

WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ~ DISTRICT 66
Board of Education Meeting Minutes ~ November 18, 2024

The Board of Education of School District 66 was convened in an open and public session on November 18, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at Westside High School, 8701 Pacific St., Omaha, Nebraska.

Board members present:

- Dana Blakely, President
- Adam Yale, Vice President
- Sarah Rider, Secretary
- Kris Karnes, Treasurer
- Meagan Van Gelder, Treasurer-Elect
- Beth Morrissette, Director

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 November 5, 2024, and appeared continuously up through the start of this board meeting. Notice of the meeting was also published in the Daily Record on November 15 and 18, 2024, and on their website. 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 Gabriel, Nick Lesiak, Molly Hurley, Kim De La Cruz, Kelcy Tapp, Laura Mann, Becky Lowther, Paul Lindgren, Garret Higginbotham, Quinn McGuire.

Others in Attendance*: Carolyn Roeder. *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. Blakely called the Board of Education Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. She welcomed those in attendance and confirmed with Ms. Hurley 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. Board Meeting attendance is noted above. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Blakely requested a motion for approval of the minutes from the Board of Education Meeting held on November 4, 2024. Mr. Yale moved for approval; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote; Ms. Karnes abstained.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Karnes presented the treasurer's report for October 2024 and moved for approval of expenditures in the amount of \$15,397,557; Mr. Yale seconded. Approval of expenditures was passed by unanimous roll call vote. Copies of the October 2024 financial reports (financial statements, general fund disbursement summary and general fund check register) are included in the board documents folder.

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Communications

Ms. Elizabeth Power, Director of Communications and Engagement, advised the board that the community will be receiving messages regarding: the upcoming Property Tax Symposium that the district is hosting on Tuesday, December 3rd, at Westside High School (hamburgers at 5:30pm, symposium and Q&A at 6:00pm); and the annual "Snow Day / Inclement Weather" message.

Annual District Audit Report

Ms. Jamie Fay, CPA, Eide Bailly LLP, presented the annual district audit report. Ms. Fay, who presented virtually, expressed appreciation for the assistance and responsiveness of District staff in handling requests for information that were made during the audit process, which was done remotely again this year. She advised that the District received a "clean, unmodified audit opinion", with no misstatements and fairly presented. Continued vigilance in budgeting allowed the District to realize an increase of \$4,333,091 to the General Fund. Other significant changes from last year were an increase in the Bond Fund (due to the voter-approved \$121M Bond in May 2023); and a decrease in the Nutrition Services Fund, an impact seen across the country due to the end of COVID funding for schools by the USDA. Copies of the Audit Report and Ms. Fay's keynote presentation are included in the board meeting documents folder.

Academic Report: WHS IT Fundamentals

Ms. Kim De La Cruz, Director of Secondary Teaching and Learning, welcomed Ms. Abby Langner, Business Teacher at Westside High School, who presented an academic report on IT Fundamentals that covers computer programming. The high school Business and Information Technology team identified programming as its most essential unit, and IT Fundamentals is an elective course that students (starting with the Class of 2027) can take to meet the computer science / technology graduation requirement. Ms. Langner reviewed the course standards and coding and programming indicators, along with the lessons and activities that align with the course standards. Copies of the Executive Summary and Ms. Langner's presentation are included in the board documents folder.

Phase II Bond Project: Approval of Design Development for Paddock Road Elementary Addition

Mr. Matt Herzog, Project Advocates, and Ms. Erin Froschheiser, Leo A. Daly, presented the Design Development plans for the Paddock Road Elementary addition project for board approval. Leo A. Daly was approved by the Board of Education for the Paddock Road project on April 22, 2024. The Board of Education approved the Concept Design presented on September 3, 2024. Since that time, Leo A. Daly has continued to work closely with the Paddock Road Design Advisory Committee and District staff to create the Design Development package for the Paddock Road addition. Construction is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2025. Staff and students will remain in the building during construction. Dr. Van Gelder moved for approval; Ms. Morrissette seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. Copies of the Executive Summary and powerpoint presentation are included in the board documents folder.

