

Regular Monthly Meeting of the Kearney Public Schools Board of Education
Kearney Public Schools Board of Education
Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 5:30 PM
2nd Floor Staff Development Room, Administration Building
320 W 24th St
Kearney, NE 68845

1. Routine Business

2. Call to Order

Superintendent Mundorf called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

3. 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.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

5. Roll Call

Attendance Taken at 5:30 PM.

Drew Blessing: Present

Dave Brandt: Present

Steve Gaasch: Present

Kathy Gifford: Present

Paul Hazard: Present

John Icenogle: Present

5.A. Excuse Absent Board Member

6. Approval of the Agenda

Move to approve the agenda for the meeting, as presented. This motion, made by Kathy Gifford and seconded by Dave Brandt, Passed.

Drew Blessing: Yea, Dave Brandt: Yea, Steve Gaasch: Yea, Kathy Gifford: Yea, Paul Hazard:

Yea, John Icenogle: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

7. Reorganization of the Kearney Public Schools Board of Education for 2024

7.A. President of the Board of Education for 2024

- Superintendent Mundorf said that he would entertain nominations for the office of President of the Board of Education for 2024. Mr. Blessing nominated Steve Gaasch for the office of President of the Board of Education for 2024. Mrs. Gifford seconded the motion. There were no other nominations.

Mr. Brandt moved that nominations cease and that a unanimous ballot be cast for Steve Gaasch. This motion, made by Dave Brandt and seconded by John Icenogle, Passed.

Drew Blessing: Yea, Dave Brandt: Yea, Steve Gaasch: Yea, Kathy Gifford: Yea, Paul Hazard:

Yea, John Icenogle: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

7.B. Vice President of the Board of Education for 2024

- Mr. Gaasch called for nominations for the office of Vice President of the Board of Education for 2024. Mrs. Gifford nominated Drew Blessing for the office of Vice President of the Board of Education for 2024. Mr. Brandt seconded the motion. There were no other nominations.

Mr. Icenogle moved that nominations cease and that a unanimous ballot be cast for Drew Blessing. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Kathy Gifford, Passed.
Drew Blessing: Yea, Dave Brandt: Yea, Steve Gaasch: Yea, Kathy Gifford: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

7.C. Secretary of the Board of Education for 2024

- Mr. Gaasch called for nominations for the office of Secretary of the Board of Education for 2024. Mrs. Gifford nominated Dave Brandt for the office of Secretary of the Board of Education for 2024. Mr. Blessing seconded the motion. There were no other nominations.

Mr. Blessing moved that nominations cease and that a unanimous ballot be cast for Dave Brandt. This motion, made by Drew Blessing and seconded by Kathy Gifford, Passed.
Drew Blessing: Yea, Dave Brandt: Yea, Steve Gaasch: Yea, Kathy Gifford: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

8. Recognitions

8.A. Announcement and Recognition of "Nebraska School Board Member Week", January 21-28, 2024

- Mr. Mundorf read Resolution 37 which was passed by the 107th session of the Nebraska Unicameral. He thanked the Board of Education on behalf of all of Kearney Public Schools for their tireless efforts, talents, and dedication to the Kearney Public School district. He stated that formal recognition will take place during Nebraska School Board Member Week, January 21-28, 2024.

9. Presentations

9.A. Presentation by Meadowlark Elementary on the Famous Nebraskans Project

- Mark Stute, Principal at Meadowlark Elementary, introduced teachers Ashley Mostek, Christina Carnahan and Parker Humpal, who presented a skit of the Famous Nebraskan Museum project. This is a project that 4th graders at Meadowlark have done for many years, which targets the following 4th grade state standards:
 - Historical Inquiry and Research

- Speaking and Listening
- Models of Writing
- Media Arts
- Mrs. Gifford asked how many years they have been doing this project.
- Ms. Carnahan stated that they have been doing this for at least 10 years. She also noted that many of the costumes for this project were purchased through a Class Act Grant.

10. Public Participation/Comment

- Shellie Seeba, Crystal Hinrichs and Jana Schlender brought forward their individual requests for the Board to consider adding 7th grade girls volleyball and 7th grade girls and boys basketball. To summarize some of their points:
 - KPS is currently the only Class A school that does not offer 7th grade sports (according to their research).
 - Inclusion in sports provides a good support system for students in their social, emotional and overall mental well-being.
 - Sports will help teach them early about how to manage time and academics.
 - Students learn how to work together and how to work with coaches.
 - Sports through KPS would provide opportunities for students that cannot afford to do travel team sports or would serve as a place to start and learn something new for students that may never have played.
 - Starting in 7th grade, will help in developing students' skills and prepare them for the challenge of continuing to move up to the next level of play.
- Peter Kotsiopoulos thanked Board members for stepping up to serve on the Board of Education. He stated that he and his father were Kearney High alums, along with his own children and now his grandchildren, and he has always been proud of this. Pete acknowledged that throughout the years there have inevitably been bumps in the road within the school system, but in general, all problems have been resolved through respectable means. He stated that he felt that he needed to come forward to voice his concerns in regard to women's basketball, specifically the recent media surrounding KPS personnel and the mental health challenges of our youth. He acknowledged that KPS has a great reputation around the state but that the recent media attention has not been good. He voiced his concern that this situation seemed to be handled in the public eye and that the chain of command may not have been followed. He closed by clarifying the important difference between hearing and actually listening.

