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State Councils on Developmental Disabilities (DD) Program Performance Report for FY 2019

Mary Gordon DD Planning Council/HHS -
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Grant Number: 1901NESCDD

Section I: Identification

* - Required input

To provide identifying information of the reporting Council

1. State/Territory*

Nebraska

2. Federal Fiscal Year Reporting*

October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019

3. Contact person regarding PPR information*

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Section II: Comprehensive Review and Analysis

* - Required field

Adequacy of health care and other services, supports and assistance that individuals with developmental disabilities in Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF) receive

There are thirteen ICFs in Nebraska including four state facilities and nine private facilities. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, is identified as the survey agency within Nebraska. All facilities have been surveyed within the past year by representatives of Regulation and Licensure within the Division of Public Health. Regulation and Licensure is responsible for surveys and complaint investigations for all ICFs in the state and surveys and complaint investigations for all licensed Centers for the Developmentally Disabled (CDD) facilities in the state. There were 103 licensed CDDs in the state as of November 2019.

In response to the September 2006 de-certification by CMS of Nebraska's ICF, Beatrice State Developmental Center (BSDC), the state put resources into correcting the deficiencies cited and chose to split the BSDC campus into four separate ICFs and license them individually. Surveys continue to be positive, finding those surveyed to be in compliance with all eight ICF Conditions of Participation. There has been an investment in additional medical personnel, both staff and consultants. Medical professionals and others can participate during meetings through videoconferencing. Residents who previously lived at BSDC and now live in community settings may return to BSDC for dental care at their onsite clinic. In addition, Nebraska has nine additional ICFs operated by Mosaic – two are larger facilities while the other seven are smaller facilities with six to nine residents each. These smaller ICFs primarily serve individuals with complex medical needs and were established as a result of the decision to downsize BSDC and move individuals closer to their families.

A total of 345 individuals lived in the thirteen ICFs at the time of the surveys. Current licensed beds verses filled beds at time of survey are recorded on the following chart:

At the Beatrice State Developmental Center (BSDC), the qualified developmental disabilities professional (QDDP) schedules interdisciplinary team (IDT) meetings, ensuring that the staff who have expertise in the area(s) of concern are present. IDT meetings pertain to a symptom or a potential diagnosis, or team queries related to question(s) of a medical condition or a diagnosis based on an observation by direct care staff and/or nursing.

The healthcare services at BSDC include evaluation, assessment, and treatment of medical, clinical, dental, and behavioral needs of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). BSDC applies a person-centered, interdisciplinary care that mitigates existing health conditions, improves quality of life, and prevents development of complications. The clinical database tracks each participant and includes information on yearly risk screenings for physical and nutritional concerns, dental and specialty referral, psychiatry services, behavioral counseling, and behavior support plans. Quality improvement processes that assure participant and guardian satisfaction, and measure successful, effective health outcomes that align with healthcare elements, which may include but are not limited to: BMI improvement, blood pressure control, diabetes control, and a reduction in hospital visits. BSDC participants receive comprehensive therapeutic plan development upon referral, followed by care transition to a physician or specialist in the community as needed. All BSDC participants have person-centered healthcare plans and use all available services.

Participants and guardians are happy with BSDC healthcare services. In addition, PCP referral services to community specialists allows for a medical point-of-contact and a seamless care continuum. BSDC has an indicator that tracks quarterly “individual satisfaction” through an individual satisfaction survey. Each participant completes a satisfaction survey at the time of their Annual ISP. BSDC summarizes and analyzes the data based on the participants who had an ISP in the quarter and completed the survey.

BSDC monitors service satisfaction with:

- Day Services/Opportunities;
- Recreation/Leisure Services/Opportunities;
- Living Arrangements; and
- Health and Wellness Services/Opportunities (including the medical services).

Throughout 2016 and 2017, staff within the DD Division performed an in-depth analysis of BSDC in response to LB 895 that passed during the 2016 Legislative Session. LB 895 required the DD Division to publish a report to the Legislature of the status and future planning for BSDC. The report, submitted to the Legislature on June 1, 2017, Long-Term Viability of State-Operated Facilities for Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, provided information on nationwide trends, facility census trends, long-term structural needs, cost efficiency of services provided, role of state-operated services in the continuum of care, preferences of participants, their families, and community capacity to serve participants that currently reside at BSDC.

LB 895 gave the DD Division the opportunity to provide recommendations regarding the future of BSDC. Report recommendations were focused on a graduated rebalancing of state resources by building community capacity while continuing to improve the quality of care for those participants who continue to reside at BSDC. The recommendations of the report took into account a graduated transition that provides positive health, safety, and personal outcomes for each participant served at BSDC.

The LB 895 report identified developmental disability service gaps in Nebraska. These included medical shortages of psychiatric, behavioral, dental, and other therapies. Additionally, the long-term care needs are challenging when trying to find placement for individuals with complex medical and behavioral health needs. Another issue included behavioral support gaps, including no licensing requirements for BCBA's and a shortage of psychologists and LMHPs. The report reflected the lack of crisis supports in the state. There is nowhere to go when an individual is in a crisis situation and requires medication stabilization or when a caregiver simply needs a break. Nebraskans who live in rural areas lack access to disability supports and services, including a lack of tele-health options. The report highlighted the provider capacity issue, citing waiver stabilization efforts underway and new regulations and requirements as factors.

The preliminary recommendation of the report was for BSDC to continue operating as it was supporting the participants that currently live at BSDC and provide:

1. Respite services. The report noted that BSDC would prepare to serve as a respite provider of last resort. The report predicted that services would be available on or before February 1, 2018, and that the staff team at BSDC would actively work through the licensing process. However, due to the high demand for acute crisis stabilization services at BSDC, the state decided in FFY 18 to postpone licensing BSDC as a respite provider.
2. Crisis intervention support and consultative assessment services. The DD Division established three teams consisting of licensed and skilled professionals available to assist with community based crisis stabilization. These teams are located in Beatrice, Lincoln, and Omaha and have the ability to travel.
3. Acute crisis stabilization as an ICF admission. These services would function as part of one of the four licensed ICFs and would be a time limited service.
4. Resources to continue locating operational and financial efficiencies (not related to staff cuts).

The goal was an integrated service array to address service needs and gaps within the developmental disabilities system while the system built community capacity. The report noted that the DD Division was making a 36 month commitment to stabilization.

By September 30, 2019, 13 participants were served by BSDC acute crisis stabilization services. As a result of wait list needs for acute crisis stabilization services at BSDC, the DD Division has decided to focus resources on acute crisis stabilization services and postpone providing respite services as a last resort at BSCD.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities participates in the National Core Indicators (NCI), a survey that assists public developmental disabilities agencies with measuring and tracking their performance and comparing that performance with other states. Below is the health and wellness data from the most recent NCI data reports on interviews conducted in 2017-2018. The most relatable question is “Are you in poor health?” The NCI data is broken out for participants who live in ICFs below.

Health

- Nebraska respondents reported significantly above the national average for having a primary care doctor (ICF-100%), having a dental exam in the last year (ICF-94%), having an eye exam in the last year (ICF-97%), having a hearing test in the last five years (ICF-97%); and having a flu shot in the last year (ICF-91%).
- Nebraska data was within national average for reporting they are in poor health (ICF-3%), having a physical exam in the last year (ICF-91%), and having a colon cancer screening in the last ten years (all – 40%).
- The NCI data did not have results for the percentage of Nebraska respondents living in an ICF that reported they had had a pap test in the last three years or had a mammogram in the last two years.

Wellness

- Nebraska respondents are significantly above the national average for exercising or doing physical activity at least once per week (ICF-88%), and exercise or physical therapy that works the muscles (ICF-81%). Respondents living in an ICF in Nebraska report below the national average for tobacco and other nicotine use (ICF-0%).

Adequacy of health care and other services, supports, and assistance that individuals with developmental disabilities served through home and community-based waivers receive

There are two waivers that provide Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS): the Developmental Disabilities Adult Day waiver and the Comprehensive Developmental Disabilities waiver. The Developmental Disabilities Adult Day waiver offers day services and there were 665 individuals on this waiver in September 2019. The Comprehensive Developmental Disabilities waiver offers day and residential services and there were 4,076 individuals on this waiver in September 2019.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities also offers service coordination only. Service coordination provides case management services to coordinate and oversee a participant's services, even if he/she is not receiving waiver funded services. For participants receiving waiver services, service coordination is a mandatory service. Service coordinators work with a participant to develop the participant's Individual Support Plan (ISP) based on the participant's personal life goals and his/her needs, monitor the implementation of the ISP, complete referrals for preferred providers and arrange site visits and transition plans, and help advocate for what the participant wants and needs from his/her service provider. Service coordinators conduct onsite quarterly service reviews of the types of services each participant receives to review the delivery of services and outcomes.

The ISP is an individualized plan that helps a participant live as independently as possible. The ISP team is chosen by the participant and includes the participant, the service coordinator, the developmental disabilities providers (agency and independent) who work with the participant, the participant's guardian, family members, advocate and friends, and other organizations that support the participant. The DD Division's Quality team reviews a sample of ISPs each month to verify that the participant has the support he/she needs. The DD Division's Quality team tracks and trends high general incident reports which include hospitalizations, emergency room visits, serious injuries, and other events that affect the participant's health or safety. A cross-divisional Mortality Review Committee convenes every other month to examine participant deaths to identify if there are any concerns or additional follow-up necessary to improve participant health and well-being.

Each year the service coordinator completes level of care and risk screen assessments to ensure that the ISP addresses a participant's health and wellness needs and helps the participant to reach the goals he/she set. The level of care determines whether a participant requires the same level of services as provided by an Intermediate Care Facility. There are four risk screens administered annually: behavioral risks, overall health and risks associated with medical conditions, risks associated with walking and falls, and nutritional intake and aspiration or choking risks. A participant's provider may complete additional assessments to identify the strengths, needs, and preferences of the participant. The assessments

are reviewed by the ISP team at the annual ISP meeting and are an important part of planning for the next year. To determine each participants' annual budget amount, which is the maximum amount a participant can use to purchase Medicaid HCBS developmental disabilities services, an objective assessment process is used. The process includes completing an Inventory for Client and Agency Planning (ICAP) assessment which is a scientifically validated instrument that measures four categories of adaptive behaviors: motor skills, social and communication skills, personal living skills, and communication skills.

Medical care of the participant is the responsibility of either the legal guardian, the provider delivering continuous services, or the participant him/herself, depending on each participant's situation. Participants receiving Home and Community-Based waiver services get their medical care through Heritage Health, Nebraska's Medicaid Managed Care Program. There are three managed care organizations: Nebraska Total Care, United Healthcare, and WellCare of Nebraska. Heritage Health began January 1, 2017 and combines Nebraska's physical health, behavioral health, and pharmacy programs into a single comprehensive and coordinated system for Nebraska's Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program enrollees. All Heritage Health plans offer the same healthcare services in the community including: doctor visits, prescriptions, hospital, mental health, emergency room visits, vision and glasses, medical supplies and durable medical equipment, skilled nursing, physical, occupational and speech therapy, hearing and hearing aids, home health, dialysis, and hospice. Dental benefits are available to Medicaid enrollees as well. The services that are not covered by the health plans, but are provided by other Medicaid programs if participants are eligible, are: non-emergency transportation, personal assistance services, and long-term care.

The Heritage Health plans annually participate in the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) surveys for both adult and child members served. CAHPS is a standardized patient survey developed by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and required for the Heritage Health plans by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). The goal of the survey is to assess the participants' perspectives of the healthcare received. It includes accessibility to medical services, physicians, specialists and the communication skills of the physicians. There is a report on each health plan that summarizes the CAHPS results. Survey results are publically available for calendar year 2019 and posted on Nebraska's Medicaid website.

The DD Division participates in the National Core Indicators (NCI) survey. It is a survey that assists public developmental disabilities agencies with measuring and tracking their performance and comparing that performance with other states. Below is the health and wellness data from the most recent NCI data reports on interviews conducted in 2017-2018. The most relatable question is, "Are you in poor health?" The NCI data is broken out for participants who live in community-based settings below.

Health

- Nebraska respondents reported significantly above the national average for having a dental exam in the last year (Community-89%), having an eye exam in the last year (Community-62%), having a hearing test in the last five years (Community-73%), and having a flu shot in the last year (Community-82%).
- Nebraska respondents were within national average for reporting they are in poor health (Community-5%), having a physical exam in the last year (Community-86%); and having a colon cancer screening in the last ten years (all-40%).
- For participants living in the community, Nebraska respondents reported significantly below the national average for having a primary care doctor (Community-94%).
- Many Nebraska respondents in the community reported they had not had a pap test in the last three years (Community-38% of those to whom this applies) or a mammogram in the last two years (Community-60% of those to whom this applies), which were significantly below the national average.

Wellness

- Nebraska respondents are significantly above the national average for exercising or doing physical activity at least once per week (Community-86%), and exercise or physical therapy that works the muscles (Community-56%).
- Nebraska is at the national average for tobacco and other nicotine use (Community-8%).

Section III: State Plan Implementation

* - Required field

A. Introduction

Provide an executive summary with cohesive information that provides an overview of the report including, but not limited to the following: (1) targeted areas of emphasis, (2) strategies used to implement activities; (3) significant accomplishments and/or barriers to state plan implementation; (4) needs requiring state plan amendments

The Council has made strong progress in reaching its 2017-2021 State Plan Goals. This has been accomplished through subawards and contracts for projects in each of the goal areas as well as activities with the DD Network Partners, collaborating with other state and advocacy agencies, and the Council Executive Director's involvement on boards, commissions, and councils. Accomplishments were made in the goal areas while continuing to address compliance issues found during an on-site visit with Sheryl Matney and Sara Newell-Perez in March 2018.

In 2019, the Council completed the following compliance areas of concern and recommendations from the on-site visit:

- The Council voted to formally remove "Planning" from their name.
- The Annual Performance Evaluation Policy and Process document and Annual Assessment form were submitted to iTACC for approval on September 4, 2019.
- By-Laws were amended and ratified by the Council in February 2019.
 - "Planning" was removed from the Council's name.
 - Membership composition was clarified.
 - Term limits and rotation were defined.
 - Election of all Executive Committee members, to include Council Chairperson and Committee Chairs, was addressed.
 - All references to the Regional DD Councils were removed.

- The Council Member Handbook was updated to reflect the ratified By-Laws and the Annual Performance Evaluation Policy and Process will be added to the handbook.

The first elections for Council Chairperson and Committee Chairpersons were held. Prior to the onsite visit, Committee Chairs had been selected by the Council Chair and Executive Director. Voting for the Council Chairperson had not happened as the previous Chair served for five years; the Chair before her had served for 20 years. Council members appreciated the opportunity to run for leadership positions. Three self-advocates threw their hats in the ring for the Planning Committee Chair position with one voted in as Chair.

In response to the training on the period of performance for federal funds, the Council has moved to releasing Requests for Applications once per year. This will allow the Nebraska Council to ensure that subaward projects will fall within the requirements for obligating and liquidating funds in the first two years of funding.

The Council began using DD Suite for all new subawards. After a two-day training in June, Council staff created seven Notices of Funds Available (RFAs); 15 applications were received; 7 projects were awarded funds. The Subaward User Manual was revised to reflect the reporting processes in DD Suite. Council staff are encouraged at the positive response from applicants and are hopeful that 2020 PPR reporting will go smoothly.

The Council has four State Plan goals. Council staff monitored 15 subawards and contracts that ran simultaneously throughout FFY19. Training and educating were the focus of most of the projects funded. Activities and training events were scheduled and conducted across Nebraska to reach diverse audiences:

- Two- and three-day dementia trainings were presented by national subject matter experts. Trainings were targeted to caregivers in rural cluster areas on dementia and recognizing the signs of dementia in adults with IDD.
- Clifton Strengths Finder and Strengths Explorer were administered to youth and young adult athletes to find and use their strongest skills;
- Leadership training sessions were held in multiple locations for self-advocates, advocates, families, and others on community inclusion, state and federal policies and waivers, promoting and developing roles for people with IDD as leaders and self-advocates, and more.
- Lincoln/Lancaster Council Human Services received funding to collaborate with the Lincoln Police Department, Lancaster County Sheriff's Department, and Lincoln Public Schools to conduct School Resource Officer training.
- Program for Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS) Adult Self-Advocacy Series training for adults with autism and others with IDD began 4/1/19.

- The Along the Way transition resource guides were printed and distributed. The Infants, Toddlers, and Children; Adolescents and Young Adults; and Adults guides and companion resource guide are posted on the Council webpage.
- “Turn It Up! Stories from People with Disabilities” is a project that solicited and received applications from people with disabilities across the state to participate in an opportunity to tell their story on Nebraska Educational Television.
- The second year of funding for the Juvenile Justice Brain Injury and Cognitive Disability Task Force saw the addition of new community task forces in rural cluster areas of the state. Community task forces were provided insight to the Classroom-to-Courtroom Pathway for juveniles with IDD.
- People First of Nebraska continued to provide leadership training to their members. These skills were used to present conference breakout sessions, testify at public legislative hearings, and collaborate with other People First organizations in the region.
- Educational Service Unit 7 concluded their training of educators on the Assessment of Functional Living Skills program. Educators used the protocols in the program as a tool to focus their goals for students and to write better lesson plans.
- Over 500 hours were provided for the Heartland Equine Therapeutic Riding Academy project to bring employment skills to transition age students. Two participants were able to pursue employment positions.
- Listening sessions were held in a rural cluster community in central Nebraska to gain an understanding from parents of the challenges their students with IDD face in inclusive education.
- The 2017 Respite Task Force project final report made recommendations and suggestions for improving the Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network. The Respite Network Program Coordinator provided an update to Council members at the August 2019 Council meeting on progress that has been made on some of the recommendations.

The Council had released an RFA for Person-Centered Planning Training and received three applications. The application selected by the Council was rejected by the DSA’s legal department as the applicant was a for-profit entity. The applicant was notified and the RFA was not awarded. The Council will consider re-releasing the RFA.

Another RFA that was not completed was for Disability Benefits Planning and Assistance. One application was received; however, after discussion at the Grant Review Committee meeting and with the Council, it was decided that Council staff would research the Disability Benefits (DB) 101 option to see if it would be a viable solution for Nebraska. This would include contacting other agencies to determine whether collaboration of funds would be of interest.

One of the hot topics that carried over from FFY18 into FFY19 was the lack of a Nebraska Olmstead Plan. In August 2018, the Council provided a large amount of funding to DHHS, the DSA, to contract with Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) to create an Olmstead Plan for Nebraska. The Council ED was very involved with the Nebraska Olmstead Advisory Committee and was a strong voice to ensure that the plan would be comprehensive and that the voices of those in the disability community were heard. A legislative bill was introduced and signed by the Governor to increase the state agencies that would be involved in creating the plan. State funds were allocated to complete the contract with TAC. Work on the Olmstead Plan continues.

The Council watched the 2019 Legislative session closely. Letters were written in support or opposition to proposed legislation that would impact the IDD population. The Council ED testified at two public hearings. Council staff, DD Network CEOs, and other advocacy organizations kept each other informed of changes and updates to proposed legislation. This collaboration is invaluable not just during the legislative session, but throughout the year.

The Council ED is a strong advocate who was involved in numerous statewide advisory boards, commissions, and councils. She participated in public policy advocacy and cross-systems dialogue collaboration. A small sampling of her activities in 2019 include:

- Informing and educating policymakers and legislators on issues faced by individuals with IDD and their families.
- Meeting with the new DHHS CEO about concerns with the LTC Redesign project, stakeholder relationships with DHHS, and intra-agency communication.
- Representing the Council at an Interstate Transition meeting between Kansas and Nebraska agencies.
- Providing public comments on the HCBS DD adult day waivers and comprehensive waiver amendments.
- Supporting employment initiatives for people with IDD.
- Engaging Special Education Advisory Council members to seek ways to impact systems and changes of the Nebraska educational system.

The Council has funded projects related to all their goals. Work remains to be done in Goal 3 (Employment) Objective C, benefits planning. This will be addressed in 2020. The Council will continue the work on the targeted disparity objective under Goal 2 (Advocacy & Self-Determination). At the 5/17/19 Council meeting, members voted to remove Goal 4, Objective C – “Expand and enhance inclusive childcare opportunities throughout the state.”

This Executive Summary reports the work completed by the Council in 2019. As has been the traditional, the summary will be sent to Nebraska’s 49 senators, the Governor, the five representatives in Washington, DC, the DSA, and all Council members. This annual summary is posted on the Council webpage in an accessible format for subrecipients and other interested persons. A link to the pdf of the Council’s annual Program Performance Report is included. Alternate formats will be made available upon request.

Cultural Diversity : Describe the Council's overall efforts to address the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families of a diverse culture through its state plan supported activities

Throughout FFY 19, the Council supported efforts to address cultural diversity. Nebraska is comprised of 77,358 square miles, making it the 16th largest state in terms of sheer geographic area. Although Nebraska’s total population is approximately two million residents, nearly 60% of its citizens live outside the metropolitan areas of Omaha and Lincoln. Citizens who live in rural Nebraska often feel overlooked and forgotten. Fortunately, the Council’s competitive subaward application process makes it possible for entities from all areas of the state to submit proposals with innovative ideas on addressing the Council’s State Plan focus areas. Seven of the Council’s FFY19 projects impacted citizens in rural Nebraska while also highlighting inclusivity and diversity. Five of these projects are highlighted below, as well as other efforts where the Council has addressed cultural diversity.

As noted in the FFY 18 PPR, the Council funded Operation HOELS (Hands-On Employment and Life Skills), the employment-based project with Educational Service Unit (ESU) 7 to develop appropriate goals for employment, independent living, community participation, & daily living skills for transition age students. ESU 7 serves the school districts in seven counties in Northeast Nebraska. The project ran 4/1/2018 – 3/31/2019. The train-the-trainer approach to administering the Assessment of Functional Living Skills (AFLS), which assesses functional, practical, and essential skills of everyday life, including employment and independent living, continues to have an impact on students in this area of Nebraska.

The Council funded Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI), Nebraska's UCEDD, to update training materials and continue facilitating a Statewide Leadership Seminar Series through on-site training to increase the number of individuals who will assume leadership roles in advocating for systems change for people with disabilities and their families in the state and beyond. The primary audience was individuals with I/DD and family members, including those from diverse backgrounds. The two-day training was held in rural cluster areas of the state, including Norfolk, Grand Island, and Columbus. MMI used the Association of University Centers for Disabilities' "Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit" as a resource for reaching out to under-resourced members of the community with an intended outcome of alleviating service disparities and inequities in underserved groups. Fliers were developed in English and Spanish as part of the project's outreach process.

MMI's Dementia Capable Care Training project was successful in reaching 31 participants in Norfolk and 36 in North Platte. Despite attempts from the Project Coordinator to reach out to the Native American population to engage participants in the training, no Native Americans participated. The National Task Group (NTG) on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices provided training on caregiving for aging individuals with I/DD to strengthen the knowledge base in these rural cluster areas. Participants received the NTG Early Detection Screening for Dementia worksheet to equip them with a tool to record observations that are important to share with doctors, therapists, and others providing care to adults with I/DD. The project's "Intellectual Disability and Dementia: A Caregiver's Resource Guide for Nebraskans" has been distributed across the state to families and disabilities providers to provide an overview of dementia and support options in Nebraska.

Additional efforts that focused on cultural diversity supported the Council's targeted disparity objective. The Council provided a second year of funding to support the Juvenile Justice Brain Injury & Cognitive Disability Task Force efforts by extending outreach and engagement to the rural cluster areas of Scottsbluff, North Platte, and Schuyler. Broadening this effort to communities outside of Lincoln increased stakeholder impact to develop strategies and strengthen recommendations to reduce the number of youth with brain injury, cognitive disability, behavioral and mental health disabilities, and other learning disabilities from entering the juvenile justice system, and, if they are already there, to ensure they receive adequate services and accommodations.

The Autism Society of Nebraska's project will train community leaders on the Program for Education & Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS) for adults with autism & other adults with I/DD in five locations across Nebraska, including Scottsbluff, North Platte, Grand Island, Lincoln, and Omaha.

When releasing Requests for Applications (RFA), the Council strongly encourages applications from organizations that are located in rural or urban poverty areas, organizations that employ staff with disabilities, and/or organizations that represent linguistic and cultural minorities. As applicable, subrecipients identify strategies to successfully recruit and train individuals from culturally diverse communities. Specifically, the Council notes that applicants agree to comply with the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act: "In order to avoid discrimination against persons with limited English proficiency on grounds of national origin, adequate steps will be taken to ensure that such persons receive the language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to the programs, free of charge." In the RFA, Diverse Identities refers to people of various races, cultural and ethnic heritages, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, sexual orientations, ages, and religions from diverse socio-economic and geographic backgrounds. The RFA Opportunity subaward application also addresses cultural diversity by asking the following: "Does this project address an identified disparity (e.g., racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, gender, minority groups with developmental disabilities, underserved geographic areas, people who use assistive technology in order to participate in community life, etc.) that affects a sub population of people with developmental disabilities who are unserved and/or underserved? Does it implement strategies to decrease the differences in access, service use, and outcomes among such sub population?" Applicant responses are taken into consideration when the Council scores each application.

The Designated State Agency for the Council is the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Public Health (DPH). In December 2016, DPH released their 2017-2021 State Health Improvement Plan. The plan provides a roadmap to continue to help Nebraskans live healthier lives now and into the future. The plan set five priorities, including reducing health disparities. The priority states, "Nebraskans will experience health equity and decreased health disparities." Actions to address this priority include addressing social determinants of health; improving the cultural competency and health literacy of the health workforce; improving the collection of data, including standardized collection of demographics for comparison; and studying health outcome data by population characteristics (e.g. rural, ethnicity, race, age, gender, and disability). The DPH supports organizational capacity to address equity through systems, policy, and program efforts that are data informed and culturally competent. As a result of the advocacy of Council staff, individuals with disabilities were included in the targeted populations that experience health disparities.

In April 2019, Council staff attended the DPH Office of Health Disparities & Health Equity's Minority Health Conference in York. The theme of the 2019 conference was "Uniting Practice and Partnerships to Achieve Health Equity". One of the keynote speakers was Deborah Fournier, JD, the Senior Director of Clinical to Community Connections at the Association for State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO). Previously, she served

as the New Hampshire Medicaid Director. Ms. Fournier spoke about the importance of community and clinical linkages, and how to engage partners in the work of health equity. The closing keynote was given by Edward Ehlinger, MD, MSPH, Chair of the federal HHS Secretary's Advisory Committee on Infant Mortality, a public health metaphysician who has spent his professional career working in various settings to advance health equity and optimal health for all, including as the past president of ASTHO. Dr. Ehlinger spoke about the Triple Aim of Health Equity and how to achieve optimal health for all members of society. Breakout tracks at the conference included:

- Leveraging Innovation in Care Delivery

Building public health infrastructure, transforming teams utilizing Community Health Workers, and building healthy and resilient communities.

- Delivering High Quality Services

Community Health Work around maternal and child health, making data driven decisions, barriers & opportunities for promoting health professions careers among African Americans and Latinos in the Midwest, and the national standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services.

- Increasing Quality Care for Special Populations

Medical care for persons with I/DD, the intersection of race, ethnicity, and healthcare, food insecurity among rural cancer survivors, and how to address common concerns in rural areas.

- Bridging Gaps to Ensure Equitable Care

Building strong alliances, responding to multilingual health needs, and adult immunization within Indian Country: an immunization outreach effort, and addressing homelessness.

Attending the Minority Health Conference provided a unique opportunity for Council staff to broaden their understanding of health disparities and how Council projects have the potential to impact this area.

B. Evaluation of State Plan Implementation

B1. Evaluation Activities

Council staff implement formative and summative evaluation through multi-method approaches to evaluate the goals/objectives in the State Plan. The purpose of formative evaluation is to: determine the extent to which goals/objectives are achieved; provide a description of the strategies that contributed to achieving the objectives; and provide a description of factors that may have impeded progress. The purpose of the summative evaluation is the collection of data that measures intended project outcomes.

Council staff analyze projects and require subrecipients to evaluate their project. Council staff incorporate all or some of the following methods noted below when reviewing project activities. Official records of each project's progress in reaching stated work plan activities are maintained by the Council office. Evaluation methods employed include the following:

- Council subrecipients are required to submit Quarterly Progress Reports for Council funded projects. In addition, subrecipients are required to submit a Final Report after the end of the subaward year. The Quarterly Progress Report is the primary source of information concerning progress made in completing activities related to the project work plan. The Quarterly Progress Report serves as a formative evaluation tool. The Quarterly Report is reviewed by Council staff and is used to evaluate progress made in reaching the project work plan's time line and work scope. Subrecipients are asked to list accomplishments and activities related to each goal and objective listed in the subaward proposal; identify any problems in reaching goals that the project is experiencing; and if technical assistance is needed. The Final Report serves as a summative evaluation tool. The Final Report requires subrecipients to summarize project accomplishments and results including designated measurements; impact of project activities on target population; barriers or problems encountered and actions to overcome; satisfaction survey data; and project sustainability.

- Council subrecipients are required to submit performance measures/indicators with each Quarterly Progress Report and with the Final Report. Performance measures/indicators are goals that each project should plan to meet or exceed as a result of the project activities that are conducted and measure participant satisfaction with the subaward project. The Project Director for each subaward is informed via the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCDD) Subaward User Manual, to become familiar with the performance measures/indicators to track the numbers of persons/programs/policies, etc., impacted by the project on an ongoing basis. The NCDD Subaward User Manual recommends that the subaward Project Director initiate data collection methods before the project begins rather than collecting the data after the fact. A complete list of performance measures/indicators and definitions is provided in the NCDD Subaward User Manual. The Performance Measures/Indicators Report is used in conjunction with the Quarterly Progress Report to evaluate progress on goals/objectives and as a summary of statistical accomplishments once the project has been completed. It also serves as a formative evaluation tool when reported each quarter and a summative tool at the end of the project.

- All Council funded projects must submit results from a standard project activity satisfaction survey at the end of the subaward project. In October 2017 when performance measures changed, Council staff developed a single survey that captures demographic data as well as satisfaction results from individuals with intellectual/developmental disability or family members. General stakeholders also use this same satisfaction form, although their demographic data is not collected. Those within the general stakeholders' category include state advocacy organizations, provider organizations, state agencies, legislative/policymaking groups, and other agencies or organizations. The survey is intended to measure project participants' satisfaction with the project the Council has funded.
- Monitoring of subaward projects is also accomplished through additional methods including review of written program and expenditure reports, review of source documentation as required by the Office of Management and Budget Supercircular, telephone conference calls, and electronic mail and/or on-site visits. The purpose of on-site visits is to review project activities and progress made in reaching the work plan goals/objectives. Site visits by Council staff are conducted to assist subrecipients by providing technical assistance. Subrecipients may request a site visit any time during the project period. In addition, Council staff may conduct an impromptu visit.
- Pre/post tests may be used to measure participants' assessments of the gains they make from participating in project education and training programs. Pre/post tests will be designed to demonstrate participants' increased knowledge and skills, changed attitudes, and/or increased motivation in alignment with project specific outcomes.
- Product review will be used if the primary outcome of an objective is a product. Outcome attainment will be assessed by an in-depth review of the completed product, and quality and relevance attained through product review instruments.

The initial evaluation outcomes provide an overview of increased awareness, knowledge and skills gained by our partners through Council activities. Intermediate outcomes reflect the translation into application of new and enriched skills, enhanced organizational capacity, improved practices and greater availability and access of higher quality services and opportunities for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities and their families. The intermediate outcomes are logically linked to the desired impact of long-term outcomes-positive transitions across the lifespan, positive system change, competitive employment, and community inclusion.

The Nebraska Council has concerns about the performance measures shared at iTACC trainings prior to the new PPR template being implemented in 2019 for the FFY2017, FFY2018, and FFY2019 PPRs. Previously, the sub outcome measures for IFA 2 were not broken out. Specifically, IFA 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5 did not indicate the need to collect responses from self-advocates and family members separately. The Council had been collecting data beginning in October 2017 using the prior IFA questions that looked for the percentage of people who are better able to say what they want or what services and supports they want or say what is important to them; the percentage of people who are now in advocacy activities;

the percentage of people who are on cross-disability coalitions, policy boards, governing bodies. Since our data collection forms did not break out these measures separately, it has made it difficult for staff to decipher how to break out these sub output measures accurately. The Council has updated these performance measures for subawards that began October 1, 2019. In FFY20, subrecipients will report all performance measures using the DD Suite platform.

B2. Evaluation Results

The Council funded 15 subawards and contracts throughout 2019. Projects, primarily training opportunities, were planned and carried out across the state. The majority of the projects were in rural cluster communities to reach underserved populations. Audiences included advocates, individuals with IDD and/or their families, teachers/educators, service providers, Special Olympics athletes, students and School Resource Officers/ law enforcement officers, and policymakers. Training notices for one project were posted in Spanish to reach the Spanish-speaking population in that area. Unsuccessful efforts were made to reach the Native American population.

Survey results may be misleading in the area of satisfaction. While the responses were positive for all the subawards, some of the trainings were geared toward professionals – teachers/educators and service providers. There was no place in Section IV to report their satisfaction rates. They were included in the number of people trained or educated, but their satisfaction was not reported as they are not individuals with IDD or parents/ family members. This lowered the satisfaction scores for these projects. While individuals with IDD and their families are the primary focus, the satisfaction with training opportunities for the professionals who assist and care for them should also be considered when evaluating the effectiveness of the project.

Changes to the Subaward User Manual were made to incorporate the Council's 2019 move to DD Suite for all new subawards. Further updates are anticipated to incorporate additional details on gathering surveys and reporting performance measures.

The majority of the projects met their goals with no issues. One project exceeded the number of trainees in attendance. There were a few that did not meet their goals, whether related to staff changes within their agency, planned activities falling through, or weather concerns.

Progress toward the goals of the State Plan has been consistent. The Council releases RFAs that address specific goals and objectives, but also releases RFAs for projects that can address any of the goals and objectives. This has allowed the Council to have a multi-prong approach to ensuring all objectives are met for the goals.

Goal 1, Objective A

Two projects that begin in 2018 were completed in 2019.

- The Transition Conferences and Classes project was just shy of meeting their goal of the number of attendees attending the conference in the Panhandle, although families traveled to Scottsbluff from surrounding towns to attend. The option to participate in the Lincoln session via Facebook Live was utilized by several people. Attendees asked for the conference to become an annual event. Surveys were not requested from Facebook Live viewers. Aside from the lower than predicted attendance in Scottsbluff, the outcomes planned were achieved.
- The Along the Way Transition Resource guides project was completed with the printing of 5,000 copies of the three guides and companion resource guide. The guides have been distributed and are available for download on the Council webpage. No surveys were collected for the completion of this project as it was just for printing and distribution of the guides. However, satisfaction with the product was very high. The supply in the Council office was quickly depleted.

Goal 1, Objective B

- The Dementia Capable Care training project was a success and the outcomes were achieved as planned. Two sessions were held in rural cluster communities. Attendees could attend a two-day training or stay for a third day to become Affiliated Trainers, allowing them to go back to their communities to train more individuals on dementia and what to look for in individuals with IDD who may be presenting signs of dementia. This was a training heavily attended by service providers who were included in the Number Educated count, but not in the Satisfaction with the Project. That being said, all attendees reported being satisfied with this training. The next phase of this project is to create aging committees across the state, a concept quickly embraced by attendees. The Council will provide funding for this 2020 project.

Goal 1, Objective C

- The RFA released for Person-Centered Planning Training was awarded to the top application. However, after discovering the entity was a for-profit, the DSA rejected the subaward and notified the applicant that they would not be funded. The Council will determine whether to re-release the RFA.

Goal 2, Objective A Fulfills the Council's self-advocacy DD Act requirement.

- The Council demonstrated their commitment to the self-advocacy movement by providing financial support to the state's self-advocacy organization, People First of Nebraska (PFN). All but one of their expected outputs were achieved. The exception was that a new chapter would be developed in western Nebraska. A new chapter was formed in eastern Nebraska but the planned new chapter in the Panhandle did not occur. The PFN Board interviewed and hired a new advisor for the Panhandle region and a new chapter was forming. However, due to health reasons, the new advisor had to resign her position and the chapter was unable to continue. Efforts were under way to find a new advisor. Exceeding expectations was PFN's Disability Policy Specialist (DPS) program. PFN contracted with individuals with disabilities to become learn about the legislative process, meet with senators and/or their staff, and provide public testimony on relevant proposed legislation. The DPS program was presented at the SOAR conference and will be recognized at the 2019 AUCD conference. Strategies to meet their expected outcomes were successfully implemented.
- The objective of training 5-7 youth and young adult Special Olympics Nebraska athletes was exceeded when they trained 17 athletes. The goal of reaching athletes in five sites across the state was not realized due to personal schedule conflicts with the athletes in some locations, and no athletes being available for training dates scheduled in two of the locations. Instead, some training locations were close enough that athletes could attend a nearby location. Strategies for recruiting athletes was successful. All other outcomes were achieved.

Goal 2, Objective B

- The Leadership Seminar Series provided training and tools to attendees to design their own systems level advocacy plan to become involved in advocating for systems improvements for people with IDD. Training was adapted for presentation to the People First of Nebraska board members. This exceeded the expectations of the project coordinator as the board members used the training to create their goals for 2020 at the board meeting the next day. The number of training sessions delivered was impacted by the severe weather in Nebraska in March 2019. Due to blizzards in western Nebraska and flooding in northeast Nebraska, the training event in western Nebraska was not held. Attempts to reschedule the training were unsuccessful. The training event in northeast Nebraska was rescheduled; however, due to continued flood threats, the number of attendees was less than anticipated. All other projected outcomes for this project were achieved.

- A project to give a platform for people with disabilities to tell their stories began in April 2019. Recruitment efforts were successful with applications received from 30 individuals. At the end of FFY2019, plans were being made to assist story-tellers prepare for taping at the Nebraska Educational Television studio. The project will be completed in 2020 and reported in the 2020 PPR.
- Key activities and expected outputs and outcomes related to the Council's education and outreach during the State's Legislative session were met and are summarized in Section IV of the report. Legislative efforts continued to be robust, as the Council serves as a source of information and advice for state senators by taking a nonpartisan approach to provide education on legislation that will impact individuals with developmental disabilities. Collaboration occurred within the DD Network and within members of the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD) on disability related bills.
- Council staff had the opportunity to serve on multiple coalitions/networks/partnerships to advocate for improved services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities, as well as to address unmet needs and challenges. Staff updated Council members at quarterly Council meetings about these efforts, and shared email updates as needed throughout the year. As Council staff become more knowledgeable on the core system of services and supports for citizens with developmental disabilities, additional opportunities to participate evolve, ensuring that the voice of the DD community is considered and incorporated.

Goal 2, Objective C Meets the DD Network Collaboration requirement.

