

**Regular Monthly Meeting of the Kearney Public Schools Board of Education**  
**Kearney Public Schools Board of Education**  
**Monday, January 12, 2026 at 5:30 PM**  
**2nd Floor Staff Development Room, Administration Building**  
**320 W 24th Street**  
**Kearney, NE 68845**

**1. Routine Business**

**1.A. Call to Order**

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

**1.B. 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.C. Board Meeting Decorum Expectations**

**1.D. Pledge of Allegiance**

**1.E. Roll Call**

Attendance Taken at 5:32 PM.

Amy Barth: Present

Drew Blessing: Present

Niki Deeds: Present

Paul Hazard: Present

John Icenogle: Present

Amanda Smallcomb: Present

1.E.I. Excuse Absent Board Member

**1.F. Approval of the Agenda**

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

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

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

**2. Reorganization of the Kearney Public Schools Board of Education for 2026**

**2.A. Election of the President of the Board of Education for 2026**

- Dr. Mundorf announced that we will entertain nominations for the office of President of the Board of Education for 2026.
- John Icenogle nominated Paul Hazard for the office of President of the Board of Education for 2026. Amy Barth seconded the motion.
- There were no other nominations.

Drew Blessing moved that nominations cease and that a unanimous ballot be cast for Paul Hazard. John Icenogle seconded the motion. This motion, made by Drew Blessing and

seconded by John Icenogle, Passed.

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

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

## 2.B. Election of the Vice President of the Board of Education for 2026

- President Hazard called for nominations for the office of Vice President of the Board of Education for 2026.
- Drew Blessing nominated Amanda Smallcomb for the office of Vice President of the Board of Education for 2026. Niki Deeds seconded the motion.
- There were no other nominations.

Move to nominate Amanda Smallcomb for the office of Vice President of the Board of Education for 2026. This motion, made by Drew Blessing and seconded by Niki Deeds, Passed.

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

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

## 2.C. Election of the Secretary of the Board of Education for 2026

- Mr. Hazard called for nominations for the office of Secretary of the Board of Education for 2026.
- Amanda Smallcomb nominated Niki Deeds for the office of Secretary of the Board of Education for 2026. John Icenogle seconded the motion.
- There were no other nominations.

Move to nominate Niki Deeds for the office of Secretary of the Board of Education for 2026. This motion, made by Amanda Smallcomb and seconded by John Icenogle, Passed.

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

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

## 3. Recognitions

3.A. Recognition of Kearney High School Students who were Selected to Participate in the 2025 Nebraska All-State Band, Choir and Orchestra, sponsored by the Nebraska Music Education Association

- Mr. Rick Mitchell, Kearney High School band teacher, reported that there were 15 Kearney High School students selected for the All-State ensemble this year. Each year, they audition over 2,000 students for these ensembles and seat anywhere between 500 and 600 students for four ensembles. This year, Kearney High School had seven in band, four in choir, and four in orchestra.
- Antonio Guerrero was the very first student at KHS who was selected to All-State all four years.

- In addition, the All-State Event is also a convention for educators, and the Kearney High School band and orchestra were both selected to perform at this convention, which is a huge honor.

### 3.B. Recognition of Alison Klein, Kearney High School Science Teacher, for Earning National Board Certification in Adolescent and Young Adult Science (Chemistry) from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

- Mr. Jeff Ganz, principal of Kearney High School, introduced Mrs. Allison Klein, Kearney High School science teacher. Mrs. Klein has earned the National Board Certification in adolescent and young adult science from the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. Mr. Ganz explained that this is an extraordinary achievement, and it's widely regarded as the highest credential in the teaching profession. Mrs. Klein has worked diligently on this distinguished recognition, and it sets that high standard that we're looking for at Kearney High School. Mrs. Klein's students benefit greatly from her deep expertise, and this certification is a testament to her commitment to exceptional teaching.
- Mrs. Klein thanked the board for acknowledging this accomplishment and added that it takes a lot of dedication and support from administration and her students and families.
- Mrs. Klein explained that the process takes 3 to 5 years and involves an action research project in her classroom. It includes four components—an intensive content exam and three performance-based sections using student work and classroom video—designed to demonstrate high-quality instruction. Submissions are scored with rubrics, and results are returned after six months. She added that only about 40% of teachers pass on their first attempt, so she is very proud of her accomplishment.

