

WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ~ DISTRICT 66
Board of Education Meeting Minutes ~ September 22, 2025

The Board of Education of School District 66 was convened in an open and public session on September 22, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the District Administration Office, 909 S. 76th St., Omaha, Nebraska.

Board members present:

- Adam Yale, President
- Kris Karnes, Vice President
- Meagan Van Gelder, Treasurer
- Sarah Rider, Treasurer-Elect
- Beth Morrisette, Secretary
- Dana Blakely, 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 September 9, 2025, and appeared continuously up through the start of this board meeting. Notice of the meeting was also published in the Daily Record on September 19 and 22, 2025, and on their website at omahadailyrecord.com, as well as the NE Press Association website at nepublicnotices.com. 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, Robert Aranda, Matt Lee.

Others in Attendance*: Diane Cahill, Stephanie Adams. *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.

Immediately following adjournment of the FY26 Property Tax Public Hearing, Mr. Yale called the Board of Education Meeting to order at 6:13 p.m. He 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. He 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

Mr. Yale requested a motion for approval of the minutes from the Board of Education FY25 Budget Public Hearing held on September 8, 2025. Ms. Rider moved for approval; Ms. Blakely seconded. Ms. Morrisette abstained. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Mr. Yale requested a motion for approval of the minutes from the Board of Education Meeting held on September 8, 2025. Ms. Karnes moved for approval; Dr. Van Gelder seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

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Treasurer's Report

Dr. Van Gelder presented the treasurer's report for August 2025 and moved for approval of expenditures in the amount of \$14,588,580; Ms. Morrisette seconded. Approval of expenditures was passed by unanimous roll call vote. Copies of the August 2025 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 Engagement, welcomed student representatives of the HOPE Squad from the high school, who shared about the club's mission, which is to implement impactful prevention strategies to reduce the risks of suicide. HOPE Squad members are trained to note signs of distress, and use peer-to-peer engagement and outreach activities to connect with and educate the student body to reduce the stigma of mental health. There is also a HOPE Squad at Westside Middle School and Rockbrook Elementary. HOPE Squads are in thousands of schools across the country, empowering students to help save lives.

Phase II Bond Project: Approval of Fluid Cooler Purchase Order for Westside High School

Mr. Matt Herzog, Project Advocates, requested approval of the Fluid Cooler Purchase Order in the amount of \$622,900 for Westside High School as part of the Phase II HVAC improvements at Westside High School. Mr. Herzog was joined by Mr. Andrew Gilliam of Morrissey Engineering to review the recommendation for the installation of a fluid cooler that will supplement the existing geothermal well field system (located under the baseball field). The well field system's energy return has diminished since it was installed in 1998. The fluid cooler will extend the life of the well field and supplement the heating and cooling system at the high school. Once approved, construction drawings will be issued for bid in October 2025; construction would begin in early 2026. Ms. Morrisette moved for approval; Ms. Blakely seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Nutrition Services Annual Report (Policy 3400)

Mr. Erin Vic, Director of Nutrition Services, presented the annual update on Nutrition Services, per policy 3400. Mr. Vic reviewed Average Daily Participation (ADP) numbers and comparisons of 2023-2024 to 2024-2025; updates to Contracted Meal Services (added St. Patrick's Catholic School in 2024-2025) and Access66 Catering (provided 3700 plus after-school meals, as well as box lunches for Film Streams educational programs). He also highlighted new requirements of the National School Lunch Program that include tracking all food items that are not produced within the continental United States, as well as added sugar limitations. Copies of the Executive Summary and slide presentation are included in the board documents folder.

Approval of FY26 Budget

Mr. Brian Gabriel, District Officer of Business and Finance, presented the 2025-2026 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, 2025.

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Ms. Blakely moved for approval of the **General Fund budget** for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in the amount of \$106,537,653.00 calling for a local real property tax need of \$40,987,772.27 plus 1% County Treasurer Collection Fee of \$414,017 for a total of \$41,401,789.27; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Ms. Rider moved for approval of the **Employee Benefit Fund budget** for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in the amount of \$54,071.06 calling for a local real property tax need of \$0; Ms. Karnes seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Ms. Karnes moved for approval of the **Activities Fund budget** for the 2025-2026 year in the amount of \$2,000,000 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 **School Nutrition Fund budget** for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in the amount of \$8,173,235.05 calling for a local real property tax need of \$0; Ms. Morrissette seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Ms. Morrissette moved for approval of the **Bond Fund budget** for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in the amount of \$11,351,843.08 calling for a local real property tax need of \$11,322,659.94 plus 1% County Treasurer Collection Fee of \$114,370 for a total of \$11,437,029.94; Ms. Blakely seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Ms. Blakely moved for approval of the **Special Building Fund budget** for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in the amount of \$85,590,391.54 calling for a local real property tax need of \$3,233,863.94 plus the 1% County Treasurer Collection Fee of \$32,665 for a total of \$3,266,528.94; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Ms. Rider moved for approval of the **Student Fee Fund budget** for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in the amount of \$300,000 calling for a local real property tax need of \$0; Ms. Karnes seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. A copy of the Executive Summary is included in the board documents folder.

