



School-based  
Teacher-led  
Assessment and  
Reporting  
System

A Summary  
September 2004



Nebraska Department  
of Education

*Nebraska*

## **STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**



**S**chool-based  
**T**eacher-led  
**A**ssessment and  
**R**eporting  
**S**ystem



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2003-2004**

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*Nebraska Department of Education*

## **STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

**S**chool-based **T**eacher-led **A**ssessment and **R**eporting **S**ystem

**2004**

**Statewide Assessment Office**

**Accreditation and School Improvement Team**

Doug Christensen, Ph.D.  
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## *Foreword*

Nebraska’s approach to standards, assessment, and accountability: School-based Teacher-led Assessment and Reporting System, STARS, is firmly grounded in the belief that decisions about student learning should be standards-based and should be based upon classroom knowledge of the student. This process relies upon the professional expertise of Nebraska educators and has been built upon a statewide initiative to develop educator capacity in assessment design and the use of assessment data for improved instruction. The requirements of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* have been integrated into the accountability requirements.

Nebraska educators use locally designed assessments in combination with national tests and a statewide writing assessment in order to determine the performance of students on the academically rigorous content standards. All assessments used must be of high quality and must meet the Six Quality Assessment Criteria developed through the Buros Center for Testing at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska.

This document outlines the basic process that Nebraska school districts have undertaken for the purposes of improving student achievement in their classrooms and buildings. An annual report of student performance and additional supporting data are found in the “State of the Schools” Report and website that can be accessed electronically: [reportcard.nde.state.ne.us](http://reportcard.nde.state.ne.us)



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Doug Christensen, Ph.D.  
Commissioner of Education

**Nebraska's**  
**School-based Teacher-led Assessment and Reporting System**  
**STARS**



**I. What is Nebraska's School-based Teacher-led Assessment and Reporting System? (STARS)**

**A. Purpose and Philosophy**

Nebraskans realize that improving upon the quality of life in our communities includes making a commitment to the youngest of Nebraskans, our children. When they leave our schools, it is important that future citizens be prepared to succeed so that they can continue to learn throughout their lives, enter the workforce in jobs that will provide satisfying careers, and participate in a democratic way of life that values the individual roles and responsibilities of our families, communities, and society.

The State Board of Education has made a commitment that Nebraska schools must be “the best in the nation.” The two key priorities are to “improve educational opportunities” and “improve learning” from pre-school education through the programs of community colleges, four-year colleges and universities, and beyond. It is essential that we provide quality educational programs along with equal opportunity for all individuals to participate in those programs, if we are to be “the best in the nation.”

The underlying philosophy that supports Nebraska's School-based Teacher-led Assessment and Reporting System emphasizes a partnership between the local school districts and the Nebraska Department of Education. Keeping decisions about student performance on standards at the local classroom level provides a balance between state level guidance and local decision-making. Partnership and balance are the two crucial elements in making changes in schools that will result in improved learning for all students.

**B. Legal Basis**

During the 2000 session, the Nebraska Legislature passed Legislative Bill 812 which amended State Statute 79-760 (The Educational Quality Accountability Act). This legislation established the requirements and general procedures for the implementation of standards, assessment, and accountability reporting for public school districts in Nebraska. The bill which maintains and supports Nebraska's

School-based Teacher-led Assessment and Reporting System (STARS) requires that each public school district:

- Adopt measurable quality academic content standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, and history that are the same as, equal to, or exceeding in rigor the state standards. The local standards are to be completed by July 1, 2003.
- Begin assessment and reporting in 2000-01 to include:
  - A local assessment of reading including speaking and listening
  - Participation in a statewide writing assessment
  - Submission of local assessment procedures to NDE to be reviewed and rated by independent assessment experts at the conclusion of the 2000-01 school year
- Report results of local assessments on a building basis to the Nebraska Department of Education

Statute 79-760 as amended in 1999 requires that the State Department of Education publish a State Report Card beginning in fall 2000. The report card includes a statewide aggregate of at least the following: student achievement, graduation rate, student attendance, teacher attendance, teacher qualifications, graduate follow-up, and school funding.

### **C. Integration of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB)**

The federal legislation signed in the winter of 2002, *No Child Left Behind*, has been integrated into Nebraska's STARS. Throughout this summary document you will find evidence of the integration of NCLB into the STARS system.

## **II. How does the Nebraska School-based Teacher-led Assessment and Reporting System (STARS) work?**

### **A. Standards**

#### ***What are the standards and where did they come from?***

The State Board of Education has adopted measurable model academic content standards that cover reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies and history. These content standards are known as Nebraska L.E.A.R.N.S. (Leading Educational Achievement through Rigorous Nebraska Standards)

The legislation requires that Nebraska school districts shall by July 1, 2003, adopt measurable quality academic content standards for reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, and history. (NOTE: The reading standards should also include speaking and listening.)

The quality academic content standards adopted by Nebraska school districts may be those adopted by the State Board of Education (Nebraska L.E.A.R.N.S) or may be local school district standards that are determined to be equal to or more rigorous than the state standards.

