

Secondary Newcomers and SLIFE Students (Rule 19)

Executive Summary

David Schlotterback

Emporia State University

IT899

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This eLearning training solution was conceived as a response to a critical gap in resources and recommended practices for educators and district leaders supporting the integration of Newcomer and SLIFE (Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education) students into Nebraska school districts. This project, initiated by Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), aimed to bridge this gap by providing a centralized online training platform to assist districts statewide. The course is designed to inform district leaders about available resources, ensure alignment with state compliance requirements, and provide guidance on effective implementation strategies. It also outlines appropriate protocols and highlights the rights of these students as established in Nebraska State Statute 79-201.

Guided by the ADDIE model while incorporating Backward Design during the Design phase, this instructional design approach centered on engaging learners through Constructivist learning theory. The project integrated authentic scenarios and artificial intelligence to create an interactive experience that delivers practical guidance and resources to support district-level implementation. The scenario-based learning was designed using a Constructivist approach, recognizing that each Nebraska district has varying supports and resources. Learners are encouraged to draw upon their own district-specific experiences when responding to the quiz questions within the scenario-based segments of the course.

The pilot study, involving four secondary educators in Nebraska, consisted of participants accessing the full version of the course, which was delivered through the Instructure Canvas Learning Management System (LMS). The course featured four in-depth modules, each broken into smaller, manageable sections to minimize cognitive load and enhance knowledge retention.

The primary objective of the pilot was to assess the course's effectiveness in achieving its learning outcomes and to collect participant feedback on overall satisfaction of the training event.

The pilot study yielded promising results, with participants expressing high levels of satisfaction. Feedback highlighted the user-friendly nature of the LMS and the effectiveness of the scenario-based instruction integrated into the course. The layout within the LMS was the central concern among participants which is detailed in the final report.

This project represents a meaningful advancement in supporting the successful integration of students entering Nebraska school districts, particularly in areas where educators may lack sufficient resources. The long-term benefits for Newcomer and SLIFE students—and their families—will help create a more positive and inclusive educational experience as they transition into their new learning environments.