

MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION
February 12, 2024
7:30 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, Dave Zimmerman, Debra Schlake, Jared McKeever, & Jeff Argo. The following administrators were present: Kane Hookstra & Christopher Prososki.

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: 2/7/2024

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.

I.C. Motion to excuse Dana Dorn from the February 12, 2024, School Board Meeting

Motion to excuse Dana Dorn from the February 12, 2024, school board meeting. This motion, made by Debra Schlake and seconded by Betsy Frerichs, passed.

yes: 5, no: 0, Absent: 1

II. Approval of Minutes from the January 15, 2024, Regular Board Meeting

Motion to approve minutes from the January 15, 2024, Regular Board Meeting. This motion, made by Jeff Argo and seconded by Jared McKeever, passed.

yes: 5, no: 0, Absent: 1

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 Jeff Argo, passed.

yes: 5, no: 0, Absent: 1

IV.A.2. Lunch & Activity Claims

V. Support Service

V.A. Facility Update

John Eisenhower provided the school board with a written report on getting the welding program setup for use, installing the new desktop bus radio system that recently went out, inspecting the basketball hoops, vehicle inspections, and working with Colorado West to get the Level 3 charger up and running.

V.B. Personnel Items

Dr. Proski said that Bryce Kruse, the in-town bus route driver, just resigned. Dr. Proski noted that it has gotten harder and harder to find bus drivers and there may come a day when Southern has to move from 3 bus routes to 2 bus routes. If this has to occur, the district would no longer provide busing in-town. Based on state law in Nebraska, a school district is only required to transport students that live 4 miles or more away from school or students that are on an Individualized Education Program or IEP. Dr. Proski said he would hate to do this, but no one in the United States has an answer to this dilemma. Dr. Proski said that for the time being, a teacher will cover the in-town morning bus route and a maintenance staff member will cover the afternoon bus route.

V.C. Technology Update

Dr. Proski noted that he completed the Future Ready District Technology Plan with Cody Sabey, which is a requirement from the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE).

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, elementary quiz bowl competitions, Threat Assessment training, WORDS literacy grant update, and spelling bee competition.

VI.C. Secondary Principal's Report

The secondary principal provided a written report on the following items: current enrollment figures, an alternative school update, upcoming class registration, parent-teacher conferences, Honor Roll, Pioneer Conference Art Show, junior and senior high quiz bowl competitions, and spelling bee results.

VI.D. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Prososki talked about the recent winter weather and the need for a bus barn in the future. He noted that there has been more extreme weather recently and the district is having issues getting buses to start in the freezing cold weather. Dr. Prososki said that the majority of school districts in Nebraska have bus barns, just like the majority of individuals in agriculture have barns for their equipment as well. Dr. Prososki noted that nothing in life is cheap and erecting a new bus barn would be expensive. If the district decides not to invest in a bus barn, the district will be required to have either more late starts or more snow days, which is very inconvenient for students and parents. Next, Dr. Prososki reminded the school board about the upcoming accreditation visit on February 27 & 28, Dr. Prososki reminded the school board about the upcoming foundation meeting before the March school board meeting, and Dr. Prososki reminded the school board about the upcoming American Civics committee meeting before the March school board meeting. Dr. Prososki gave the school board a legislative update, and he noted that the radicalization of the current Nebraska state legislature is exacerbating the educator shortage in Nebraska. Lastly, Dr. Prososki went over the preliminary state aid and budget authority numbers for the 2024-2025 school year. Based on the preliminary numbers, the district's budget authority will go from \$6,293,682 to \$6,461,422. He noted that this represents a 4.15% increase or a \$257,740 increase. Dr. Prososki said that since Southern is an equalized school district, budget authority is not a factor in Southern's budget. Based on the preliminary state aid numbers, the district's state aid will go from \$1,530,406 to \$1,982,298. He noted that this represents a 29.53% increase or a \$451,892 increase. Dr. Prososki said that the preliminary property tax request authority (A new revenue cap imposed on school districts in Nebraska) is not available yet and this may decrease the amount of revenue the district receives next school year in terms of being able to grow Southern's budget from the previous school year. Dr. Prososki said that he does not understand why the Nebraska state legislature is trying to bleed schools to death in terms of not being able to grow budgets when schools across Nebraska are all facing educator shortages, especially when it comes to classified staff, especially kitchen staff and bus drivers.

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

VII.A. Principals' Contract & Salaries

Using the same array that the Southern Education Association (SEA) used for their negotiations, Kane's current base salary ranks 8th out of 11 districts and his base salary is \$6,158.32 below the midpoint. Jeff's current base salary ranks 5th out of 11 districts and his base salary is \$2,371.67 above the midpoint.

Dr. Prososki noted that Southern currently has two principals and one superintendent or three administrators for 379 students. Next school year, Diller-Odell will have two principals, one

superintendent, a separate athletic director, and a curriculum, instruction, assessment, and school improvement administrator or five administrators for 236 students.

VII.A.1. Principals' Contract Extensions

Motion to approve the principals' contract extensions. This motion, made by Debra Schlake and seconded by Jared McKeever, passed.

yes: 5, no: 0, Absent: 1

VII.A.2. Principals' Salaries for the 2024-2025 School Year

Motion to approve a 4% raise for the 2024-2025 school year. This motion, made by Jared McKeever and seconded by Debra Schlake, passed.

yes: 5, no: 0, Absent: 1

VII.B. Classified Salaries for the 2024-2025 School Year

Motion to approve a \$2.50 raise for the 2024-2025 school year. This motion, made by Jared McKeever and seconded by Betsy Frerichs, passed.

yes: 5, no: 0, Absent: 1

Dr. Prosocki noted that classified staff are the backbone of the district, and it is important to keep their wages competitive with area employers because we are currently in a workers' labor market. All classified staff members will receive a \$2.50 raise for the 2024-2025 school year and this represents a 15.50% increase from the previous school year.

VII.C. Consider the Approval of an Overnight Trip for the State Cheer Competition

Motion to approve the overnight trip for the state cheer competition. This motion, made by Debra Schlake and seconded by Jeff Argo, passed.

yes: 5, no: 0, Absent: 1

Based on Policy 6027: Field Trips, all overnight trips require pre-approval by the school board. The overnight trip will take place on February 15, 2024.

VII.D. Option Enrollment Applications

VIII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m. This motion, made by Debra Schlake and seconded by Jared McKeever, passed.

yes: 5, no: 0, Absent: 1

The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2024, 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