



Board Work Session

Tuesday, June 29, 2021 at 4:30 PM

Educational Service Unit 7, Oak Room
2657 44th Avenue
Columbus, NE 68601-8537

1. Call the Meeting to Order
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee
Rationale:

LEADERSHIP • SERVICE • SUPPORT

Notice of this meeting was given in advance according to State Law 84-1411, by giving notice of the meeting to the public on ESU 7 website www.esu7.org and posted at location of meeting. Notice of this meeting was also given in advance to all members of the Board of Education of Educational Service Unit 7. Availability of the agenda and purpose of the hearing was communicated in the advance notice of the meeting and in the notice to the members of this hearing. All proceedings of the Board of Education of Educational Service Unit 7 were taken while the convened hearing was open to the attendance of the public.

1. Notification of Open Meetings Law
Speaker(s): Board President or Designee
Rationale:

This meeting has been preceded by reasonable advance notice and is hereby declared to be in open session. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted in the meeting room.

§84-1411 adjusts notice requirements for meetings of public bodies. For meetings of governing bodies of all political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska:

- Notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction. If available, notice shall also be published on such newspaper's website.
- In addition to the required notice, notice may also be provided by any other appropriate method designated by the public body or advisory committee.

2. Roll Call

Speaker(s): Board President or Designee

3. Absent Board Members

Speaker(s): Board President or Designee

Rationale:

Recommendation: Discuss, consider and take action to approve the Board member absences.

Recommended Motion(s):

Discuss, consider and take action to approve the Board member absences
Passed with a motion by Board Member #1 and a second by Board Member #2.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

Speaker(s): Board President or Designee

2. Welcome Visitors

Speaker(s): Board President or Designee

3. Public Comment

Speaker(s): Board President or Designee

Rationale: The Board has the discretion to limit the amount of time set aside for public participation.

Citizens wishing to address the Board on a certain agenda item must complete the Public Comment Document prior to the start of the board meeting. Citizens wishing to present petitions to the Board may do so at this time. However, the Board will only receive the petitions and not act upon them or their contents.

4. Strategic Planning Work Session

Speaker(s): Administrator or Designee

Rationale: Dr. Skretta and Dr. Rohwer will facilitate Strategic Planning with the Board and ESU leadership.

5. Adjournment

Speaker(s): Board President or Designee

Nebraska Open Meetings Act

84-1407. Act, how cited. Sections 84-1407 to 84-1414 shall be known and may be cited as the Open Meetings Act.

84-1408. Declaration of intent; meetings open to public. It is hereby declared to be the policy of this state that the formation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret. Every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public in order that citizens may exercise their democratic privilege of attending and speaking at meetings of public bodies, except as otherwise provided by the Constitution of Nebraska, federal statutes, and the Open Meetings Act.

84-1409. Terms, defined. For purposes of the Open Meetings Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1) (a) Public body means (i) governing bodies of all political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska, (ii) governing bodies of all agencies, created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, of the executive department of the State of Nebraska, (iii) all independent boards, commissions, bureaus, committees, councils, subcommittees, or any other bodies created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, (iv) all study or advisory committees of the executive department of the State of Nebraska whether having continuing existence or appointed as special committees with limited existence, (v) advisory committees of the bodies referred to in subdivisions (i), (ii), and (iii) of this subdivision, and (vi) instrumentalities exercising essentially public functions; and

(b) Public body does not include (i) subcommittees of such bodies unless a quorum of the public body attends a subcommittee meeting or unless such subcommittees are holding hearings, making policy, or taking formal action on behalf of their parent body, except that all meetings of any subcommittee established under section 81-15,175 are subject to the Open Meetings Act, and (ii) entities conducting judicial proceedings unless a court or other judicial body is exercising rulemaking authority, deliberating, or deciding upon the issuance of administrative orders;

(2) Meeting means all regular, special, or called meetings, formal or informal, of any public body for the purposes of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action of the public body; and

(3) Videoconferencing means conducting a meeting involving participants at two or more locations through the use of audio-video equipment which allows participants at each location to hear and see each meeting participant at each other location, including public input. Interaction between meeting participants shall be possible at all meeting locations.

84-1410. Closed session; when; purpose; reasons listed; procedure; right to challenge; prohibited acts; chance meetings, conventions, or workshops.

