

MINUTES  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
February 17, 2025  
7:00 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. The following administrators were present: Kane Hookstra, Jeff Murphy, & Christopher Proski. The following visitors were present: Dr. Derrick Joel, Shari Becker, Fred Helmink, & Jack Moles.

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: 2/12/2025

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 January 13, 2025, Regular Board Meeting

Motion to approve minutes from the January 13, 2025, Regular Board Meeting. This motion, made by Debra Schlake and seconded by Jeff Argo, 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 Debra Schlake and seconded by Betsy Frerichs, 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 remodeling the old office at the Jr./Sr. High School, replacing the furnace and heat pump at the 3-year-old preschool, safety drills, and LED replacements.

Dr. Prosocki said that the district is in need of another suburban because of the additional extra-curricular offerings that have been added. The school board decided to go ahead and purchase 2 more suburbans because in May, congress is planning on outlawing 10 rated passenger vans, which, in turn, would cause Southern to lose 2 more of our current vans. In addition, Dr. Prosocki said he would like to extended the current QCPUF bond to cover the cost of the 8 RTU & Condensing unit project, so the district does not have to tap into our cash reserves because of the looming economic downturn that will be caused by the upcoming tariff wars. In addition, Dr. Prosocki said he would like the board to also address the roof over the gym, which was completed in 2007 and is reaching the end of its twenty-year shelf life.

##### V.B. Personnel Items

###### V.B.1. Resignation

###### V.B.1.1. Dr. Christopher Prosocki - 1.0 FTE - Superintendent at the Conclusion of his 2024-2025 Contract

Motion to approve the resignation of Dr. Christopher Prosocki at the conclusion of his 2024-2025 contract. This motion, made by Dana Dorn and seconded by Debra Schlake, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

###### V.B.2. Consider the Hiring of a Superintendent Search Firm to fill the Open Superintendent Position for the 2025-2026 School Year (NASB, NRCSA, or McPherson & Jacobson)

Motion to enter in executive session at 8:21 p.m. as needed to protect the interest of the district & to prevent the needless injury to the reputation of the search firms. This motion, made by Debra Schlake, and seconded by Jeff Argo, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

Motion to reconvene the meeting from executive session at 8:40 p.m. This motion, made by Debra Schlake and seconded by Betsy Frerichs, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

Motion to approve McPherson Jacobson search firm to fill the open superintendent position for the 2025-2026 school year. This motion, made by Debra Schlake and seconded by Jeff Argo, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

#### V.C. Technology Update

Dr. Prosocki said that the program that runs the district cameras are no longer working properly due to its age, and the district had to replace the system recently.

### 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, K-3 music concert on February 25, Elementary School Quiz Bowl team placing 4th, WORDS training, 10/11 meteorologist Bill Rentschler visiting 3rd grade students, parent teacher conferences on February 20, bus evacuation drill, spelling bee on February 12, and information about the 5-week tutoring programming that is starting on February 17.

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

The secondary principal reported on the following items: all of the district's alternative spots at ESU 5 are full, finishing the registration handbooks, parent teacher conferences on February 20, first semester honor roll, Pioneer Conference Art Show winners, and junior & senior high quiz bowl competitions.

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

Dr. Prosocki reminded the school board about the upcoming foundation at 5:45 p.m. and a Committee on American Civics meeting at 6:45 p.m. on March 10, 2025. Next, Dr. Prosocki gave the school board a legislative update, and he went over the preliminary state aid and preliminary budget authority. Based on the preliminary numbers, the district's budget authority will increase by 11.21% or by \$724,283 (\$7,185,706 total) and the district's state aid will decrease by 1.74% or by \$122,385 (\$1,859,913 total). Dr. Prosocki also noted that if LB 142 passes, it would change counting all students as poverty students under CEP to just the Identified Student Percentages (Southern would lose state aid under this proposed bill). Dr. Prosocki noted that a federal judge recently rescinded the 2024 Title IX regulations, and as typical, the feds are making it harder for educators to do their jobs and do what is best for all kids across the country. Lastly, Dr. Prosocki said that if the district either hires a first-year superintendent or an interim superintendent that has never completed a budget for an equalized school district, he would be willing to contract out his services to ensure the budget is done properly. Dr. Prosocki noted when he first started at Southern, about \$500,000 was left on the table by because of mistakes that were

made during the previous budget year, and he firmly believes in doing best for all kids regardless of their zip code.

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

### VII.A. Principals' Contracts & Salaries for 2025-2026 School Year

Using the same array that the Southern Education Association (SEA) used for their negotiations, Kane Hookstra's current salary ranks 6th out of 11 districts, and his base salary is \$253 above the midpoint. Jeff Murphy's current base salary ranks 3rd out of 11 districts, and his base salary is \$6,781 above the midpoint.

Dr. Prosocki noted that Southern currently has two principals and one superintendent or three administrators for 374 students. Diller-Odell has two principals, one superintendent, an athletic director, and a curriculum, instruction, assessment, and school improvement administrator or five administrators for 250 students. In addition, both Freeman and Tri County are adding a third principal next school year. Dr. Prosocki noted that Southern Public Schools continues to provide a high-quality education at an economical cost to district patrons.

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

Motion to approve the principals' contract extensions through the 2025-2026 school year. This motion, made by Debra Schlake and seconded by Betsy Frerichs, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

#### VII.A.2. Principals' Salaries for the 2025-2026 School Year

Motion to approve a 4.5% raise for the 2025-2026 school year. This motion, made by Jared McKeever and seconded by Debra Schlake, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

### VII.B. Classified Salaries for the 2025-2026 School Year

Motion to approve a \$1.50 raise for the 2025-2026 school year. This motion, made by Debra Schlake and seconded by Jared McKeever, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

Dr. Prosocki noted that classified staff are the unsung heroes of school districts across the United States.

### VII.C. Consider the Approval of an Out-of-State Travel Request (6th Grade Field Trip)

Motion to approve the out-of-state travel request for the 6th grade field trip. This motion, made by Debra Schlake and seconded by Jared McKeever, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

### VII.D. Option Enrollment Applications

## VIII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 p.m. This motion, made by Jeff Argo and seconded by Debra Schlake, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. March 10, 2025, 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