11. Board Reports

11.A. Report on Activities of NASB Legislative Committee

- Mr. Blessing stated that not a lot has happened yet due to the fact that the legislature has just convened and not a lot of bills have had a hearing or debate. There are currently about fifty new bills in regard to education and about fifty-four bills that were carried over from last year. As part of the NASB Legislation Committee, Drew will meet with them weekly to review hearings and debates in regard to educational bills. Drew stated that the governor has been talking about his proposed property tax

relief bill, so he will continue to watch for the bills that will reflect the changes that he plans to make.

11.B. Report on KPS Foundation Board Activities

- Mr. Brandt stated that, as a Board of Education member, he fills the role of sitting on the KPS Foundation Board. Highlights from the KPS Foundation for the last year are as follows:
 - Management of over 150 funds, including CLASS Act and KCLC, which provide scholarships, family assistance, classroom supplies, technology, books and more.
 - The management of Foundation funds has grown from \$726,000 in 2018 to now over \$2 million.
 - The Foundation's endowment has grown by over \$58,000, which now includes funds for the FFA endowment, five scholarships, the KHS Alumni Association, and board-designated funds.
 - The Foundation managed scholarship applications for the third year. North Pole Express completed its 12th year. KCLC is beginning its 20th year and serves a total of 500 children. The 29th KCard was worth \$40,000 to student organizations.
 - The Foundation received gifts from 1,100 donors for campaigns such as Thank a Teacher, Dual Credit Scholarships, CLASS Act, True Blue, Post Prom, Mary Kay Redman and more.
- Mrs. Gifford took a moment to thank Mr. Blessing and Mr. Brandt for the extra time and effort that goes into serving on these committees.
- Mr. Brandt also stated that CLASS Act is coming up on April 13th.

12. Consent Agenda

Move to approve the items on the Consent Agenda, as presented. This motion, made by Drew Blessing and seconded by Kathy Gifford, Passed.

Drew Blessing: Yea, Dave Brandt: Yea, Steve Gaasch: Yea, Kathy Gifford: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

12.A. Approval of Minutes of the December 11, 2023 Regular Meeting and the January 3, 2024 Board Committee of the Whole Meeting

12.B. Approval of the January 2024 Claims

12.C. Approval of the January 2024 Financial Reports

12.D. Approval of the Check Signing Authority for 2024 for the Kearney Public Schools at Nebraskaland Bank as President and Secretary of the Board of Education, and Dr. Chris Loofe and Jenae Dahlstedt

13. Regular Agenda - Personnel

13.A. Acceptance of Resignations and Retirements

- Dr. Herrmann stated that Annette Colling has been with the district for 24 years and Lori Schulte for 27 years, noting that they have both given a lot of their time and service to Kearney Public Schools.

Move to accept, with regret the retirement resignations of Annette Colling, kindergarten teacher at Glenwood Elementary School, and Lori Schulte, Spanish teacher at Horizon Middle School, effective the end of the 2023-2024 school year. This motion, made by Kathy Gifford and seconded by Dave Brandt, Passed.

Drew Blessing: Yea, Dave Brandt: Yea, Steve Gaasch: Yea, Kathy Gifford: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

13.B. Approval of the Employment of Certificated Staff

Move to approve the employment of Emily Elgert, MA+36, Step 15, 1.0 FTE special education teacher at Kearney High School; Sarah Fowler, MA, Step 9, 1.0 FTE Spanish teacher at Horizon Middle School, and Kati Harmon, BA, Step 3, 1.0 FTE special education teacher, building to be determined, for the 2024-2025 school year. This motion, made by Dave Brandt and seconded by Paul Hazard, Passed.

Drew Blessing: Yea, Dave Brandt: Yea, Steve Gaasch: Yea, Kathy Gifford: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

14. Regular Agenda - Business

15. Regular Agenda - Miscellaneous

15.A. Board Committee Assignments for 2024- Committee on American Civics and Negotiations Committee

A motion was made by Drew Blessing to appoint Dave Brandt, John Icenogle, and Paul Hazard to the Committee on American Civics; and Kathy Gifford, John Icenogle, and Drew Blessing to the Negotiations Committee, for 2024. This motion, made by Drew Blessing and seconded by Kathy Gifford, Passed.

Drew Blessing: Yea, Dave Brandt: Yea, Steve Gaasch: Yea, Kathy Gifford: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

15.B. Closed Session

- The Board moved to closed session for the purpose of discussing teacher negotiations at 6:15 PM.

Move to enter closed session for the purpose of discussing teacher negotiations. This motion, made by Drew Blessing and seconded by Paul Hazard, Passed.

Drew Blessing: Yea, Dave Brandt: Yea, Steve Gaasch: Yea, Kathy Gifford: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

15.C. Return to Open Session

- The Board returned to open session at 6:45 PM.

Move to return to open session. This motion, made by Kathy Gifford and seconded by John Icenogle, Passed.

Drew Blessing: Yea, Dave Brandt: Yea, Steve Gaasch: Yea, Kathy Gifford: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

16. Next Meeting

- The next regular meeting of the Kearney Public Schools Board of Education will be held on February 12, 2024 at 5:30 P.M. in the Staff Development Room in the Administration Building at 320 West 24th St, Kearney, NE 68845.

17. Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 6:47 PM.

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

Drew Blessing: Yea, Dave Brandt: Yea, Steve Gaasch: Yea, Kathy Gifford: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

Notice of Meeting

This meeting was publicized in the Kearney Hub on December 30, 2023; radio stations KGFW and KKPR; and KSNB and KHGI T.V.

Dave Brandt, Secretary