

School Board Executive Summary



Topic: Approval of 2026 Caucus Committee

Date: September 8, 2025

Prepared by: Nick Lesiak, In-House Legal Counsel

Recommended Action:

- ☐ Information Only
- ☐ Presentation/Discussion
- ☒ Discussion/Action by Board of Education
- ☐ Presentation/Action Next Meeting

Recommendation(s): Appointment of the following persons to serve on the 2026 Caucus Committee:

Rod Anderson
Amy Brown

Mike Grier
Todd Johnson

Charlie Liakos
Janet Parsonage

Purpose: The appointment of Caucus Committee members is the first step in the planning process for the District's 2026 Caucus. All members of the Caucus Committee must be residents of the District.

Background: Westside Community Schools holds a caucus every two years (ahead of the state primary election) to nominate up to four candidates to fill two six-year terms on the Board of Education. The two six-year terms expiring on May 31, 2026, are currently held by Dana Blakely and Beth Morrisette.

The Board of Education appoints a Caucus Committee as an advisory committee to the Board in the fall preceding a Caucus. The Caucus Committee is scheduled to meet on September 16, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. at the District Office, in an open meeting (public notice is given of the date, time and location), for the purpose of determining its recommendations to the Board on caucus details, including:

- The date, time, and location of the Caucus. The Caucus must be held at least 70 days prior to the state primary election. (The anticipated date in 2026 is May 12, 2026 - <https://sos.nebraska.gov/elections-division>);

- Preparation of the Caucus rules, including the selection of the Caucus chairperson, the location and time for voting, and the procedures on the night of the Caucus. The proposed Caucus rules will be presented to the Board of Education for approval on October 6, 2025. At that time, the Board will also be asked to certify vacancies on the Board of Education and authorize the District to proceed with the Caucus. The Caucus Rules will then be submitted to the Douglas County Election Commissioner for approval;
- The deadline for candidates to file a letter of intent to run for the Board of Education in order for their name to appear on the pre-printed Caucus ballot and publicized by the district, as well as the procedures for such filing.

Caucus Committee responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that informational and promotional materials are provided to District residents with assistance from the Director of Communications. In the past, this has included a mailing to District residents, information in school newsletters and announcements on the District's website and social media sites;
- Managing all aspects of the Caucus, including introduction of nominees, announcement of rules, time-keeping, ballot counting, and making decisions as necessary to maintain order at the Caucus.

District staff, including District In-House Legal Counsel, serve in a support role to the Caucus Committee.

Attachment(s): None