(1) Any public body may hold a closed session by the affirmative vote of a majority of its voting members if a closed session is clearly necessary for the protection of the public interest or for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual and if such individual has not requested a public meeting. The subject matter and the reason necessitating the closed session shall be identified in the motion to close. Closed sessions may be held for, but shall not be limited to, such reasons as:

(a) Strategy sessions with respect to collective bargaining, real estate purchases, pending litigation, or litigation which is imminent as evidenced by communication of a claim or threat of litigation to or by the public body;

(b) Discussion regarding deployment of security personnel or devices;

(c) Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct;

(d) Evaluation of the job performance of a person when necessary to prevent needless injury to the reputation of a person and if such person has not requested a public meeting;

(e) For the Community Trust created under section 81-1801.02, discussion regarding the amounts to be paid to individuals who have suffered from a tragedy of violence or natural disaster; or

(f) For public hospitals, governing board peer review activities, professional review activities, review and discussion of medical staff investigations or disciplinary actions, and any strategy session concerning transactional negotiations with any referral source that is required by federal law to be conducted at arms length.

Nothing in this section shall permit a closed meeting for discussion of the appointment or election of a new member to any public body.

(2) The vote to hold a closed session shall be taken in open session. The entire motion, the vote of each member on the question of holding a closed session, and the time when the closed session commenced and concluded shall be recorded in the minutes. If the motion to close passes, then the presiding officer immediately prior to the closed session shall restate on the record the limitation of the subject matter of the closed session. The public body holding such a closed session shall restrict its consideration of matters during the closed portions to only those purposes set forth in the motion to close as the reason for the closed session. The meeting shall be reconvened in open session before any formal action may be taken. For purposes of this section, formal action shall mean a collective decision or a collective commitment or promise to make a decision on any question, motion, proposal, resolution, or other matter of public interest, position, or policy but shall not include negotiating guidance given by members of the public body to legal counsel or other negotiators in closed sessions authorized under subdivision (1) (a) of this section.

(3) Any member of any public body shall have the right to challenge the continuation of a closed session if the member determines that the session has exceeded the reason stated in the original motion to hold a closed session or if the member contends that the closed session is neither clearly necessary for the protection of the public interest or (b) the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual. Such challenge shall be overruled only by a majority vote of the members of the public body. Such challenge and its disposition shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require that any meeting be closed to the public. No person or public body shall fail to invite a portion of its members to a meeting, and no public body shall designate itself a subcommittee of the whole body for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act. No closed session, informal meeting, chance meeting, social gathering, email, fax, or other electronic communication shall be used for the purpose of circumventing the requirements of the act.

(5) The act does not apply to chance meetings or to attendance at or travel to conventions or workshops of members of a public body at which there is no meeting of the body then intentionally convened, if there is no vote or other action taken regarding any matter over which the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

84-1411. Meetings of public body; notice; method; contents; when available; right to modify; duties concerning notice; videoconferencing or other electronic communication authorized; emergency meeting without notice; appearance before public body.

(1) (a) Each public body shall give reasonable advance public notice of the time and place of each meeting as provided in this subsection. Such notice shall be transmitted to all members of the public body and to the public.

(b) (i) Except as provided in subdivision (1)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's web site. (ii) In the case of the governing body of a city or village or the governing body of such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published by: (A) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's web site; or (B) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city or village. Such notice shall be posted in the same three places for each meeting. (iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(c) In addition to a method of notice required by subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice may also be provided by any other appropriate method designated by such public body or such advisory committee.

(d) Each public body shall record the methods and dates of such notice in its minutes.

(e) Such notice shall contain an agenda of subjects known at the time of the publicized notice or a statement that the agenda, which shall be kept continually current, shall be readily available for public inspection at the principal office of the public body during normal business hours. Agenda items shall be sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the meeting. Except for items of

an emergency nature, the agenda shall not be altered later than (i) twenty-four hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting or (ii) forty-eight hours before the scheduled commencement of a meeting of a city council or village board scheduled outside the corporate limits of the municipality. The public body shall have the right to modify the agenda to include items of an emergency nature only at such public meeting.

(2) A meeting of a state agency, state board, state commission, state council, or state committee, of an advisory committee of any such state entity, of an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, the Joint Public Agency Act, or the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, of the governing body of a public power district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state, of the governing body of a public power and irrigation district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state, of a board of an educational service unit, of the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council, of the governing body of a risk management pool or its advisory committees organized in accordance with the Intergovernmental Risk Management Act, or of a community college board of governors may be held by means of videoconferencing or, in the case of the Judicial Resources Commission in those cases specified in section 24-1204, by telephone conference, if:

(a) Reasonable advance publicized notice is given as provided in subsection (1) of this section;

(b) Reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend, hear, and speak at the meeting, including seating, recordation by audio or visual recording devices, and a reasonable opportunity for input such as public comment or questions to at least the same extent as would be provided if videoconferencing or telephone conferencing was not used;

