

WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ~ DISTRICT 66

Board of Education Meeting and FY27 Property Tax Request Public Hearing Minutes

September 22, 2026

The Board of Education of School District 66 was convened in an open and public session on September 22, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the District Administration Office, 909 S. 76th St., Omaha, Nebraska.

Board members present: Kris Karnes, President
Meagan Van Gelder, Vice President
Sarah Rider, Treasurer
Stephanie Adams, Secretary
Adam Yale, Director

Board member absent (excused): Sean Conway, Treasurer-Elect

Notice of the meeting was given by placing advance notice on the front page of the District's website no less than 48 hours in advance of the scheduled commencement of the meeting as authorized by Board Policy 1220. Notice for this meeting appeared beginning on September 9, 2026, and appeared continuously up through the start of this board meeting. Notice of the meeting was also published in the Daily Record on September 3 and 4, 2026, and on their website at omahadailyrecord.com, as well as the NE Press Association website at nepublicnotices.com. An additional notice specifically for the FY27 Property Tax Request Public Hearing portion of the meeting agenda was posted in the Daily Record and on the NE Press Association website on 9/14, 9/15, 9/16, 9/18 and 9/21, 2026. Copies of proof of publication are attached to the official minutes. Notice of this meeting and the availability of the agenda was simultaneously given to all members of the Board of Education and available to anyone at the Board of Education office. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

District Staff in Attendance: Mike Lucas, Mark Weichel, Andrea Haynes, Brian Gabrial, Nick Lesiak, Molly Hurley, Matt Lee, Kami Jessop, Kim De La Cruz, Kelcy Tapp, Laura Mann, Elizabeth Power, Robert Aranda, Michelle Patterson.

Others in Attendance*: Mindy Filipi, Caleb Van Weelden, Elizabeth Watkins, Steve Likes, Shawn Dobbs.

*Members of the public are not required to identify themselves to attend. Attendee names appearing in these minutes are those who signed a voluntary sign-in sheet.

Ms. Karnes called the FY27 Property Tax Public Hearing and Board Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. She welcomed those in attendance and confirmed that public notice had been given of the meeting under the Nebraska Open Meetings Act and that a copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was posted at the meeting and on the district website, as required by law. She acknowledged that the meeting had been publicly announced and the agenda was available to any interested parties. Attendance is noted above. Ms. Karnes requested a motion to approve an excused absence for Sean Conway. Dr. Van Gelder moved for approval; Mr. Yale seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Hearing: FY27 Property Tax Request

Ms. Karnes stated that the purpose of the Public Hearing is to hear opposition, support, or observations regarding the setting of the Property Tax Requests for the Westside Community School District 66 as

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certified for the District by the Douglas County Clerk. Any resolution setting, altering, or amending of any tax request as a result of this hearing shall be forwarded to the Douglas County Clerk in accordance with Nebraska Revenue Statutes Section 77-1601.02. Mr. Brian Gabrial, District Officer of Business and Finance reviewed the following valuations, tax needs and recommended levies for FY27:

Valuations: Property: \$5,361,828,600, an increase of 2.67%; Real Estate: \$5,187,853,965, an increase of 3.41%; Personal Business: \$95,018,610, a decrease of 29.39%; and State Assessed Valuation: \$78,956,025, an increase of 10.78%.

Tax Needs: General Fund: \$41.8M; Bond Fund: \$11.7M; and Special Building Fund: \$3.9M.

Recommended Levies: \$0.7788 in the General Fund; \$0.2190 in the Bond Fund; and \$0.0719 in the Special Building Fund, for a total of \$1.0697. This levy rate is a decrease of \$0.0047 cents, or 0.4%.

Ms. Karnes invited questions or comments from the Board, as well as from those in attendance, regarding the FY27 proposed Property Tax request. There were no questions from the Board and no comments from those in attendance. Copies of Mr. Gabrial's Executive Summary and slide presentation are included in the board documents folder.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Karnes requested a motion for approval of the minutes from the Board of Education Meeting and FY27 Budget Public Hearing held on September 8, 2026. Dr. Van Gelder for approval; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Rider presented the treasurer's report for August 2026 and moved for approval of expenditures in the amount of \$12,062,619; Mr. Yale seconded. August 2026 financial reports (financial statements, general fund disbursement summary and general fund check register) are included in the board documents folder.

Communications

Ms. Elizabeth Power, Director of Communications and Community Engagement, welcomed representatives of Red Shield, a student-led club at Westside High School that supports and promotes sportsmanship and school spirit at athletic events, pep rallies and other school assemblies. Senior student leaders presenting were: Dylan F., Jaydyn M., Rachel R., Calista P., and Taytum P. They were joined by their club sponsor, Ms. Kalen Carlson, WHS Business Teacher.