Phase II Bond Project: Approval of CMR Contract for Paddock Road Elementary Addition

Mr. Herzog requested board approval of the Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) Contract for the Paddock Road Elementary addition project. The Board approved the Construction Manager at Risk construction delivery method for this project at their meeting on September 16, 2024.

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A Request for Qualifications for Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) was publicly advertised and posted to the District website on September 17, 2024. Five firms submitted Statements of Qualifications on October 18, 2024. Three firms were selected to interview with the CMR Selection Committee. The selection committee conducted interviews on October 30, 2024, and chose Meco-Henne Contracting as the CMR for the project. A Notice to Proceed with CMR Negotiations authorization letter to begin preconstruction services while this final contract was being negotiated (with assistance from Project Advocates) was approved by the Board on November 4, 2024. The final contract is being presented for approval. No modifications were made from the District standard contract. Ms. Karnes moved for approval; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Phase II Bond Project: Approval of CMR Contract for Rockbrook Elementary Addition

Mr. Herzog requested board approval of the Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) Contract for the Rockbrook Elementary addition project. The Board approved the Construction Manager at Risk construction delivery method for this project at their meeting on September 16, 2024. A Request for Qualifications for Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) was publicly advertised and posted to the District website on September 17, 2024. Four firms submitted Statements of Qualifications on October 18, 2024. Three firms were selected to interview with the CMR Selection Committee. The selection committee conducted interviews on October 31, 2024, and selected Prairie Construction as the CMR for the project. A Notice to Proceed with CMR Negotiations authorization letter to begin preconstruction services while this final contract was being negotiated (with assistance from Project Advocates) was approved by the Board on November 4, 2024. The final contract is being presented for approval. No modifications were made from the District standard contract. Ms. Rider moved for approval; Mr. Yale seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Computer Science and Technology Annual Curriculum Report

Ms. Kim De La Cruz, Director of Secondary Teaching and Learning, presented an informational report to the board regarding Computer Science and Technology curriculum. In the Spring of 2022, the Nebraska Legislature passed the Computer Science and Technology Education Act that requires (beginning with the 2025-2026 school year):

- Public school districts to include computer science and technology education in the instructional programs of its elementary and middle schools, as appropriate;
- Students in the graduating class of 2028 (current 9th graders) in public schools to complete at least one course in computer science and technology (as defined by Nebraska State Statute 79-3303) as a graduation requirement; and,
- Public school districts provide an annual computer science and technology education status report to its local Board of Education and the State Board of Education.

While the report is not required until December 2026, because of the changes that WCS has made with the graduation policy the last couple of years related to the Legislature's actions in spring 2022 and spring 2023, we started presenting the report last year. Ms. De La Cruz reviewed the district's timeline related to the Computer Science and Technology Education Act. A copy of the Executive Summary is included in the board documents folder.

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New Courses at Westside High School for the 2025-2026 School Year

Ms. De La Cruz reviewed three new courses that will be offered at Westside High School in the 2025-2026 school year: AP Modern World History; Advanced Robotics (Honors); and Honors Algebra 1. Ms. De La Cruz also reviewed three course name changes to: better align with state 4-year colleges (Pre-Calculus to College Algebra); align with state course codes (Advanced Algebra Honors to Algebra 2 Honors and Advanced Algebra to Algebra 2); and better reflect a widened scope of the course (Mindfulness and Positive Psychology to Methods of Mind Mastery). A copy of the Executive Summary is included in the board documents folder.

Approval of Bid for WHS Main Gym Bleacher Replacement Project

Mr. Andy Wane, Director of Facilities, requested board approval of the bid from the AdScreen Group (in the amount of \$240,250) for demolition and replacement of the WHS Main Gym Bleachers. Four bids were received for this project, and the low bid was submitted by AdScreen. They have completed similar projects at area high schools, including a recent project at Millard South High School. The expected substantial completion date of this project is projected to be July 25, 2025. Mr. Yale moved for approval; Dr. Van Gelder seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. A copy of the Executive Summary and bid information is included in the board documents folder.

Board Policies for Approval (#5340; #5360)

Mr. Nick Lesiak, In-House Legal Counsel, presented revisions to policies 5340 and 5360 for board approval. Previously presented for discussion and consideration at the Board Meeting on November 4, 2024, revisions to both policies are updates to policy language.