- All activities, expected outputs, and outcomes were achieved as noted in Section IV. The highlight of this collaboration effort included a joint meeting/training of representatives from the Council, P&A Board of Directors, and the UCEDD Consumer Advisory Board. The annual Tri-Board Training was attended by 41 people. The topic of the meeting, "Using Social Capital to Create an Inclusive Community for People with Disabilities," was presented by Dr. Al Condeluci. Attendees were led through a small group World Café process to examine community inclusion issues more closely. Wayne Stuberger and Rachel Ray from MMI presented the summary data of the NCI survey results for Nebraska. Evaluations collected from attendees reflect very high satisfaction rates. Shared knowledge will allow the DD Network to function more effectively as an entity as NCI data is collected in future years.
- Additional advocacy efforts within Objective C have been realized with the Council Executive Director's membership on the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD), a non-partisan, cross-disability coalition of organizations committed to working with the disability community to advance equal rights and disability related public policies. NCCD hosts an annual event at the State Capitol called "Common Grounds." The event was held on 3/19/19 for state senators and their staff. It is an opportunity to be introduced and to interact with various NCCD members who distributed policy briefs on the need for a comprehensive Olmstead Plan in Nebraska, Employment,

Early Childhood & Education, and Restraint/Seclusion. Approximately 20 people attended. Following the event, NCCD members went door-to-door delivering cookies and the policy brief summaries to the offices of senators who were unable to attend in person. Unfortunately, attendance was down at this year's event.

Goal 2, Objective D Meets the Targeted Disparity requirement.

- The key activity was met as work continued on the Juvenile Justice Brain Injury and Cognitive Disability Task Force. The contractor and technical assistance provider hired by the Council in 2018 to facilitate Task Force was contracted for 2019. Phase I of this project provided an opportunity to educate the diverse array of 40 stakeholders who engaged in the Task Force project on the Council's targeted disparity issue. Phase 2 expanded the task force to three additional communities. School faculty & administration, law enforcement, juvenile justice, Educational Service Units, probation, private sector companies, community-based programs, state agencies, behavioral health system of care representatives & families, attended the task force meetings. The Pathway Flowchart was reviewed and participants customized the chart to fit their community.
- A subaward with the Lancaster County Human Services office will provide School Resource Officer training to schools in Lancaster County. The training of Lincoln Police Department and Lancaster County Sheriff SROs and teachers/administrators has occurred. Data will be collected on interactions between SROs and students will be compared to the previous school year to determine whether the number of suspensions and expulsions is reduced for students with IDD, brain injury, and minority students. Outcomes will be reported in the 2020 PPR.

Goal 3, Objective A

- The project to train educators on the Assessment of Functional Living Skills (AFLS) protocols for Hands-On Employment & Life Skills did not go as planned. The number of teachers to be trained was not met during the project period. Also, it is undetermined whether AFLS was used with 10 students. After the training of the educators, many expressed concern about the large amount of information in ALFS. The protocols were instead being used to write lesson plans and to focus the goals of the students. This change in strategies seemed to work better for the educators.
- The Heartland Equine Therapeutic Riding Academy project that began in 2018 was completed in 2019. The outcome for reaching 12-20 transition age students was achieved with 15 students participating. While 280 hours of training were planned, over 500 hours were provided. Two participants were able to pursue assisted employment positions.

- The Council ED continued to represent the Council at Association of Professionals for Supported Employment (APSE), Nebraska Association of Specialized Providers (NASP), and Association for Community Professionals (ACP). These organizations support and promote competitive, integrated employment throughout Nebraska. APSE submitted public comment on proposed HCBS DD waiver amendments, noting significant concerns that the VR wait list situation was creating challenges for individuals who wanted to work but were unable to access supports.
- The Council's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) representative provided quarterly updates to Council members on the implementation of the Work Force Innovation and Opportunity Act. Updates were given on the collaboration to coordinate employment services between VR and the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). Council members also given updates on VR's Order of Selection which occurred on 12/13/17. While the Order of Selection is still in place and the wait list numbers are in flux, movement has been made on the wait list for Priority Group 1.

Goal 3, Objective B

- Special Olympics Nebraska athletes provided presentations at 49 events across Nebraska. During their presentations, several athletes talked about their employment experiences. One athlete presented at a breakfast with over 300 people in attendance. This was reported in Goal 2, Objective A.
- An RFA for Benefits Planning was released. The application received was discussed in the Grant Review Committee and with Council members. Instead of funding the proposal, Council members requested that Council staff research Disability Benefits (DB) 101 and the possibility of collaborating with other agencies to bring the program to Nebraska.

Goal 4, Objective A

- Disability Rights Nebraska received funding to develop the Inclusive Education Lay Advocacy Program to engage concerned citizens in lay advocacy for students with disabilities and their families. The project did not go as planned. There was a request for a no-cost extension to continue the project to 3/31/19 as they had delays in hiring the Lay Advocacy Coordinator. The project was to provide education that empowered advocates and families to master information, understand and enforce legal rights, negotiate systems, and effectively advocate to secure inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities in the Kearney Public School System, located in central Nebraska. The trainings did not happen as the curriculum was not fully developed. The awareness campaign to promote inclusive

education was completed. The five listening sessions held in Kearney exceeded the four sessions that were planned, and three individuals have been identified to help develop the process instead of the two anticipated. Much valuable information was learned in the listening sessions.

- The Council was successful in contracting with N&R Publishing to create an 8-page publication/public relations piece for the Council featuring stories that highlight the Council and the values of the DD Act, especially community integration and inclusion in all facets of community life. The insert was placed in ten newspapers across the state, and the Council will own the “evergreen” digital version. “The Power of Inclusion” insert has proven to be an engaging publication that helped the Council promote inclusion awareness, while educating Nebraska about the State Council and its mission in advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change efforts.
- As noted in the FY 18 PPR, the Council approved funds of \$127,000 to be used by DHHS to hire Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) to develop the Nebraska Olmstead Plan. DHHS entered into a contract with TAC for 7/18/18 to 12/31/18. TAC completed Phase 1 as noted in their contract work plan, which included performing a system scan and analysis to develop a general baseline of the services, housing and other factors that support the ability of people with disabilities to live in integrated community-based settings. TAC also completed most of Phase 2, which included meeting onsite with state agency leadership and the Olmstead Advisory Committee, and conduct key stakeholder interviews. However, for a variety of reasons DHHS modified the TAC contract to not include the final deliverable (Phase 3) of an Olmstead Plan.

DHHS extended TAC’s contract through 3/25/19 to continue the Olmstead Plan development. The contract noted that TAC would provide a guidance document of recommended components to include in a final Nebraska Olmstead Plan.

DHHS submitted a detailed report to the Legislature & Governor in December 2018. The report included the progress that had been accomplished and recommendations for additional steps needed for Nebraska to secure a final Olmstead Plan. The report noted that a lack of sufficient time was a factor in TAC not being able to complete the Olmstead Plan process. TAC provided a proposal recommending a new \$37,200 contract that would allow an additional 90 days to provide Nebraska with a complete Olmstead Plan. DHHS made it clear in the December 2018 report that legislative efforts would need to be addressed to ensure that all levels of state government be involved with the Olmstead Plan development and implementation.

As a result, the Council and other key disability stakeholders advocated for the passage of LB570, which strengthened Olmstead Plan efforts by increasing the number of agencies on the Olmstead Steering Group and providing the additional funding needed for TAC to complete the plan development process. LB570 and the accompanying amendments required TAC to assist with its continued analysis &

revision of the Olmstead Plan and submit the final plan to the Legislature by 12/15/19. Fortunately, LB570 passed and the Governor signed it on 5/17/19. The Council ED continued her role on the Olmstead Planning Advisory Council throughout 2019 to ensure the plan development was comprehensive and that the 12/15/19 deadline was met.

Goal 4, Objective B

- In 2017, the Council funded a project to form a Respite Task Force in order to develop a framework to strengthen, support, and expand the Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network system. The final report provided an overview of respite programs in the state, addressed the identified gaps and barriers to the utilization of respite care services in Nebraska, and made recommendations/suggestions, including a recommended increase to the \$125 monthly Lifespan Respite Network subsidy rate in state regulations since the rate has not been increased since the program began in 1999. Administrative suggestions were emphasized to improve efficiencies and streamline the requirements of the current billing system for providers to receive more timely payment for providing respite services.

At the 8/16/19 Council meeting, the DHHS Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network Program Coordinator presented updates that have occurred to the program based on these recommendations. Several recommendations from the Task Force have either been implemented or are in the process of being implemented. Title 464 regulations have been revised and sent to the Governor's Office. Some of the changes the Task Force recommended were incorporated into the regulation recommendations. The Governor's office denied any of the regulations that included financial increases, including the \$300 monthly subsidy increase proposed.

On the positive side, the Task Force recommendation to simplify the application process was taken. The application has been revised and simplified. If families have applied for any other DHHS program, they do not need to include any financial information. Changes to the billing process continue with the goal of having an online payment process ready by the end of December 2019.

B3. Lessons Learned and Future work of the Council

FFY 19 brought significant changes to the Nebraska DD Council with many of the changes resulting from the Council's on-site technical assistance visit in March 2018 with Sheryl Matney, Technical Assistance Director, Information and Technical Assistance Center for Councils on Developmental Disabilities (iTACC), and Sara Newell-Perez, Program Specialist, Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD). A major outcome, of the on-site visit, was to provide the Nebraska Council clear and concise information that would assist the Council and staff with addressing identified issues that were not consistent with DD Council program guidelines.

On May 2, 2018, iTACC submitted the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities Technical Assistance On-Site Visit Report and Recommendations. iTACC provided some tangible recommendations to address identified "compliance issues." The report's cover letter noted that the recommendations offered were from a technical assistance perspective and AIDD may have further instructions and directions for the Nebraska Council. The report also clarified that issues that were identified as a "compliance issue" were items that must be addressed by the Council. In addition, other recommendations were included that were not considered "compliance related," and the Council was encouraged to thoughtfully review and consider the recommendations offered.

The Council reviewed the iTACC report at the May 11, 2018 meeting. Sheryl returned to Nebraska to present the report and provide clarification as needed. After the presentation ended, the Council voted to formally accept the report's recommendations that address compliance issues with the Regional Councils; changes in the Council By-Laws to include member term limits and rotation; supervision of the Council Executive Director; Executive Director Evaluation Process; and the appointment of a committee to address the concerns.

The Compliance Committee was formed to address the findings in iTACC's report. The Council Executive Director coordinated the Compliance Committee meetings throughout 2018 and 2019 to follow the timeframe for addressing "compliance issues."

In FFY 19, the Council addressed the following "compliance issues" and recommendations, as noted below.

- The Compliance Committee met frequently towards the end of FFY 18 and the beginning of FFY 19 to make key changes to the Council By-Laws to address "compliance issues" and recommendations. A rough draft of the amendments to the By-Laws was shared at the Council's November 16, 2018 meeting. Following the November meeting, the Compliance Committee met again to make suggested edits. The amended By-Laws were presented and ratified at the February 1, 2019 Council meeting. The By-Laws were amended to define a "term" as three years and indicate the number of terms (two) that a non-agency member can service in succession. "Membership Composition" was amended to include a non-governmental representative and a non-profit representative from organizations concerned with services for people with DD. An additional amendment noted that the Chairperson, in addition to the Vice-Chairperson and the Secretary, shall be elected from among the membership of the Council by members of the Council. Prior to this amendment, the Council

Chairperson was appointed by the Governor without input from the Council. Other amendments were made to the By-Laws regarding Council standing committees and established an election process for standing committee Chairpersons, who also serve on the Executive Committee. The most essential amendment to the By-Laws was officially removing the word “Planning” from the name of the Council to be consistent with the DD Act. The amended Council By-Laws were shared with the Governor’s Appointments Office.

- As a result of the amendments to the Council By-Laws, when the Council held officer elections in August 2019, the Council Chairperson was elected by Council membership for the first time in history. In November 2019, elections were held for the first time for the standing committee Chairpersons. There were three self-advocates who sought the Planning Committee Chairperson position. Clearly the amendments, to the standing committee Chairperson election, in the By-Laws inspired members to seek leadership opportunities.
- The Governor’s Appointments Office concurred with the Council’s By-Laws amendments, and promptly appointed the newly elected Chairperson, new Council members to fill the term limited vacancies, and new Council members to fill the non-governmental and non-profit vacancies.
- The Council Executive Director followed up with Sheryl in June 2019 on questions related to the remaining findings in iTACC’s report. The Executive Director confirmed that updates had been made to the Council Member Handbook reflective of the ratified By-Laws, including the removal of references to the previous Regional Council and Regional Council Coordinating Committee structure.
- The Council Chairperson summarized the Executive Director evaluation process that took place in November 2018, as recommended by the Compliance Committee, to develop the Annual Performance Evaluation Policy and Process document and the Annual Assessment form. The policy and process document and assessment form were submitted to iTACC for approval on September 4, 2019. The Council formally approved the Annual Performance Evaluation Policy and Process document and Annual Assessment form at its November 2019 meeting. The policy and process will become part of the Council Member Handbook.
- Following the recommended process in November 2018 and then documented in 2019, the Council evaluated the Council Executive Director during the November 2018 and November 2019 meetings. [The Council Chairperson submits the final evaluation ratings, summaries, and comments to the Unit Administrator in the Division of Public Health (DSA) who is responsible to enter the evaluation ratings for the Council Executive Director into the State’s Performance Review system. The Council Chairperson and the DSA’s representative meet with the Council Executive Director to present the annual performance evaluation.]

In FFY 19, the Council took steps to address “compliance issues” and recommendations which impacted the workload and focus of Council staff and members. Complying with the timeframe for addressing the findings reflects the Council’s commitment to improve program performance, statutory compliance, and program outcomes.

As noted in the FFY 18 PPR, Council staff and members continue to adjust to AIDD’s requirement for all DD Councils to complete and submit annual work plans.

Historically, the day before the May Council meeting, the Planning Committee would meet to review the Council’s goals and objectives, from the Five-Year State Plan, to identify which goals and objectives to recommend as funding priorities for the coming year. The Planning Committee’s recommendations would be presented to the Council the following day for review and a vote for approval would be taken. Once the recommendations were approved, Requests for Applications (RFAs) would go out in early June. Subaward applications would be reviewed and scored at the August Council meeting, with approved projects starting on October 1. The Council continues to follow this process. Unfortunately, the Council’s timing does not correspond with AIDD’s timing for submitting the required annual work plans. Council staff continue to struggle with accurately predicting what the Council will select as funding priorities in May for the formal subawards (\$25,000 - \$50,000) related to a specific Five-Year State Plan goal and objective.

Additionally, the Council sets aside funds (not to exceed \$15,000) for a minimum of four opportunity subawards annually. These subawards allow the applicant flexibility to select any focus area of the Five-Year State Plan. In FFY 19, the Council decided to align the opportunity subawards cycle with the federal fiscal year and the period of performance timeframe by releasing the RFAs in June with approved projects starting on October 1. Previously the Council released opportunity subaward RFAs in June and December, which made it difficult to align the Council approved opportunity subaward projects with federal fiscal year and the period of performance timeframe.

Having the opportunity to update the current federal fiscal year work plan in December with the Council’s State Plan updates in the ACL reporting system makes it possible to adequately reflect the Council’s current funding priorities.

Council staff were overwhelmed by the time consuming process of completing two federal fiscal year reports (FFY 17 & FFY 18) in early 2019, and concluded that the annual report process could be simplified if all aspects of the DD Suite Grant Management System (DD Suite) were utilized. Council staff received on-site training with Dan Shannon, Director of the Massachusetts DD Council, on June 10 and 11, 2019, to use DD Suite to post subaward RFAs and manage subrecipient reports and performance measures and data.

After training, the Council Program Specialist was able to upload the formal and opportunity subaward RFAs. With DD Suite, RFAs are posted on a national website which is used by other DD Councils and agencies. All applications are submitted in DD Suite using a standard format, and now the Council's formal and opportunity subawards use the same application format. DD Suite has the ability to manage and maintain all subrecipient data and is designed to automatically sort, convert and import the required ACL/AIDD performance measure data from Council subawards and Council activities into the associated objectives for the annual PPR. Beginning in FFY 20, all subrecipient reporting will be done in DD Suite to include: Narrative Reports, Expenditure Reports, and Performance Measure Data. This will streamline the process for Council staff and will show a history of the subaward projects the Council has funded. DD Suite also contains a feature that can compile all the narrative information reported by subrecipients and by Council staff for each State Plan goal and objective, which will assist Council staff in developing the narratives for the PPR.

Council staff have taken full advantage of DD Suite membership by reviewing other DD Councils' RFAs for technical assistance when writing RFAs. Having access to what other DD Councils use for subaward reporting has been a help as staff continues to update the NCDD Subaward User Manual and reporting forms.

Council staff discovered the need to capture additional information from subrecipients after completing the FFY 17, FFY 18, and FFY 19 PPRs. Staff plan to make updates to the NCDD Subaward User Manual and the information within DD Suite to clarify, with subrecipients, the requirement to provide additional detail in progress reports, such as including actual numbers of people attending training events, etc.

Another lesson learned was that the Council's 2017-2021 State Plan objectives may have been too ambitious. Four State Plan goals were intentionally broadly written to incorporate multiple advocacy, systems change, and capacity building projects. The objectives were more specific. In FFY 19, the Planning Committee concluded that the current State Plan included a few unattainable objectives. At the May 2019 Council meeting, the Planning Committee recommended to change Objective B from Goal One, which stated: "An increased number of adults with I/DD and their aging families will be identified through outreach activities and provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources." by removing "identified through outreach activities and." The Council approved the Committee's recommendation and the objective now reads: "An increased number of adults with I/DD and their aging families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources." The Council approved the Committee's recommendation to remove Objective A, 4 from Goal Two, which stated: "Supporting the development of a curriculum to be used statewide for the development of self-advocacy and self-determination skills." The Council also approved the Committee's recommendation to remove Objective C from Goal Four, which stated: "Expand and enhance inclusive childcare opportunities throughout the state." This objective would require investment and significant time to accomplish, especially since the Council had not received any subaward application proposals to tackle this area of need to date.

During the Planning Committee meeting Committee members discussed the possibility of removing the benefits planning objective from the employment goal (Objective C, from Goal 3). The Planning Committee recommended that the Council approve the release of an RFA targeted to address Disability Benefits Planning and Assistance. The Council approved the Committee's recommendation at the May 2019 meeting. However, as a result of not receiving any strong applications in response to the Disability Benefits Planning and Assistance RFA, the Council did not fund a disability benefits planning and assistance initiative for FFY 20. Efforts are underway to explore the possibility of a broad collaboration with various DHHS divisions and other agencies to pool funds to bring Disability Benefits (DB) 101, an on-line benefits planning system, to Nebraska if it is deemed a viable solution. The Council will revisit potential elimination of this objective in May 2020.

Finally, the Council determined that occasionally follow up and additional educational outreach is needed after a Council funded project is completed in order to support systems change efforts. For example, the Council provided \$25,000 in subaward funding to Munroe-Meyer Institute's (UCEDD) "Respite Across the Lifespan" which covers the Eastern Region of the Nebraska Respite Network during FFY18. A Respite Task Force would be formed and charged with the duty of working collaboratively to look at the unmet needs of family caregivers and determine where there are gaps in respite care service delivery. The Respite Task Force addressed the under-utilization of respite care services in Nebraska, and developed a Respite Task Force Report and a two page Summary for Nebraska Senators to initiate changes in the respite delivery system. Due to some delays in printing the Respite Task Force Report, an extension was provided through February 28, 2019.

Throughout FFY 19, steps were taken to improve the respite services system as a result of some of the recommendations from the Respite Task Force, as noted in the narrative for Goal Four's (Community Inclusion) Objective B in Section IV of this PPR. However, at the August meeting the Council learned from a presentation by the DHHS Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network Program Coordinator that the Governor had vetoed an attempt to increase the \$125 monthly subsidy to \$300 within the Title 464 regulations. This was frustrating to learn, as in almost 20 years, the yearly Lifespan Respite Subsidy allocation of \$810,000 has never been fully disbursed. One of the Respite Task Force key recommendations was to increase the monthly subsidy, since the rate has not been increased since its inception in 1999 and does not take into consideration cost of living increases. In addition, the \$125 rate does not consider the cost of care for those with higher-care needs. Costs for care providers can range as high as \$40+ per hour of care provided, and some agencies require a minimum number of hours weekly to provide care. The Fiscal Note that was submitted with the proposed regulation changes showed that implementing the \$300 increase would not exceed \$810,000.

The Council was concerned to learn that the increase was not approved. Lifespan Respite Subsidy funds not spent revert back to DHHS' General Funds, and disability advocates are concerned that if these respite funds continue to be underutilized, that they risk being cut or eliminated. Council staff plan to meet with members of the Governor's policy team in 2020 to review the Respite Task Force Report and encourage the Governor to reconsider increasing the monthly subsidy amount to \$300.

C. Input on National Priorities

Input on National Priorities

Nebraska Employment Challenges

Throughout FFY 19, the State of Nebraska's Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) did not allow prevocational or supported employment services to be provided under the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) DD waivers when these services were not otherwise available to individuals through the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Individuals with I/DD who wanted to work and were found eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and HCBS DD waiver services were placed on Nebraska VR's lengthy wait list for employment services. DDD was misinterpreting federal regulations on supported employment to mean that everyone had to apply for VR services first and either be denied or exhaust the VR services they were eligible for before being eligible to receive prevocational services or supported employment services under the DD waiver. This resulted in individuals with I/DD, who were wait listed onto Nebraska's VR Order of Selection Priority Group One, not having the ability to access any prevocational or employment services on the HCBS DD Waiver. In January 2019, the Council's Executive Director noted in her HCBS DD Waiver public comments that the state should consider allowing the authorization of prevocational services for individuals who are on the VR wait list, allowing DD providers to help these individuals make meaningful, informed choices to obtain competitive supported employment services.

Frustrated by the systemic employment issues within Nebraska, the Council Executive Director, Kristen Larsen, reached out to Serena Lowe, the Senior Policy Advisor from the Administration for Community Living (ACL), in early September. I/DD community stakeholder Beckie Koehler, who works at Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska as the Vice President of Mission Services, also reached out to Serena. Beckie has spent over 26 years of her career in middle management and administrative roles within several of Nebraska's specialized I/DD provider organizations, focused on supported employment services and maximizing employment outcomes for job seekers with I/DD. Beckie has over 18 years of experience in developing, managing, and delivering benefits and work incentives planning and assistance services within the state of Nebraska. Beckie holds the Social Security Administration's Benefits Planning, Assistance, and Outreach credential and the Community Work Incentive Coordinator certification from Virginia Commonwealth University. Beckie has used her expertise in providing supported employment services to support individuals with I/DD to achieve competitive, integrated employment and has taken a leadership role in addressing Nebraska's systemic employment challenges.

Both Beckie and Kristen have served on NASP's (Nebraska Association of Service Providers) Employment Subcommittee since April 2019. NASP is a statewide association of community organizations that provide habilitative services, residential care, employment services, and more to individuals with I/DD. NASP's Employment Subcommittee has been investigating employment issues throughout 2019 in an effort to present some possible solutions to address these issues. Of particular concern was the interpretation that DDD took with regards to individuals with I/DD receiving supported employment supports and "the payer of last resort." NASP has raised the alarm with advocates and stakeholders about this employment issue.

Knowing that Serna had assisted with hosting a series of three national ACL webinars in October, November, and December 2018 on the topic of "provider transformation to support people with developmental disabilities in competitive employment settings," Beckie contacted her for guidance related to Nebraska's challenges. Beckie and Kristen listened to these webinars that highlighted promising state strategies for working with providers to meet the HCBS settings criteria and promoting optimal community integration, as well as addressing ongoing HCBS systems change before and after each State's Transition Plan final approval. Serena learned about Nebraska's systemic issues, and contacted national Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) leadership, including the CMS waiver review teams, to discuss Nebraska's concerns. Serena secured clarification from Ralph Lollar, Director of Long-Term Supports and Services within the Disabled and Elderly Programs Health Group (DEHPG), CMCS, CMS, on Nebraska's interpretation. Ralph verified the following on September 9, 2019 in an email to Serena:

States must assure that individuals eligible to receive supported employment supports from another system (VR, education, etc.) exhaust those other resources first. However, if there is a waiting list for such services, then CMS considers these services to not be available by the other systems and thus Medicaid HCBS waiver-eligible beneficiaries can receive supported employment services via the HCBS waiver. In other words,

individuals who are eligible for the Medicaid HCBS waiver do not have to wait for services to be available through VR if a waiting list exists, but can receive supported employment services via Medicaid in waivers that include this service. States will be responsible for verifying the VR services were not available (e.g. the individual is/has been placed on a waiting list).

After receiving this information, NASP's Employment Subcommittee was able to inform and educate stakeholders and state policy makers on CMS's interpretation.

Kristen also shared with Serena that the Council provided Collaboration Funding to bring Dr. Lisa Mills to Nebraska in July to train on "Employment Innovation – Best Practices for Contemporary, Integrated, and Competitive Employment with Individuals with Developmental Disabilities." The training was open to NASP members, VR leadership and staff, and DDD leadership and staff. VR sent top leadership representatives to the training, and DDD sent mid-managers. Dr. Mills' presentation was concise with the message that HCBS Waivers provide the flexibility for systems to work together to provide supported employment or prevocational supports to individuals with I/DD. Even with this training, NASP and other stakeholders struggled to learn if DDD would change their interpretation regarding federal regulations on supported employment. At that time, DDD leadership indicated that they were working with CMS to explore a remedy to this situation. The Director of DDD noted her concerns that DDD did not have adequate funding, allocated by the Legislature, to provide HCBS DD employment waiver services.

On November 5, 2019 DDD announced a formal policy change for supported employment. After further collaboration with their federal partners (CMS), it was determined that HCBS DD Waiver services (Supported Employment - Individual or Supported Employment - Follow Along) may be authorized to provide a job coach or support, in a competitive integrated employment setting, to help the participant maintain employment. Under the following three circumstances, the above services may be authorized: when a participant is currently receiving HCBS DD Waiver services, when a participant is on the VR wait list, or the participant has secured employment through alternative activities outside of billable waiver services. This announcement was a step in the right direction in addressing Nebraska's employment challenges.

The Council's Executive Director is hopeful that Mark Schultz, who was confirmed by the Senate as the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration on August 1, 2019, will help address systemic challenges that VR programs are experiencing across the United States. Mark served as the Director for Nebraska VR, and served as the Nebraska Department of Education's Deputy Commissioner. Mark's federal position, housed in the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, is the unit that oversees federal VR grants and programs. A number of states are under an "Order of Selection," where priority is determined during the eligibility process based on how significantly one's disability impacts their ability to work. Individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected first to receive VR services. In July Nebraska's appropriation allowed VR to serve 300 people and to draw down the federal reallocation. The reallocation allowed the state to take an additional

1,000 people off the waiting list. VR continues to work to take people off the wait list, but due to the 2017 hiring freeze VR has 48 staff vacancies statewide, hindering capacity. As of November 7, 2019, the VR wait list included 1,476 people within Priority Group 1, 716 people within Priority Group 2, and 394 within Priority Group 3. VR monitors expenditures monthly so timely decisions can be made about serving more people on the wait list by taking people off the wait list in the order of one's date of application. The Council continues to monitor VR's Order of Selection wait list numbers.

At the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) meeting in October 2019, the Council learned Mark rolled out some new guidance related to "prior approval," which is the fiscal work behind the scenes. It is anticipated there will be guidance on how states can use the 15% pre-ETS funding (mandated within the Work Force Innovation and Opportunity Act) which will be referred to as "flexibilities" for Pre-ETS. Significant conversation continues at the national level regarding Competitive Integrated Employment, and the Council hopes to learn more from the Nebraska VR Director following the CSAVR meeting in January.

Nebraska's Living Well Internal Advisory Committee

In 2019, the Nebraska Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Program, in the Division of Public Health, was awarded a "Living Well" grant from ACL. The "Living Well" grants are considered a priority area for the Administration on Disabilities, and the Council has been involved in Nebraska's program. The "Living Well" grant enables Nebraska to build additional capacity and increase programming for the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP), which is known as "Living Well in Nebraska." In the application, they proposed to develop a statewide advisory team to provide guidance and identify opportunities for the expansion and sustainability of this program. The Council Executive Director provided a letter of support with the grant proposal and the letter highlighted the Council's contentment with the proposal including a goal focused on educating adults, with I/DD and chronic conditions, through "Living Well in Nebraska" workshops on maintaining and improving their health status. Nebraska was notified that they were awarded the "Living Well" grant in late 2018. As a result, the Council's Executive Director was identified as potential partner and began serving on the statewide advisory team in February 2019.

The Council Executive Director has committed to the "advocate" level of involvement to support "Living Well in Nebraska." As an advocate, the Council has agreed to: assist in increasing awareness of "Living Well" workshops with partners, health care providers, and clients; help identify additional partners; help identify potential leaders; help identify locations for workshops; and participate in quality improvement, strategic planning, & sustainability efforts with DHHS.

In March 2019, the Council Executive Director met with the “Living Well in Nebraska” Project Coordinator and provided numerous suggestions within all of the above mentioned areas. One of the recommendations included meeting with Janet Miller, from the Munroe-Meyer Institute, who was overseeing a Council subaward to provide Dementia Capable Care training on caring for individuals aging with I/DD.

Progress updates are provided at the “Living Well in Nebraska” Advisory Team meetings. Throughout 2019, the project focused on building project capacity by training “Living Well” leaders and Master Trainers and meeting the goal of having 90+ leaders trained and adding two Master Trainers. In 2019, eight local health department regions had trained “Living Well” leaders in their regions. As of December 9, 2019, Nebraska had 289 participants attend “Living Well in Nebraska” workshops. At a recent “Living Well in Nebraska” Advisory Team meeting, the Council Executive Director made the recommendation to have a place on the participant registration form to indicate if the participant experiences a disability in order to capture this data. The Council will continue to collaborate with the Nebraska Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Program to ensure the visibility of issues impacting the I/DD population as the “Living Well in Nebraska” program progresses.

Quality Management in Developmental Disabilities Services

DDD strives to deliver safe, high quality, integrated services and supports to adults and children with I/DD. DDD has embarked on a multi-year, phased approach to enhance the quality throughout the delivery system, as the previous system was outdated and needed to be more comprehensive. On September 30, 2017, DDD submitted their first quality management strategy plan to the Governor and the legislature, and beginning in September 2018, quarterly updates have been provided with the annual progress reports.

DDD continues its commitment to having a quality management system that is a multi-faceted strategy and incorporates qualitative and quantitative data. This system takes a person-centered approach which ensures the safest and best possible life for each Nebraskan with I/DD. DDD is building the quality management system to assure that individuals served by DDD have access to safe, personalized services delivered by qualified providers and driven by individual choice.

The management system ensures accountability for the service providers and incorporates certification requirements and review metrics reflective of national best practices, for both independent and agency providers. The system holds DDD accountable. Producing reports through a customized quality improvement data system allows the greatest transparency possible by utilizing accurate data to analyze quality. DDD completed the 2016-2017 National Core Indicators (NCI) Adult In-Person survey to establish a baseline to measure the outlined goals.

The quality management system ensures local trends are reported and ensures that Nebraska is meeting the requirements as outlined by CMS. The system focuses on ensuring national best practices are in line with statewide needs and pertinent indicators incorporate results from NCI.

DDD continues to develop quality management system structures to review and improve: health, wellness, and self-direction support for Nebraskans with I/DD; compliance with DHHS, state, and federal regulations; and provider performance, as evidenced by a 15% improvement in 13 categories of the 2017-2018 NIC Adult In-Person survey that were reported in June 2019. DDD's goal is to have a 31% improvement in the 13 categories of the 2018-2019 NIC Adult In-Person survey that will be reported by June 2020. DDD's focus on overall customer service to individuals and their families, efforts to promote technical assistance to providers, and an increased focus on keeping stakeholders informed are some of the factors that contributed to the improvement.

DDD will continue meeting with various statewide stakeholders and advisory committees to enhance the quality management system. DDD is committed to ensuring that individuals receiving services, families, providers, advocates, and the general public have the opportunity to advise and influence quality services for individuals with I/DD.

The next phase of DDD's quality management system strategy will be to contract with a Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) to continue Nebraska's commitment and implement model practices for components of a robust oversight framework. The contract scope of work will include a strong incident report management system, death mortality reviews, and training & technical assistance to build community-based provider capacity. In 2019, DDD received appropriation funding to move forward on this project. The Request for Proposal process is underway for contracting with a QIO.

DDD has sought Council input throughout their quality management system strategy and as a member of the Nebraska Governor's Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council, the Council Executive Director is kept informed at the quarterly meetings.

Related to the topic of quality management system, CMS' Health and Welfare State Review Team announced that they will be visiting Nebraska December 9-13, 2019 for a compliance review of health and safety oversight of HCBS DD Waiver participants. In January 2018, the Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General, ACL, and the Office for Civil Rights issued a Joint Report entitled, "Ensuring Beneficiary Health and Safety in Group Homes Through State Implementation of Comprehensive Compliance Oversight." This Joint Report described themes of unreported and unanalyzed critical incidents found across three individual state audits and identified model practices to enhance states' oversight mechanisms to ensure the health and welfare of individuals receiving HCBS in 1915(c) waiver programs. Among its recommendations, the Joint Report suggested that CMS form a team to address systemic problems in state implementation and compliance with health and safety oversight, which CMS opted to address with a proactive, technical assistance approach.

The Health and Welfare Special Reviews Team (HWSRT) is tasked with assessment, analysis, and technical assistance in support of this recommendation. During their visit, the HWSRT will speak to state agencies, advocates, providers, and participants about what is working well and what needs improvement related to supporting participant health and welfare. This project offers assistance to states to improve how the health and welfare, of HCBS DD Waiver participants, is assured on both a state and national level. One way to learn how the state is doing in this area is to talk with people who are tasked with monitoring and responding to health and welfare concerns for participants receiving HCBS DD Waiver services in the community.

While onsite, the HWSRT will be conducting a number of interviews and discussions with people responsible for various parts of the system that record, investigate, track, resolve, and monitor critical incidents and other issues related to health and welfare for participants receiving HCBS DD Waiver services. The team will also speak to service providers and participants who receive HCBS DD Waiver services. The team is interested in identifying processes that are working well and those that need improvements. The Council plans to review the HWSRT Nebraska report and findings in 2020.

Section IV: State Plan Implementation Progress Report

Detailed Progress Report on Goals

Description

Improve Transition Across Lifespan

Area Of Emphasis

Area of Emphasis	Planned for this goal	Areas addressed
Quality Assurance	true	true
Education and Early Intervention	true	true
Child Care		
Health	true	true
Employment		
Housing		
Transportation		

Area of Emphasis	Planned for this goal	Areas addressed
Recreation		
Formal and Informal Community Supports	true	true

Strategies

Strategies	Planned for this goal	Strategies Used
Outreach	true	true
Training	true	true
Technical Assistance	true	true
Supporting and Educating Communities	true	true
Interagency Collaboration and Coordination	true	true
Coordination with Related Councils, Committees and Programs	true	true
Barrier Elimination		
Systems Design and Redesign		
Coalition Development and Citizen Participation		false
Informing Policymakers		

Strategies	Planned for this goal	Strategies Used
Demonstration of New Approaches to Services and Support		
Other Activities		

3. Intermediaries/Collaborators

Collaborators	Planned for this goal	Actual
State Protection and Advocacy System	true	true
University Center(s)	true	true
State DD agency	true	true
State and local advocacy organizations, such as The Arc of Nebraska, local Arc chapters, the Autism Family Partnership, etc.	true	true
PTI (Parent Training and Information) of Nebraska	true	true
Nebraska Dept. of Education	true	true
ADRC (Aging & Disability Resource Centers) Sites, Area on Aging sites	true	true
Nebraska VR	true	true

Provide an overall cohesive description of (a) the extent to which progress is being made in achieving the intended outcomes of the Goal for the reporting year, (b) the extent to which each goal was or was not achieved for the reporting year, (c) where applicable, factors that impeded goal achievement for the reporting year, (c) needs that require substantive state plan amendment (goal only)

The Council continues to make great progress in the Lifespan Transition goal with two of the three objectives being met. The third objective is being addressed by re-releasing an RFA after funding to an applicant was disallowed by the DSA (see below).

In 2019, two subawards were funded and one additional RFA was released but not funded. The Dementia Capable Care project surpassed the projected goal in terms of the numbers of people trained in the area of caring for individuals who may be experiencing signs and symptoms of dementia, or who have already been diagnosed. A group of participants was also trained to take this information to their communities to further the awareness and education of families and those who care for individuals with DD who may have or are showing signs and symptoms of dementia. There were a number of unexpected outcomes that resulted from the project that will be discussed later in this report.

The second project begins 10/1/19 and ends 9/30/20 and will continue the Along the Way Transition Resource Guides project. The guides were created in response to an RFA in 2017 to create a comprehensive resource guide across the lifespan for individuals with DD, families, and professionals. Progress on this subaward will be reported in the 2020 PPR.

An RFA for Person-Centered Planning Training, Objective 3, was released and awarded. However, our DSA would not permit the subaward to be completed due to the applicant being a for-profit entity. Requests for clarification from the federal funding agency on whether for-profits can be funded with federal dollars were referred back to the DSA and State procurement policies. The DSA determined that they would follow the federal definition of who is eligible to receive federal subaward dollars, which does not include for-profits. The interpretation was followed by a letter to the subrecipient by the DSA Legal Department stating that the funding would not be awarded.

4 Year Overview : A description of how the Council will use and build from knowledge gained and progress made to move forward in the next state plan cycle.(This section only applies to the PPR submitted for the Federal Fiscal Year 2020, which will be due by January 1, 2021)

5 Year Overview : For the final PPR of this state plan cycle, provide an overall analysis of the outcomes achieved during the five year state plan cycle. The description should include the extent to which diverse stakeholders are satisfied with council activities that promote self-determination and community participation for individuals with disabilities and families, results of other types of information gathering such as focus groups, surveys, or other feedback or input methods with individuals with developmental disabilities and families and major accomplishments and factors impeding goal achievement (if applicable).(This section only applies to the PPR submitted for the Federal Fiscal Year 2021, which will be due by January 1, 2022)

Objectives

1. An increased number of individuals transitioning out of special education and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources for adult living.

1. Goal: Improve Transition Across Lifespan

2. State Plan Objective Objective 1

3. This Objective is

Individual & Family Advocacy

4. This Objective is

Ongoing

5. This Objective is

	The Objective is
a. Fulfilling a Self-Advocacy DD Requirement *	No
b. Targeted disparity *	No
c. DD Network Collaboration *	No
d. A demonstration project of New Approaches to Services and Supports *	No
e. A demonstration of projects or activities *	No

6. Stage of Implementation

Implementation

7. Provide an overall description of this effort

A new activity using a previous Council-funded product will bring awareness and education to self-advocates, families, and professionals in the area of transition across the lifespan. A statewide training of professionals who work with individuals with DD and their families will take place in FFY2019-20. These professionals will receive training to increase their knowledge on available resources and how to assist individuals with DD and their families in accessing resources. In turn, these professionals will meet in groups or individually with self-advocates, families, and others in their communities to increase their knowledge available resources and better understand how to access these resources. Families of children with DD and culturally diverse communities will be targeted.

The FFY2018-19 Transition Conference and Classes project concluded with good numbers attending either in person or watching live on Facebook. Self-advocates and families increased their knowledge on transition, available resources, and other topics relevant to their location on each end of the state.

8. Outputs Achieved

Expected Outputs	Achieved
<p>Advocacy Partnership for People with Special Needs will plan and host one transition conference in Lincoln and two additional transition-focused classes in Lincoln and a transition conference in western Nebraska.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>Three age-specific Nebraska Transition Resource Guides will be reviewed by Council and updated as needed. Competitive RFA will be released for statewide training using this resource.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>On-going distribution of the three age-specific Nebraska Transition Resource Guides. An electronic version will be hosted on the Council website.</p>	

10. The report should include the following: (a) A narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented toward achieving the objective, including how the identified strategy was used, how the activity was implemented, challenges to achieving the objective and unexpected benefits.(b) For system change activities, include a description of the stage of implementation (planning, initiation, implementation, outcome/fully integrated) of the system change initiative. (c) All narratives must describe what numbers make up the performance measures number for the activities being reported in the narrative.(d) A summary of evaluation activities to monitor progress and impact of council supported activities for the objective; data collected during the year, data sources, and data collection methods; (logic model and evaluation plan may be attached to the report).

