Regular Board of Education Meeting

Monday, August 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 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 Vice President Beth Kabes notified of her absence prior to the meeting.

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. 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.

3. Welcome Visitors
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee

4. 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.

5. District 8 Board Vacancy
Rationale:

Applications have not been received for the board vacancy in District 8. NEB. REV. STAT. § Section 32-574 states, "Unless otherwise provided by law, all vacancies shall be filled within forty-five 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.

6. 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.

6.1. Minutes
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee
Rationale:

This is a consent item.

6.2. Presentation of Bills #82046 through #82213 totaling $1,249,141.81
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee
Rationale:

The summary of bills for the current month total:$1,249,141.81 - Bills #82046 through #82213

General Activity Fund total: No Activity

	Amount	Vendor	Description
82046	$9,731.27	402 Electric	Warehouse lighting replacement
82060	$75,000.00	Beringer Htg & Air	LA building HVAC replacement/upgrade
82066	$15,000.00	CASASLWP, LLC	Title II contracted service
82077	$15,236.95	Columbus Carpet	Cen7ter flooring
82097	$28,789.00	ESUCC	District SRS
82106	$20,927.03	FNBO-DE	School technology flow through
82117	$11,665.00	Heartland Communications	School technology flow through
82125	$20,930.00	Kagan Professional Development	Title II contracted service
82130	$7,908.12	Lakeview	Title II and CLSD grant reimbursement
82158	$14,032.61	Powerschool	Perform and Records software
82178	$20,000.00	TNTP, Inc.	CLSD In person training
82183	$8,717.23	Wasabi Technologies LLC	School technology flow through
82208	$5,462.10	Renaissance Learning	Educlimber
82212	$10,690.00	Teaching Strategies	CLSD grant materials
82214	$4,062.00	Columbus Painting	Painting in North building
82215	$1,161.00	Columbus Painting	Painting in South building

This is a consent item.

6.3. Presentation of Bills #82216 through #82389 totaling $1,256,747.11
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee
Rationale:

The summary of bills for the current month total:$1,356,747.11 - Bills #82216 through #82389

General Activity Fund total: No activity

	Amount	Vendor	Description
82228	$63,970.00	Beringer Htg & Air	LA building HVAC replacement/upgrade
82251	$50,232.74	Dell Technologies	School technology flow through
82253	$18,697.17	Eakes Office Solutions	Copier service agreements
82260	$5,000.00	ESU 2	Title III contracted services
82262	$12,565.00	ESUCC	World Book, Canvas Renewal, Cisco Duo Security Access
82273	$41,525.48	FNBO-DE	School technology flow through
82303	$23,531.75	JourneyEd Inc.	School technology flow through

82307	$8,436.00	Kiddie Cab	T1C Summer School Student Transportation
82310	$7,982.40	Lakeview	Various Grant reimbursements
82346	$6,357.40	State of NE DAS State Accounting	Network Service Charges
82356	$5,673.55	Worthington Direct	Cen7ter storage shelving
82358	$5,521.49	Carol Tolman	CLSD grant contracted service
82375	$77,521.50	Just Right Reader Inc.	CLSD grant literacy materials

This is a consent item.

6.4. Reading of Article I, Section 1, A ESU Name
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee
Rationale:

This is a consent item.

6.5. Reading of Article I, Section 1, C Statutory Role
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee
Rationale:

This is a consent item.

6.6. Reading of Article I, Section 1, D Principle Office
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee
Rationale:

This is a consent item.

6.7. Reading of Article I, Section 1, E Boundaries
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee
Rationale:

This is a consent item.

6.8. Excess Lodging & Meals
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee
Rationale: Excess Lodging:

- The Professional Development Department had excess travel to report:
  - Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Conference, Orlando, FL. (June 28-July 1, 2026)
    - Kendra Gustafson - $285.39
  - 3rd Annual Standards Based Grading Conference, Cedar Falls, IA. (June 15, 2026)
    - Mark Brady - $19.92

- The Administration Department had excess travel to report:
    - Humanex Community & Leadership Summit, Omaha, NE. (June 24-25, 2026)
        - Marci Ostmeyer - $54.00
        - Sonya Sukup - $54.00
    - Association of Educational Service Agencies Summer Leadership Conference, Riverside, CA. (July 14-17, 2026)
        - Marci Ostmeyer - $279.00
    - Nebraska Council of School Administrators Administrator Days, Kearney, NE. (July 28-31, 2026)
        - Marci Ostmeyer - $79.90

This is a consent item.

