

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

April 29, 2026, 1:30 p.m.

Nebraska Department of Education, Room 204
500 S. 84th Street, Lincoln, NE 68510

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 Leah Barrett called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1.1 ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed the following Executive Council members in **attendance**:

President Leah Barrett, NSWERS President
Dr. Matthew Blomstedt, NSWERS Member
(as proxy for Dr. Jeffrey Gold)
Chancellor Paul Turman, NSWERS Secretary/Treasurer
Mr. Lane Carr, NSWERS Vice President
(as proxy for Dr. Brian Maher)

Jordan Johnson, NSWERS Legal Counsel via Zoom

**1.2 ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PLACEMENT OF THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT
INFORMATION**

Dr. Barrett announced that information regarding the Open Meetings Act is available at the meeting room entrance and on the NSWERS.org website.

- 2. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA**

2.1 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No public comment.

2.2 APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

No agenda items were removed, added, or corrected. Approval of the agenda as presented passed with a motion by Dr. Blomstedt, seconded by Dr. Turman.

Dr. Blomstedt	Yea
Dr. Turman	Yea
Dr. Barrett	Yea
Mr. Carr	Yea

2.3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM NSWERS BUSINESS MEETING, JANUARY 28, 2026

Motion to approve the minutes of January 28, 2026, NSWERS Executive Council Business meeting passed with a motion by Dr. Turman, seconded by Dr. Blomstedt.

Dr. Turman	Yea
Mr. Carr	Yea
Dr. Blomstedt	Yea
Dr. Barrett	Yea

3. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION

3.1 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action with respect to the NSWERS interlocal agreement.

A significant discussion focused on proposed revisions to the NSWERS interlocal agreement and bylaws. The major revision would be to add the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) and the Department of Labor as formal interlocal partners, thus expanding governance participation. Secondly, it creates flexibility for philanthropic organizations, tribal colleges, private institutions, and other non-public partners. Thirdly, it allows you to exercise your judgment and remove members from the interlocal agreement.

The Council members generally support broader collaboration but emphasized the need to distinguish voting members from non-voting/ex officio members. The Council also stated that entities that do not contribute financially or provide certain datasets should not automatically have budget authority, leadership roles, or full governance powers. A strong emphasis was placed on data stewardship. Protecting partner authority over data use. Maintaining limits on who makes decisions regarding data access and analytics.

Members requested an executive summary consisting of a one-page rationale/vision document explaining why expansion matters, its strategic value, and a long-term governance approach.

No action was taken.

3.2 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action with respect to the proposed budget for NSWERS for the fiscal year 2027. (Support document-NSWERS budget FY 2026-2027)

A review of the proposed budget highlighted the following items. The NSWERS budget remains largely flat compared with previous projections. Roughly \$50,000 adjustment

added for office relocation/move-related costs. Budget includes: **3%** talent/merit pool increase for staff. Major costs include personnel, contracts, and operations. NSWERS has a healthy carryover of funds from the prior year due to conservative spending practices. The carryover is being used to meet reserve requirements (8%) and fund future office relocation expenses.

Council members encouraged continued budget history reporting. Long-term financial storytelling and advocacy showing growth, impact, and strategic direction.

The motion to approve the budget for fiscal year 2027 was passed, moved by Dr. Turman and seconded by Dr. Blomstedt.

Dr. Turman	Yea
Dr. Barrett	Yea
Mr. Carr	Yea
Dr. Blomstedt	Yea

3.3 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action with respect to the proposed Revisions to the NSWERS Data specifications, version 1.5. (Support Document-Data Specifications Revisions)

Discussion included adding a new Transfer Courses File to better understand student transfer pathways. This will capture incoming transfer coursework, source institutions, credit articulation, and transfer effectiveness. This supports postsecondary transfer analysis, policy development, and evaluation collaborations.

Additionally, adding Local Program ID fields to enrollment and award files. This enables more precise program-level analysis and clearer differentiation among transfer-oriented programs, workforce/terminal programs, and institution-specific pathways.

The motion to approve NSWERS Data Specifications v1.5 was passed, moved by Dr. Turman and seconded by Mr. Carr.

Dr. Barrett	Yea
Dr. Turman	Yea
Dr. Blomstedt	Yea
Mr. Carr	Yea

3.4 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action with respect to the proposed Revisions to the NSWERS Information & Research Agenda, version 2.1. (Support Document-NSWERS Information & Research Agenda v2.1)

Discussion included the proposed updates to the research constructs to reflect newly approved transfer data. New language formally authorizes work on synthetic data, differential privacy, data masking, suppression methods, and confidentiality protections. Doing so helps to improve privacy protections while preserving evaluation capability. It also provides planned releases of several different studies.

