

WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ~ DISTRICT 66

Board of Education Summer Workshop ~ June 1, 2026

The Board of Education of School District 66 was convened in an open and public session on June 1, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. at Westside High School, 8701 Pacific St., Omaha, NE.

Board members present:

- Adam Yale, President
- Kris Karnes, Vice President
- Meagan Van Gelder, Treasurer
- Sarah Rider, Treasurer-Elect
- Stephanie Adams, Incoming Board Member
- Sean Conway, Incoming Board Member

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 May 22, 2026, and appeared continuously up through the start of this board meeting. Notice of the meeting was also published in the Daily Record on May 29 and June 1, 2026, and on their website at omahadailyrecord.com, as well as the NE Press Association website at nerepublicnotices.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, Molly Hurley, Andrea Haynes, Mark Weichel, Kami Jessop, Kim De La Cruz, Kelcy Tapp, Matt Lee, Elizabeth Power, Jay Dostal.

Others in Attendance*: *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 Workshop to order at 9:03 a.m. 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. Mr. Yale welcomed Stephanie Adams and Sean Conway, who were elected to the Westside Board of Education following the May 12, 2026, primary election. Dr. Lucas thanked the administrative team for joining the board this morning and shared that today's workshop will provide an opportunity for senior leadership and directors to share a high-level overview on a number of Strategic Plan goals related to curriculum, assessments, artificial intelligence, technology, and HR initiatives focused on staff retention.

Public Comment: There were no requests for public comment.

Oath of Office for Stephanie Adams and Sean Conway

Mr. Yale administered the oath of office; Ms. Adams and Mr. Conway both verbally affirmed their commitment to the principles of service on the Westside Community Schools Board of Education. The Oath of Office is included in the board documents folder.

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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 (three certified staff probationary contracts) for board approval. Dr. Van Gelder moved for approval; Ms. Karnes seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. A copy of the personnel report is included in the board documents folder.

Review of New Strategic Plan - 2026-2031

Dr. Mark Weichel, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, reviewed the new strategic plan that was approved by the Board on May 11, 2026. While the four primary goals remain the same, Dr. Weichel highlighted a number of language enhancements (both to the primary goals and goal objectives) that are intended to bolster and expand upon the successes the district has achieved over the past five years. Dr. Weichel is also collaborating with a team to revise the online strategic plan dashboard. This updated layout will allow for links to documents and presentations, and offer a more precise overview of the data and metrics that are tracked for every goal.

Dr. Matt Lee, Director of Technology, provided further insight into objective #8 of Goal 1 - Elevating Student Excellence and Wellbeing: *#8. Promote innovative and effective technology, including technology deployments and artificial intelligence, to maximize student achievement.* When ChatGPT was publicly released in 2022, the district established five goals to ensure that high-quality instruction and student outcomes remained at the center of AI use. The five goal areas are: (1) AI Literacy - Common Language; (2) Safety and Security; (3) Staff Efficiency; (4) Teaching and Learning; and (5) Transparency and Community Engagement. In addition, in 2022-2023 WCS began a proactive and structured three-phase implementation of AI.

- AI Phase I - 2022-23: Roundtable discussions with education partners; staff, parent and community forums to understand ChatGPT and to prepare for responsible use of AI.
- AI Phase II - 2024-24: Implementation of a teacher task force to examine the instructional impact of AI; development of a shared syllabus statement for all secondary courses; launch of a public AI page on the district's website with resources, instructional tools and guidelines for ethical use (<https://teachers.technology/ai-at-westside/>).
- AI Phase III - 2025-present: Data guardrails to protect student / staff information within all AI tool interactions; creation of an "AI Library" with mini-lessons that can be used in the classroom and referenced for later use; ongoing partnerships with other educational groups regarding AI use.

Dr. Lee reported that for the 2026-27 school year, the district will continue implementing AI Phase III with thoughtful engagement of AI and technology in the classroom and strategies that protect the privacy of everyone in our community. Further, the district will continue to focus on technology use in the classroom, asking the question *"If we're using technology, what is the reason?"* to ensure lessons are intentional and students are active and engaged users. The strategic plan for the 2026-27 through 2030-31 school years will be officially rolled out at the All Staff Back to School Meeting on August 6, 2026. A copy of the 2026-2031 Strategic Plan is included in the board documents folder.

