



Regular Board of Education Meeting

Educational Service Unit 7, Oak Room

2657 44th Ave

Columbus, NE 68601-8537

Monday, April 20, 2026 at 4:00 PM

Posted Locations:

- Columbus Telegram Newspaper
- Columbus Telegram Website
- ESU 7 North Building Front Door

Posted Date: 04/10/2026

Attendance Taken at 4:01 PM.

Bob Arp: Present

Joyce Baumert: Present

Amy Blaser: Absent

Marni Danhauer: Absent

April Emeigh: Present

Don Graff: Present

Beth Kabes: Present

Clark Lehr: Present

Dawn Lindsley: Present

Richard Stephens: Present

Jack Young: Present

Present: 9, Absent: 2.

1. Call the Meeting to Order

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.

Board President Dawn Lindsley called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

1.1. Notification of Open Meetings Law

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

1.3. Absent Board Members

Administrator Recommendation: Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve Board member absences. Amy Blaser and Marni Danhauer- absent as notified.

Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve Board member absences as presented Passed with a motion by Clark Lehr and a second by Richard Stephens.

Amy Blaser:	Absent
Marni Danhauer:	Absent
Bob Arp:	Yea
Joyce Baumert:	Yea
April Emeigh:	Yea
Don Graff:	Yea
Beth Kabes:	Yea
Clark Lehr:	Yea
Dawn Lindsley:	Yea
Richard Stephens:	Yea
Jack Young:	Yea
Yea: 9, Nay: 0, Absent: 2	

1.4. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Approval of Agenda

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.

Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the agenda as presented Passed with a motion by Beth Kabes and a second by Joyce Baumert.

Amy Blaser: Absent
Marni Danhauer: Absent
Bob Arp: Yea
Joyce Baumert: Yea
April Emeigh: Yea
Don Graff: Yea
Beth Kabes: Yea
Clark Lehr: Yea
Dawn Lindsley: Yea
Richard Stephens: Yea
Jack Young: Yea
Yea: 9, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

3. Welcome Visitors

4. Public Comment

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. **Consent Agenda**

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.

Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the consent agenda as presented
Passed with a motion by Jack Young and a second by Don Graff.

Amy Blaser: Absent
Marni Danhauer: Absent
Bob Arp: Yea
Joyce Baumert: Yea
April Emeigh: Yea
Don Graff: Yea
Beth Kabes: Yea
Clark Lehr: Yea
Dawn Lindsley: Yea
Richard Stephens: Yea
Jack Young: Yea

Yea: 9, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

5.1. Minutes

This is a consent item.

5.2. Presentation of Bills #81515 through #81680 totaling \$1,045,346.52

The summary of bills for the current month totals: \$1,045,346.52- Bills #81515 through #81680

General Activity Fund total: \$ 0.00

	Amount	Vendor	Description
81544	\$29,350.00	Dell Technologies	School Technology flow through (server)
81549	\$17,633.86	ESU 2	NNNC semester billing
81550	\$8,000.00	ESU 3	Early Learning Connection PD training
81595	\$7,665.52	Madden Therapy LLC	Special Education contracted services
81614	\$5,527.36	Southwest Binding & Laminating	Print Shop supplies
81615	\$6,357.40	State of NE DAS State Accounting	Network Service Charges

81617	\$7,900.00	The Leadership Center	NRPDHH Grant event registrations
81670	\$6,250.00	Red River Press Inc.	Title III ELLII teacher licenses (software)

This is a consent item.

5.3. Reading of Article II, Section 3, A Annual Organizational Meeting

This is a consent item.

5.4. Reading of Article II, Section 4, A Special Meetings

This is a consent item.

5.5. Reading of Article II, Section 5, A Emergency Meetings

This is a consent item.

5.6. Reading of Article II, Section 6, A Notice to Public

This is a consent item.

5.7. Reading of Article II, Section 6, C Yearly Activities

This is a consent item.

5.8. Resignations - Ingrid Rodriguez
 Ingrid Rodriguez - Provisional Licensed Mental Health Practioner. Last day will be May 20, 2026.

This is a consent item.

5.9. Excess Lodging & Meals
 Excess Lodging:

- The Professional Development Department had excess travel to report:
 - Plain Talk about Literacy and Learning Training - March 11-13, 2026
 - Mary Jo Reynolds - \$464.84
- The Special Education Department had excess travel to report:
 - NASES SPED Legislative Conference -Lincoln, NE - February 18-19, 2026 Lincoln Marriott Cornhusker
 - Tami Clay - \$22.00
 - Susan Olmer - \$62.62

- NASP National Association of School Psychologists - Chicago, IL- February 24-27, 2026 Hyatt Regency
 - Jaedyn Malasek - \$507.28
 - Calvin Frey - \$507.28
- Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorder - Kansas City, MO - March 5-7, 2026 Sheraton Kansas City at Crown Center
 - Brooke Hemmer - \$284.52
 - Jenna Mattox- \$284.52
 - Brandy Rose - \$284.52
- Celebrating Women in Leadership - Kearney, NE - March 25-26, 2026 - Holiday Inn
 - Tami Clay \$89.90

This is a consent item.