#### ***How are the standards used?***

Nebraska school districts have aligned their local curriculum with the state approved content standards in order to provide learning opportunities for all students. The local curriculum and standards alignment process is documented by each school district in a portfolio of standards and assessment procedures that are reviewed for each content area. Not only are school districts required to describe and outline their process for aligning the standards with the local curriculum, but they are also required to document that students have had the opportunity to learn that content.

The purpose of aligning Nebraska's rigorous content standards with local curriculum is to establish standards-based classrooms within all Nebraska school districts. When aligned with local curriculum, the content standards are used to establish clear learning targets and expectations for all students within Nebraska classrooms. Standards-based classrooms are achieved as each teacher clearly articulates the learning targets, aligns instruction to the learning targets within each of the content standards, and accurately assesses whether or not students are meeting the targets outlined by the content standards.

## **B. Assessment**

### ***What content standards are assessed and when?***

Beginning in the 2000-2001 school year, educators in all Nebraska school districts began to assess the content standards. The assessment of Nebraska students on academic content standards occurs according to the following schedule:

2000-2001	Reading, Speaking and Listening – Gr. 4, 8, 11 Statewide Writing Assessment Pilot Implementation – Gr. 4, 8, 11
2001-2002	Mathematics, Gr. 4, 8, 11 Statewide Writing Assessment – Grade 4
2002-2003	Reading, Speaking, and Listening – Gr. 4, 8, 11 Statewide Writing Assessment - Grade 8
2003-2004	Mathematics – Gr. 4, 8, 11 Statewide Writing Assessment – Grades 4, 8, 11
2004-2005	Reading and Mathematics – Grades 4, 8, 11 Statewide Writing Assessment – Grades 4, 8, 11
2005-2006	Reading and Mathematics – Grades 3-8, 11* Statewide Writing Assessment – Grades 4, 8, 11 Science – Local Reporting – Grades 5, 8, 11**
2006-2007	Reading and Mathematics – Grades 3-8, 11* Statewide Writing Assessment – Grades 4, 8, 11 Social Studies – Local Reporting – Grades 5, 8, 11**

\* Only grades 4, 8, and 11 are assessed and reported by standard. Grades, 3, 5, 6, and 7 report progress in reading and mathematics and are monitored through Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP.)

\*\*Districts may choose to assess science and social studies in Grades 4 or 5

### ***How is assessment conducted in Nebraska school districts?***

Nebraska school districts are required to assess rigorous content standards locally according to the schedule outlined above. School districts may use a combination of assessments to measure the standards. The assessments include norm-referenced tests, criterion-referenced assessments, or locally developed classroom assessments. Regardless of the assessments selected, school districts must document that their assessments meet the Six Quality Assessment Criteria that have been established for the

state of Nebraska. The process to assure quality assessment is described in the next section.

By June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, school districts are required to report their student results on the content standards. A secured electronic website is provided for reporting. Districts report their student results in four levels of achievement: advanced, proficient, progressing, and beginning. Districts are required to complete reports that include all of the students assessed including students with disabilities and students learning the English language. Any student not included in each of the reporting forms must be reported as “Not Assessed/Not Included in Reporting.”

After the student achievement has been reported and calculated at the state level, state-wide mastery levels are established for student performance. These mastery level determinations are facilitated by the Buros Center for Testing using the expertise of panels of Nebraska educators from throughout the state. The mastery levels are determined in order to correspond to the student performance ratings that school districts receive. The five rating classifications are as follows: Exemplary, Very Good, Good, Needs Improvement, and Unacceptable. School districts receive a student performance rating for each of the grade levels assessed and reported.

### **How is the quality of the local assessment determined?**

The assessment used in each Nebraska school district to measure student achievement on standards must be of high quality. By June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, all Nebraska school districts are required to submit a District Assessment Portfolio of the assessment practices and procedures used for measuring students on standards. In the portfolio, school districts are also required to include a sample of the actual assessment instruments. This sample has been generated randomly and assigned to the school districts.

The portfolios are reviewed and evaluated by assessment experts from across the nation. The assessment evaluators determine whether or not the school district assessment practices and procedures meet the Six Quality Assessment Criteria which were established by the Nebraska Department of Education with the assistance of the Buros Center for Testing. The Criteria are listed and described below. The assessments used in each Nebraska school district must:

1. **Match and measure the standards.** Districts must determine that the assessment measures the standards and that students have sufficient opportunity to demonstrate their ability to meet the standard.
2. **Provide opportunity for students to have learned the content.** Districts must have examined their own local curriculum to determine that the opportunity to meet the standards exists within the local district's

curriculum and that instruction on the standards occurs at an appropriate time in relationship to assessment.

3. **Be free of bias.** Districts must examine the assessment to be sure that any of the items or tasks are free of bias and are not insensitive to any group or circumstance.
4. **Be written at the appropriate level.** Districts must examine the assessment items or tasks in order to determine that the expectations are appropriate for the assessed grade level.
5. **Be reliable and consistently scored.** Districts must document that they can have confidence in the results of the assessment, that assessment results have produced an appropriate level of reliability, .70 or higher.
6. **Have appropriate mastery levels.** Districts must describe the systematic way they have determined mastery levels for the assessment, including both professional judgment and actual student results.