The motion to approve NSWERS Information & Research Agenda v2.1 was passed, moved by Dr. Blomstedt and seconded by Mr. Carr.

Dr. Blomstedt	Yea
Mr. Carr	Yea
Dr. Turman	Yea
Dr. Barrett	Yea

3.5 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action with respect to the proposed Revisions to the NSWERS Data Management Policies and Procedures. (Support Document-NSWERS Data Management Policy and Procedures v2.7)

New language allows the NSWERS Management Committee to decide to modify a level two data request. The Management Committee will also have the authority to approve a modification that might add an additional data element. Of note, this is for requests that have already been reviewed and approved by the NSWERS Executive Council.

The motion to approve the revised NSWERS Data Management Policies and Procedures was passed, moved by Dr. Turman and seconded by Dr. Blomstedt.

Mr. Carr	Yea
Dr. Blomstedt	Yea
Dr. Barrett	Yea
Dr. Turman	Yea

3.6 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action with respect to the proposed Revisions to the NSWERS Business & Finance policies: 6002, 6006, 6016, 6101, 6104, 6400, 6401, and 6801. (Support Document-NSWERS Business & Finance Policy Edits PROPOSED 042926)

The operative policy change is to policy #6002, signature authority. It will allow a single authorized signature for purchases up to \$75,000. Corporate surety bonds under a specific Nebraska statute don't apply to NSWERS, so the new verbiage will read "bonding and/or insurance."

The motion to approve the proposed revisions to NSWERS Business & Finance Policies was passed, moved by Dr. Turman and seconded by Dr. Blomstedt.

Dr. Barrett	Yea
Dr. Turman	Yea
Dr. Blomstedt	Yea
Mr. Carr	Yea

3.7 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action to nominate and appoint a Secretary-Treasurer of the NSWERS Executive Council.

The motion to appoint Dr. Leah Barrett as Secretary-Treasurer of the NSWERS Executive Council was passed, moved by Dr. Turman and seconded by Dr. Blomstedt.

Dr. Blomstedt	Yea
Mr. Carr	Yea
Dr. Turman	Yea
Dr. Barrett	Yea

3.8 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action to nominate and appoint a Vice President of the NSWERS Executive Council.

The motion to appoint the next NSWERS Vice President of the NSWERS Executive Council was passed, moved by Dr. Barrett and seconded by Mr. Carr. Dr. Blomstedt shared that Dr. Gold also expressed interest in this role or other roles. Therefore, he would abstain from the vote.

Dr. Turman	Yea
Dr. Barrett	Yea
Mr. Carr	Yea
Dr. Blomstedt	Abstained

3.9 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action with respect to the Avenue Scholars evaluation proposal. (Support Document-Memo Supporting Avenue Scholars Evaluation)

Dr. Alex Broderson presented recommendations from the NSWERS Management Committee regarding the Avenue Scholars Evaluation Proposal. The proposed evaluation will examine the career path of a high school student who continues through either post-secondary education or training and then enters the workforce.

The Council discussed the value of the evaluation and its alignment with the NSWERS mission and research agenda.

The motion to approve the Avenue Scholars evaluation proposal was passed, moved by Dr. Turman and seconded by Mr. Carr.

Mr. Carr	Yea
Dr. Blomstedt	Yea
Dr. Barrett	Yea
Dr. Turman	Yea

3.10 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action with respect to the Sixpence evaluation proposal. (Support Document-Memo Supporting Sixpence Evaluation)

Dr. Alex Broderson presented the NSWERS Management Committee's recommendations on the Sixpence Early Learning Fund Evaluation Proposal. The proposed evaluation will

assess the Sixpence Program within Nebraska's early childhood program. It will examine the educational outcomes associated with participation in the program. The Council discussed the importance of evaluating early childhood interventions and long-term outcomes.

The motion to approve the Sixpence evaluation proposal was passed, moved by Dr. Turman and seconded by Dr. Blomstedt.

Dr. Blomstedt	Yea
Mr. Carr	Yea
Dr. Turman	Yea
Dr. Barrett	Abstained

3.11 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action with respect to the Student Tuition and Transparency System and Workforce Outcomes for Northeast Community College data request. (Support Document-Memo Supporting NCC Data Request)

This is a request for NCC records that they submit in the system to be linked with other information in the NSWERS system. The goal is to find out what is happening to their students upon exit, earnings, whether they are working, and whether they are being retained in state. The Council discussed the intended use of the requested data and compliance with NSWERS policies.