6. Treasurer's Report
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.

Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented Passed with a motion by Clark Lehr and a second by April Emeigh.

Amy Blaser:	Absent
Marni Danhauer:	Absent
Bob Arp:	Yea
Joyce Baumert:	Yea
April Emeigh:	Yea
Don Graff:	Yea
Beth Kabes:	Yea
Clark Lehr:	Yea
Dawn Lindsley:	Yea
Richard Stephens:	Yea
Jack Young:	Yea

Yea: 9, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

7. Reading of Article III, Section 5, D Construction Projects

From Attorney Justin Knight, "Recent changes to state and federal procurement standards require several mid-year policy updates. Additional revisions may be necessary after the Nebraska Legislature adjourns next month...Neb. Rev Stat. § 73-106 requires the State Board of Education to adjust the bidding threshold once every five years. The State Board adjusted this amount to \$136,000. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-3445 requires the State Board of Engineers and Architects to adjust the threshold for architects or engineers on construction projects. The Board adjusted this amount to \$144,000."

The ESU shall bid every project for the construction, remodeling, or repair of any building or for site improvements when the contemplated expenditures for the project is in excess of \$ ~~409136~~ ,000.00, or such sum as adjusted pursuant to §73-106.

6. Retention of an Architect or Engineer. The ESU shall not engage in the construction of any public works involving architecture or engineering unless the plans, specifications, and estimates have been prepared and the construction has been observed by an architect, a professional engineer, or those under the direct supervision of an architect or professional engineer; provided that such requirement shall not apply to any public work in which the contemplated expenditure for the complete project does not exceed One Hundred and ~~Eighteen~~ ~~Forty Four~~ Thousand Dollars (\$~~118144~~,000), as adjusted from time to time by § 81-3445 or other applicable law.

Administrator Recommendation: Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve Article III, Section 5, D as presented.

Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve Article III, Section 5, D as presented Passed with a motion by Beth Kabes and a second by Jack Young.

Amy Blaser:	Absent
Marni Danhauer:	Absent
Bob Arp:	Yea
Joyce Baumert:	Yea
April Emeigh:	Yea
Don Graff:	Yea
Beth Kabes:	Yea
Clark Lehr:	Yea
Dawn Lindsley:	Yea
Richard Stephens:	Yea
Jack Young:	Yea

Yea: 9, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

This policy change is on the advice of our attorney.

- 2026-2027 Contract for Cassandra Ruth, Early Childhood Speech Language Pathologist
2026-2027 Contract for Cassandra Ruth, Early Childhood Speech Language Pathologist
Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the 2026-2027 Early Childhood Speech Language Pathologist Contract for Cassandra Ruth as presented. Passed with a motion by Jack Young and a second by April Emeigh.

Amy Blaser:	Absent
Marni Danhauer:	Absent
Bob Arp:	Yea
Joyce Baumert:	Yea

April Emeigh: Yea
Don Graff: Yea
Beth Kabes: Yea
Clark Lehr: Yea
Dawn Lindsley: Yea
Richard Stephens: Yea
Jack Young: Yea
Yea: 9, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

9. 2026-2027 Contract for Ann Dubas, Psychologist
2026-2027 Contract for Ann Dubas, Psychologist
Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the 2026-2027 Psychologist Contract for Ann Dubas as presented. Passed with a motion by Joyce Baumert and a second by Bob Arp.

Amy Blaser: Absent
Marni Danhauer: Absent
Bob Arp: Yea
Joyce Baumert: Yea
April Emeigh: Yea
Don Graff: Yea
Beth Kabes: Yea
Clark Lehr: Yea
Dawn Lindsley: Yea
Richard Stephens: Yea
Jack Young: Yea
Yea: 9, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

Contract reflects a reduction in FTE.

10. 2026-2027 Contract for Christina Hancock, Speech Language Pathologist
2026-2027 Contract for Christina Hancock, Speech Language Pathologist
Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the 2026-2027 Speech Language Pathologist Contract for Christina Hancock as presented. Passed with a motion by Joyce Baumert and a second by Beth Kabes.

Amy Blaser: Absent
Marni Danhauer: Absent
Bob Arp: Yea
Joyce Baumert: Yea
April Emeigh: Yea
Don Graff: Yea
Beth Kabes: Yea

Clark Lehr: Yea

Dawn Lindsley: Yea

Richard Stephens: Yea

Jack Young: Yea

Yea: 9, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

Question from board member Clark Lehr regarding the meaning of FTE = Full Time Equivalence. The change in all three contracts is a reduction in FTE.

