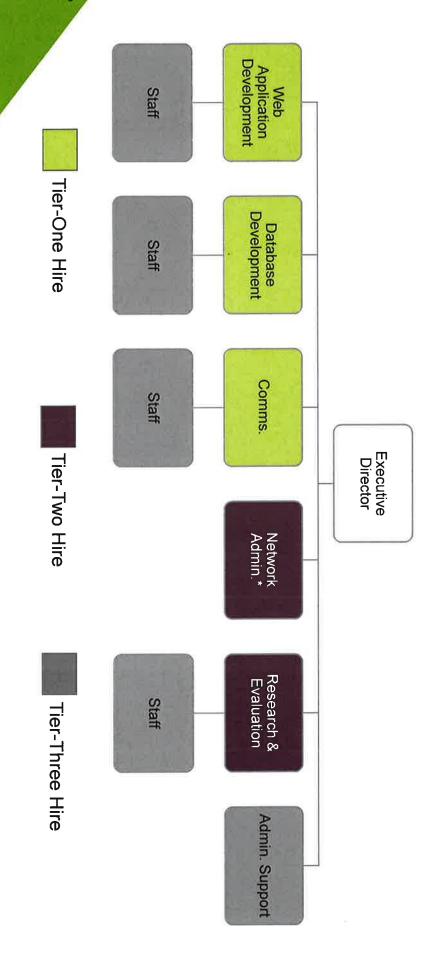




Develop & Implement Foundational Elements

- 1.1.4 Acquire & Maintain Organizational Skills
- Multi-Tier Staffing Approach
- NSWERS Staffing Plan
- Specialty Contract SupportFor example:
- Student1 IT Professional Services
- Magnolia Research & Evaluation Professional Services
- KSB Law Legal Services

NSWERS Multi-Tier Staffing Plan



1.2 Define NSWERS Data Collection

- Update Proof of Concept Project
- NDE has shared base cohort file
- NSWERS made available matching file to postsecondary education
- Postsecondaries are now uploading matched files
- Uncovering questions, issues, nuance, opportunities
- Next stop, NDOL
- 1.2.2 Leverage Nebraska Person ID System
- Conversations across public education entities related to Parchment, electronic transcripts, information sharing, technical challenges

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
- Secure API and web services
- 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

1.4 Optimize Data Processing & Protect Digital Assets

- 1.4.1 Robust Data Security Process
- Physical and Network Security
- Two-Factor Authentication
- Access Controls
- Encryption of Data
- Staff Security Training
- 1.4.2 Data Governance ProgramPolicy and Procedure
- NSWERS Data Inventory
- Data Access



Object	Description	Status
Overall	Progress Towards Strategic Plan	19% Complete
Goal 2	Evaluate Efficacy	9% Complete
Objective 2.1	Create NSWERS Information Agenda	34% Complete
Objective 2.2	า Operations	1% Complete
Objective 2.3	Report on Longitudinal Outcomes	0% Complete
Objective 2.4	Release Data and Disseminate Research Findings 0% Complete	0% Complete

nswers Goal 2



Evaluate Efficacy

2.1 Create NSWERS Information Agenda

- 2.1.1 Adopt solutions for timeliness, relevance and accuracy
- **NSWERS Engine concept**
- Created in partnership with Magnolia Research
- Present, edit and refine through Management Committee before bringing to the Executive Council for consideration next month

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
- 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**

2.4 Release Data & Disseminate Findings

- 2.4.1 Establish and maintain NSWERS data clearinghouse for DaaP
- 2.4.2 Establish and maintain NSWERS DaaS enterprise
- 2.4.3 Create or acquire communication methods and platforms
- Public and secure
- 2.4.4 Strengthen awareness, facilitate collaborations, drive system improvement



nswers

Resolution to Recognize Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS) Executive Council Member, Dr. Susan M. Fritz

- WHEREAS, Susan Fritz represented the University of Nebraska as a member of the Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS) Executive Council;
- WHEREAS, Susan Fritz served with distinction as the founding President of the Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS) Executive Council;
- WHEREAS, Susan Fritz contributed to the development of the Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS) organization through tireless relationship building among Nebraska's education and workforce stakeholders;
- WHEREAS, Susan Fritz led efforts to secure private resources to enable the launch of the Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS) organization;
- WHEREAS, Susan Fritz championed the NSWERS purpose with the Nebraska Legislature, rallied support from leading decision makers throughout the State, and was instrumental in the development of the inaugural NSWERS Strategic Approach and Plan; now, therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, that the NSWERS Executive Council recognizes and thanks
 Susan Fritz for her service and contributions to the Nebraska Statewide
 Workforce & Educational System (NSWERS).

Signed on behalf of the NSWERS Executive Council this ninth day of June, Two Thousand and Twenty-One.