

MINUTES  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
May 13, 2024  
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: Betsy Frerichs, Dana Dorn, Dave Zimmerman, Debra Schlake, Jared McKeever, & Jeff Argo. The following administrators were present: Kane Hookstra, Jeff Murphy, & Christopher Proski.

Reasonable advance publicized notice of the meeting was given according to law by publishing, a designated method for giving notice of the school district. Posted Location:

- Fairbury Journal-News

Posted Date: 5/8/2024

Reasonable advance notice was simultaneously given to board members and a copy of their acknowledgment 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 was posted on the back of the board of education meeting room.

II. Approval of Minutes from the April 8, 2024, Regular Board Meeting

Motion to approve minutes from the April 8, 2024, Regular Board Meeting. This motion, made by Jared McKeever and seconded by Dana Dorn, 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.

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

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 Jeff Argo and seconded by

Debra Schlake, passed.  
yes: 6, no: 0

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

#### V. Support Service

##### V.A. Facility Update

John Eisenhower provided the school board with a written report over completing the quarterly vehicle inspections, mowing, working with Nuvve to set our charges times for the electric bus so they do not charge during peak times during the day when the cost of electricity costs more to consume, working with Nuvve to set up V2G capabilities so the district can sell back electricity to the power companies to make a profit over the summer months, and finalizing the punch list for the Jr./Sr. High School remodel project.

##### V.B. Personnel Items

Dr. Proski said that Brenda Gronwold will serve as the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) teacher in the fall, and the United Way covers the costs associated with her employment contract. Dr. Proski noted that we are seeing an increased number of students that are struggling to regulate themselves and their emotions at the elementary school. Dr. Proski said, in his personal opinion, this has been caused by the loss of socialization during the pandemic, busier parents or parents that struggle with parenting skills, and over stimulation from excessive screen time. To combat these issues, Southern is looking to add another day for the ESU 5 mental health counselor (Go from 1 day to 2 days a week, pending their availability in the fall). After talking to ESU 5, the ESU 5 mental health counselor schedules are full and Southern has been placed on a waiting list.

##### V.B.1. Hiring Recommendation

###### V.B.1.1. Nicole Stevens - 1.0 FTE - K-12 Vocal Music Teacher for the 2024-2025 School Year

Motion to approve Nicole Stevens as the K-12 vocal music teacher for the 2024-2025 school year. This motion, made by Debra Schlake and seconded by Betsy Frerichs, passed.  
yes: 6, no: 0

##### V.B.2. Resignation

###### V.B.2.1. Jake Voorhis - 1.0 FTE - K-12 Vocal Music Teacher at the Conclusion of the 2023-2024 School Year

Motion to approve the resignation of Jake Voorhis as the K-12 vocal music teacher at the conclusion of the 2023-2024 school year. This motion, made by Dana Dorn and seconded by Jeff Argo, passed.  
yes: 6, no: 0

The school board accepted the resignation of Jake Voorhis at the conclusion of the 2023-2024 school year with regrets, and the school board thanked Jake for his year of service at Southern Public Schools.

#### V.C. Technology Update

### VI. Administrative and Committee Reports

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

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

The elementary principal reported on the following items: current enrollment figures (192 students in PK-6), kindergarten roundup (20 students attended), Fun & Field Day, 6th grade completing the All Stars program, kindergarten graduation, Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) team developing interventions and decision-making practices for students that are below grade level in reading, and Mr. Hookstra was accepted into the Pre-K-3 Leadership Academy put on by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) and the Nebraska Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). Please Note: MTSS is a framework of evidence-based practices to meet the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs of all students.

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

The secondary principal reported on the following items: current enrollment figures (176 students in grades 7-12), last day of school, all the alternative spots being filled, senior scholarship interview day, Honors night, graduation, and testing incentive.

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

Dr. Prosocki said that Southern will be participating in the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council (ESUCC) Sysco food program in the fall, and this will save the district money when Southern purchases food commodities. Next, Dr. Prosocki went over the minutes from the required annual preschool meeting based on Rule 11, he went over the assessment calendar for the upcoming school year, and he went over the spring DIBELS results. Overall, the spring DIBELS scores went up ten percentage points from the fall. Dr. Prosocki said district resubmitted the Identified Student Population (ISP) to the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or the free breakfast/free lunch program because our ISP went from 68% to 86%. This is the amount that is reimbursed at the federal free rate. This will extend Southern Public Schools 4-year CEP cycle by 2 years. The old CEP cycle was from 2022-2023 school year to 2025-2026 school year. The new CEP cycle will run from the 2024-2025 school year to the 2027-2028 school year. Dr. Prosocki noted that if we participate in the CEP program or not, all public schools in the United States still have to abide by the federal United States Department of Agricultural (USDA) regulations. The USDA prohibits the sale of any foods or the brining in of food in competition with the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs anywhere on school/institution premises during the period beginning one half hour prior to the serving period for breakfast and/or school lunch and lasting until one half hour after serving of breakfast and/or school lunch. Dr. Prosocki went over some of the changes associated with LB 71 and entrance age in public school preschools in Nebraska that