11. Retirement Resolution- Larry Shefcyk- Custodian/Maintenance Technician

BOARD RESOLUTION OF ESU 7 IN RECOGNITION AND PROFOUND APPRECIATION OF DISTINGUISHED SERVICE BY LARRY SHEFCYK

WHEREAS, Larry has always been mindful of the interests of Educational Service Unit 7 and has worked tirelessly to advance ESU 7;

WHEREAS, Larry has provided outstanding support and guidance to ESU 7; and

WHEREAS, Larry has faithfully and with honor, integrity and great distinction served as Custodian/Maintenance Technician for ESU 7;

RESOLVED, that the ESU 7 Board of Directors formally acknowledges and extends its profound appreciation to Larry for nearly seven years of service to ESU 7 and his cause of impact on education. As a token of appreciation, ESU 7 will provide Larry with a gift recognizing his retirement;

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Board Members of ESU 7 are hereby authorized and directed to take such action as may be necessary, appropriate or advisable to implement this resolution; and

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that the ESU 7 Board is comprised of 12 members, of whom __, constituting a quorum, were present at a meeting duly and regularly called, noticed, convened and held this 20th day of April, 2026, and that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of __ members, and opposed by __ members, and said Resolution has been duly recorded in the Minutes and is in full force and effect.

Discuss, consider and take any necessary action to approve the Retirement Resolution as presented for Larry Shefcyk. Passed with a motion by Clark Lehr and a second by Jack Young.

Amy Blaser: Absent

Marni Danhauer: Absent

Bob Arp: Yea
Joyce Baumert: Yea
April Emeigh: Yea
Don Graff: Yea
Beth Kabes: Yea
Clark Lehr: Yea
Dawn Lindsley: Yea
Richard Stephens: Yea
Jack Young: Yea
Yea: 9, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

Board members signed Larry Shefcyk's Retirement Resolution. This is a customary practice for people retiring from ESU 7.

12. Accessibility of attachments (public facing)

For Public Facing Content

Legal & Compliance

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II Final Rule (April 2024).
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA required.
- Compliance deadlines:
 - April 24, 2026 → for schools/ESUs serving 50,000+ population.
 - April 26, 2027 → for schools/ESUs serving under 50,000.

*Note: For ESUs, population = total area served.

Accessibility Basics:

Alt Text:

- Alternative text (often called alt text) is a brief written description that conveys the purpose or meaning of non-text content (for example, images, icons, and graphs). It helps students who use assistive technologies, supports low-bandwidth situations when images don't load, and improves search and reusability of instructional materials.

Captions

- Captions are on-screen text synchronized with video that conveys spoken dialogue and other meaningful audio (speaker names, sound effects, and music cues). High-

quality captions make instructional media accessible and usable for all learners across classrooms, devices, bandwidth, and learning contexts.

Color Use:

- Thoughtful color use helps students notice patterns and understand information. Accessible color choices ensure that meaning is not lost for learners who can't perceive certain colors, are viewing on a projector/low-contrast screen, or are using assistive technologies.

Headings:

- Headings are the signposts of a page or slide. They provide structure, help all readers scan quickly, and let assistive technologies (like screen readers) jump between sections. Using true heading styles—not just bold or bigger text—creates a clear, logical outline for your materials.

Links:

- Links connect learners to instructions, resources, assignments, and support. Clear, descriptive link text and predictable behavior help all readers—including those using screen readers or keyboard navigation—find what they need quickly.

Tables:

- Tables are for organizing related data into rows and columns so readers can compare information quickly. Accessible tables use clear headers, simple structure, and (when needed) short explanations so students, families, and assistive technologies can understand the data.

Text Contrast:

- Text contrast is the difference in luminance between text (or icons/lines) and its background. Strong contrast makes content readable on any device or projector and for learners with low vision or color-vision differences. It's a cornerstone of accessible design across slides, documents, LMS pages, and district websites.

Federal guidelines require all public-facing documents to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act by their deadline. Administrator Ostmeyer reviewed compliant and non-compliant versions of the ESU 7 2024-2025 Annual Report as an example.

13. District 8 Board Vacancy

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.

Superintendents are meeting on April 28th. Maps of vacant districts and districts up for election will be provided.

There is a new change to the retirement law instituting a "120-day hard cap" which means the retiree can have no contact with any part of education. We verified with NPERS that if there is a current teacher interested in filing for the upcoming election and the filing deadline falls within the 120-day cap, they can still file and will not be in violation.

14. Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council 2026-2027 Master Services Agreement
This agreement outlines the ESUCC statewide offerings that ESUs elect to participate in each year.

Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to approve the 2026-2027 Master Service Agreement with ESUCC as presented. Passed with a motion by Bob Arp and a second by Don Graff.