(c) At least one copy of all documents being considered is available to the public at each site of the videoconference or telephone conference;

(d) At least one member of the state entity, advisory committee, board, council, or governing body is present at each site of the videoconference or telephone conference, except that a member of an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas at wholesale on a multistate basis, an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, or a governing body of a risk management pool or an advisory committee of such organization or pool may designate a nonvoting designee, who shall not be included as part of the quorum, to be present at any site; and

(e) (i) Except as provided in subdivision (2)(e)(ii) of this section, no more than one-half of the state entity's, advisory committee's, board's, council's, or governing body's meetings in a calendar year are held by videoconference or telephone conference; or (ii) In the case of an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas at wholesale on a multistate basis or an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, such organization holds at least one meeting each calendar year that is not by videoconferencing or telephone conference.

Videoconferencing, telephone conferencing, or conferencing by other electronic communication shall not be used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act.

(3) A meeting of a board of an educational service unit, of the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council, of the governing body of an entity formed under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, the Joint Public Agency Act, or the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, of the governing body of a risk management pool or its advisory committees organized in accordance with the Intergovernmental Risk Management Act, of a community college board of governors, of the governing body of a public power district, of the governing body of a public power and irrigation district, or of the Nebraska Brand Committee may be held by telephone conference call if:

(a) The territory represented by the educational service unit, member educational service units, community college board of governors, public power district, public power and irrigation district, Nebraska Brand Committee, or member public agencies of the entity or pool covers more than one county;

(b) Reasonable advance publicized notice is given as provided in subsection (1) of this section which identifies each telephone conference location at which there will be present: (i) A member of the educational service unit board, council, community college board of governors, governing body of a public power district, governing body of a public power and irrigation district, Nebraska Brand Committee, or entity's governing body; or (ii) A nonvoting designee designated under subdivision (3)(f) of this section;

(c) All telephone conference meeting sites identified in the notice are located within public buildings used by members of the educational service unit board, council, community college board of governors, governing body of the public power district, governing body of the public power and irrigation district, Nebraska Brand Committee, or entity or pool or at a place which will accommodate the anticipated audience;

(d) Reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend, hear, and speak at the meeting, including seating, recordation by audio recording devices, and a reasonable opportunity for input such as public comment or questions to at least the same extent as would be provided if a telephone conference call was not used;

(e) At least one copy of all documents being considered is available to the public at each site of the telephone conference call;

(f) At least one member of the educational service unit board, council, community college board of governors, governing body of the public power district, governing body of the public power and irrigation district, Nebraska Brand Committee, or governing body of the entity or pool is present at each site of the telephone conference call identified in the public notice, except that a member of an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas at wholesale on a multistate basis, an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, or a governing body of a risk management pool or an advisory committee of such organization or pool may designate a nonvoting designee, who shall not be included as part of the quorum, to be present at any site;

(g) The telephone conference call lasts no more than five hours; and

(h) No more than one-half of the board's, council's, governing body's, committee's, entity's, or pool's meetings in a calendar year are held by telephone conference call, except that: (i) The governing body of a risk management pool that meets at least quarterly and the advisory committees of the governing body may each hold more than one-half of its meetings by telephone conference call if the governing body's quarterly meetings are not held by telephone conference call or videoconferencing; and (ii) An organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas at wholesale on a multistate basis or an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act may hold more than one-half of its meetings by telephone conference call if the organization holds at least one meeting each calendar year that is not by videoconferencing or telephone conference call.

Nothing in this subsection shall prevent the participation of consultants, members of the press, and other nonmembers of the governing body at sites not identified in the public notice. Telephone conference calls, emails, faxes, or other electronic communication shall not be used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act.

(4) The secretary or other designee of each public body shall maintain a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and shall make reasonable efforts to provide advance notification to them of the time and place of each meeting and the subjects to be discussed at that meeting.

(5) When it is necessary to hold an emergency meeting without reasonable advance public notice, the nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes and any formal action taken in such meeting shall pertain only to the emergency. Such emergency meetings may be held by means of electronic or telecommunication equipment. The provisions of subsection (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting emergency meetings. Complete minutes of such emergency meetings specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available to the public by no later than the end of the next regular business day.

(6) A public body may allow a member of the public or any other witness other than a member of the public body to appear before the public body by means of video or telecommunication equipment.

84-1412. Meetings of public body; rights of public; public body; powers and duties.

(1) Subject to the Open Meetings Act, the public has the right to attend and the right

to speak at meetings of public bodies, and all or any part of a meeting of a public body, except for closed sessions called pursuant to section 84-1410, may be videotaped, televised, photographed, broadcast, or recorded by any person in attendance by means of a tape recorder, camera, video equipment, or any other means of pictorial or sonic reproduction or in a writing.