### ***How is a district's local assessment reviewed for quality?***

All Nebraska school districts submit District Assessment Portfolios of assessment practices and procedures for each grade level assessed. Included in the portfolios is a random sample of assessment instruments that has been requested from the school districts. The portfolios, due at the end of June each year, are submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education.

The Nebraska Department of Education works with the Buros Center for Testing in order to review the District Assessment Portfolios and to evaluate how well each district's assessment system meets the Six Quality Assessment Criteria. The evaluation process has two levels. The first level consists of a National Advisory Panel of well-known assessment experts who give guidance to the entire portfolio review process. This group of eight individuals, four from out of the state of Nebraska and four from within Nebraska, assist in the training of the portfolio reviewers, provide guidance to the assessment review process and make the final determination of model assessment practices within the state.

The second level of evaluation is the review of the portfolios themselves. Sixteen portfolio reviewers from both within the state of Nebraska and from outside of the state are contracted to complete the portfolio examinations. These portfolio reviewers are assessment experts who examine the district portfolios and determine the quality of the assessment processes and procedures used within each school district. The criteria for the review are the Six Quality Assessment Criteria. (See Appendix A)

After a training session conducted by the Buros Center for Testing, the reviewers evaluate the portfolios each year from July 1-September 1<sup>st</sup>. School districts receive feedback on their assessment procedures as a result of the portfolio review in addition to suggestions about how their local assessment processes can be improved. This feedback along with a rating of the quality of the assessment is sent to the school districts in October of the year following the portfolio submission. Districts receive a rating for each portfolio submitted: Exemplary, Very Good, Good, Acceptable but Needs Improvement, or Unacceptable. (See Appendix B.) Approximately 75% of the portfolios are double scored as a check for reliability.

The assessment experts who examine the District Assessment Portfolios identify potential model assessment practices. These practices that are “illustrative of model practice” are recommended from all sizes and circumstances of school districts: large, medium, small, urban, and rural. The model practices identified by the evaluators are appropriate for replication in other school districts within the state of Nebraska.

### ***Statewide Writing Assessment – Who is assessed and when?***

Nebraska students in grades 4, 8, and 11 participate in a trait-based statewide writing assessment as outlined in the schedule that follows:

2000-2001	Statewide Writing Assessment Pilot Implementation – Gr. 4, 8, 11
2001-2002	Narrative writing – Grade 4
2002-2003	Descriptive writing - Grade 8
2003-2004	Narrative writing – Grade 4 Descriptive writing – Grade 8 Persuasive writing – Grade 11
2004-2005 and beyond	The schedule will be repeated in all grades.

Students demonstrate their writing skills in response to a prompt that has been designed and selected for their appropriate grade levels. The Nebraska Department of Education convenes panels of teachers annually who develop, refine, and pilot the prompts with students prior to their statewide implementation. Students in the three grade levels respond to prompts in different modes of writing as outlined above.

### ***Statewide Writing Assessment – Internal and External Scoring***

The statewide writing assessments are scored by experienced Nebraska teachers who have been trained in trait-based writing. The scoring is based upon six traits of writing.

Scoring rubrics (Appendices C, D, and E) have been designed at each grade level assessed: grades 4, 8, and 11. The scoring takes place at three regional scoring locations within the state. At each of the geographically representative scoring sites, a random sample of writing assessments is also scored. The results are examined and analyzed by the Buros Center for Testing. The same random sample of papers is also scored out of the state by an independent and externally contracted test maker. In this way, Nebraska is able to provide a check and balance to the regional scoring.

All of the results are analyzed by the Buros Center for Testing for technical reliability. Additionally, the Buros Center for Testing conducts and facilitates a standard-setting process annually in order to establish the proficiency levels that are used to determine whether or not students have mastered the writing standards. This standard-setting process uses teams of experienced teachers from across the state of Nebraska. Once the mastery levels have been statistically determined and finalized, Nebraska school districts receive access to their results electronically as well as in written reports. These reports include information at the district, building, and individual student levels. These written reports provide information about the achievement of Nebraska students on the writing standards.

### ***Assessment – What other assessments are conducted in Nebraska?***

In addition to measuring their students on academic content standards in reading, writing, and mathematics, Nebraska school districts have assessed students with several national tests. These external tests have served to validate the results of students on state standards. A norm-referenced test is administered at least once in the elementary grades, once in the middle grades, and once in the high school. Additionally, districts have participated in other national assessments including the National Assessment of Educational Progress, (NAEP) and the American College Test (ACT). In all of these assessments, Nebraska students continue to score well, adding evidence to further support the success of Nebraska students on content standards.

## **C. Accountability – How are Nebraska school districts accountable?**

### ***State and Federal Goals***

All districts in Nebraska have two state accountability goals to meet annually. One is the District Assessment Quality Rating and the other is the Student Performance Rating. Both goals must be met with ratings of Good, Very Good, or Exemplary (see Appendix A.) Any school district not meeting those goals are provided support and technical assistance through the partnership established by NDE and the educational service units.

