

Homer Community School District
Committed to excellence, inspiring greatness, exceeding expectations
Board of Education
Wednesday, October 15, 2025
7:00 PM

Agenda

{{Name: Agenda Item Name}}

I. Opening the Meeting

A. Call Meeting to Order and Notification of Open Meeting Law

i. Posted in the room

ii. Publication of Meeting was provided according to 84-1411

B. District Mission Statement:

II. Board Member Roll Call

III. Excuse Absent Board Members

IV. Approval of the Agenda and changes to the Agenda

V. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes from the September regular meeting

B. Approve claims and accounts

C. Approve resignations

VI. Public Comment

VII. Information Items: Reports

A. Administrator reports

B. Superintendent report

VIII. Discussion Items

A. Board Goals

- B. Review Superintendent Contract
- C. Attendance update
- D. Negotiations
- E. Annual Review of Emergency Operations Plan
- F. Rule 10
- G. Safety Audit
- H. Enrollment

IX. Action Items

- A. Consider, discuss, and take action to give authority to the superintendent to move up to \$90,000 in the 2025-26 school year from General Fund to Lunch Fund as needed for payroll and other expenses.
- B. Consider, discuss, and take action to approve the Social Studies curriculum to meet compliance with State Statute 79-724.

X. Next Meeting

XI. Adjournment

NOTICES:

COPY OF OPEN MEETINGS ACT: The Board of Education makes 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.

CHANGES TO ORDER OF AGENDA: The Board will generally follow the sequence of the published agenda but may change the order of items when appropriate and may elect to take action on any of the items listed.

PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

Getting Started: When you have been recognized, please stand and state your name.

Time Limit: You may speak only one time and must limit your comments to 5 minutes or less. The total time allotted for Public Comment is 30 minutes. **At the Board's discretion, individual and total comment time may be extended.**

Personnel or Student Topic: If you are planning to speak about a personnel or student matter involving an individual, please understand that our policies require that such concerns initially be directed to the administration for consideration. Board members will generally not respond to any questions you ask or comments you may make about individual staff members or students. You are cautioned that slanderous comments are not protected just because they are made at a Board meeting.

General Rules: Please remember that this is a public meeting for the conduct of the business of the Board of Education. Offensive language, personal attacks and hostile conduct will not be tolerated. **RECORDING OF MEETINGS:** The recording of open sessions of Board of Education meetings by the public is permissible according to section 84-1412 (Meetings of public body; rights of public; public body; powers and duties) of Nebraska law. Any public body may make and enforce reasonable rules and regulations regarding the recording of meetings. In accordance with section 84-1410, the recording of closed sessions is not permissible. Board Policy 204.12 and Administrative Regulation 204.12R describe how members of the public may participate in Board of Education meetings and use recording devices. The recording of any part of Board of Education meetings is permissible, except for closed sessions. No recording, other than note taking, shall be done without informing the president in advance. The president has the right to control the placement of the recording device so the device does not obstruct the view of board members or other members of the public attending the meeting and does not otherwise interfere with the meeting.

CLOSED SESSION: The Board may go into closed session for the protection of public interest or prevention of needless harm to an individual.

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF EDUCATION
HOMER COMMUNITY SCHOOL
Wednesday, September 10, 2025

A meeting of the Board of Education of Homer Community School was convened in open and public session on Wednesday, September 10, 2025 at 7:00 PM in the Secondary Commons at Homer Community School, Homer, Nebraska. The following board members were present or absent:

Byron Hall: Absent, Ryan Harris: Absent, Samantha Johnson: Present, Tyler Kirkholm: Present, Dr. Kristina Nelsen: Present, Paul Tighe: Present.

