

WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ~ DISTRICT 66
Board of Education Meeting Minutes ~ January 12, 2026

The Board of Education of School District 66 was convened in an open and public session on January 12, 2026, 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 Morrissette, 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 December 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 January 9 and 12, 2026, 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 were 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, Nick Lesiak, Kim De La Cruz, Kami Jessop, Kelcy Tapp, Laura Mann, Robert Aranda, Matt Lee, Jake Ritonya, Becky Lowther.

Others in Attendance*: Sean Conway. *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.

Mr. Yale called the Board of Education Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He 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. 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 Meeting held on December 8, 2025. Ms. Blakely moved for approval; Ms. Rider seconded. 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 December 19, 2025. Ms. Karnes moved for approval; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Treasurer's Report

Dr. Van Gelder presented the treasurer's report for December 2025 and moved for approval of expenditures in the amount of \$12,223,847; Ms. Morrissette seconded. December 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, shared student, staff and community highlights, including: new video projection / light show for the high school's main gym for activities and athletic events; a group of Prairie Lane students represented Westside when they sang the National Anthem at a Lancer's game on January 9th; the District census project is underway, with postcards that were mailed to all district addresses beginning to be returned, and district teams training for door-to-door canvassing; and a soft opening for the OneWorld School-Based Health Clinic at Hillside Elementary was held after school on January 12th. Ms. Power also shared four snow-day videos that were received from staff members. Everyone is hopeful that we'll get to use them to announce some snow days yet this winter!!

Strategic Plan Reports

Dr. Mark Weichel, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, provided an update on data related to Goal One of the current strategic plan: Student Achievement and Well-Being. Consistent and focused work across the district has yielded strong results in both academic growth and students' sense of belonging. Further, the district received an "Excellent" on the most recent NDE AQuESTT rating. Dr. Weichel shared that instructional practices are also at their strongest levels in five years, including consistent use of the instructional model; increased use of data to identify and support students who are struggling as well as students who excel; and continued growth in AP course registrations and dual enrollment participation. Dr. Weichel also provided an overview of the ongoing development of the next 5-year strategic plan that the district will launch in August 2026 for the 2026-2027; 2027-2028; 2028-2029; 2029-2030; 2030-2031 school years. Copies of the Executive Summary and slide presentation are included in the board documents folder.

Disposal of District Property (Policy 3450)

Mr. Andy Wane, Director of Facilities, requested board approval to sell a 2017 Ford F-350 XL 4x4 with Western Wide-Out Plow that has been in operation at the Service Center since 2017 and has 42,147 miles. Morrisette 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.

Board Policy for Approval - #6400

Mr. Nick Lesiak, In-House Legal Counsel, requested approval of revisions to one existing policy that was previously presented for board consideration on November 17, 2025. Minor revisions to policy 6400 (Student Trips - Instruction) are for clarification of existing language and to fix defined terms. Ms. Blakely moved for approval; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. A copy of the Executive Summary is included in the board documents folder.

Board Policies for Review - #6300, #6310

Mr. Lesiak presented revisions to two existing board policies for board discussion and consideration:

#6300 - Controversial Issues (Instruction) - These revisions come from KSB's policy book and are intended to outline the requirements for teachers teaching controversial subjects and include renaming the policy to "Sensitive Topics".

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#6310 - Speakers (Instruction) - These revisions are intended to clarify the steps necessary to request and approve guest speakers for classes/extracurricular activities/clubs and assemblies. The Teaching and Learning team has also provided input on these revisions.

Policy revisions will be presented for approval on February 9, 2026. A copy of the Executive Summary is 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; one administrator contract; one certified staff retirement; and one certified staff resignation) for board approval. Dr. Van Gelder moved for approval; Ms. Morrissette seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. A copy of the personnel report is included in the board documents folder.

Appointment of Board Committee to hear SEIU Local 226 grievance appeal

Mr. Lesiak requested appointment of a three-person committee of the Board to hear a grievance appeal submitted by SEIU Local 226. Mr. Yale advised that the committee would consist of himself, Ms. Blakely and Ms. Karnes, and requested a motion for approval. Ms. Rider moved for approval; Dr. Van Gelder seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

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 over the last two weeks, including: Loveland Community Meeting; Westside Swim Meet; Westside Student Board Connection Orientation; 3:1 Meetings with Dr. Lucas; Basketball Holiday Tournament; JV & Varsity Basketball; BOE Policy Subcommittee Meeting.

January 13, 2026	Westgate Elementary Ribbon-Cutting and Open House - 4:00-5:30 p.m.
January 13, 2026	Bond Oversight Committee Meeting - Westgate Elementary - 5:30 p.m.
January 16, 2026	Professional Learning Day - No School for Students
January 19, 2026	MLK Day - No School / District Offices Closed
January 26, 2026	NASB Legislative Issues Conference - Cornhusker Marriott - Lincoln
February 3, 2026	District Caucus at Westside High School - 8701 Pacific Street
	- 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. - Daytime Voting Available
	- 6:15 p.m. - Caucus Voter Check-in
	- 7:00 p.m. - Caucus Begins
February 9, 2026	Board of Education Meeting - ABC Building - 6:00 p.m.
February 10, 2026	Back-Up Weather Date for District Caucus

Strategy Session to explore potential real estate purchase

Mr. Yale advised that this item on the agenda is consideration of information from legal counsel regarding a potential real estate purchase; and that discussion of this issue in closed session is necessary and permitted by law. Ms. Karnes moved that the Board enter closed session to discuss a potential real estate purchase and to receive and discuss legal advice from the District's attorney, both of which are clearly necessary to protect the public's interest and to maintain the attorney-client privilege; Ms. Rider seconded. Mr. Yale restated that the Board had adopted a motion to enter closed session to discuss a potential real estate purchase and to receive and discuss legal advice from the District's attorney, both of which are clearly necessary to protect the public's interest and to maintain the attorney-client privilege. The Board will limit itself to discussion of this issue. The Board entered closed session at 6:54 p.m. The Board adjourned from closed session at 7:21 p.m. There being no further business, Mr. Yale adjourned the meeting at 7:21 p.m.



Beth Morrisette, Secretary, Board of Education

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NOTICE OF MEETING**

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1/9, 1/12 ZNEZ



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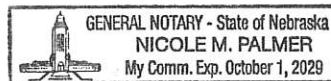
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Friday, January 09, 2026

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