



Regular Board of Education Meeting

Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 5:30 PM

Educational Service Unit 7, Oak Room  
2657 44th Ave  
Columbus, NE 68601-8537

1. Call the Meeting to Order

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

**LEADERSHIP • SERVICE • SUPPORT**

Notice of this meeting was given in advance according to State Law 84-1411, by giving notice of the meeting to the public on ESU 7 website [www.esu7.org](http://www.esu7.org) and posted at location of meeting. Notice of this meeting was also given in advance to all members of the Board of Education of Educational Service Unit 7. Availability of the agenda and purpose of the hearing was communicated in the advance notice of the meeting and in the notice to the members of this hearing. All proceedings of the Board of Education of Educational Service Unit 7 were taken while the convened hearing was open to the attendance of the public.

1.1. Notification of Open Meetings Law

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

This meeting has been preceded by reasonable advance notice and is hereby declared to be in open session. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted in the meeting room.

#### 1.2. Roll Call

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

#### 1.3. Absent Board Members

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

Board Members Doug Pauley and Marni Danhauer will be absent. They notified of their absence prior to the meeting.

Reminder - cannot reply to the emailed meeting notification or text. Must email Marci (mostmeyer@esu7.org) or text/call (402) 809-1566

**Administrator Recommendation:** Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve Board member absences.

**Recommended Motion(s):**

Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve Board member absences as presented Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

#### 1.4. Pledge of Allegiance

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

#### 2. Board Code of Ethics and Oath of Office

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:** Annually, Board Members participate in the Oath of Office and sign their Code of Ethics.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Nebraska, against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely and without mental reservations, or for purpose or evasions; and that I will faithfully and impartially perform the duties of the office of member of the Board of Educational Service Unit No. 7, according to law, to the best of my ability. And I do further swear that I do not advocate, nor am I a member of any political party or organization that advocates the overthrow of the government of the United States or this State by force or violence; and that during such time that I am in this position I will not advocate nor become a member of any political party or organization that advocates the overthrow of the government of the United States or this State by force or violence. So help me God.

#### 3. Dissemination of Conflict of Interest Forms

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:** Annually, The Code of Ethics form will be disseminated to the Board for signature and Conflict of Interest forms to those who may have a potential conflict of interest.

#### 4. Board Vacancy - District 8

**Speaker(s):** Board President

**Rationale:** Board Member Doug Pauley, submitted his resignation on **February 11, 2025**. NEB. REV. STAT. § Section 32-562 requires the vacancy to be accepted by the rest of the board. Further, Section 32-574 states, "Unless otherwise provided by law, all vacancies shall be filled within 45 days after the vacancy occurs unless good cause is shown that the requirement imposes an undue burden."

District 8 includes the following school districts, Clarkson, Columbus, David City, Lakeview, Schuyler. The term will expire December 31, 2028.

**Administrator Recommendation:** Discuss, consider and take all action necessary to accept the resignation of District 8 Board Member Doug Pauley, and adopt a procedure for the appointment of a new member to the Educational Service Unit 7 Board of Education to fill the vacancy thereon created by the resignation of Doug Pauley.

**Recommended Motion(s):**

Discuss, consider and take all action necessary to accept the resignation of District 8 Board Member Doug Pauley, and adopt a procedure for the appointment of a new member to the Educational Service Unit 7 Board of Education to fill the vacancy thereon created by the resignation of Doug Pauley Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

#### 5. Approval of Agenda

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

The sequence of agenda topics is subject to change at the discretion of the Board.

**Administrator Recommendation:** Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the agenda as presented.

**Recommended Motion(s):**

Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the agenda as presented Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

#### 6. Virtual Conferencing for December 2025-March 2026

**Speaker(s):** Board President or designee

**Rationale:** Nebraska Revised Statute § 84-1411 authorizes virtual meetings for educational service units if the requirements of subdivision (2)(b) are met.

The Board voted to have a virtual conferencing option for the following board meetings: December 2025, January 2026, February 2026, and March 2026.

#### 7. Welcome Visitors

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

#### 8. Public Comment

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:** The Board has the discretion to limit the amount of time set aside for public participation.

Citizens wishing to address the Board on a certain agenda item must complete the Request to be Heard Document prior to the start of the board meeting. Citizens wishing to present petitions to the Board may do so at this time. However, the Board will only receive the petitions and not act upon them or their contents.

#### 9. Approval of the 2026-2027 Services Plan

**Speaker(s):** Board President or designee

**Rationale:** The ESU 7 Executive Committee Chair attending, Chad Denker, will make a summary report to the Board on the plan for ESU 7 Services for 2026-2027.

**Administrator Recommendation:** Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the 2026-2027 Services Plan as presented.

**Recommended Motion(s):**

Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the 2026-2027 Services Plan as presented Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

#### 10. Consent Agenda

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

Unless removed from the consent agenda, items identified within the consent agenda will be acted on at one time.

If any Board member wishes to discuss an item, it must be removed from the consent agenda at which time the remaining items will be acted upon.

