

ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION - 2026
COMMITTEE STATEMENT (UPDATED)
LB937

Hearing Date: Tuesday January 20, 2026
Committee On: Education
Introducer: Education
One Liner: Change provisions relating to option enrollment, reading, dyslexia, reporting, teacher apprenticeships, teacher recruitment and retention, and the College Pathway Program

Roll Call Vote - Final Committee Action:
Advanced to General File with amendment(s)

Vote Results:

Aye: 8 Senators Murman, Conrad, Hughes, Hunt, Juarez, Lonowski, Meyer, G., Sanders
Nay:
Absent:
Present Not Voting:

Testimony:

Proponents:

Senator Dave Murman
Lane Carr

Representing:

Opening Presenter
Nebraska Department of Education

Opponents:

Shelli A. Cook
Patty Pansing Brooks
Lou Ann Linehan
Heather Schmidt
Sharon O'Neal
Tim Kiefer

Representing:

Self - Private Practice S.L.D.
Self
Self
Self
Nebraska Dyslexia Association
Self

Neutral:

Korby Gilbertson

Representing:

Self

* ADA Accommodation Written Testimony

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

LB 937 amends sections several sections of the Revised Statutes of Nebraska to harmonize education reporting requirements, align statutory deadlines, and remove obsolete provisions. The bill expands option enrollment reporting and notice requirements; updates the Nebraska Teacher Apprenticeship Program; aligns high-need retention grant eligibility with teachers authorized to teach dual enrollment courses under the Nebraska Teacher Recruitment and Retention Act; consolidates reading deficiency reporting into the annual statistical summary; adjusts property tax and census reporting deadlines; updates College Pathway Program Act terminology and reporting; and repeals obsolete



provisions relating to educator evaluation grants, solar and wind revenue accounting, and the Junior Mathematics Prognosis Examination.

Section-by-Section Bill Summary:

Section 1 amends section 79-239 to expand the annual required data elements of school district option enrollment information for applications received pursuant to section 79-237 to include information on the number of applications approved and learning community disclosures.

Section 2 amends section 79-308 by removing obsolete provisions relating to educator-effectiveness grant programs that applied to the 2016-17 through 2020-21 school years.

Section 3 amends section 79-528 by changing the census reporting deadline from July 20 to October 15, adding reporting requirements related to option enrollment applications and reading deficiencies, and removing obsolete learning community levy reporting provisions relating to learning communities.

Section 4 amends section 79-816 to revise completion requirements for the Nebraska Teacher Apprenticeship Program by replacing the pedagogy examination requirement with successful completion of a subject-area examination as determined by the Commissioner of Education.

Section 5 amends section 79-8,113 by adding a definition of "dual enrollment" under the Nebraska Teacher Recruitment and Retention Act.

Section 6 amends section 79-8,114 to expand eligibility for high-need retention grants to include teachers who teach at least one dual enrollment course during the 2026-27 school year and changes eligibility provisions for a high-need retention grant for a teacher with an endorsement in special education, mathematics, science, or technology.

Section 7 amends section 79-1035 to remove obsolete provisions requiring separate accounting for income derived from solar or wind agreements on school lands.

Section 8 amends section 79-11,157.01 to revise the timing and structure of reporting requirements related to students with reading deficiencies, including characteristics of dyslexia. The bill changes the reporting requirement so that information on kindergarten through grade three students who display deficiencies in reading is submitted as part of the end-of-the-school-year annual statistical summary required under § 79-528, rather than through a separate statutory reporting deadline. The bill removes school-level reporting elements previously specified in statute and instead requires districts to submit information in the manner prescribed by the Commissioner of Education. The bill assigns responsibility to the Commissioner of Education to annually compile the information received and electronically submit the report due to be provided to the Legislature on or before September 1 of each year. The report must include aggregate information on students who display deficiencies in reading by grade level, unless such information may be withheld under public records law.

Section 9 amends section 79-3407 to change the annual deadline for a school district to submit property tax request authority documentation to the State Department of Education from September 30 to October 15.

Section 10 amends section 79-3703 to replace references to "a grant" with "funding" under the College Pathway Program Act.

Section 11 amends section 79-3704 to replace references to "grants" with "funding" under the College Pathway Program Act.