Administration present: Superintendent Dr. Joseph Lefdal, Principal Abbie Uhl, Principal Jake Brand, and Board Secretary Amy Brand

Visitors present: Several

Notice of the meeting was given in advance by publication and/or posting in accordance with the Board approved method for giving notice of meetings. Notice of this meeting was given to all members of the Board of Education. The Secretary of the Board maintains a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and advance notification to the listed media of the time and place of the meeting and the subjects to be discussed at this meeting was provided. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the publicized notice and a current copy of the Agenda was maintained as stated in the publicized notice. All proceedings of the Board of Education, except as hereinafter noted, were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

I.2025-26 Budget Hearing

I.A.Call Hearing to Order

I.B.The purpose of the Hearing is to review, discuss, consider, and receive input, and or support, opposition, criticism, suggestions or observations of taxpayers relating to the proposed budget.

I.B.i.Public Comment

There was none.

I.B.ii.Discussion

Dr. Lefdal discussed this year's budget and our tax and levy history as well as property tax asking history.

I.C.Adjourn Budget Hearing

II.2025-26 Levy Setting Hearing

II.A.Call Hearing to Order

II.B.The purpose of the hearing is to review, discuss, consider, and receive input, and or support, opposition, criticism, suggestions or observations from taxpayers relating to the proposed tax levy.

II.B.i.Public Comment

There was none.

II.B.ii.Discussion

Dr. Lefdal discussed several different district goals.

II.C.Adjourn Levy Setting Hearing

III.Opening the Meeting

III.A.Call Meeting to Order and Notification of Open Meeting Law

III.A.i.Posted in the room

III.A.ii.Publication of Meeting was provided according to 84-1411

III.B.District Mission Statement:

IV.Board Member Roll Call

Motion was made by Dr. Kristina Nelsen and seconded by Samantha Johnson to excuse absent board members Hall and Harris. On roll call vote the Board voted as follows: The motion carried

Byron Hall: Absent, Ryan Harris: Absent, Samantha Johnson: Yea, Tyler Kirkholm: Yea, Dr. Kristina Nelsen: Yea, Paul Tighe: Yea

Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

V.Excuse Absent Board Members

VI.Approval of the Agenda and changes to the Agenda

Motion was made by Dr. Kristina Nelsen and seconded by Tyler Kirkholm to approve the agenda as presented. On roll call vote the Board voted as follows: The motion carried

Byron Hall: Absent, Ryan Harris: Absent, Samantha Johnson: Yea, Tyler Kirkholm: Yea, Dr. Kristina Nelsen: Yea, Paul Tighe: Yea

Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

VII.Consent Agenda

Motion was made by Samantha Johnson and seconded by Dr. Kristina Nelsen to approve all items presented on the Consent Agenda. On roll call vote the Board voted as follows: The motion carried

Byron Hall: Absent, Ryan Harris: Absent, Samantha Johnson: Yea, Tyler Kirkholm: Yea, Dr. Kristina Nelsen: Yea, Paul Tighe: Yea

Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

VII.A.Approval of Minutes from the August regular meeting

VII.B.Approve claims and accounts

VII.C.Approve new hires

VIII.Public Comment

There was none.

IX.Information Items: Reports

IX.A. Administrator reports

Mrs. Uhl and Mr. Brand reported that Homer Community Schools is off to a strong start this year. Parent/Teacher Conferences are set for September 24-25, with scheduled times for elementary, core teacher meetings for middle school, and an open house for high school. TeamMates launched the week of September 1, and Student Council hosted a successful blood drive on September 3. Picture Day is September 16, with retakes October 23. Elementary students completed AIMSweb testing, and grades 3-5 are taking MAP Growth September 8-12, alongside grades 6-8. Knight Time began September 8 for K-2 and starts September 15 for 3-5. Progress continues on the new library project, and a new agriculture teacher has joined the district, also assisting with multiple activities. Middle school is restructuring WIN Time groups using MAP Growth data to strengthen MTSS. Fall sports are underway with strong showings in cross country, volleyball, and football.

IX.B. Superintendent report

Dr. Lefdal thanked Becky and Austin for their assistance in restructuring the library. He has also been working on state grants and reports. The admin team is exploring options for a community informational meeting/video, and a brief update on special education spending was given.