School buildings in Nebraska are subject to the goals established through the Adequate Yearly Progress requirement of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act*. Those buildings

with 30 or more students in each group are annually reviewed for their results in performance and participation in math and reading, in either statewide writing assessment or graduation rate, depending upon the grade level, and district assessment quality. The buildings with fewer than 30 students in a group are monitored through the state accountability system.

Both state and federal accountability goals are displayed and explained on the State of the Schools Report.

### ***The State of the Schools Report***

In the fall of each year the Nebraska Department of Education issues *The State of the Schools Report*. This report includes student performance data, teacher data, and information about the schools at the state, district, and building levels. Intended to be a comprehensive source of data for the entire state, this web site can be used both for the improvement of instruction and for public accountability. Student performance on standards as well as student results on national tests are all made available. School district data including ratings on student performance and assessment quality are displayed along with the demographic characteristics of each school district. Adequate Yearly Progress results for federal accountability are displayed by building and by district.

In addition to the information about student performance and assessment quality, detailed information is provided on teacher qualifications, course offerings, school expenditures and receipts. Downloadable files are made available through the site, and a follow up site is available to electronically respond to questions. The State of the Schools Report can be accessed either through the NDE Homepage, [www.nde.state.ne.us](http://www.nde.state.ne.us) or the following website: <http://reportcard.nde.state.ne.us>

### ***The State Report Card***

In addition to website access to the State of the Schools Report, the Nebraska Department of Education publishes a written report card that includes information on a statewide basis. Data available on the written State Report Card are summaries of total student performance and characteristics, teacher quality, and school information. Each of the data elements that are described in total in the State Report Card can be examined in detail by school district and by building in the State of the Schools report.

### ***Local Reporting***

In addition to reporting student performance, teacher qualification data, and school information to the Nebraska Department of Education, all school districts report student performance information at the local level. Although each school district adopts its

own unique format for that local reporting, many districts have chosen to model their local reporting after the State Report Card. Through this process all school districts are equipped to address the needs of their own students and use the data collected to determine their school improvement goals.

### **III. State and Local Support**

#### **A. Professional Development**

In order to develop and extend its approach to standards, assessment, and accountability and to keep the school improvement focus internally driven in each local school district, Nebraska has invested extensively in local educators. Professional development has been provided for teachers and administrators in areas of standards alignment, assessment literacy, assessment quality, data analysis, and the school improvement process. These professional development efforts have been provided in several ways.

##### ***The role of the Nebraska Department of Education***

The Nebraska Department of Education has provided support to Nebraska schools in a variety of ways. Support materials, hands-on workshops, conferences, communication through satellite broadcasts, state-wide information sharing sessions, training sessions and interactive data bases have been established. Department staff have traveled across the state assisting school districts in their efforts in support of local practices. The establishment of a Trainer of Trainers model to facilitate and extend learning about assessment was established beginning in 1999. This training model began with the assistance of Dr. Rick Stiggins of the Assessment Training Institute in Portland, Oregon.

##### ***The role of the Educational Service Units***

Eighteen Educational Service Units, established regionally throughout the state of Nebraska, have been instrumental in the professional development process within the state. The ESU organizations have provided significant training around curriculum alignment, assessment, trait-based writing, data collection and analysis in support of the school-based teacher-led assessment and reporting system. Additionally, dedicated staff development personnel have provided support and training in instructional strategies as a response to the data collected. All of these efforts have worked together to assist school districts in their local school improvement efforts.

Working in conjunction with the Nebraska Department of Education, the Educational Service Units have provided a strong supportive network for Nebraska school districts. Many smaller school districts have combined their efforts in the standards and assessment process and have joined together to form consortiums of school districts through their Educational Service Units.

### ***Other Federal Programs***

All federal programs, including Title I, Title III, the Eisenhower Funds, Special Education, Safe and Drug Free Schools, Class size reduction, and comprehensive school reform dollars have been used in support of local school districts' work in school improvement. Funds have been used to provide professional development, assessment development, and support for the use of data in school improvement.

## IV. Next Steps

### *What are the Next Steps for the School-based Teacher-led Assessment and Reporting System in Nebraska?*

#### *Data Analysis*

As statewide data is collected in reading, writing, and mathematics, local school districts are learning how to analyze this data for use in school improvement. Nebraska educators have been participating in data retreats, learning how to draw conclusions, and identifying next steps. Administrators and teachers have been focusing their data analysis efforts around three questions:

*What does the data tell us? (factual)*

*What might this data mean? (hypothesis)*

*What are the implications? (next steps)*

Local school districts have been involving their staff members in these local conversations in an attempt to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the student performance in their districts. Further, once those strengths and weakness have been identified, a discussion takes place about the reasons behind those observations. Then the conversation continues in order to determine how to best address those needs. Matching appropriate instructional strategies and intervention with those identified needs has been a significant step forward.

Responding to the data and communicating that information throughout the entire community has been a collaborative and necessary process involving many users of the data and all of the stakeholders of the community: the students, the parents, boards of education as well as the educators themselves.