Getting timely information on transition to self-advocates, families, and professionals has been an ongoing topic in Nebraska. There had not been a go-to source to serve as a reference for services and supports across the lifespan. This has created gaps and voids for self-advocates and families. In 2017, the Council released an RFA to create a resource guide to assist self-advocates with DD and their families in transition across the lifespan. Fritz & O'Hare Associates (FOA) was awarded funding. Three guides, *Along the Way: A Guide for Parents of Infants, Toddlers, and Children with Disabilities*; *A Guide for Adolescents and Young Adults with I/DD*; *A Guide for Adults with I/DD*, and a separate *Directory of Resources for Individuals with I/DD* reference guide were created. The guides were made available online and 500 hard copies were distributed at transition conferences and as requested. The guides are promoted by the Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities during her statewide listening tours as well as being available on the Council and DD Division webpages.

In 2019, the Council released an RFA to take the guides across the state to make families and professionals aware of the guides and to train professionals on the use of the guides. These professionals (teachers, ESUs, advocacy organizations, DD providers, Nebraska VR, DHHS Division of Developmental Disabilities, and Early Development Network Service Coordinators) would then train self-advocates, families and others in their communities. FOA was awarded funding for the project to begin 10/1/19.

The Transition Conference and Classes project by Advocacy Partnership for People with Special Needs, under the umbrella of the Arc of Lincoln, reached self-advocates and families in opposite ends of the state.

In Lincoln, the Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities was a presenter. The Executive Director of The Arc of Nebraska attended and provided support by posting the conference dates and information on their webpage. There were 62 people in attendance with an additional 24 watching the live feed on Facebook. Survey results showed 3 self-advocates attended, reported increasing their advocacy, are better able to say what is important to them, and reported being satisfied with the conference; 59 family members attended with 47 reporting that they were both satisfied and that they increased their advocacy, and 1 reported participating in advocacy activities. Afterwards, many parents asked if this conference would be an annual event to learn more and to have more families and self-advocates in attendance.

The Transition Conference in Lincoln was followed up with classes that were most commonly requested after the conference. These included a talk about safety at home, in the community, and on the internet, by a Lincoln Police Department officer. Two other presentations were given on the topics of community activities in the summer for people with I/DD, and what groups they could join to be involved in their communities.

The conference in Scottsbluff was attended by 26 of the anticipated 30 participants. Attendees came from four surrounding towns in rural western Nebraska. Presenters and vendors included Vocational Rehabilitation, Legal Aid, Disability Rights Nebraska, Northwestern Mutual, and Panhandle Trails Intercity Public Transit. Surveys reported 6 self-advocates attended, 3 increased their advocacy, 21 were better able to say what was important to them, and 3 were satisfied with the conference; 20 family members attended and were better able to say what was important to them, 4 are participating in advocacy, and 16 reported being satisfied with the conference.

The Project Director for the Transition Conferences and Classes project resigned before all the reports were completed. Information received was pulled from the surveys by someone who had not been involved in the project; therefore, more detailed information is not available.

12. Expected Outcomes Achieved

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
60 families and/or individuals with developmental disabilities will attend the Transition Conference in Lincoln. Some of these participants will attend the two follow-up trainings to increase their knowledge about adult services and community resources.	true

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
At least 20 of the Lincoln Transition Conference participants will attend two follow up meetings focused on four of the most common additional topics requested.	true
30 families and/or individuals with developmental disabilities will attend the Transition Conference in western Nebraska.	
Nebraska families will have access to resources across multiple systems to steer families through the transition process across the lifespan.	true
Potential in-person outreach training with families, educators, and advocates across the state using the new Nebraska Transition Resource Guides.	
The final Nebraska Transition Resource Guides will provide families, students with developmental disabilities, educators, and advocates with helpful information to improve transitions throughout the lifespan.	true

13. Progress towards achieving outcomes for overall objective : The annual report should include an assessment as to the extent to which progress was made on the intended outcomes for the objective.

In FFY2017, considerable progress toward this objective was made as the Council funded the creation of three age-specific transition resource guides and a Directory of Resources. Access to this valuable information for self-advocates, families, and professionals was made through distribution of a limited number of hard copies and on the Council webpage. A new subaward has been funded that will train professionals across the state on how to use the guides when working with self-advocates and families.

In FFY2018, additional progress was made by funding a Transition Conferences and Classes project. This promising practice brought a variety of speakers to two locations in Nebraska and reached 88 self-advocates, families, and others. While the anticipated number of attendees was not met in the panhandle, it was surpassed at the eastern conference. Additional conferences have been requested by attendees in the panhandle.

Positive outcomes from the Transition Conferences and Classes:

- Several parents did not know that there are two strong resources in western Nebraska: Disability Rights Nebraska, the state's P&A, has an office in Scottsbluff; and Panhandle Partnership, a non-profit collaborative that builds collaboration among agencies, networks, and the broader community to find creative solutions to improve the lives of people and communities of the Nebraska Panhandle.
- Several families were not aware that they should apply for services, while others were under the impression that their children with autism would not receive any services. These assumptions were addressed, along with discussion on the different waivers and how to apply for the waivers.
- Families who received additional information on services and waivers have been approved. They now feel more prepared for when their child ages out of the school program.
- Advocates feel they have a better understanding of the services available or know who they can turn to for help.
- Families who traveled from surrounding areas in rural western Nebraska feel that they are not alone and now know where they can find help.

- Several attendees have continued to discuss the 9:00 PM routine that the officer talked about – every night at 9:00 PM, check that your house is locked up, shades are pulled, and the porch light is on.

14. Additionally, include stories of culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities whose lives are better because of Council work on this activity (e.g., became better advocates for themselves and others, became more connected to the community). Stories of policy or legislative changes that happened as a result of Council individual advocacy work that are likely to positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities or that will prevent a potential negative impact (e.g., created deleted, refined programs and/or legislation, reallocated use of funds, organizational systems change as a result of evidence based practices).

Stories from the Along the Way Transition Resource Guide distribution project will be reported in the 2020 PPR.

From the Transition Conference and Classes:

- One participant asked about the disclosure cards that had been shared at the Scottsbluff conference. Disclosure cards are the size of a state ID card and can be given to an officer when the individual needs to show ID so they can let the officer know that they have autism, an intellectual disability, or a developmental disability. This advocate used the cards for some of her deaf clients. Apparently not long after the clients had the disclosure cards, they were stopped by the local police department. By handing them the disclosure card, the officer knew immediately that both people in the vehicle were deaf. There was a name of a sign language interpreter to contact on the card. Apparently, this has happened before when not only were the people who were deaf frustrated, but it made the police officer frustrated as well. These cards have been implemented in Lincoln for anyone interested, and are now being used in Scottsbluff and surrounding areas to help individuals with disabilities to be better understood and be able to advocate for themselves.

- A relationship with the Panhandle Partnership was formed for this conference, and with all the organizations working together, it was a meaningful day for those in attendance. After reading all the satisfaction surveys, it was clear that the topics provided for this conference were all topics that the community needed more information on.

2. An increased number of adults with I/DD and their aging families will be identified through outreach activities and provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources.

1. **Goal:** Improve Transition Across Lifespan

2. **State Plan Objective** Objective 2

3. **This Objective is**

Individual & Family Advocacy

4. **This Objective is**

Ongoing

5. This Objective is

	The Objective is
a. Fulfilling a Self-Advocacy DD Requirement *	No
b. Targeted disparity *	No
c. DD Network Collaboration *	No
d. A demonstration project of New Approaches to Services and Supports *	No
e. A demonstration of projects or activities *	No

6. Stage of Implementation

Implementation

7. Provide an overall description of this effort

A new activity was funded to provide training to families and service provider agencies on how to watch for and recognize possible signs of dementia in people with IDD. In addition to the Dementia Capable Care training, the Intellectual Disability and Dementia: A Caregiver's Resource Guide for Nebraskans was created with resources specific to Nebraska in order to provide information on learning about dementia screening, assessments, and diagnosis; learning about dementia; and working with health care providers. A screening tool was provided to be used as a baseline, then as a reference for future years to track changes that could be signs of dementia in individuals.

8. Outputs Achieved

Expected Outputs	Achieved
The comprehensive Nebraska Transition Resource Guide specific to adult services will be shared with ADRC sites and a link to the electronic document will be available on the ADRC resources website.	true
ADRC sites track data on incoming calls and resource referrals. Data will reflect that the comprehensive Nebraska Transition Resource Guide is shared with families or individuals.	
Dementia Care Training will be provided at two different rural sites in Nebraska for family caregivers, guardians, direct support professionals, medical professionals, and others interested in learning about addressing the needs of adults with I/DD who may be suspected to have a form of dementia or already have a diagnosis.	true
30 participants at each site will attend Dementia Care Training (60 total). At least 10 of the 30 participants (20 total) will stay the third day to become Affiliated Trainers with the National Task Group.	true

Expected Outputs	Achieved
A customized Nebraska resource guide "Intellectual Disability and Dementia" will be developed by December 31, 2019.	true

10. The report should include the following: (a) A narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented toward achieving the objective, including how the identified strategy was used, how the activity was implemented, challenges to achieving the objective and unexpected benefits.(b) For system change activities, include a description of the stage of implementation (planning, initiation, implementation, outcome/fully integrated) of the system change initiative. (c) All narratives must describe what numbers make up the performance measures number for the activities being reported in the narrative.(d) A summary of evaluation activities to monitor progress and impact of council supported activities for the objective; data collected during the year, data sources, and data collection methods; (logic model and evaluation plan may be attached to the report).

ADRCs

It was anticipated that the Along the Way Guide for Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and the companion Directory of Resources guide would be available through the Aging and Disabilities Resource Center. It has come to the Council's attention that the guides were removed from their website when the page was redesigned. This is being addressed with the ADRC so that the guides can be accessible to families and caregivers who are looking for resources on the ADRC's webpage. The expected outcome of having the ADRC track data on the number of adults with DD living with aging caregivers who are seeking resources, phone calls requesting information, and resource referrals was not met. This outcome would be too difficult for ADRC staff to track and report to the Council.

Dementia Capable Care Training

Because the rate of dementia is high in individuals with I/DD, especially those with Down syndrome, a dedicated training opportunity to bring awareness of this very real possibility was made through funding to the Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI), the state's UCEDD.

Two master trainers were contracted from the National Task Group to conduct the Dementia Capable Care training. Emails announcing the training were sent to providers and families across the state. Notices were posted on the MMI website, the NTG website, and on Facebook. Participants could sign up for the two-day training or add a third day to become Affiliated Trainers after passing a quiz. Attempts to recruit participation from the Native American community were unsuccessful.

Two trainings were scheduled in rural clusters of the state. It was anticipated that 30 people would attend each training location. Of the 80 initial registrants, 67 participated. This reduced number may have been due to an emergency meeting that was called at the same time to address Share of Cost issues. Time and travel expenses to attend the training may also have played a role in not having more attendees. This would be especially true for direct-support provider agencies that could not afford to send staff.

Funds were leveraged in North Platte. Region II Services provided food for training attendees, a \$300 value. They also covered the expense for the meeting space, valued at \$300 for the three-day training.

In Norfolk, 31 people attended the two-day session with 19 attending the third day to become Affiliated Trainers. North Platte saw 36 at the two-day training and 23 on the third day. Attendees were professionals (53), family members (9), and self-advocates (5). Several attendees traveled to the Norfolk training from Kansas and two came from Indiana. Of the 42 people who attended the third day of training, 28 have taken the NTG quiz to become Affiliated Trainers.

A copy of the resource guide (see below) and screening tool were provided to all attendees. Affiliated Trainers received all the training materials in order to train other staff in their agencies. They also receive updates on training and are offered continuing educational webinars offered by the NTG to acquire additional information.

At the end of day two, participants created action plans. Follow-up meetings were requested to learn more about the recommended NTG/EDSD (Early Detection Screen for Dementia) screening tool. This tool helps establish baseline functioning of individuals and can be completed yearly to measure changes over time. It is a great asset to take to physicians to show changes and help determine whether an individual may be beginning to show the signs of a dementia such as Alzheimer's disease. It can also show these changes to doctors who can then delve further into finding the causes of noted changes. Rather than follow-up meetings, a webinar was created to provide information. A link to the recorded webinar was sent to all registrants. Survey feedback was very positive with all 67 being very satisfied with the project.

The topic of Aging Committees was brought up in the trainings. Participants were interested in forming Aging Committees and asked about receiving more guidance on how to do so and how to keep them going. The purpose of aging committees is to bring areas together to begin the dialogue of how they can be more proactive in planning for the needs of individuals in their care who are aging. It is anticipated that these committees will pay close attention to legislative actions that may need to come up in order to address the needs of those aging in Nebraska. A goal will be for these committees to bring others in to the committee and help work on identified issues and strive to keep training more staff in dementia capable care. One Aging Committee has been formed and two are in development.

In addition to the training sessions, the "Intellectual Disability and Dementia: A Caregiver's Resource Guide for Nebraskans" was created using the Rhode Island Guide as a reference, with their permission. Hard copies of this guide were provided to training participants, Council members, and others. It is available on the Munroe-Meyer Institute and Council webpages as well as the NTG webpage at www.aadmd.org/ntg, and it has been shared on several Facebook pages. This guide has been given to families who have contacted the project coordinator for assistance.

As a result of the work Janet Miller, the Project Coordinator, has done, she has received the national Spirit of the NTG Award, given annually to an individual or organization that has provided exceptional support, education, or training to individuals, families, and/or community supports that have been affected by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias in adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Janet serves on the NTG Steering Committee.

Locally, Janet's work has included:

- Starting a support group for caregivers of adults with dementia.
- Creating a Facebook page for Nebraska Caregivers for Adults with Developmental Disabilities.
- Coordinating the development of a state-wide Aging Coalition.
- Working with the Down Syndrome Alliance of Nebraska to bring neurologist Dr. Seth Keller (American Association of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry [AADMD] and co-founder of NTG Practices Steering Committee) to the University of Nebraska Medical Center's Department of Neurology. He presented to parents and caregivers on the issue of dementia and its impact on persons with Down syndrome. He also met with UNMC medical students who wanted to learn more about persons with disabilities. The student group joined the international student group through the AADMD.
- Offering support to several families who have been referred to her.
- Working with another mom of an adult with Down syndrome and the Down Syndrome Alliance of Nebraska to offer an every-other-month educational series on issues concerning adults with DD.
- Presenting information on aging with developmental disabilities and dementia three times on Nebraska Educational Television, Nebraska's public education station.
- Collaborating with the Alzheimer's Association of Nebraska to assist with calls or requests from families caring for those with DD and dementia. One of their staff has joined the Aging Coalition.
- Bringing awareness to UNMC doctors in multiple disciplines of the need for looking at the complex medical needs of individuals with developmental disabilities. Doctors from several disciplines have begun working together and communicating. As a result, the members of the Aging Committee are writing for a Roberts Wood Johnson Foundation grant to increase awareness of the needs of those with DD who are aging. A planned outcome of the grant is establishing a multi-disciplinary comprehensive complex care clinic.

12. Expected Outcomes Achieved

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
As a result of the Council funded and created comprehensive Nebraska Transition Resource Guide and sharing this resource with the ADRC sites, an increased number of aging families will be provided information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community services.	false
ADRC will track initial data of adults with I/DD living with aging caregivers seeking resources.	
The Dementia Care training helps caregivers have a better understanding of how to identify the onset of this disease, and empowers families to advocate for appropriate services and supports to help their family members live the best quality of life possible in a community based setting rather than a nursing home.	true
Family caregivers and direct support professionals who attend Dementia Care training and/or review the resource guide will have a better understanding of intellectual disability and dementia and best practices for providing care and supports.	true

13. Progress towards achieving outcomes for overall objective : The annual report should include an assessment as to the extent to which progress was made on the intended outcomes for the objective.

In 2017, considerable progress toward this objective was made as the Council funded the creation of three age-specific transition resource guides and a Directory of Resources. Access to this valuable information for self-advocates, families, and professionals was made through distribution of 500 hard copies and the Council webpage. The Along the Way Guide for Adults with I/DD is a valuable tool for families and caregivers. It was anticipated that this guide would be available to the public through the ADRC and their website for families to access the information. This was not met due to the guides being taken off the ADRC website during their webpage redesign. Attempts are being made to correct this. The guides continue to be available on the Council's webpage.

Great progress was made in 2019 with the Dementia Capable Care training subaward. After the training, participants were able to take the information they learned back to their communities and service providers to increase the awareness of dementia in adults with I/DD. Affiliated Trainers have access to the Intellectual Disability and Dementia: A Caregiver's Resource Guide for Nebraskans and additional online resources and webinars to continue reaching families and service provider agencies. This training created a promising practice that is being utilized by provider agencies and families across the state and in states that had representation at the trainings. Another promising practice was the establishment of Aging Committees that are being formed in communities across the state.

Outcomes include:

- 28 attendees passed the NTG quiz on the third day of training and can now present trainings in their communities.
- 8 people were trained in Region II Services.
- 15 additional individuals were trained in McCook, a rural cluster community.
- 30 people have registered for 2 upcoming trainings in the McCook area.
- McCook is in the planning stages of establishing an Aging Committee.
- 15 NTG/EDSD screenings have been completed in the McCook area.
- Southwest Training Service is working on creating an Aging Committee.

- Region II Services in the west central area of the state has formed an Aging Committee.
- Region II Services has completed 20 of the NTG/EDSD screening and have 13 more scheduled.
- The Scottsbluff Region I Office of Human Development in the panhandle has begun incorporating the NTG/EDSD at their ISP meetings with 3 having been completed.
- Region I is sharing the importance of the NTG/EDSD form in these meetings.
- Region I has done a presentation to their administrators to help them better understand the importance of being educated on aging and dementia in the IDD population.
- Information learned by providers at the trainings has helped in the way they are providing services to those in their care.
- Participants are much more confident in their abilities to identify potential conditions and to have greater understanding of what might be behind some behaviors.
- Staff and family members are better equipped with knowledge of the type of information that is important to share with doctors, therapists, and others providing care to adults with DD.
- Many of the participants were not in positions to make major changes within their organizations, however several of the responses received indicate that they are trying to establish aging committees.

14. Additionally, include stories of culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities whose lives are better because of Council work on this activity (e.g., became better advocates for themselves and others, became more connected to the community). Stories of policy or legislative changes that happened as a result of Council individual advocacy work that are likely to positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities or that will prevent a potential negative impact (e.g., created deleted, refined programs and/or legislation, reallocated use of funds, organizational systems change as a result of evidence based practices).

Note: The Dementia Capable Care Training project was personal for the project coordinator, Janet Miller. It reflects her personal experience of seeing the signs and symptoms of dementia in Jennifer, her 30-something-year-old daughter with Down syndrome, while struggling to find a doctor who would take seriously the possibility of a dementia diagnosis. She lost Jennifer to dementia at age 41.

A provider in Omaha sent staff to the additional evening training that was offered to learn more about the materials on dementia and appropriate care of those aging with DD. They did so because they realized there were several clients in their care who needed additional supports. The agency has also referred a couple of families to the project coordinator for additional information.

When asked whether they (attendees) are able to apply the knowledge gained from the training, responses included:

- Absolutely. At our ISP meetings, I have explained the importance of the EDSD form. We have filled out the EDSD form for three individuals that we have ruled are at risk for dementia. The ISP team went through all the other possible health issues and ruled them out, which lead us to believe that we needed to fill out the EDSD. I also have done a presentation for our administrators to help them better understand the importance of being educated on aging and dementia in the DD population.
- Yes. We have worked with some individuals and their medical providers to help rule out underlying medical conditions that may be the condition (dementia).

- We are currently working on training our employees working with our aging population where appropriate and have included the content in our priority list for our health services team as well. I think we are in a much better position to ask probing questions that may not have occurred prior to the training.

3. An increased number of individuals with I/DD and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge and acquire skills for developing self-directed, person-centered plans.

1. Goal: Improve Transition Across Lifespan

2. State Plan Objective Objective 3

3. This Objective is

Individual & Family Advocacy

4. This Objective is

Ongoing

5. This Objective is

	The Objective is
a. Fulfilling a Self-Advocacy DD Requirement *	No
b. Targeted disparity *	No
c. DD Network Collaboration *	No
d. A demonstration project of New Approaches to Services and Supports *	No
e. A demonstration of projects or activities *	No

6. Stage of Implementation

Planning

7. Provide an overall description of this effort

New and continuing projects focusing on increasing information to expand knowledge on how to develop self-directed, person-centered plans were not successful. The Council was prepared to contract with Jean Tuller to provide training on self-direction for Medicaid HCBS waiver participants, future participants, advocates, and other stakeholders. However, Ms. Tuller retired and the Council was unable meet this portion of the objective. Instead the Council pursued a subaward to provide person-centered planning training across the state. Council members voted to award funds to the top applicant. When the subaward went through the DSA's internal review process, it was flagged as the subrecipient was determined to be a for-profit entity. The DSA ultimately did not allow the subaward to be completed.

The Council anticipated that Disability Rights Nebraska would apply for and receive a grant through the Nebraska VR Pre-Employment Transition Services program as in previous years, where the Council-funded "It's All About the Plan" module would again be part of the project. However, Disability Rights Nebraska was not selected to receive the VR summer grant funding.

8. Outputs Achieved

Expected Outputs	Achieved
<p>The Council's "It's All About the Plan" curriculum will be used by Disability Rights Nebraska or other advocacy organization in the summer Nebraska VR funded self-advocacy trainings. At least one training will be planned and implemented.</p>	
<p>Four self-direction trainings led by Jean Tuller in four different locations across the state.</p>	
<p>Ten to fifteen participants will attend the Jean Tuller Self-Direction Trainings at each site.</p>	

10. The report should include the following: (a) A narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented toward achieving the objective, including how the identified strategy was used, how the activity was implemented, challenges to achieving the objective and unexpected benefits.(b) For system change activities, include a description of the stage of implementation (planning, initiation, implementation, outcome/fully integrated) of the system change initiative. (c) All narratives must describe what numbers make up the performance measures number for the activities being reported in the narrative.(d) A summary of evaluation activities to monitor progress and impact of council supported activities for the objective; data collected during the year, data sources, and data collection methods; (logic model and evaluation plan may be attached to the report).

Self-Directed and Person-Centered Planning Training

Council staff anticipated collaborating with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to contract with their contractor, Jean Tuller, to continue the Self-Direction training for Medicaid HCBS waiver participants, future participants, advocates, and other stakeholders. DDD previously contracted with Ms. Tuller to provide a limited number of sessions of this training throughout Nebraska. However, Ms. Tuller retired and is no longer providing contractual services.

Council staff demonstrated initiative by collaborating with top leadership within DDD to brainstorm possible strategies to educate families and adults who are on the DD waivers on how to create person-centered plans. This discussion led to the Council's decision to release an RFA for a national entity to bring person-centered planning training to Nebraska. The training should educate DD providers, families/guardians, self-advocates, and service coordinators on what person-centered planning actually is, with training conducted in person and via webinars. The Council collaborated with the DHHS Medicaid and Long-Term Care Division (MLTC) to provide an additional \$78,000 in funds for this project. The funds would come from the Money Follows the Person program. The DD Division also offered to assist the subrecipient with logistical support and funds to help pay for meeting locations if needed. This collaboration between MLTC, the DD Division, and the Council will help ensure that the amount of funding available would bring in quality applicants for the project, and that DHHS staff would have a role in the curriculum development and that their service coordinator staff would be included in the training.

The Council released the RFA and received three applications. The top applicant was selected for funding. During the required legal and grants management reviews by the DSA, it was determined that the applicant is a for-profit entity. The DSA follows the federal definition of who is eligible to receive federal subaward dollars, which does not include for-profits. The applicant received a letter from the DSA's Legal Department advising that the subaward would not be executed. Council members will vote on whether to re-release the RFA at the November 2019 quarterly meeting.

It's All About the Plan

When predicting key activities, outputs, and outcomes for this objective, Council staff anticipated that Disability Rights Nebraska or another advocacy entity would continue to use the "It's All About the Plan" modules in collaboration with a Nebraska VR short-term program Pre-Employment Transition Services grant throughout the summer. These Council-funded modules were developed in 2014 and updated in 2016 to train individuals with I/DD, family members, and community facilitators on how to increase their skills to express meaningful choice & self-determination when participating in IEPs or ISPs to develop self-directed, person-centered plans. Unfortunately, Disability Rights Nebraska was not selected for the VR summer grant funding in 2019, so these predictions did not transpire.

The curriculum is available free of charge on the Council and other websites as well as through iTunes.

The Parent and the Individual Education Program (IEP):

http://itunes.southeast.edu/podcasts/CE/Choice/ParentIEP/story_html5.html (http://itunes.southeast.edu/podcasts/CE/Choice/ParentIEP/story_html5.html)

The Student and the Individual Education Program (IEP):

http://itunes.southeast.edu/podcasts/CE/Choice/StudentIEP/story_html5.html (http://itunes.southeast.edu/podcasts/CE/Choice/StudentIEP/story_html5.html)

The Individual and the Individual Support Plan (ISP):

<http://itunes.southeast.edu/Podcasts/CE/Choice/IndividualISP/story.html> (<http://itunes.southeast.edu/Podcasts/CE/Choice/IndividualISP/story.html>)

The Family/Guardian and the Individual Support Plan (ISP):

<https://itunes.southeast.edu/Podcasts/CE/Choice/FamilyISP/story.html> (<https://itunes.southeast.edu/Podcasts/CE/Choice/FamilyISP/story.html>)

12. Expected Outcomes Achieved

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
Disability Rights Nebraska or other advocacy organization will conduct a Self-Advocacy for Youth with Disabilities program for up to 20 students and two Informational Family sessions for up to 15 family members of students with disabilities.	
Provide a link to “It’s All About the Plan” training modules on Council’s web page for 24/7 access for refresher.	true
Participants attending the HCBS waiver self-direction training provided by Jean Tuller will learn: 1) how the self-directed model of service delivery differs from the traditional service delivery models; 2) the history of self-direction; 3) elements of self-direction; and 4) self-direction in Nebraska.	

13. Progress towards achieving outcomes for overall objective : The annual report should include an assessment as to the extent to which progress was made on the intended outcomes for the objective.

Although the Person-Centered Planning Training subaward was not allowed to be awarded in 2019, Council staff will ask the Council to determine whether to re-release the RFA at the Council's November 2019 meeting. The \$78,000 from the Money Follows the Person program is available for this project through 9/30/20.

The "It's All About the Plan" curriculum, an e-learning, four-module course previously funded by the Council, continues to be available free of charge to provide outreach and self-advocacy training. In recent years, some entities that have received funding from Nebraska VR to support transition summer programs have used this resource. The curriculum is very effective in training people with I/DD, their family members, and community facilitators on how to exercise self-determination and to be independent, productive, and included in all facets of community life. Council staff are unaware of an entity that used this resource in the summer 2019, which is why our outputs predictions related to Disability Rights Nebraska using the curriculum were not achieved. Rather, Disability Rights Nebraska focused staff efforts on the implementation of their new Representative Payee Monitoring Program. Given that Disability Rights Nebraska has four staff vacancies at this time, it is also unlikely that they will apply for grant funding through the Nebraska VR Pre-Employment Transition Services program to lead a summer self-advocacy training in 2020.

14. Additionally, include stories of culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities whose lives are better because of Council work on this activity (e.g., became better advocates for themselves and others, became more connected to the community). Stories of policy or legislative changes that happened as a result of Council individual advocacy work that are likely to positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities or that will prevent a potential negative impact (e.g., created deleted, refined programs and/or legislation, reallocated use of funds, organizational systems change as a result of evidence based practices).

No stories to share at this time.

Individual & Family Advocacy Performance Measure

Description

Improve Transition Across Lifespan

Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	#	%
White, alone	51	92.73
Black or African American alone	0	0
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1	1.82
Hispanic/Latino	1	1.82

Race/Ethnicity	#	%
Asian alone	0	0
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander alone	0	0
Two or more races	1	1.82
Race unknown	1	1.82

Gender

Gender	#	%
Female	47	92.16
Male	4	7.84
Other	0	0

Category

Category	#	%
Individual with DD	14	13.86
Family Member	87	86.14

Geographical

Geographical	#	%
Urban	2	4.08
Rural	47	95.92

I. Output Measures

Objective	Performance Measure : IFA 1.1 People with DD who participated in activities	Performance Measure : IFA 1.2 Family members who participated in activities
An increased number of individuals transitioning out of special education and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources for adult living.*	9	79
An increased number of adults with I/DD and their aging families will be identified through outreach activities and provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources.*	5	61

Objective	Performance Measure : IFA 1.1 People with DD who participated in activities	Performance Measure : IFA 1.2 Family members who participated in activities
An increased number of individuals with I/ DD and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge and acquire skills for developing self-directed, person-centered plans.*	0	0
Total # of Output Respondents	14	140

II. Outcome Measures

Performance Measures	Percent (%)
IFA 2.1 Percent of people with DD who increased advocacy	78
IFA 2.2 Percent of family members who increased advocacy	85

Sub-Outcome Measures : The number (#) of people who are better able to say what they want/say what is important to them

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
An increased number of individuals transitioning out of special education and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources for adult living.*	7	17
An increased number of adults with I/DD and their aging families will be identified through outreach activities and provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources.*	5	6
An increased number of individuals with I/DD and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge and acquire skills for developing self-directed, person-centered plans.*	0	0
Total # of Sub-Outcome Respondents	12	23

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
IFA 2.3 Percent of people better able to say what they need	86	16

Sub-Outcome Measures : The number (#) of people who are participating in advocacy activities

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
An increased number of individuals transitioning out of special education and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources for adult living.*	1	4
An increased number of adults with I/DD and their aging families will be identified through outreach activities and provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources.*	8	1

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
An increased number of individuals with I/ DD and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge and acquire skills for developing self-directed, person-centered plans.*	0	0
Total # of Sub-Outcome Respondents	9	5
IFA 2.4 Percent of people participating in advocacy activities	64	4

Sub-Outcome Measures : The number (#) of people who are on cross disability coalitions, policy boards, advisory boards, governing bodies and/or serving in leadership positions.

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
An increased number of individuals transitioning out of special education and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources for adult living.*	0	0

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
An increased number of adults with I/DD and their aging families will be identified through outreach activities and provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources.*	0	0
An increased number of individuals with I/DD and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge and acquire skills for developing self-directed, person-centered plans.*	0	0
Total # of Sub-Outcome Respondents	0	0
IFA 2.5 Percent of people on cross disability coalitions	0	0

IFA 3 The percent of people satisfied with a project activity*

88

IFA 3.1 Percent of people with DD satisfied with activity*

79

IFA 3.2 Percent of family members satisfied with activity*

82

System Change Performance Measures

Description

Improve Transition Across Lifespan

SC 1: Output Measures - The number of Council efforts to transform fragmented approaches into a coordinated and effective system that assures individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of and have access to needed community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life.

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
An increased number of individuals transitioning out of special education and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources for adult living.	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	88	0

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
An increased number of adults with I/DD and their aging families will be identified through outreach activities and provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources.	1	0	3	3	0	0	66	1	1

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
An increased number of individuals with I/DD and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge and acquire skills for developing self-directed, person-centered plans.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Systems Change SC 2: Outcome Measures

Outcome Measures	Number(#)
SC 2.1 - Efforts that led to improvements *	4
SC 2.2 - Efforts that were implemented *	4

Sub-Outcome Measures

Objective	SC 2.1.1 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation improvements	SC 2.1.2 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation implemented	SC 2.1.3 Number of improved promising or best practices	SC 2.1.4 Number of implemented promising or best practices
<p>An increased number of individuals transitioning out of special education and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources for adult living.</p>	0	0	0	1
<p>An increased number of adults with I/DD and their aging families will be identified through outreach activities and provided with information to expand their knowledge of adult services and other community resources.</p>	1	3	0	3

Objective	SC 2.1.1 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation improvements	SC 2.1.2 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation implemented	SC 2.1.3 Number of improved promising or best practices	SC 2.1.4 Number of implemented promising or best practices
An increased number of individuals with I/DD and their families will be provided with information to expand their knowledge and acquire skills for developing self-directed, person-centered plans.	0	0	0	0

Detailed Progress Report on Goals

Description

Improve Advocacy, Self-advocacy, and Self-determination

Area Of Emphasis

Area of Emphasis	Planned for this goal	Areas addressed
Quality Assurance	true	true
Education and Early Intervention	true	true
Child Care		
Health	true	
Employment		true
Housing		
Transportation		
Recreation		
Formal and Informal Community Supports	true	true

Strategies

Strategies	Planned for this goal	Strategies Used
Outreach	true	true
Training	true	true
Technical Assistance	true	true
Supporting and Educating Communities	true	true

Strategies	Planned for this goal	Strategies Used
Interagency Collaboration and Coordination	true	true
Coordination with Related Councils, Committees and Programs	true	true
Barrier Elimination		true
Systems Design and Redesign	true	true
Coalition Development and Citizen Participation	true	true
Informing Policymakers	true	true
Demonstration of New Approaches to Services and Support		
Other Activities		

3. Intermediaries/Collaborators

Collaborators	Planned for this goal	Actual
State Protection and Advocacy System	true	true
University Center(s)	true	true
State DD agency	true	true

Collaborators	Planned for this goal	Actual
Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD)	true	true
People First of Nebraska	true	true
The Arc of Nebraska and local Arc chapters	true	true
Nebraska State Independent Living Center	true	true
Department of Health and Human Services Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care	true	true
Nebraska Office of Public Guardian	true	
Nebraska Supreme Court, Administrative Office of Probation	true	true
Nebraska Department of Education	true	true
Department of Health and Human Services Division of Behavioral Health	true	true
Nebraska Department of Education - Nebraska VR	true	true
Department of Health and Human Services Division of Children and Family Services	true	false
Nebraska Brain Injury Advisory Committee	true	true
Nebraska Brain Injury Alliance	true	true

Collaborators	Planned for this goal	Actual
Nebraska Association of Specialized Providers (NASP)	true	true
Department of Health and Human Services Division of Public Health	true	true
Enable Savings Plans - First National Bank	true	
PTI (Parent Training and Information) Nebraska	true	

Provide an overall cohesive description of (a) the extent to which progress is being made in achieving the intended outcomes of the Goal for the reporting year, (b) the extent to which each goal was or was not achieved for the reporting year, (c) where applicable, factors that impeded goal achievement for the reporting year, (c) needs that require substantive state plan amendment (goal only)

New & continuing self-advocate & advocate training projects reached a variety of audiences across the state in 2019. Projects were funded to train self-advocates in leadership; bring self-advocates' stories to the public; & address targeted disparity issues & the school-to-prison pipeline. Proposed legislation was followed &/or tracked with letters & testimony being provided. The Council ED participated in numerous workgroups, statewide advisory committees & councils, & DD Network Partners meetings.

People First of Nebraska (PFN) continued to train on leadership skills by participating in the Leadership Seminar Series training. They were able to use the training the following day at their Board meeting to write PFN's goals & objectives for next year. PFN continues to be involved at the local, state & national levels & has collaborated with neighboring states on regional projects. A poster describing PFN's Disability Policy Specialist program has been recognized by AUCD.

Special Olympics Nebraska & the Autism Society of Nebraska projects both involved leadership training skills. Special Olympics Nebraska recruited youth & young adult athletes to participate in Athlete Leadership training. Attendees used the Gallop Clifton's Strengths Finder or Strengths Assessment tools to learn about their strengths. Training assisted the athletes to improve their strengths & learn new leadership skills. These strengths & skills were used at speaking opportunities in multiple settings.

Autism Society of Nebraska is bringing the PEERS Adult Training to Nebraska. This project will train community leaders on the Program for Education & Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS) for adults with autism & others with DD. Trainings will take place in five locations across the state.

Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI), the state's UCEDD, was funded for a second year of their Leadership Seminar Series. The training included a day of training with modified curriculum to the state's self-advocacy organization, People First of Nebraska. Three trainings were planned for the Leadership Seminar Series, however severe weather across the state made it impossible to complete all the training as planned. Blizzard conditions in the state's panhandle delayed the training in Scottsbluff. Attempts to reschedule this training were unsuccessful because of scheduling conflicts with the presenters & with date & training location availability. The Scottsbluff training will be rescheduled during the 2020 project. The Norfolk training was rescheduled & completed, but with fewer than anticipated attendees due to the clean-up of the extreme flooding & continued flooding concerns. The training in Grand Island was completed as planned.

The Council followed several legislative bills introduced in 2019. Letters in support or opposition to bills were sent to senators prior to the public hearings to educate them on how potential legislation would or could impact the DD community. Testimony by the Council ED was given at three public hearings.

The Nebraska Association of Service Providers (NASP) Turn It Up! project is providing the opportunity for self-advocates with cross disabilities to tell their stories. These stories will be recorded & shown on the Nebraska Educational Television station to audiences across the state. Viewing kits & discussion guides will be created & shared to educate & assist the general public, college classes & community groups with person first language.

One continuing & one new project address targeted disparity issues. Year 2 of the contract with John Ferrone is drawing on the progress made in year 1 of the Juvenile Justice Brain Injury & Cognitive Disability Task Force (Task Force). Mr. Ferrone is providing technical assistance to facilitate Task Force meetings to continue efforts in identifying a plan to prevent & reduce the number of youth with brain injury, cognitive disabilities, learning disabilities or other behavioral health challenges who are entering or already in the juvenile justice system and to oversee engagement with three communities and stakeholders regarding the Classroom-to-Courtroom Pathway.

The Lincoln/Lancaster County Human Services subaward began with providing training to School Resource Officers (SROs) with the Lincoln Police Department & Lancaster County Sheriff School Resource Officers & school administrators. With the training completed, the quarterly reporting will begin to collect data on the numbers of students contacted by SROs & the outcomes. Data will look at those students by outcome, race & whether they have an IEP. The project continues through August 2020.

The Council ED has continued her strong commitment to bringing the Council's voice to work groups & statewide advisory committees & councils. As part of the DD Network team, she has met regularly with the DD Network CEOs.

The creation of a Consumer Leadership Fund was approved by the Council. This fund would defray the costs for self-advocates &/or families of individuals with I/DD to participate in conferences, workshops, & other training opportunities that will increase their knowledge of disability issues & increase their skills as advocates for people with I/DD. A process will be developed to review & approve funding requests.

4 Year Overview : A description of how the Council will use and build from knowledge gained and progress made to move forward in the next state plan cycle.(This section only applies to the PPR submitted for the Federal Fiscal Year 2020, which will be due by January 1, 2021)

5 Year Overview : For the final PPR of this state plan cycle, provide an overall analysis of the outcomes achieved during the five year state plan cycle. The description should include the extent to which diverse stakeholders are satisfied with council activities that promote self-determination and community participation for individuals with disabilities and families, results of other types of information gathering such as focus groups, surveys, or other feedback or input methods with individuals with developmental disabilities and families and major accomplishments and factors impeding goal achievement (if applicable).(This section only applies to the PPR submitted for the Federal Fiscal Year 2021, which will be due by January 1, 2022)

Objectives

1. Objective A. Strengthen support for an increased number of self-advocates through leadership development and coalition participation by:
1. Supplying direct funding to People First of Nebraska for advocacy activities. 2. Supporting opportunities for individuals with I/DD who are considered leaders to provide leadership training to individuals with I/DD who may become leaders. 3. Supporting participation of self-advocates in cross-disability and culturally diverse leadership coalitions. 4. Supporting the development of a curriculum to be used statewide for teaching self-advocacy and self-determination skills.