X. Discussion Items

X.A. First reading of Internal Controls update to policy 3132

X.B. Calendar changes

Dr. Lefdal shared we have the opportunity to host District One Act and Conference Wrestling. Staff will report these days for Professional Development but students will not.

XI. Action Items

XI.A. Consider, discuss, and take action to approve the 2025-26 Budget as advertised.

Motion was made by Tyler Kirkholm and seconded by Samantha Johnson to approve the 2025-26 Budget as advertised. On roll call vote the Board voted as follows: The motion carried

Byron Hall: Absent, Ryan Harris: Absent, Samantha Johnson: Yea, Tyler Kirkholm: Yea, Dr. Kristina Nelsen: Yea, Paul Tighe: Yea

Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

XI.B. Consider, discuss, and take action to approve the 2025-26 Levy Resolution as advertised.

Motion was made by Tyler Kirkholm and seconded by Dr. Kristina Nelsen to approve the 2025-26 Levy Resolution as advertised. On roll call vote the Board voted as follows: The motion carried

Byron Hall: Absent, Ryan Harris: Absent, Samantha Johnson: Yea, Tyler Kirkholm: Yea, Dr. Kristina Nelsen: Yea, Paul Tighe: Yea

Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

XII. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, October 15th at 7:00 p.m.

XIII. Adjournment

Motion was made by Dr. Kristina Nelsen and seconded by Samantha Johnson to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. On roll call vote the Board voted as follows: The motion carried

Byron Hall: Absent, Ryan Harris: Absent, Samantha Johnson: Yea, Tyler Kirkholm: Yea,

Dr. Kristina Nelsen: Yea, Paul Tighe: Yea
Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

Dated this Wednesday, September 10, 2025.

ATTEST:
Dr. Kristina Nelsen
Secretary

Dakota County School District #31R
a/k/a Homer Community School
BY: Paul Tighe, President

Board Report - Board

Vendor Name	Invoice Number	Description	Amount
Checking Account ID 1	Fund Number 01	GENERAL FUND	
Appear	1115000,11-0001	Mop Supplies	272.45
Appear	1119199-0001	Mop Suplies	96.85
Total Appear			<u>369.30</u>
AT&T	10112025-0001	Long Distance	121.73
Total AT&T			<u>121.73</u>
Blick Art Materials	6183739	Art Class Supplies	133.06
Blick Art Materials	6227727	Art Supplies	85.50
Blick Art Materials	6404032	White Poster Board	79.98
Total Blick Art Materials			<u>298.54</u>
Capital One Bank	1665146795-0001	HS, Kitchen, Concessions	112.57
Total Capital One Bank			<u>112.57</u>
Cassie Kubik	082025,092025	August/September Mileage	1,159.20
Total Cassie Kubik			<u>1,159.20</u>
Century Link	10062025-0001	Monthly Fee	321.44
Total Century Link			<u>321.44</u>
Craig Frerichs	09242025	Safety and Security Visit	470.00
Total Craig Frerichs			<u>470.00</u>
Crystal Oil	100057	Bus Fuel	514.78
Total Crystal Oil			<u>514.78</u>
Curry Floor & Acoustic Co	36871	Flooring materials	127.00
Total Curry Floor & Acoustic Co			<u>127.00</u>
Dakota County Star	314,343	Legal Notices	746.39
Total Dakota County Star			<u>746.39</u>
Dennis Supply Company	2191670-001	Supplies	179.49
Total Dennis Supply Company			<u>179.49</u>
Eakes Office Solutions	682807,9213992	Copier supplies, overage meter readings	1,107.15
Eakes Office Solutions	9204733	Supplies	202.20
Total Eakes Office Solutions			<u>1,309.35</u>
Electronic Engineering	883004359	Radio suplies	162.04
Total Electronic Engineering			<u>162.04</u>
Embassy Suites - Lincoln	37963	Superintendent Travel	149.00
Total Embassy Suites - Lincoln			<u>149.00</u>
Fastwyre Broadband	09012025-0001	Monthly Fee	10.45
Fastwyre Broadband	1602601-0001	Monthly Fee	10.45
Total Fastwyre Broadband			<u>20.90</u>
First Community Bank	09082025-0001	Special Building Loan Payment	114,000.00
Total First Community Bank			<u>114,000.00</u>

