

MINUTES  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
February 10, 2020  
7:30 PM

I. Call Meeting to Order

President Dave Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and the following members were present: Angela Meyer, Betsy Frerichs, Carol Pralle, Dave Zimmerman, Emily Shockley, and Jim Zvolanek. The following administrators were presents: Jerry Rempe, Jeff Murphy, & Christopher Prosocki. The following student board member was present: Aryel Lane. The following visitors were present: Kane Hookstra, Jonna Adams, Tiffany Henrichs, Nicole Stevens, & Dee Bednar.

Reasonable advance publicized notice of the meeting was given according to law by publishing, a designated method for giving notice of the school district. Reasonable advance notice was simultaneously given to board members and a copy of their acknowledgement of receipt of notice and the agenda attached. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

I.A. Roll Call

I.B. Notice of Nebraska Open Meetings Act Posted

President Dave Zimmerman announced that a complete copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act is posted in the back of the board of education meeting room.

II. Approval of Minutes from the January 13, 2020, Regular Board Meeting and Special Board Meeting

Motion to approve minutes from the January 13, 2020, Regular Board Meeting and Special Board Meeting. This motion, made by Angela Meyer and seconded by Betsy Frerichs, passed.  
yes: 6, no: 0

III. Communications, Audiences, and Recognitions

III.A. Public comments will not be received after this period of time. Public comment period is limited to 5 minutes per person and a total of 30 minutes overall.

Kane Hookstra talked about concerns of larger class sizes and meeting the needs of all students. Jonna Adams echoed Kane's sentiments and wondered how we can do what is best for students with 20 kids or more in a classroom. Tiffany Henrichs noted she has four kids in the district in varying class sizes and she had concerns about class sizes getting larger. She also had a concern about meeting the students' needs that are on either the low end or the high end of the spectrum. Nicole Stevens came in support of teachers and said she has seen behavior issues through subbing in the district. Dee Bednar came in support of teachers and brought up the mental health concerns of students.

IV. Financial Statement: Item for Discussion, Consideration, and/or Action

C.D. Bids for the month were as follows:

Security First Bank, Blue Springs Special Funds: 1.80%  
Wymore State Bank, Special Funds: 1.89%

#### IV.A. Approval of Bills

##### IV.A.1. General Fund, Special Building Fund, Depreciation Fund, and Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund Claims

Motion to approve the general fund, special building fund, depreciation fund, and qualified capitol purpose undertaking fund claims. This motion, made by Jim Zvolanek and seconded by Carol Pralle, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

##### IV.A.2. Lunch & Activity Claims

#### V. Support Service

##### V.A. Facility Update

John Linder provided the school board with a written report over snow removal, the hiring of Cody McKinney for the evening custodial position, and students helping with trash pickup and vacuuming.

The school board reviewed some preliminary drawings of the press box. Dr. Prososki noted that he wants to get the project out to bid in the next few weeks. Due to budget constraints, the district will just be erecting a press box with storage below it. This project will not include restrooms or a new concession stand. Dr. Prososki noted that no district funds will be used to pay for this project and this project will be paid for with the use of QCPUF bond proceeds and the Thomas Foundation grant proceeds.

##### V.B. Personnel Items

Dr. Prososki noted that Cody McKinney was just hired as a full-time maintenance staff member and he will be replacing Casey Colgrove.

##### V.C. Technology Update

Dr. Prososki noted that Southern had to complete the Payment Quality Assurance (PQA) program audit for the Wide Area Network (WAN) services for the 2019 fiscal year. In addition, during the active shooter training at the Elementary School, staff brought up different possible safety concerns like the PA system not being loud enough outside. Also, the Gage County Sheriff's office said they would like to have access to all of our buildings through a fob that the other surrounding schools currently offer. Since our entry system is dated and cannot work in its current capacity, the district is exploring different options to rectify this issue. Lastly, we are looking at using E-Rate funds from the federal government to upgrade the technology infrastructure at the Elementary School (Switches, wireless, wyebots, & rack). These were all recommendations that were made by the ESU 5 Technology Director.

#### VI. Administrative and Committee Reports

##### VI.A. Student Board Member Report

The student board member reported on the following items: activities going on, a quiz bowl radio show, Pioneer Conference Art, and student honors.

