

Board of Education Meeting
Southwest Public Schools
District 179
December 16, 2024

President Jason Neseth called the regular meeting of the Southwest Public Schools Board of Education to order at 5:32 p.m. on December 16, 2024 at the Southwest Junior-Senior High School in Bartley.

Present: John O'Dea, Jennifer McConville, Jason Kloepping, Jason Neseth, Superintendent Drew Billeter, Matt Springer, Tara Fries, and Patricia Smith.

Absent: Brooke Brooks and Duane Teter.

Visitors: Derek and Darin Meyers, Stacy and Ella Wilson, Connie Lovin, Kim Barnett, Hillery Kennedy, Ron Neseth, Jody Hyke, and Brian Foster.

President Neseth observed Open Meeting Law requirements.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by Kloepping, to excuse absent board members, Brooke Brooks and Duane Teter. Ayes: Kloepping, Neseth, McConville, and O'Dea. Nays: None. Absent: Brooks and Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by McConville, to approve the board meeting agenda as presented. Ayes: Kloepping, McConville, Neseth, and O'Dea. Nays: None. Absent: Brooks and Teter. Motion carried.

Notices of the meeting were posted at the Adams Bank and Trust in Indianola, the Stockmens Bank Bartley Branch, Post Offices in Bartley and Indianola, Southwest Elementary School in Indianola, Southwest Junior-Senior High School in Bartley, and published in the Valley Voice newspaper and on the school website. Notice of the meeting was given in advance to all members prior to the meeting date.

During the agenda item Public Comment and Recognition of Visitors, representatives of the Southwest Teachers' Association presented Jason Kloepping with a card and thanked him for his service on the School Board. Superintendent Billeter also presented him with a plaque, made by students, recognizing his service as a board member.

Agenda Item A of VI Old Business, Approval of Prior Minutes, was tabled until another board member arrives at the meeting.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by McConville, to approve the claims as presented. Ayes: McConville, Kloepping, O'Dea, and Neseth. Nays: None. Absent: Brooks and Teter. Motion carried.

The treasurer's report was presented to the Board.

Superintendent Billeter presented the annual financial literacy report to the board per LB452.

Brooke Brooks arrived at the meeting at 5:48 p.m.

John O'Dea led a discussion for Board member to voice opinions concerning the elementary after-school daycare program. A financial report of the revenue and expenditures associated with the daycare program will be emailed to the Board members and further discussion was tabled until the January 13 Board Meeting.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by Kloepping, to approve the 2025-2026 Negotiated Agreement between the Board and the Southwest Teachers' Association. The base salary will increase by \$800 and changes in the number of personal and sick leave days were discussed. Ayes: O'Dea, Kloepping, Neseth, Brooks, and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by McConville, seconded by O'Dea, to approve revising Policy 4056 Resignation of Certified Staff. If a contract is signed by a certificated employee by March 15, the employee will not be approved to resign from the district at a later date before the beginning of the next school year. Ayes: O'Dea, Kloeping, Neseth, Brooks, and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by McConville, to approve the bid by Brico Pest Control as the district's pest control provider. Ayes: O'Dea, Kloeping, Brooks, Neseth, and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Superintendent Billeter discussed the quote from Verkada Cameras to add additional security cameras at the Elementary and Junior-Senior High School as there are several rooms and hallways with blindspots in both buildings. The quote would add a total of six additional cameras and includes the five-year \$4,000 licensing fee, for a total of \$14,730.99 and will be paid from the Special Building Fund. Moved by McConville, seconded by Kloeping, to approve the quote from 12 Points Technologies. Ayes: O'Dea, Kloeping, Brooks, Neseth, and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Superintendent Billeter, Principal Springer, and Tech Coordinator Jody Hyke discussed the original Watt-Stopper lighting equipment installed in the junior-senior high school at the time of construction. The control module has ceased to function, and there have been several problems with room lighting being discontinued and gym lights shutting off during a basketball game. A source for a digital copy of the building specs has been found, but no installer has been located. A motion was made by O'Dea and seconded by Brooks, to table a decision on the quote obtained from Mercer-Zimmerman for the equipment only until an installer could be located and a quote secured for the cost of the equipment installation. Ayes: O'Dea, Kloeping, Brooks, Neseth, and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by Kloeping, seconded by Brooks, to approve the minutes of the November 11, 2024 Board Meeting minutes. Ayes: Kloeping, Brooks, McConville, and Neseth. Nays: None. Abstained: O'Dea. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Superintendent Billeter reported on receiving an award of a School Nutrition Grant in the amount of \$19,172.00 for replacing a serving table and warming stations at the elementary kitchen. Claims for the grant must be submitted prior to September 15. Installation quotes must be obtained. Southwest Schools was also awarded a grant from the Nebraska Recycling Council for purchase of Slim Jim 4-Stream Recycling Stations for \$3,080.00 for each building. The trip to Spring City in Grand Island for 99 junior-senior high students was taken on December 3. The trip was an incentive to students meeting the benchmark goals or achieving growth on the recent MAPS test scores. One hundred thirty-six of 150 students reached the goal. Mr. Billeter also informed the Board that Letters of Intent will be distributed to certified employees in January.

Principal Fries reported on the December 12 elementary Family Engagement Block Party Night put on by the Red Willow County Extension Office. A Family Literacy Night is being planned for the second semester.

Principal Springer reported on the Jump City Reward Trip and the retirement of two maintenance/custodial employees, who also serve as substitute bus drivers, at the end of July 2025. Replacements will be sought in a few months.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by Kloeping, to go into closed session at 6:35 p.m. for Item #8, Certified Teacher's Request for Additional Leave Time, #9 Principals' Contracts, and #10 Superintendent Contract for the 2025-2026 school year to discuss pay increases for the protection of the public interest and personnel issues for the needless injury to the reputation of an individual. President Neseth repeated the motion, and the board voted as follows: Ayes: Neseth, O'Dea, McConville, Brooks, and Kloeping. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

President Neseth closed executive session at 6:47 p.m.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by Klopping, to approve the certified teacher's request for additional leave time. Ayes: O'Dea, Klopping, Brooks, Neseth, and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by McConville, seconded by Klopping, to approve contracts for the Elementary and High School Principal for the 2025- 2026 school year at a 4% increase. Ayes: O'Dea, Klopping, Brooks, Neseth, and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by Klopping, seconded by O'Dea, to approve the 2025-2026 Superintendent's contract also at a 4% increase. Ayes: O'Dea, Klopping, Brooks, Neseth, and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by Klopping, to adjourn the meeting at 6:52_p.m. Ayes: O'Dea, McConville, Klopping, Neseth, and Brooks. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Agenda for meetings will be kept continually current and available for public inspection in the office of the Superintendent.

The next regular board meeting will be held on Monday, January 13, 2025, at 7:30 p.m. at the Southwest Junior-Senior High School in Bartley.