(2) It shall not be a violation of subsection (1) of this section for any public body to make and enforce reasonable rules and regulations regarding the conduct of persons attending, speaking at, videotaping, televising, photographing, broadcasting, or recording its meetings. A body may not be required to allow citizens to speak at each meeting, but it may not forbid public participation at all meetings.

(3) No public body shall require members of the public to identify themselves as a condition for admission to the meeting nor shall such body require that the name of any member of the public be placed on the agenda prior to such meeting in order to speak about items on the agenda. The body may require any member of the public desiring to address the body to identify himself or herself.

(4) No public body shall, for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act, hold a meeting in a place known by the body to be too small to accommodate the anticipated audience.

(5) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds its meeting in its traditional meeting place which is located in this state.

(6) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds a meeting outside of this state if, but only if:

(a) A member entity of the public body is located outside of this state and the meeting is in that member's jurisdiction;

(b) All out-of-state locations identified in the notice are located within public buildings used by members of the entity or at a place which will accommodate the anticipated audience;

(c) Reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend, hear, and speak at the meeting, including making a telephone conference call available at an instate location to members, the public, or the press, if requested twenty-four hours in advance;

(d) No more than twenty-five percent of the public body's meetings in a calendar year are held out-of-state;

(e) Out-of-state meetings are not used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act;

(f) Reasonable arrangements are made to provide viewing at other instate locations for a videoconference meeting if requested fourteen days in advance and if economically and reasonably available in the area; and

(g) The public body publishes notice of the out-of-state meeting at least twenty-one days before the date of the meeting in a legal newspaper of statewide circulation.

(7) The public body shall, upon request, make a reasonable effort to accommodate the public's right to hear the discussion and testimony presented at the meeting.

(8) Public bodies shall make available at the meeting or the instate location for a telephone conference call or videoconference, for examination and copying by members of the public, at least one copy of all reproducible written material to be discussed at an open meeting. Public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room at a location accessible to members of the public. At the beginning of the meeting, the public shall be informed about the location of the posted information.

84-1413. Meetings; minutes; roll call vote; secret ballot; when.

(1) Each public body shall keep minutes of all meetings showing the time, place, members present and absent, and the substance of all matters discussed.

(2) Any action taken on any question or motion duly moved and seconded shall be by roll call vote of the public body in open session, and the record shall state how each member voted or if the member was absent or not voting. The requirements of a roll call or viva voce vote shall be satisfied by a public body which utilizes an electronic voting device which allows the yeas and nays of each member of such public body to be readily seen by the public.

(3) The vote to elect leadership within a public body may be taken by secret ballot, but the total number of votes for each candidate shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) The minutes of all meetings and evidence and documentation received or disclosed in open session shall be public records and open to public inspection during normal business hours.

(5) Minutes shall be written, except as provided in subsection (6) of this section, and available for inspection within ten working days or prior to the next convened meeting, whichever occurs earlier, except that cities of the second class and villages may have an additional ten working days if the employee responsible for writing the minutes is absent due to a serious illness or emergency.

(6) Minutes of the meetings of the board of a school district or educational service unit may be kept as an electronic record.

84-1414. Unlawful action by public body; declared void or voidable by district court; when; duty to enforce open meeting laws; citizen's suit; procedure; violations; penalties.

(1) Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be declared void by the district court if the suit is commenced within one hundred twenty days of the meeting of the public body at which the alleged violation occurred. Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in substantial violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be voidable by the district court if the suit is commenced more than one hundred twenty days after but within one year of the meeting of the public body in which the alleged violation occurred. A suit to void any final action shall be commenced within one year of the action.

(2) The Attorney General and the county attorney of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets shall enforce the Open Meetings Act.

(3) Any citizen of this state may commence a suit in the district court of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets or in which the plaintiff resides for the purpose of requiring compliance with or preventing violations of the Open Meetings Act, for the purpose of declaring an action of a public body void, or for the purpose of determining the applicability of the act to discussions or decisions of the public body. It shall not be a defense that the citizen attended the meeting and failed to object at such time. The court may order payment of reasonable attorney's fees and court costs to a successful plaintiff in a suit brought under this section.

(4) Any member of a public body who knowingly violates or conspires to violate or who attends or remains at a meeting knowing that the public body is in violation of any provision of the Open Meetings Act shall be guilty of a Class IV misdemeanor for a first offense and a Class III misdemeanor for a second or subsequent offense.