Vendor Name	Invoice Number	Description	Amount
First National Bank Omaha	081120253	Teacher Supplies	256.94
First National Bank Omaha	08222025	Library Supplies	30.05
First National Bank Omaha	25158	class set of novels for gr. 7	304.98
First National Bank Omaha	25171	CC Grant	610.46
First National Bank Omaha	25183	World Geography Guided Reading Book	16.30
First National Bank Omaha	25189	Chair	47.98
First National Bank Omaha	25190	Door Signs	19.78
First National Bank Omaha	25195	Standing desk for Brand & Horner	224.00
First National Bank Omaha	25207	Library Supplies	12.22
First National Bank Omaha	252072	Library Supplies	255.99
First National Bank Omaha	260004	Conference Room Chairs	658.98
First National Bank Omaha	260005	Welding Helmet	307.04
First National Bank Omaha	260007	Nose bleed cotton Plugs	15.19
First National Bank Omaha	26003	Conference Table	789.20
Total First National Bank Omaha			<u>3,549.11</u>
First National Bank Omaha	10072025	Supplies	3,230.31
Total First National Bank Omaha			<u>3,230.31</u>
Fleet US	SI115200	Field paint	465.00
Total Fleet US			<u>465.00</u>
Follett School Solutions, Inc.	1594020	Library barcode labels	365.10
Total Follett School Solutions, Inc.			<u>365.10</u>
Gill Hauling	09012025-0001	Trash Removal	1,185.80
Gill Hauling	4367609T13-0001	trash removal	1,095.29
Total Gill Hauling			<u>2,281.09</u>
Great Minds PBC	251790	Great Minds 3rd Grade Workbooks	166.66
Total Great Minds PBC			<u>166.66</u>
Hillyard / Sioux Falls Branch	605944053	Custodial Supplies	504.24
Hillyard / Sioux Falls Branch	605944053-1	Custodial Supplies	146.43
Total Hillyard / Sioux Falls Branch			<u>650.67</u>
Hirshfield's	47033521	Bathroom Paint	183.95
Total Hirshfield's			<u>183.95</u>
Hometown Leasing	09252025	Final Copier Lease Payment	1,610.70
Total Hometown Leasing			<u>1,610.70</u>
Instructional Planning Center	26-1004	Instruction	246.18
Total Instructional Planning Center			<u>246.18</u>
Interstate Battery Center #9136	1913699033923	Custodial Supplies	52.25
Total Interstate Battery Center #9136			<u>52.25</u>
J & J Pronto	09302025-0001	Fuel	3,523.70
Total J & J Pronto			<u>3,523.70</u>
Joseph Lefdal	10012025	Cell Phone Reimbursement	300.00
Total Joseph Lefdal			<u>300.00</u>

