

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNIT NO 16  
314 WEST FIRST STREET  
OGALLALA NE 69153-0915  
(308) 284-8481  
JAMES MCGOWN, ADMINISTRATOR

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

**Ogallala Central Office  
Regular Board Meeting**

**Tuesday, June 23, 2026  
12:30 PM CT**

Legal Notice of the REGULAR BOARD MEETING was published in the Keith County News, North Platte Telegraph and on the Educational Service Unit 16 web page, [www.esu16.org](http://www.esu16.org).

The meeting was opened at 12:30 p.m. CT by Robert Jones, President of the Board of Educational Service Unit 16. Roll Call was taken and those present were:

|                                      |         |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Julie Boettcher (District 1):        | Absent  |
| Bill Eakins (District 10):           | Present |
| John Frates (District 11):           | Present |
| Eileen Ohm (District 12):            | Absent  |
| Jason Axthelm (District 2):          | Present |
| Bill McGahan (District 3):           | Present |
| Robert Jones (District 4):           | Present |
| Cheryl Bales (District 5):           | Present |
| Grant Creager (District 6):          | Present |
| Sherry Polk (District 7):            | Present |
| Margaret "Sooky" Marks (District 8): | Present |
| Judy Seger (District 9):             | Present |

- 1) This agenda contains a list of subjects known at the time of its distribution on June 16, 2026. A copy of the agenda reflecting any changes will be available for public inspection during normal business hours in the office of the Administrator of Educational Service Unit 16. Except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda will not be enlarged later than 24 hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting. The public meetings law (84-1410) allows boards to go into executive session "if a closed session is clearly necessary for the protection of the public interest or for the protection of needless injury to the reputation of an individual." Individuals attending this meeting are invited to make comments during the "Recognition of Visitors" time allowed under agenda item 4. Time for each speaker should not exceed 5 minutes.
- 2) Call to Order
  - 2)a Pledge of Allegiance
  - 2)b Roll Call
  - 2)c Board Meeting Attendance

A motion was made by Cheryl Bales (District 5) and Judy Seger (District 9) to record, in the minutes, an excused absence for Julie Boettcher & Eileen Ohm. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.
  - 2)d Notification of Open Meetings Law Posting and Recognition of Recordings
  - 2)e Legal Notice of Regular Board Meeting
- 3) Consent Agenda:

- 3)a Approval of Agenda (*Motion and second, Board President reads Conflict of Interest Statement*)  
 Approval of Minutes of the prior month Board Meeting  
 Approval of Excess Federal Rates Report  
 Approval of Claims and Financial Report  
 Authorize Payment of Claims per Article III, Section 5A  
 A motion was made by Bill McGahan (District 3) and John Frates (District 11) to approve the Consent Agenda including: the Minutes of the May Board Meeting as written and sent to Board Members; the Excess of Federal Rates Report; Financial Reports and the claims for May, authorization of June mid month claims and July claims to be approved during the August board meeting. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.
- 4) Treasurer's Report  
 A motion was made by Margaret "Sooky" Marks (District 8) and Grant Creager (District 6) to approve the May 2026 treasurer's report including the check register as presented by Amber Lutz. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.
- 5) Recognition of Visitors
- 6) Action Items
- 6)a Authorization of Administrator to Serve as the ESU 16 Representative for 2026-27  
 A motion was made by John Frates (District 11) and Jason Axthelm (District 2) to approve Administrator, James McGown, to serve as the ESU 16 Authorized Representative and to sign all local, state, and federal forms for the 2026-27 fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.
- 6)b Appointment of ESU 16 Administrator as Designated Person for Management of the Asbestos Plan  
 A motion was made by Bill McGahan (District 3) and Bill Eakins (District 10) to appoint ESU 16 Administrator, James McGown, as the Designated Person for management of the Asbestos Plan for the 2026-27 fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.
- 6)c Action Regarding Administrator's Proposed Initiatives for 2026-27  
 A motion was made by Margaret "Sooky" Marks (District 8) and Judy Seger (District 9) to approve the Administrator's Priority Initiatives for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.
- 6)d Consider Approval of the OWLS Student Handbook  
 A motion was made by Cheryl Bales (District 5) and Grant Creager (District 6) to adopt the 2026-27 Student Handbook for the OWLS Program. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.
- 6)e Action to Approve the Working Budget and to Advance the Proposed Budget to Formal Hearing  
 A motion was made by Bill Eakins (District 10) and Judy Seger (District 9) to approve the working budget and to advance the 2026-2027 proposed budget for consideration at the required formal public budget hearing in September. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.
- 6)f Action on Setting the Date for the General Fund Budget and Tax Request Hearing  
 A motion was made by John Frates (District 11) and Cheryl Bales (District 5) to publish the budget for July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027 and to set the date for the Hearings on Tuesday, September 15, 2026. 12:30 p.m. CT-General Budget Hearing, 12:45 p.m. CT-Property Tax Request Hearing, 1:00 p.m. CT-Regular Board Meeting. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.
- 6)g Consider Approval of 2026-27 Staff Handbook and Profile of Services  
 A motion was made by Bill McGahan (District 3) and Jason Axthelm (District 2) to adopt the 2026-2027 Staff Handbook and the 2026-2027 Profile of Services. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.
- 6)h Consider Approval West Central Health Department Portable Building Request

