

**OHP COMMITTEE
PRIORITY AREAS & WORK GROUP ACTIVITIES**

▪ ***Systems Communication, Coordination and Collaboration***

Identify and promote evidence-based practices, protocols and policies that foster communication, coordination and collaboration among the primary systems involved in education of students in out-of-home care, including cross-systems information sharing, systems cross-training, and the *Systems Tool Kit/Partnering4Students* website. Recommendations related to judicial practices that support school stability, in collaboration with other initiatives. Collaboration with other initiatives for young children in out-of-home placements.

▪ ***Student Transitions***

Promote communication, coordination and collaboration between schools to facilitate successful transition of students: from Interim-Program Schools and Special Purpose Schools to public school or other education programs; from middle school to high school; and on to adulthood and independent living through employment and/or post-secondary education. Additionally, promotion of family engagement and student empowerment, in collaboration with other initiatives.

▪ ***Informational Advocacy***

Provide information for informed legislative, regulatory and policy level decision-making that supports school stability and positive academic outcomes for students in out-of-home placements. Identify and promote professional development opportunities for educators in public schools related to students in out-of-home placements, in collaboration with other initiatives.



**INTERIM-PROGRAM SCHOOLS
AND SPECIAL PURPOSE SCHOOLS**

Across state of Nebraska, there are currently 18 Interim-Program Schools located in juvenile detention facilities, emergency shelters, institutions and other residential programs that provide temporary 24-hour custodial care for children and youth under 19 years of age. Interim-Program Schools provide continuity of instruction for students who are in out-of-home care and cannot attend public school for reasons of health or safety. There are also four residential Special Purpose Schools, two of which are operated by the State Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Centers, one at the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services, and another at the federal Pine Ridge Job Corps Center.

A student's length of stay in an Interim-Program School or Special Purpose School may range from a few days in an emergency shelter or juvenile detention center, to several months in a longer-term residential care or treatment program, to years in the adult prison system.

Many students make significant academic progress while in these classroom settings. Students temporarily attending an Interim-Program School remain in membership and on the attendance rolls of their public school district of residence. While Special Purpose Schools can award academic credits and high school diplomas, students who have attended Interim-Program Schools receive credit for school work completed while in that setting from the public school where they return or transfer.

The transfer and acceptance of academic credits earned by a student while attending an Interim-Program School or Special Purpose School by the receiving public school is critical to that child's' continued grade progression and eventual graduation. Another crucial factor in promoting and sustaining school enrollment, continued attendance and academic achievement is ongoing support and coordination from the primary systems involved throughout the student's transition to public school or other education program.

A Listing of NDE Approved Interim-Program Schools and Accredited Special Purpose Schools is available at:
<http://www.education.ne.gov>
<http://www.partnering4students.org>



Nebraska Department of Education

**NDE COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION
OF STUDENTS IN
OUT-OF-HOME
PLACEMENTS**



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STUDENTS IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS

In Nebraska, students in out-of-home placements include children and youth temporarily residing in foster care, group homes, juvenile emergency shelters, residential treatment programs, institutions, juvenile detention or correctional facilities, adult prisons, and other settings that provide temporary 24-hour custodial care. The majority are involved in the child welfare, juvenile justice and/or criminal justice systems, with a significant portion being State wards. Many have behavioral and mental health diagnoses. Substance abuse may also be evident.

These students undergo multiple transitions, including changes in residential placement, school and legal status. For some, minimal school engagement, truancy, school suspension, expulsion or dropping out are common and re-occurring themes. There is also a significant incidence of students with disabilities who receive special education and related services.

NDE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION OF STUDENTS IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS

The *NDE Committee on Education of Students in Out-of-Home Placements (OHP Committee)* is a multi-disciplinary group, organizationally housed under the Nebraska Department of Education's Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC). The *OHP Committee's* stated purpose is to advise and make recommendations regarding education of students in out-of-home care to the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), SEAC, State Accreditation Committee, State Board of Education, other state and local agencies, policymakers and stakeholders.

In addition to its advisory role, the *OHP Committee* serves as the primary venue for communication, coordination and collaboration among the various systems involved in education of students in out-of-home care. The *OHP Committee* provides a forum for identification and discussion of education-related issues and concerns, evidence-based practices, protocols and programs which promote school stability and improve academic and vocational outcomes for these students.

OHP COMMITTEE BELIEF STATEMENTS

- **Children:** We believe all children and youth have the right to a free appropriate public education. We believe all children and youth have the right to be involved in their own educational process.
- **Parents:** We believe informed parents (biological and adoptive parents, guardians and/or surrogate parents) are able to and must be meaningfully involved in their child's education.
- **Barriers:** We believe barriers that hinder a child or youth's access to a free appropriate public education need to be identified, addressed and resolved.
- **Systems:** We believe all systems must work together to address the needs of the individual child or youth. Systems should actively work to involve parents and other family members.
- **Transition:** We believe a transition process, based on the strengths and needs of each child and youth as well as support of family, communities and schools, is essential.
- **Resources:** We believe the resources should be in place to fulfill the needs of each child and youth.



OHP COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The *OHP Committee's* membership is representative of the various geographical areas of the state and includes individuals representing the following agencies, organizations and schools:

- Interim-Program Schools
- Special Purpose Schools
- Public Schools
- Neglected, Delinquent and At-Risk Children and Youth Programs (ESEA, Title I-Part D)
- Homeless Students Education Programs (ESEA, Title X-Part C)
- Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services – Division of Children and Family Services
- Nebraska State Probation Administration
- Nebraska Foster Care Review Office
- Juvenile Court Judges
- Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteers
- Foster Youth and Families
- Parent Advocacy Organizations
- Mental Health Service Providers
- Vocational Services
- Private Youth Services Foundations and Programs
- Member at Large
- Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)

The *OHP Committee* meets quarterly, operating under the guidance and leadership of an *Executive Council* comprised of five of the *Committee's* members. Staff support is provided through the Nebraska Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Federal Programs Office - Title I.

For Additional Information, Contact:

Michele Borg, OHP Facilitator/Coordinator
for Nebraska Department of Education

Email: borgworks@gmail.com

Phone: (402) 310-1348