Vendor Name	Invoice Number	Description	Amount
Just For Kix	250198	Dance costumes and poms.	256.87
Total Just For Kix			<u>256.87</u>
Lakeshore Learning Materials LLC	92059240	Supplies	14.99
Total Lakeshore Learning Materials LLC			<u>14.99</u>
Lifeguard MD	22584	AED Supplies	2,137.50
Total Lifeguard MD			<u>2,137.50</u>
Matheson Tri-Gas, Inc.	52572306-0001	Shop Supplies	58.78
Total Matheson Tri-Gas, Inc.			<u>58.78</u>
McGraw-Hill School Education Holdings, LLC	137592946001	Geometry books	935.75
Total McGraw-Hill School Education Holdings, LLC			<u>935.75</u>
Menards	70882	Plasma Table Drain	96.15
Total Menards			<u>96.15</u>
Microtel Inn and Suites	09282025	Lodging for XC	385.00
Total Microtel Inn and Suites			<u>385.00</u>
Midwest Alarm Company	511005	Sprinkler services	553.80
Total Midwest Alarm Company			<u>553.80</u>
Midwest Lubricants LLC	213181	Bus supplies	232.00
Total Midwest Lubricants LLC			<u>232.00</u>
MTC Mechanical	956	Work in the kitchen	1,959.17
Total MTC Mechanical			<u>1,959.17</u>
National Art & School Supplies, Inc.	44730	Supplies	492.44
Total National Art & School Supplies, Inc.			<u>492.44</u>
Ncsa	88846	Labor Relations Conference	240.00
Total Ncsa			<u>240.00</u>
Nebraska Public Power Distric	09082025-0002	Electric	6,106.92
Total Nebraska Public Power Distric			<u>6,106.92</u>
Nebraska Safety Center	57-14821	Bus Driver Training	1,000.00
Total Nebraska Safety Center			<u>1,000.00</u>
Nohava Roofing	2523	Fix Roof	959.78
Total Nohava Roofing			<u>959.78</u>
One Source	2022189533	Background checks	83.00
Total One Source			<u>83.00</u>
Perma-Bound	2017323-03,04,05	Library Books	114.66
Total Perma-Bound			<u>114.66</u>

Vendor Name	Invoice Number	Description	Amount
Rainbow Resource Center, Inc.	250184	World Geography Teacher book - returned	0.00
Rainbow Resource Center, Inc.	25194	JH World Geography Textbook Teacher Copy	209.19
Total Rainbow Resource Center, Inc.			<u>209.19</u>
Robertson Implement Co.	92544,92669	Mower Supplies	159.17
Total Robertson Implement Co.			<u>159.17</u>
Siouxland Lock & Key	20356	Supplies	477.00
Total Siouxland Lock & Key			<u>477.00</u>
Themes and Variations	25193	Online music yearly curriculum Subscript	200.00
Total Themes and Variations			<u>200.00</u>
Thompson Solutions Group	84398	FOB Cards	373.64
Total Thompson Solutions Group			<u>373.64</u>
Troy's Auto World	1953,1954,1963,1952,	Vehicle service	1,579.10
Total Troy's Auto World			<u>1,579.10</u>
Unity Point Clinic	278183	Bus Driver Drug Screens	268.00
Total Unity Point Clinic			<u>268.00</u>
Vectric Ltd.	25199	software update	50.00
Total Vectric Ltd.			<u>50.00</u>
Village Of Homer	10152025-0001	Water	649.23
Total Village Of Homer			<u>649.23</u>
Weissman	08212025	Dance Costumes	301.25
Total Weissman			<u>301.25</u>
West Music	08082025	Grant Musical Expense	4,365.25
Total West Music			<u>4,365.25</u>
Wilmes Hardware Hank	1760880,1761206	Supplies	72.07
Total Wilmes Hardware Hank			<u>72.07</u>
Wireless Links	30-202509-0107	Bus suplies	60.60
Total Wireless Links			<u>60.60</u>
WoodRiver Energy, LLC	465131-0001	Natural Gas	283.98
WoodRiver Energy, LLC	469471-0001	Natural Gas	431.55
Total WoodRiver Energy, LLC			<u>715.53</u>
Fund Number 01			<u>161,793.29</u>
Checking Account ID 1			<u>161,793.29</u>

General Fund Account Balances – September 2025

Receipts:

(Received since last board meeting)

First Community Bank – Interest	50.07
Dakota & Thurston County Treasurer – Taxes from last month	401,068.94
ESU 1 & 2 Reimburse Pow Wow attendees and Roadshow Reimb.	1,035.86
State of NE MIPS	365.53
State of NE – State Aid	218,964.00