A motion was made by Cheryl Bales (District 5) and Grant Creager (District 6) to approve West Central District Health Department to continue to utilize 1,000 sq ft of the parking lot at NPSSC for a storage station. Rent for 2026-27 will be \$800 per year. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.

6)j Consider Approval of Vision and O&M Contract with North Platte Public Schools  
A motion was made by Margaret "Sooky" Marks (District 8) and Judy Seger (District 9) to approve the contract with North Platte Public Schools to provide Vision and O&M services at \$91 per hour plus mileage, to ESU 16 member districts for the 2026-27 school year. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.

6)j Consider Amendments to Staff Contracts  
A motion was made by Margaret "Sooky" Marks (District 8) and Grant Creager (District 6) to approve the 2026-27 contract amendment for Loree Cain from \$89,944.30 to \$92,526.30 and to approve amendments for Lane Swedbergs contracts; 2025-26 from \$74355.69 to \$76855.69. 2026-27 from \$76773.90 to \$79,376.56. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.

6)k Consider Approval of Neat Centers for MPCC & North Platte  
A motion was made by Cheryl Bales (District 5) and Grant Creager (District 6) to approve the quote for Neat Centers for MPCC & North Platte in the amount of \$38,392.32 paid for by SNDEN. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.

6)l Consider Approval of Neat Centers for RUS Grant Districts  
A motion was made by Margaret "Sooky" Marks (District 8) and Grant Creager (District 6) to approve the quote for Neat Centers for Districts in the amount of \$25,031.80 paid for by the RUS Grant. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.

6)m Consider Approval to replace the air conditioner unit NP Boardroom  
A motion was made by Judy Seger (District 9) and Cheryl Bales (District 5) to approve the quote from Lusk Heating & Air Conditioning Inc in the amount of \$12,664.62 to replace the RTU in the North Platte Boardroom. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.

6)n Consider Approval of 5 Year Lease with Eakes Office Supply  
A motion was made by Grant Creager (District 6) and Margaret "Sooky" Marks (District 8) to approve 5 year lease with Eakes in the monthly amount of \$986.07. Roll Call Vote: Yea: 10, Nay: 0 Motion Carried.

- 7) Discussion Items
- 8) Director Reports
- 9) Administrative Reports
  - 9)a Board Reports
  - 9)b Administrator's Report
  - 9)c Out of Unit Travel and Mileage Reports
- 10) Adjourn

**Michelle Walker**  
Recording Secretary

Signature of Board Officers

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Board President

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Board Secretary