Section 12. Repealer.

Section 13 outright repeals sections 79-309.01 and 79-718, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, relating to obsolete solar or wind agreements and the Junior Mathematics Prognosis Examination.

Explanation of amendments:

The Education Committee considered and adopted AM 2454 which is a white copy committee amendment that strikes the original sections and includes LB 937 as amended by AM 2312, and incorporates LB 1164 as amended by AM 2521, LB 1241 as amended by AM 2318, LB 1146 as amended by AM 2334, LB 1243 as amended by AM 2073, and LB 1224 as amended by AM 2228. The underlying amendments to each bill are incorporated by the committee amendment.

LB 937 (Sections 4, 6, 7, 9-12, 14-16, and 24 of AM 2454)

AM 2312 amends LB 937 by striking original section 8 of the bill and striking statutory references to changes made by section 8.

LB 1224 (Sections 1, 2, and 13 of AM 2454)

As amended by AM 2228, LB 1224, introduced by Senator Hunt, inserts new provisions adding definitions for “educational decisionmaker” and “exempt school” to section 28-710 under the Child Protection and Family Safety Act and creates a new section prohibiting the subject of a substantiated child abuse or neglect report from transferring or disenrolling a student from the student’s current school during the pendency of an investigation. The amendment requires the Department of Health and Human Services to notify the student’s school and the Commissioner of Education that any such transfer or election to an exempt school is invalid and requires the school or commissioner to notify the department if a transfer or disenrollment request is received during the restricted period. The restriction is lifted upon the filing of a juvenile court petition or fourteen days after notice to the subject of the report, at which time the department must issue notice lifting the restriction. The amendment further provides that all notices are confidential and limited to the student’s name and transfer status, authorizes the department to adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to implement the section, and amends section 79-1601 to prohibit individuals convicted of certain felony offenses from monitoring or instructing students at schools that elect not to meet state accreditation or approval requirements.

Testifiers on LB1224:

Proponents:

Senator Megan Hunt , Opening Presenter
Tess Ulrey, Coalition for Responsible Home Education

Opponents:

David Splonskowski, Nebraska Christian Home Educators Association
Kathryn Dillow, Nebraska Homeschool
Amy Buchmeyer, Home School Legal Defense Association
Jarrod Ridge, Self

Neutral:

Dr. Alyssa Bish, Department of Health and Human Services
Michelle Ender, Self



Committee vote to attach LB1224:

Yes: 8 Murman, Conrad, Hughes, Hunt, Juarez, Lonowski, Meyer, G., Sanders;

No: 0;

Absent: 0;

Present Not Voting: 0;

LB 1146 (Section 3 of AM 2454)

As amended by AM 2334, LB 1146, introduced by Senator Conrad, amends section 79-209 to revise when a school district may report a child's absences to the county attorney, requiring that a school document unsuccessful efforts to address attendance barriers before making a referral and clarifying that referral may occur only after a child has accrued twenty or more days of unexcused absences during a school year. The bill enumerates specific exceptions to what constitutes an unexcused absence for purposes of referral to the county attorney. These exceptions include absences excused by a parent, guardian, or educational decisionmaker when a note from a licensed physician, licensed physician assistant, or licensed mental health practitioner supporting the absence is provided. The exceptions also include absences by pregnant or parenting students. In addition, absences by students with an individualized family service plan, an individualized education program under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, accommodations or services under section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, special education as defined in section 79-1125, or eligibility for services under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act are excluded when such absences are related to the student's plan, services, special education, or program.

Testifiers on LB1146:

Proponents:

Senator Danielle Conrad , Opening Presenter

Anahi Salazar, Voices for Children in Nebraska

Jamel JW Connor, ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union)

Vanessa Chavez Jurado, Stand for Schools

Spike Eickholt, Education Rights Council

Opponents: None

Neutral: None

Committee vote to attach LB1164:

Yes: 7 Murman, Conrad, Hughes, Hunt, Juarez, Meyer, G., Sanders;

No: 0;

Absent: 0;

Present Not Voting: 1 Lonowski;

LB 1243 (Section 5 of AM 2454)

As amended by AM 2073, LB 1243, introduced by Senator Murman, amends section 79-2,136 to provide that, for students desiring to participate in extracurricular activities governed by a national or state organization other than an athletics or activities association, a school board shall require that the student enroll only in the minimum number of district credit hours required by such organization, but the board may not prohibit a student from enrolling in more than such minimum number of hours. The amendment also modifies the existing prohibition on a school board requiring a minimum number of credit hours for participation in extracurricular activities not governed by an athletics or activities association to also apply to activities not governed by a national or state organization.