Balance in General Fund Checking (10/1/2025)	393,913.12
Balance in CD (10/1/2025)	192,332.71
Balance in General Fund Petty Cash (10/1/2025)	1,948.50
General Fund Balance	588,194.33

General Fund Checking Balance as of October 1, 2025	393,913.12
October Account Payable Expenses	- 26,854.91
October Payroll Expense (Inc payroll deductions)	- 541,718.75
October To Be Deposited	+ 152,004.15
Estimated Balance End of October	- 22,656.39

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Hot Lunch Program Balance September, 2025

Hot Lunch Balance as of September 1, 2025	\$ 25,584.60
September Expenses to date	- 35,131.65
September Deposited to date	+ 10,402.70
September GF Reimbursement	+ 5,347.89
Balance End of September	\$ 6,203.54
 October Lunch Payroll	 \$ 28,010.66

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Activity Account Balance – September, 2025

Beginning bank balance as of September, 2025	\$ 126,481.32
September expenditures	- 29,126.28
September deposits	+ 20,970.76
Balance End of September	\$ 118,325.80

Building Fund: (Used for Improvements)		
Balance in Building Fund Passbook (9-1-25)		\$ 177,354.44
Interest		451.00
Dakota and Thurston County Treasurer		40,474.07
Less Loan payment		216,774.44
	September Ending Balance	\$ 1,505.07
QCPUF Fund		
Balance in QCPUF (9-1-25)		\$ 157,256.84
Interest		383.53
Dakota and Thurston County Treasurer		14,051.13
	September Ending Balance	\$ 171,691.50
Depreciation Fund: (Used for Replacement)		
Balance in Depreciation Fund Balance (9-1-25)		\$ 296,876.12
Interest		682.81
Less check to FNB Omaha for Milk Cooler		2,523.51
	September Ending Balance	\$ 295,035.42

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Total Collections

	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
September	800,659	698,595	725,802	621,845
October	316,779	466,618	652,282	
November	519,791	221,093	698,727	
December	275,982	346,820	703,572	
January	1,130,286	1,324,358	869,749	
February	588,149	524,431	854,291	
March	332,046	485,652	532,020	
April	574,028	513,032	492,355	
May	855,633	996,973	1,400,457	
June	429,134	489,487	554,793	
July	48,640	84,226	69,485	
August	417,695	93,457	119,103	
TOTALS	6,288,821	6,244,744	7,672,635	621,845

Tax Collections

	2022-2023	% of Total	2023-2024	% of Total	2024-2025	% of Total	2025-2026	% of Total
September	600,231	74.97%	504,135	72.16%	505,420	69.64%	401,069	64.50%
October	116,402	36.75%	108,401	23.23%	143,002	21.92%		#DIV/0!
November	35,932	6.91%	29,497	13.34%	29,152	4.17%		#DIV/0!
December	25,912	9.39%	25,976	7.49%	39,247	5.58%		#DIV/0!
January	889,616	78.71%	991,893	74.90%	516,753	59.41%		#DIV/0!
February	214,253	36.43%	228,350	43.54%	655,772	76.76%		#DIV/0!
March	59,157	17.82%	70,956	14.61%	36,784	6.91%		#DIV/0!
April	347,686	60.57%	232,260	45.27%	191,916	38.98%		#DIV/0!
May	591,358	69.11%	706,690	70.88%	1,194,987	85.33%		#DIV/0!
June	135,466	31.57%	173,628	35.47%	146,425	26.39%		#DIV/0!
July	40,059	82.36%	28,798	34.19%	36,411	52.40%		#DIV/0!
August	49,150	11.77%	33,418	35.76%	44,348	37.23%		#DIV/0!
TOTALS	3,105,221	49.38%	3,134,003	50.19%	3,540,218	46.14%	401,069	64.50%

