

WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ~ DISTRICT 66
Board of Education Meeting Minutes ~ February 23, 2026

The Board of Education of School District 66 was convened in an open and public session on February 23, 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
Dana Blakely, Director

Board member absent (excused): Beth Morrissette, Secretary

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 February 10, 2026, and appeared continuously up through the start of this board meeting. Notice of the meeting was also published in the Daily Record on February 20 and 23, 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, Molly Hurley, Kim De La Cruz, Kami Jessop, Kelcy Tapp, Robert Aranda, Matt Lee, Jake Ritonya, Becky Lowther, Tyler Foster.

Others in Attendance*: 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.

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. Mr. Yale requested a motion for an excused absence for Ms. Morrissette. Ms. Rider moved for approval; Ms. Blakely seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. 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 February 9, 2026. Ms. Karnes moved for approval; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. Mr. Yale abstained.

Treasurer's Report

Dr. Van Gelder presented the treasurer's report for January 2026 and moved for approval of expenditures in the amount of \$11,652,894; Ms. Blakey seconded. January 2026 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, shared student, staff and community highlights, including: Swanson 4th-grader Bhavya B. had her artwork selected in the most recent International Space Station (ISS) Mission Patch Design Competition. Metropolitan Community College partners with the Student Spaceflight Experiments Program (SSEP) to provide students with the opportunity to design a patch for an upcoming ISS mission. Bhavya's design was selected and will be flown to the International Space Station this summer! Four Westside High School students were recently selected to the Grit Scholar program at Creighton University. Shout-out to the District's Building Services team who worked hard last Friday to clear sidewalks and parking lots at all of our building campuses. And the high school's Dance Marathon club is sponsoring a coin drive across the district this week, with proceeds going to Nebraska Children's Hospital.

Curriculum Update: K-12 Math

Dr. Mark Weichel, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, was joined by: Ms. Kim De La Cruz, Director of Secondary Teaching and Learning; Dr. Kelcy Tapp, Director of Elementary Teaching and Learning; Ms. Faren Huben, WMS Math Teacher; Jamie Dolan, Elementary Instructional Coach; and Jamie Schnieber, Elementary Instructional Coach. They provided an overview of K-12 math instruction including: recent curriculum adoptions; areas of focus for professional learning and data-informed instruction; and student growth and achievement data from a number of assessments. K-12 vertical alignment work completed in 2023 has strengthened lesson consistency and expectations across all grade levels, and supports a smooth progression of learning as students move from one grade or course to the next. The team shared a copy of the "*Westside Math Vision Statement*", which is included in the board documents folder, along with copies of the Executive Summary and slide presentation.

Board Policies for Review - #7115; #7140; #7180

Mr. Nick Lesiak, In-House Legal Counsel, presented one new policy for review (7115) and a recommendation to eliminate two existing policies (7140; 7180). Policies will be presented again for approval on March 9, 2026.

#7115 - Denial of Access to School Premises or Activities - This proposed new policy is from KSB's policy book. The District already issues "ban-and-bar" notices as we are allowed to do by law. This policy would: 1) provide notice to the public that we can and will ban people from our property under appropriate circumstances; and 2) provide a policy basis for us to do so.

#7140 - Request to Contact Students - Propose elimination of this policy; subject matter is covered in policy #5315 (Access to Students by Law Enforcement and other Agencies).

#7180 - Visits to the Schools - Propose elimination of this policy; subject matter is covered in policy #6320 (Review of / Access to Educational Materials) and the Student / Parent Handbook.

A copy of the Executive Summary is included in the board documents folder.

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Approval of Teacher Negotiated Agreement for the 2026-2027 School Year

Dr. Andrea Haynes, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and District Operations, and Ms. Melanie Connolly, Director of HR Business Systems, presented the Teacher Negotiated Agreement for the 2026-2027 school year for approval. The agreement includes an estimated base salary increase of 4.90% and an update to the stipend for district-defined special education positions from \$4,000 to \$3,000. The degree adjustment will increase from \$3,000 per degree to \$3,750 for Master's and \$3,900 for Master's+30. The new teacher's starting salary will increase by \$1,800, from \$44,200 to \$46,000. The revised language includes additions and updates to the Extracurricular Extra Duty, and updates to the sick and parental leave. New compensation packages will begin September 1, 2026. Westside Education Association representatives - Becky Lowther and Tyler Foster - expressed their appreciation for the collaborative process and reported that 88.46% of their membership voted in favor of the agreement. Ms. Blakely moved for approval; Dr. Van Gelder seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. Copies of the Executive Summary, slide presentation and redline and final versions of the Negotiated Agreement are included in the board document 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 (five certified staff probationary contracts; one certified staff resignation; and one recommendation for cancellation of certified staff contract) for board approval. Dr. Van Gelder moved for approval; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. A copy of the personnel report is included in the board documents folder.

Public Comment: There were two requests for public comment: Paul Vonderfecht - Ed Tech; Justin Dorsey - Reduce use of iPad in elementary school.

Board Member Representation / Legislative Updates / Announcements

The Board was represented at a number of activities and meetings over the last two weeks, including: Bond Oversight Committee meeting; Key Communicators meeting; 3:1 Superintendent / Board member meetings; NE Council for Teacher Education meeting; NE Association of School Boards Policy Committee meeting; Loveland Community Meeting (regarding start of construction this spring); and Metro Swim at WHS (spectator and volunteer).

March 9, 2026	Board of Education Meeting - ABC Building - 6:00 p.m.
March 16, 2026	Bond Oversight Committee Meeting - ABC Building - 6:00 p.m.
March 18, 2026	Parent Teacher Conferences - 4:00-8:00 p.m.
March 19, 2026	Parent Teacher Conferences - 8:00am-4:00pm - No School for Students
March 20, 2026	No School - Quarter Break
March 23, 2026	Board of Education Meeting - ABC Building - 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business, Mr. Yale adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.


Beth Morrisette, Secretary, Board of Education

**WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
NOTICE OF MEETING**

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 **February 23, 2026**, 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.

2/20, 2/23 ZNEZ



The Daily Record

Proof of Publication

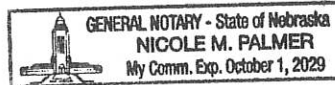
JASON W. HUFF, Publisher

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:

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Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before
me this FEBRUARY 23 2026

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Monday, February 23, 2026

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2/20, 2/23 ZNEZ

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