

**Regular Monthly Meeting of the Kearney Public Schools Board of Education**  
**Kearney Public Schools Board of Education**  
**Monday, December 8, 2025 at 5:30 PM**  
**2nd Floor Staff Development Room, Administration Building**  
**320 W 24th Street**  
**Kearney, NE 68845**

**1. Routine Business**

1.A. Holiday Music Provided by Horizon Middle School Under the Direction of Victoria Glandon

- Board members, KPS Administration and guests listened to holiday music provided by Horizon Middle School choir students.

**1.B. Call to Order**

President Icenogle called the meeting to order at 5:34 PM.

**1.C. 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.

**1.D. Board Meeting Decorum Expectations**

**1.E. Pledge of Allegiance**

**1.F. Roll Call**

Attendance Taken at 5:36 PM.

Amy Barth:	Absent
Drew Blessing:	Present
Niki Deeds:	Present
Paul Hazard:	Present
John Icenogle:	Present
Amanda Smallcomb:	Present

**1.F.I. Excuse Absent Board Member**

Move to excuse absent Board member Amy Barth from the meeting. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Drew Blessing, Passed.

Amy Barth: Absent, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea  
Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

**1.G. Approval of the Agenda**

Move to approve the agenda for the meeting, as presented. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Amanda Smallcomb, Passed.

Amy Barth: Absent, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea  
Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

## 2. Recognitions

### 2.A. Recognition of Victoria Glandon, Horizon Middle School Music Teacher, on Receiving the 2026 NFHS Middle School Outstanding Music Educator Award

- Tori Glandon, vocal music teacher at Horizon Middle School spoke about receiving the NFHS Middle School Outstanding Music Educator Award and the selection process for the award. Mrs. Glandon was nominated and voted on by the NSAA Music Coordinators and NMEA Board of Directors and received over half of the votes. She added that she received the award at the NMEA banquet on Friday, November 21st in Lincoln.
- Mrs. Glandon was honored to be nominated. She praised her students, stating that she sets the bar pretty high for them and they always meet it.
- Board members thanked Mrs. Glandon for all the work she does at Horizon.

## 3. Presentations

### 3.A. Presentation by Emily Davidson, 7th Grade Teacher at Horizon Middle School, on the LEAP Program

- Emily Davidson, 7th grade teacher at Horizon Middle School, explained the creation and purpose of the HMS LEAP program, which focuses on suicide prevention and mental health awareness. The program involves 18 students who meet twice a week during the 10th period. Students are trained in QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) and team-building activities. The program aims to remove stigmas around mental health and provide leadership opportunities.
- Kayla Kuhn, Horizon Middle School student, outlined some activities and events organized by the HMS LEAP program, including the first day of school sidewalk greetings, and partnerships with local organizations. The program also focuses on Veterans Day and Hope Week, which promotes mental health awareness and suicide prevention.
- Mrs. Davidson added that this program has such a positive impact on students and the school community.

### 3.B. K-12 Financial Literacy Presentation

- Clint Edwards, 6-12 education director, introduced the K-12 financial literacy presentation, highlighting the importance of financial literacy in the school system.
- Jenn True, PK-5 education director, explained the Junior Achievement program used in elementary and middle schools, focusing on money management, entrepreneurship, and business skills.
- Mr. Edwards discussed the high school personal finance course, noting that it is a graduation requirement and aligns with state standards. He also shared data showing that Nebraska currently ranks third in the nation for high school financial literacy.

### 3.C. Annual "State of the Schools" Report

- Jeff Schwartz, student services and safety director, Mrs. True and Mr. Edwards provided an overview of the annual state of the schools report, explaining the AQuESTT accountability system. The report shows improvements in school classifications, with more schools moving into the excellent category.
- Mr. Edwards discussed the new factors being considered in the AQuESTT system, including student discipline rates. The report highlights the district's performance in various academic metrics, including ACT scores and NSCAS results.
- Meagan Kershner, Director of Finance, gave an overview of the 2025 financial report.

### 3.D. Construction Update

- Kent Cordes with BD Construction gave an update on the construction projects continuing throughout the district.

## 4. Public Participation/Comment

- A patron addressed the Board.

## 5. Board Reports

### 5.A. Follow-up Report from the NASB Annual Education Conference

- Amanda Smallcomb shared her experience and key takeaways from the 2025 NASB annual education conference, including updates on federal funding changes, AI in education, and bond issue planning. Mrs. Smallcomb discussed the keynote speaker, James Lawrence—widely known as the Iron Cowboy—and noted that his story emphasized the value of teamwork and perseverance.
- Paul Hazard attended a question-and-answer session with the NSAA, where he learned about their new Competitive Equity Council and NIL in high school. He also addressed the issue of "super teams," noting that while the NSAA recognizes the concern, they do not yet have a clear solution. Mr. Hazard added that he also participated in a session on board decorum and committee meeting procedures, observing that the guidelines are consistent with current practices at KPS.
- Dr. Jason Mundorf reported that he attended a superintendent panel, moderated a legal session on negotiations and co-presented on a partnership between Kearney Public Schools and UNK.
- Dr. Kent Edwards shared that he appreciated the professional learning opportunities provided by the board and the chance to network with peers. He also mentioned the importance of understanding the system and practical applications for district improvement.

## 6. Consent Agenda

Move to approve the items on the Consent Agenda, as presented. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Paul Hazard, Passed.