### 3.C. Announcement and Recognition of "Nebraska School Board Member Week," January 25-31, 2026

- Dr. 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. A gift of KPS cell phone chargers with the KPS logo was given to each board member as a token of appreciation.

## 4. Presentations

### 4.A. Presentation by Troy Saulsbury and Caryn Saulsbury, 4th Grade Teachers at Central Elementary School on their Oregon Trail Unit

- Mr. Troy Saulsbury and Mrs. Caryn Saulsbury, 4th Grade Teachers at Central Elementary, shared information about their Oregon Trail unit at Central Elementary School, detailing the preparation, activities, and community involvement. This unit brings education to life. The year starts by creating Nebraska dough maps, making Nebraska birthday cakes or cookies, and then writing a speech and report about Nebraska history.

- The most notable event is the Oregon Trail reenactment, which has gotten a lot of attention in the news. Students are put into families, receive a packing list, and then build their wagons out of shopping carts and supplies. The students then start their journey with their wagon through parts of the community, including the rock garden at Harmon Park. Mr. Saulsbury and Mrs. Saulsbury try to make it as real as possible and give the students opportunities throughout the day to stop and write in their journals.
- This is a great learning experience and teaches students about Nebraska and the Oregon Trail but also how to adapt and problem-solve.

4.B. Presentation by Erikka Rhodes, Hanny Arram Center for Success JAG Teacher, Mid-Year JAG Program Update

- Ms. Erikka Rhodes, JAG teacher at Hanny Arram Center for Success, along with Devin Clark, JAG President, provided an update on the program's activities and progress during its second year.
- The group has visited colleges and participated in career fairs and leadership conferences. Students have also engaged with professionals through employee presentations and job shadowing experiences. In addition, students take part in service-learning projects that allow them to collaborate with community members while giving back to the community. Several students are developing an app designed to help youth ages 13-16 find employment opportunities, such as mowing lawns and grocery shopping. They are currently working on coding the app, which is an exciting development.

4.C. Construction Update

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

**5. Public Participation/Comment**

- Patrons addressed the Board.

**6. Board Reports**

**7. Consent Agenda**

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

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

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

7.A. Approval of Minutes of the December 8, 2025 Regular Meeting, and the January 7, 2026 Committee of the Whole Meeting

7.B. Approval of the January 2026 Claims

7.C. Approval of the January 2026 Financial Reports

7.D. Second and Final Reading Approval of Revised 3000 Section of Board Policies

7.E. Second and Final Reading Approval of Revised Board Policy 5204 Student Graduation

7.F. Approval of the Check Signing Authority for 2026 for the Kearney Public Schools at Nebraskaland Bank as President and Secretary of the Board of Education, and Meagan Kershner and Jenae Dahlstedt

## 8. Regular Agenda - Personnel

8.A. Acceptance of Resignations and Retirements

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

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

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

8.B. Approval of the Employment of Certificated Staff

Move to employ the certificated staff at Kearney Public Schools for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years as presented. This motion, made by Drew Blessing and seconded by Niki Deeds, Passed.

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

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

## 9. Regular Agenda - Business

## 10. Regular Agenda - Miscellaneous

10.A. Approval of Naming the Track at Kearney High School "Mathiesen Track" and Authorizing the Superintendent to Develop a Naming Rights Agreement in Conjunction with Coach Mathiesen for Future Approval

- Dr. Mundorf explained that a proposal has been brought to the Board to consider naming the Kearney High School track after legendary and Hall of Fame KHS track coach Roger Mathiesen. If the Board chooses to move forward, Board Policy 7300 requires the establishment of a naming rights agreement, which would be developed with legal counsel in coordination with, and subject to the approval of, Mr. Mathiesen.
- Board members discussed their views on naming the track after Coach Mathiesen, and all were supportive of moving forward.

Move to approve the name of the track at Kearney High School, "Mathiesen Track," and to authorize the superintendent to develop a naming rights agreement in conjunction with Coach Mathiesen for future approval. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Amy Barth, Passed.

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

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

## 11. Next Meeting

## 12. Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 6:29 PM

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

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

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

### Notice of Meeting

This meeting was publicized in the Kearney Hub on January 8, 2026; radio stations KGFW and KKPR; and KSNB and KHGI T.V.

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Drew Blessing, Secretary