Testifiers on LB1243:



Proponents:

Senator Dave Murman , Opening Presenter
David Lostroh, Nebraska Christian Home Educators Association
Danielle Ohlmann, Self
Angela Roehl, Self
Shane Hamilton, Self

Opponents:

Colby Coash, Nebraska Association of School Boards
Brad Jacobsen, Lincoln Public Schools
Colin Kubik, Nebraska Agricultural Educators Association

Neutral: None

Committee vote to attach LB1243:

Yes: 8 Murman, Conrad, Hughes, Hunt, Juarez, Lonowski, Meyer, G., Sanders;
No: 0;
Absent: 0;
Present Not Voting: 0;

LB 1241 (Section 8 of AM 2454)

As amended by AM 2318, LB 1241, introduced by Senator Murman, creates a new section of law prohibiting school boards and governing authorities of approved or accredited public, private, denominational, or parochial schools from hiring individuals for positions involving regular contact with students unless specified employment history checks are completed. Applicants must disclose prior employers involving contact with children within the preceding seven years, authorize the release of employment records, and provide a statement regarding any prior child abuse or sexual misconduct investigations, employment separations related to such allegations, or license actions resulting from such allegations. The bill requires a prospective employer to contact each prior employer listed by the applicant to confirm dates of employment and determine whether the applicant was the subject of any reports or actions involving child abuse or sexual misconduct. Applicants who willfully provide false or incomplete information are subject to disciplinary action, including employment denial or termination, license revocation referral, and a civil penalty of up to \$500. Provisional employment for up to ninety days is permitted if the applicant has complied with disclosure requirements, the employer is unaware of disqualifying history, and special or emergent circumstances justify temporary employment. Employers must immediately terminate or rescind offers if disqualifying information is discovered, and such actions are not subject to grievance or tenure protections. Employers responding to verification requests are granted civil and criminal immunity unless they knowingly provide false information, and information obtained pursuant to this section is not considered a public record under the Nebraska public records statutes. The bill also prohibits school boards or governing authorities from entering into agreements that suppress or destroy records related to child abuse or sexual misconduct investigations or findings, providing that any contract terms requiring record expungement, limiting reporting to authorities, or suppressing such information are void and unenforceable. The bill requires the State Department of Education to establish a public awareness campaign and publish guidance to assist applicants and employers in understanding their rights and responsibilities under the bill.

Testifiers on LB1241:

Proponents:

Senator Dave Murman , Opening Presenter
Loan Eby, Self
Vanessa Chavez Jurado, Stand for Schools



Opponents: None

Neutral: None

Committee vote to attach LB1241:

Yes: 8 Murman, Conrad, Hughes, Hunt, Juarez, Lonowski, Meyer, G., Sanders;

No: 0;

Absent: 0;

Present Not Voting: 0;

LB 1164 (Sections 17-22 of AM 2454)

As amended by AM 2521, LB 1164, introduced by Senator Lonowski, creates the Prior Learning Act and requires the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education to approve and publish a statewide list of prior learning examinations and corresponding cut scores for awarding postsecondary academic credit. The bill requires Nebraska public postsecondary institutions to adopt written policies awarding credit for approved examinations, prioritize the application of such credit toward degree requirements, and annually report data on credits awarded. The amendment further requires the Commission to act in consultation with Nebraska public postsecondary institutions when approving the list of prior learning examinations and determining the corresponding cut scores, requires that such cut scores be set in a manner consistent with national standards, and requires the list and cut scores to be updated as necessary. The amendment also expands the list of commonly recognized prior learning examinations that must be approved by the Commission to include examinations that assess and certify foundational workplace skills and are not associated with a specific high school course. The bill also authorizes the Commission to adopt and promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the act and establishes statewide public reporting requirements.