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Assessment Overview and Student Performance Trends

Ms. Kim De La Cruz, Director of Secondary Teaching and Learning; Dr. Kelcy Tapp, Director of Elementary Teaching and Learning; and Dr. Kami Jessop, Director of Special Services, provided an overview of the district's assessment platform broken down by grade level, frequency and purpose of each assessment. They also reviewed performance and proficiency indicators, providing the most recent scores and data available. For measuring early reading literacy in grades K-3 (NE Reading Improvement Act - 2018), the state will be eliminating an approved list of screening tools and moving to a single statewide screening assessment beginning with the 2027-2028 school year ([DIBELS 8th Edition](#)). This move will provide consistency across all Nebraska school districts and clarity in meeting the state's literacy goals. A copy of the Assessment Overview presentation is included in the board documents folder.

Future Ready; College, Career and Life Readiness Center (CCLRC); Innovation Lab; Find the Why

Dr. Jay Dostal, Principal, WHS, presented an overview of current [Future Ready Pathways](#) in place at Westside High School that are organized under six broad categories / career fields. Aligned with NDE Career Readiness Standards and WHS core academic graduation requirements, these pathways allow students to connect their classroom learning with the world of work. Students who complete a future ready pathway obtain industry recognized certifications / credentials, leading to higher academic engagement, clearer career focus, college credit, and increased confidence. Dr. Weichel reviewed an extensive list of program opportunities that are already in place and programming that will soon be rolled out with the opening of the [College, Career and Life Readiness Center \(CCLRC\)](#) and [Innovation Lab](#) at Westside High School. He also revisited the career exploration challenges through [Find the Why](#), which will launch in August, along with an extensive list of opportunities for workforce partners to introduce career pathways to our students. Supporting materials are included in the board documents folder.

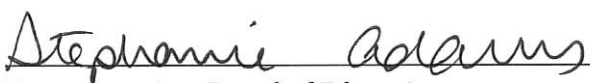
Update from Human Resources

Dr. Haynes provided an overview of district programs that support staff in a number of ways: Grow Our Own and Leadership Westside; Employee Evaluations; Substitute Teacher Fill Rates; and Compensation. Copies of Dr. Hayne's presentation and supporting materials are included in the board documents folder.

Board of Education: Onboarding and Orientation

Mr. Yale, Ms. Karnes, Dr. Van Gelder and Ms. Rider walked through the "*Guide to Board of Education Service*" document and the Board of Education Onboarding and Orientation schedule with Ms. Adams and Mr. Conway. A member of the district leadership team and one returning board member will schedule one-hour blocks of time together with Ms. Adams and Mr. Conway in June, July, August, September and October for: introductions to all areas of district operations; district facility tours; and engagement with the Westside Foundation and state education representatives. Copies of the Guide to Board of Education Service and BOE Onboarding schedule are included in the board documents folder.

There being no further business, Mr. Yale adjourned the meeting at 2:50 p.m.


Stephanie Adams
Representative, Board of Education

**WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
NOTICE OF MEETING**

Notice is hereby given of a Board of Education Summer Workshop for Westside Community Schools, District 66, Douglas County, in the State of Nebraska, to be held Monday, June 1, 2026 9:00 AM 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.

5/29, 6/1 ZNEZ



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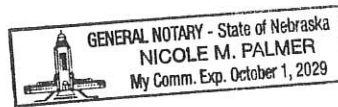
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The State of Nebraska,
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County of Douglas,
City of Omaha } ss.

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me this JUNE 01 2026

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NOTICE OF MEETINGS

NOTICE OF BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS:

The Board of Education may, at its discretion at any meeting, take up any item listed on the Agenda at any time during the meeting, irrespective of the order listed on the Agenda. Therefore, members of the public who wish to be present for one or more particular Agenda item(s) should be present at the start of the meeting. Unless noted otherwise, all Board of Education Meetings are held at the District Administration Office – ABC Building – 909 S. 76th Street, Omaha, 68114. All Board of Education Meetings are open to the public.

Monday, June 1, 2026 - 9:00 a.m. - Westside High School - Summer Workshop

The Board of Education for Westside Community Schools will hold a summer workshop on Monday, June 1, 2026, at Westside High School, 8701 Pacific St., Omaha, NE, 68114.

Click [HERE](#) for the Board Workshop Agenda when available.

Click [HERE](#) for the Board Workshop document folder when available.

Monday, June 15, 2026 - 5:00 p.m. - ABC Building - Board of Education Meeting