1. Goal: Improve Advocacy, Self-advocacy, and Self-determination

2. State Plan Objective Objective 1

3. This Objective is

Individual & Family Advocacy

4. This Objective is

Ongoing

5. This Objective is

	The Objective is
a. Fulfilling a Self-Advocacy DD Requirement *	Yes
b. Targeted disparity *	No
c. DD Network Collaboration *	No
d. A demonstration project of New Approaches to Services and Supports *	No
e. A demonstration of projects or activities *	No

6. Stage of Implementation

Implementation

7. Provide an overall description of this effort

The Council funded one ongoing project & two new projects under this objective. All three projects focused on increasing leadership skills for self-advocates & advocates. Multiple training sessions were held in urban & rural clusters across the state to reach a broad audience of self-advocates & advocates. Two projects offered opportunities to travel to national conferences where new leadership skills could be used. The ongoing project with PFN continues to set & meet higher leadership training goals for self-advocates across the state.

One new project focused on training youth & young adult athletes to learn about & use their strengths in leadership roles. The opportunity to travel to a national conference & participate on a national board were available to athletes who best used their leadership skills. Another goal of this project was to strengthen the relationships in schools between students with & without disabilities.

Advocacy for adults on the autism spectrum was the focus of a new project. A national training expert traveled from California to Nebraska to provide training to advocates who will take the training across the state. Recruiting & registering participants for the localized training is taking place.

Council members voted to set aside funds for a Consumer Leadership Fund. This fund would provide an avenue to support self-advocates &/or families of individuals with I/DD who requested financial assistance to attend advocacy trainings. This was not undertaken in 2019.

8. Outputs Achieved

Expected Outputs	Achieved
<p>PFN will collaborate with other self-advocacy organizations in the Heartland Self Advocate Regional Network to co-sponsor and attend a regional conference in Kansas City, Missouri. At that conference, PFN will begin developing ideas for a regional project or activity to implement in the next 12 months.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>Within PFN, 5 opportunities for individuals with I/DD who are considered leaders will provide leadership training to individuals with I/DD who may become leaders. This includes break-out sessions at the regional self-advocacy conference or at the annual PFN state conference.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>Two PFN members will serve as PFN Disability Policy Specialists during the 2019 Nebraska legislative session.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>At least two PFN members will attend the Disability Policy Seminar or the National Independent Living Conference in Washington, DC.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>PFN will develop the "My Home Is Where My Heart Is" awareness campaign toolkit for chapters across the state. Awareness campaign will be incorporated into the February Disability Policy Day and the Disability Pride Rally in July.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>One new PFN chapter will be organized in western Nebraska.</p>	
<p>Funding provided through the NE Consumer Leadership Development Fund will enable persons with I/DD to improve their skills as advocates and leaders in Nebraska's disability community and become involved in policy decisions that affect their lives by attending conferences, trainings, and summits in or out of state.</p>	

Expected Outputs	Achieved
<p>Athlete Leadership Program (ALPS) classes will be held in at least four of the following communities across Nebraska: York, Kearney, Chadron, and Fremont/Elkhorn/Omaha area.</p>	
<p>The ALPS will engage 5-7 athlete leaders and mentors at each location to take the Clifton Strengths Finder, participate in leadership training, and develop personal impact story at each of the trainings. A Graduation will commence at the end of each training, and this is open to community members, donors, families and businesses owners.</p>	<p>true</p>

10. The report should include the following: (a) A narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented toward achieving the objective, including how the identified strategy was used, how the activity was implemented, challenges to achieving the objective and unexpected benefits.(b) For system change activities, include a description of the stage of implementation (planning, initiation, implementation, outcome/fully integrated) of the system change initiative. (c) All narratives must describe what numbers make up the performance measures number for the activities being reported in the narrative.(d) A summary of evaluation activities to monitor progress and impact of council supported activities for the objective; data collected during the year, data sources, and data collection methods; (logic model and evaluation plan may be attached to the report).

People First of Nebraska (PFN)

The Council has previously funded PFN. The Council increased the requirements & expectations for what PFN should accomplish toward becoming not only leaders in their communities, the state, & nationally, but in becoming more self-sufficient. PFN met & surpassed these expectations.

PFN held their 40th annual convention with 191 individuals participating in 13 breakout sessions. All breakouts were either led or co-led by individuals with disabilities, including presentations by new members. Session topics included Voting Rights; promotion of the Nebraska Leadership Training & how self-advocates participated in its development; Fire Safety; Managing your Health; Relationship Skills; My Life as a Disability Policy Specialist; Employment in the Community; & a presentation & Q&A on data from the Nebraska Core Indicators Survey. A total of 85 surveys were returned: 96% noted they increased their advocacy skills, 99% reported being better able to say what they wanted, 99% were satisfied with the project.

There are 12 active PFN chapters across the state. One new rural chapter was established. A chapter in the Panhandle had disbanded due to the lack of a coordinator. Four candidates were interviewed, 1 was recommended. This candidate was hired & the chapter was being re-established. However, she resigned over health issues. The search is underway for a new coordinator. A mother-daughter team has agreed to serve as advisors for this chapter.

PFN increased their collaboration with other disability organizations & invited more organizations to participate in quarterly meetings & sponsor/present at the annual convention.

- Heartland Self-Advocacy Regional Network (HSARN) included co-sponsoring & attending the regional conference in Kansas City, MO & developing ideas for a regional project or activity.
- Self Advocate Coalition of Kansas is in process to host a series of listening session with people with disabilities along the Nebraska-Kansas border.
- People First of Missouri & the Institute for Human Development (Missouri UCEDD).

PFN members are developing into leaders for self-determination on many levels. More members are volunteering to be part of projects & activities. PFN works to find ways for members to contribute & be successful. Board members are getting a grasp of the bigger policy issues beyond their own personal needs – becoming disability advocates, not just self-advocates. The Board's management of their finances has placed PFN in a very strong & stable position. PFN see the need to spend their money to support their organization. Participation in HSARN provided a view of advocacy beyond Nebraska & inspired ideas about new ways to advocate & take leadership

in Nebraska. The collaboration provided role models & mentors & has given PFN opportunities to mentor self-advocates from other states. PFN sees themselves as equals among disability organizations in Nebraska & trend-setters in the development of regional collaboration.

PFN:

- Board members participated in a day of Leadership Seminar Series training. The training was used to identify needs & develop their 2019-20 goals.
- Sent 2 members to the Annual Conference on Independent Living in Washington, DC.
- Leveraged \$1700 from LEND to send 21 members to the SOAR conference.
- Hosted the 2nd Disability Policy Day (12 attendees) & the 3rd annual Disability Pride Day (80 attendees).
- Developed & approved a Code of Conduct for officers, board members, advisors, coordinators & anyone attending PFN events.
- Developed a logo & valentine & delivered to Nebraska's 49 senators & the governor emphasizing the importance of community living for people with disabilities. Valentines included photos of people with disabilities & the work, family, community, church & volunteer activities they do in the community. Board members signed & sent thank you notes to the 49 senators thanking them for their support on important disability legislation and asking them to remember people with disabilities when they vote in the future.
- Partnered with other organizations to meet mutual goals related to promoting self-advocacy, leadership, & disability friendly legislation & policy.
- Hired 2 Disability Policy Specialists. Six candidates applied & interviewed for 2 DPS positions. Two additional DPS's were funded by LEND. DPS's received over 50 hours of mentoring, advocacy, leadership & professional development training from Arc of Nebraska, Arc of Buffalo County, Disability Rights Nebraska, Independent Living Council & Munroe-Meyer Institute. The

unique collaboration to provide policy advocacy training for DPS's was presented at the SOAR conference. A poster describing the project was accepted for presentation at the 2019 AUCD conference in Washington, DC.

DPS's have spoken, presented, or participated in the following:

- Lincoln Women's March about issues for women with disabilities;
- Nebraska Association of Service Professionals on respectful language, voting rights & Olmstead;
- Local PF chapter on how to advocate with policymakers & on self-advocacy at the Disability Policy Day;
- Nebraska Department of Ed Transition conference on guardianship & alternatives to guardianship;
- Regional SOAR conference;
- Testifying on several bills;
- Common Grounds to inform legislators & staff about disability issues;
- Researching disaster planning for people with disabilities;
- Olmstead Advisory group;
- Staffing the PFN table at a job fair for students with disabilities sponsored by Nebraska VR;
- PFN representatives to the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities.

Quarterly reports and Board meeting minutes were submitted to Council staff. Council staff have been in attendance at some events where PFN representatives are present.

Special Olympics Nebraska (SONE)

The SONE Athlete Leadership Program (ALPS) provided leadership training to people with I/DD, improved advocacy/self-advocacy skills & increased community inclusion for individuals with I/DD. Athletes completed either the Gallup's Clifton Strengths Finder or Strengths Explorer to learn their strengths & what they do best. One-on-one mentors were available to athletes as they developed their own leadership story. ALPS trained the 17 athletes in 2 sessions with a public graduation after each session. Classes were held in 2 of the 5 sites across the state (Omaha & Lincoln). Classes were planned for 5 locations, however no athletes were available for the training dates in Fremont & Chadron; & 2 athletes drove from York to Lincoln participate. Locations where the schedules did not work for the athletes are planned to be visited in the future when SONE has sustaining funds for the project. Athletes from 4 rural towns & 2 urban cities attended the Athlete Input Council Leadership conference in Kearney.

A total of 252 athletes used their new leadership skills at 49 separate events. Some of the events were 5 Polar Plunges across the state, Hill Day-Washington, DC, World Games-Abu Dhabi, Spring Games-Lincoln, Police Ball-Omaha, Board meetings, Summer Games-Omaha, Inclusive Youth Leadership Conference-Chicago, Special Olympics North America Business meeting-Charlotte, NC, Law Enforcement Torch Run Conference-Aurora, CO, & Unified Leadership Conference-Washington, DC. At 12 of these events, radio, tv & newspaper reporters interviewed the athletes, giving them the opportunity to use their public speaking skills.

Using their new leadership skills: 1 athlete was selected for the Special Olympics North America Athlete Input Council; 1 started the Trailblazers program at the University of Nebraska-Omaha; 1 was selected to assist in creating the 2022 USA Games logo; 7 athletes traveled to conferences & events around the country.

Advocacy happening in the schools is changing school culture. SONE has seen changes not only in the students with disabilities, but also in those without disabilities.

- Youth Leadership Council Summits were held in North Platte & Omaha South high schools. In North Platte, 31 students without IDD & 14 with IDD attended; in Omaha, 75 students without IDD & 23 with IDD attended.
- Through the Youth Activation Leadership Committee, students with & without disabilities are coming together & forging friendships.

- 3 schools were recognized as Unified Champion Schools with banners. To receive a banner, schools must show that they are involved in whole school engagement, Unified sports & inclusive youth leadership.

Quarterly reports were submitted to the Council. Follow-up emails provided additional project details.

Autism Society of Nebraska (ASN)

The ASN project, in collaboration with Autism Center of Nebraska (ACN), is providing “Train the Leaders PEERS Adult Self-Advocacy Series” training to community leaders in 5 cities across the state. This training will teach these leaders how to implement the PEERS (Program for Education & Enrichment of Relational Skills) program for adults with autism & others with I/DD.

Originally, the project would send a professional from Nebraska to UCLA in California to be trained in the PEERS model, then bring it back to Nebraska to train others. Unfortunately, the individual who was to receive the training resigned her position. A master’s degree is required of the individual to be trained, however there was no one else available who holds a master’s degree. Instead, the PEERS trainer was contracted to come to Nebraska to provide the training. By holding this training in Nebraska, adults on the spectrum will be able to attend & audit the training. Their feedback will give critical input on the trainings. Additionally, the Nebraska Autism Spectrum Disorder Network has offered to help identify the presenters of the series in each training city & provide the presenters at no cost to the subaward. Curriculum specific to each local community & adult-focused target audience is being developed. Quarterly reports are being submitted with follow-up emails to provide additional project detail.

12. Expected Outcomes Achieved

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
<p>At least 20 PFN members will attend the regional self-advocacy conference in Kansas City, Missouri May 30-July 1, 2019.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>PFN will help co-sponsor the Heartland Self Advocate Regional Network regional conference in Kansas City, Missouri May 30-June 1, 2019.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>The PFN "My Home Is Where My Heart Is" statewide awareness campaign will profile the lives of people with disabilities in their homes, working at their jobs, volunteering, and building their lives in their community. Their message will be disseminated to elected officials and policymakers. Outreach will also target newspaper, radio, and TV media.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>Self-advocates in western Nebraska will organize a local chapter and strengthen self-advocacy efforts in this rural area.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Funding provided through the Nebraska Consumer Leadership Development Fund will enable persons with I/DD to improve their skills as advocates and leaders in Nebraska's disability community and become involved in policy decisions that affect their lives by attending conferences, trainings, and summits in or out of state.</p>	<p></p>
<p>In order for a person to receive funding through the Nebraska Consumer Development Fund to attend events, the awardees must fulfill required responsibilities that include sharing knowledge, information, etc. that is gained at the event with other Nebraska citizens, and providing a presentation within three months of attending the event.</p>	<p>false</p>

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
<p>The Athlete Leadership Program empowers people with intellectual disabilities to develop their advocacy skills. By sharing their stories, they educate community members, policy makers, corporations, schools and employers proving that people with I/DD can make meaningful contributions to society. Each participant is partnered with a volunteer mentor from their community.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>An ALPS athlete will develop their personal story to share with policy makers in Washington DC.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>ALPS athletes and peers from across the state will be implementing inclusive activities and messaging in their school. Youth leaders with and without disabilities work together on the Youth Activation Leadership Committee to plan activities in their high school throughout the year.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>Beyond the ALPS, each new graduate can share their story with their local community as well as policy makers at the state and national level. Athlete leaders have opportunities to use their new skills at events throughout the year which include competitions, fundraisers, board meetings, corporate presentations and countless other activities.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>A recent ALPS Graduate from 2019 will be chosen to join the Special Olympics Nebraska Board of Directors. They will serve on committees, report to the board and bring ideas back to the Athlete Input Council.</p>	<p>true</p>

13. Progress towards achieving outcomes for overall objective : The annual report should include an assessment as to the extent to which progress was made on the intended outcomes for the objective.

PFN outcomes:

- 13 breakout sessions led or co-led by self-advocates at the annual convention.
- Collaborated with other self-advocacy organizations in Nebraska, including Arc of Nebraska, SILC, Disability Rights Nebraska, & the Brain Injury Alliance of Nebraska.
- Co-hosted & presented at HSARN in Kansas City, MO.
- At least 1 project with the People First of Kansas group is in the planning stages.
- Presented at the SOAR conference, the annual PFN convention, at chapter & Board meetings.
- Hired 2 Disability Policy Specialists for the 2019 legislative session.
- DPS's presented information on proposed legislation to the PFN Board, testified at public hearings, were invited to speak at 5 events, & represented PFN on 3 committees.
- 2 members attended the Disability Policy Seminar & the Annual Conference on Independent Living, both in Washington, DC.
- Distributed "My Home is Where My Heart Is" awareness materials to the state's 49 senators & the governor. These were created by members across the state to emphasize the importance of people with disabilities & showing them participating in community life, working, being with family & friends, & participating in community service.

Special Olympics Nebraska outcomes:

- Students who have not always had the opportunity to be leaders are stepping up & becoming Unified partners & forming true friendships with their athlete partners.

- 17 athletes took the Strengths Finder or Strengths Explorer assessments and graduated from the ALPS program. These leaders have had the opportunity to travel, speak to large groups, attend conferences and educate the community to help break down stigma and stereotypes.
- 9 athletes traveled to participate in national leadership conferences & activities.
 - Garret attended national advocacy training in Washington, DC where he collaborated with 45 other athletes & furthered his leadership skills. While in DC, he met with all 5 Nebraska representatives & their staff to tell his story.
 - Eric attended a Unified Leadership training in Washington, DC. He created a presentation for SONE staff & Board members on how to give athletes more meaningful roles within SONE (see his speech under Stories below).
 - Joey & Sophia attended a Unified Inclusion conference in Chicago. Both were selected by corporate sponsor KPMG to be interviewed in a promotional video.
 - Matt & Austin attended Unified Athlete Leadership University training at Bethel University in MN & presented on how they can help impact the environment & community.
 - John represented Nebraska at the North America Law Enforcement Torch Run Conference in Colorado.
 - Haley, an athlete & DD Council member, was selected to help design the 2022 USA Games logo. She made two trips to Orlando, FL to create a logo then returned to be part of the reveal. An ESPN feature video of the project premiered nationwide online (www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=qebdScVUNd4).
 - Rachel was selected to be on the Special Olympics North America Athlete Input Council where she represents a 6-state region & is responsible for monthly national calls. She relays that info to the 6 state delegates. She also started the Trailblazers program at UNO this fall. Her dream of going to college is being fulfilled. She is taking classes with her college age peers, attends the Unified Fitness classes twice a week & actively participates in class, a skill she & her parents would not have thought possible prior to her experience in the Athlete Leadership program.

- 252 individuals with I/DD used their leadership skills at 49 events.
- 3 athlete leaders were trained as Health Messengers, advocates who promote self-advocacy in their own health care & for health/fitness opportunities in their communities.
- Youth athletes with & without disabilities worked together on the Youth Activation Leadership Committee to plan activities in their schools throughout the year.
- 100 students with & without disabilities took part in day-long inclusivity training on how they can change the culture in their schools through inclusion.
- 3 schools were presented with Unified Champion School banners.
- 2 schools held all-school assemblies to honor their schools as Unified Champion Banner Schools. Each assembly included student leaders with disabilities speaking & taking part in the presentation.
- 4 regional Athlete Input Councils were created to represent all areas of the state.
- 22 Corporate Partners offered support.

14. Additionally, include stories of culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities whose lives are better because of Council work on this activity (e.g., became better advocates for themselves and others, became more connected to the community). Stories of policy or legislative changes that happened as a result of Council individual advocacy work that are likely to positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities or that will prevent a potential negative impact (e.g., created deleted, refined programs and/or legislation, reallocated use of funds, organizational systems change as a result of evidence based practices).

PFN

- Jessica posted: “I have grown so much personally, emotionally, & professionally. Doing Leadership Scotts Bluff, participating in amazing volunteer opportunities, being on the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities & my time at the People First conventions & Youth Leadership Council Alumni has taught me so much. Learning more about my disability, growing closer to God & finding my church home & learning that my mental health & self care are so important. Learning not to push myself back to make others happy is still a learning curve. I can’t wait to continue to learn & grow. Also remember, you were born to stand out so why try to fit in :) I am amazing, beautiful & smart. Love yourself. Love God & Love others.”
- Jennifer joined the PFN Board in 2017 & became active in policy advocacy through regular calls to her senator. She was contracted to serve as a DPS for 2019. She made great personal strides last year to become more independent. After her contract as a DPS ended, she was hired by the SILC as an administrative assistant & is living independently in her own apartment.
- Travis has served as a PFN Board member & officer since 2012. During most of that time he lived with his parents in northeast Nebraska. Travis developed a relationship with Hannah, who was from central Nebraska. Travis’ family worried about this long-distance relationship, but through the advocacy skills of Travis & Hannah, they developed & executed a plan for Travis to move to central Nebraska to live in the same independent living community as Hannah.

From Special Olympics Nebraska:

Sean shared that he didn’t go to his own high school graduation because he didn’t like to get up in front of people when he was in high school. Now he is a confident leader on his team who got up in front of an audience of 75 people & said, “I challenge everyone to never be afraid to Show Up. You are never too old to compete.”

Speeches given by athletes:

“Hi I am Eric. I have been a Special Olympics athlete for 17 years & a board member for 4 years. One question I had ask myself is am I am Brave Enough? Am I Brave Enough to be the voice of all of the Special Olympics Nebraska Athletes? Am I Brave Enough to go into a board meeting & understand all of the topics on the agenda? Am I Brave Enough to give my opinion & input in a committee meeting? Am I Brave Enough to speak up to my superiors at work? When I first started as an athlete leader, I was nervous when I had to speak at events. I was in my own shell. It was hard for me to get out of my comfort zone. After getting Leadership training I feel more confident. I get goosebumps when I know others are listening & my input matters. I have learned that as a Special Olympics leader it is important for me listen to my peers & share their input with the board. I have learned as Leader that I need to listen to other opinions & see an issue from both sides. Even when I don't agree. The answer to my question Am I Brave enough? I discovered that I am always learning new skills to be Brave. My question for you is how can you engage athletes as leaders in your role with Special Olympics?”

Ryan:

“I have a lot of medals! That's because I am a Special Olympics Champion! My name is Ryan, & I want to tell you why I love Special Olympics. I was born with Down syndrome. And because of the Special Olympics, I get to play sports. I love sports. I like to get medals, especially the gold. I have won gold medals in swimming & basketball. Another thing I love about the Special Olympics, are the coaches. I started swimming six years ago on the Barracudas with Coach Brandon. He is my favorite coach, even though he is a Cubs fan & talks smack about my Cardinals. He is goofy but helps me with my swimming. He taught me how to do the butterfly stroke & is helping me to be more active. One of my favorite memories being a part of Special Olympics is meeting friends as Young Athletes, & still being friends now. My best friend Aidan & I have been friends since we were little, & we still love to play baseball together. Because I am a Special Olympics athlete, I have the confidence to go after my dreams. After I graduate high school, I am going to get a job. I want to be a movie caster. Someday I also want to get married & be a dad. Special Olympics has been a very important part of my life, & I hope to be an athlete for life!”

“My name is Sophie & I am a senior at Millard West High School. High school is the time when everyone finds themselves & I found myself through unified activities. As a freshman I was quiet & timid. I've never been the person to have a lot of friends. I was nice to everyone & I knew a lot of people but it was hard for me to form deep friendships. The fall of my freshman year I decided to tryout for the

Unified Bowling team. A role which I took very seriously. I was even asked by my coach at tryouts “if I even smile.” Overtime, I became more comfortable & blossomed into my outgoing self. Now, I can’t stop smiling. I have met the most wonderful & genuine people I know through Unified activities. I have watched true friendships with unified partners & athletes form. My athlete partners are my inspiration to be the best person I can be & to constantly do more. We all have unquestioned acceptance of one another, & I am free to be my true self—I can be as silly as I want! Every day I get to experience how much people with different abilities can do. My bowling teammate Joey started out rolling the bowling ball between his legs & now he is a consistent middle of the lane bowler. I witnessed Josh, an athlete from Beatrice, letting an athlete from my team who wasn’t keeping up with the pace of the soccer game, score a goal. One of my favorite memories was in March at the Q-street classic. Here is a picture of what I was doing during that game—holding Joe’s hand practically dragging him down & back on the court, both of us laughing hysterically! Our athletes show so much perseverance & determination. Seeing my friends achieve their goals in bowling & improve little by little (even when they get a strike) & how it brings them so much joy, has made me realize that I too should celebrate the everyday joys. To stop focusing so far into the future & just live. Today I am a partner in Unified bowling & track. I coach unified soccer & swim teams for my high school, as well as a softball skills team. Coaching has really opened my eyes to my true strengths & the type of leader I want to be. I am a representative on the Youth Activation Committee for Special Olympics where high schoolers from across the state come together to collaborate on events, volunteer & grow the unified movement. Additionally, I hold leadership roles in multiple other non-profits & clubs geared toward inclusion. Inclusion to me is equality, acceptance, togetherness, & love— it’s a sense of belonging. A sense of belonging is one of the greatest gifts I received from my involvement in inclusive activities. I too feel accepted & loved for my true self. It warms my heart that I am a source of similar feelings to the same people who have changed my life. I am thankful for these true deep friendships. I don’t think my friends with different abilities will ever know the positive impact they’ve had on me. We can all make an impact. I know I am making an impact by being involved with Special Olympics Nebraska, I encourage each & everyone of you to open yourselves up to making an impact to.”

“Hey, I’m Josh. I’m here to talk about Special Olympics & Superheroes. What do they have in common? Well, superheroes, have a lot of strengths. Special Olympics provides me with many strengths, too. It makes me stronger & faster, it shows me how to work well with others, & how to help others. Special Olympics is my superhero training camp. As a Special Olympics soccer player, I am here to show you how to be like a superhero. In soccer, we learn how to run like superheroes, kick the ball just like how superheroes kicks bad guys, &

we both focus in the heat of the moment! In the Athlete Leadership Program, I learned about my top three strengths: Organizer, Dependability, & Confidence. As an organizer, I like to plan out what my day will be like & get breakfast ready every night before bed. Superheroes make sure their suits are nearby them at all times & make sure they plan how to save people. As someone who is dependable, I like to make sure everyone is listening to what others are saying & helping others. As for superheroes, they always help people without wanting any thanks. They even wear masks so they don't have to be thanked! As a person with the strength of confidence, I make sure I am brave every day & help people, including my Special Olympics soccer team! As for superheroes, they have to have confidence in themselves so that they do not let other people down & be brave when crime happens. So, now you know about my strengths that I am organized, dependable, & confident. Are you ready to be a superhero? I'm hoping that you all consider getting involved with the Special Olympics to help other superheroes get stronger, faster, & learn more about themselves."

2. Objective B. Advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD of diverse identities and their families through active participation in: statewide advisory committees and cross-disability workgroups; public policy advocacy; cross-systems dialogue; and DD Network collaboration.

1. Goal: Improve Advocacy, Self-advocacy, and Self-determination

2. State Plan Objective Objective 2

3. This Objective is

Individual & Family Advocacy

4. This Objective is

Ongoing

5. This Objective is

	The Objective is
a. Fulfilling a Self-Advocacy DD Requirement *	No
b. Targeted disparity *	No
c. DD Network Collaboration *	No
d. A demonstration project of New Approaches to Services and Supports *	No
e. A demonstration of projects or activities *	No

6. Stage of Implementation

Implementation

7. Provide an overall description of this effort

One new & one continuing subaward, weighing in on proposed legislation, & the numerous activities of the Executive Director continue to move the Council closer to completing the objectives of this goal.

Because of the continued high interest in this leadership training series, a second year of funding for the Munroe-Meyer Institute's Leadership Seminar Series brought training to rural cluster areas of the state. A modified version was presented to the People First of Nebraska Board members.

The new Nebraska Association of Service Providers project provides a platform for self-advocates to tell their stories. This project requested applications for individuals with cross-disabilities across the state to tell their story about what makes them special, what makes them people first, & how to use people first language. An advisory board was formed to review the applications & select the finalists. The selected individuals will tell their stories on Nebraska's public education station, NETV. Production of the program is underway.

Council staff review proposed legislative bills introduced annually. Staff collaborated with other advocacy organizations to share information and provide a united front on proposed legislation. The bills were narrowed to those that may impact individuals with IDD, their families, & service providers. Council members then determined which bills would be supported or opposed with letters or testimony, & which should be tracked. A summary of bills being followed by the Council was printed & mailed to stakeholders, professionals, state senators, & others.

The Council ED met regularly with the DD Network partners and assisted with planning and coordinating the annual Tri-Board Training. She attended &/or served on numerous statewide advisory boards, councils, & cross-disabilities workgroups, & participated in public policy advocacy, cross-systems dialogue, & DD Network collaboration.

The creation of a Consumer Leadership Fund was approved by the Council. This fund would defray the costs for self-advocates & parents/family/guardians of individuals with DD to participate in conferences, workshops & other training opportunities that will increase their knowledge of disability issues & increase their skills as advocates for people with developmental disabilities.

8. Outputs Achieved

Expected Outputs	Achieved
<p>MMI will host two-day Leadership Training Seminars in three different geographical locations of the state. Advocacy seminars will train 20 to 40 individuals with developmental disabilities, family members, and concerned citizens at each site.</p>	
<p>MMI will host a fourth Leadership Training Seminar with representatives of People First of Nebraska and the Nebraska Youth Leadership Council focused on self-advocacy tailored to the interests of these groups. Representatives from both self-advocacy organizations will help plan the Seminar. A modified curriculum will be developed.</p>	true
<p>Projected changes to Leadership Training Seminar will include more cross-disability information, including independent living and traumatic brain injury systems, supports, and policies.</p>	true

Expected Outputs	Achieved
<p>MMI Leadership Training Seminar curriculum will be updated to include: 1) a greater emphasis on community inclusion; 2) promoting supports to and developing roles for individuals with disabilities as leaders and system advocates; 3) self-direction and person-centered planning, as well as family-centered planning; and 4) significant policy changes, including Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Settings Rule, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments legislation, and Nebraska state statute and policy changes.</p>	true
<p>Council Chair to submit 20 letters to State Senators serving on various legislative committees to educate and inform them on the Council's positions on 20 legislative bills.</p>	
<p>One Council member to provide oral testimony during a disability employment bill hearing to educate and inform senators on the Council's position.</p>	
<p>583 individuals & senators reached through one to two Newsline publications summarizing recommended legislative bills during legislative session.</p>	true
<p>Council Executive Director quarterly attendance at minimum of three DD Network, coalition, or partnership meetings.</p>	true
<p>Council Executive Director attendance at minimum of 15 meetings of work groups and statewide advisory committees.</p>	true

Expected Outputs	Achieved
<p>Funding provided through the Nebraska Consumer Leadership Development Fund will enable self-advocates and parents/family/guardians of children/adult children with developmental disabilities to improve their skills as advocates and leaders in Nebraska’s disability community and become involved in policy decisions that affect their lives by attending conferences, trainings, and summits in or out of state.</p>	<p>false</p>

10. The report should include the following: (a) A narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented toward achieving the objective, including how the identified strategy was used, how the activity was implemented, challenges to achieving the objective and unexpected benefits.(b) For system change activities, include a description of the stage of implementation (planning, initiation, implementation, outcome/fully integrated) of the system change initiative. (c) All narratives must describe what numbers make up the performance measures number for the activities being reported in the narrative.(d) A summary of evaluation activities to monitor progress and impact of council supported activities for the objective; data collected during the year, data sources, and data collection methods; (logic model and evaluation plan may be attached to the report).

Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI), the state’s UCEDD, was funded for a second year of their Leadership Seminar Series. Representatives from Disability Rights Nebraska, Arc of Nebraska, & Nebraska Statewide Independent Living Council presented portions of the training. Curriculum created for use in the first year was revised based on attendee feedback. A modified curriculum was created for presentation to the state’s self-advocacy organization, People First of Nebraska (PFN).

Participants were recruited from local communities with preference given to individuals with a disability or family members & caregivers, focusing on outreach to underserved community members. Support staff for the Nebraska Youth Leadership Council attended a training, however none of their Council members attended despite being encouraged to attend by MMI. Advertising for the seminars was translated into Spanish. Three trainings were planned, however severe weather across the state made it impossible to complete all the trainings. Blizzard conditions in the state's panhandle delayed the Scottsbluff training. Attempts to reschedule were unsuccessful because of scheduling conflicts with the presenters & with date & training location availability. The Norfolk training was rescheduled & completed but with fewer than anticipated attendees due to continued flooding concerns. Training in Grand Island was completed as planned.

Training attendance included 12 in Norfolk, 24 in Grand Island, & 14 PFN Board members in Columbus. More people had registered but severe weather events kept some away. Training topics included:

- A greater emphasis on community inclusion;
- Promoting supports to & developing roles for individuals with DD as leaders & systems advocates;
- Information on self-direction & person-centered planning as well as family-centered planning for families with young children with disabilities;
- Policy changes, including the CMS Settings Rule, WIOA, ADA amendments legislation & the Nebraska state policy changes including Managed Care, Waiver changes;
- AUCD's "Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit" to reach under-resourced members of the community.
- Cross-disability information, including Independent Living & Traumatic Brain Injury systems, supports, & policies. Non-Council funds covered these cross-disability presentations.
- Mentors from the community to assist participants as requested.

Participants were provided worksheets to create Action Plans. Trainers asked participants to explain what they wanted to do & helped them break their plans into achievable objectives. Plans included recommendations on who would need to be involved in the process for the plan to be successful, steps to be taken & a timeline for completion. At least 1 team approach was taken to implement their plans. Participants were contacted 30 days after the training to request technical assistance. Attendees reported they were making good progress & not in need of assistance at that time. Follow-up continued with Year 1 participants in Omaha & Grand Island. Action plans had been successfully implemented in the areas of employment, education & housing. See Section 14 for Success Stories.

An unexpected benefit of the training was the degree to which the attendees at the PFN session made use of the information following the seminar. Attendees gave detailed & insightful reports at the subsequent PFN Board meeting where the training was used to create the annual goals & objectives for PFN. These goals & objectives were written into the FFY2019-20 funding request to the Council.

Surveys were returned by 31 (15 self-advocates, 16 family members) of the 50 participants. Results reported 11 self-advocate participants increasing their advocacy & being better able to say what they want/what is important to them; 4 are participating in advocacy activities & are in leadership positions; 1 was satisfied with the project. Of family members: 11 increasing their advocacy, 14 being better able to say what is important to them, 15 participating in advocacy activities, 15 in leadership positions & 12 being satisfied with the project.

The Turn It Up! project is underway. The NASP Executive Director introduced the idea of telling their story to 50 individuals with IDD & encouraged all to apply. Applications were received from 30 people with a variety of disabilities from across the state. An advisory board was formed to review & score the applications to determine which of the stories could be best told by the individual in their own words & from their own point of view; 7 applicants were selected. Taping of these stories has been scheduled. Once completed, the program will be shown on Nebraska's educational television channel.

A viewing kit & discussion guide are being developed in conjunction with this project. These will assist groups such as college classes & community groups consider people first language. NASP is preparing to hold at least 1 model viewing & make presentations available for a wide variety of community groups, associations, & civic groups. Target groups may include the Nebraska Association of Social Workers, nursing & healthcare associations & others.

Council staff reviewed the 739 proposed legislative bills introduced in 2019. The 24 most relevant bills were reviewed by the Legislative & Advocacy Committee (Council & non-Council members). The L&A Committee recommended 15 bills for the Council to consider: 14 to support, 1 to oppose & 8 to track. Council staff wrote letters to the senators to educate them on the impact of the proposed legislation to individuals with IDD in Nebraska. No Council members testified on any of the bills. Instead, the Council ED provided testimony in support of 2 bills & in opposition to 1. Five bills supported & 3 bills tracked by the Council were signed into law. Newsline, a summary of the bills followed by the Council, was mail to 585 stakeholders, professionals, state senators, & others. This summary provided a status of the proposed bills & whether the Council supported or opposed the bill. The Council ED participated in the NCCD Common Grounds event. Disabilities professionals & self-advocates spoke on the impact that specific proposed legislation would have on individuals with disabilities, & senators & staff had the opportunity to be introduced to & interact with NCCD members. Policy briefs were distributed to 49 senators & their aides on pressing topics such as Nebraska's need to develop an Olmstead Plan, Early Childhood, Education, Employment, Restraint/Seclusion & Transition. A presentation by Eric Evans (DRN) highlighted NCCD's support of LB570 with AM470 to take the final steps for Nebraska to have a complete Olmstead Plan. Other presenters focused on the Medicaid insurance for workers, the use of restraints in school settings & accessibility at the Capitol.

The Council ED attended meetings and trainings with the DD Network partners & serves on numerous advisory councils & committees to stay engaged in federal & state changes & policies impacting individuals with DD. In 2019, the Council ED or her representative attended quarterly meetings with:

- Nebraska Brain Injury Advisory Council

- Nebraska UCEDD Community Advisory Board
- Nebraska Governor's Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council
- Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership Advisory Council
- Nebraska State Advisory Committee on Mental Health Services
- Disability Stakeholder Olmstead Planning Advisory Committee
- Long Term Care Redesign Advisory Committee, which merged with the DHHS HCBS Stakeholder meetings in 2019
- DHHS Oral Health Advisory Panel
- Nebraska Preventative Health Advisory Committee
- Title V Maternal Child Health (MCH) Block Grant Steering Committee.
- DHHS HCBS Quality Council Committee & Quality Insurance Subcommittee (Aging & Disability & TBI waivers)
- Nebraska's Living Well Internal Advisory Committee (See National Priorities)
- Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities
- Special Education Advisory Council, serving as 2018-19 Chair. During this time:
- Members were more engaged & actively sought opportunities to impact systems & changes of the educational system. The ED used the public comment portion of the meeting to educate & inform members about efforts to complete Nebraska's Olmstead Plan. Legislative concerns were addressed regarding a bill threatening to impose seclusion & restraint on students. Members learned more about NDE's Multi-Tiered System of Supports initiative to promote an integrated system connecting gen ed & special ed, along with all components of teaching & learning, into a high quality, standards-based instruction & intervention

system that is matched to a student’s academic, social-emotional & behavior needs. MTSS makes it possible for gen ed & special ed educators to recognize that they are serving all students, bridging the behavior & academic worlds to encourage an inclusive education model.

- Members brainstorm recommendations for the 2018-19 priorities, including supporting a systemic approach to address each student’s social & emotional learning needs by improving school-wide processes & resources related to core behavior practices, such as de-escalation techniques, positive behavioral intervention & supports & trauma informed care. With proper behavior supports, students are better able to learn & thrive. The new priorities will make this possible throughout Nebraska.

The Council approved funding for a Consumer Leadership Fund. This fund would defray the costs for self-advocates & parents/family/guardians of individuals with DD to participate in conferences, workshops & other training opportunities that will increase their knowledge of disability issues & increase their skills as advocates for people with developmental disabilities. This was not addressed in 2019.

12. Expected Outcomes Achieved

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
<p>During the Leadership Training Seminar, participants will be assisted in designing their own systems level advocacy plan outlining how they will become involved in advocating for systems improvements for people with disabilities and their families. In the development of these plans, participants will be encouraged to form local teams, of minimally 3 - 4 individuals as a source of support to each participant’s efforts.</p>	<p>true</p>

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
Leadership Training Seminar trainers will follow up with participants 30 days following the training to assess their progress on advocacy plans and to offer additional information or other supports if requested.	true
Self-advocates will have access and accommodations to participate in a specially tailored "self-advocate" seminar.	true
MMI will use the Association of University Centers for Disabilities "Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit" to help reach under-resourced members of the community with an intended outcome of alleviating service disparities and inequities in typically underserved groups.	true
Stakeholders and policymakers will be educated on key legislation impacting individuals with DD through letters of support/opposition and/or testimony.	true
Coalition/network/partnership meetings provide opportunities for stakeholder collaboration and coordination to promote systems change.	true
Council Executive Director's active participation on state work groups and statewide advisory committees brings the perspective of individuals with developmental disabilities to discussions and promotes system collaboration and advocacy efforts.	true
In order for a person to receive funding through the Nebraska Consumer Development Fund to attend events, the awardees must fulfill required responsibilities that include sharing knowledge, information, etc. that is gained at the event with other Nebraska citizens, and providing a presentation within three months of attending the event.	

13. Progress towards achieving outcomes for overall objective : The annual report should include an assessment as to the extent to which progress was made on the intended outcomes for the objective.

The Council continues to make progress on this goal. In 2017, the Council funded the Leadership Seminar Series project. In 2018, the Council funded this project for a second year.

In 2017, 2018 & 2019, the Council educated legislators through letters of support &/or opposition to proposed legislation & testimony given at public hearings.