Update on District 66 Census Process

Dr. Mike Lucas shared that the District will be re-introducing the district census process to the community with the launch of a "Count Us In" campaign beginning next month. Nebraska State Laws' 79-524, 79-528, and 79-578 require that all Nebraska School Districts gather information on the number of children living within their school district boundaries; and the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) requires school districts to report annually a count of all children between the ages of 5-18 that live within their district boundaries. The campaign will include messaging that explains the importance of the census, and what the district does and doesn't do with the information that will be collected. There will also be a "Count Us In" census website link that people can access and enter their data into. More information will be forthcoming in the weeks ahead and will also be shared at Parent-Teacher Conferences in October. A copy of the Executive Summary is included in the board documents folder.

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Board Policies for Approval

Mr. Lesiak requested approval of the following two policies that were previously presented for Board discussion and consideration on September 8, 2025:

#5600 - Student Government (Students) - Minor updates to defined terms. Ms. Karnes moved for approval; Dr. Van Gelder seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

#6135 - Multicultural Education (Instruction) - Recommended revisions that are in line with KSB's policy book. Mr. Lesiak displayed an updated version of the proposed revisions, with additional descriptive language under the heading "Philosophy, Mission and Program Goals". Dr. Van Gelder moved for approval; Ms. Morrissette seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Copies of the Executive Summary and each policy are included in the board documents folder.

Board Policies for Review

Mr. Lesiak presented one new policy and proposed revisions to one existing policy for board consideration and discussion.

#5250 - Rights of Custodial and Non-Custodial Parents (Students) - Proposed new policy.

#5310 - Bullying and Dating Violence (Students) - Language revisions to existing policy, that are in line with Nebraska statute definitions.

Policies will be presented for approval at the Board of Education Meeting on October 6, 2025. Copies of each policy and the Executive Summary are included in the board documents folder.

Public Comment: There was one request for public comment: Diane Cahill, Policy 5310.

Board Member Representation / Legislative Updates / Announcements

The Board was represented at a number of activities and meetings over the last two weeks, including: Homecoming Parade, Pep Rally and varsity football game; Westside Community Council; WHS Fall Choral Concert; Strategic Plan refresh meeting; American Civics Committee; Teaching and Learning Key Communicators; tour of new cafeteria at WMS; walkthroughs at WHS, Westbrook, Oakdale and Westgate; Board Policy subcommittee; and NASB continuing education.

September 23, 2025	TEAMMATES Westside Chapter Runza Day! (965 S. 72nd and 105th & Pacific)
September 24, 2025	First Things First - On The Road - 4:00-6:00 p.m. - EPS Teacher Training Conference Center (20650 Glenn St., Elkhorn)
September 27, 2025	Westside Foundation VI-VI 2025 - CHI - 6:00 p.m.
October 6, 2025	Board of Education Meeting - ABC Building - 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business, Mr. Yale adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.



Beth Morrissette, Secretary, Board of Education

**WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
NOTICE OF MEETING**

Notice is hereby given of a Board of Education FY26 Proposed Property Tax Request Public Hearing and regular Board Meeting for Westside Community Schools, District 66, Douglas County, in the State of Nebraska, to be held September 22, 2025, at 6:00 p.m., at the District Administration Office, 909 S. 76th St., Omaha, NE. The agenda, continually kept current, is available at the District Office. The meeting is open to the public.

9/19, 9/22 ZNEZ



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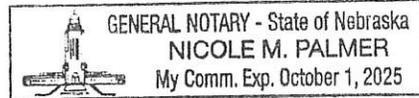
JASON W. HUFF, Publisher

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:

9/19/25 9/22/25

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



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Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before
me this SEPTEMBER 22 2025

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Notice Content

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9/19, 9/22 ZNEZ

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