Amy Blaser:	Absent
Marni Danhauer:	Absent
Bob Arp:	Yea
Joyce Baumert:	Yea
April Emeigh:	Yea
Don Graff:	Yea
Beth Kabes:	Yea
Clark Lehr:	Yea
Dawn Lindsley:	Yea
Richard Stephens:	Yea
Jack Young:	Yea

Yea: 9, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

The purpose of this contract is to coordinate statewide activities between ESUCC and each ESU. Traditionally, ESU 7 participates in all of them. The only change is a \$200 increase for a lobbyist.

15. **Administrator's Report General**

- May Meeting
- Accessibility Requirements- April 24, 2026
 - Website work (Jan Marie, Otis, Rich, Kaise, Marci) <https://www.esu7.org/>

- ESUCC Update
- Professional Development and Print Shop Report - Director Ericson
- Special Education Report - Director Clay
- Technology Report - Director Ellsworth
- Upcoming Events

Administrator Ostmeier and Director Ericson will be absent at the May Board Meeting. Director Ellsworth and Director Clay will be the directors at the meeting.

The ESU 7 Americans with Disabilities Act Compliancy team has been crucial in digesting and carrying out the recent changes and updates.

Director Ericson - summer help in the Print Shop will be starting soon. The Print Shop is also continuing to team with the technology department for billing. Professional Development Coordinators utilized Humanex with Leadership Development. Boone Central has highlighted four priorities and developed action steps and progress markers through the strategic planning process with the assistance of Director Ericson along with two other PD Coordinators and an LMHP Coordinator.

Director Clay - Bridges program is full and has a waiting list for next year. Learning Academy is on the cusp of adding another teacher, just figuring out student numbers for next year. A decision will be made in the next month. Still searching for a deaf educator but continuing to contract with ESU 8 and CPS.

Director Ellsworth - Board members will be receiving new Mac Neo laptops in an effort to trial a new laptop option for school districts.

15.1. Updated ESU 7 District 1 Map

Due to the change in the Humphrey Public School district map, a change was made to ESU 7's District 1 Map. The new description is as follows:

Educational Service Unit Seven

District One

Educational Service Units exterior boundaries are set by the legislature. When stated a precinct partially (i.e., part) covers any pieces or size it is referring only to those facets the legislature approves. Following is a list of areas where each subdistrict is recognized: Antelope County - Part of Oakdale Precinct, and Part of Elgin Precinct. Boone County - Part of Beaver Precinct, Part of Boone Precinct, Part of Ceder Precinct, Part of Southwest Manchester Precinct, Part of Dublin-Bonanza Precinct, Part of North Branch- Shell Creek Precinct, Part of North Manchester Precinct, Part of Oakland Precinct, and Part of Southeast Manchester Precinct. Madison County - Part of S-E-SC-NG-K Precinct (which is Humphrey Public School district #67), Platte County - Part of St. Bernard/Joliet Precinct (excluding Newman Grove School

District), Part of Walker/Woodville Precinct (excluding Newman Grove School District) and Part of Granville/Humphrey Precinct (excluding Madison School District) which is also divided into two sections - West and East along 280th Ave - The West portion is District One. For clarity add parcels 710170922 and 710171328.

The physical map did not have any adjustments due to how little the boundary change is. However, the legal description has changed to include the additional land.

- 15.2. Goal Update
Goals - Attached for your Review

- 15.3. Services Update

- SMART Update

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

- 15.4. Facilities Update

LA HVAC Progress

Playground grass

Outdoor Spaces Committee

Summer work scheduled

Administrator Ostmeyer and Director Ellsworth are meeting with HVAC next week to discuss next steps. For the playground project, a check has been held for the remaining \$3,500 for grass seeding and installation that couldn't be completed until warmer weather. Administrator Ostmeyer has formed an Outdoor Spaces Committee made up of ESU 7 staff members. Items to be discussed include picnic table locations, outdoor seating, etc. Summer projects that will be completed include painting, new flooring and others. Maurice with ALICAP sent the final payment amounts for, \$84,212.55 for mold in Learning Academy, \$3,400 for pests in Cen7ter and \$5,346 for water damage in Learning Academy.

- 15.5. Personnel
All Classified/Non Certificated Hires and Resignations under this item. Not an action item.
Due to an internal position shift in the Technology Department, there is now an opening. More details to come.

- 15.6. Administrator's Legislative Update
[View Ostmeyer's April Legislative Update](#)
Administrator Ostmeyer reviewed the attachments and provided an update on key bills.

16. Board Announcements

Board President Dawn Lindsley reported the NASB Summer School Law Conference in Kearney is an option for board members to attend.

17. Adjournment

Board President Dawn Lindsley adjourned the meeting at 5:11 pm.