Revised
10/2020



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ESU 7 Strategic Plan Development

Facilitated by Keith Rohwer & John Skretta

Your hosts for tonight

Keith Rohwer, NCSA



John Skretta, ESU 6



Board and Team member introductions

- Name
- Schools represented in your Board district
- Vocation?
- How long have you served on Board or been employed at ESU 7?

Our objectives for tonight

- Reaffirm strengths
- Acknowledge challenges
- Identify key growth opportunities
- Articulate 3 to 5 broad themes or topical areas that will serve as pillars of your next Strategic Plan



*Any
questions?*

Performance Data summary

[highlights reel - from ESU 7 Annual Report]

- 66 services
- 8,338 service recipients in districts
- Over 6,600 service hours in districts
- Over \$1.2M saved

*What do these
big picture
numbers make
you think about
services from
ESU 7?*

Performance Data summary - Annual Performance Goals Measurable - Reportable

- Board of Education
- Administrator
- Directors
- Agency Team
- Department / Division



Annual goals are individual, departmental, and organizational at ESU 7!

Performance Data summary - Communications Plan

- To - From
 - Board of Education
 - Chief Administrator
 - Staff Directors
 - Districts
 - ESU Departments

Performance Data summary - Service Planning

- The Service Implementation Model Process and Log ([SIMPL](#)) is a data-driven decision making process to systematically identify needs and develop services and supports to fill the gaps. The process is utilized by stakeholders of ESU 7 for the purpose of identifying services necessary for ESU 7 to include in its service plan to positively impact student achievement.



Performance Data summary - Survey Results

- Survey data confirms that for Agency Team and Administrator, internal stakeholders (ESU 7 team members) find that their leaders:
 - Follow through on commitments
 - Actively listen to diverse points of view
 - Ensure policies and procedures are adhered to
 - Express confidence in their employees
 - Trust employees in the work they do

What do these findings suggest to you about the culture that has been established at ESU7?

Performance Data summary - On Campus Survey Results

- 95% of session attendees found the sessions attended were “useful” or “very useful.”
- Attendees reported they found
 - Presenters were knowledgeable about content
 - Understood how the content of the session applies to their work
 - Had time to collaborate with others and exchange ideas



What else might you want to know about session attendees' perceptions to measure value and impact?

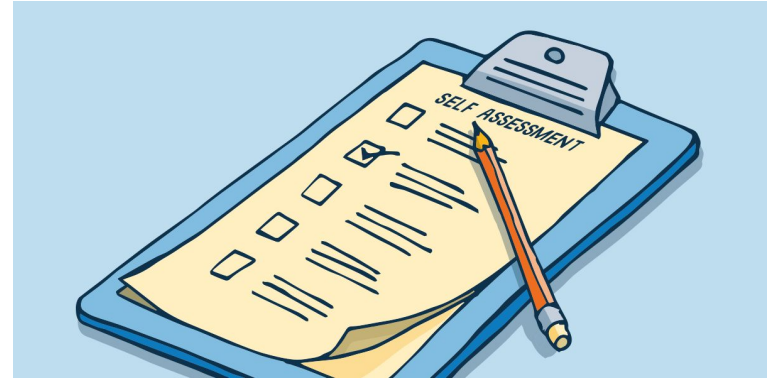
Performance Data summary - Survey on: Safe, Supportive and Collaborative Culture

- Nearly 98% agree that ESU 7 is a safe place
- Over 90% indicating strong belief that ESU 7 is a supportive place
- Over 90% find the ESU to be proficient to distinguished in being a collaborative place
- Over 90% find the ESU to be proficient to distinguished in having a positive culture



Performance Data summary - Board Self-Assessment

- Facets measured included:
 - Physical Setting
 - Meeting Protocol
 - Leadership
 - Policy Governance
 - Service Delivery
 - Resources



Is there anything you wish to call attention to from the Board Self-Assessment?

Perceptual Data summary [highlights reel]

- The facilitators interviewed five focus groups comprised of over **45 ESU 7 stakeholders** on June 14 to gather information and insights from both internal and external affiliates of ESU 7.
- Each group was asked tailored questions designed to elicit input from the subjects' perspectives.
- We will share key findings and quotations from focus group participants across each group interviewed.
- See the [focus group summary report](#).

Perceptual Data summary [Internal Leadership]

- AGENCY TEAM FOCUS GROUP

- “We strive to continue to be the “Best First Choice” as a service provider and a support for schools needing assistance!”
- “The overall organization of ESU #7 provides leadership and collaboration. Information is “intentionally” funneled down through the organization to keep people be informed.”
- “Highly functional departments show just how strong the collaboration is that exists within the organization.”
- “The SIMPL process is a key to data collection in the goal setting process. We need to continue to grow our database.”
- “All staff is highly valued and important. Again, we want to be the “First Best Choice” of school districts for needed services.”