#### *The School Improvement Process*

Nebraska's School-based Teacher-led Assessment and Reporting System is the data generator for the school improvement process. With the information gained about student performance through the assessment of students on standards, through the statewide writing assessment, and through the national tests administered within local school districts, Nebraska schools have a data framework for school improvement decisions. The analysis of the data provides the "next steps" and the roadmap for school improvement strategies.

The challenge for the Nebraska Department of Education is to assist and support schools in pulling their standards, assessment, and accountability efforts into the bigger picture, that of school improvement. STARS is a means to an end, a local approach to making decisions about student learning so that the necessary steps can be taken to

strengthening already good schools into becoming even stronger and better. Student learning is a priority in Nebraska, and the School-based Teacher-led Assessment and Reporting System is the system that has been designed to further support that priority.

All Nebraska schools are collecting student performance data to be used in a formal school improvement process. Many districts are participating through the North Central Accreditation model and others are actively involved in the Nebraska Framework for School Improvement. The improvement of schools and the use of data to support that improvement process is of high priority to all of the school districts in the state.

Nebraska Department of Education  
*The purpose of this rubric is to provide school districts with guidance in the preparation of the District Assessment Portfolio.  
 This rubric corresponds with and provides the detail for the Quality Criteria Rating Chart (Attachment B).*

## **DISTRICT ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIO RUBRIC**

### **For Use in 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06**

<b>6 Quality Criteria</b>	<b>Not Met</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Met</b>
<b>1. The assessments match the standards.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No qualifications of the independent reviewers are provided.</li> <li>• No evidence of an independent review for match to standards (reviewers did not write the assessments) is provided.</li> <li>• No process for matching assessments to standards is described.</li> <li>• No results of the matching process are provided.</li> <li>• No sufficiency process is described.</li> <li>• No sufficiency results are provided (sufficiency required for number of items/performances only).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications of the independent reviewers are unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• Evidence of an independent review for match to standards is unclear or incomplete (reviewers did not write the assessments).</li> <li>• The process for matching assessments to standards is unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• Results of the matching process are unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• Sufficiency process is unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• Sufficiency results are unclear or incomplete (sufficiency required for number of items/performances only).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications of the independent reviewers are clear and complete.</li> <li>• Evidence of an independent review for match to standards is clear and complete (reviewers did not write the assessments).</li> <li>• The process for matching assessments to standards is clear and complete.</li> <li>• Results of the matching process are clear and complete.</li> <li>• Sufficiency process is clear and complete.</li> <li>• Sufficiency results are clear and complete (sufficiency required for number of items/performances only.)</li> </ul>
<b>2. Students have an opportunity to learn.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No qualifications of the opportunity to learn reviewers are provided.</li> <li>• No process for opportunity to learn (both curriculum alignment and time of assessment/instruction) is described.</li> <li>• No results of the process for alignment of standards with local curriculum are provided.</li> <li>• No dates are provided when standards are taught.</li> <li>• No dates are provided when standards are assessed (80% of instruction should take place prior to assessment.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications of the opportunity to learn reviewers are unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• The process for opportunity to learn is described but is unclear or incomplete (both curriculum alignment and timing of assessment/instruction).</li> <li>• The results of the process for alignment of standards with local curriculum are unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• Dates are provided when standards are taught but they are unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• Dates are provided when standards are assessed but are unclear or incomplete (80% of instruction should take place prior to assessment.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications of the opportunity to learn reviewers are clear and complete.</li> <li>• The process of opportunity to learn is described and is clear and complete (both curriculum alignment and timing of assessment/instruction).</li> <li>• The results of the process for alignment of standards with local curriculum are clear and complete.</li> <li>• Dates are provided when standards are taught and they are clear and complete.</li> <li>• Dates are provided when standards are assessed and are clear and complete (80% of instructions should take place prior to assessment.)</li> </ul>

## **DISTRICT ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIO RUBRIC**

### **For Use in 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06**

<b>6 Quality Assessment Criteria</b>	<b>Not Met</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Met</b>
<p><b>3. The assessments are free of bias and sensitive situations.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No qualifications of the bias reviewers are provided.</li> <li>• No bias orientation is described.</li> <li>• No process for bias review of assessment items is described.</li> <li>• No results of a bias review are provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications of the bias reviewers are unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• The description of the bias orientation is unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• The process for bias review of assessment items is unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• Results of a bias review are unclear or incomplete.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications of the bias reviewers are clear and complete.</li> <li>• The description of the bias orientation is clear and complete.</li> <li>• The process for bias review of assessment items is clear and complete.</li> <li>• Results of a bias review are clear and complete.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. The assessments are at the appropriate level.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No qualifications of the reviewers for appropriate level are provided.</li> <li>• No process for appropriate level review is described.</li> <li>• No results for the appropriate level review are provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications of the reviewers for appropriate level are unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• Process for appropriate level review is unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• Results of the appropriate level review are unclear or incomplete.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications of the reviewers for appropriate level are clear and complete.</li> <li>• Process for appropriate level review is clear and complete.</li> <li>• Results of the appropriate level review are clear and complete.</li> </ul>