Testifiers on LB1164:

Proponents:

Senator Dan Lonowski , Opening Presenter

Katie Zulkoski, College Board

Opponents: None

Neutral: None

Committee vote to attach LB1164:

Yes: 8 Murman, Conrad, Hughes, Hunt, Juarez, Lonowski, Meyer, G., Sanders;

No: 0;

Absent: 0;

Present Not Voting: 0;

Section-by-Section Summary of AM 2454:

Section 1. Amends section 28-710 to include definitions for "educational decisionmaker" and "exempt school" under the Child Protection and Family Safety Act and add new section 2 of the bill to the Act. (LB 1224)

Section 2. A new section of law to prohibit the subject of a substantiated child abuse or neglect report from transferring or disenrolling a student from their current school during an investigation, and requires the Department of Health and Human Services to notify the student's school and the Commissioner of Education that any such transfer or election to an exempt school is invalid. The school or commissioner must notify the department if they receive a transfer or disenrollment request during the restricted period. The transfer restriction is lifted upon the filing of a



juvenile court petition or 14 days after notice to the subject, and the department must issue a notice lifting the restriction. All notices are confidential and limited to the student's name and transfer status, and the department may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the section. (LB 1224)

Section 3. Amends section 79-209 to revise when a school district may report a child's absences to the county attorney, requiring that a school shall document unsuccessful efforts to address attendance barriers before making a referral and clarifies that referral may occur only after a child has accrued twenty or more days of unexcused absences during a school year. Specific exceptions are enumerated as to what constitutes an unexcused absence for purposes of referral to the county attorney including: 1) absences excused by a parent, guardian, or educational decisionmaker due to illness qualifies as an excused absence only if a note from a licensed physician, licensed physician assistant, or licensed mental health practitioner verifying the illness is provided; 2) absences by pregnant or parenting students; and 3) absences by students with an individualized family service plan, an individualized education program under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, accommodations or services under section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, special education as defined in section 79-1125, or eligibility for services under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, when such absences are related to the student's plan, services, special education, or program. (LB 1146)

Section 4. Amends section 79-239 to expand the annual required data elements of school district option enrollment information for applications received pursuant to section 79-237 to include information on the number of applications approved and learning community disclosures. (LB 937)

Section 5. Amends section 79-2,136 to include new language that for students desiring to participate in extracurricular activities governed by a national or state organization, other than an athletics or activities association, the school board shall require that the student enroll only in the minimum number of district credit hours as required by such organization, but the board may not prohibit a student from enrolling in more than such minimum number of hours. The section also changes the prohibition of a school board requiring a minimum number of credit hours for participation in extracurricular activities not governed by an athletics or activities association to also apply to such activities not governed by a national or state organization. (LB 1243)

Section 6. Amends section 79-308 by removing obsolete provisions relating to educator-effectiveness grant programs that applied to the 2016-17 through 2020-21 school years. (LB 937)

Section 7. Amends section 79-528 by changing the census reporting deadline from July 20 to October 15, adding reporting requirements related to option enrollment applications and reading deficiencies, and removing obsolete learning community levy reporting provisions relating to learning communities. (LB 937)

Section 8. A new section of law to prohibit school boards and governing authorities of approved or accredited public, private, denominational, or parochial schools from hiring individuals for positions that involved regular contact with students unless specified employment history checks are completed. Applicants must disclose prior employers involving contact with children within the last 7 years, authorize the release of employment records, and provide a statement on any prior child abuse or sexual misconduct investigations, employment separations related to such allegations, or license actions resulting from such allegations.

The section requires a prospective employer to contact each prior employer listed by an applicant to confirm dates of employment and determine whether the applicant was the subject of any reports or actions involving child abuse or sexual misconduct. Applicants who willfully provide false or incomplete information are subject to disciplinary action, including employment denial or termination, license revocation referrals, and a civil penalty up to \$500. Provisional employment for up to ninety days is permitted if the applicant has complied with disclosure requirements, the employer is unaware of disqualifying history, and special or emergent circumstances justify temporary employment.



Employers must immediately terminate or rescind offers if disqualifying information is discovered, and such actions are not subject to grievance or tenure protections. Employers responding to verification requests are granted civil and criminal immunity unless knowingly providing false information. Information obtained pursuant to this section is not considered a public record under the Nebraska public records statutes.