State Aid

	2022-2023	% of Total	2023-2024	% of Total	2024-2025	% of Total	2025-2026	% of Total
September	199,203	24.88%	191,609	27.43%	201,069	27.70%	218,964	35.21%
October	195,724	61.79%	185,008	39.65%	200,874	30.80%		#DIV/0!
November	195,724	37.65%	185,008	83.68%	0	0.00%		#DIV/0!
December	195,724	70.92%	185,008	53.34%	401,748	57.10%		#DIV/0!
January	195,724	17.32%	185,008	13.97%	200,874	23.10%		#DIV/0!
February	195,724	33.28%	185,008	35.28%	0	0.00%		#DIV/0!
March	195,724	58.94%	185,008	38.09%	401,748	75.51%		#DIV/0!
April	195,724	34.10%	185,008	36.06%	200,874	40.80%		#DIV/0!
May	195,724	22.87%	185,008	18.56%	200,874	14.34%		#DIV/0!
June	195,719	45.61%	185,004	37.80%	200,873	36.21%		#DIV/0!
July								
August								
TOTALS	1,960,714	31.18%	1,856,677	29.73%	2,008,934	26.18%		

Homer Community Schools Board Goals and Priorities

- **Creating lesson where students are engaged.**
- **Creating lessons that challenge students to think in new ways.**
- **Recruit, develop, and retain teachers and administrators with appropriate credentials.**
- **Programs that support and promote workforce, military, and college options.**
- **Continue to increase dual and college credit options.**
- **Expand use of website, social media, and video production to promote our district.**
- **Continue board policy update and organization.**
- **Continue to renew current hiring practices to ensure the selection, hiring, development, and retention of quality staff.**

Superintendent Self-Evaluation

Aligned with Nebraska Educational Leadership Standards

1. Visionary Leadership

Standard: The superintendent leads in developing and implementing a shared vision of student success, aligned with local, state, and national expectations.

- **Self-Reflection Questions:**

1. How effectively have I communicated a shared vision of student achievement to staff, students, and the community?
 - Since beginning my role as superintendent, I have worked to establish foundational goals that strengthen student achievement, with a particular focus on collaborative coaching in classrooms and the consistent use of learning targets. Building on this work, we are continuing to emphasize engagement, instructional improvement, and teamwork across the district. While a formal strategic plan has not yet been finalized, we are moving forward with a clear vision: to develop a plan that is data-driven, student-centered, and reflective of our community's input. Through ongoing staff meetings, classroom visits, and conversations with stakeholders, I have reinforced our commitment to continuous improvement and collaboration so that every student has the opportunity to succeed.
2. How do I ensure that the district's strategic plan reflects a commitment to equity and high expectations for all students?
 - We remain in the early stages of developing the district's strategic plan, but my commitment is clear: equity and high expectations for all students will be at the center of our work. Over the coming year, we will engage teachers, parents, students, and community members to gather meaningful input on how Homer Community School can best serve every learner. Our focus will be on identifying barriers to achievement and building systems of support that ensure success for all students, regardless of background or ability. As this work develops, the strategic plan will include specific goals for closing achievement gaps, expanding professional development on equity, and fostering inclusive learning environments where every student is valued and challenged.
3. In what ways have I promoted innovation and improvement in teaching and learning?
 - This year, we have continued to build on collaborative coaching as a key strategy for improving teaching and learning. Teachers and principals are working side by side to strengthen student engagement and refine instructional practices, creating a culture of reflection, feedback, and continuous improvement. The use of learning targets has also become

more consistent, helping staff align instruction with both standards and student needs. While we are still taking intentional, small steps, these practices are establishing a strong foundation.

Rating:

- Exemplary
- Proficient
- Needs Improvement
- Unsatisfactory

2. Instructional Leadership

Standard: The superintendent fosters an environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning, ensuring that all students meet or exceed academic standards.

