

**WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ~ DISTRICT 66**

**Board of Education Meeting Minutes ~ November 4, 2024**

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The Board of Education of School District 66 was convened in an open and public session on November 4, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at Westside High School, 8701 Pacific St., Omaha, Nebraska.

**Board members present:** Dana Blakely, President  
Adam Yale, Vice President  
Sarah Rider, Secretary  
Meagan Van Gelder, Treasurer-Elect  
Beth Morrisette, Director

**Board member absent (excused):** Kris Karnes, Treasurer

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 October 22, 2024, and appeared continuously up through the start of this board meeting. Notice of the meeting was also published in the Daily Record on November 1 and 4, 2024, and on their website. 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, Kami Jessop, Kelcy Tapp, Laura Mann, Becky Lowther, Paul Lindgren, Abby Langner, Garret Higginbotham, Cynthia Bailey, Scott Becker.

**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.

Ms. Blakely called the Board of Education Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. She 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. She acknowledged that the meeting had been publicly announced and the agenda was available to any interested parties. Board Meeting attendance is noted above. Ms. Blakely requested a motion for approval of an excused absence for Ms. Karnes. Motion made by Mr. Yale; seconded by Ms. Morrisette. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Blakely requested a motion for approval of the minutes from the Board of Education Meeting held on October 21, 2024. Mr. Yale moved for approval; Ms. Rider seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

**Communications**

Ms. Elizabeth Power, Director of Communications and Engagement, provided an update on the following: additional security has been arranged at three district buildings tomorrow, November 5, 2024 - Election Day - that will serve as polling places (Paddock Road, Sunset Hills, and West Campus); NDE will hold a

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press conference at Paddock Road on November 6th to announce a \$6M grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to expand the state's Teacher Apprenticeship program; all district Elementary schools have events planned for Veterans Day, November 11th; and Westside Warrior gear is now available at Lawlor's - both in-store and on-line.

### **Phase II Bond Project: Approval of Notice to Proceed Letters for CMR Contract Negotiations**

Mr. Matt Herzog, Project Advocates, presented *Notice to Proceed with Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) Contract Negotiations Letters* for board approval for both the Paddock Road Elementary addition project and the Rockbrook Elementary addition project. Both projects include construction of a new gymnasium that will also serve as a community storm shelter, and expanded Early Childhood classroom space. For both of these projects, the Board of Education approved the CMR construction delivery method at their meeting on September 16, 2024, and Requests for Qualifications for the Construction Manager at Risk were publicly advertised and posted to the District website on September 17, 2024.

Paddock Road Elementary: Five firms submitted Statements of Qualifications on October 18, 2024. Three firms were selected to interview with the Paddock Road CMR Selection Committee. The selection committee conducted interviews on October 30, 2024, and chose Meco-Henne Contracting as the CMR for the project. The Notice to Proceed letter authorizes the CMR to begin preconstruction services immediately while the final contract is negotiated with assistance from Project Advocates. The contract will be presented to the Board of Education for approval on November 18, 2024. Dr. Van Gelder moved for approval of the Notice to Proceed with CMR Contract Negotiations letter with Meco-Henne Contracting; Ms. Morrisette seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Rockbrook Elementary: Four firms submitted Statements of Qualifications on October 18, 2024. Three firms were selected to interview with the Rockbrook CMR Selection Committee. The selection committee conducted interviews on October 31, 2024, and selected Prairie Construction as the CMR for the project. The Notice to Proceed letter authorizes the CMR to begin preconstruction services immediately while the final contract is negotiated with assistance from Project Advocates. The contract will be presented to the Board of Education for approval on November 18, 2024. Ms. Rider moved for approval of the Notice to Proceed with CMR Contract Negotiations letter with Prairie Construction; Ms. Morrisette seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Copies of the Executive Summaries and Notice to Proceed Letters are included in the board documents folder.

### **Fulbright Scholarship Presentation**

Dr. Kelcy Tapp, Director of Elementary Teaching and Learning, introduced Ms. Emily Heisterkamp, Music Teacher at Hillside Elementary, who presented an informational report on her participation in the Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms (through the Fulbright Scholarship program) during the 2023-2024 school year. Ms. Heisterkamp completed a 10-week online global education course last fall, and (along with Dr. Tapp) attended a Global Education Symposium in Washington D.C. last winter. Her international field experience took her to India in July 2024. Ms. Heisterkamp kept a travel blog, sharing



her experiences and insights about culture, teaching and education, and also created a website as an ongoing resource connecting music education and global education. She will also be presenting at the NE Music Education Conference later this month to bring global awareness to the music room. Copies of the Executive Summary and Ms. Heisterkamp's presentation are included in the board documents folder.