6.9. Disposal of Inventory
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.10. 2026-2027 Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association (NRCSA) Dues
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee
Rationale:

The Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to serving the needs of rural schools and communities. Since 1981, NRCSA has been committed to protecting the well-being of public education and implementing its mission of providing quality education for all children.

NRCSA is an Association consisting of 195 school districts and ESU's in Nebraska working together to support and promote quality educational programs for students in rural Nebraska. Through its members NRCSA serves the interests of over 75,000 children in 88 counties and 24 legislative districts.

This is a consent item.

6.11. 2026-2027 Contract for Brandy Thompson, Professional Development Career Academy Coordinator
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.12. 2026-2027 Contract for Brooke Koliha, Professional Development Coordinator
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.13. 2026-2027 Contract for Cynthia Alarcon, Grant Coordinator
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.14. 2026-2027 Contract for Dan Ellsworth, Network Operations Director
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.15. 2026-2027 Contract for Ernie Valentine, Professional Development Coordinator
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.16. 2026-2027 Contract for Kendra Gustafson, Professional Development Coordinator
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.17. 2026-2027 Contract for Marci Haight, Grant Coordinator
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.18. 2026-2027 Contract for Beth Ericson, Professional Development Director
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.19. 2026-2027 Contract for Mark Brady, Professional Development Coordinator
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.20. 2026-2027 Contract for Martha (Vanessa) Gascon-Guarcas, MEP Education Liaison
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.21. 2026-2027 Contract for Michelle Olson, Grant Writer
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.22. 2026-2027 Contract for Otis Pierce, Professional Development Coordinator
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.23. 2026-2027 Contract for Richard Stuart, Information Technology Specialist
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.24. 2026-2027 Contract for Stephanie Johnson, ASD Behavior Specialist
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

6.25. 2026-2027 Contract for Travis Kassing, Network & Computer Systems Engineer
Speaker(s): Board President or designee
Rationale: This is a consent item.

7. June and July Treasurer's Report
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee

Rationale: Review the breakdown of the Treasurer's Report for the months of June and July

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.

8. Board Spotlight - 2026 Ear Marked Cash on Hand

Rationale: Administrator Ostmeyer will present this month's spotlight on 2026 Ear Marked Cash on Hand. Note - this is the proposal for the next year's budget, it is NOT finalized.

9. Mileage Reimbursement Rate

Speaker(s): Board President or designee

Rationale: The IRS Mileage rate as of July 1, 2026 is $0.76 per mile, increased from $0.725 per mile.

Article III, Section 4, D: Coffee Act Policy (Reimbursable Expenses)

Reimbursement of Expenses. The ESU will pay the registration costs, tuition costs, fees or charges for attendance by Board members at such approved functions. The ESU will pay mileage at the rate allowed by law (that is, the rate established by the Department of Administrative Services) or actual travel expense if travel is authorized by commercial or charter means. The ESU will pay meals and lodging at a rate not exceeding the applicable federal rate unless a fully itemized claim is submitted substantiating the costs actually incurred in excess of such rate and such additional expenses are expressly approved by the Board.

For employees and volunteers, the ESU will pay costs and make reimbursements in the same manner as provided above for Board member attendance, unless otherwise established by policy, Board action, contract, or negotiated agreement.

Administrator Recommendation: Discuss, consider and take any necessary action to approve the IRS mileage reimbursement rate of $0.76 per mile beginning July 1, 2026, as presented.