#### VI.B. Elementary Principal's Report

The elementary principal reported on the following items: current enrollment figures (3-Year-Old Preschool - 9, 4-Year-Old Preschool - 20, K - 26, 1st - 23, 2nd - 23, 3rd - 25, 4th - 19, 5th - 34, & 6th - 27), parent teacher conferences on February 13 from 3:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., kindergarten parent orientation meeting on February 19 at 6:00 p.m. at the Elementary School, Johnson County Central is going to bring 15 teachers over to review our English Language Arts program, girls basketball sub-districts are at Diller-Odell, boys basketball is at Johnson-Brock, and wrestling districts are at Southern Valley.

#### VI.C. Secondary Principal's Report

The secondary principal reported on the following items: current enrollment figures (7th - 32, 8th - 28, 9th - 32, 10th - 24, 11th - 27, 12th - 39), alternative education program at ESU 5 (3 of the 4 spots are filled), Dr. Bond working on getting students registered for the 2020-2021 school year, parent teacher conferences on February 13, he gave a therapy dog update, Pioneer Conference Art show information, an update on the agriculture program at Southern, and a \$2,000 grant that was received from the Farm Credit Services for the new agriculture program.

#### VI.D. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Prosocki discussed an opposition letter to LB 974 that all ESU 5 superintendents crafted and sent to Revenue Committee and to Senator Myron Dorn and to Senator Tom Brandt. All educational groups in Nebraska are also opposing this bill and if LB 974 passes, it will result in drastic funding shortfalls for schools across Nebraska. Next, Dr. Prosocki gave the board an update on some proposed bills that are currently being discussed in the state legislature, he reminded the school board about the upcoming NRCSA spring conference in March, and he distributed a copy of the school board committees for 2020. Dr. Prosocki noted that he has been working on a \$50,000 grant with Brady Meyer and Jamie Schluter through the reVISION process. If this competitive grant is received, the proceeds will go to adding welding classes, agriculture classes, implementing Future Farmers of America (FFA) program, small engine classes, new laptops for the business class, adding computer science classes, and implement a new leadership class that works on developing students' soft skills and hard skills related to local labor market and post-secondary demands. He said if we add this class, he would want to make it a class that is required for graduation. Southern could also potentially receive up to \$150,000 though this competitive grant over the next 3 years. Dr. Prosocki told the school board that he has been working with Stephanie Ware to submit our School-wide Title I plan (K-6) with all of the required documentation to the Nebraska Department of Education. Next, Dr. Prosocki went over both the state aid projections and the budget authority projections. He noted that budget authority does not play a factor in Southern's budget and the district state aid is projected to increase by \$176,965 or by 13%. He noted that last year the district state aid increased by \$189,496, but the district lost \$182,242 last year because a drop in the district's valuation, so the district budget only grew by \$7,254. This was not enough revenue to cover the increases to both salary and benefits last year. Dr. Prosocki said there is also a proposed bill, LB 880, that will delay state aid certification to May 1. Lastly, going through reVISION process with the Nebraska Department of Education, they stated that many districts changed their Jr./Sr. High School schedules in an effort to offer more elective classes and offer more core classes to students. Currently, Southern is the only ESU 5 district that is on a 7-period schedule and not an 8-period schedule. There is not enough time to make the switch for next school year (2020-2021), but this could be a possibility for the 2021-2022 school year.

## VII. Items for Discussion, Consideration, and/or Action

### VII.A. Principals' Contracts & Salaries

Using the same array that the Southern Education Association used for their negotiations, Jerry Rempe's current base salary ranks 5th out of 11 districts and his total compensation ranks 8th out of 11 districts. In addition, Jerry does not receive any additional compensation for being the athletic director.

Jeff Murphy's current base salary ranks 6th out of 11 districts and his total compensation ranks 4th out of 11 districts. In addition, Jeff does receive extra duty pay because he is currently the head girls basketball coach and the concession sponsor. This is also why his total compensation is higher.

#### VII.A.1. Principals' Contract Extensions

Motion to approve the principals' contract extensions. This motion, made by Betsy Frerichs and seconded by Angela Meyer, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

#### VII.A.2. Principals' Salaries for 2020-2021

Motion to approve a 3% raise for the 2020-2021 school year. This motion, made by Betsy Frerichs and seconded by Jim Zvolanek, passed.

Carol Pralle: no, Betsy Frerichs: yes, Angela Meyer: yes, Emily Shockley: yes, David Zimmerman: yes, Jim Zvolanek: yes

yes: 5, no: 1

#### VII.B. Classified Salaries for 2020-2021

Motion to approve a 3% raise for the 2020-2021 school year. This motion, made by Jim Zvolanek and seconded by Betsy Frerichs, passed.