Amy Barth: Absent, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

- 6.A. Approval of Minutes of the November 10, 2025 Regular Meeting, and the December 3, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting
- 6.B. Approval of the December 2025 Claims
- 6.C. Approval of the December 2025 Financial Reports
- 6.D. Acceptance of the Kearney High School Booster Club Annual Self-Audit Report for the 2024-2025 School Year
- 6.E. Acceptance of the Windy Hills Elementary Parent Advisory Committee Annual Self-Audit Report for the 2024-2025 School Year
- 6.F. Acceptance of the Kearney High School Theatre Boosters Annual Self-Audit Report for the 2024-2025 School Year
- 6.G. Set the Date of the January Winter Retreat Meeting of the Board of Education as January 26, 2026, 6:00-9:00 PM
- 6.H. Second and Final Reading Approval of Revised 2000 Section of Board Policies
- 6.I. Second and Final Reading Approval of Board Policy 5410 Wand Detectors

**7. Regular Agenda - Personnel**

7.A. Acceptance of Resignations and Retirements

Move to accept, with regret, the resignations and retirements as presented. This motion, made by Amanda Smallcomb and seconded by Niki Deeds, Passed.

Amy Barth: Absent, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

7.B. Approval of the Employment of Certificated Staff

Move to employ the certificated staff at Kearney Public Schools for the 2026-2027 school year as presented. This motion, made by Amanda Smallcomb and seconded by Drew Blessing, Passed.

Amy Barth: Absent, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

**8. Regular Agenda - Business**

**9. Regular Agenda - Miscellaneous**

9.A. Approval of Drew Blessing, Amanda Smallcomb and Dr. Jason Mundorf to attend the NASB Legislative Advocacy Conference in Washington, D.C. April 26-29, 2026

Move to approve Drew Blessing, Amanda Smallcomb and Dr. Jason Mundorf to attend the NASB Legislative Advocacy Conference in Washington, D.C., April 26-29, 2026. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Paul Hazard, Passed.

Amy Barth: Absent, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

9.B. Approve a change in Kearney High School Graduation Requirements to Increase Personal Finance from a 5-Credit Requirement to a 10-Credit Requirement with the Course Taken During the Junior or Senior Year Beginning with the Incoming Freshmen Class of 2026-2027

- Clint Edwards explained the proposal to update the high school graduation requirements by increasing the personal finance credit from five to ten credits. The new requirement will apply to the incoming freshman class of 2026-2027, while current students will continue to follow the existing graduation requirements.
- Dr. Mundorf noted that Board Policy 5204 will also need to be updated to reflect the revised graduation requirements.

Move to approve a change in Kearney High School graduation requirements to increase personal finance from a 5-credit requirement to a 10-credit requirement with the course taken during the junior or senior year beginning with the incoming freshmen class of 2026-2027 and approve the first reading of Board Policy 5204, as presented. This motion, made by Drew Blessing and seconded by Paul Hazard, Passed.

Amy Barth: Absent, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

9.C. Approve Algebra 1 and Spanish 1 as High School Credits for Courses Taken During the 8th Grade Year at either Horizon or Sunrise Middle Schools

- Mr. Edwards explained that Algebra 1 and Spanish 1 will now be offered as high school credits for eighth-grade students at Horizon and Sunrise Middle Schools. These courses will follow the same curriculum as Kearney High School but will not be included in students' GPA. The change is intended to ensure that colleges and other institutions can acknowledge the academic work completed by eighth-grade students.
- Board members emphasized the importance of aligning the curriculum to ensure consistency and quality.

Move to approve Algebra 1 and Spanish 1 as high school credits for courses taken during the 8th grade year at either Horizon or Sunrise Middle Schools. This motion, made by Amanda Smallcomb and seconded by John Icenogle, Passed.

Amy Barth: Absent, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

9.D. First Reading Approval of Revised 3000 Section of Board Policies

- Dr. Mundorf reported that the revised section of 3000 board policies were thoroughly discussed at the last committee meeting. However, he received notice today that, due to federal guidelines, there are changes in procurement plan thresholds for food service programs from \$250,000 to \$350,000 for large purchases and from \$10,000 to \$15,000 for small purchases, and those changes are also included in the revisions that are attached to this agenda.

Move to approve the first reading of the revised board policies, as presented. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Amanda Smallcomb, Passed.

Amy Barth: Absent, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

#### 9.E. Approval of the Superintendent's Contract Commencing July 1, 2026

- President Icenogle emphasized the Board's satisfaction with the superintendent's performance.

Move to approve the Superintendent's contract commencing July 1, 2026. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Amanda Smallcomb, Passed.

Amy Barth: Absent, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

#### 10. Closed Session

- The Board moved to closed session for the purpose of conducting a strategy session in regard to negotiations for the 2026-2027 school year at 7:23 PM.

Move to enter into a closed session for the purpose of conducting a strategy session in regard to negotiations for the 2026-2027 school year. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Drew Blessing, Passed.

Amy Barth: Absent, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

#### 11. Return to Open Session

- The Board returned to open session at 8:39 PM.

#### 12. Next Meeting

#### 13. Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

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

Amy Barth: Absent, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

#### Notice of Meeting

This meeting was publicized in the Kearney Hub on December 4, 2025; radio stations KGFW and KKPR; and KSNB and KHGI T.V.

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Drew Blessing, Secretary