In 2017, 2018 & 2019, the Council ED made a difference for individuals with IDD, their families, & advocacy professionals across the state by serving on numerous advisory boards, councils, & cross-disabilities workgroups. She participated in public policy advocacy, cross-systems dialogue, & DD Network collaboration. She has been a strong voice on behalf of the Council in the development of the Nebraska Olmstead Plan. All these pieces have made great progress in moving the Council toward reaching their goal & creating a stronger Nebraska.

MMI has completed the second year of their Leadership Seminar Series project. This has reached attendees in rural cluster areas across the state to train concerned citizens, including self-advocates, families, & professionals, on how to assume leadership roles in advocating for systems improvements for people with IDD & their families.

- To date, over 100 people have attended this training in the first two years of the project.
- One parent advocate in Omaha joined the Special Education Advisory Council & is working on changing Procedural Safeguards manual for Nebraska Parents as a result of attending this training.
- Another Omaha parent is promoting rare disease advocacy by helping to start the Nebraska Rare Disease Action Network.

- An attendee at the Norfolk training reported that they have a new focus to better serve their students using their Action Plan & will be working with parents to help form a Special Education Advocacy Committee.
- Several Grand Island attendees have developed ambitious plans, including contacting their state senators with recommendations or initiating establishing guardianship for a family member & pursuing & gaining approval for state DD services.

Many responses to the survey noted the networking the attendees were able to do through the training.

The number of applications received by self-advocates for the Turn It Up! project exceeded the expectations of the NASP Executive Director. The opportunity & platform for them to tell their stories is welcomed by these applicants & others. Viewing kits & discussion guides will assist with educating the public on using people first language & what individuals with DD can do, how they live, & how their hopes & dreams for their futures are typical of anyone.

Letters to the senators about the potential positive or negative impacts of proposed legislation on the DD population did have influence. Testimony by the Council ED also provided persuasive arguments for or against proposed bills. The second session of the legislative year begins in January 2020 with several of the bills the Council was following expected to be reintroduced.

14. Additionally, include stories of culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities whose lives are better because of Council work on this activity (e.g., became better advocates for themselves and others, became more connected to the community). Stories of policy or legislative changes that happened as a result of Council individual advocacy work that are likely to positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities or that will prevent a potential negative impact (e.g., created deleted, refined programs and/or legislation, reallocated use of funds, organizational systems change as a result of evidence based practices).

Leadership Seminar Series

The following were survey comments from participants:

- Great training! I gained more confidence in myself both personally & professionally.
- Very educational seminar & happy that it was in a more local/rural area. I would highly recommend to others looking for additional supports, resources, & networking.
- Very informative! Thank you for coming to Norfolk!

It was reported to project staff the People First seminar attendees have utilized the information from the Columbus Board retreat/seminar to very good effect. In the PF Board meeting the day following the seminar, several attendees gave very detailed reports of the seminar information & their advocacy plans. Subsequent reports from contacted attendees have been quite positive as regards their progress &/or completion of their plans. This was an especially positive outcome since this was the first time this had been attempted.

Action Plan completed by a Grand Island Parent:

Find a way to get her son part time employment or speed up the VR assessment; find a job that lets him go to work or stay home depending on his day. The parent collaborated with another attendee, whose plan involved a starting new ice cream business that would employ people with disabilities alongside typical workers. The two individuals spoke on this at the training & continued the discussion the

following weeks. Her son was to begin working there & would have the flexibility he needed to accommodate him. In these instances, both plans were considerably more elaborate as they involved specific steps regarding starting a business, identifying employees, transportation, determining whether this was a good fit for the young man in question, etc. Both plans were met. The business is in operation, it employs individuals with I/DD, & the young man is employed there part-time.

Action Plan completed by an Omaha Parent:

Her goal was to generally work to improve Special Education systems. She developed a plan to increase her involvement in Special Education systems activities. This involved a number of steps, but mainly focused on increasing her access to policymakers in the area of Special Education.

- Progress:
- Joined Special Education Advisory Council.
- Working on changing Procedural Safeguards manual for Nebraska Parents.
- Completed manual.
- Began a collaboration with a legal service to identify & deliver information & support to families with children in Special Education.

Legal entity joined NCCD in order to increase their footprint on policy & advocacy (the attendee is the organizations representative to NCCD.)

Action Plan completed by a Mother & Daughter, both with disabilities (Omaha):

Their goal was to identify more accessible housing options that are not institutional for the daughter. Both met with legislators about accessibility issues, including in housing, in the Capitol building, & along the streets. The daughter was hired by People First of Nebraska as a Disability Policy Specialist, which gave her a stronger voice for accessibility. She worked with the other Disability Policy Specialist for People First & with her mother to educate senators & policy makers. They were able to find an accessible apartment for the daughter,

who had begun using a wheelchair, in a renovated building with an elevator (in Lincoln). She has been hired part time/year round by the Nebraska Statewide Independent Living Council & is able to wheel to her office a few blocks away. The project team kept in touch with both during the initial grant year into the new year & provided technical assistance as needed on legal accessibility requirements, effective communicating with policymakers, professional behavior tips, & dealing with stressful situations.

SEAC: With prompting from parent member Amy Bonn, SEAC formed an ad hoc committee to begin addressing the readability of Nebraska's Procedural Safeguards & Parental Rights document. Committee members gathered in March to review what other states have been doing & developed an outline of changes. They sought feedback from several state organizations, parents & educators. The completed document will be shared at the February 2020 SEAC meeting. Interestingly, Amy participated in the DD Council-funded Leadership Seminar Series with MMI. Developing this parent friendly document was the outcome of Amy's advocacy plan from the leadership training. This new document has the potential to empower parents as they navigate Nebraska's special education system. SEAC: With prompting from parent member Amy Bonn, SEAC formed an ad hoc committee to begin addressing the readability of Nebraska's Procedural Safeguards & Parental Rights document. Committee members gathered in March to review what other states have been doing & developed an outline of changes. They sought feedback from several state organizations, parents & educators. The completed document will be shared at the February 2020 SEAC meeting. Interestingly, Amy participated in the DD Council-funded Leadership Seminar Series with MMI. Developing this parent friendly document was the outcome of Amy's advocacy plan from the leadership training. This new document has the potential to empower parents as they navigate Nebraska's special education system.

3. Objective C. Collaborate among the Nebraska DD Network Partners (Disability Rights Nebraska, Munroe-Meyer Institute University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities [UCEDD], and the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities) to advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD by: 1. Conducting monthly planning meetings to discuss trends, concerns, and challenges with a goal of system changes and improvements for Nebraskans with developmental disabilities. 2. Serving as

cross-agency representatives on the Council and Advisory groups for the DD Network Partners. 3. Working in conjunction with disability advocacy organizations to inform state senators about disability issues and assist in the development of policies and legislation favorable to this population. 4. Participating in the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD), a cross-disability advocacy organization focused on advancing the rights of Nebraskans with disabilities through policy research and development, legislative testimony, and the development of educational materials for policy makers. 5. Hosting training on a mutually selected topic for DD Network Partner members at the annual Tri-Board Meeting.

1. Goal: Improve Advocacy, Self-advocacy, and Self-determination

2. State Plan Objective Objective 3

3. This Objective is

System Change

4. This Objective is

Ongoing

5. This Objective is

	The Objective is
a. Fulfilling a Self-Advocacy DD Requirement *	No
b. Targeted disparity *	No
c. DD Network Collaboration *	Yes
d. A demonstration project of New Approaches to Services and Supports *	No
e. A demonstration of projects or activities *	No

6. Stage of Implementation

Implementation

7. Provide an overall description of this effort

This objective meets the requirement of providing specific detail on how the Council will collaborate with the DD Network Partners (Disability Rights Nebraska [P&A] and Munroe-Meyer Institute [UCEDD]) to advocate for positive systems change. DD Network collaboration includes the following:

1. DD Network CEOs conduct monthly planning meetings to discuss trends, concerns, and challenges with a goal of systems change and improvements for Nebraskans with DD.
2. Serving as cross agency representatives on the Council and Advisory groups for the DD Network Partners.
3. Working in conjunction with disability advocacy organizations to inform state senators about disability issues and assist in the development of policies and legislation favorable to this population.
4. Participating in the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD), a cross-disability advocacy organization focused on advancing the rights of Nebraskans with disabilities through policy research and development, legislative testimony, and the development of educational materials for policy makers. This includes hosting the annual “Common Grounds” outreach and education event for senators and their staff.
5. Hosting annual training on a mutually selected topic for DD Network Partner members at the annual Tri-Board Meeting.

The DD Network CEOs and staff collaboratively engage in a variety of advocacy efforts and communicate regularly on trends, concerns, and challenges in order to collaborate to bring systems change and improvements for Nebraskans with IDD. Nebraska takes pride in the strong collaborative relationships within the DD Network, and we are committed to continuing this legacy. DD Network collaboration is essential to bringing systems change and improvements to Nebraska.

8. Outputs Achieved

Expected Outputs	Achieved
Minimum of 10 monthly DD Network Partner meetings.	false

Expected Outputs	Achieved
1 DD Network Tri-Board Training event (annually).	true
Minimum of 10 NASP and NCCD meetings attended annually.	true
One annual event for senators and their staff.	true

10. The report should include the following: (a) A narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented toward achieving the objective, including how the identified strategy was used, how the activity was implemented, challenges to achieving the objective and unexpected benefits.(b) For system change activities, include a description of the stage of implementation (planning, initiation, implementation, outcome/fully integrated) of the system change initiative. (c) All narratives must describe what numbers make up the performance measures number for the activities being reported in the narrative.(d) A summary of evaluation activities to monitor progress and impact of council supported activities for the objective; data collected during the year, data sources, and data collection methods; (logic model and evaluation plan may be attached to the report).

DD Network Collaboration

Collaborative activities between the Council, UCEDD, and P&A include monthly planning meetings with the CEOs of each organization. These meetings help foster partnerships within the DD Network and allow for significant information sharing and joint collaboration activities. In 2019, the DD Network CEOs met for eight monthly meetings. Although they fell short of the 10 monthly meeting goal, the CEOs took advantage of other joint meetings during the months where scheduling conflicts arose. This included meeting in February regarding the Olmstead Plan legislation and legislative hearing.

In July, the CEOs participated in an Interstate Transition meeting in Lincoln with representatives from key agencies in Kansas and Nebraska, including the Department of Education Special Education and Transition Coordination, Career and Technical Education; Kansas and Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation Services; the Kansas and Nebraska DD Councils; the Kansas Families Together and PTI Nebraska; the University of Kansas and Munroe-Meyer Institute; and the Kansas and Nebraska Protection and Advocacy Centers. The focus of the two-day meeting was improving workforce readiness and work-based learning involving transition students ages 14 to 21. The meeting provided an opportunity for Nebraska's DD Network Partners to highlight collaborative efforts, in addition to prompting ideas for future endeavors. Seventeen professionals from Nebraska and 12 professionals from Kansas attended the event.

The CEOs also touched base at the April and September UCEDD Community Advisory Board meetings and at each quarterly DD Council meeting. The CEOs communicated via email and phone calls throughout the year, with special attention focused on the Nebraska Olmstead Plan legislative and development efforts.

DD Network Memberships

DD Network Partners are members of the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD). This is a cross-disability coalition of organizations committed to advancing the rights of people with disabilities and statewide policies that affect them. NCCD and its fifteen member organizations monitor and respond to legislation and policies pertinent to Nebraskans with disabilities and provide a resource for the Unicameral to call upon when developing legislation. In 2019, the DD Network Partners stressed the importance of NCCD members being engaged in the stakeholder process and with legislative efforts to ensure Nebraska completed the process to develop the state's

first Olmstead Plan. NCCD provided monthly updates on the Olmstead Plan progress and The Arc of Nebraska, also an NCCD member, strengthened Olmstead awareness and support. Additionally, a presentation highlighting NCCD's support of legislation and final steps for Nebraska to have a complete Olmstead Plan was shared at the 3/19/19 Common Grounds event.

NCCD hosted Common Grounds, an annual event held at the State Capitol for state senators and their staff. Legislative session policy brief summaries were handed out to educate policymakers and cookies were distributed to all attendees. Presentations were given highlighting Nebraska Olmstead Plan legislative efforts, Medicaid Insurance for Workers, and the Use of Restraints in School Settings. Before and after these presentations, NCCD members mingled with state Senators and their staff and delivered policy briefs on the need for a comprehensive Olmstead Plan in Nebraska, Employment, Early Childhood & Education, and Restraint/Seclusion. Following the event, NCCD members went door-to-door delivering cookies and the policy brief summaries to the offices of senators who were unable to attend in person. Unfortunately, attendance was down at this year's event. Approximately 20 people attended the event.

The Council ED attended six NCCD meetings and seven monthly Nebraska Association of Service Providers (NASP) meetings in 2019. The DD Network Partners also belong to NASP, the statewide membership association of community organizations that provide supports to people with disabilities.

On 10/30/2018, representatives from each of the DD Network Partners provided a brief presentation to NASP members. These presentations provided background information about the mission and focus of each organization, the current priorities and projects that each entity was supporting, and suggested areas for potential collaboration with NASP. For example, the Council ED shared about the State Plan goals, and opportunities for NASP and other organizations to apply for subaward funds to strengthen self-advocacy and advocacy efforts or for projects that support increasing competitive employment success for individuals with IDD. The DD Network Partners also discussed similar legislative issues and policy concerns to address systemic issues.

[DD Network Tri-Board Training](#)

The annual Tri-Board training event for board and Council members from the DD Network Partner organizations was held on 5/31/2019. Forty-one people attended the training. The focus for this year's training was to explore the notion of social capital and macro change, and how individuals might have a greater chance to connect in their communities. The CEOs selected the topic of "Using Social Capital to Create an Inclusive Community for People with Disabilities." National keynote speaker Dr. Al Condeluci, former CEO of Community Living and Support Services and organizer of the Interdependence Network (www.alcondeluci.com), facilitated the training on how social capital is an approach to address the relationship disparities that people with IDD face in their communities.

The day-long activity started with exploration of the National Core Indicators by Dr. Wayne Stuber and Rachel Ray from MMI (UCEDD). They explored results from the 2017-2018 surveys that were conducted across Nebraska and compared them to national responses.

The notions of culture, community, and social capital were explored, along with recent research conducted on community engagement. Led by Dr. Condeluci, the group examined the historic cultural trends that have hardened thinking and created powerful myths and stereotypes about people who are different. Specific attention was paid to how people with disabilities are perceived and treated. These stereotypic realities create cultural images that are difficult to erase.

The construct of social capital was introduced, defined, and examined. There was an overview of the positive impact that all people reap from relationships, including health, happiness, advancement, achievement, and life expectancy.

The group looked at the community, its definition, how relationships are built, how building relationships is a process, and that we can help facilitate this process. The four key steps in the relationship building were explored.

- Identify the passions, interests, hobbies, and avocations of the person. (Find their similarity.)
- Find or create a group in the community that connects the same commonality you found in the person you support.
- Study, observe, discover, or create the key behaviors that are expected in this group. (You might coach or prepare the person for what is expected)

- Find a “gatekeeper” or influential person already in the group and ask them to introduce the person you are supporting to the other members so that their value spreads to the new person.

These steps create the process necessary for people to begin to develop social capital. The more time people spend together and the more similarity they exchange, the greater the chances that a relationship will unfold.

To examine these issues more closely, a “World Café” learning process was initiated. This approach uses a learning circle format. Attendees were divided into three conversations groups and given unique questions relative to the topic and generated by gaps shown by Nebraska’s recent NCI Data. Using this interactive process, three rounds of the World Café process were conducted, pondering each of the three questions and narrowing the answers for each round. Round 1 focused on what we should do; Round 2 focused on what we could do; Round 3 focused on what we will do. The results were meant to focus our efforts – start by thinking big and break down the elephant into actionable, bite-size pieces. The DD Network Partners already have some of the tools available to create change. It’s time to engage with work.

Evaluation surveys were completed by 27 attendees reflecting high satisfaction with the event.

12. Expected Outcomes Achieved

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
Tri-Board Training topic selected by DD Network Partner CEOs.	true
Serve as cross-agency representatives on Council & advisory groups of the DD Network Partners.	true
Collaborate on system changes, trends, concerns, and challenges.	true

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
Improved systems within the State of Nebraska in relation to people with I/DD and their families.	true
Annual NCCD "Common Grounds" awareness event for senators provides DD awareness to legislators and their staff.	true

13. Progress towards achieving outcomes for overall objective : The annual report should include an assessment as to the extent to which progress was made on the intended outcomes for the objective.

The partnership that was created years ago between the Council, P&A, and UCEDD have created shared goals and strong collaboration. This collaboration has made significant improvements in systems within Nebraska for people with IDD and their families.

- The CEO of the UCEDD serves as a DD Council member and in 2019 served on the Council's Planning Committee. The Council's ED and the P&A CEO serve on and attend quarterly UCEDD Consumer Advisory Board meetings. A representative from the P&A Board serves on the Council and in 2019 served on the Council's Grants Review Committee. The P&A CEO attends the quarterly Council meetings. The P&A Public Policy Director serves on the Council's Legislative and Advocacy Committee. The Council's ED serves on the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities Stakeholder and Legislative Review Committee.

- Several years ago Nebraska passed legislation to implement term limits in their Legislature. Although this has both good and bad results, one of the issues that has concerned disability advocates is that it is difficult to identify champions who are able to learn about the complexities of the service system and the interactions between the state and federal programs. Therefore, it is especially important that the DD Network Partners work together throughout the legislative session to communicate clear, consistent messages to senators and their staff.
- The DD Network Partners collaborated on efforts to secure funding and stakeholder input for the Nebraska Olmstead Plan development process. The DD Network Partners also collaborate as members of the Governor's Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee to strengthen external oversight of waiver services provided by the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). In 2019, the Council ED and the P&A representatives collaborated in writing a letter on behalf of the Governor's Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee thanking Governor Ricketts and the State of Nebraska for allocating funding over recent years to reinstitute Nebraska's participation in the NCI Adult In-Person Survey. This letter also thanked the DDD for their efforts to improve the transparency of the Division's work. Disability Rights Nebraska is a key member of the Juvenile Justice Brain Injury and Cognitive Disability Task Force. MMI staff is serving as Project Coordinator for the Council-funded advocacy and self-advocacy leadership development training.
- The DD Network CEOs provide input/feedback on the other organizations' annual goals and objectives.
- The DD Network was represented at the 3/19/19 Common Grounds event. DD Network Partners contributed to the NCCD policy brief summaries that were distributed to state senators and their staff members at the event. Representatives from the UCEDD and P&A also gave presentations.
- After the 10/30/2018 presentation to NASP members, NASP did submit a competitive application in response to the Council's Opportunity Subaward RFA. The Council voted to fund NASP's "Turn it Up: Stories from People with Disabilities" project for \$15,000 to promote awareness and the proper usage of people first language in multiple contexts. The project began 4/1/19.

Tri-Board Training

Tri-Board training attendees were divided into three groups to discuss three questions generated by gaps shown in Nebraska's recent NCI Data during the World Café portion of the training. After three rounds of small group discussion, each of the groups reported their responses to what we should do, what we could do, and what we will do. The questions and the top answers narrowed down to what we will do are recorded below.

Question: What will we do to address meaningful opportunities for people with disabilities?

1. Establish Social Role Valorization as a foundational training for parents, providers, and individuals; show how to access other relevant training opportunities (including strengths-based trainings).
2. Identify community gatekeepers (e.g., employers, volunteer opportunities, chambers of commerce, post-secondary schools, and faith groups) to support inclusive community opportunities.
3. Promote inclusion and education in schools and demand support from schools for students to get better jobs or post-secondary educational opportunities.

Question: What will we do to address transportation issues?

1. Incorporate transportation goals and strategies into the Olmstead Plan.
2. Research on working models.
 1. Include research on incentives and grants (Uber and Gallup buses) and leverage existing options (UNO, UNL, other transport) to collaborate.
3. Conduct a needs assessment of Nebraska disability population.

Question: What will we do so people are in and of the community?

1. Utilize media and social media for messaging.

1. Provide Council subaward funding for Nebraska Association of Service Providers, Region 5 Services, “Turn It Up!” project.
 2. DD Council release of “The Power of Inclusion” publication.
 3. Engage the media to provide human interest stories in the news.
 4. Write an Olmstead Plan press release.
 5. Highlight stories on interests, employment, and housing.
2. Promote the Council funded Lay Advocacy Inclusive Education that Disability Rights Nebraska is leading.
 3. Promote and engage participants in the Council funded Munroe-Meyer Institute Statewide Leadership Seminar Series.
 4. Continue to pursue the construction of a meaningful Nebraska Olmstead Plan.
 5. Continue involvement with and support for People First of Nebraska.

The training challenged all participants to reflect on our own social capital and how all of our relationships, including the prickly and supportive ones, are meaningful and that we must remember how important those real, live human connections are for everyone.

14. Additionally, include stories of culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities whose lives are better because of Council work on this activity (e.g., became better advocates for themselves and others, became more connected to the community). Stories of policy or legislative changes that happened as a result of Council individual advocacy work that are likely to positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities or that will prevent a potential negative impact (e.g., created deleted, refined programs and/or legislation, reallocated use of funds, organizational systems change as a result of evidence based practices).

No stories to report.

4. Objective D. Address the targeted disparity issue with African-American male students with developmental disabilities who are incarcerated or enter the criminal justice system at higher statistical rates by: 1. Improving systemic collaboration in the areas of education, developmental disabilities, behavioral health, children and family services, and the judicial system. 2. Decreasing, through systems collaboration, the number of out of school suspensions resulting from zero tolerance policies. 3. Conducting additional activities to reduce this disparity, including outreach, training, and education.

1. **Goal:** Improve Advocacy, Self-advocacy, and Self-determination

2. **State Plan Objective** Objective 4

3. **This Objective is**

System Change

4. **This Objective is**

Ongoing

5. This Objective is

	The Objective is
a. Fulfilling a Self-Advocacy DD Requirement *	No
b. Targeted disparity *	Yes
c. DD Network Collaboration *	No
d. A demonstration project of New Approaches to Services and Supports *	No
e. A demonstration of projects or activities *	No

6. Stage of Implementation

Implementation

7. Provide an overall description of this effort

In the first year of funding, the Juvenile Justice Brain Injury & Cognitive Disability Task Force addressed the targeted disparity issue of African-American male students with developmental disabilities who are incarcerated or enter the criminal justice system at higher statistical rates. The final report included strategies & recommendations to address the systemic issue & laid the foundation for a second year. Included in the recommendations was the funding of a project to train School Resource Officers (SROs) in order to reduce the number of targeted students who are suspended &/or expelled from school, as well as the number entering the Classroom-to-Courtroom Pathway.

The second year of funding built upon the efforts of the Lincoln Task Force by extended outreach & engagement to additional communities; educated stakeholders on the Classroom-to-Courtroom Pathway & the causes; & provided technical assistance to facilitate community Task Force meetings. A no-cost extension was given to allow additional time for the contractor to update priority recommendations & provide suggestions for statewide & individual regional initiatives.

As recommended, a new subaward was funded to train school resource officers in one school district using Strategies for Youth’s “Policing the Teen Brain in School” training, a nationally recognized curriculum. Data will be collected on the interactions between the SROs & students both in the school setting & at school events/activities. Of particular value will be the data on minority students & students with IEPs.

8. Outputs Achieved

Expected Outputs	Achieved
Task Force contractor and Nucleus Team will engage three communities and stakeholders in Nebraska to broaden efforts. Contractor will facilitate up to three meetings in each of the three locations.	true

Expected Outputs	Achieved
<p>Contractor will prepare the material to be shared with the new communities and stakeholders. Materials will be shared with the Nucleus Team members for review and to make refinements to prepare it for delivery.</p>	true
<p>Task Force contractor will develop a tool to gather, synthesize, and compile statewide perspectives on the challenges and opportunities for implementation of the priority recommendations. A template for stakeholders to document what they already have in place will also be provided.</p>	true
<p>Task Force contractor will share the FFY18 priority recommendations from the final report, and facilitate the discussion towards exploring how to take action on those priorities.</p>	true
<p>During statewide Task Force outreach, there may be a need to establish committees. If so, the Task Force contractor will assist the stakeholders to form committees and help facilitate meetings and provide reports.</p>	true
<p>Task Force contractor will submit a final report to the Council.</p>	false
<p>Lincoln/Lancaster County Human Services will contract with Strategies for Youth for the "Policing the Teen Brain in Schools" four-day train-the-trainer training for up to 35 School Resource Officers and school administrators.</p>	true
<p>The School Resource Officer Training project's pre- and post-training data will indicate whether the training decreased the number of out-of-school suspensions resulting from zero tolerance policies, as well as juvenile justice system involvement, for students with disabilities.</p>	false

10. The report should include the following: (a) A narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented toward achieving the objective, including how the identified strategy was used, how the activity was implemented, challenges to achieving the objective and unexpected benefits.(b) For system change activities, include a description of the stage of implementation (planning, initiation, implementation, outcome/fully integrated) of the system change initiative. (c) All narratives must describe what numbers make up the performance measures number for the activities being reported in the narrative.(d) A summary of evaluation activities to monitor progress and impact of council supported activities for the objective; data collected during the year, data sources, and data collection methods; (logic model and evaluation plan may be attached to the report).

Juvenile Justice Brain Injury & Cognitive Disability Task Force

The Juvenile Justice Brain Injury & Cognitive Disability Task Force continued to make progress by building on the first-year efforts of the 40-plus member Lincoln Task Force. Funded for a second year, the Contractor met with the Nucleus Team members – representatives from the DD Council, Nebraska VR, Administration Office of Probation, Disability Rights Nebraska & Brain Injury Alliance of Nebraska – to seek input & establish connections to broaden task force efforts.

Based on a recommendation from the project's first year final report, new community task forces were established in the rural cluster communities of Scottsbluff in the panhandle, North Platte in west central Nebraska & Schuyler in east central Nebraska. Extending the Task Force efforts to these communities reached 85 participants (41 in North Platte, 22 in Schuyler & 22 in Scottsbluff) representing diverse community perspectives: school faculty & administration, law enforcement, juvenile justice, Educational Service Units, probation, private sector companies, community-based programs, state agencies, behavioral health system of care representatives & families. Nucleus Team members reviewed & approved the materials prepared by the Contractor to be shared with the new communities & stakeholders.

The Contractor provided technical assistance to facilitate task force meetings, expanded stakeholder engagement & educated stakeholders on the Classroom-to-Courtroom Pathway & the causes. Time was spent in each of the communities to validate the Pathway & identify unique nuances that stakeholders can share/identify. The Contractor provided oversight of statewide engagement by sharing the Pathway Flow-Chart, created in the first year of the project, to seek statewide consensus. Each community reflected upon, discussed & refined the flow chart by customizing it to their own processes & community context. Most notably, the communities added elements to the flow chart; no community removed any part of the flow chart. In fact, the flow chart evolved from one community to the next with additions from different communities serving to plant seeds of ideas in other communities. Example: Scottsbluff added Behavioral Health Services in multiple places along the Pathway, which caused the North Platte group to begin strategizing how best to do the same. As a result, detail was added to the flow chart to help crystallize what is the same across the state & what is unique.

The most predominant theme in all three communities centered on parent & family engagement. In all communities, families & youth were the top priority. There was frustration among the community participants that they did not know how to assist the families & youth even more. A gap exists between the resources & supports that are available & the families & youth who most need them.

In an effort to define the reasons this gap exists & to bridge it, parental focus groups were conducted in Scottsbluff and Gothenburg, Nebraska. Feedback from the 11 attendees included:

- Parents felt ostracized, judged & dismissed by the system & people in positions of authority, whether school faculty or administrators, or by the only law enforcement officer in a rural area who does not change their first impression.
- Based on these feelings, parents may not know about available resources & supports. Parents who do know, avoid the system & its resources & supports.
- Additionally, and most tragically, parents indicated that insurance policies & school policies prevented necessary testing from being conducted to determine whether their child was eligible for additional resources & supports. The only way to get the complete suite of testing & assessments administered was for a parent to call the police on their child & have their child arrested.

During task force & statewide engagement meetings, potential decision makers & leaders with the authority to make changes & implement initiatives were identified. Statewide engagement included:

- Sharing & enhancing task force priority recommendations;
- Documenting efforts across the state; and
- Engaging stakeholders to implement recommendations containing supports & resources needed along the pathway to reduce the number of youth interfacing with the juvenile justice system.

There is an obvious need to review, refine & possibly overhaul the process of administering diagnostic assessments for students early in their student careers. A survey created by the Contractor to test for consensus with respect to the initial Lincoln Task Force priority recommendations indicated a strong consensus for family & youth priorities as well as training, education & general outreach to stakeholders who play a role within the Pathway. Survey & specific concepts generated by each community will lead to robust recommendations that will be documented in the final report & used by the Council to validate the strong consensus among diverse communities. These final recommendations will also serve as a springboard for the project's diverse stakeholders to pursue additional funding sources to continue efforts to address the Classroom-to-Courtroom Pathway.

Due to extensive flooding in Nebraska in 2019, there were delays meeting with stakeholders in Scottsbluff, North Platte & Schuyler. A no-cost extension has been approved to allow additional time to the contractor to complete the final report.

SRO

Council staff met with the Director of the Lincoln/Lancaster County Human Services office & the Lincoln Police Department (LPD) captain in charge of the school resource officers (SROs) for Lincoln schools. The intent of the meeting was to discuss a collaboration to train SROs in working with & understanding students with IDD in order to decrease the number of suspensions & expulsions. Some school administrators & Lancaster County Sheriff SROs would also be included in the training. Data on interactions between SROs & students would be collected with particular attention paid to minority students & students with IEPs. A formal proposal for the project was requested & received. The Council approved the funding.

Project goals include:

- Train 35 SROs & school administrators on “Policing the Teen Brain in School”.
- Decrease suspensions/expulsions of the target population by 25%.
- Decrease school-based law enforcement referrals of the target population by 15%.
- SROs will be involved in at least six positive school events per school.

A trainer from Strategies for Youth presented the 4-day “Policing the Teen Brain in School” training in June 2019. Sessions were aimed at helping law enforcement to better understand the young people in their community & foster healthy relationships between youth & law enforcement. Strategies for Youth trains law enforcement to use developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed & racially equitable approaches to interacting effectively with youth.

Participants reported a wide range of years of experience in law enforcement, with 2/3 having more than 10 years. A total of 41 people have been trained:

- 26 LPD SROs
- 2 LPD officers interested in being SROs
- 6 people involved in the gang unit
- 1 head of security for Lincoln Public Schools (LPS)
- 1 Vice-Principal for LPS
- 1 head of security for Grand Island Public Schools;
- 3 Lancaster County Sheriff SROs

- 1 SRO from the police department in Superior, Nebraska

Pre-training surveys completed by 25 participants (including members of the Sheriff's office, officers & security directors from other districts, & one school administrator) & post-training surveys completed by 15 provided evidence of positive change following the training.

The project runs 1/1/19 through 8/30/2020 to capture data for an entire school year. Data will be collected & compared to the previous year's data over the course of the school year. Results of the project will be reported in the 2020 PPR.

12. Expected Outcomes Achieved

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
<p>Educate Pathway stakeholders around the state about the existence of the "Classroom to Courtroom Pathway" and the causes. Validate the "Classroom to Courtroom Pathway," and identify unique nuances that stakeholders can share/identify. Add detail to the Pathway and crystallize what is the same across the state and what is unique.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>During the Task Force and statewide engagement meetings, identify possible decision-makers and leaders with the authority to make changes and implement initiatives.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>Task Force contractor will submit a final report to the Council that will build on the first contract year's report, updating the priority recommendations, explaining where consensus and momentum exist across the state, and suggest an approach for statewide and individual regional initiatives.</p>	

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
Possible implementation (throughout the year 8/20/18-8/20/19) of priority recommendations from the Juvenile Justice Task Force final report submitted in June 2018.	true
The School Resource Officer Training will provide additional best practice training to help prevent juvenile justice system involvement for Lincoln Public School students with disabilities.	true

13. Progress towards achieving outcomes for overall objective : The annual report should include an assessment as to the extent to which progress was made on the intended outcomes for the objective.

The Council began work on this objective in 2017 when the Juvenile Justice Brain Injury & Cognitive Disability Task Force was formed. Members included stakeholders from multiple backgrounds who met regularly to identify a plan to reduce the number of youth with brain injury & cognitive disabilities entering into the juvenile justice system &, if they are already there, to ensure they receive adequate services & accommodations. Their work created a framework & vision of solutions to address the key challenges for these students. After hiring a contractor with Council funding, the Lincoln Task Force launched, providing an opportunity to educate the diverse array of 40 stakeholders.

Significant progress was made with the expansion of the Lincoln Task Force to train/educate 85 people in three additional communities in rural cluster areas across the state. The promising practice to bring education & training on the Classroom-to-Courtroom Pathway to stakeholders who play a role within the Pathway has increased awareness & identified unique nuances that stakeholders can share/

identify. Statewide engagement provided statewide perspectives on the challenges & opportunities for implementation of the project's priority recommendations. The Pathway Flow-Chart proved to be a useful tool for professionals & families as it has resulted in an increased level of understanding, communication & problem-solving.

In 2018, the Council provided funding to Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Services to collaborate with Lincoln Public Schools to train Lincoln Police Department (LPD) School Resource Officers (SROs) & Lincoln Public Schools administrators on strategies to reduce the number of African-American students with IDD from being suspended, expelled, or started on the Classroom-to-Courtroom Pathway. Lancaster County Sheriff SROs were included in this best practice training. During the training, the Strategies for Youth trainer observed strong interactions and conversations between officers about strategies and best practices for working with youth. Several LPD officers were identified who expressed an interest in becoming "Policing the Teen Brain in School" trainers. This project continues through 8/30/2020.

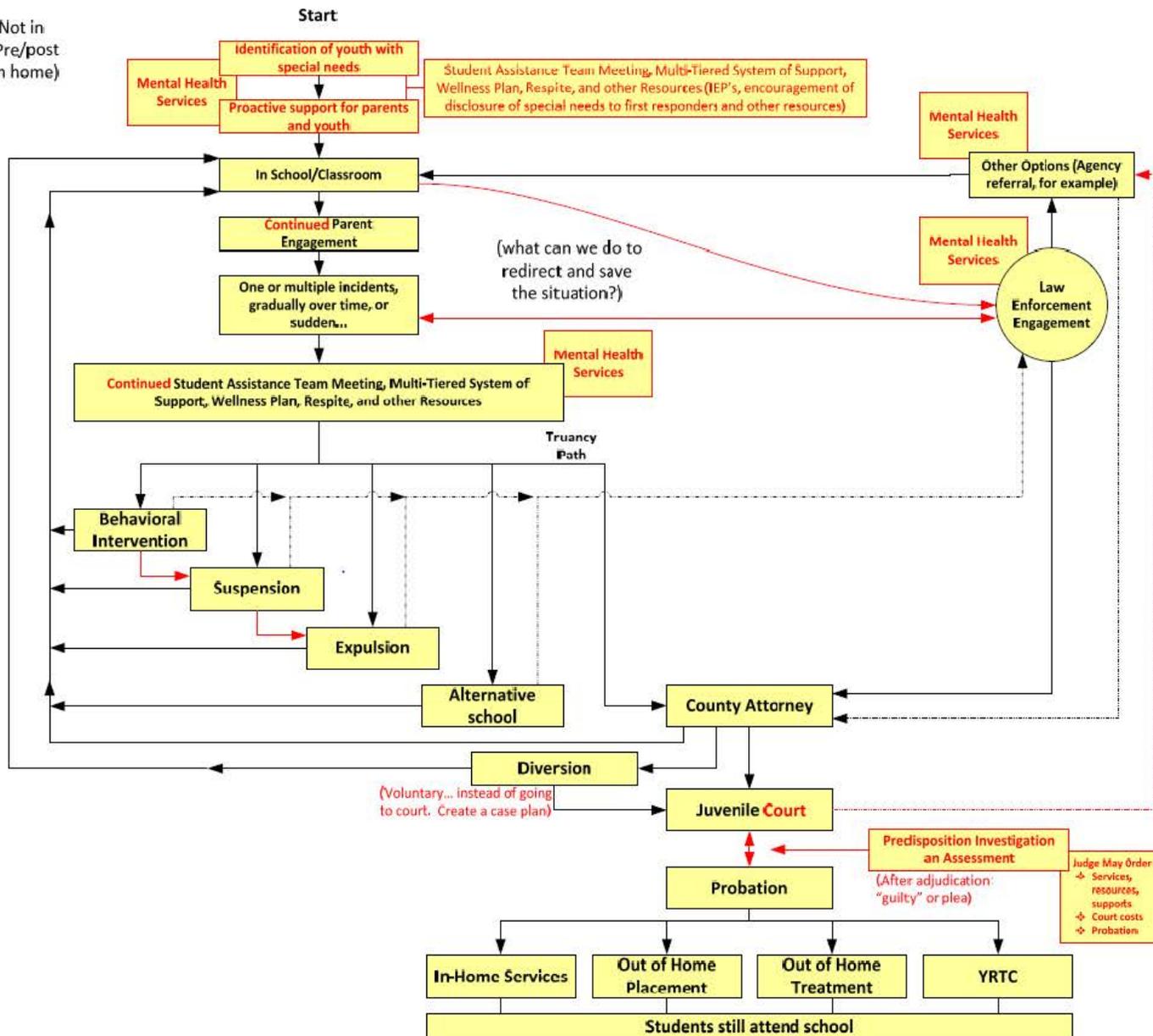
After funding was awarded, the Nebraska Legislature introduced LB390, a bill requiring a minimum of 20 hours of training for SRO or security guards on school-based law enforcement, including but not limited to coursework on school law, student rights, understanding special needs students & students with disabilities, conflict de-escalation techniques, ethics for SROs, teenage brain development, adolescent behavior, implicit bias training, diversity & cultural awareness, trauma-informed responses & preventing violence in school settings. It requires a minimum of one administrator in each elementary or secondary school where a SRO or security guard is assigned to attend a minimum of 20 hours of this training. It ensures records are kept on each student referral for prosecution from an SRO to include the reason for such referral, the federally identified demographic characteristics of such students & more. The Council strongly supported this legislation. The bill passed final reading & was signed by the Governor on 4/24/19.

14. Additionally, include stories of culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities whose lives are better because of Council work on this activity (e.g., became better advocates for themselves and others, became more connected to the community). Stories of policy or legislative changes that happened as a result of Council individual advocacy work that are likely to positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities or that will prevent a potential negative impact (e.g., created deleted, refined programs and/or legislation, reallocated use of funds, organizational systems change as a result of evidence based practices).

The Classroom-to-Courtroom Pathway Flow Chart has allowed stakeholders to ask new questions that they did not know they needed to ask & to hear questions from others that they did not know they needed to answer. It has also allowed all of the stakeholders with the Juvenile Justice Brain Injury & Cognitive Disability Task Force Initiative to see where they were in relation to each other along the pathway.

Below is the updated Classroom-to-Courtroom Pathway Flow Chart.

Is the student at risk? Not in trouble yet (including Pre/post school time including in home)



After the four-day SRO training, most participants considered themselves better equipped to:

- Recognize & work with youth with mental health issues;
- Recognize & work with youth who have experienced trauma;
- Help young people regulate their behavior; and
- De-escalate tense situations.

When responding to what concepts of the training were helpful, most respondents noted that it helped them to understand the teen brain. Specifically:

- Culture implied bias.
- Learning to practice more Behavior-Language-Timing not only with students but adults, too.
- To step back & look to see if there is mental illness or other reasons why students are behaving as they are.

