

**WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS  
DISTRICT 66  
Board Meeting Minutes - March 6, 2017**

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The Board of Education Meeting of School District 66 was convened in open and public session on March 6, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. at the Westside ABC Building, 909 S. 76th Street, Omaha, Nebraska.

**Board members present:** Beth Morrisette, Vice President  
Kris Karnes, Secretary  
Dana Blakely, Treasurer  
Doug Krenzer, Director  
Adam Yale, Director

**Board member absent (excused):** David Williams, President

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 March 1, 2017, and appeared continuously up through the start of this board meeting, a copy of which is 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.

Ms. Morrisette called the Board of Education Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Board member attendance is noted above. It was confirmed that Mr. Williams' absence is excused. Ms. Morrisette welcomed the audience 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 is posted at the meeting, as required by law. She acknowledged that the meeting had been publicly announced and the agenda was available to any interested parties.

**District Staff in Attendance:**

Blane McCann, Mark Weichel, Bob Zagozda, Enid Schonewise, Greg Betts, Ruby Larson, Jim Sides, Kami Jessop, Molly Hurley, Jenny Brockman, Brandi Petersen, Jay Opperman, Amanda Moon, Ali Sweitzer, Michael Jernigan, Laura Iliff.

**Others in Attendance\*:**

Dave Richardson, Stephanie Lund, Emma Boyd.

\*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.

**Approval of Minutes from February 20, 2017 and March 2, 2017**

Mr. Yale moved for approval of the minutes from the Board of Education Meeting held on February 20, 2017, as presented. Ms. Karnes seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. Ms. Karnes moved for approval of the minutes from the Board of Education Meeting held on March 2, 2017, as presented. Mr. Krenzer seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote, with Ms. Morrisette abstaining.

**Communications**

Ms. Brandi Petersen, Director of Communications and Community Engagement, introduced Mr. Michael Jernigan, WHS Teacher and Varsity Wrestling Coach, and Mr. Darlondo Hill, WHS Senior and Varsity Wrestler, and congratulated them on Darlondo's first place finish at the State Wrestling Championships. It has been 16 years since Westside has had a state wrestling champion. Along with Darlondo, another of Coach Jernigan's wrestlers, Nick Jasa (who was unable to attend this evening), also had a first place finish in his weight class. Ms. Petersen also recognized another high school teacher (unable to attend this evening), Ms. Erin Lunsford, Art Department Chair. Ms. Lunsford's talented students recently took home 133 Nebraska Scholastic Arts Awards, the most in the state. Ms. Petersen announced that Dr. Blane McCann would be recognized tomorrow evening at a UNO-PDK event with their Outstanding Educational Leader Award.

Representatives from the Westside Student Council, Ms. Stephanie Lund and Ms. Emma Boyd, provided an update on activities at the high school. Winter Formal, along with Battle of the Bands, was held last month, raising \$8,000. These funds are used to support Student Council projects throughout the year, including a summer leadership program. Their February Heart Campaign was a great success, with a cut-out heart made for every employee and every student in the school. Winter sports have wrapped up and spring sports are under way. DECA held a "Sample Saturday" at the 90th & Center Dunkin Donuts on February 25th. And the Theater Department will be presenting "Zombie Prom" the weekend of March 18-19.

**Board Policy for Review (first reading)**

Ms. Brandi Petersen, Director of Communications and Community Engagement, presented the following Board Policy for first reading, discussion and consideration by the board:

**Board Policy 7250 and Regulation 7250R - Distribution of Materials**

Revisions to this policy will: clarify that the policy refers to outside organizations, not school-sponsored groups or students; clarify that school affiliated organizations are eligible to request distribution, and; update policy language regarding compliance with procedures contained in the regulation. Beginning with the 2017-2018, distribution of flyers and informational materials will be primarily electronic, with limited distribution of paper flyers. These policy and regulation updates will not affect those groups and organizations already approved for paper distribution for the remainder of this school year.