The motion to accept the Student Tuition and Transparency System and Workforce Outcomes for Northeast Community College data request was passed, moved by Dr. Blomstedt and seconded by Dr. Turman.

Dr. Barrett	Abstained
Dr. Turman	Yea
Dr. Blomstedt	Yea
Mr. Carr	Yea

3.12 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action with respect to a lease for office space with Nebraska Nova at Nebraska Innovation Campus. (Support Document-NSWERS Office Letter Of Intent)

Dr. Hastings reviewed the proposed lease arrangement with Nebraska Nova (NU Innovation Campus). The proposed lease would provide expanded office and meeting space for NSWERS operations. The Council discussed costs, available space, meeting facilities, and lease protections, including an early termination provision.

The motion to authorize the Executive Director, in consultation with the NSWERS Executive Council President and Legal Counsel, to negotiate and execute a multi-year lease for office space with Nebraska Nova at Nebraska Innovation Campus was passed, moved by Dr. Turman and seconded by Dr. Blomstedt.

Dr. Turman	Yea
Dr. Barrett	Yea
Mr. Carr	Yea
Dr. Blomstedt	Yea

3.13 Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action with respect to a Teaming agreement with Mathematica, Inc. for the United States Department of Education Regional Education Laboratory Program (REL) 2027-2031 Central. (Support Document 103 TA. 1736 NSWERS)

Dr. Hastings reviewed the proposed Teaming Agreement with Mathematica, Inc.

The Council discussed the agenda item at length, weighing the potential benefits and drawbacks of entering into the teaming agreement. In the course of that discussion, members considered NSWERS's interest in being positioned to work with whichever entity is ultimately awarded the REL 2027-2031 Central contract. The Council concluded that NSWERS is best served by maintaining neutrality so that it can partner with the eventual contractor for this work, regardless of which entity prevails.

Ultimately, the Council decided to take no action on the Teaming Agreement with Mathematica, Inc.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Matt Hastings, Executive Director of NSWERS, provided a brief report to the NSWERS Executive Council. His topics included a review of the NSWERS 2030 Strategic Plan and an update on the status of partner contribution MOUs and related invoices. Dr. Hastings reported that NSWERS's business and finance operations have moved further in-house, consistent with the Executive Council's intent in adopting its new business and finance policies. Accordingly, NSWERS now distributes detailed monthly expense reports to the NSWERS Executive Council President and Treasurer, and those monthly reports are then combined and presented to the full Executive Council at its quarterly business meetings. Dr. Hastings also reported that all NSWERS insurance policies have been updated and bound for the coming fiscal year, reminding the Council that these include cyber liability, crime, and public officials' policies.

5. INFORMATION ITEMS AND REPORT

5.1 Treasurer's Report (Chancellor Paul Turman and Dr. Matt Hastings) (Support Documents-NSWERS Expense Detail March 26 and Financial Report)

Dr. Turman provided the Treasurer's Report and shared that he met with Dr. Hastings prior to the Executive Committee meeting to discuss and plan the FY 27 budget. He noted that Dr. Hastings will provide the Executive Council with a six-year snapshot of NSWERS expenditures in relation to the budget in the coming days.

5.2 Nebraska Math Readiness Partnership Evaluation (Dr. Alex Brodersen)

Dr. Alex Brodersen provided the Executive Council with an update on the Nebraska Math Readiness Partnership (NMRP) evaluation project. NMRP is a dual-enrollment program that prepares students for college-level math before they graduate from high school. Key findings from the evaluation indicate that participating students were more likely to complete credit-bearing math once enrolled in college, and that students who did not progress all the way through the program still received significant benefits. Given the number of eligible students, the evaluation points to a strong opportunity to expand the program's implementation, as detailed in the NMRP evaluation. The full analysis will be available to the public in the coming days on the NSWERS Insights webpage at insights.nswers.org.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the NSWERS Executive Council Business Meeting passed with a motion from Dr. Blomstedt and seconded by Dr. Turman.

Mr. Carr	Yea
Dr. Blomstedt	Yea
Dr. Barrett	Yea
Dr. Turman	Yea

President Barrett adjourned the meeting at 4:18 p.m.

The next NSWERS Executive Council Meeting is scheduled for July 22, 2026, 1:30 PM, at the Nebraska State College System Board Room.