Responses to what they are going to change as a result of this training:

- Look more into the behavioral issue, see what the underlying issue could be.
- Be more understanding of youth and ask more 'why' questions.
- Attempt to be involved in more IEP meetings.

In addition, the post-training survey demonstrated:

- A positive change in participant awareness of the need to treat adolescents differently from adults with respect to arrests, Miranda warnings & certain criminal justice standards.
- All respondents found that the training would be useful in helping them carry out their duties & several described specific changes they intend to make.
- 100% of participants felt that this training would be useful in performing their duties: 40% somewhat useful, 40% very useful & 20% extremely useful.

Individual & Family Advocacy Performance Measure

Description

Improve Advocacy, Self-advocacy, and Self-determination

Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	#	%
White, alone	232	95.08

Race/Ethnicity	#	%
Black or African American alone	5	2.05
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0	0
Hispanic/Latino	1	0.41
Asian alone	0	0
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander alone	0	0
Two or more races	4	1.64
Race unknown	2	0.82

Gender

Gender	#	%
Female	231	63.81
Male	127	35.08
Other	4	1.1

Category

Category	#	%
Individual with DD	265	84.66

Category	#	%
Family Member	48	15.34

Geographical

Geographical	#	%
Urban	193	55.94
Rural	152	44.06

I. Output Measures

Objective	Performance Measure : IFA 1.1 People with DD who participated in activities	Performance Measure : IFA 1.2 Family members who participated in activities
<p>Objective A. Strengthen support for an increased number of self-advocates through leadership development and coalition participation by: 1. Supplying direct funding to People First of Nebraska for advocacy activities. 2. Supporting opportunities for individuals with I/DD who are considered leaders to provide leadership training to individuals with I/DD who may become leaders. 3. Supporting participation of self-advocates in cross-disability and culturally diverse leadership coalitions. 4. Supporting the development of a curriculum to be used statewide for teaching self-advocacy and self-determination skills.*</p>	<p>245</p>	<p>31</p>

Objective	Performance Measure : IFA 1.1 People with DD who participated in activities	Performance Measure : IFA 1.2 Family members who participated in activities
<p>Objective B. Advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD of diverse identities and their families through active participation in: statewide advisory committees and cross-disability workgroups; public policy advocacy; cross-systems dialogue; and DD Network collaboration.*</p>	<p>65</p>	<p>16</p>

Objective	Performance Measure : IFA 1.1 People with DD who participated in activities	Performance Measure : IFA 1.2 Family members who participated in activities
<p>Objective C. Collaborate among the Nebraska DD Network Partners (Disability Rights Nebraska, Munroe-Meyer Institute University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities [UCEDD], and the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities) to advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD by:</p> <p>1. Conducting monthly planning meetings to discuss trends, concerns, and challenges with a goal of system changes and improvements for Nebraskans with developmental disabilities. 2. Serving as cross-agency representatives on the Council and Advisory groups for the DD Network Partners. 3. Working in conjunction with disability advocacy organizations to inform state senators about disability issues and assist in the development of policies and legislation favorable to this population. 4. Participating in the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD), a cross-disability</p>	0	0

Objective	Performance Measure : IFA 1.1 People with DD who participated in activities	Performance Measure : IFA 1.2 Family members who participated in activities
<p>advocacy organization focused on advancing the rights of Nebraskans with disabilities through policy research and development, legislative testimony, and the development of educational materials for policy makers. 5. Hosting training on a mutually selected topic for DD Network Partner members at the annual Tri-Board Meeting.*</p>		

Objective	Performance Measure : IFA 1.1 People with DD who participated in activities	Performance Measure : IFA 1.2 Family members who participated in activities
Objective D. Address the targeted disparity issue with African-American male students with developmental disabilities who are incarcerated or enter the criminal justice system at higher statistical rates by: 1. Improving systemic collaboration in the areas of education, developmental disabilities, behavioral health, children and family services, and the judicial system. 2. Decreasing, through systems collaboration, the number of out of school suspensions resulting from zero tolerance policies. 3. Conducting additional activities to reduce this disparity, including outreach, training, and education.*	0	0
Total # of Output Respondents	310	47

II. Outcome Measures

Performance Measures	Percent (%)
IFA 2.1 Percent of people with DD who increased advocacy	98

Performance Measures	Percent (%)
IFA 2.2 Percent of family members who increased advocacy	79

Sub-Outcome Measures : The number (#) of people who are better able to say what they want/say what is important to them

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Objective A. Strengthen support for an increased number of self-advocates through leadership development and coalition participation by: 1. Supplying direct funding to People First of Nebraska for advocacy activities. 2. Supporting opportunities for individuals with I/DD who are considered leaders to provide leadership training to individuals with I/DD who may become leaders. 3. Supporting participation of self-advocates in cross-disability and culturally diverse leadership coalitions. 4. Supporting the development of a curriculum to be used statewide for teaching self-advocacy and self-determination skills.*	251	23

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Objective B. Advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD of diverse identities and their families through active participation in: statewide advisory committees and cross-disability workgroups; public policy advocacy; cross-systems dialogue; and DD Network collaboration.*	43	14

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
<p>Objective C. Collaborate among the Nebraska DD Network Partners (Disability Rights Nebraska, Munroe-Meyer Institute University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities [UCEDD], and the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities) to advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD by:</p> <p>1. Conducting monthly planning meetings to discuss trends, concerns, and challenges with a goal of system changes and improvements for Nebraskans with developmental disabilities. 2. Serving as cross-agency representatives on the Council and Advisory groups for the DD Network Partners. 3. Working in conjunction with disability advocacy organizations to inform state senators about disability issues and assist in the development of policies and legislation favorable to this population. 4. Participating in the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD), a cross-disability advocacy organization focused on</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0</p>

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
<p>advancing the rights of Nebraskans with disabilities through policy research and development, legislative testimony, and the development of educational materials for policy makers. 5. Hosting training on a mutually selected topic for DD Network Partner members at the annual Tri-Board Meeting.*</p>		
<p>Objective D. Address the targeted disparity issue with African-American male students with developmental disabilities who are incarcerated or enter the criminal justice system at higher statistical rates by: 1. Improving systemic collaboration in the areas of education, developmental disabilities, behavioral health, children and family services, and the judicial system. 2. Decreasing, through systems collaboration, the number of out of school suspensions resulting from zero tolerance policies. 3. Conducting additional activities to reduce this disparity, including outreach, training, and education.*</p>	0	0

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Total # of Sub-Outcome Respondents	294	37
IFA 2.3 Percent of people better able to say what they need	95	79

Sub-Outcome Measures : The number (#) of people who are participating in advocacy activities

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
<p>Objective A. Strengthen support for an increased number of self-advocates through leadership development and coalition participation by: 1. Supplying direct funding to People First of Nebraska for advocacy activities. 2. Supporting opportunities for individuals with I/DD who are considered leaders to provide leadership training to individuals with I/DD who may become leaders. 3. Supporting participation of self-advocates in cross-disability and culturally diverse leadership coalitions. 4. Supporting the development of a curriculum to be used statewide for teaching self-advocacy and self-determination skills.*</p>	<p>102</p>	<p>5</p>

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Objective B. Advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD of diverse identities and their families through active participation in: statewide advisory committees and cross-disability workgroups; public policy advocacy; cross-systems dialogue; and DD Network collaboration.*	4	15

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
<p>Objective C. Collaborate among the Nebraska DD Network Partners (Disability Rights Nebraska, Munroe-Meyer Institute University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities [UCEDD], and the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities) to advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD by:</p> <p>1. Conducting monthly planning meetings to discuss trends, concerns, and challenges with a goal of system changes and improvements for Nebraskans with developmental disabilities. 2. Serving as cross-agency representatives on the Council and Advisory groups for the DD Network Partners. 3. Working in conjunction with disability advocacy organizations to inform state senators about disability issues and assist in the development of policies and legislation favorable to this population. 4. Participating in the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD), a cross-disability advocacy organization focused on</p>	0	0

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
<p>advancing the rights of Nebraskans with disabilities through policy research and development, legislative testimony, and the development of educational materials for policy makers. 5. Hosting training on a mutually selected topic for DD Network Partner members at the annual Tri-Board Meeting.*</p>		
<p>Objective D. Address the targeted disparity issue with African-American male students with developmental disabilities who are incarcerated or enter the criminal justice system at higher statistical rates by: 1. Improving systemic collaboration in the areas of education, developmental disabilities, behavioral health, children and family services, and the judicial system. 2. Decreasing, through systems collaboration, the number of out of school suspensions resulting from zero tolerance policies. 3. Conducting additional activities to reduce this disparity, including outreach, training, and education.*</p>	0	0

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Total # of Sub-Outcome Respondents	106	20
IFA 2.4 Percent of people participating in advocacy activities	34	43

Sub-Outcome Measures : The number (#) of people who are on cross disability coalitions, policy boards, advisory boards, governing bodies and/or serving in leadership positions.

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
<p>Objective A. Strengthen support for an increased number of self-advocates through leadership development and coalition participation by: 1. Supplying direct funding to People First of Nebraska for advocacy activities. 2. Supporting opportunities for individuals with I/DD who are considered leaders to provide leadership training to individuals with I/DD who may become leaders. 3. Supporting participation of self-advocates in cross-disability and culturally diverse leadership coalitions. 4. Supporting the development of a curriculum to be used statewide for teaching self-advocacy and self-determination skills.*</p>	<p>134</p>	<p>15</p>

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Objective B. Advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD of diverse identities and their families through active participation in: statewide advisory committees and cross-disability workgroups; public policy advocacy; cross-systems dialogue; and DD Network collaboration.*	3	15

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
<p>Objective C. Collaborate among the Nebraska DD Network Partners (Disability Rights Nebraska, Munroe-Meyer Institute University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities [UCEDD], and the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities) to advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD by:</p> <p>1. Conducting monthly planning meetings to discuss trends, concerns, and challenges with a goal of system changes and improvements for Nebraskans with developmental disabilities. 2. Serving as cross-agency representatives on the Council and Advisory groups for the DD Network Partners. 3. Working in conjunction with disability advocacy organizations to inform state senators about disability issues and assist in the development of policies and legislation favorable to this population. 4. Participating in the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD), a cross-disability advocacy organization focused on</p>	0	0

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
<p>advancing the rights of Nebraskans with disabilities through policy research and development, legislative testimony, and the development of educational materials for policy makers. 5. Hosting training on a mutually selected topic for DD Network Partner members at the annual Tri-Board Meeting.*</p>		
<p>Objective D. Address the targeted disparity issue with African-American male students with developmental disabilities who are incarcerated or enter the criminal justice system at higher statistical rates by: 1. Improving systemic collaboration in the areas of education, developmental disabilities, behavioral health, children and family services, and the judicial system. 2. Decreasing, through systems collaboration, the number of out of school suspensions resulting from zero tolerance policies. 3. Conducting additional activities to reduce this disparity, including outreach, training, and education.*</p>	0	0

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Total # of Sub-Outcome Respondents	137	30
IFA 2.5 Percent of people on cross disability coalitions	44	64

IFA 3 The percent of people satisfied with a project activity*

83

IFA 3.1 Percent of people with DD satisfied with activity*

81

IFA 3.2 Percent of family members satisfied with activity*

19

System Change Performance Measures

Description

Improve Advocacy, Self-advocacy, and Self-determination

SC 1: Output Measures - The number of Council efforts to transform fragmented approaches into a coordinated and effective system that assures individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of and have access to needed community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life.

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
Objective A. Strengthen support for an increased number of self-advocates through leadership development and coalition participation by: 1. Supplying direct funding to People First of Nebraska for advocacy activities. 2. Supporting opportunities for individuals with I/DD who are considered	1	0	2	3	0	1	5	585	5

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
<p>leaders to provide leadership training to individuals with I/DD who may become leaders.</p> <p>3. Supporting participation of self-advocates in cross-disability and culturally diverse leadership coalitions.</p> <p>4. Supporting the development of a curriculum to be used statewide for teaching self-advocacy and self-determination skills.</p>									

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
Objective B. Advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD of diverse identities and their families through active participation in: statewide advisory committees and cross-disability workgroups; public policy advocacy; cross-systems dialogue; and DD Network collaboration.	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	50	1

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
<p>Objective C. Collaborate among the Nebraska DD Network Partners (Disability Rights Nebraska, Munroe-Meyer Institute University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities [UCEDD], and the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities) to advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD by: 1. Conducting monthly planning meetings to discuss trends, concerns,</p>	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	61	3

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
<p>and challenges with a goal of system changes and improvements for Nebraskans with developmental disabilities. 2. Serving as cross-agency representatives on the Council and Advisory groups for the DD Network Partners. 3. Working in conjunction with disability advocacy organizations to inform state senators about disability issues and assist in the development of policies and legislation favorable to this</p>									

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
<p>population. 4. Participating in the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD), a cross-disability advocacy organization focused on advancing the rights of Nebraskans with disabilities through policy research and development, legislative testimony, and the development of educational materials for policy makers.</p> <p>5. Hosting training on a mutually selected topic for DD Network Partner members</p>									

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
at the annual Tri-Board Meeting.									

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
<p>Objective D. Address the targeted disparity issue with African-American male students with developmental disabilities who are incarcerated or enter the criminal justice system at higher statistical rates by:</p> <p>1. Improving systemic collaboration in the areas of education, developmental disabilities, behavioral health, children and family services, and the judicial system.</p> <p>2. Decreasing, through systems collaboration, the number of</p>	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	41	1

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
out of school suspensions resulting from zero tolerance policies. 3. Conducting additional activities to reduce this disparity, including outreach, training, and education.									

Systems Change SC 2: Outcome Measures

Outcome Measures	Number(#)
SC 2.1 - Efforts that led to improvements *	3
SC 2.2 - Efforts that were implemented *	3

Sub-Outcome Measures

Objective	SC 2.1.1 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation improvements	SC 2.1.2 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation implemented	SC 2.1.3 Number of improved promising or best practices	SC 2.1.4 Number of implemented promising or best practices
<p>Objective A. Strengthen support for an increased number of self-advocates through leadership development and coalition participation by:</p> <p>1. Supplying direct funding to People First of Nebraska for advocacy activities.</p> <p>2. Supporting opportunities for individuals with I/DD who are considered leaders to provide leadership training to individuals with I/DD who may become leaders.</p> <p>3. Supporting participation of self-advocates in cross-disability and culturally diverse leadership coalitions.</p> <p>4. Supporting the development of a curriculum</p>	1	1	2	2

Objective	SC 2.1.1 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation improvements	SC 2.1.2 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation implemented	SC 2.1.3 Number of improved promising or best practices	SC 2.1.4 Number of implemented promising or best practices
to be used statewide for teaching self-advocacy and self-determination skills.				
Objective B. Advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD of diverse identities and their families through active participation in: statewide advisory committees and cross-disability workgroups; public policy advocacy; cross-systems dialogue; and DD Network collaboration.	0	0	0	0

Objective	SC 2.1.1 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation improvements	SC 2.1.2 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation implemented	SC 2.1.3 Number of improved promising or best practices	SC 2.1.4 Number of implemented promising or best practices
<p>Objective C. Collaborate among the Nebraska DD Network Partners (Disability Rights Nebraska, Munroe-Meyer Institute University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities [UCEDD], and the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities) to advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD by: 1. Conducting monthly planning meetings to discuss trends, concerns, and challenges with a goal of system changes and improvements for Nebraskans with developmental disabilities. 2. Serving as cross-agency</p>	1	1	0	0

Objective	SC 2.1.1 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation improvements	SC 2.1.2 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation implemented	SC 2.1.3 Number of improved promising or best practices	SC 2.1.4 Number of implemented promising or best practices
<p>representatives on the Council and Advisory groups for the DD Network Partners.</p> <p>3. Working in conjunction with disability advocacy organizations to inform state senators about disability issues and assist in the development of policies and legislation favorable to this population.</p> <p>4. Participating in the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD), a cross-disability advocacy organization focused on advancing the rights of Nebraskans with disabilities through policy research and development, legislative testimony, and the development of educational materials for policy makers.</p>				

Objective	SC 2.1.1 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation improvements	SC 2.1.2 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation implemented	SC 2.1.3 Number of improved promising or best practices	SC 2.1.4 Number of implemented promising or best practices
<p>5. Hosting training on a mutually selected topic for DD Network Partner members at the annual Tri-Board Meeting.</p>				

Objective	SC 2.1.1 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation improvements	SC 2.1.2 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation implemented	SC 2.1.3 Number of improved promising or best practices	SC 2.1.4 Number of implemented promising or best practices
<p>Objective D. Address the targeted disparity issue with African-American male students with developmental disabilities who are incarcerated or enter the criminal justice system at higher statistical rates by:</p> <p>1. Improving systemic collaboration in the areas of education, developmental disabilities, behavioral health, children and family services, and the judicial system.</p> <p>2. Decreasing, through systems collaboration, the number of out of school suspensions resulting from zero tolerance policies.</p> <p>3. Conducting additional activities to reduce this disparity, including</p>	1	1	1	1

Objective	SC 2.1.1 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation improvements	SC 2.1.2 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation implemented	SC 2.1.3 Number of improved promising or best practices	SC 2.1.4 Number of implemented promising or best practices
outreach, training, and education.				

Detailed Progress Report on Goals

Description

Improve Employment

Area Of Emphasis

Area of Emphasis	Planned for this goal	Areas addressed
Quality Assurance	true	true

Area of Emphasis	Planned for this goal	Areas addressed
Education and Early Intervention	true	true
Child Care		
Health		
Employment	true	true
Housing		
Transportation		
Recreation		
Formal and Informal Community Supports	true	true

Strategies

Strategies	Planned for this goal	Strategies Used
Outreach	true	true
Training	true	true
Technical Assistance	true	true
Supporting and Educating Communities	true	true
Interagency Collaboration and Coordination	true	true

Strategies	Planned for this goal	Strategies Used
Coordination with Related Councils, Committees and Programs	true	true
Barrier Elimination	true	true
Systems Design and Redesign		
Coalition Development and Citizen Participation		
Informing Policymakers	true	true
Demonstration of New Approaches to Services and Support		
Other Activities	true	true

3. Intermediaries/Collaborators

Collaborators	Planned for this goal	Actual
State Protection and Advocacy System	true	true
University Center(s)	true	true
State DD agency	true	true
Nebraska Association of Specialized Providers (NASP)	true	true

Collaborators	Planned for this goal	Actual
Nebraska APSE (Association of People Supporting Employment First) Chapter	true	true
Nebraska Association of Community Providers (ACP)	true	true
Nebraska VR	true	true
Enable Savings Plan, First National Bank	true	
People First of Nebraska	true	true
Nebraska State Independent Living Council	true	true
Easter Seals of Nebraska	true	true
Statewide advocacy organizations, including The Arc of NE and local Arc chapters	true	true
Nebraska Department of Education	true	true

Provide an overall cohesive description of (a) the extent to which progress is being made in achieving the intended outcomes of the Goal for the reporting year, (b) the extent to which each goal was or was not achieved for the reporting year, (c) where applicable, factors that impeded goal achievement for the reporting year, (c) needs that require substantive state plan amendment (goal only)

The Council continues to focus on employment. Subawards building employment skills for self-advocates through trainings and hands-on activities, as well as projects that trained advocates and service providers on skills to assist self-advocates on their employment journey have been funded. Two subawards that began in FFY18 were completed in FFY19. One new Request for Applications was released for Benefits Planning Training.

Operation HOELS (Hands-On Employment and Life Skills), a subaward with Educational Service Unit 7, was completed. This project provided employment kits for classroom use and trained educators in administering the Assessment of Functional Living Skills (AFLS), which assesses functional, practical, and essential skills of everyday life, including employment and independent living. Also, ESU #7 will build assessment/skill kits for district check out for use with the AFLS assessment protocols.

The Heartland Equine and Therapeutic Riding Academy project provided opportunities for participants to work on a farm with animals and in a store providing customer service. These skills were learned through this project's Program & Facility Expansion –Life Skills Program. Project will provide career exploration, job shadowing, and advanced education opportunities. Program will focus on self-advocacy, vocational skills, and college exploration through various activities with horses and miniature horses, speakers, and job shadowing.

The Council ED continued to represent the Council at APSE (Association of Professionals for Supported Employment), NASP (Nebraska Association of Specialized Providers), and ACP (Association for Community Professionals). These organizations support and promote competitive, integrated employment throughout Nebraska.

The Council's Vocational Rehabilitation representative provided quarterly updates to Council members on the implementation of the Work Force Innovation Act. Updates regarding the collaboration to coordinate employment services between Nebraska VR (VR) and the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) were also presented to Council members. Council members were made aware that Nebraska VR entered into an Order of Selection on 12/13/17. This Order of Selection has continued throughout 2018 and 2019, creating challenges to individuals with developmental disabilities seeking competitive supported employment supports.

In January 2019, Council Executive Director submitted public comment to DHHS' Division of Developmental Disabilities on the HCBS adult day waiver and the comprehensive waiver amendments. These comments will reflect concerns with recent challenges in supporting employment services for individuals with DD. Many of these issues are tied to current funding streams (Nebraska VR, WIOA - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) and processes including the current waiver service definitions that leaves many people with DD struggling to access and maintain employment.

Partner with Nebraska APSE (Association of People Supporting Employment First) to support their first Employment First conference in 2019. Provide Council funds for keynote presenter or trainer.

4 Year Overview : A description of how the Council will use and build from knowledge gained and progress made to move forward in the next state plan cycle.(This section only applies to the PPR submitted for the Federal Fiscal Year 2020, which will be due by January 1, 2021)

5 Year Overview : For the final PPR of this state plan cycle, provide an overall analysis of the outcomes achieved during the five year state plan cycle. The description should include the extent to which diverse stakeholders are satisfied with council activities that promote self-determination and community participation for individuals with disabilities and families, results of other types of information gathering such as focus groups, surveys, or other feedback or input methods with individuals with developmental disabilities and families and major accomplishments and factors impeding goal achievement (if applicable).(This section only applies to the PPR submitted for the Federal Fiscal Year 2021, which will be due by January 1, 2022)

Objectives

1. Objective A. Provide support to address barriers, advocate for, and expand opportunities for an increased number of individuals to participate in community integrated employment or entrepreneurship.

1. **Goal:** Improve Employment

2. **State Plan Objective** Objective 1

3. **This Objective is**

Capacity Building

4. **This Objective is**

Ongoing

5. **This Objective is**

	The Objective is
a. Fulfilling a Self-Advocacy DD Requirement *	No
b. Targeted disparity *	No
c. DD Network Collaboration *	No

	The Objective is
d. A demonstration project of New Approaches to Services and Supports *	No
e. A demonstration of projects or activities *	No

6. Stage of Implementation

Implementation

7. Provide an overall description of this effort

Two projects were funded in FFY18 & concluded in FFY19. One project provided Hands-On Employment & Life Skills (HOELS) training to educators in Educational Service Unit (ESU) 7 & teachers in its school district. This training was used in conjunction with the Assessment of Functional Living Skills (ALFS) program to assess the measure of student skills in functional, practical & essential skills of everyday life, including employment & independent living. Assessment/skill kits were developed for use with AFLS assessment protocols. The other project utilized a 280-hour program to address skills needed to succeed in a variety of settings for transition age youth. Training focused on self-advocacy, vocational skills & college exploration through various activities with horses & miniature horses, speakers & job shadowing. Teaching methods were customized for the participant's learning style.

Continuation work included the Council ED's active participation with various coalitions, networks, partnerships & organizations that support & promote competitive, integrated employment throughout Nebraska, making it possible to stay abreast of systemic employment challenges. A collaboration with the Nebraska Association of Service Providers (NASP) utilized Council funds to bring an employment specialist to Nebraska for a training session on best practices on promoting integrated, community-based employment for individuals with IDD.

The Council ED ensured quarterly updates were provided to Council members on critical issues across the state, including Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) & WIOA, the collaboration between VR & the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) on employment services & the VR Order of Selection.

Public comments were provided by the Council ED on HCBS DD adult day waiver & comprehensive waiver amendments. Comments reflected concerns with recent challenges in supporting employment services for individuals with IDD. Many of these issues are tied to current funding streams (VR, WIOA) & processes, including the current waiver service definitions that leave many people with IDD struggling to access &/or maintain employment. DD waiver amendments that address benefits planning gaps were also addressed.

As issues related to accessing employment supports have become increasingly apparent for those with IDD, the Council ED continues her involvement by attending APSE (Association of Professionals for Supported Employment), NASP & ACP (Association for Community Professionals) meetings & events.

8. Outputs Achieved

Expected Outputs	Achieved
Minimum of 10 NASP and APSE meetings attended.	true

Expected Outputs	Achieved
4 reports from Nebraska VR on WIOA updates at Council meetings.	true
Provide AFLS training to 30 educators in ESU #7 districts in Fall 2018. Contract with Deb Rauner to conduct AFLS training.	
"Operation HOELS" - Develop AFLS assessment/skills kits for each protocol and create a checkout system for kits for ESU #7 districts.	true
"Operation HOELS" AFLS assessment/skill kits will be used with 10 students in the ESU #7 school districts.	
HETRA's project will reach 12-20 transition aged participants with developmental disabilities. Participants will complete the 280 hour program.	true
DHHS Division of Developmental Disabilities will address public comments when they submit DD waiver amendments to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Council Director will also share the public comments with Council members and members of the state's Governor's Developmental Disability Advisory Council. (Council Director is appointed to DD Advisory Council to represent DD Council.)	true

Expected Outputs	Achieved
<p>The Executive Director Public Comments on the DD waiver amendments address specific systemic employment challenges and recommendations to address the issues. One key recommendation is for the DD Division and Nebraska VR to contract with a national subject expert in conceptualizing and executing the needed employment services transformation. Supported employment providers, Nebraska VR, and staff from the DD Division must collectively build confidence that essential employment supports will be available, at the points needed, to address barriers to employment. The systems must work together seamlessly, and engaging a specialist to provide technical assistance to Nebraska is necessary to make this possible.</p>	true
<p>Nebraska DD providers, staff with Nebraska VR and Nebraska Division of Developmental Disabilities, family members, individuals with DD, and others will have opportunity to attend Nebraska APSE conference to learn best practices so individuals with developmental disabilities can secure fully integrated employment earning minimum wage or higher.</p>	true

10. The report should include the following: (a) A narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented toward achieving the objective, including how the identified strategy was used, how the activity was implemented, challenges to achieving the objective and unexpected benefits.(b) For system change activities, include a description of the stage of implementation (planning, initiation, implementation, outcome/fully integrated) of the system change initiative. (c) All narratives must describe what numbers make up the performance measures number for the activities being reported in the narrative.(d) A summary of evaluation activities to monitor progress and impact of council supported activities for the objective; data collected during the year, data sources, and data collection methods; (logic model and evaluation plan may be attached to the report).

The subaward with ESU 7 for the Operation HOELS Assessment of Functional Living Skills (AFLS) project was successful. ESU 7 determined that providing training on implementing formal assessment measures was necessary to provide high quality programming to students with IDD. Data from formal assessments would assist IEP teams in developing appropriate goals for employment, independent living, community participation & daily living skills. ESU 7 contracted with Deb Rauner, an Independent Autism Consultant, to present 1 AFLS training & 2 consulting sessions to build assessment/skill kits. AFLS has 6 assessment protocols: Basic Living Skills, Home Skills, Community Participation Skills, School Skills, Independent Living Skills & Vocational Skills. Skill assessment/skill boxes with materials to determine whether the student mastered the tasks were developed around Vocational & Basic Living Skills protocols. These boxes are available for check-out throughout the district. In addition to the training, assistance was offered with IEP goal writing based on assessment data & teaching ongoing data collection to determine progress on goals.

Special ed teachers understand the importance of building meaningful, achievable post-secondary goals & objectives for students. Because AFLS is large, teachers were overwhelmed with using it as an assessment but see it as an incremental skill building guide & tool to focus their goals for students & write better lesson plans. The assessments are building better transition activities & IEP goals, improving post-secondary outcomes, providing meaningful discussion about future goals & dreams & increasing student & parent IEP participation (See Success Stories). The specific number of students who used the kits is undetermined. However, because teachers used portions of the kits in lesson planning, the number is believed to exceed the 10 predicted.

The number of educators expected to be trained was not reached during the subaward period. Because some districts are very small & do not currently have any students with the level of need to benefit from the AFLS assessments, educators from those districts did not attend. Other districts had new special ed teachers who were unable to attend because the training was early in the school year. Of the 30 educators anticipated, 16 were trained. Additionally, 7 individuals in the regional accountability area became trained to support other special ed teachers. They assisted transition specialists in 3 transition assessment trainings. Since the subaward ended 4/30/19, the project coordinator has continued to train educators & she also created a Quality Transition IEP Guide for district use. An additional 30 educators have been trained.

During a 12-week program, 15 transition aged students participated in Heartland Equine Therapeutic Riding Academy's classroom & hands-on learning communication, decision making, time management & employment skills. Initially proposed to provide 280 hours of training, over 500 hours were provided in this agricultural/equine facility setting. Daily evaluations for each participant after each Life Skills class showed an overall increase in the 4 categories of Confidence/Independence, Ability to Follow Directions, Productivity & Ability to Stay on Task. After trending a rapid rise in scores at the midpoint of the session, curriculum & expectations were adjusted to provide additional challenges to participants.

Participants educated, motivated & inspired their peers. Daily opportunities were given to teach other participants what they learned by example. Different learning styles were taken into consideration & teaching styles were tailored for each participant, reflecting a high success rate. Modifications were made to tools & grips for participants as needed. After completing the training, 3 participants were certified in Grooming & 2 in Tacking at an entry volunteer level, the highest level above novice & requires additional knowledge. Due to the extremely cold weather, numerous participants decided to not come to many of the classes.

As part of the transition-age curriculum, participants had the opportunity to learn about & participate in Project SEARCH. Of the 15 participants, 2 were able to pursue assisted employment positions in the ag/equine setting.

An anonymous donor provided \$50,000 in matching funds to HETRA in 2019. This allowed them to expand the program, hire a full-time employee to run the program & purchase supplies & equipment needed for the program.

The Council ED continued to represent the Council as a Nebraska Association of Professionals for Supported Employment (APSE) member. During 2019, APSE focused on addressing the employment systemic issues challenging adults with IDD.

To celebrate Disability Employment Awareness Month, APSE hosted a screening of Bottom Dollars, a Rooted in Rights original documentary, across the state. The film exposes the exploitation of nearly 250,000 people with disabilities in the US who are legally being paid an average of less than \$2/hour. The documentary calls for the phase out of the unfair practice of sub-minimum wages & sheltered workshops & offers solutions for fair wages & inclusive employment.

In January 2019, APSE submitted public comment on proposed HCBS DD waiver amendments. Comments centered on other Nebraska employment challenges, including that Nebraska was operating a system where people who are served with a Supported Employment Code & lost their jobs are no longer able to access their supported employment budget to help them locate new employment. APSE's comments noted significant concerns that the VR wait list situation was creating challenges for individuals who wanted to work but were unable to access supports.

APSE discussed hosting a conference in August 2019 focused on improving strategies to secure funding for supported employment, but put the conference on hold due to time constraints. Instead, APSE focused on developing networks with the Employment Consortium, ACP (Association of Community Professionals), the UCEDD & NASP. The newly elected Nebraska APSE President also attended the 2019 National Conference in St. Louis.

In January 2019, the Council's ED submitted public comments on HCBS DD waiver amendments to address specific systemic employment challenges & recommendations to address the issues. One key recommendation was for DDD & VR to contract with a national subject matter expert in conceptualizing & executing the needed employment services transformation. Supported employment providers, VR & DDD staff must collectively build confidence that essential employment supports will be available, at the points needed, to address barriers to employment, & the systems must work together seamlessly. The Council ED shared her public comments with Council members & members of the state's Governor's Developmental Disability Advisory Council.

The Council ED represents the Council by serving as an affiliate member on NASP. NASP supports organizations that serve thousands of individuals across the state providing habilitative services, residential care, employment services & more. Throughout 2019, NASP was actively involved in problem solving related to employment challenges. The Council ED began participating on NASP's Employment Subcommittee in April 2019 to investigate employment issues & present possible solutions.

NASP members identified the following concerns regarding access to employment services:

1. Lack of access to employment services not comparable to VR services.
2. Lack of access to employment services because DDD is a payer of last resort.

3. Waiting for employment services under the DD waiver when an individual qualifies, potentially leading to a “waiver within a waiver” scenario.
4. Individuals being served in a more restrictive manner, raising Olmstead concerns.

NASP requested collaboration funds from the Council in May 2019. NASP documented that over 2,644 people are on the waiting list for VR employment services. Approximately 500 of these individuals were people with IDD. Challenges related to serving them include policies regarding access to employment services through the HCBS waivers & the Interagency Agreement between the DDD & VR. NASP providers were working with individuals with DD who were in workshop settings while waiting for services to support competitive, integrated employment; were denied access to prevocational services; were told to quit working to retain access to Medicaid; & were capable of community-based integrated employment with supported employment services but were unable to receive such services.

Barriers to employment can be addressed by implementing best practices across Medicaid, DDD & VR systems. NASP proposed bringing Dr. Lisa Mills to Nebraska in July to provide training on insights about best practices for Nebraska on promoting integrated, community-based employment through administrative practices & partnerships. Dr. Mills is a subject matter expert on linking Medicaid to Employment Services & Long-Term Supports & Services with the LEAD Center. The LEAD Center is a collaborative of disability, workforce & economic employment organizations dedicated to improving employment & economic advancement outcomes for people with disabilities. NASP planned to invite their provider agency & affiliate members, leadership from DDD & VR & other community members to attend the presentation.

The Council provided NASP with \$2,500 of collaboration funds to bring Dr. Mills to Nebraska to host “Employment Innovation – Best Practices for Contemporary, Integrated, Competitive Employment for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities” on 7/23/19. The presentation was very concise with the message that HCBS waivers provide flexibility for systems to work together to provide supported employment or pre-vocational supports to individuals with DD.

12. Expected Outcomes Achieved

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
Identify current trends and issues faced by providers to support competitive employment.	true
Council members gain knowledge on WIOA development and are more engaged as stakeholders.	true
Operation HOELS provides formal transition assessment related to training, education, employment, and independent living skills. Assessment outcomes will be used to develop student's postsecondary transition IEP (Individualized Education Plan) goals.	true
HETRA's transition program participants will improve their employment skills including learning to follow directions, team work, communication skills, problem solving, becoming acutely aware of their surroundings, monitoring their behaviors, and body positioning to control and safely lead horses. Ultimately these pre-employment skills will prepare them for employment in the agriculture industry. HETRA's long-term goal is to hire a few of the participants who complete the program.	true
The Council Director will continue to collaborate with other stakeholders including APSE, Goodwill Industries of Nebraska, The Arc of Nebraska, and members of the Governor's Developmental Disability Advisory Council to advocate for a solution to Nebraska's employment systemic challenges.	true
Nebraska APSE conference has the potential to provide technical assistance to empower supported employment providers, Nebraska VR, and staff from the DD Division to address specific systemic employment challenges in Nebraska.	
Executive Director public comments to DHHS' Division of Developmental Disabilities on the HCBS adult day waiver and the comprehensive waiver amendments become part of public record that is also shared with CMS. This leverages pressure on state DD Division and Nebraska VR to address identified problems.	true

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
Potential changes to the DHHS DD waiver amendments, or Council Director recommendations implemented.	true

13. Progress towards achieving outcomes for overall objective : The annual report should include an assessment as to the extent to which progress was made on the intended outcomes for the objective.

Tremendous progress has been made on the Council’s employment goal through subawards & activities. The Council also addressed recent systemic issues related to individuals with IDD accessing employment supports.

2017 subawards:

- Trained students in employment skills through hands-on experience in a variety of modules at a local farm & retail store.
- Provided train-the-trainer to service providers in strategies for engaging individuals with DD & promoted careers in the DD field in 4 select communities.

2018 subawards:

- Collaborated with VR on competitive employment.
- Provided classes & certification to DD service providers.
- Utilized Project Discovery Employment Kits for students to explore classroom & on-the-job employment skills & educated families on employment opportunities for their family member with DD.

- Taught life skills through a 280-hour training in an agricultural setting to transition age youth.
- Provided training to educators on assessments of functional living skills & developed skills boxes to determine whether students mastered the skills.

APSE members gathered on 2/20/19 to deliver informational packets to state senators on Legislative Advocacy Day. Packets provided examples of struggles in supporting employment based on current funding mechanisms & interpretations in Nebraska. The handouts not only addressed the bleak reality of employment challenges in Nebraska, it also reflected on previous employment successes when Nebraska's Medicaid HCBS DD waiver provided funding for supported employment services. The packets allowed APSE to educate senators on the comparison of how smoothly things worked previously versus the current situation, which inhibits employment success.

To celebrate Disability Employment Awareness Month, APSE hosted a screening of *Bottom Dollars*, a Rooted in Rights original documentary, across the state on 10/25/18. The film exposes the exploitation of nearly 250,000 people with disabilities in the US who are legally being paid an average of less than \$2/hour. The documentary calls for the phase out of the unfair practice of sub-minimum wages & sheltered workshops & offers solutions for fair wages & inclusive employment. The goal of the film is to empower advocates & policymakers to start focusing on giving workers with disabilities the basic protection of a minimum wage.

In January, the Council ED provided public comment on the HCBS DD waiver, indicating the following systemic employment challenges for people with IDD:

- Funding streams & processes, including HCBS DD waiver services definitions, which greatly limit employment supports.
- DDD & VR must improve their processes. The main issue centered on the DDD providing a directive that waiver eligible individuals must apply to VR & be found ineligible for VR services before any employment related waiver service will be authorized with a DD provider. This specific requirement was not stated in any part of the current or amended Waiver documents. This unwritten requirement limits & restricts access to essential employment related waiver services.

- The DDD was not allowing prevocational or supported employment services to be provided under DD waivers when these services are not otherwise available to the individual through the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The recommendation was made that the DDD allow DD provider authorization of prevocational services for people who are on the VR wait list.

In 2017, VR went into an Order of Selection, continuing in 2018 & 2019, resulting in adults seeking support being assessed based on need & placed into one of the 3 priority groups. Individuals with IDD who applied for VR services were placed in Priority Group One, which included individuals who are most significantly impaired.

Paige Rose, the Council's VR rep, provided written quarterly updates to Council members:

11/16/18: The first 100 names were pulled from VR Priority Group 1 wait list; letters were sent in October notifying individuals that they had 30 days to contact VR. Staff focused on reaching out to these individuals. Their fiscal committee looked at the next 600 individuals in Priority Group 1 to project the impact for each team across the state to ensure staff capacity. Paige noted wait list numbers are in constant flux. The wait list as of 10/23/18 (all populations, not just IDD): Priority Group 1 – 1,255; Priority Group 2 – 407; Priority Group 3 – 240.

By late November, VR anticipated an update from their Director on the hiring freeze as they were down 30+ staff statewide. From 7/1/17 to 7/30/18, VR provided 799 Work Based Learning Opportunities for students across the state. Paige shared that RFPs for summer Pre-Employment Transition Services would be released the 1st or 2nd week of December instead of the end of November & that the late release would push the initial application submission date of 1/4/19 back 1 to 2 weeks.

2/1/19: The wait list numbers as of January 2019: Priority Group 1 – 1,384; Priority Group 2 – 481; Priority Group 3 – 323. She also reported that 200 individuals were removed from the Priority Group 1 wait list so far. Unfortunately, the Order of Selection & hiring freeze remained in effect. Proposals for 2019 Summer Transition Programs were due 1/30/19. VR was working on posting a list of IDD providers who have an agreement with VR for supported employment to their web site.