# DISTRICT ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIO RUBRIC

## For Use in 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06

6 Quality Assessment Criteria	Not Met	Needs Improvement	Met
<p><b>5. There is consistency of scoring.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No qualifications of the reliability process participants are provided.</li> <li>• No appropriate process for calculating reliability is described.</li> <li>• No reliability value is provided. (Minimum level of acceptable reliability is .70, mean or median, averaged across all standards.)</li> <li>• No procedure for improving reliability is provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications of the reliability process participants are unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• Appropriate process for calculating reliability is unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• Reliability value provided but calculations are below the minimum acceptable level. (Minimum level of acceptable reliability is .70, mean or median, averaged across all standards.)</li> <li>• Procedure for improving reliability is unclear or incomplete.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications of the reliability process participants are clear and complete.</li> <li>• Appropriate process for calculating reliability is clear and complete.</li> <li>• Reliability value provided and calculations are at or above the minimum acceptable level. (Minimum level of acceptable reliability is .70, mean or median, averaged across all standards.)</li> <li>• Procedure for improving reliability is clear and complete.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. The mastery levels are appropriately set.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No qualifications for mastery level participants are provided.</li> <li>• No evidence of mastery level process is provided.</li> <li>• No results of the mastery level process are provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications for mastery level participants are unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• Evidence of a mastery level process is unclear or incomplete.</li> <li>• Results of the mastery level process is unclear or incomplete.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications for mastery level participants are clear and complete.</li> <li>• Evidence of mastery level process is clear and complete.</li> <li>• Results of the mastery level process is clear and complete.</li> </ul>

## QUALITY CRITERIA RATING CHART FOR THE 2004-05 DISTRICT ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIO

(Effective until 2006-07)

Each grade level portfolio from the district will receive one of five ratings:

Quality Criteria for Assessment	Exemplary	Very Good	Good	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable
<b>1. Matches Standards</b>	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met
<b>2. Opportunity to Learn</b>	Met	Met	Met	Met	or Met
<b>3. Bias Review</b>	Met	Met	Met	Not Met	Not Met
<b>4. Appropriate Level</b>	Met	Met	or Met	Not Met	Not Met
<b>5. Score Consistency*</b>	Met	Needs Improvement	Needs Improvement	Not Met	Not Met
<b>6. Mastery Levels</b>	Met	or Met	or Met	Not Met	Not Met

Districts may receive one of four comments:

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| 1) "Met"               | 2) "Met some further comment necessary" |
| 3) "Needs Improvement" | 4) "Not Met"                            |

## GRADE 4 NEBRASKA DEPT OF EDUCATION SCORING GUIDE FOR NARRATIVE WRITING

	1      1+	2-      2      2+	3-      3      3+	4-      4
<b>IDEAS/ CONTENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates no understanding of the events of the story</li> <li>severe digressions from the prompt</li> <li>lacks supporting details</li> <li>is repetitious, disconnected, or seemingly random</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates a limited understanding of the events of the story</li> <li>some digressions from the prompt</li> <li>contains limited, unrelated details</li> <li>displays a vague storyline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates a general understanding of the events of the story</li> <li>is generally focused on the prompt</li> <li>contains adequate, relevant details</li> <li>narrative is acceptable, if not distinctive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates a clear understanding of the events of the story</li> <li>is well-focused on prompt throughout</li> <li>contains numerous, relevant details</li> <li>narrative is distinctive in its approach</li> </ul>
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural development does not include a beginning, middle, and end</li> <li>sequencing is random</li> <li>pacing is awkward</li> <li>transitions are missing; connections are unclear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural development of a beginning, middle, and end is incomplete</li> <li>sequencing is somewhat logical</li> <li>pacing is sometimes inconsistent</li> <li>transitions are predictable, repetitious or weak</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural development includes a functional beginning, middle, and end</li> <li>sequencing is functional and logical</li> <li>pacing is generally controlled</li> <li>transitions are generally effective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural development includes an effective beginning, middle, and end</li> <li>sequencing is thoughtful, logical and effective</li> <li>pacing is well-controlled</li> <li>transitions clearly show how ideas connect</li> </ul>
<b>VOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conveys no sense of the person behind the words</li> <li>tone is not appropriate for the purpose and audience</li> <li>is lifeless and/or mechanical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conveys a limited sense of the person behind the words</li> <li>tone is sometimes not appropriate for purpose and audience</li> <li>is occasionally expressive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conveys a general sense of the person behind the words</li> <li>tone is generally appropriate for purpose and audience</li> <li>is generally individualistic or expressive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conveys a strong sense of the person behind the words</li> <li>tone is well-suited to the purpose and audience</li> <li>is individualistic, expressive, and engaging throughout</li> </ul>
<b>WORD CHOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses language that is neither specific nor precise</li> <li>contains numerous misused or overused words and phrases</li> <li>uses clichés and jargon rather than original language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses language that is occasionally specific and precise</li> <li>uses language that often seems forced or contrived for the purpose and audience</li> <li>occasionally uses vivid words and phrases</li> <li>some overuse of clichés and jargon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses language that is usually specific and precise</li> <li>uses language that generally appropriate for the purpose and audience</li> <li>uses some vivid words and phrases</li> <li>generally avoids clichés and jargon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses language that is specific and precise</li> <li>displays language that seems natural and appropriate for the purpose and audience</li> <li>effectively uses vivid words and phrases</li> <li>avoids clichés and jargon</li> </ul>
<b>SENTENCE FLUENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses sentences that almost never vary in length or structure</li> <li>uses choppy, incomplete, rambling, or awkward phrasing throughout</li> <li>fragments or run-ons distract the reader</li> <li>dialogue, if present, is used inappropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses sentences that occasionally varies in length or structure</li> <li>uses phrasing sometimes seems natural</li> <li>fragments, if present, may confuse the reader</li> <li>dialogue, if present, tends to sound unnatural</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses sentences that vary somewhat in length and structure</li> <li>uses phrasing that generally sounds natural and conveys meaning</li> <li>fragments, if present, may add style</li> <li>dialogue, if present, generally sounds natural</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses sentences of varying length and structure throughout</li> <li>uses phrasing that sounds natural and conveys meaning</li> <li>fragments, if present, add style</li> <li>dialogue, if present, sounds natural</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>paragraphing is missing</li> <li>errors in grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling throughout distract the reader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>paragraphing, if attempted, is irregular</li> <li>errors in grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling may distract the reader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attempts at paragraphing are generally successful</li> <li>a few errors in grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling—especially with more sophisticated words and concepts – do not distract the reader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>paragraphing is sound</li> <li>grammar, usage, spelling and punctuation are generally correct</li> <li>conventions—especially grammar and spelling—may be manipulated for stylistic effect</li> </ul>