School Update: Hillside Elementary

Ms. Michelle Patterson, Hillside Elementary Principal, shared great news about Hillside! A copy of Ms. Patterson's School Update is included in the board documents folder.

Consideration of Resolution Authorizing the Creation of the Westside Educational Facilities Leasing Corporation and authorizing the District to enter into one or more lease purchase financings with said Corporation in an aggregate principal amount of not to exceed \$8,250,000, for the purpose of leasing certain educational facilities and equipment from the Corporation

Dr. Lucas shared that the Board's approval of this resolution is the next step in the process of making important renovations and upgrades to the middle school track and field. Ms. Adams moved for approval of a resolution ratifying, confirming and approving the formation of the Westside Educational Facilities Leasing Corporation and the assistance of such corporation in providing for the financing of facilities for use by the District; authorizing the District to undertake one or more lease or lease-purchase financings for the acquisition, construction, improvement and equipping of certain educational facilities for use by Douglas County School District 0066 (Westside Community Schools) in the State of Nebraska; authorizing the execution and delivery by the District and the Corporation of documents relating to such financings; authorizing District officers and Corporation officers to determine the amount, payments and dates, effective interest rates, prepayment provisions and other terms and details of such financings, all subject to the parameters set forth herein; designating the financings as qualified tax-exempt obligations; adopting certain post-issuance tax compliance policies and procedures with respect to the financings; and authorizing certain actions and documents and prescribing other matters relating thereto; Dr. Van Gelder seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote; Ms. Karnes abstained. Copies of the Executive Summary and Resolution are included in the board documents folder.

Approval of Design Development for the WMS Track and Field Renovation Project

Mr. Matt Herzog with Project Advocates, Ms. Mindy Filipi with Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture, and Mr. Caleb Van Weelden with Lamp Rynearson Engineering, presented the Design Development plans for the Westside Middle School Track and Field renovation project for board approval. After presenting the schematic design at the August 24th Board Meeting, the team made slight modifications to the west entry driveway (lowering the retaining wall height) and the material selection for the concession / restroom building. Furthermore, grandstand seating capacity was adjusted from 1,000 seats to 980 seats, which will provide 24 ADA seats and 80 companion seats. Completion of the project design is projected for November 2026, with bidding in December 2026. Construction is scheduled to begin in May 2027, with the field and track substantially completed before the start of the 2027-28 school year. The track surface is expected to be finished in August 2027, and the concession/restroom building in December 2027. Dr. Van Gelder moved for approval; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. Copies of the Executive Summary and project slide presentation are included in the board documents folder.

Preview of New Strategic Plan Dashboard on District Website

Dr. Mark Weichel, Assistant Superintendent for Strategic Initiatives and Innovation, displayed highlights of the new Strategic Plan dashboard that is available on the district website. The new dashboard can display whole numbers, bar graphs, infographics, PDF documents, District webpages, and other resources that provide a transparent and clear picture of progress for all strategic plan goals and priorities. As with the previous strategic plan, a district-level administrator serves as the "owner" of every strategy under each of the four strategic plan goals and is responsible for monitoring progress and identifying information that

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best demonstrates progress toward their specific strategy. A copy of Dr. Weichel's Executive Summary is included in the board documents folder. [Click Here for Link to Strategic Plan Dashboard.](#)

Approval of FY27 Budget

Mr. Brian Gabriel, District Officer of Business and Finance, presented the 2026-2027 budget for approval. The Budget Public Hearing was held on September 8, 2025. The budget is due to the State Auditor, the County Clerk and NDE on September 30, 2026.

Mr. Yale moved for approval of the **General Fund budget** for the 2026-2027 fiscal year in the amount of \$111,113,378.08 calling for a local real property tax need of \$41,339,144.67 plus 1% County Treasurer Collection Fee of \$417,567 for a total of \$41,756,711.67; Ms. Adams seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Ms. Adams moved for approval of the **Employee Benefit Fund** budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year in the amount of \$30,000 calling for a local real property tax need of \$0; Dr. Van Gelder seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Dr. Van Gelder moved for approval of the **Activities Fund budget** for the 2026-2027 year in the amount of \$2,000,000 calling for a local real property tax need of \$0; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Ms. Rider moved for approval of the **School Nutrition Fund budget** for the 2026-2027 fiscal year in the amount of \$8,495,834.72 calling for a local real property tax need of \$0; Mr. Yale seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Mr. Yale moved for approval of the **Bond Fund budget** for the 2026-2027 fiscal year in the amount of \$11,795,489.25 call for a local real property tax need of \$11,624,980.59 plus 1% County Treasurer Collection Fee of \$117,424 for a total of \$11,742,404.59; Ms. Adams seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Ms. Adams moved for approval of the **Special Building Fund budget** for the 2026-2027 fiscal year in the amount of \$51,248,795.78 calling for a local real property tax need of \$3,815,567.05 plus the 1% County Treasurer Collection Fee of \$38,541 for a total of \$3,854,108.05; Dr. Van Gelder seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Dr. Van Gelder moved for approval of the **Student Fee Fund budget** for the 2026-2027 fiscal year in the amount of \$300,000 calling for a local real property tax need of \$0; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Board Policies for Approval (#4470, #6100)