### **Approval of Learning Community Grant Proposal**

Dr. Mark Weichel, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, presented the District's proposed plan for utilizing grant funding from the Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties for board approval. The Learning Community has awarded Westside Community Schools a grant totaling \$259,993.73 for each year over five school years, based on our district enrollment numbers. The funding, which will be directed to our highest-needs buildings, supports the Learning Community's mission to *"implement more effective practices to measurably improve educational outcomes for children and families in poverty."*

Dr. Weichel explained that the District's plan will concentrate on our highest-need schools: Westbrook, Westgate, and Hillside, where many students face significant challenges, particularly in academics, behavior, and emotional regulation. The proposed plan is to add a dedicated full-time Special Education Facilitator at Westbrook, Westgate and Hillside. Dr. Weichel noted that, while the title of this position reflects the type of applicant we seek, these facilitators will work with our highest-needs students regardless of their special education status. Goals for the district include: 1) address the needs of our highest-needs students; 2) enhance teacher capacity in supporting student needs; and, 3) develop and implement systems and processes to increase support for students. Dr. Weichel and his team will work closely with the grant evaluator and anticipate using a mix of quantitative and qualitative data to assess progress and effectiveness.

On October 29, 2024, the district received approval from Westside's two Learning Community Sub-council members. The proposed plan will now go to the Learning Community Board consent agenda for final approval, pending our board's approval. Ms. Rider moved for approval; Mr. Yale seconded. Copies of the Executive Summary and slide presentation are included in the board documents folder.

### **Board Policies for Approval**

Mr. Nick Lesiak, In-House Legal Counsel, presented revisions to policy #5670 for board approval. Previously presented for discussion and consideration at the Board Meeting on October 21, 2024, revisions to policy #5670 are due to changes to Federal Title IX requirements.

#### Policy #5670 - Marital, Parental, or Pregnancy Status of Students (*Students*)

Mr. Yale moved for approval of revisions to policy 5670; Dr. Van Gelder seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. A copy of policy 5670 and the Executive Summary are included in the board documents folder.

**Board Policies for Review**

Mr. Lesiak presented proposed revisions to existing policies #5340 - Vehicles (*Students*) and #5360 - Student Lockers (*Students*) for board discussion and consideration. Both policies will be presented again for approval at the Board of Education Meeting on November 21, 2024. Copies of each policy and the Executive Summary are 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 (two certified staff retirements and one certified staff resignation) for board approval. Mr. Yale 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 no requests for Public Comment.

**Board Member Representation / Legislative Updates / Announcements**

The Board was represented at a number of activities and meetings, including: Homecoming Parade and Pep Rally; District Lighthouse Leader and Alumni Association Hall of Fame Dinner; Property Tax Roundtable; Bond Issuance Planning meeting; ECC Trunk-or-Treat; high school athletic competitions; walkthrough at Westbrook; CMR Meeting and Community Information Meeting at Paddock Road; CMR Meeting Rockbrook Elementary; and tour of Project Search.

Ms. Blakely reviewed upcoming activities:

November 7, 2024	Rockbrook Elementary Phase II Project Community Meeting - 6:00 p.m.
November 11, 2024	Bond Oversight Committee Meeting - WHS - 6:00 p.m.
November 14, 2024	WE-SIDE Community Walk - Munroe-Meyer Institute - 4:00-5:30 p.m.
November 18, 2024	Board of Education Meeting - WHS - 6:00 p.m.
November 19, 2024	Westbrook Elementary Phase II Project Community Meeting - 6:00 p.m.
November 20-22, 2024	State Education Conference - CHI Center

There being no further business, Ms. Blakely adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

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Sarah Rider, Secretary, Board of Education



## **Public Notice Placement Confirmation**

Please notify us of any changes ASAP at [legals@omahadailyrecord.com](mailto:legals@omahadailyrecord.com)

**Scheduled Publication**

**11/1, 11/4**

**WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS  
PUBLIC NOTICE**

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 **November 4, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.** 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.

11/1, 11/4

ZNEZ

All notice submissions, changes and cancellations must be made by 12 p.m. two weekdays prior to publication, or by earlier deadlines noted in your confirmation email in advance of court holidays. Please note the The Daily Record reserves the right to delay publication if we are unable to reach you to resolve questions or concerns.



Board of Education Meeting  
November 4, 2024

## WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PROOF OF PUBLICATION

The undersigned hereby certifies that a Notice of Board Meeting, a copy of which is attached hereto, was placed on the home page of the website of Westside Community Schools ([www.westside66.org](http://www.westside66.org)) beginning on October 22 2024 and that it appeared there continuously up through the time of the scheduled board meeting.

Kim Sedivy

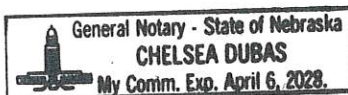
Name

Communications & Graphics

Title

STATE OF NEBRASKA )  
 ) ss.  
COUNTY OF DOUGLAS )

Before me, a Notary Public, qualified in and for said County and State, personally came Kim Sedivy, known to me to be the identical person, and signed the foregoing instrument, and acknowledged the execution of this document to his or her voluntary deed.



[Signature]

Notary Public