*Internal leaders - agency team:
To these what would you add or
clarify for the Board?*

Perceptual Data summary [Internal Staff]

- ESU 7 STAFF FOCUS GROUP

- “We have much more cohesiveness than before. We are able to reach out to any department. Less SILOS. Working hard to connect with people who have the answers through communication between the departments.”
- “As staff we are given the encouragement to take on leadership roles and opportunities, both within the ESU and with outside groups.”
- “When a school district says “Our Staff”, many times that includes the ESU Staff who are supports for their specific district or buildings.”
- “Contacts for assistance may even come from weekend calls.”
- “ESU #7 provides a fantastic culture both professionally and personally for all staff.”
- “Mental Health will continue to be an increasing challenge going forward. How we respond to this issue will also need to include family assistance with this problem.”

Perceptual Data summary [External Leadership]

- ESU 7 SCHOOL LEADERS FOCUS GROUP
 - “The ESU does a great job of pulling us all together as administrators to identify specific programs to address current challenges. This is not a competitive situation between school districts and administrators.”
 - “Specific district consultations with each school district.”
 - “SIMPL Process is a key to our success in goal setting and goal completion.”
 - “Strategies over the past 18 months have really supported schools during the COVID Pandemic.”
 - “The ESU Staff does everything possible to help you as a school district to be successful. Able to effectively use people’s time when the meetings are in-person.”
 - “ESU #7 has done a great job of getting the right people on the right seats on the bus.”
 - “Sources of pride are the: Mental Health Program; MTSS Program; Learning Academy; PD Department; PD Point of Contact; 7 Center;”
 - “They’ve brought 19 school districts together as a working group to make education better for all.”

Perceptual Data summary [External Teacher Leaders]

- ESU 7 SCHOOL TEACHERS FOCUS GROUP
 - “I am totally impressed with the various ESU #7 Departments.”
 - “Excellent IT Support.”
 - “I always have access to the ESU Staff. ESU Staff will email you directly with responses to any questions that you submit.”
 - “They are very willing to be open and have discussions about what is needed to be done.”

Perceptual Data summary [External Teacher Leaders]

- ESU 7 SCHOOL TEACHERS FOCUS GROUP
 - “Resource Coach observes students in class and then eats lunch with the teachers for follow-up conversations and useful strategies.”
 - “Teachers have the personal email addresses and phone numbers of staff members to foster excellent connections.”
 - “The ESU Staff has a philosophy that they are NOT BETTER than you as a teacher. They are there to support you.”
 - “Appreciation for the PD staff has a vested interest in our school; In response, the teachers have great CONFIDENCE in the ESU Staff.”

Perceptual Data summary [Community Agency Reps]

- ESU 7 Community Stakeholders Group

- “How can we support ESU #7 in their Mental Health services?”
- “How can we partner with the ESU to look for future teachers?”
- “Student Health Fund Support. Eye Glasses. CCC has additional health funds.”
- “When I have reached out, there has always been open door. Would welcome the opportunity to have additional conversations.”

For our internal leaders:
Who were the Community
Stakeholder participants
(agencies) and what is
their current affiliation with
ESU 7?



Review of Opportunities on the Horizon

Possible opportunities on the horizon:

- “Keep doing what you are doing.”
- Maintain mentoring relationships internally in order to retain staff talent.
- Continue to develop and enhance data-informed feedback loops with member districts to provide actionable insights about ESU 7 programming.
- Emphasize continuing personal development and professional growth for staff in order to ensure expectations for support to member districts can be met.
- Sustain personalized relationships and tailored services to all districts.
- Stay the course with the Learning Academy. Sustain and grow it.
- Further expand and enhance support for new teachers to assist districts in educator retention.
- Expand mental health services and supports: “What we have seen in needs so far is just the tip of the iceberg.” Schools are going to see continued requests for this service.
- Ensure that state and federal requirements are not barriers to services.
- Continue to expand IT supports and unify district networks and systems to ensure consistency and stability of services in a highly dynamic environment.

Review of Opportunities on the Horizon

Possible opportunities on the horizon:

- Sponsoring professional learning opportunities that invite collaboration with community agencies and target hybrid audiences of educators and community agency personnel to expand impact.
- Expanding inclusive practices to reach families and help close a parenting 'skills gap' to support child learning and development. Expand holistic supports to help needy families access available resources and services.
- Sustained coordination with community agencies in order to address gaps and build community capacity.
- Using data to identify gaps in services and supports to address holistic health and educational equity.