Consent Agenda Includes:

- Minutes from the previous meeting(s)
- Presentation of the bills
- Policy review with no recommended changes
- Other routine agenda items

**Administrator Recommendation:** Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the consent agenda as presented.

**Recommended Motion(s):**

Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the consent agenda as presented Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

#### 10.1. Minutes

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

**This is a consent item.**

10.2. Presentation of Bills # 81208 through #81345 totaling \$975,263.22

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

The summary of bills for the current month total: \$975,263.22 - Bills #81208 through #81345

General Activity Fund total: No activity

	Amount	Vendor	Description
81214	\$9,749.20	Amergis Healthcare Staffing	Bridges contracted services
81224	\$8,031.19	Chartwells Dining Services	Title IC Suenos Summit Oct 2025
81234	\$10,953.53	Eakes Office Solutions	Copier Maintenance agreements
81285	\$6,357.40	State of NE DAS State Accounting	Network Service Charges
81335	\$7,775.47	Renaissance Learning, Inc.	Educlimber Software Flow Through

**This is a consent item.**

10.3. Reading of Article I, Section 3, D Orientation of New Board Members

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

**This is a consent item.**

10.4. Reading of Article I, Section 3, G Compensation of Board Members

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

**This is a consent item.**

10.5. Reading of Article I, Section 4, G Removal from Officer Position

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

**This is a consent item.**

10.6. Reading of Article I, Section 4, H Filling a Vacant in Officer Position

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

**This is a consent item.**

10.7. Reading of Article I, Section 5, B Appointments

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

**This is a consent item.**

10.8. Resignations

**Speaker(s):** Board President or designee

**Rationale:** Resignation:

- Brooke Kavan, Professional Development Coordinator, is resigning effective June 30, 2026.

**This is a consent item.**

10.9. Excess Lodging

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:** Excess Lodging:

- The Grants Department had excess travel to report:
  - Disability and Other Developmental Disabilities (DADD) Conference, Long Beach, CA (January 14-17, 2026)
    - Stephanie Foreman - \$602.59

**This is a consent item.**

10.10. 2026-2027 NASB Dues

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:** This is a consent item.

11. Reading of Article I, Section 2, B Duties and Function of the Board

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

**This is a consent item.**

12. Reading of Article I, Section 3, C Role of Individual Board Members

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:**

**This is a consent item.**

13. Board Spotlight - Emergency Operations Team (EOT)

**Rationale:** Emergency Operations Chair Dan Ellsworth, will present the Emergency Operations Team (EOT) Spotlight.

14. Treasurer's Report

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

**Rationale:** Review the breakdown of the Treasurer's Report.

**Administrator Recommendation:** Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented.

**Recommended Motion(s):**

Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

15. 2024-2025 Audit Report

**Speaker(s):** Board President or designee

**Rationale:** The 2024-2025 Romans Wiemer and Associates Audit Report is attached for the Board's review.

**Administrator Recommendation:** Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to accept the 2024-2025 Audit Report as presented.

**Recommended Motion(s):**

Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to accept the 2024-2025 Audit Report as presented Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

16. New Hire: Crystal Ernst, Professional Development Coordinator for June 22, 2026-August 31, 2026 and school year 2026-2027

**Rationale:** Crystal Ernst, Professional Development Coordinator for June 22, 2026-August 31, 2026 and school year 2026-2027.

**Administrator Recommendation:** Discuss, consider, and take any necessary action to approve the contract for Crystal Ernst, Professional Development Coordinator for June 22, 2026-August 31, 2026 and school year 2026-2027 as presented.

**Recommended Motion(s):**

Discuss, consider, and take any necessary action to approve the contract for Crystal Ernst, Professional Development Coordinator for June 22, 2026-August 31, 2026 and school year 2026-2027 as presented Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

17. New Hire: Kristine Hackett, Professional Development Coordinator for June 22, 2026-August 31, 2026 and school year 2026-2027

**Rationale:** Kristine Hackett, Professional Development Coordinator for June 22, 2026-August 31, 2026 and school year 2026-2027

**\*\*ATTACH SIGNED CONTRACTS BELOW**

**Administrator Recommendation:** Discuss, consider, and take any necessary action to approve the contract for Kristine Hackett, Professional Development Coordinator for June 22, 2026-August 31, 2026 and school year 2026-2027 as presented.

**Recommended Motion(s):**

Discuss, consider, and take any necessary action to approve the contract for Kristine Hackett, Professional Development Coordinator for June 22, 2026-August 31, 2026 and school year 2026-2027 as presented Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

#### 18. April 2026 Board Meeting Time

**Speaker(s):** Board President

**Rationale:**

The Board - Employee Recognition Dinner is scheduled on April 20, 2026, beginning at 5:00pm. It is recommended to change the Board Meeting time to 4:00pm to accommodate the Annual Board Recognition Dinner.

**Recommendation:** Discuss, consider and take any action necessary to approve an April 20, 2026, Board Meeting Time of 4:00pm.