Ms. Petersen stated that many metro districts have already transitioned to electronic delivery only. This reduces costs of both paper and staff time that it takes to produce and distribute flyers, and is environmentally friendly. Ms. Karnes expressed concern for families that may not have access to a computer at home. Some options for making information available in paper format include: keeping a binder at the front desk that contains group / organization materials; holding a "resource fair" a few times a year during school family events or during conferences, and; charging an organization a fee to have the school distribute their information. This policy will be presented again on March 20, 2017 for board approval. Redline copies of both the policy and the regulation are attached to the official minutes.

**Board Policies for Approval (second readings)**

The following policies being presented for approval were introduced for consideration and discussion at the board meeting on February 20, 2017.

**Board Policy 2217 - Web Content Accessibility (new)**

Presented by Dr. Paul Lindgren, Director of Technology, this new policy, along with an accompanying regulation (2217R), has been drafted in accordance with Federal ADA and Section 504 requirements that a public entity, which includes public schools, must take appropriate steps to ensure that its website is accessible to persons with disabilities by removing any barriers that could prevent access. The district's Website Accessibility Committee is responsible for reviewing existing website content and to take necessary action to bring website content into compliance with applicable accessibility standards. Ms. Karnes moved for approval of new board policy 2217; Mr. Yale seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

The following policies for approval, presented by Ms. Kami Jessop, Director of Special Services, include updates to current policies (2215 and 6215) on nondiscrimination and provision of special education services, and adds a new policy (6216) specific to Section 504 requirements. In addition, policies 2215 and 6216 each have a new accompanying regulation that sets forth implementation procedures.

**Board Policy 2215 - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability (revision)**

A revision to policy 2215 adds a new regulation specifying the duties of the ADA/504 Coordinator and coordinates with nondiscrimination policies adopted last year by the Board. Ms. Karnes moved for approval of revisions to board policy 2215; Ms. Blakely seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

**Board Policy 6215 - Special Education Services for Students with Disabilities (revision)**

Sets forth in greater detail the categories of responsibilities in providing special education services. These revisions are based on regulations from the NE Department of Education that are provided each year. Ms. Karnes moved for approval of revisions to board policy 6215; Mr. Krenzer seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

**Board Policy 6216 - Section 504 Plans and Services for Students with Disabilities (new)**

This is a new policy that covers provision of services under Section 504 for students with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit a major life activity. Ms. Karnes moved for approval of new board policy 6216; Ms. Blakely seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Copies of all policies (redline for revisions) and regulations are attached to the official minutes.

**A Day in the Life of Special Educator**

Ms. Jessop, along with Ms. Jenny Brockman, Coordinator of Special Services, presented a report on the district's special education program, which currently serves approximately 900 students (birth through age 21) in all district buildings, as well as students on IEP's in eight non-public schools in our district boundaries. The district's special education enrollment rate is 16%, which is slightly above the state average. The Special Services department provides a continuum of instructional, behavioral, physical and social-emotional supports including: Speech Language Pathology, Psychology, Assistive Technology, Vision and Mobility, Occupational / Physical Therapy, Deaf Education, Sign Language, Personal Care Nursing and specialized transportation.

Ms. Jessop stated that all of these services are provided by district staff (none are contracted out to outside providers) and within each building in order to meet the needs of all but a handful of learners in-house. The levels of support a student receives can range from learning center support in a general education classroom to targeted specialized supports through I-66. Ms. Jessop explained that the district also collaborates with key community programs (Brook Valley, Boys Town) for students who may require intensive, short-term behavioral assistance. In such cases, it is always the ultimate goal of the student's IEP team to get the student back into a classroom setting, or the least restrictive environment.

Ms. Brockman outlined the scope of district programs - from birth through post secondary.

**Under age 5:** the Foundation Early Childhood program serves approximately 90 children in homes, daycares, inclusive preschool classrooms and preschool settings.

**Non-Public:** Our teachers travel to 8 private or parochial schools within district boundaries, as well as the Ambassador Assisted Living and to our homebound students.

**Elementary & I66:** Every elementary building is equipped to support the needs of all children when necessary.

**Middle School:** Co-teaching and collaboration among team teachers and the teaching of daily living skills provide the specialized supports for "tweeners".