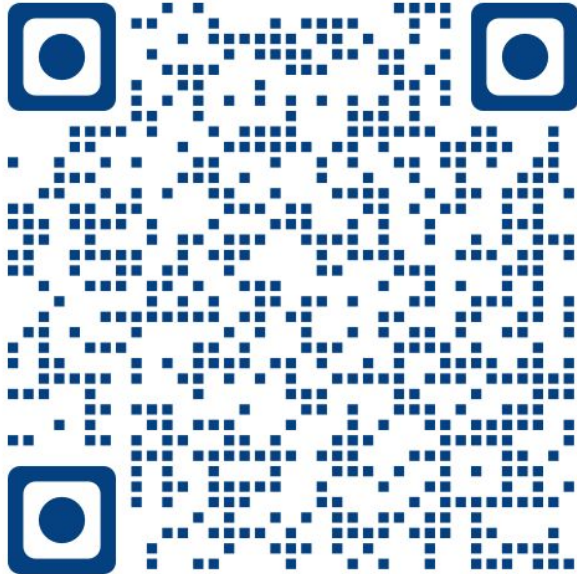
What thoughts come to your mind when reviewing this list?

- What else might you say or share about the list the focus groups generated?
- Are there additional areas of opportunity that come to mind?
- We are seeking input for the ESU Leadership, from your perspective, as they develop goals and objectives for the revised "Strategic Plan" for ESU #7.
 - We are going to take a quick electronic survey to gather that information.
 - Please complete the survey.

**Groups of 2-3: Think / Pair / Share
5 minutes & then share out**

Your Prioritization List for ESU 7

- Complete Google Form at <https://forms.gle/hJ3P52zSs5C1DfWA8>
 - Or to to QR Code:



“Survey says...”

Opportunity to share - bringing your perspective to bear

- Initial review of results
- BOE members: an opportunity to verbally summarize what you submitted on the survey.
- Input / insights from ESU 7 team members.



Closing (Dr. Polk, BOE)



- Next steps
 - Using our outcomes to identify areas / themes for horizon work
 - Narrowing to targets / goal development
 - Establishing timelines and methods for measuring our continued progress

ESU #7 Board Meeting Strategic Plan Development Session Notes

Tuesday, June 29, 2021 at 4:30 P.M.

Seven Board of Education Members in Attendance

Six members of the ESU #7 Leadership Team in Attendance

Session Objectives

- **Reaffirm strengths**
- **Acknowledge challenges**
- **Identify key growth opportunities**
- **Articulate 3 - 5 broad themes or topical areas that will serve as pillars of the next Strategic Plan**

Performance Data Summary – Annual Report

Comments:

“Certainly shows that the School Districts are being served.”

“How do we know that we are comparable to other ESU’s in Nebraska?”

“What is being done to track the various services?”

“How can we make sure that we can tell the whole story?”

“It is obvious that many people do not know what ESU’s do for school districts in Nebraska.”

“How do we educate state leaders about the important work being done?”

“How can data help to tell that story?”

“SIMPL Data is a key to this concept.”

Performance Data Summary – Annual Performance Goals

Comments:

“Leadership provides the model for setting goals.”

“Goal setting is a requirement for all departments and staff members.”

“Goals allow staff members to experience a sense of accomplishment.”k

“Each year’s goals are meaningful and measureable”.

“Setting goals is an expectation.”

“The goals that are set are connected through common themes.”

“The Board of Education has similar goals.”

“The Board of Education reviews and approves the yearly goals”.

Performance Data Summary – Communications Plan

Comments:

“Leadership provided by the Agency Team structure / once per month meetings.”

“Agency Team process to communicate with ALL staff members”.

“Intentional communication to identify and clarify expectations”.

“DKY (Did You Know) memos to staff with pertinent information”.

“Work to avoid saturation (too much) of communication.”

“Staff Newsletter”.

“Monthly in-person Superintendent Meetings.”

“Lots of district communications.”

Performance Data Summary – Service Planning

Comments:

“SIMPL is very time intensive.”

“SIMPL is key to determining service planning goals for the districts”.

“Target Marketing is one concept that might assist with schools taking advantage of services.”

Performance Data Summary – Survey Results

Comments:

“Follow Through / Active Listening / Ensure Adherence / Express Confidence / Trust”

“All of these characteristics describe a very Healthy Organization.”

“ESU #7 is one of those healthy organizations.”

“There is Great Chemistry among the staff at ESU #7.”

“A Board Member described it as “Puzzle Pieces” fitting together to create the chemistry.”