Mr. Nick Lesiak, District In-House Legal Counsel, presented revisions to policies 4470 (*Recognition of Service*) and 6100 (*Accreditation*) for approval. Both policies were previously presented for board discussion at the September 8, 2026, Board of Education meeting. Updates to both policies reflect minor revisions to standardized terms. Mr. Yale moved for approval of revisions to policy 4470; Ms. Adams seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. Dr. Van Gelder moved for approval of revisions to

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policy 6100; Mr. Yale seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. Redline copies of each policy and the Executive Summary are included in the board documents folder.

Nutrition Services Annual Update (Written Report)

Mr. Erin Vik, Director of Nutrition Services, prepared the Nutrition Services Annual Update (Policy 3400) It was submitted as a written report for the Board's review.

Public Comment: There were two requests for public comment: Chase Piper, shock gloves still being allowed in WCS; Elizabeth "Lizi" Watkins, SROs.

Board Member Representation / Legislative Updates / Announcements

The Board was represented at a number of activities and meetings, including: Westside Community Schools Homecoming Parade and Pep Rally; Alumni Association Homecoming Tailgate; Homecoming Football game and fireworks; 3:1 meetings with Dr. Lucas.

Ms. Karnes reviewed the following upcoming activities:

October 5, 2026	Board of Education Meeting - ABC Building - 6:00 p.m.
October 7, 2026	Parent / Teacher Conferences - 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.
October 8, 2026	Parent / Teacher Conferences - 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (No School for Students)
October 9, 2026	Fall Break - No School
October 12, 2026	Professional Development Day (No School for Students)
October 13, 2026	Bond Oversight Committee Meeting - ABC Building - 6:00 p.m.
October 17, 2026	VI-VI - CHI Center - 5:30 p.m.

There being no further business, Ms. Karnes adjourned the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Secretary, Board of Education

**WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
MEETING NOTICE**

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9/3, 9/4 ZNEZ



The Daily Record

Proof of Publication

JASON W. HUFF, Publisher

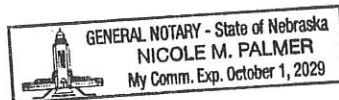
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, }
The State of Nebraska, } ss.
District of Nebraska,
County of Douglas,
City of Omaha

JASON W. HUFF, being duly sworn, deposes and say that they are the PUBLISHER and/or MANAGING EDITOR of THE DAILY RECORD, of Omaha, a legal newspaper, printed and published daily in the English language, having a bona fide paid circulation in Douglas County in excess of 300 copies, and a general circulation in Sarpy, Lancaster, Cass and Dodge Counties, printed in Omaha, in said County of Douglas, Nebraska for more than fifty-two weeks last past; that the printed notice here-to attached was published in THE DAILY RECORD, of Omaha, for 2 consecutive weeks on:

9/3/26

9/4/26

That said Newspaper during that time was regularly published and in general circulation in the County of Douglas, and State of Nebraska.



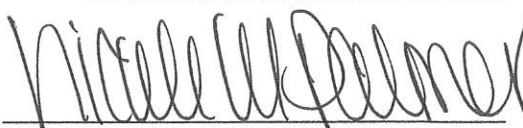
Publisher's Fee \$37.38

Additional Copies \$

Filing Fee \$

Total \$37.38

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this SEPTEMBER 04 2026


Notary Public in and for
Douglas County, State of Nebraska

Notice of Special Hearing To Set Final Tax Request

Westside Community Schools (28-0066) in Douglas County, Nebraska

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given, in compliance with the provisions of State Statute Section 77-1632, that the governing body will meet on the 22nd day of September 2026 at 6 o'clock PM, at 909 South 76th Street, Omaha, NE for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions or observations of taxpayers relating to setting the final tax request.