**High School/West Campus:** Focus on instilling / teaching accountability and fostering independence are key during grades 9-12.

**Transition / Project SEARCH:** Teaching real life-life living skills (in the transition apartment) and preparing young adults (ages 18-21) for the post-secondary world through Project SEARCH.

Ms. Jessop invited Ms. Amanda Moon, Principal at Westgate Elementary, and Ms. Ali Sweitzer, Special Education Teacher at Westgate Elementary, to share their perspectives from the building level. Ms. Moon and her team have worked very hard to create a structured and collaborative environment where their special education teachers and classroom teachers are comfortable with co-teaching. They have instilled the belief that every learner will succeed. Ms. Sweitzer shared that flexibility is a key component of their day, and they have to be ready to meet each child where he / she is on any given day. Kids who don't get breakfast or are experiencing hardships at home, and staffing levels of Educational Assistants will greatly impact how their day goes.

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The Board expressed praise and admiration for the work that Ms. Moon and her staff are doing at Westgate. Ms. Jessop shared reasons the district has to celebrate, including: a 1.7% decrease in special education dropouts and a double-digit improvement in special education graduation rate; and an 8% increase in the amount of time that special education students are being educated in the general education classroom alongside their same-age peers. Ms. Jessop thanked the board and stated that she, along with every staff member in the district's special education department, are very lucky to be working in a school community that values inclusion and wants to ensure that all students have access to high-quality educational opportunities that challenge them to reach their greatest potential. (A copy of the Executive Summary and powerpoint are attached to the official minutes.)

### **BOE / Superintendent Roles Document**

Dr. McCann presented the Board / Superintendent Roles Document from work that was done at board / senior leadership retreats in the spring and summer of 2016. A copy of this document is attached to the official minutes. The document is used to guide the work of the board and superintendent and how best to work together to promote high student achievement and engagement. Additionally, the concept of informed oversight is important to ensuring a balance of governance between the superintendent and the board of education.

This summer, Dr. McCann will ask each board member to complete a self-assessment regarding the operation protocols outlined in the roles document. Mr. Yale and Ms. Karnes both concurred, and expressed that a mid-year self-analysis is important to measure oneself and to hold oneself accountable to his / her role as an elected board member. Mr. Krenzer stated that the self-assessment also ensures that each board member continues to operate under the guiding principles of the roles document. Ms. Morrissette felt this process will also be a tremendous benefit as new board members are elected.

Dr. McCann expressed appreciation for the board members' involvement with their partner school buildings this school year. The building principals appreciate the presence and engagement of board members with their staff. Ms. Blakely stated that the Westside board is truly forward-thinking and focused on student achievement. A spring workshop will be scheduled for the board to continue their work of building capacity and to set goals for the 2017-2018 school year.

### **Personnel Report**

Dr. Schonewise presented recommendations for approval for six resignations, one retirement and one leave of absence. Ms. Blakely moved for approval of the Personnel Report. Mr. Yale seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. (A copy of the Personnel Report is attached to the official minutes.)

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**Reports**

Ms. Blakely and Dr. McCann will be attending Nebraska Council on Teacher Education (NCTE) meeting on March 10th in Lincoln, and an NSBA Board President Workshop in Norfolk March 12-13. Dr. McCann has met with Community Club officers to help inform them of legislative issues impacting district funding and public education. He is also continuing his meetings with staff at all school buildings prior to the FY18 budget presentation at the board meeting on March 20th.

**Announcements**

Dr. McCann reviewed other upcoming events:

March 14, 2017	Bond Oversight Committee Meeting - 6:00pm
March 20, 2017	Board of Education Meeting - 6:30pm
April 3, 2017	Board of Education Meeting - 6:30pm
April 10-14, 2017	Spring Break - No School
April 11, 2017	Bond Oversight Committee Meeting - 6:00pm
April 17, 2017	Board of Education Meeting - 6:30pm
April 20, 2017	K-8 Art Fair - The Living Stage at Hotel RL

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.



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Kris Karnes, Board Secretary