Performance Data Summary – Campus Survey

Comments:

Only note recorded was on Classroom Coaching

Performance Data Summary – Safe, Supportive and Collaborative Culture

Comments:

No notes recorded

Perceptual Data Summary – Internal Leadership Highlights

“Best First Choice”

“Highly functional departments”

“All staff is highly valued and important”

“SIMPL Process is key”

“ESU #7 organization provides leadership and collaboration”

Perceptual Data Summary – Internal Staff Highlights

“More cohesiveness than before”

“Less SILOs”

“Our Staff at school districts includes ESU Staff members”

“ESU #7 provides a fantastic culture”

Perceptual Data Summary – External Leadership

“ESU Staff does everything possible to help school districts be successful”

“ESU #7 had brought 19 school districts together”

“Strategies over the past 18 months have really supported schools during the Pandemic”

“Specific individual consultations with each school district”

“SIMPL Process is key to our success in goal setting and goal completion”.

Personal Data Summary – External Teacher Leaders

“Excellent IT Support”

“Always have access to ESU Staff”

“Resource Coach support of students and staff”

“Teachers have great CONFIDENCE in the ESU Staff”

Personal Data Summary – Community Agency Reps

Some conversation about how you “define” the ESU #7 “Community”

“Mental Health Support”

“Student Health Fund Support”

“Door is always open”

Additional Thoughts:

The ESU #7 staff members are proud of being a part of the ESU #7 organization.

The ESU Board Members express that same pride.

Board of Education focus on continuing to find ways to show “how” success is measured.

Are we reaching instructors in their specific areas for additional content knowledge?

The challenge of obtaining resources with new program requests will continue.

Just because a particular area is a strength does not mean that is cannot still be a future goal.

July 6, 2021

Dear Dr. Polk,

Keith and I wanted to thank you for the opportunity to assist in facilitating the strategic planning process for ESU 7. We are including a document which Keith compiled which we believe accurately reflects the key comments, insights and observations shared by your ESU 7 Board members during the work session/retreat which we facilitated.

We would extract a couple observations from this which we believe reflect the distilled takeaways from our work with ESU 7:

- ESU 7 is a data-driven organization focused on measurable outcomes and using key performance indicators to assess district satisfaction and district utilization of services.
- ESU 7 is a goal-oriented organization where individual, collective and organizational goals are valued, respected and considered a vital component of driving daily behaviors.
- ESU 7 has a clear organizational structure and hierarchy; despite that, there is a relatively flat organizational culture where every single employee is valued and dignified for their role and purpose within the broader ESU 7 team. The administrator and leadership team model principles of collaborative leadership.
- ESU 7 is accurately characterized as both a functional and highly cohesive environment. The work of individual ESU 7 employees is purpose-driven and service-oriented.

In reviewing the survey results which prompted Board members to identify their perceived top organizational priorities for ESU 7, there were three areas that (based on results compiled thus far) stood out as the most likely to be deemed highly or vitally important to ESU 7 from the perspective of your ESU 7 Board. The items receiving the overall highest level of aggregate perceived importance:

- *Staff retention through mentoring relationships*
- *Continued emphasis on personal and professional development of staff to ensure high performance to districts*
- *Sustaining personalized relationships and tailored services to all districts*

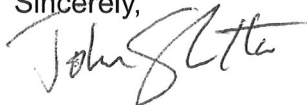
In my estimation, these were identified as key areas because they are more broadly construed, whereas some of the other items were more division or departmentally focused relating to mental health, student services programming, or technology.

Another area of priority for ESU 7 leadership internally received varied perspectives from the Board on the rating scale Google form, but this is not to denigrate its overall importance. That item assessed the importance of *continued data informed feedback to districts on service performance and service selection*. In particular, numerous comments by Board members suggested that they believe that additional levels of measurement and visualization of key data points can help to provide informative illustrations of ESU 7's accomplishments as well as what your ESU may improve upon.

These broad areas should in our opinion now be taken back to your leadership team to convene a conversation around goals which may help specify objectives under these priorities. Sharing the broadly identified aggregate priorities back with the Board is strongly recommended; it is also our sincere belief that the Administrator and leadership team are in the best position to articulate specific goals around these areas. We would further recommend that you continue to use a "SMART goal" approach focusing on setting targets which are specific, measurable, attainable, results oriented, and time bound. We believe this aligns with practices currently in place at your ESU.

In conclusion, we appreciate very much the opportunity to assist in facilitating this process. Please feel free to contact us if you need additional information or clarification, and we would welcome a follow up discussion to debrief sometime in the near future.

Sincerely,



John Skretta
ESU 6