Policy #5340 - Vehicles (*Students*) - Mr. Yale moved for approval of revisions to policy 5340; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Policy #5360 - Student Lockers (*Students*) - Dr. Van Gelder moved for approval of revisions to policy 5360; 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.

Board Policies for Review (#5180; #5450)

Mr. Lesiak presented proposed language revisions to existing policies #5180 - School Dismissal (*Students*) and #5450 - Freedom of Expression (*Students*) for board discussion and consideration. Both policies will be presented again for approval at the Board of Education Meeting on December 9, 2024. Redline copies of each policy and the Executive Summary are included in the board documents folder.

Personnel Report: Employment Actions Related to the Contracts of Certified Staff Members

Dr. Andrea Haynes, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and District Operations, presented the personnel report (one certified staff probationary contract and two certified staff retirements) for board approval. Ms. Rider moved for approval; Mr. Yale seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. A copy of the personnel report is included in the board documents folder.

Legislative Priorities for the 2025 Legislative Session

Dr. Lucas presented the District's Legislative Priorities for the 2025 Legislative Session for board approval. One new priority that has been added is the support of legislation that will aid in recruiting and retaining high quality staff. Other priorities that carry over from previous years include: support for current school district boundaries and processes; support for a school finance model that is predictable and sustainable without limiting the current levy authority; support of the current net option aspect of the state's funding formula; and opposition to any funding made available to any entities that are not subject to the same accountability and standards as Nebraska public schools. The 2025 Legislative Session convenes on January 8, 2025. Ms. Rider moved for approval; Dr. Van Gelder seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. A copy of the Executive Summary is included in the board documents folder.

Public Comment: There were no requests for Public Comment.

Board Member Representation / Legislative Updates / Announcements

The Board was represented at a number of activities and meetings, including: NDE & Governor Teacher Apprenticeship Media Event at Paddock Road on November 6th; Rockbrook Community Meeting on November 7th; Bond Oversight Committee Meeting on November 11th; WE-SIDE Community Walk at Munroe Meyer Institute on November 14th; Children's Hospital Gala on November 16th; WMS production of Shrek Jr.; BOE Policy Review subcommittee meeting; Rockbrook school visit; Westbrook CMR shortlist; WE-SIDE Steering Committee meeting; Teaching and Learning Key Communicators meeting; and Football playoff games on November 8th and 15th. Ms. Blakely reviewed upcoming activities:

- November 19, 2024 Westbrook Elementary Phase II Project Community Meeting - 6:00 p.m.
- November 20-22, 2024 State Education Conference - CHI Center
- November 27-29, 2024 Thanksgiving Break - No School
- December 3, 2024 Property Tax Symposium and Q&A (WCS, Douglas County, Papio NRD, Others)
 - Westside High School, 8702 Pacific St.
 - Hamburgers & Hot Dogs at 5:30 p.m.
 - Symposium and Q&A - 6:00-7:30 p.m.
- December 9, 2024 Board of Education Meeting - Westside High School - 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business, Ms. Blakely adjourned the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

Dana Blakely (BOARD PRESIDENT) FOR SARAH RIDER
Sarah Rider, Secretary, Board of Education

**WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given of a Board of Education Meeting for Westside Community Schools, District 66, Douglas County, in the State of Nebraska, to be held **November 18, 2024**, at **6:00 p.m.** at **Westside High School, 8701 Pacific St., Omaha, NE**. The agenda, continually kept current, is available at the District Office. The meeting is open to the public.

11/15, 11/18 ZNEZ



Proof of Publication

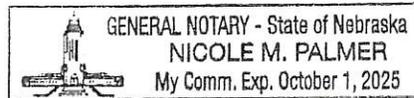
JASON W. HUFF, Publisher

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

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:

11/15/24 11/18/24

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 \$26.18 *Jason W. Huff*

Additional Copies \$ _____ Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this NOVEMBER 22 2024

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Total \$26.18 *Nicole M. Palmer*
Notary Public in and for
Douglas County, State of Nebraska