Carol Pralle: no, Betsy Frerichs: yes, Angela Meyer: yes, Emily Shockley: yes, David Zimmerman: yes, Jim Zvolanek: yes

yes: 5, no: 1

#### VII.C. Policy Review - 1000 Series & 2000 Series

The school board reviewed the 1000 and 2000 series policies and updated Policy 1003: Mission Statement and Policy 2016: Participation in Insurance Program by Board Members and updated reporting out who participates with the district insurance just once a year and not four times a year. The Nebraska Department of Education requires school boards across Nebraska to review policies every three years. Based on policy 2016: Participation in Insurance Program by Board Members, school board members are statutorily allowed to participate in the district's health and life insurance coverages. Currently, Dave Zimmerman takes both the family health insurance and the family dental insurance through the district. All board members that participate in the district's insurance program must pay both the employee and the employer portion of the premiums. The district does not pay anything towards their insurance policies. Dave Zimmerman currently pays \$1,794.85 a month for family health insurance and family dental insurance or \$21,538.20 a year.

#### VII.D. Policy 5002.2: Elementary Class Sizes

Motion to approve Policy 5002.2: Elementary Class Sizes. This motion, made by Carol Pralle and seconded by Emily Shockley, passed.

Betsy Frerichs: no, Angela Meyer: no, Carol Pralle: yes, Emily Shockley: yes, David Zimmerman: yes, Jim Zvolanek: yes  
yes: 4, no: 2

Dr. Prosocki stated that he wished the state of Nebraska would fulfill their legal obligation and provide adequate funding to public schools across Nebraska, but based on the current composition of the Nebraska state legislature, he does not foresee this happening anytime soon. A perfect example of this is LB 974, which will take even more financial resources away from schools if it is passed during this legislative session. Dr. Prosocki noted that one of the main reasons school districts across Nebraska implement policies is to take feelings and emotions out of delicate decisions that have to be made from time to time. Issues such as student memorials, decisions that have to be made regarding friends that work on staff, controversial issues like sex education, sports cooperatives, etc.

In Rule 10 (Accreditation requirements for public schools in Nebraska), it recommends one teacher per every twenty-five students in grades K-12. In Policy 5002.2: Elementary Class Sizes, it states that kindergarten will have a maximum of twenty students per class, first grade will have a maximum of twenty-two students per class, and second grade through sixth grade will have a maximum of twenty-five students per class.

In the policy it states that if the class and/or grade numbers drop, the district will endeavor to make all personnel changes through attrition. Under this policy, no one would be in jeopardy of losing their job and nothing would change next school year. If a teacher moved to a different position in another district or retired, then we would look at student numbers (And other factors such as special education numbers, behavioral factors, and poverty factors) and decide if we would fill the position or not. In the policy it also states that the administration has the power to adjust or lower the maximum totals listed above based on special education numbers, social and emotional factors, and student socioeconomic factors.

Dr. Prosocki provided an ESU 5 district comparison over poverty and special education numbers. He also provided the board with a classroom size comparison regarding Johnson-Brock and Tri County. He commended the district for having two counselors and a mental health counselor one day a week (This was all implemented before he started as a superintendent). Area schools such as Thayer Central and Freeman just have one counselor in their district.

Dr. Prosocki presented the school board with three options to pick from:

- 1) Table, change, and/or adopt Policy 5002.2 Elementary Class Sizes;
- 2) Pursue a levy override to put on the ballot for registered voters to consider;
- 3) Do not implement an Elementary Class Size policy and look to address this on a situational basis in the years ahead.

Betsy voiced her concern about making elementary school class sizes bigger. The school board decided to discuss each of the three options in great detail and decided to adopt Policy 5002.2 Elementary Class Sizes as written.

VII.E. Option Enrollment Applications

VIII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:29 p.m. This motion, made by Emily Shockley and seconded by Betsy Frerichs, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for 7:30 p.m., March 9, 2020, at Southern Jr./Sr. High School Board Room in Wymore. The Board of Education will usually adhere to the sequence of the published agenda, but reserves the right to adjust the order of items if necessary and may elect to amend the agenda as deemed necessary.

BY

President of the Board of Education  
Of this School District

ATTEST

Secretary of the Board of Education  
of this School District