Property Valuations	2025-2026	2026-2027	Change
	5,222,388,240	5,351,823,600	2.67%

2025-2026 Budget Information

Fund	2025-2026 Operating Budget	2025-2026 Property Tax Request	2025-2026 Tax Rate	Property Tax Rate Divided By 2026 Valuation	2026-2027 Operating Budget	2026-2027 Proposed Property Tax Request	2026-2027 Proposed Tax Rate	Change in Tax Rate	Change in Operating Budget
General Fund	106,537,653.00	41,401,769.27	0.792775	0.772158	111,113,376.08	41,756,711.67	0.778777	-2%	4%
Bond Fund(s) K-12	14,051,643.08	11,437,029.94	0.219600	0.213305	11,795,482.25	11,742,404.59	0.215000	0%	-16%
Bond Fund(s) K-8			0.000000	0.000000			0.000000	#DIV/0!	
Bond Fund(s) 9-12			0.000000	0.000000			0.000000	#DIV/0!	
Bond Fund			0.000000	0.000000			0.000000	#DIV/0!	
Special Building Fund	65,590,391.54	3,266,526.94	0.052549	0.060922	51,248,795.79	3,854,108.05	0.071850	15%	-40%
Qualified Capital Purpose Underwriting Fund K-12			0.000000	0.000000			0.000000	#DIV/0!	
Qualified Capital Purpose Underwriting Fund K-8			0.000000	0.000000			0.000000	#DIV/0!	
Qualified Capital Purpose Underwriting Fund 9-12			0.000000	0.000000			0.000000	#DIV/0!	
Total	206,179,887.62	56,105,346.15	1.074324	1.046385	174,157,663.11	57,353,224.31	1.069557	0%	-16%

2026-2027 Budget Information

9/14, 9/15, 9/16, 9/17, 9/18

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
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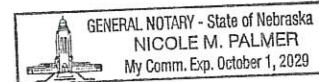
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9/14/26 9/15/26 9/16/26

9/17/26 9/18/26

That said Newspaper during that time was regularly published and in general circulation in the County of Douglas, and State of Nebraska.



Publisher's Fee \$420.97

Additional Copies \$ _____

Filing Fee \$ _____

Total \$420.97

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before
me this SEPTEMBER 18 2026

Notary Public in and for
Douglas County, State of Nebraska

Omaha Daily Record

THE DAILY RECORD

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Notice Publish Date:

Friday, September 04, 2026

Notice Content

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9/3, 9/4 ZNEZ

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Notice Publish Date:

Monday, September 21, 2026

Notice Content

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WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS - 9/14

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2025-20262026-2027 Change Property Valuations 5,222,388,240 | 5,361,828,600 | 2.67%|

2025-2026 Budget Information 2026-2027 Budget Information

FundOpe2r0a2ti5n-g2 0B2u6dgetP2r0oRp2ee5qr-t2uy0e T2sta6 xTa2x0 R25ate (2P02r2o05pD2-e6i2vr 0tViyd2a eT6ldu aR axBet iRyqoauunte) e stOpe2r0a2ti6n-g2 0B2u7dget ProTp2ao0xs2 eR6de- 2qP0ur2oe7pste rtyPTrao2xp0 oR2sa6eted CinhR aaTntaegx eCOhBpauendraggteein ti gn

General Fund 106,537,653.00 41,401,789.27 0.792775 0.772158 111,113,378.08 41,756,711.67 0.778777 -2 % 4 % Bond Fund(s) K-12 14,051,843.08 11,437,029.94 0.219000 0.213305 11,795,489.25 11,742,404.59 0.219000 0 % -16% Bond Fund(s) K-8 0.000000 0.000000 0.000000 #DIV/0! 0 Bond Fund(s) 9-12 0.000000 0.000000 0.000000 #DIV/0! 0 Bond Fund 0.000000 0.000000 0.000000 #DIV/0! 0 Special Building Fund 85,590,391.54 3,266,528.94 0.062549 0.060922 51,248,795.78 3,854,108.05 0.071880 15 % -40 % UQnudaelifrtieadk inCga pFituanld P uK rp-o1s2 e0.000000 0.000000 0.000000 #DIV/0! 0 UQnudaelifrtieadk inCga pFituanld P uK rp-o8 se0.000000 0.000000 0.000000 #DIV/0! 0 UQnudaelifrtieadk iCnga pFituanld P u9rp-o12s e0.000000 0.000000 0.000000 #DIV/0! 0

Total 206,179,887.62 56,105,348.15 1.074324 1.046385 174,157,663.11 57,353,224.31 1.069657 0 % -16%

9/14, 9/15, 9/16, 9/18, 9/21 ZNEZ