**Recommended Motion(s):**

Discuss, consider and take any action necessary to approve an April 20, 2026, Board Meeting Time of 4:00pm Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

#### 19. Administrator's Report General

**Speaker(s):** Administrator or Designee

**Rationale:**

- Spotlight Funding Revisit
- ESUCC Update
- Professional Development and Print Shop Report - Director Ericson
- Special Education Report - Director Clay
- Technology Report - Director Ellsworth
- Upcoming Events
  - ESU 7 Board Recognition Dinner
    - **Monday, April 20, 2026 at The Oak Room of Columbus**
    - Board Meeting 4:00-5:00pm
    - Social Hour 5:00-6:00pm
    - Dinner 6:00-8:00pm
  - NRCSA (Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association) Legislative Forum
    - February 26, 2026 - Lincoln
    - Deadline to Register: February 19, 2026
    - Registered: Marci Ostmeyer, Dawn Lindsley
  - Budget & Finance Workshops
    - March 10, 2026 - Seward
      - Deadline to Register: March 5, 2026
      - Registered: Marci Ostmeyer, Clark Lehr
    - March 24, 2026 - West Point
      - Deadline to Register: March 19, 2026
    - April 7, 2026 - Ogallala

- Deadline to Register: April 1, 2026
    - (Amplified) April 8, 2026 - Kearney
    - Deadline to Register: April 1, 2026
  - NASB (Nebraska Association of School Boards) Member Golf Outing
    - June 10, 2026 - Kearney Country Club
  - School Law Seminar (more info to come)
    - June 10-11, 2026 - Kearney
  - 2026 Elections
    - Filing Deadlines
      - Incumbents: **July 15, 2026**
      - Non-Incumbents: **August 3, 2026**
    - These are the districts up for election in 2026
      - Richard Stephens - District 1 (Richard has chosen not to run again)
      - Amy Blaser - District 3
      - Jack Young - District 5 (Jack has chosen not to run again)
      - April Emeigh - District 7
      - Joyce Baumert - District 9 (Joyce has chosen not to run again)
      - Don Graff - District 11

#### 19.1. Goal Update

**Speaker(s):** Administrator or Designee

**Rationale:** Goals - Attached for your Review

Goal 2: By July 2026, the ESU 7 board will attend at least two professional/personal learning events annually.

- Attached Below

Goal 3: By July 2026, the ESU 7 board will attend the corresponding school district board meetings at least once every two years to report the tailored services provided by ESU 7 and the outcomes measured.

- Completed:
  - Cross County - October 13, 2025
  - Schuyler - October 13, 2025
  - High Plains - November 10, 2025
  - Humphrey - November 10, 2025
  - Lakeview - November 10, 2025
  - Palmer - December 8, 2025
  - David City - January 14, 2026
  - Howells-Dodge - January 14, 2026
  - Shelby-Rising City - January 19, 2026
  - Leigh - February 11, 2026
  - Columbus Public Schools - February 16, 2026
  - Twin River Public Schools - February 16, 2026

- Central City - February 16, 2026
- Scheduled:
  - St. Edward - March 9, 2026
    - Dan Ellsworth and Richard Stephens

#### 19.2. Facilities Update

**Speaker(s):** Administrator or Designee

**Rationale:** The Administrator will provide a facilities update during this item

#### 19.3. Personnel

**Speaker(s):** Administrator or designee

#### 19.4. Legislative Update

**Speaker(s):** Administrator or Designee

**Rationale:** During this item, the Administrator will provide a Legislative Update to members of the Board.

### 20. Committee Reports

**Speaker(s):** Committee Chair

#### 20.1. Negotiations Committee Report

**Speaker(s):** Negotiations Committee Chair

**Rationale:** Reports of activities and discussions from the Negotiations Committee will take place during this item.

**Committee Recommendations:**

**General Staff:** Discuss, consider, and take any necessary action to approve a \_\_\_ Total Compensation Package increase for the general staff group, excluding the Administrator and paraprofessionals, for the contract year of 2026-2027.

**Paraprofessionals:** Discuss, consider, and take any necessary action to approve a \$\_\_\_ per hour increase to the base of the paraprofessional salary schedule for the Cen7ter, Bridges and Learning Academy paraprofessionals for the contract year of 2026-2027. This increases the base to \$ \_\_\_ per hour for Cen7ter and \$\_\_\_ for Bridges & Learning Academy.

**Recommended Motion(s):**

Discuss, consider, and take any necessary action to approve a \_\_\_ Total Compensation Package increase for the general staff group, excluding the Administrator and paraprofessionals, for the contract year of 2026-2027. Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

Discuss, consider, and take any necessary action to approve a \$\_\_ per hour increase to the base of the paraprofessional salary schedule for the Cen7ter, Bridges and Learning Academy paraprofessionals for the contract year of 2026-2027. This increases the base to \$\_\_\_ per hour for Cen7ter and \$\_\_\_ for Bridges & Learning Academy Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

### 21. Conference Report

**Speaker(s):** Conference Attendees

**Rationale:** Conference Attendees will report on their learnings.

Nebraska Association of School Boards (NASB) Legislative Issues Conference -  
January 26, 2026

22. Board Announcements

**Speaker(s):** Board Members

**Rationale:** During this item, Board Members can make any announcements.

23. Adjournment

**Speaker(s):** Board President or Designee

Created by: Morgan Morsett, Secretary to the ESU 7 Board of Directors