**GRADE 8 NEBRASKA DEPT OF EDUCATION SCORING GUIDE FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING**

	<b>1</b>	<b>1+</b>	<b>2-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2+</b>	<b>3-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3+</b>	<b>4-</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>IDEAS/ CONTENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates no picture of what is being described</li> <li>severe digressions from the prompt</li> <li>lacks supporting details</li> <li>description is missing</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates a limited picture of what is being described</li> <li>some digressions from the prompt</li> <li>contains some supporting, relevant details</li> <li>description is limited</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates a general picture of what is being described</li> <li>is generally focused on the prompt</li> <li>contains adequate, supporting, relevant details</li> <li>description is acceptable</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates a clear picture of what is being described</li> <li>is well-focused on prompt</li> <li>contains numerous, supporting, relevant details</li> <li>description is distinctive</li> </ul>	
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural development does not include a beginning/introduction, middle/body, and end/conclusion</li> <li>sequencing is random</li> <li>pacing is awkward</li> <li>transitions are missing; connections are unclear</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural development of a beginning/introduction, middle/body, and end/conclusion is incomplete</li> <li>sequencing is somewhat logical</li> <li>pacing is sometimes inconsistent</li> <li>transitions may be repetitious, predictable or weak</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural development includes a functional beginning/introduction, middle/body, and end/conclusion</li> <li>sequencing is functional and logical</li> <li>pacing is generally controlled</li> <li>transitions are generally effective</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural development includes an effective beginning/introduction, middle/body, and end/conclusion</li> <li>sequencing is thoughtful, logical and effective</li> <li>pacing is well-controlled</li> <li>transitions clearly show how ideas connect</li> </ul>	
<b>VOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conveys no sense of the person behind the words</li> <li>tone is not appropriate for purpose and audience</li> <li>is lifeless and/or mechanical</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conveys a limited sense of the person behind the words</li> <li>tone is sometimes not appropriate for purpose and audience</li> <li>is occasionally expressive</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conveys a general sense of the person behind the words</li> <li>tone is generally appropriate for purpose and audience</li> <li>is generally individualistic or expressive</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conveys a strong sense of the person behind the words</li> <li>tone is well-suited to the purpose and audience</li> <li>is individualistic, expressive, and engaging throughout</li> </ul>	
<b>WORD CHOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses language that is neither specific nor precise</li> <li>contains numerous misused or repetitious words and phrases</li> <li>overuse of clichés and jargon</li> <li>lacks vivid words or phrases</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses language that is occasionally specific and precise</li> <li>uses language that may seem forced or contrived</li> <li>occasionally uses vivid words and phrases</li> <li>some overuse of clichés and jargon</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses language that is usually specific and precise</li> <li>uses language that is generally appropriate for the purpose and audience</li> <li>uses some vivid words and phrases</li> <li>generally avoids clichés and jargon</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses language that is consistently specific and precise</li> <li>uses language that seems natural and appropriate for the purpose and audience</li> <li>effectively uses vivid words and phrases</li> <li>avoids clichés and jargon</li> </ul>	
<b>SENTENCE FLUENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses sentences that almost never vary in length or structure</li> <li>uses phrasing that is choppy, incomplete, rambling, or awkward</li> <li>fragments or run-ons confuse the reader</li> <li>dialogue, if present, sounds unnatural</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses sentences that sometimes vary in length or structure</li> <li>uses phrasing that occasionally sounds natural</li> <li>fragments, if present, may confuse the reader</li> <li>dialogue, if present, may occasionally sound unnatural</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses sentences that generally vary in length and structure</li> <li>uses phrasing that usually sounds natural and conveys meaning</li> <li>fragments, if present, may add style</li> <li>dialogue, if present, generally sounds natural</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses sentences of varying length and structure throughout</li> <li>uses phrasing that consistently sounds natural and conveys meaning</li> <li>fragments, if present, add style</li> <li>dialogue, if present, sounds natural</li> </ul>	
<b>CONVENTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>paragraphing is missing</li> <li>errors in grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling throughout distract the reader</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>paragraphing, if attempted, is irregular</li> <li>errors in grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling may distract the reader</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attempts at paragraphing are generally successful</li> <li>a few errors in grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling—especially with more sophisticated words and concepts- do not distract the reader</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>paragraphing is sound</li> <li>grammar, usage, spelling and punctuation are mostly correct</li> <li>conventions—especially grammar and spelling—may be manipulated for stylistic effect</li> </ul>	