5/17/19: The Project SEARCH Job Fair held 4/30/19 at the Lancaster Event Center was a huge success. The Order of Selection wait list as of 5/13/19: Priority Group 1 – 2,013; Priority Group 2 – 594; Priority Group 3 – 357. At that time, VR was averaging 100 new applicants eligible for Priority Group 1 per month. The increase could be attributed VR advising students with disabilities to apply 2 years prior to their graduation in order to be placed on the wait list. Their rationale was that as students approached their graduation date, they would be closer to being off the wait list. However, those students who have the most significant disabilities were told to delay their application to VR until 2 months prior to graduation. VR recommended this approach because if the student with significant disabilities was found ineligible, all pre-employment transition services in the school would have to stop immediately. VR wants all students to have exposure to all pre-employment transition services the entire time they are in high school, if possible.

Transition Summer Programs were approved for 18 VR grant projects statewide. Council members were encouraged to reference the STUDENT page on www.vr.nebraska.gov (<http://www.vr.nebraska.gov>) for more info.

The 2019 Legislature's Appropriations Committee provided VR with an additional \$1.2 million of general funds in each year of the next biennium to help offset part of the incurred maintenance-of-effort penalty & to begin serving adults waiting for services. Once signed by the Governor, funds were earmarked for July 1st.

Paige also shared that VR intended to request re-allotment money in Fall of 2019. With the additional Nebraska disaster declaration resulting from March storms & flooding, there would be a \$5-6 million re-allotment potential.

8/16/19: Paige noted:

- Nebraska continues to make progress in a reduction of 14c certificate holders & individuals working sub-minimum wage positions.
- 802 Work Based Learning Experiences were set up between 7/1/18 & 7/8/19.
- 200 students participated in Transition Summer Programs statewide.

- On 8/1/19, Nebraska VR's Mark Schultz was confirmed by the Senate as Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, housed in the Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services.
- VR requested re-allotment funds & expected to hear back by mid-September.
- VR hosted reps from Kansas on 7/23-24/19 for an Interstate Transition Meeting. Several Nebraska partners joined the discussion to speak about collaborative efforts & lessons learned to improve transition outcomes. The group plans to meet again in the future. Several innovative practices, including the Nebraska Council's "Along the Way" transition guides, were shared between the states.

The Council collaborated with NASP to bring subject matter expert Dr. Lisa Mills to Nebraska to provide training on employment best practices for individuals with DD. Approximately 50 people attended this event. Some NASP members are also members & leaders within the Association of Community Professionals. These ACP leaders were so impressed with Dr. Mills' presentation that they made arrangements to bring her back to Nebraska as their keynote speaker to present on "Making Sense of the Final Settings Rule" at the ACP Fall 2019 Conference in November.

Following Dr. Mills' training, NASP received no response from the DD Division when asked whether they would change employment services interpretations. DD Division leadership did indicate that they were working with CMS to explore a remedy to this situation. However, the DD Director also noted concerns that the DD Division did not have funding allocated by the state legislature to provide or expand employment HCBS DD waiver services. It wasn't until 11/5/19 that the DD Division announced a formal policy change for supported employment. The announcement stated that after further collaboration with CMS, it was determined that DD HCBS waiver Supported Employment – Individual or Supported Employment – Follow-Along may be authorized to provide a job coach or support in a competitive, integrated employment setting to help the participant maintain employment. These services may be authorized under the following 3 circumstances:

- When a participant is currently receiving Medicaid HCBS DD waiver services,
- When a participant is on the VR waitlist, &

- When the participant has secured employment through alternative activities outside of billable waiver services.

This announcement was a huge step toward addressing Nebraska's employment challenges.

14. Additionally, include stories of culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities whose lives are better because of Council work on this activity (e.g., became better advocates for themselves and others, became more connected to the community). Stories of policy or legislative changes that happened as a result of Council individual advocacy work that are likely to positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities or that will prevent a potential negative impact (e.g., created deleted, refined programs and/or legislation, reallocated use of funds, organizational systems change as a result of evidence based practices).

AFLS Training

As a result of this training, some districts have been able to identify additional teaching techniques & assessments that would be appropriate for individuals with lifelong DD. Discussion of how the AFLS can be used to build curriculum & community supports has resulted in a parent volunteering to share about her child's community experiences through 4-H as a way to learn independent living & community involvement.

A teacher/parent is excited about the possible use of AFLS combined with inclusion for better & improved outcomes in the classroom.

"I like to use it as a curriculum guide, as you can personalize it very easily. The task objectives & criteria are very clearly stated. The data tracking system is very visual. Any student I've used it with has shown growth. It's easily adaptable to meet any age or cognitive ability. I've taken the information to IEP meetings & shared it with parents, which generated great discussion about what we have worked on & what needs to be addressed next."

From the project coordinator six months after the subaward ended:

“I am super excited to report that through DD Council funding & NDE funding for assessment kits, I’ve been able to utilize one of the comprehensive transition assessments (Transition Planning Inventory-2, or TPI-2) & its guide to direct teachers back to the AFLS as part of their ongoing age-appropriate transition assessment process we are currently training on this fall. So we have yet another means of assessing & building skills using AFLS. Teachers are just getting started in this process, & I would imagine I will have more feedback in the next year or two. That’s the hard part - waiting & seeing the results unfold over the next few years - I’d love to see it NOW :)”

HETRA

Daniel is a tall & charming young man but he is incredibly soft spoken & shy. His main form of self-expression was in his art projects not in physical feats. Initially, Daniel was intimidated by horses & had a difficult time in calming himself enough to be around them for very long. Daniel learned that by calming himself he was also helping the horses to stay calm too. This gave Daniel the courage to work near the horses, because he was helping them stay calm. Daniel’s first success in the program was being able to groom a horse. He then studied to be able to tack a horse with supervision. These successes gave Daniel the confidence to certify in both Grooming & Tacking. After completing Life Skills Session A at HETRA Daniel asked to participate in the Adaptive Therapeutic Riding. With the support of his mom & to the delight of the HETRA staff Daniel completed his first session of adaptive therapeutic riding. He told his mom & the HETRA staff present, “I never thought I could do this. This is the best day of my life.”

2. Objective B. Increase opportunities for self-advocates to share employment experiences and promote community integrated employment and entrepreneurship with peers and stakeholders.

1. Goal: Improve Employment

2. State Plan Objective Objective 2

3. This Objective is

Individual & Family Advocacy

4. This Objective is

Ongoing

5. This Objective is

	The Objective is
a. Fulfilling a Self-Advocacy DD Requirement *	No
b. Targeted disparity *	No
c. DD Network Collaboration *	No
d. A demonstration project of New Approaches to Services and Supports *	No
e. A demonstration of projects or activities *	No

6. Stage of Implementation

Planning

7. Provide an overall description of this effort

People First of Nebraska holds an annual convention for people with disabilities to learn, interact, and network. PFN members present or co-present all the breakout sessions. In October 2019, one breakout session was led by self-advocates who talked about their experiences in looking for and applying for jobs. This will be reported in the 2020 PPR.

8. Outputs Achieved

Expected Outputs	Achieved
One People First of Nebraska (PFN) member will share their employment story at a break-out session at the PFN annual conference.	
One ALPS graduate will share their employment experiences in their testimonial at one outreach event.	true
Increase understanding of employment challenges, barriers and successes by individuals with I/DD.	true

10. The report should include the following: (a) A narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented toward achieving the objective, including how the identified strategy was used, how the activity was implemented, challenges to achieving the objective and unexpected benefits.(b) For system change activities, include a description of the stage of implementation (planning, initiation, implementation, outcome/fully integrated) of the system change initiative. (c) All narratives must describe what numbers make up the performance measures number for the activities being reported in the narrative.(d) A summary of evaluation activities to monitor progress and impact of council supported activities for the objective; data collected during the year, data sources, and data collection methods; (logic model and evaluation plan may be attached to the report).

People First of Nebraska is planning a breakout session on employment for the October 2019 annual convention. This session will be led by an individual with DD and will address their employment experiences.

Special Olympics Nebraska athletes have provided presentations at 49 events across the state. Several of these athletes have included their employment experiences in their speeches. One athlete presented at the annual Breakfast of Champions, an audience of over 300 people. She spoke of her job at a local bakery and how she has learned to speak up and speak out.

12. Expected Outcomes Achieved

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
Stakeholders who hear from self-advocates will increase their awareness and knowledge on the need for improved employment paths.	true

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
<p>More self-advocates will seek out opportunities to be more engaged in competitive employment and entrepreneurship.</p>	

13. Progress towards achieving outcomes for overall objective : The annual report should include an assessment as to the extent to which progress was made on the intended outcomes for the objective.

Through presentations by Special Olympics athletes, audiences have learned more about their employment experiences. These events have increased awareness not only of barriers that individuals with IDD face in accessing employment, but, more importantly, the variety of jobs that people with IDD are capable of doing.

14. Additionally, include stories of culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities whose lives are better because of Council work on this activity (e.g., became better advocates for themselves and others, became more connected to the community). Stories of policy or legislative changes that happened as a result of Council individual advocacy work that are likely to positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities or that will prevent a potential negative impact (e.g., created deleted, refined programs and/or legislation, reallocated use of funds, organizational systems change as a result of evidence based practices).

Stories from the Special Olympics project are reported in Goal 2 Objective A.

3. Objective C. Provide access to benefits planning services for an increased number of service providers, individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities and their families to support the person's employment choices.

1. **Goal:** Improve Employment

2. **State Plan Objective** Objective 3

3. **This Objective is**

System Change

4. **This Objective is**

Ongoing

5. **This Objective is**

	The Objective is
a. Fulfilling a Self-Advocacy DD Requirement *	No

	The Objective is
b. Targeted disparity *	No
c. DD Network Collaboration *	No
d. A demonstration project of New Approaches to Services and Supports *	No
e. A demonstration of projects or activities *	No

6. Stage of Implementation

Implementation

7. Provide an overall description of this effort

This objective is designed to improve access to benefits planning services for an increased number of service providers, individuals with IDD and their families to support the person's employment choices. Many families fear that their adult child will lose their Social Security benefits if they earn too much. Both self-advocates and parents need to understand the laws to aid the balancing act of earning money and losing benefits. Not only was it difficult for many parents and self-advocates, it was reported that some Service Coordinators did not have a good understanding of the benefit analysis process. Feedback in the 2015 Needs Assessment illuminated a clear need for benefit

planning, which may include additional training and supports for family members, self-advocates and Service Coordinators. Currently, the only source for benefits planning is through a contract Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has with Easter Seals of Nebraska. There are only a small number of professionals trained to perform benefits analysis, and many individuals are unaware of this service. Capacity building and greater access to the benefits planning service is desperately needed, especially since VR is now in an order of selection, resulting in a wait list for these services.

Throughout FFY19, Council staff continued to connect with key stakeholders across the state, continuing efforts to identify benefits planning services that are currently in place, as well as the barriers that individuals and families are facing to access these services. Council staff also raised concerns at regular HCBS stakeholder meetings about the inadequacy of these services. In 2019, an RFA was released for a Benefits Planning Training project. Unfortunately, the Council did not receive any subaward proposals to address this area.

8. Outputs Achieved

Expected Outputs	Achieved
<p>Within Council public comments, identify problem: Waiver eligible individuals who are working competitively risk losing their Medicaid eligibility and essential waiver services due to earned income if a disability benefits analysis and work incentive plan are not developed and implemented. Current service definitions and this waiver amendment do not provide access to essential disability benefits planning and assistance services. Recommend: Benefits planning should be added as a service in Nebraska, and adequately represented in the rate methodology to allow for reimbursement for this service.</p>	<p>true</p>

Expected Outputs	Achieved
<p>Within Council public comments, identify problem that career planning and disability benefits planning and assistance should be available in the prevocational period before referral to Nebraska VR is made, ensuring that the waiver eligible citizen is making informed choices about pursuing competitive employment. Stress that effective benefits planning services help individuals learn about their options to support their person centered services and goals.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>Within Council public comments, share that waiver eligible citizens have no timely access to career planning, job development, disability benefits planning and assistance, placement services, and ongoing supports. Recommend that Service definitions should be broadened to address these needs.</p>	<p>true</p>
<p>DHHS Division of Developmental Disabilities will address public comments when they submit DD waiver amendments to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Council Director will also share the public comments with Council members and members of the state's Governor's Developmental Disability Advisory Council. (Council Director is appointed to DD Advisory Council to represent DD Council.)</p>	<p>true</p>

10. The report should include the following: (a) A narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented toward achieving the objective, including how the identified strategy was used, how the activity was implemented, challenges to achieving the objective and unexpected benefits.(b) For system change activities, include a description of the stage of implementation (planning, initiation, implementation, outcome/fully integrated) of the system change initiative. (c) All narratives must describe what numbers make up the performance measures number for the activities being reported in the narrative.(d) A summary of evaluation activities to monitor progress and impact of council supported activities for the objective; data collected during the year, data sources, and data collection methods; (logic model and evaluation plan may be attached to the report).

In January 2019, the Council ED submitted public comment to DHHS' Division of Developmental Disabilities on the HCBS Adult Day Waiver and Comprehensive Waiver amendments. These comments reflect the need to address the barriers for adequate and efficient benefits planning services. The ED shared her public comments with Council members and with members of the state's Governor's Developmental Disability Advisory Council.

Within Council public comments, the ED identified the following problems:

- If a disability benefits analysis and work incentive plan are not developed and implemented, waiver eligible individuals in competitive employment risk losing their Medicaid eligibility, and essential waiver services, due to earned income. Current DD waiver service definitions and the proposed waiver amendment do not provide access to essential disability benefits planning and assistance services. The ED recommended that benefits planning should be added as a service in Nebraska and adequately represented in the rate methodology to allow reimbursement for this service.

- Career planning and disability benefits planning and assistance should be available in the prevocational period before referral to Nebraska VR is made. This would ensure that the waiver eligible citizen is making informed choices about pursuing competitive employment. The ED's comments stressed that effective benefits planning services help individuals learn about their options to support their person centered services and goals.
- Waiver eligible citizens have no timely access to career planning, job development, disability benefits planning and assistance, placement services, or ongoing supports. The ED recommended that the DD waiver service definitions be broadened to address these needs.

12. Expected Outcomes Achieved

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
Executive Director public comments to DHHS' Division of Developmental Disabilities on the HCBS adult day waiver and the comprehensive waiver amendments become part of public record that is also shared with CMS. This leverages pressure on state DD Division and Nebraska VR to address identified problems.	true
Potential changes to the DHHS DD waiver amendments, or Council Director recommendations implemented.	

13. Progress towards achieving outcomes for overall objective : The annual report should include an assessment as to the extent to which progress was made on the intended outcomes for the objective.

The ED's public comments to DHHS' Division of Developmental Disabilities on the HCBS Adult Day Waiver and the Comprehensive Waiver amendments became part of public record that was shared with CMS. This leveraged pressure on state DD Division and Nebraska VR to address the identified barriers to benefits planning services.

At this time, there have not been any potential changes to the DHHS DD waiver amendments addressing the Council ED's benefits planning service recommendations. The Council will continue exploring avenues to address this challenge.

14. Additionally, include stories of culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities whose lives are better because of Council work on this activity (e.g., became better advocates for themselves and others, became more connected to the community). Stories of policy or legislative changes that happened as a result of Council individual advocacy work that are likely to positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities or that will prevent a potential negative impact (e.g., created deleted, refined programs and/or legislation, reallocated use of funds, organizational systems change as a result of evidence based practices).

No stories to report in 2019.

Individual & Family Advocacy Performance Measure

Description

Improve Employment

Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	#	%
White, alone	0	
Black or African American alone	0	
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0	
Hispanic/Latino	0	
Asian alone	0	
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander alone	0	
Two or more races	0	
Race unknown	0	

Gender

Gender	#	%
Female	5	41.67
Male	7	58.33
Other	0	0

Category

Category	#	%
Individual with DD	11	84.62
Family Member	2	15.38

Geographical

Geographical	#	%
Urban	8	29.63
Rural	19	70.37

I. Output Measures

Objective	Performance Measure : IFA 1.1 People with DD who participated in activities	Performance Measure : IFA 1.2 Family members who participated in activities
<p>Objective A. Provide support to address barriers, advocate for, and expand opportunities for an increased number of individuals to participate in community integrated employment or entrepreneurship.*</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Objective B. Increase opportunities for self-advocates to share employment experiences and promote community integrated employment and entrepreneurship with peers and stakeholders.*</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0</p>
<p>Objective C. Provide access to benefits planning services for an increased number of service providers, individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities and their families to support the person's employment choices.*</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0</p>

Objective	Performance Measure : IFA 1.1 People with DD who participated in activities	Performance Measure : IFA 1.2 Family members who participated in activities
Total # of Output Respondents	11	2

II. Outcome Measures

Performance Measures	Percent (%)
IFA 2.1 Percent of people with DD who increased advocacy	11
IFA 2.2 Percent of family members who increased advocacy	1

Sub-Outcome Measures : The number (#) of people who are better able to say what they want/say what is important to them

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Objective A. Provide support to address barriers, advocate for, and expand opportunities for an increased number of individuals to participate in community integrated employment or entrepreneurship.*	11	1

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Objective B. Increase opportunities for self-advocates to share employment experiences and promote community integrated employment and entrepreneurship with peers and stakeholders.*	0	0
Objective C. Provide access to benefits planning services for an increased number of service providers, individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities and their families to support the person's employment choices.*	0	0
Total # of Sub-Outcome Respondents	11	1
IFA 2.3 Percent of people better able to say what they need	100	50

Sub-Outcome Measures : The number (#) of people who are participating in advocacy activities

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Objective A. Provide support to address barriers, advocate for, and expand opportunities for an increased number of individuals to participate in community integrated employment or entrepreneurship.*	6	0
Objective B. Increase opportunities for self-advocates to share employment experiences and promote community integrated employment and entrepreneurship with peers and stakeholders.*	0	0
Objective C. Provide access to benefits planning services for an increased number of service providers, individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities and their families to support the person's employment choices.*	0	0
Total # of Sub-Outcome Respondents	6	0

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
IFA 2.4 Percent of people participating in advocacy activities	55.00000000000001	0

Sub-Outcome Measures : The number (#) of people who are on cross disability coalitions, policy boards, advisory boards, governing bodies and/or serving in leadership positions.

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Objective A. Provide support to address barriers, advocate for, and expand opportunities for an increased number of individuals to participate in community integrated employment or entrepreneurship.*	6	0
Objective B. Increase opportunities for self-advocates to share employment experiences and promote community integrated employment and entrepreneurship with peers and stakeholders.*	0	0

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Objective C. Provide access to benefits planning services for an increased number of service providers, individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities and their families to support the person's employment choices.*	0	0
Total # of Sub-Outcome Respondents	6	0
IFA 2.5 Percent of people on cross disability coalitions	55.00000000000001	0

IFA 3 The percent of people satisfied with a project activity*

97

IFA 3.1 Percent of people with DD satisfied with activity*

100

IFA 3.2 Percent of family members satisfied with activity*

50

System Change Performance Measures

Description

Improve Employment

SC 1: Output Measures - The number of Council efforts to transform fragmented approaches into a coordinated and effective system that assures individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of and have access to needed community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life.

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
Objective A. Provide support to address barriers, advocate for, and expand opportunities for an increased number of individuals to participate in community integrated employment or entrepreneurship.	1	0	1	2	0	0	2	16	1

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
Objective B. Increase opportunities for self-advocates to share employment experiences and promote community integrated employment and entrepreneurship with peers and stakeholders.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
Objective C. Provide access to benefits planning services for an increased number of service providers, individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities and their families to support the person's employment choices.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Systems Change SC 2: Outcome Measures

Outcome Measures	Number(#)
SC 2.1 - Efforts that led to improvements *	1

Outcome Measures	Number(#)
SC 2.2 - Efforts that were implemented *	1

Sub-Outcome Measures

Objective	SC 2.1.1 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation improvements	SC 2.1.2 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation implemented	SC 2.1.3 Number of improved promising or best practices	SC 2.1.4 Number of implemented promising or best practices
Objective A. Provide support to address barriers, advocate for, and expand opportunities for an increased number of individuals to participate in community integrated employment or entrepreneurship.	1	1	1	1

Objective	SC 2.1.1 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation improvements	SC 2.1.2 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation implemented	SC 2.1.3 Number of improved promising or best practices	SC 2.1.4 Number of implemented promising or best practices
<p>Objective B. Increase opportunities for self-advocates to share employment experiences and promote community integrated employment and entrepreneurship with peers and stakeholders.</p>	0	0	0	0
<p>Objective C. Provide access to benefits planning services for an increased number of service providers, individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities and their families to support the person's employment choices.</p>	0	0	0	0

Detailed Progress Report on Goals

Description

Community Inclusion

Area Of Emphasis

Area of Emphasis	Planned for this goal	Areas addressed
Quality Assurance	false	true
Education and Early Intervention	true	true
Child Care	true	
Health	true	true
Employment	true	true
Housing	true	true
Transportation	true	true
Recreation	true	false
Formal and Informal Community Supports	true	true

Strategies

Strategies	Planned for this goal	Strategies Used
Outreach	true	true
Training	true	true
Technical Assistance	true	true
Supporting and Educating Communities	true	true
Interagency Collaboration and Coordination	true	true
Coordination with Related Councils, Committees and Programs	true	true
Barrier Elimination		
Systems Design and Redesign		true
Coalition Development and Citizen Participation	true	true
Informing Policymakers	true	true
Demonstration of New Approaches to Services and Support		
Other Activities	true	true

3. Intermediaries/Collaborators

Collaborators	Planned for this goal	Actual
State Protection and Advocacy System	true	true
University Center(s)	true	true
State DD agency	true	true
Nebraska Respite Network	true	true
Nebraska disability advocacy organizations, such as The Arc of NE, local Arc chapters, Autism Society of Nebraska, Autism Family Network, etc.	true	true
Community or non-profit organizations	true	true
Disability Services Stakeholder Olmstead Planning Advisory Council	true	true
Child care coalitions	true	

Provide an overall cohesive description of (a) the extent to which progress is being made in achieving the intended outcomes of the Goal for the reporting year, (b) the extent to which each goal was or was not achieved for the reporting year, (c) where applicable, factors that impeded goal achievement for the reporting year, (c) needs that require substantive state plan amendment (goal only)

Tremendous work has gone into this goal, primarily on the Nebraska Olmstead Plan. In 2018, the Council provided \$127,000 to bring national consultants from the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) to assist the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to write and complete the plan. The Council ED maintains her seat on the Olmstead Planning Advisory Council. In 2019, she provided testimony at the legislative public hearing in support of proposed legislation to include additional agencies in the Plan's scope.

The subaward with Disability Rights Nebraska for the Inclusive Education Lay Advocacy project concluded. This project began in 2017 but was delayed after the project director resigned shortly after funds were awarded. The new project director requested additional time to complete the project. Listening sessions held in a rural cluster community in central Nebraska were well-attended.

The Council contracted with N&R Publications to create a newspaper insert that was published in local papers across the state. The insert brought awareness of the work of the Council and highlighted five individuals with developmental disabilities or their families through stories reflecting inclusion, advocacy, and self-advocacy in a variety of settings.

The FFY2017-18 Respite Task Force project with the Munroe-Meyer Institute (Nebraska's UCEDD) provided key recommendations for improving the state's respite program. The Program Coordinator for the Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network presented an update on changes as a result of the recommendations to the Council at a 2019 quarterly meeting.

4 Year Overview : A description of how the Council will use and build from knowledge gained and progress made to move forward in the next state plan cycle.(This section only applies to the PPR submitted for the Federal Fiscal Year 2020, which will be due by January 1, 2021)

5 Year Overview : For the final PPR of this state plan cycle, provide an overall analysis of the outcomes achieved during the five year state plan cycle. The description should include the extent to which diverse stakeholders are satisfied with council activities that promote self-determination and community participation for individuals with disabilities and families, results of other types of information gathering such as focus groups, surveys, or other feedback or input methods with individuals with developmental disabilities and families and major accomplishments and factors impeding goal achievement (if applicable).(This section only applies to the PPR submitted for the Federal Fiscal Year 2021, which will be due by January 1, 2022)

Objectives

1. Objective A. Increase opportunities for community inclusion for individuals with I/DD.

1. **Goal:** Community Inclusion

2. **State Plan Objective** Objective 1

3. **This Objective is**

Individual & Family Advocacy

4. **This Objective is**

Ongoing

5. This Objective is

	The Objective is
a. Fulfilling a Self-Advocacy DD Requirement *	No
b. Targeted disparity *	No
c. DD Network Collaboration *	No
d. A demonstration project of New Approaches to Services and Supports *	No
e. A demonstration of projects or activities *	No

6. Stage of Implementation

Implementation

7. Provide an overall description of this effort

The Council provided significant funding to bring the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) consultants to Nebraska to create the state's Olmstead Plan. The Council ED continued her role on the Olmstead Planning Advisory Council to ensure the plan is comprehensive. A legislative bill was introduced regarding the Olmstead Plan, and TAC consultants made progress on a plan to be submitted to the Nebraska Legislature.

The subaward with Disability Rights Nebraska which began in 2017 continued into 2019 after the project coordinator resigned, leaving the project in limbo until a new project director was hired. The delayed start to the project required a no-cost extension in order to complete the training requirements.

A new project was the creation of an 8-page publication/public relations piece featuring stories that highlight the Council and the values of the DD Act, especially community integration and inclusion in all facets of community life. The insert was placed in newspapers across the state, and the Council will own the "evergreen" digital version. The Council contracted with N&R Publishing to create this publication.

8. Outputs Achieved

Expected Outputs	Achieved
<p>Disability Rights Nebraska will develop an awareness campaign to promote inclusive education. Conduct four "Inclusive Education Listening Sessions" in Kearney to recruit interested families and citizens to become lay advocates. Continue working with two appointed parents in Kearney area to help develop process.</p>	<p>true</p>

Expected Outputs	Achieved
<p>Disability Rights Nebraska will recruit and train concerned citizens to become effective lay advocates for students with disabilities and their families. On-going technical assistance will be provided to lay advocates.</p>	
<p>Phase One of Nebraska Olmstead Plan: TAC will perform a system scan and analysis to develop a general baseline of the services, housing and other factors that support the ability of people with disabilities to live in integrated community-based settings.</p>	true
<p>Phase Two of Nebraska Olmstead Plan: TAC will meet onsite with state agency leadership and the Olmstead Advisory Committee, and conduct key stakeholder interviews.</p>	true
<p>Phase Three of Nebraska Olmstead Plan: TAC will draft and finalize the Nebraska Olmstead Plan by June 30, 2019.</p>	true
<p>Olmstead Plan legislation proposed in 2019 will pass into state statute, requiring the various state departments to collaborate and develop Nebraska's Olmstead Plan.</p>	true
<p>Legislative action in 2019 that mandates the cooperation and contributions from all levels of State government to develop and implement the strategic and comprehensive Olmstead Plan.</p>	true
<p>One Olmstead Plan opinion editorial submitted and printed either in the Lincoln Journal Star or the Omaha World Herald.</p>	true

Expected Outputs	Achieved
Policy Brief “The Need for a Comprehensive Olmstead Plan in Nebraska” will be developed for NCCD (Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities) to distribute to senators and their staff early in Legislative Session 2019.	true
One 8-page publication/public relations piece will be developed to be distributed statewide.	true
The 8-page publication/public relations insert will be placed in 10 newspapers across the state.	true

10. The report should include the following: (a) A narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented toward achieving the objective, including how the identified strategy was used, how the activity was implemented, challenges to achieving the objective and unexpected benefits.(b) For system change activities, include a description of the stage of implementation (planning, initiation, implementation, outcome/fully integrated) of the system change initiative. (c) All narratives must describe what numbers make up the performance measures number for the activities being reported in the narrative.(d) A summary of evaluation activities to monitor progress and impact of council supported activities for the objective; data collected during the year, data sources, and data collection methods; (logic model and evaluation plan may be attached to the report).

Nebraska Olmstead Plan

In May 2018, the Council approved entering into an agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to provide \$127,000 of FFY17 funding to hire Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) to develop the state Olmstead Plan. In 2016, the Nebraska Legislature passed LB1033, which required DHHS to perform specific tasks to develop a comprehensive strategic Olmstead Plan by 12/

15/18. However, the legislature failed to allocate funding to hire a subject matter expert to provide technical assistance in writing the plan. Council members were concerned with the stalled efforts, especially since the deadline was quickly approaching. They decided that utilizing Council funds on the TAC contract furthered progress on the Community Inclusion State Plan Goal since a completed Olmstead Plan would ultimately increase community inclusion for people of all disabilities.

DHHS entered into a contract with TAC for 7/18/18 – 12/31/18. TAC began the critical work within Phase 1 of their timeline to perform a system scan & analysis to develop a general baseline of the services, housing & other factors that support the ability of people with disabilities to live in integrated, community-based settings. TAC also began Phase 2, to meet onsite with state agency leadership & the Olmstead Advisory Committee, in addition to conducting key stakeholder interviews & town hall listening sessions. The Council ED is an appointed member of the Olmstead Advisory Committee & stayed abreast of TAC's efforts by attending the on-going Olmstead committee meetings. She was also involved in TAC's Olmstead stakeholder feedback & listening sessions & she organized a conference call with members from NCCD (Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities) in late September 2018 to provide the TAC consultants with further input.

The completed Olmstead Plan was to be delivered to the legislature & Governor by 12/15/18. A variety of reasons resulted in DHHS not being able to submit a completed Olmstead Plan by this date. However, DHHS did submit a detailed report to the legislature & Governor on the progress that had been accomplished, which included recommendations for additional steps needed in order for Nebraska to secure a final Olmstead Plan. Within this report, Bo Botelho, then Interim Chief Executive Officer of DHHS, stated: "It is the ethical and legal responsibility of all levels of government, throughout Nebraska, to develop & commit to an Olmstead Plan."

The TAC contract timeline was very aggressive to meet the 12/31/18 deadline of a completed comprehensive Plan. It required TAC to analyze current state services, engage stakeholders, include plan components that would cover all disability populations & assess & provide strategies in key areas that are necessary to support an individual with a disability to live in the most integrated setting. These areas included improving & maintaining self-directed, long-term & attendant care; affordable & safe housing; transportation; employment & training; education; health & mental health services; accessible & universally-designed technology; & support for families. The lack of sufficient time was a factor in TAC not being able to complete the Olmstead Plan process, as noted in the December 2018 DHHS report.

As a result, DHHS extended TAC's contract through 3/25/19, the maximum duration allowed by state statute, to continue the Olmstead Plan development. At that time, TAC provided a guidance document containing recommended components to include in a Nebraska Olmstead Plan. This document was intended to serve as a draft framework for an Olmstead Plan, not the final Olmstead Plan. As noted in the December 2018 DHHS report, TAC provided a proposal recommending a new \$37,200 contract that would allow an additional 90 days to provide Nebraska with a complete Olmstead Plan.

In response, disability advocates reached out to Senator Lynn Walz about the need for strengthened Olmstead legislation. As a result, Senator Walz introduced LB570 & Nebraska legislators voted for the bill. The bill increased the number of agencies on the Olmstead Steering Group, extended the completion date of the Olmstead Plan to 12/15/19 & required DHHS to use an independent consultant (TAC) to assist with its continued analysis & revision of the Olmstead Plan. Unlike previous legislative efforts, LB570 included a fiscal note with state funding to support the process.

Disability advocates were focused on educating & informing Senators about the need for this legislation. For example, the NCCD developed & distributed the policy brief "The Need for a Comprehensive Olmstead Plan in Nebraska" to senators & their staff at the 3/19/19 Common Grounds event. The DD Network Partners were also active in educating & informing state senators about the importance of passing this legislation & were involved throughout the Olmstead Plan development process. Representatives from the P&A & DD Council served on the Olmstead Advisory Committee; the UCEDD CEO serves on the Olmstead Steering Group.

LB570 was signed into law by Governor Ricketts on 5/17/19. Disability Rights Nebraska (P&A) released a press release on 5/21/19 regarding the Olmstead Plan development & highlighted the collaboration that the DD Network Partners invested to further the process. This news release is posted on the P&A website & the Council website. It was also submitted to the Lincoln Journal Star & the Omaha World Herald newspapers.

[Power of Inclusion Publication](#)

At the November 2018 Council meeting, the Council ED reported that she attended the NACDD Executive Director's Leadership Summit in October 2018, where training & discussion focused on improving Council messaging strategies. At the ED Summit, N&R Publications from California shared a presentation about a collaborative developmental disability marketing publication project in California. She shared a copy of this publication piece entitled Meet Me with Council members and explained N&R's journalistic approach to messaging to engage people without IDD to understand what issues are being dealt with in the IDD community. The Meet Me insert was used to highlight inclusion, living arrangements, competitive employment, etc. She suggested that the Council could contract with N&R to develop a similar product. N&R staff would come to Nebraska to conduct a two-hour interview with a diverse group of cross-disability individuals to develop a storyboard highlighting different stories that would reflect inclusion, advocacy & self-advocacy in a variety of settings. The publication could also highlight the Council's financial support towards developing Nebraska's Olmstead Plan. This publication would be a good way to promote what the Council does, the work we've done & the lives we've impacted. The Council liked the idea & voted to set aside \$47,000 to contract with N&R to produce a publication highlighting the Nebraska Council & the values of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance Act.

N&R Publications handled the logistics for the multi-step project which culminated with distribution involving printing, delivery & inserting 151,300 copies into 10 newspapers across Nebraska. The 8-page publication highlighted the importance of inclusion & integration in all facets of community life & featured stories of some Council members & partners who are demonstrating the power of inclusion. Copies of the publication were inserted into the following Nebraska newspapers the week of 7/25/19: Omaha World-Herald, Lincoln Journal Star, Columbus Telegram, Fremont Tribune, Grand Island Independent, Kearney Hub, McCook Daily Gazette, Norfolk Daily News, North Platte Telegraph & the Scottsbluff Star-Herald. An additional 5,000 hard copies of the insert were provided to the Council, numerous stakeholders, state senators, members of other disability related committees & advisory groups & with communities where Council members reside. The Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities serves on the Council; she distributed many of the hard copies of the publication on her September 2019 statewide tour, which included sharing them with DD service offices across the state & with stakeholders who attended town hall meetings. The Council shared the electronic version on our website, through email blasts, on social media & through platforms that our partners utilize as a powerful outreach tool. https://issuu.com/news_review/docs/npccd_062719?fr=xKAE9_zU1NQ

Disability Rights Nebraska

The project with Disability Rights Nebraska was funded to recruit & train concerned citizens to become lay advocates for students & their families. Once trained, the lay advocates would be paired with families to provide educational advocacy for students with disabilities. Parents, self-advocates & other concerned citizens would be empowered to master information & negotiate systems so that students with disabilities can become full members of their school communities.

Approximately 90 families attended the 5 listening sessions that were held in Kearney, a rural cluster community in central Nebraska. Through these listening sessions, the subrecipient came to understand the degree of resistance to children with IDD to accessing the general curriculum in their schools. The idea that these children will simply go to group homes & day programs is very strong. Often, educators see no need for these students to have exposure to the same knowledge expected of others in our society.

The training of lay advocates did not occur during this subaward. However, the curriculum, based on the Georgia model for inclusive advocacy, is being developed & modified with the Georgia developer, Leslie Lipson, serving as a consultant. A trial run of the training curriculum was held in Lincoln in late August; a training was to be scheduled for mid-October in Kearney where so far 3 individuals who attended the listening sessions have stated they will attend the training.

12. Expected Outcomes Achieved

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
<p>The Inclusive Lay Advocacy project will provide education that empowers advocates and families to master information, understand and enforce legal rights, negotiate systems, and effectively advocate to secure inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities in the Kearney Public School System. Trained lay advocates will attend IEP meetings with families to advocate for inclusive education settings.</p>	false
<p>An increased number of special education students within the Kearney Public School system will have increased access to inclusive education rather than receiving educational services in a segregated environment.</p>	
<p>TAC will draft and finalize the Nebraska Olmstead Plan.</p>	
<p>New Olmstead Plan legislation passes in 2019 to ensure that all levels of State government develop and implement a strategic and comprehensive Olmstead Plan.</p>	true
<p>The 8-page publication/public relations piece will feature powerful stories that illustrate the Council's impact. The insert will serve as an engaging publication that helps the Council promote inclusion awareness, while educating Nebraska about the State Council and its mission in advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change efforts.</p>	true

13. Progress towards achieving outcomes for overall objective : The annual report should include an assessment as to the extent to which progress was made on the intended outcomes for the objective.

Many projects and activities have moved the Council closer to reaching this goal.

FFY2016-17:

- Funding was provided to the Autistic Women’s Network for the What Every Autistic Girl Wishes her Parent Knew anthology. This book was written by women on the autism spectrum. It is available online.
- Break Through Inc. wrapped up their “Last One Picked, So What?” program to elementary, middle, and high school students, educators, administrators and staff in rural cluster communities throughout Nebraska.
- Funding was provided to Disability Rights Nebraska to begin the Inclusive Education Lay Advocacy project.

FFY2017-18

- Break Through Inc. made “Let’s Make a Difference” presentations to elementary, middle, and high school students, educators, administrators and staff in rural cluster communities throughout Nebraska.
- Disability Rights Nebraska continued their Inclusive Education Lay Advocacy project.
- The Council approved funds to be used by DHHS to contract with the Technical Assistance Collaborative to develop the Nebraska Olmstead Plan.

FFY2018-19

- Disability Rights Nebraska completed their Inclusive Education Lay Advocacy project. The Council voted to approve funds to continue this project in FFY2020.
- The Council contracted with N&R Publications on a newspaper insert that was included in 10 newspapers across the state.
- Work continues on the Nebraska Olmstead Plan

Nebraska Olmstead Plan

Unfortunately, TAC didn't have sufficient time to complete a comprehensive Olmstead Plan by 12/15/18 as initially anticipated within Phase 3 of the DHHS contract timeline. In order to continue Olmstead Plan development efforts, DHHS amended the TAC contract through 3/31/19, the maximum time allowed by state law, to continue their work. Yet as noted above, this still wasn't sufficient for TAC to complete a comprehensive, cross-disability Olmstead Plan.

As TAC proceeded with DHHS in developing the Plan, it became clear that DHHS could not provide a comprehensive Olmstead Plan without additional partners. In response, Nebraska legislators voted to pass LB570, which expanded the scope of agencies to be part of the Olmstead Steering Group, extended the completion date of the Plan to 12/15/19, and required DHHS to use an independent consultant to assist with its continued analysis and revision.

The legislative support for an Olmstead Plan underscores Nebraska's commitment to ensuring that citizens with disabilities have opportunities to live as fully integrated members of their communities. In addition, implementing a comprehensive, effective Plan will keep the state accountable to complying with the letter and spirit of the Olmstead decision and the ADA.

Power of Inclusion Publication

The "Power of Inclusion" 8-page publication/public relations piece featured powerful stories that illustrate the Council's impact. The insert served as an engaging publication that helped the Council promote inclusion awareness, while educating Nebraska about the State Council and its mission in advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change efforts. The Council is really proud of the publication and the messaging it shares to Nebraskan citizens who may not be familiar with the Council and the important advocacy and developmental disability systems change work we facilitate. More importantly, we are confident that the insert will encourage citizens to support inclusion for people who experience developmental disabilities in their communities.

