

Regular Monthly Meeting of the Kearney Public Schools Board of Education
Kearney Public Schools Board of Education
Monday, February 9, 2026 at 5:30 PM
2nd Floor Staff Development Room, Administration Building
320 W 24th Street
Kearney, NE 68845

1. Routine Business

1.A. Call to Order

President Hazard called the meeting to order at 5:31 PM.

1.B. Open Meetings Act Announcement

This is an open, public meeting of the Kearney Public Schools Board of Education, and a copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted in this room.

1.C. Board Meeting Decorum Expectations

1.D. Pledge of Allegiance

1.E. Roll Call

Attendance Taken at 5:33 PM.

Amy Barth: Present

Drew Blessing: Present

Niki Deeds: Present

Paul Hazard: Present

John Icenogle: Present

Amanda Smallcomb: Present

1.E.I. Excuse Absent Board Member

1.F. Approval of the Agenda

Move to approve the agenda for the meeting, as presented. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Amanda Smallcomb, Passed.

Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle:

Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

2. Recognitions

3. Presentations

3.A. Presentation from Stacie Blackmore, Music Teacher at Sunrise Middle School about the Sunrise Honor Choir Students Singing at the State Capitol

- Stacie Blackmore, music teacher at Sunrise Middle School, shared that the Nebraska Music Education Association hosts Music Education Week at the State Capitol each March, in conjunction with the national celebration of Music in Our Schools Month. Each year, ensembles submit recorded auditions in December, and selected groups are invited to perform. This year, the Sunrise Honor Choir was chosen.

- On March 18, 2026, 72 students and 22 chaperones will travel to Lincoln. The group will tour the Capitol, have lunch, and at 12:30 p.m., Sunrise sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students will perform in the Capitol rotunda. They hope Senator Clouse will be able to stop by and visit with the students.
- Ten ensembles are selected to perform during the week, and this year only two are middle school choirs. Mrs. Blackmore is especially proud that Sunrise was chosen to represent this level of student talent. Groups are eligible to be considered once every three years. Two performances will be held each day during the week of March 17-20, 2026. The performance is open to the public.
- Board members congratulated Mrs. Blackmore and the Sunrise Honor Choir for being selected.

3.B. Construction Update

- Kent Cordes with BD Construction gave an update on the construction projects continuing throughout the district.

4. Legislative Update

- Drew Blessing provided updates on several legislative bills:
 - LB 384, which requires one school board member to attend county budget hearings.
 - LB 575, which aims to decompress the timeline for budget hearings.
 - LB 1038 is a major school finance bill that could significantly reduce property tax revenue for Kearney Public Schools.
 - LB 742 would require schools to allow seventh and eighth graders to participate in high school sports, with an amendment making it discretionary.
 - LB 1050, the third-grade reading bill, would require students who do not meet the state benchmark to be held back, with no option for parental or school recommendations to override. Dr. Mundorf discussed the impact of the third-grade reading bill, emphasizing the need for additional instruction time rather than retention. The bill is seen as problematic due to its lack of consideration for students with special needs or those who have recently arrived in the country. The bill is currently facing opposition, with some members of the Education Committee expressing concerns about its effectiveness.
 - LB 1257, which aims to help with school finance and property tax by eliminating sales tax exemptions.
 - LB 960 would require school boards to have six student representatives, with an amendment reducing the requirement to at least one representative.
 - LB 1207 would require schools to provide teachers with five mental health days. Mr. Blessing suggested a letter to the committee to highlight the district's existing PTO policy.
- Dr. Mundorf highlighted the following bills:
 - LB 824 would reduce the retirement prohibition for retired teachers.
 - LB 1166 would change the retirement contribution date to align with the school fiscal year.

- LB 1053 would repeal the K-2 suspension law that was put into place a few years ago.
- LB 653 would expand special education option enrollment.
- LB 841 would prohibit changes to a student's Individual Education Plan without parental consent.
- LB 1146 would prevent school districts from enforcing consequences for a student's absence from school.
- LB 765 would require at least 50.1% voter turnout and a majority vote in favor for any school bond issue to pass. This bill would basically eliminate school bonds.

5. Public Participation/Comment

6. Board Reports

7. Consent Agenda

Move to approve the items on the Consent Agenda, as presented. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Niki Deeds, Passed.

Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

7.A. Approval of Minutes of the January 12, 2026, Regular Meeting, the January 26, 2026, Special Winter Retreat Meeting, and the February 4, 2026, Committee of the Whole Meeting

7.B. Approval of the February 2026 Claims

7.C. Approval of the February 2026 Financial Reports

7.D. Approval of Kearney High School Jazz Band Trip to the Greeley Jazz Festival, April 23–25, 2026 in Greeley, Colorado

7.E. Approval of Kearney High School Band Trip to the Quad State Marching Contest, October 17, 2026 in Vermillion, South Dakota

8. Regular Agenda - Personnel

8.A. Acceptance of Resignations and Retirements

Move to accept, with regret, the resignations and retirements as presented. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Drew Blessing, Passed.

Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

8.B. Approval of the Employment of Certificated Staff

Move to employ the certificated staff at Kearney Public Schools for the 2026-2027 school year as presented. This motion, made by Drew Blessing and seconded by Amanda Smallcomb, Passed.

Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

8.C. Approval of the Employment of Administrative Staff

Move to approve Trent Steele, assistant principal at Kearney High School, starting the 2026-2027 school year. This motion, made by Amanda Smallcomb and seconded by John Icenogle, Passed.

Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

8.D. Ratification of Negotiated Agreement with Kearney Education Association

- Dr. Mundorf explained the negotiated agreement with the Kearney Education Association, which includes a 3.53% total compensation increase. The agreement includes changes in the salary schedule and extracurricular positions for the 2026-2027 school year.
- A few Board members expressed concerns about the impact on younger teachers and the need for future adjustments.

Move to ratify the Negotiated Agreement with the Kearney Education Association for contract terms for all certified, non-supervisory employees of the Kearney Public Schools for the 2026-2027 school year as presented. This motion, made by Amy Barth and seconded by Drew Blessing, Passed.

Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

9. Regular Agenda - Business

9.A. Approval of Bid for Chromebooks

- Troy DeHaven, Technology Director, reviewed the proposal process and explained the rationale behind the recommendation. Mr. Hazard clarified with Mr. DeHaven that using paper and pen is no longer feasible, given how much of the curriculum is now delivered online.

Move to accept the bid from RTI for 5th and 9th grades and upgrades to Windy Hills technology, in the amount of \$292,049.80, as presented. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Amanda Smallcomb, Passed.

Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

9.B. Approval of Lighting and Sound Upgrades to the Kearney High School CHAT for the Theatre Production Program

- Dr. Mundorf explained the proposal for lighting and sound upgrades that would improve performances in the CHAT at Kearney High School. The theater group has held fundraisers, so a portion of the expense will come from them. Some of the current equipment has been in place for approximately ten years. Board members expressed excitement about the improvements to the CHAT.

Move to approve the lighting and sound upgrades to the Kearney High School CHAT for the Theatre Production program, as presented. This motion, made by Amanda Smallcomb and seconded by Drew Blessing, Passed.

Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

10. Regular Agenda - Miscellaneous

10.A. First Reading Approval of the Revised 4000 Section of Board Policies

- Dr. Mundorf explained that in our ongoing effort to revise all board policies, the Board Policy Committee has spent hours reviewing and revising the policies, ensuring alignment with state and federal statutes. This month the committee brings forth revisions to the 4000 section related to HR practices and staffing.

Move to approve the first reading of the Revised 4000 Section of Board Policies, as presented. This motion, made by Amanda Smallcomb and seconded by Niki Deeds, Passed.

Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

10.B. Approval of the Naming Rights Agreement between Kearney Public Schools and Roger A. Mathiesen for Naming the Kearney High School Track as Mathiesen Track

- Dr. Mundorf presented the naming rights agreement between Kearney Public Schools and Roger A. Matheson for the naming of the Kearney High School track. The agreement outlines the terms of naming the track after Coach Matheson, a national Hall of Fame coach.

Move to approve the Naming Rights Agreement between Kearney Public Schools and Roger A. Mathiesen on the naming of the Kearney High School track as Mathiesen Track, as presented. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Amy Barth, Passed.

Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

11. Closed Session

- The Board moved to go into closed session at 6:47 PM.

Move to enter into a closed session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Amanda Smallcomb, Passed.

Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

12. Return to Open Session

- The Board returned to open session at 7:37 PM.

13. Next Meeting

14. Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 7:37 PM.

Move to adjourn the meeting. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Drew Blessing, Passed.

Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

Notice of Meeting

This meeting was publicized in the Kearney Hub on February 5, 2026; radio stations KGFW and KKPR; and KSNB and KHGI T.V.

Niki Deeds, Secretary