**GRADE 11 NEBRASKA DEPT OF EDUCATION SCORING GUIDE FOR PERSUASIVE WRITING**

	<b>1</b>	<b>1+</b>	<b>2-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2+</b>	<b>3-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3+</b>	<b>4-</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>IDEAS/ CONTENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates no understanding of the writer's opinion</li> <li>severe digressions from the prompt</li> <li>lacks supporting examples, reasons</li> <li>contains no persuasive arguments</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates a limited understanding of the writer's opinion</li> <li>some digressions from the prompt</li> <li>contains limited supporting examples, reasons</li> <li>arguments may not be logical</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates a general understanding of the writer's opinion</li> <li>is generally focused on the prompt</li> <li>contains adequate relevant supporting examples, reasons</li> <li>arguments are acceptable</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates a clear understanding of the writer's opinion</li> <li>is well-focused on prompt</li> <li>contains numerous, relevant supporting examples, reasons</li> <li>contains arguments that are distinctive</li> </ul>	
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural development does not include an introduction, body, and conclusion</li> <li>sequencing is random</li> <li>pacing is awkward</li> <li>transitions are missing</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural development of an introduction, body, and conclusion is incomplete</li> <li>sequencing is somewhat logical</li> <li>pacing is sometimes inconsistent</li> <li>transitions may be repetitious, predictable or weak</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural development includes a functional introduction, body, and conclusion</li> <li>sequencing is functional and logical</li> <li>pacing is generally controlled</li> <li>transitions are generally effective</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>structural development includes an effective introduction, body, and conclusion</li> <li>sequencing is thoughtful, logical and effective</li> <li>pacing is well-controlled</li> <li>transitions clearly show how ideas connect</li> </ul>	
<b>VOICE/TONE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>shows no commitment to the topic</li> <li>is not engaging</li> <li>tone is not appropriate for purpose and audience</li> <li>fails to anticipate the reader's questions</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>shows limited commitment to the topic</li> <li>is occasionally engaging</li> <li>tone is sometimes not appropriate for purpose and audience</li> <li>anticipates a few of the reader's questions</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>shows a general commitment to the topic</li> <li>is generally engaging</li> <li>tone is appropriate for purpose and audience</li> <li>generally anticipates the reader's questions</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>shows a strong commitment to the topic</li> <li>is engaging throughout</li> <li>tone is appropriate and effective for the purpose and audience</li> <li>consistently anticipates reader's questions</li> </ul>	
<b>WORD CHOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is neither specific nor precise</li> <li>contains numerous misused or overused words and phrases</li> <li>overuse of clichés and jargon distract the reader</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is occasionally specific and precise</li> <li>language sometimes seems forced or contrived for the purpose and audience</li> <li>some clichés and jargon may distract the reader</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is usually specific and precise</li> <li>language is generally appropriate for the purpose and audience</li> <li>generally avoids clichés and jargon</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>language is specific and precise throughout</li> <li>language is natural and appropriate for the purpose and audience</li> <li>consistently avoids clichés and jargon</li> </ul>	
<b>SENTENCE FLUENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sentences almost never vary in length or structure</li> <li>choppy, incomplete, rambling, or awkward phrases throughout</li> <li>fragments or run-ons distract the reader</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sentences sometimes vary in length or structure</li> <li>phrasing sometimes sounds natural</li> <li>fragments or run ons, if present, may distract the reader</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sentences generally vary in length and structure</li> <li>phrasing generally sounds natural and conveys meaning</li> <li>fragments, if present, may add style</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sentences vary in length and structure throughout</li> <li>phrasing consistently sounds natural and conveys meaning</li> <li>fragments, if present, add style</li> </ul>	
<b>CONVENTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>paragraphing is missing</li> <li>errors in grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling throughout distract the reader</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>paragraphing may be irregular</li> <li>errors in grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling may distract the reader</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>paragraphing is generally successful</li> <li>a few errors in grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling—especially with more sophisticated words and concepts- do not distract the reader</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>paragraphing is sound</li> <li>grammar, usage, spelling and punctuation are mostly correct</li> <li>conventions—especially grammar and spelling—may be manipulated for stylistic effect</li> </ul>	