Recommended Motion(s):

Discuss, consider and take any necessary action to approve the IRS mileage reimbursement rate of $0.76 per mile beginning July 1, 2026, as presented Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

10. Budgeting for additional 1% Budget Authority

Speaker(s): Board President or designee

Rationale:

Nebraska Statute allows an additional 1% in budgeted property tax asking requiring an affirmative vote of 75% of the governing body for approval. These additional budget authority dollars remain critical as we continue to operate with the one and a half cent levy, no state aid funding for 2026-2027, and spending restrictions for the upcoming years. In the event valuations change or additional funding becomes available, this action will allow ESU 7 additional budget authority to access those dollars.

Administrator Recommendation: Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the additional 1% in budgeted tax asking.

Recommended Motion(s):
Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the additional 1% in budgeted tax asking Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

11. Romans, Wiemer & Associates Audit Bid
Speaker(s): Administrator or Designee
Rationale: Administrator Recommendation: Discuss, consider, and take any necessary action to approve the Romans, Wiemer & Associates Audit Bid.
Recommended Motion(s):
Discuss, consider, and take any necessary action to approve the Romans, Wiemer & Associates Audit Bid Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

12. Administrator's Report General
Speaker(s): Administrator or Designee
Rationale:

- ESUCC Update
- ALICAP Letter & Certificate
- Professional Development and Print Shop Report - Director Ericson
- Special Education Report - Director Clay
- Technology Report - Director Ellsworth

12.1. Goal Update
Speaker(s): Administrator or Designee
Rationale: Goal 1: By ~~July~~ December 2026, the ESU 7 board will formalize a process to mentor and onboard new board members.

- Extended to December

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

- Update attached

Goal 3: By July 2026, the EUS 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.

- Update attached

Goal 4: By July 2026, the ESU 7 board will continue to use the operationalized communication materials detailing tailored services and outcomes at scheduled visits to each district and train board members on the meaning of the data.

- Example attached

12.2. Services Update
Speaker(s): Administrator or Designee
Rationale:

- SMART Update

Items inside this item include visit updates, director reports, etc.

12.3. Facilities Update
Speaker(s): Administrator or Designee
Rationale: The Administrator will provide a facilities update during this item

12.4. Personnel
Speaker(s): Administrator or designee
Rationale: New Hires:
Jayne Hoffmeister, Bridges Paraprofessional. Start date, August 10, 2026.
Ashlynn Follett, Bridges Paraprofessional. Start date, August 10, 2026.
Melissa Doles, Bridges Paraprofessional. Start date, August 10, 2026.
Trystan Berry, Bridges Paraprofessional. Start date, August 10, 2026.
Sierra Rhynalds, Bridges Paraprofessional. Start date, August 10, 2026.
Kathy Sebastian, Bridges Paraprofessional. Start date, August 10, 2026.
Jayne Hoffmeister, Bridges Paraprofessional. Start date, August 10, 2026.
Alex Kemp, Cen7ter Paraprofessional. Start date, August 10, 2026.
Maria Delgado Pinedo, Title IC Education Program Recruiter. Start Date: August 10, 2026.
Chris Loescher, Computer Support Specialist. Start date, September 1, 2026.

12.4.1. Personnel - 2026-2027 Contracts
Speaker(s): Administrator or designee
Rationale: 2026-2027 Contracts offered and authorized by the Chief Administrator for the following staff:
- Abel (Josh) Arias, Title IC Education Program Service Provider
- Alexus Hitz, District Technology Coordinator
- Angie Arndt, Department Secretary
- Angie Olson, Print Shop Personnel
- Brian Jarecki, Custodian/Maintenance
- Carolyn Koch, Bookkeeper
- Chris Chvala, Computer Support Specialist
- Cindy Wieser, Department Secretary
- Devon Gronenthal, District Technology Coordinator
- Elizabeth Lawrence, Department Secretary

- Emma Moore, District Technology Coordinator
- Janet Ciboron, Print Shop Personnel
- Jason Trotter, District Technology Coordinator
- Jeremiah Salyard, District Technology Coordinator
- Linda Shefcyk, Business Manager
- Maria Rodriguez-Borquez, Title IC Education Program Recruiter
- Maria Pierce, Print Shop Personnel
- Mayra Garcia, Department Secretary
- Morgan Morsett, Executive Secretary
- Susan Olmer, Bookkeeper
- Traci Siem, Receptionist/Administrative Secretary
- Yaribey Rodriguez, Title IC Education Program Service Provider

- The Title IC Education Department will hire school tutors throughout the year as necessary as classified following the Title IC Education Grant regulations

12.5. Legislative Update
Speaker(s): Administrator or Designee
Rationale: During this item, the Administrator will provide a Legislative Update to members of the Board.