The section also prohibits school boards or governing authorities from entering into agreements that suppress or destroy records related to child abuse or sexual misconduct investigations or findings. Any contract terms requiring record expungement, limiting reporting to authorities, or suppressing such information are void and unenforceable. Finally, the State Department of Education must establish a public awareness campaign and publish guidance to help applicants and employers understand their rights and responsibilities under this section. (LB 1241)

Section 9. Amends section 79-816 to revise completion requirements for the Nebraska Teacher Apprenticeship Program by replacing the pedagogy examination requirement with successful completion of a subject-area examination as determined by the Commissioner of Education. (LB 937)

Section 10. Amends section 79-8,113 by adding a definition of "dual enrollment" under the Nebraska Teacher Recruitment and Retention Act. (LB 937)

Section 11. Amends section 79-8,114 to expand eligibility for high-need retention grants to include teachers who teach at least one dual enrollment course during the 2026-27 school year and changes eligibility provisions for a high-need retention grant for a teacher with an endorsement in special education, mathematics, science, or technology. (LB 937)

Section 12. Amends section 79-1035 to remove obsolete provisions requiring separate accounting for income derived from solar or wind agreements on school lands. (LB 937)

Section 13. Amends § 79-1601 to prohibit individuals from monitoring or instructing students at schools that elect not to meet state accreditation or approval requirements if they have been convicted of a felony under sections 28-319 to 28-322.05, 28-316.01, 28-323, 28-703, or 28-707. (LB 1224)

Section 14. Amends section 79-3407 to change the annual deadline for a school district to submit property tax request authority documentation to the State Department of Education from September 30 to October 15. (LB 937)

Section 15. Amends section 79-3703 to replace references to "a grant" with "funding" under the College Pathway Program Act. (LB 937)

Section 16. Amends section 79-3704 to replace references to "grants" with "funding" under the College Pathway Program Act. (LB 937)

Section 17. Names sections 17 to 22 of the amendment as the Prior Learning Act. (LB 1164)

Section 18. Defines terms used in the Act as follows: 1) Commission refers to the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education; 2) cut score is the minimum score required to receive postsecondary credit; 3) Nebraska postsecondary institution has the same meaning as in section 85-2403; and 4) prior learning examination means a postsecondary-level examination approved by the Commission to determine whether a student has knowledge and skills equivalent to those obtained from a postsecondary course in the same subject. (LB 1164)

Section 19. Directs the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, on or before September 1, 2026, to approve and publish on its website a list of prior learning examinations and the corresponding cut scores required to



receive postsecondary credit from a Nebraska public postsecondary institution, develop such list and scores in consultation with public postsecondary institutions and consistent with national standards, and update the list and cut scores as necessary. The list must include commonly recognized prior learning examinations, including examinations that assess and certify foundational workplace skills and are not associated with a specific high school course. (LB 1164)

Section 20. Requires each Nebraska public postsecondary institution, by October 1, 2026, to adopt written policies for awarding academic credit based on prior learning examinations that award credit to students meeting or exceeding approved cut scores, that prioritize application toward general education and degree requirements, and that provide for transcript documentation and credit transfer, and make such policies publicly available. A Nebraska public postsecondary institution may require higher cut scores with justification and Commission approval. Each institution must submit its policies to the Commission by October 15, 2026, and the Commission shall provide a statewide summary on its website. (LB 1164)

Section 21. Requires each Nebraska public postsecondary institution, beginning December 31, 2027, and annually thereafter, to report data to the Commission regarding the number of students awarded credit based on prior learning examinations, the number and types of credits awarded, the number of credits applied toward degree requirements, and related information. The Commission shall annually compile the data and submit a statewide summary to the Education Committee of the Legislature. (LB 1164)

Section 22. Authorizes the Commission to adopt and promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the Prior Learning Act. (LB 1164)

Section 23. Repealer.

Section 24. Outright repeal of sections 79-309.01 and 79-718, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, relating to obsolete solar and wind agreements and the Junior Mathematics Prognosis Examination. (LB 937)

Dave Murman, Chairperson