will now allow 5-year-old students who turn 5 prior to July 31 to attend preschool. The district will still prioritize 4-year-old preschool students in our preschool program and Dr. Prosocki noted that, based on the Constitution of Nebraska, only children 5-17 in age are afforded a free, appropriate public education. Based on the state aid formula (TEEOSA), Nebraska schools currently do not get state funding for the 3-year-old preschool programs and Nebraska schools only get 60% funding for the 4-year-old preschool programs. Dr. Prosocki then went over all of the new state laws that passed during the 108th Legislature, Second Session, and he said the district received a \$20,005 NDE safety and security grant that will help offset some of the costs associated with the building entrance remodels. Lastly, Dr. Prosocki gave the school board an update on the new Title IX regulations, and he said all staff at Southern will need to be trained again this fall on the new required federal regulations. Dr. Prosocki noted that if Southern does not implement the new Title IX regulations by August 1, 2024, the district will lose federal funding. On the flip side, Governor Pillen is defying the new Title IX regulations, and if schools in Nebraska implement them, the district will lose state funding. This is another primary example of why no one is becoming educators in Nebraska.

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

### VII.A. Set Activity Prices for the 2024-2025 School Year

Motion to keep the activity prices the same for the 2024-2025 school year. This motion, made by Jared McKeever and seconded by Debra Schlake, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

The admission prices for the 2024-2025 school year will be \$6 for adults, \$4 for students. The prices for passes for the 2024-2025 school year will be \$50 for adults, \$30 for students, and \$90 for families. These are also the same prices that the other Pioneer Conference schools charge.

### VII.B. Approval of Milk Bids for the Southeastern Nebraska Milk Cooperative for the 2024-2025 School Year

Motion to approve the escalating and de-escalating milk bid from Hiland Dairy for the 2024-2025 school year. This motion, made by Dana Dorn and seconded by Jeff Argo, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

Southern Public Schools is a member of the Southeastern Nebraska Milk Cooperative and the purpose of the cooperative is to achieve lower milk prices in an effort to save the district money. The Southeastern Nebraska Milk Cooperative consists of the following districts: Diller-Odell, Fairbry, Meridian, Southern, Tri County, & Wilber-Clatonia.

### VII.C. Southern Public Schools Strategic Plan for the 2024-2029 School Years

Motion to approve Southern Public Schools strategic plan for the 2024-2029 school years. This motion, made by Debra Schlake and seconded by Betsy Frerichs, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

### VII.D. Set the Annual Student Fees Hearing for June 10, 2024, at 7:10 p.m. in the Jr./Sr. High School Boardroom in Wymore, Nebraska

Motion to set the annual student fees hearing for June 10, 2024, at 7:10 p.m. in the Jr./Sr. High School boardroom in Wymore, Nebraska. This motion, made by Jared McKeever and seconded by Debra Schlake, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

Dr. Prosocki noted that school districts in Nebraska are required by law to have a Student Fees hearing. Dr. Prosocki said that no changes have been made to Policy 5045: Student Fees over the past couple of years. These are also the same fees that local ESU 5 schools utilize in our area. Dr. Prosocki said that Policy 5045: Student Fees serves as a placeholder for sponsors or coaches that may want to complete some extra activities during the school year. The majority of the fees in Policy 5045: Student Fees are not imposed on students, and in many cases, they can elect if they want to pay, for example, a \$30 fee to take their laptop home with them during the school year or not.

VII.E. Set the Annual Parental Involvement Hearing and the Annual Title I Parental Involvement Hearing for June 10, 2024, at 7:20 p.m. in the Jr./Sr. High School Boardroom in Wymore, Nebraska

Motion to set the annual parental involvement hearing and the annual Title I parental involvement hearing for June 10, 2024, at 7:20 p.m. in the Jr./Sr. High School boardroom in  
yes: 6, no: 0

VII.F. Approve the Track Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with the City of Wymore

Motion to table the track interlocal cooperation agreement with the city of Wymore pending more information. This motion, made by Jared McKeever and seconded by Jeff Argo, passed.  
yes: 6, no: 0

VII.G. Purchase of a 2024 Chevrolet Suburban as per Legal Advice & NDE Advice (Schools can no longer purchase 12/15 passenger rated vans based on federal regulations)

Motion to approve the purchase of a 2024 Chevrolet Suburban as per legal advice & NDE advice. This motion, made by Dana Dorn and seconded by Debra Schlake, passed.  
yes: 6, no: 0

On August 10, 2005, President Bush signed into law the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Pub. Law 109-59. Federal law prohibits the use of any passenger vehicle for student transportation, which is rated for more than 10 passengers plus the driver by the manufacturer. Federal law also contains substantial penalties for schools, rental agencies, and vehicle dealerships. It is illegal for the school or anyone other than a manufacturer to remove seats from a van to meet the mandated passenger requirements for student transportation. This would apply to both a school and/or a dealership if the intention is to circumvent the mandated passenger rating for school transportation. Currently, no new vehicle manufacturer is producing a gas powered, 10 passenger-rated van. We are currently short vehicles for all of the students that we are required to transport, and we are short vehicles for all of the activities that our students attend. After talking to KSB School Law and NDE, they recommended purchasing a 9-seat suburban. Other schools have purchased micro-buses, but

these buses cost around \$110,000/\$120,000, and they seat over 14 passengers, which requires all of the same training as a regular bus driver.

#### VII.H. Option Enrollment Applications

#### VIII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 p.m. This motion, made by Jared McKeever and seconded by Betsy Frerichs, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. June 10, 2024, at Southern Jr./Sr. High School Boardroom 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