13. Committee Reports
Speaker(s): Committee Chair

13.1. Budget Committee Report
Speaker(s): Budget Committee Chair
Rationale: Reports of Budget Committee activities and discussion will take place during this item.

Committee Recommendation:

13.2. Buildings and Grounds Committee Report
Speaker(s): Buildings and Grounds Committee Chair
Rationale: The Buildings and Grounds Committee Chairperson will provide an update.

Committee Recommendation: Discuss, consider and take any action necessary to approve the Fee Proposal and Agreement to Perform Professional Services for a Site Study, Variance and Possible Expansion for the ESU 7 Campus from RVW, Inc.
Recommended Motion(s):
Discuss, consider and take any action necessary to approve the Fee Proposal and Agreement to Perform Professional Services for a Site Study, Variance and Possible Expansion for the ESU 7 Campus from RVW, Inc Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

13.3. Negotiations Committee Report
Speaker(s): Negotiations Committee Chair
Rationale: Reports of activities and discussions from the Negotiations Committee will take place during this item.

Joint Budget and Negotiations Committee meeting to take place in October.

Committee Recommendation:

13.4. Administrator Evaluation Committee Report
Speaker(s): Administrator Evaluation Committee Chair
Rationale: A report of activities from the Administrator Evaluation Committee will be given during this item.

Evaluation Timeline:
- **August:** Evaluation Committee Chair and Administrator review Evaluation Tool and Evaluation Policy/Procedures.
- **September:** Full Board is provided a paper copy of the evaluation questions.
- **October:** Administrator sends digital evaluation and evaluation resources to the Evaluation Committee Chair in the first week of October. The chair then forwards on to the full Board for completion by the October Board Meeting. The Board will send their completed evaluation tool to the Evaluation Committee prior to the October Board Meeting. The Administrator completes the Evaluation Tool as a self-assessment and sends it to the Evaluation Committee Chair on or before October 31.
- **November:** Committee Chair will send the completed Administrator self-assessment to the full Board after November 1. The Evaluation Committee compiles results of the full Board's completed evaluations prior to the November Board Meeting.
- **December:** The Evaluation Committee meets prior to the December Board Meeting to review with the Administrator the results of the evaluation. Report to the full Board in December Board Meeting following Closed Session requirements with the Administrator present.
- **January:** Confirm Evaluation Committee members. The Administrator provides the Evaluation Committee with goals and shares with the Board at the January Board Meeting.

Committee Recommendation:

14. Conference Report
Speaker(s): Conference Attendees
Rationale: Conference Attendees will report on their learnings.

15. Board Announcements
Rationale:

- Awards of Achievement:
  - April Emeigh - Point Award - Level I
  - Beth Kabes - Point Award - Level II
  - Richard Stephens - Point Award - Level IX
  - Bob Arp - Point Award - Level V
- Upcoming Events
  - Area Membership Meetings
    - Tuesday, August 25 - Nebraska City

            - Wednesday, August 26 - South Sioux City
                - Registration Deadline: August 19
            - Tuesday, September 1 - Omaha
            - Wednesday, September 2 - North Platte
                - Registration Deadline: August 26
            - Wednesday, September 9 - York
                - Registration Deadline: September 2
            - Wednesday, September 23 - Fremont
                - Registration Deadline: September 17
                - Registered: Clark Lehr, Dawn Lindsley
        - State Education Conference
            - November 18-20, 2026 - Omaha
                - Registration opens in September
        - AESA Annual Conference
            - December 2-4, 2026 - Orlando, FL
                - Registration Deadline: September 30 (early bird rates)
                - Registered: Marci Ostmeyer, Marni Danhauer, Bob Arp, Don Graff

16. Adjournment
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee

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