Lay Advocacy Inclusive Education

Several themes and concerns that were noted from the listening sessions:

Concerns about the IEP meeting

- Placement is predetermined. The IEP document is completed prior to the meeting and parents have to essentially plead their case to get it changed
- Surrounded by professionals-parents feel isolated and overpowered. They are given the impression that teachers know what is best for the child, parents know nothing
- Teams make life skills sound so good that parents begin to question if what they want for their child is in the child's best interest.
- "The IEP meeting is quite a fight"
- If a parent comes to the meeting with an advocate, the school often agrees to the request, if the parent is alone the answer is generally "no"
- Inclusion helps to get academic goals written

Concerns about Implementation

- Additional services are provided on a consultation basis, i.e. OT or PT. The therapist meets with the Special Education teacher once or twice a year to offer recommendations for the student. They never work directly with the student and the teacher, then, may or may not implement the recommendations effectively.
- Parents can advocate and get students included in regular classes but they may be placed in just the extra classes and not general curricular classes, or they may be isolated in a general class with the only interaction being with the para.
- Any behaviors displayed in regular classrooms leads to being placed back in Special Education rooms.
- Staying on top of the developed IEP is a full time job. If the parent stays on top of what the school is doing, shows up to observe, asks questions, then things happen. If not, the student implementation is isolated.

Concerns about Life Skills

- Live skills program is promoted as “better fit” for the child-it is more geared to their needs than general education classes
- IEP goals tend to stay the same year after year when students are in life skills class, expectations are very low
- In life skills class para’s are not around to help as much. Usually a teacher and 3 paras in the class to assist all students. 1-1 para not enforced.
- Once in life skills class it is very difficult to get out
- Students in Life Skills class are not included with peers in the student directory. They are listed in the back under the life skills program. (Directories are used by families to invite classmates to parties and play dates-life skills kids are not recognized as a member of the age group class.

Tactics for the meeting

- Parent makes a list of all the questions she might have, then makes a list of all the anticipated answers. She spends 3-4 hours researching what might be possible and develops rebuttals to the anticipated answers.
- Families are more confident when they have an ally at the meeting-have used an advocate from the Down Syndrome Association

What is needed

- Teachers don’t have the supports to adapt for inclusive classroom instruction. Parents are told there are no resources.
- Need more resource-support for learning
- Schools need to be educated-Parents don’t know and schools don’t know either

- It takes a principal who is committed to inclusion for it to work. The best schools have a lot of support from the principal.

General concerns

- Schools try to include some students but as a student ages they are pulled out more and more. Secondary school just offer life skills for the most part.
- Pre-school was a typical placement with non-disabled peers, however, bad experience in kindergarten, son was tied to a chair so he couldn't freely move about the room. In elementary school asked for inclusion, student was placed in a class specifically for "higher functioning" students on IEPs.
- In high school, segregation is the norm.
- After school program call Cat Pals but it is mostly for students with social disabilities. Children with intellectual disabilities are not offered that program.
- Have seen good things happen with peers stepping up. But classroom teachers leave it to the para to adapt the lessons
- Special Education teachers stay in the life skills room. Don't go with students who are included to regular classrooms. Have not observed the practice of co-teaching
- Low expectations for what life will be like when students become adults
- Behavior issues make inclusion more difficult to advocate for and attain
- Schools response to behaviors is often more drastic then with typical peers
- Difficulty starts in Kindergarten-Parents told "no" he is in special education

14. Additionally, include stories of culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities whose lives are better because of Council work on this activity (e.g., became better advocates for themselves and others, became more connected to the community). Stories of policy or legislative changes that happened as a result of Council individual advocacy work that are likely to positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities or that will prevent a potential negative impact (e.g., created deleted, refined programs and/or legislation, reallocated use of funds, organizational systems change as a result of evidence based practices).

This is a story that was shared by a parent, one of the work group members, that also appeared on the Disability Rights Nebraska Blog post.

My son, Toby, is 12 years old and happens to have Down syndrome. Three years ago, I decided to get him involved in sports activities with his typical peers. I chose flag football at the local YMCA since their philosophy is "...to provide a wholesome, values-oriented atmosphere where all children are given the opportunity to play! The purpose of YMCA Youth Sports is not only to teach sports skills effectively and in a fun way, but also to teach life skills – helping children today to become more effective adults tomorrow. We emphasize character development as much as physical development." This seemed like a perfect fit! During the past 3 years, Toby may not have become the best football player, but he has had so much fun, learned some sports skills, but most importantly, he has learned what it feels like to be a part of a team! Toby spent the first years of his life neglected and abused in an orphanage in Ukraine, so feeling a part of something is foreign to him. He loves to be like his peers and feel included in what they are doing. Toby currently attends a school where he is fully included and most of his teammates are his peers from school, so they "get him". It has been a great experience for him. Every season, Toby has been given more playing time and felt more a part of the team, until this past season. I understand that as he gets older, the competitiveness increases, but again, that is why I chose to keep him playing at the YMCA, where "all children are given an opportunity to play". Unfortunately, each game, Toby got less playing time. What concerned me the most was the lesson that his teammates were learning. Was Toby really a valuable member of their team or was he just there for his token "Toby Play" at the end of the game? (The "Toby Play" was the last play of most games where Toby was given the ball and escorted into the end zone by his teammates. His "touchdown" was followed by his touchdown dance with him and all his teammates.) Don't get me wrong, I appreciated

their efforts to allow him to feel he contributed to the team, but felt he deserved, and was capable of, participating in more than one play per game. As the season progressed, his time on the field decreased more and more. This led to him being bored on the sidelines, which caused more behavior problems. I never said anything because I didn't want to be "THAT MOM", but each game I watched him sit out, it hurt my heart more and more. The last straw was the first tournament game. Toby was so excited! As always, on the way to the game, we went over appropriate behavior and how important it was to listen to his coaches. As soon as we got to the field, he ran excitedly over to his teammates on the sidelines, eagerly awaiting the game to begin. However, his chance to play never came, despite the fact that whenever the coach looked to the sidelines to put new players in, one specific teammate kept pointing to Toby...he sat the whole game out. I left the game feeling defeated, despite the score. I tried to hold in my tears, but when we got in the car and Toby started signing, "Sorry" over and over, I couldn't hold them in any longer. My son believed that he hadn't been able to play because he had done something wrong! I couldn't remain silent any longer! That night, I wrote and rewrote sample emails in my mind. Then, I finally sent one to the coach expressing my feelings about the season and this game in particular. I understand that it takes more work, time and patience to include my son. I realize that it is probably easier to leave him on the sidelines, but doing what is right isn't always easy, in fact, it rarely is. All Toby wants is to be like his peers and to feel included. The more he is allowed to participate in similar activities, the easier it becomes to fully include him. So, I sent the email and waited several LONG days to receive a response. In fact, I ended up getting replies from both coaches. They both agreed that they had gotten caught up in the game and when they realized that they didn't get Toby in, they were "devastated" and felt they had failed him. The part that touched my heart the most, though, was when they shared that it was his TEAMMATES who made them aware of the fact that Toby didn't get to play. His peers NOTICED and stood up for him! So, while I had been feeling as if this season was detrimental to both my son and his teammates, it actually proved to teach ME a powerful lesson! It taught me that my son is surrounded by peers who care enough about him to notice when he isn't being treated fairly and aren't afraid to speak up for his rights. THIS is why I fight so hard for Inclusion. THIS is what it is all about! If only it wasn't so hard for adults to see it the way the children do...

2. Objective B. Expand and enhance respite care services throughout the state.

1. **Goal:** Community Inclusion

2. **State Plan Objective** Objective 2

3. **This Objective is**

System Change

4. **This Objective is**

Ongoing

5. **This Objective is**

	The Objective is
a. Fulfilling a Self-Advocacy DD Requirement *	No
b. Targeted disparity *	No
c. DD Network Collaboration *	No

	The Objective is
d. A demonstration project of New Approaches to Services and Supports *	No
e. A demonstration of projects or activities *	No

6. Stage of Implementation

Implementation

7. Provide an overall description of this effort

In FFY2018, the Council funded Munroe-Meyer Institute's (MMI) Eastern Respite Network Service Area to form a Respite Task Force to develop a framework to strengthen, support, and expand the Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network system. The final report provided an overview of respite programs in the state, addressed the identified gaps and barriers to the utilization of respite care services in Nebraska, and included recommendations and strategies to address the issues. A condensed two-page summary was created to share with Nebraska state senators and other policymakers. This summary included one key recommendation to increase the \$125 monthly Lifespan Respite Network subsidy rate in state regulations since the rate has not been increased since the program began in 1999. Administrative suggestions were also emphasized to improve efficiencies and streamline the requirements of the current billing system for providers to receive more timely payment for providing respite services. A link to the full report was posted on the Council webpage.

8. Outputs Achieved

Expected Outputs	Achieved
Potential next steps might include making changes to current Nebraska Lifespan Respite Subsidy state regulations to improve utilization.	true
State senators and other policymakers will receive information in the Respite Task Force final report or policy brief that can be used in future planning, policy, regulations, or state statute changes.	true
Administrative suggestions will be implemented in the state's Lifespan Respite Subsidy program to simplify the application and financial eligibility process.	true
Administrative suggestions will be implemented in the state's Lifespan Respite Subsidy program to improve the current billing system requirements to receive payment for providing respite services.	true

10. The report should include the following: (a) A narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented toward achieving the objective, including how the identified strategy was used, how the activity was implemented, challenges to achieving the objective and unexpected benefits.(b) For system change activities, include a description of the stage of implementation (planning, initiation, implementation, outcome/fully integrated) of the system change initiative. (c) All narratives must describe what numbers make up the performance measures number for the activities being reported in the narrative.(d) A summary of evaluation activities to monitor progress and impact of council supported activities for the objective; data collected during the year, data sources, and data collection methods; (logic model and evaluation plan may be attached to the report).

MMI's Respite Task Force project coordinator presented a condensed two-page summary of the final report findings during the November 2018 Respite Awareness Day at the Capitol with family members and policymakers. The final Respite Task Force Report was also printed and distributed to the 48 state senators and their staff during the 2019 Legislative session. The Respite Task Force report was shared with MMI's UCEDD Community Advisory Board members, and strategies were discussed on next steps to continue addressing some of the systemic issues identified in the report. The final report was also posted on the Council website for stakeholders.

The Respite Task Force project coordinator reported that the project appeared to have a positive impact since project activities initiated the dialogue on looking at the gaps and barriers to respite services in Nebraska for all individuals, especially those with behavioral health concerns. The Nebraska Division of Behavioral Health Systems of Care representatives/staff are opening up more dialogue on the needs of families who have loved ones with behavioral health needs and have been exploring avenues to offer additional respite services to this particular population.

The Respite Task Force final report was successful at influencing the administrator of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network to pursue potential policy regulations in 2019 to increase the utilization of respite care services throughout Nebraska. This key administrator referenced the Respite Task Force final report to initiate and implement some of

the key recommendations in 2019, including simplifying the application and financial eligibility process. Administrative suggestions were also implemented in the state's Lifespan Respite Subsidy program to improve the current billing system requirements to improve the time it takes for respite providers to receive payment for providing respite services.

12. Expected Outcomes Achieved

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
Respite Task Force final report will initiate follow up activities and/or the development of strategies and next steps to address challenges and barriers to utilizing respite services.	true
Changes as a result of the Respite Task Force final report will increase respite services utilization.	true

13. Progress towards achieving outcomes for overall objective : The annual report should include an assessment as to the extent to which progress was made on the intended outcomes for the objective.

The Council invited the DHHS Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network Administrator/Program Coordinator, Sharon Johnson, to the August 16 Council meeting to present updates that have occurred to the program based on the recommendations from the Respite Task Force's 2019 Final Report. The following is taken from the Council meeting minutes:

Sharon advised the Council that several recommendations from the Task Force have either been implemented or are in the process of being implemented, and there are a couple that they have not been able to put into place. [For reference, she is referring to respite within the Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network.] Within Nebraska, there is a range of ways for families to receive funding for respite or receive respite services. Some resources are paid through government dollars and others are through volunteer resources. Lifespan Respite does include individuals of all ages and of all disabling conditions or special needs, including healthcare needs.

Title 464 is the regulation that impacts the Lifespan Respite Subsidy. This was a primary piece of DHHS' regulations that was troubling to many advocates and what they wanted to see changed. Regulations have been revised and sent to the Governor's Office. Some of the changes the Task Force recommended were incorporated into the regulation recommendations. A key recommendation was to increase the amount of the monthly subsidy to purchase respite services from \$125 per month to \$300 per month.

The Task Force recommended maintaining the current rate of \$1,000 for eligibility year for exceptional circumstances, which includes crisis respite. The requirements for individuals and/or families who are in rural areas have been loosened up, allowing more families to qualify for respite services.

On 8/16/19, Sharon learned that the Governor's office denied the \$300 monthly subsidy increase proposed in the Title 464 regulation updates. Any of the regulations that included financial increases were denied. She talked with a DHHS Deputy and was informed DHHS would continue to advocate for the increase. For now, she will have to redo the regulations and remove the \$300, the only change that was not approved. The understanding from the Governor's office is that once the volume of regulations has been through the Governor, she can go back and request an increase. In almost 20 years, the yearly Lifespan Respite Subsidy allocation of \$810,000 was never fully disbursed. There is a significant risk of losing these funds because they have not been fully utilized. The increase to \$300 would help to utilize the funds. The Fiscal Note that was submitted showed that even using the \$300 with the number of families, and even increasing the number of families that use \$300, would not exceed \$810,000. Funds not spent revert back to DHHS' General Funds.

Another recommendation from the Task Force was to simplify the application process. The application has been simplified to bare bones to determine if a loved one has a disability to qualify for the program. The application is now a five page document – three of the pages are instructions. If families have applied for any other DHHS program, they do not need to include any financial information.

The billing process continues to be a work in process. The billing document was updated, simplified, and tied to a single program. Local respite coordinators will assist families and providers to correct any billing issues. Electronic submission is encouraged to avoid payment delays. The goal is to have an online payment process ready to go by the end of December.

Sharon provided the Council with copies of the new Nebraska Family Caregiver Support – Lifespan Respite Network brochure, which was also a recommendation of the Task Force. Families and advocates still struggle with the term respite, both nationally and within Nebraska. Other words were looked at and it was decided to use Family Caregiver Support. The brochure incorporates information that is helpful to understand what respite is, information about helping families to identify as caregivers, information on how to use respite, and where to find a local coordinator.

As previously mentioned, the yearly Lifespan Respite Subsidy of \$810,000 has not been fully utilized. DHHS has decided that for this current fiscal year, rather than providing the local networks the traditional funding (a specific dollar amount), the funding is tied directly to the number of open cases of the Lifespan Respite Subsidy. The Northern, Central, and Southeast service areas have elected to not continue contracting with the Department. On behalf of the Department, a funding announcement went out and a number of other organizations were interested in contracting with the Department. In the Northern service area, DHHS will be contracting with Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health Department; with Southeast Public Health Department in the Southeast service area; and with Independence Rising in the Central service area. In addition, this year there will be additional contracts directly for respite activities with Wonderfully Made and SMILE. For this fiscal year, \$5,000 was carved out for each of the contracts with the clear expectation that direct respite activities, by either the local network or mini-granted out, be provided to have sustainable respite activities in the local networks.

The new website can be viewed at www.respite.ne.gov. There will be training with service coordinators to make sure service coordinators understand who could potentially be eligible for the Disabled Persons and Family Support Program while on the Developmental Disability waiver wait list.

14. Additionally, include stories of culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities whose lives are better because of Council work on this activity (e.g., became better advocates for themselves and others, became more connected to the community). Stories of policy or legislative changes that happened as a result of Council individual advocacy work that are likely to positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities or that will prevent a potential negative impact (e.g., created deleted, refined programs and/or legislation, reallocated use of funds, organizational systems change as a result of evidence based practices).

There was a mother/daughter team from Grand Island who cared for their spouse/dad. They had searched for respite and other types of assistance through their local office on aging, but were discouraged from using respite. Once they found the Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network, they were able to get the respite support they were seeking and wanted to be part of the Respite Task Force efforts. They were the authors of the Preface found in the final report.

3. Objective C. Expand and enhance inclusive childcare opportunities throughout the state.

1. Goal: Community Inclusion

2. State Plan Objective Objective 3

3. This Objective is

System Change

4. This Objective is

Completed

5. This Objective is

	The Objective is
a. Fulfilling a Self-Advocacy DD Requirement *	No
b. Targeted disparity *	No
c. DD Network Collaboration *	No
d. A demonstration project of New Approaches to Services and Supports *	No
e. A demonstration of projects or activities *	No

6. Stage of Implementation

Outcome/Fully Integrated

7. Provide an overall description of this effort

The Council voted to eliminate this objective at the May 2019 Council meeting.

8. Outputs Achieved

Expected Outputs	Achieved
This objective will not be addressed in the 2018-2019 fiscal year.	true

10. The report should include the following: (a) A narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented toward achieving the objective, including how the identified strategy was used, how the activity was implemented, challenges to achieving the objective and unexpected benefits.(b) For system change activities, include a description of the stage of implementation (planning, initiation, implementation, outcome/fully integrated) of the system change initiative. (c) All narratives must describe what numbers make up the performance measures number for the activities being reported in the narrative.(d) A summary of evaluation activities to monitor progress and impact of council supported activities for the objective; data collected during the year, data sources, and data collection methods; (logic model and evaluation plan may be attached to the report).

The Council voted to eliminate this objective at the May 2019 Council meeting.

12. Expected Outcomes Achieved

Expected Outcomes	Achieved
This objective will not be addressed in the 2018-2019 fiscal year.	

13. Progress towards achieving outcomes for overall objective : The annual report should include an assessment as to the extent to which progress was made on the intended outcomes for the objective.

The Council voted to eliminate this objective at the May 2019 Council meeting.

14. Additionally, include stories of culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities whose lives are better because of Council work on this activity (e.g., became better advocates for themselves and others, became more connected to the community). Stories of policy or legislative changes that happened as a result of Council individual advocacy work that are likely to positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities or that will prevent a potential negative impact (e.g., created deleted, refined programs and/or legislation, reallocated use of funds, organizational systems change as a result of evidence based practices).

The Council voted to eliminate this objective at the May 2019 Council meeting.

Individual & Family Advocacy Performance Measure

Description

Community Inclusion

Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	#	%
White, alone	4	100
Black or African American alone	0	0
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0	0
Hispanic/Latino	0	0

Race/Ethnicity	#	%
Asian alone	0	0
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander alone	0	0
Two or more races	0	0
Race unknown	0	0

Gender

Gender	#	%
Female	4	100
Male	0	0
Other	0	0

Category

Category	#	%
Individual with DD	1	25
Family Member	3	75

Geographical

Geographical	#	%
Urban	3	75
Rural	1	25

I. Output Measures

Objective	Performance Measure : IFA 1.1 People with DD who participated in activities	Performance Measure : IFA 1.2 Family members who participated in activities
Objective A. Increase opportunities for community inclusion for individuals with I/DD.*	1	3
Objective B. Expand and enhance respite care services throughout the state.*	0	0
Objective C. Expand and enhance inclusive childcare opportunities throughout the state.*	0	0
Total # of Output Respondents	1	3

II. Outcome Measures

Performance Measures	Percent (%)
IFA 2.1 Percent of people with DD who increased advocacy	100
IFA 2.2 Percent of family members who increased advocacy	100

Sub-Outcome Measures : The number (#) of people who are better able to say what they want/say what is important to them

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Objective A. Increase opportunities for community inclusion for individuals with I/DD.*	1	3
Objective B. Expand and enhance respite care services throughout the state.*	0	0
Objective C. Expand and enhance inclusive childcare opportunities throughout the state.*	0	0
Total # of Sub-Outcome Respondents	1	3

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
IFA 2.3 Percent of people better able to say what they need	100	100

Sub-Outcome Measures : The number (#) of people who are participating in advocacy activities

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Objective A. Increase opportunities for community inclusion for individuals with I/DD.*	0	2
Objective B. Expand and enhance respite care services throughout the state.*	0	0
Objective C. Expand and enhance inclusive childcare opportunities throughout the state.*	0	0
Total # of Sub-Outcome Respondents	0	2
IFA 2.4 Percent of people participating in advocacy activities	0	67

Sub-Outcome Measures : The number (#) of people who are on cross disability coalitions, policy boards, advisory boards, governing bodies and/or serving in leadership positions.

Projects	# People with developmental disabilities	# Family Members
Objective A. Increase opportunities for community inclusion for individuals with I/DD.*	0	1
Objective B. Expand and enhance respite care services throughout the state.*	0	0
Objective C. Expand and enhance inclusive childcare opportunities throughout the state.*	0	0
Total # of Sub-Outcome Respondents	0	1
IFA 2.5 Percent of people on cross disability coalitions	0	33

IFA 3 The percent of people satisfied with a project activity*

100

IFA 3.1 Percent of people with DD satisfied with activity*

100

IFA 3.2 Percent of family members satisfied with activity*

100

System Change Performance Measures

Description

Community Inclusion

SC 1: Output Measures - The number of Council efforts to transform fragmented approaches into a coordinated and effective system that assures individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of and have access to needed community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life.

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
Objective A. Increase opportunities for community inclusion for individuals with I/DD.	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	12	1
Objective B. Expand and enhance respite care services throughout the state.	3	1	3	3	0	0	3	0	1

Objective	SC 1.1 Number of policy/ procedures created/ changed	SC 1.2 Number of statutes/ regulations created/ changed	SC 1.3.1 Number of promising practices created	SC 1.3.2 Number of promising practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3.3 Number of best practices created	SC 1.3.4 Number of best practices supported through Council activities	SC 1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices created and/or supported	SC 1.4 Number of people trained/ educated	SC 1.5 Number of Systems Change activities with other organizations
Objective C. Expand and enhance inclusive childcare opportunities throughout the state.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Systems Change SC 2: Outcome Measures

Outcome Measures	Number(#)
SC 2.1 - Efforts that led to improvements *	4
SC 2.2 - Efforts that were implemented *	4

Sub-Outcome Measures

Objective	SC 2.1.1 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation improvements	SC 2.1.2 Policy, procedure, statute, regulation implemented	SC 2.1.3 Number of improved promising or best practices	SC 2.1.4 Number of implemented promising or best practices
Objective A. Increase opportunities for community inclusion for individuals with I/DD.	1	1	1	0
Objective B. Expand and enhance respite care services throughout the state.	4	4	4	4
Objective C. Expand and enhance inclusive childcare opportunities throughout the state.	0	0	0	0

Section V: Council Financial Information

* - Required input

Council is its own DSA

No
Fiscal Information for Programmatic Purposes ONLY

1. Fiscal Year: *
2017

2. Reporting Period - Start*
10-01-16

2. Reporting Period - End*
09-30-18

3. Total Federal Fiscal Award for Reporting Year*
499452

4. State Funds Contributing to Council State Plan Activities*
0

5. Additional Council Funds Used for Other Activities*
0

6. Federal Share of Expenditures*
499452

7. Federal Share of Unliquidated Obligations*
0

8. Unobligated Balance of Federal Funds (=Total Federal Fiscal Year Award - Federal Share of expenditures - Federal Share of unliquidated obligations)*

0

9. Match Required*

132311.99

10. Match Met*

102409.2

11. Match Unmet*

29902.79

Fiscal Information for Programmatic Purposes ONLY

1. Fiscal Year: *

2018

2. Reporting Period - Start*

10-01-17

2. Reporting Period - End*

09-30-19

3. Total Federal Fiscal Award for Reporting Year*

507546

4. State Funds Contributing to Council State Plan Activities*

0

5. Additional Council Funds Used for Other Activities*

0

6. Federal Share of Expenditures*

429108.57

7. Federal Share of Unliquidated Obligations*

78437.43

8. Unobligated Balance of Federal Funds (=Total Federal Fiscal Year Award - Federal Share of expenditures - Federal Share of unliquidated obligations)*

0

9. Match Required*

93862.55

10. Match Met*

93862.55

11. Match Unmet*

0

Fiscal Information for Programmatic Purposes ONLY

1. Fiscal Year: *

2019

2. Reporting Period - Start*

10-01-18

2. Reporting Period - End*

09-30-20

3. Total Federal Fiscal Award for Reporting Year*

520325

4. State Funds Contributing to Council State Plan Activities*

0

5. Additional Council Funds Used for Other Activities*

0

6. Federal Share of Expenditures*

0

7. Federal Share of Unliquidated Obligations*

285743.1

8. Unobligated Balance of Federal Funds (=Total Federal Fiscal Year Award - Federal Share of expenditures - Federal Share of unliquidated obligations)*

234581.9

9. Match Required*

0

10. Match Met*

0

11. Match Unmet*

0

Dollars leveraged for the reporting year being reported* 52500

Dollars leveraged for the reporting year being reported* 52500

Section VI: Measures of Collaboration

* - Required input

Identify the critical issues/barriers affecting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in your State that the Council and the P&A, the Council and the UCEDD, the Council and other collaborators may have worked on during the reporting period

The Nebraska DD Network Partners have a rich history of collaboration and strong relationships. The DD Network Partners CEOs and staff engage in a variety of advocacy efforts and communicate regularly on trends, concerns, and challenges to collaborate to bring systems change and improvements to Nebraskans with I/DD.

Specific information related to Nebraska's DD Network Partners collaboration objective, under the Council's Advocacy goal, is provided in Section IV. This section highlights how the DD Network Partners, through membership in the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, a cross-disability coalition, leverages collaborative activities to identify and research public policy issues, educate policymakers and the general public, and advocate for effective solutions regarding Nebraskans with disabilities. Expected Objective Outcomes within the DD Network Partners collaboration objective C under Goal Two, Advocacy and Self-Advocacy, reflects a variety of robust efforts. Additional collaboration endeavors with our DD Network Partners are highlighted throughout the FFY 19 program performance report under other State Plan goal areas.

Collaboration is evident in Munroe-Meyer Institute's (MMI), the state's UCEDD, "Statewide Leadership Seminar Series" project reported under the Advocacy and Self-Determination goal outcomes. The "Statewide Leadership Seminar Series" program focuses on developing a new generation of self-advocates and family advocates to engage in systems change level work at the local, state, and national levels. MMI serves as the Project Manager for this continuation subaward. Presenters for this project included representatives from Disability Rights Nebraska, State Independent Living Council, The Arc of Nebraska, People First of Nebraska, ADAPT Nebraska Network, and the MMI. This project leverages Nebraska's disability advocacy partnerships to enrich the leadership training by including cross-disability perspectives.

During Nebraska's Legislative Session, the DD Network Partners collaborated to identify legislation that could impact individuals with I/DD, while taking opportunities to use a nonpartisan approach to educate and inform state Senators and other policymakers. This includes working together and sharing information on introduced bills to strengthen our voice. A major challenge is that the Nebraska Legislature only allows bills to be introduced in the first 10 days of the session. This means 700 to 800 bills are introduced in a very short period of time and must be reviewed, by the respective staff of the DD Network Partners, and a determination made as to the bills' relevance and impact to the I/DD community. By working

together, the DD Council, P&A, and UCEDD lessen the chance to miss bills that may impact the I/DD community and are able to share information on the potential impact prior to their respective Council/Boards taking positions on the bills. The DD Council also shares its legislative efforts with other state partners, including members of Special Education Advisory Council, the Brain Injury Advisory Council's Public Policy Committee, and the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities.

Throughout the 2019 Legislative Session, the DD Network collaborated on the following legislation:

- Support for LB15. It would create the Children of Nebraska Hearing Aid Act. The bill would require most health plans to cover expenses associated with hearing aids for Nebraskans younger than 19, including evaluation, fitting, programming, repairs and auditory rehabilitation and training. The bill passed and was signed by the Governor on May 29, 2019.
- Oppose for LB147. This bill would change the Student Discipline Act to provide for use by a teacher or administrator of necessary physical contact or physical restraint and provide procedures and grounds for removal from a class in response to student behavior. The legislation would authorize teachers to use physical force to discipline/restrain students. If passed, LB 147 could unintentionally put Nebraska students with and without disabilities at tremendous risk. As advocates in the I/DD community, our focus is preventing the use of physical force and restraints on students, especially those with I/DD. This bill progressed out of committee, and as a result of advocacy efforts, stalled. The DD Network Partners are prepared that the bill, in some form, will return during the 2020 Legislative Session.
- Support for LB 323. This bill would change the eligibility provisions under the Medical Assistance Act for certain disabled persons. It would ignore the applicant's unearned income, assets, and resources when determining eligibility. It caps the "buy-in" premium at 7.5% of the family's income. This legislation would help individuals with disabilities, who use Medicaid, keep their job, take a raise, or go to work without losing their Medicaid benefits. It would allow individuals to earn up to 2.5 times the Federal Poverty Rate (\$31,225 for a family of 1) without losing Medicaid; and assess a small premium for those at the top tier of earnings. The bill progressed out of committee to select file, and is anticipated to be brought back to the Legislative floor for a full vote during the 2020 Legislative Session.
- Support LB 570. This bill would change provisions of state statute 81-6,112 to establish a comprehensive Nebraska Olmstead Plan to meet the integration mandate under the Americans with Disabilities Act and pursuant to the U.S. Supreme Court's Olmstead v. L.C. decision. It would extend the due date of the plan to 12/15/19 and clarify the departments required to ensure a truly comprehensive plan. It would provide for the ongoing efforts of the Olmstead Advisory Committee and Steering Group and require updates every three years to ensure ongoing compliance with federal requirements. AM 470 revised language to include that the decision making representatives of the Departments of Correctional Services, Economic Development, Labor, Transportation, Veterans' Affairs, Education, the University of

Nebraska, and the Equal Opportunity Commission shall, with DHHS, develop a comprehensive Nebraska Olmstead Plan. Additional state agency representatives are specified as collaborators. LB 570A was an appropriations bill to provide funding to hire the contractor to complete the Nebraska Olmstead Plan. The bill passed and was approved by the Governor on May 17, 2019.

Another example of collaboration occurred in June 2019 when DD Council Executive Director, Kristen Larsen, and a representative from the UCEDD, Mark Smith, met with Dannette Smith, the new CEO for the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Kristen and Mark have served as stakeholder members of the DHHS Long-Term Care (LTC) Redesign Advisory Committee since August 2016 and were involved in providing stakeholder input throughout the LTC Redesign project. DHHS engaged stakeholders (consumers, caregivers, advocates, and providers) from across the state to voice concerns and recommendations that were incorporated into the LTC Redesign Final Plan submitted by the Mercer Government Human Services Consulting (Mercer) and National Association of States United for Aging (NASUAD) in August 2017. The extensive stakeholder engagement process resulted in Mercer and NASUAD's 25 final recommendations for Nebraska's LTC Redesign. As a result, DHHS committed to focus on addressing high-priority systemic issues in the current LTC programs, including building an effective navigation system for LTC programs, ensuring consistent and fair determinations for Medicaid LTC programs, establishing the infrastructure to support consumer self-direction, and improving the assurance of health and safety of Extended Family Home (EFH) residents.

Throughout FFY 19 Kristen and Mark continued to attend the LTC Redesign Advisory Committee meetings to stay abreast of the DHHS work being done to address the priority items, and to monitor any movement of LTC moving into Heritage Health managed care. Kristen and Mark requested a meeting with CEO Smith in June 2019 to discuss their concerns related to the inactivity on some of the priority recommendations provided in the LTC Redesign Final Plan. The meeting with CEO Smith would provide an avenue to discuss concerns related to a trend in perceived lack of transparency and engagement with stakeholders related to LTC Redesign topics. The changes implemented to the state's Aging and Disability (A&D) Waiver in January 2019, resulting in children/families being found ineligible to continue receiving A&D Waiver benefits based upon changes to the children's Level of Care Assessments, was also discussed.

Identify the Area of Emphasis collaboratively addressed by DD Network

1. **Quality Assurance** true
2. **Education and Early Intervention** true
3. **Child Care**
4. **Health** true
5. **Employment** true

6. Housing true

7. Transportation true

8. Recreation

9. Quality of Life true

10. Other - Assistive Technology true

11. Other - Cultural Diversity true

12. Other - Leadership true

13. Other - Please specify true

Specify

Efforts for Nebraska to develop an Olmstead Plan.

14. Other - Please specify

15. Other - Please specify

Strategies Collaboratively implemented by DD Network

The report should include a narrative progress report that cohesively describes the activities that were implemented by the Council and the P&A, the Council and the UCEDD, the Council and other collaborators. DD Network. For at least one of the issues/barriers identified above describe: (a) the issue/barrier; (b) collaborative strategies to address issue/barrier and expected outcome(s); (c) the DDC's specific role and responsibilities in this collaborative effort. Include any technical assistance expertise DD Council staff can provide to other States in this area; (d) briefly identify problems encountered as a result of this collaboration, and technical assistance, if any, desired; and (e) any unexpected benefits of this collaborative effort.

A key collaborative DD Network Partners achievement in 2019 included legislative and stakeholder efforts focused on developing a comprehensive Nebraska Olmstead Plan. To comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Nebraska needed to develop an Olmstead Plan to assist individuals with disabilities to live and work in more integrated community settings. Nebraska neglected to develop an Olmstead Plan for the past 20 years, and as one of only twelve states in the nation without a plan, Nebraska is at risk for legal action.

Passage of Nebraska's first Olmstead Plan state statute, LB 1033, occurred in 2016 but state funding to support the effort was not included. In August 2018, the DD Council announced that they would provide the funding to retain an independent consultant to assist in developing Nebraska's Olmstead Plan. DHHS contracted with Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) to provide this assistance.

As DHHS and TAC proceeded in developing the Nebraska Olmstead Plan, it became clear that a comprehensive Olmstead Plan could not be provided without contributions from additional stakeholders. In response, Nebraska legislators voted to pass LB 570, which increased the number of agencies on the Olmstead Steering Group, extended the completion date of the Olmstead Plan to December 15, 2019, and required DHHS to use an independent consultant (TAC) to assist with its continued analysis and revision of the Olmstead Plan. LB 570 included state funding to support the process. LB 570 was signed into law by Governor Ricketts on May 17, 2019. The DD Network Partners were active in educating and informing State Senators about the importance of passing this legislation, and were involved throughout the Olmstead Plan development process. Representatives from the P&A and the DD Council served on the Olmstead Advisory Committee, and the UCEDD CEO serves on the Olmstead Steering Group. Disability Rights Nebraska (P&A) released a press release on May 21, 2019 regarding Olmstead Plan development and highlighted the collaboration that the DD Network Partners invested to further the process.

As noted above, the Council's Executive Director and a representative from the UCEDD met with Dannette Smith, the CEO of DHHS, in June 2019. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss strategies with CEO Smith to strengthen stakeholder relationships with DHHS Medicaid and Long-Term Care. During the meeting, it was noted how communication with the previous Medicaid Director, Calder Lynch, had been transparent and the stakeholders were encouraged to identify issues early in the LTC Redesign efforts. However, in June 2019 the engagement with stakeholders and movement on key recommendations by stakeholders had stopped. Communication was not as transparent since Director Calder's departure and the stakeholders were concerned with the messaging and lack of communication they were receiving from Medicaid administrators.

It was shared with CEO Smith that Nebraska's No Wrong Door (NWD) efforts had stalled despite DHHS' large investment in national consultant studies that prioritized Nebraska to develop a NWD model. Struggles were shared regarding disability partners not being adequately engaged & compensated in the current ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center) structure, which is supposed to serve as the framework & foundation for Nebraska to develop a statewide NWD system. MOUs (Memo of Understanding) have been developed but not finalized, reportedly due to funding issues with local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) partners. No processes were in place for the disability partners to bill AAA for referral services, despite the fact that \$5,000 was set aside in state statute. Concerns were raised that although an ADRC structure had been set up, it was weighted towards aging & there were no efforts to develop a NWD model. Kristen & Mark shared that comments made from top DHHS leadership at the LTC Redesign meeting in August 2018 indicated efforts were underway to explore a NWD model. Then efforts were put on hold according to comments

made at the 11/14/18 meeting & 5/8/19 meetings. Nebraska voters approved Medicaid expansion in the 2018 election and stakeholders were told, at the LTC Redesign meetings, that DHHS was focused on developing the framework to submit state plan amendments to the federal government in April 2019 in order to secure CMS approval to expand Medicaid in 2020. Therefore, the NWD model initiative halted.

Kristen & Mark shared concerns with CEO Smith that in January 2019, DHHS began implementing changes to the state's A&D Waiver assessment process, causing children/families to be found ineligible for the waiver based upon scrutiny over the Level of Care Assessments. These more restrictive A&D regulations were causing many children with disabilities to lose coverage under the state's A&D Waiver. Many families & stakeholders had been raising concerns regarding DHHS' changes to the Children's Level of Care assessment for the A&D Waiver at LTC Redesign meetings. However top Medicaid leadership seemed unresponsive & unwilling to address these concerns. Previously, children with high medical needs who did not necessarily meet "a nursing home level of care" were able to access Medicaid coverage to help pay for prescription benefits, co-pays & durable medical equipment (things that many private insurance companies don't pay for or don't cover adequately). The new A&D Waiver regulations changed this. There are limited programs available to support children with disabilities & their families in Nebraska & the A&D Waiver was the single program that allowed working families access to Medicaid & other supportive services such as specialized childcare. Mark & Kristen reiterated their concerns that Medicaid administrators were not addressing these systemic gaps.

As a follow up to this meeting, Kristen emailed CEO Smith three reports. The Nebraska Long-Term Services & Supports Program Redesign Concept Paper, published January 2016; Nebraska's LTC Redesign Final Plan, published August 2017; and Nebraska No Wrong Door: Gap Analysis & Recommendations, published July 2018. CEO Smith told Kristen that she appreciated the feedback & she plans to meet with her internal leadership team to consider the items discussed.

Some positive outcomes resulted after the meeting with CEO Smith to discuss concerns with the LTC Redesign efforts. First, Director Smith appointed Heather Leschinsky as the Cross-Divisional Medicaid Liaison. Heather had previously served as the Deputy Director for the Division of Medicaid & Long-Term Care, & had been effective with engaging stakeholders in past LTC Redesign efforts. Her Medicaid background & knowledge made her an excellent fit for this cross-divisional liaison. Heather also serves on the DD Council as the Medicaid & LTC representative.

DHHS launched the Institutional Level of Care Assessment led by the Division of Medicaid & Long-Term Care. They along with the Optumas Healthcare consulting team, were tasked to design appropriate & effective institutional level of care assessments. The one year project will be completed in two phases, with Phase I for the nursing facility level of care & Phase II for the intermediate care facility for developmentally disabled level of care. Optumas started with reviews of: all federal & state law requirements, national best practices to align where Nebraska is compared to other states, & Nebraska's current criteria & tools. Optumas will recommend any changes to assessment tools & a conduct a validation analysis of

the redesigned assessment tools to identify any error with outcome assumptions related to the tools. A Technical Advisory Group will be convened to include a group of professionals representing clinicians, policy advisors, service providers, & the university to provide transparency & for DHHS to receive their input throughout the project. Focus groups will be used to collect stakeholder feedback & concerns.

An unexpected benefit occurred in early October 2019, DHHS announced that children found ineligible for the A&D Waiver because they no longer met the Level of Care Criteria required could transfer to the Developmental Disabilities Waiver. DHHS shared that Nebraska has federal & state authority to provide continuity of care by transferring these children to the Developmental Disabilities Waiver, if the children meet Developmental Disability Waiver eligibility requirements.