● **Self-Reflection Questions:**

1. How have I supported curriculum alignment with Nebraska standards across grade levels and subjects?
 - We have continued to emphasize the importance of Nebraska standards as the foundation for lesson planning and instruction. Through collaborative coaching, teachers and principals are working together across grades and subjects to review standards and set clear learning targets aligned with state expectations. This approach not only promotes consistency across classrooms but also provides teachers with the support needed to adapt lessons to meet the diverse needs of students. By starting with manageable goals—particularly around student engagement and the effective use of learning targets—we are building steady momentum for deeper curriculum alignment and continuous instructional improvement.
2. How do I monitor the effectiveness of instructional practices and provide meaningful feedback to principals and teachers?
 - To monitor the effectiveness of instructional practices, we have strengthened our system of collaborative coaching. Principals will regularly observe classrooms and provide ongoing feedback, allowing us to collect data on student engagement and the use of learning targets. I also conduct classroom walkthroughs with principals to look for alignment with standards and evidence of effective instruction. Real-time feedback helps teachers reflect on their practice and make immediate adjustments, while principals are encouraged to highlight targeted positive feedback that reinforces what is working well. This work is laying the foundation to expand structured classroom coaching to deepen instructional growth.
3. What professional development initiatives have I implemented to improve instructional outcomes?
 - Our professional development (PD) Fridays continue to play a pivotal role in advancing district priorities around student engagement, instructional

practice, and relationship-building. These sessions are directly aligned with our goals for collaborative coaching and the use of learning targets. By providing staff with dedicated time to focus on practical, student-centered strategies, we are creating an environment where teachers feel supported and empowered. The emphasis has been on manageable strategies that produce meaningful outcomes, giving teachers confidence to make improvements that collectively strengthen classroom instruction and student learning.

Rating:

- Exemplary
- Proficient
- Needs Improvement
- Unsatisfactory

3. Effective Management

Standard: The superintendent demonstrates skills in managing the district’s resources—human, financial, and material—to foster an effective learning environment.

● **Self-Reflection Questions:**

1. How have I managed district finances to support the district’s educational goals and ensure fiscal responsibility?
 - Over the past year, I have continued to work closely with our business manager to maintain a strong budget foundation that supports the district’s educational goals. We have built on last year’s audits of spending trends by tightening financial practices, addressing areas of excess, and ensuring that resources are aligned with instructional priorities. Compliance with Rule 10 requirements, teacher certification, and labor relations remains a priority, and we are approaching these areas with a focus on both responsibility and sustainability. This year, our attention has also turned toward planning for future initiatives—particularly those tied to student engagement and instructional improvement—while continuing to seek opportunities to optimize spending. These steps are helping us create a sustainable financial structure that balances accountability with innovation to support long-term student success.
2. How effectively do I lead and support the district's administrative team in decision-making?
 - Over the past year, I have continued to take a collaborative approach to leadership, with a strong emphasis on working alongside our principals. We hold meetings to review district priorities, instructional strategies, and key challenges, ensuring alignment across schools. Brainstorming sessions throughout the week provide space for open dialogue, allowing ideas to be shared and refined. This collaborative leadership style has

strengthened our administrative team, enabling us to make unified decisions around professional development, restorative discipline procedures, and operational improvements, while fostering a culture of trust and shared responsibility.

3. What systems have I put in place to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the district?
 - This year, we have continued to strengthen our operational systems to ensure both safety and efficiency across the district. Our work has included reviewing and updating board policies, continuing to expand the use of online board meetings to improve communication and transparency, and maintaining compliance with state and federal reporting requirements. Teacher certification audits and Rule 10 requirements remain a priority, ensuring that we meet all standards with consistency. At the same time, we have updated safety protocols and reinforced our commitment to creating a secure environment for students and staff. These operational improvements not only keep us compliant but also ensure that the district runs smoothly in support of teaching, learning, and community trust.

Rating:

- Exemplary
- Proficient
- Needs Improvement
- Unsatisfactory

4. Community and Family Engagement

Standard: The superintendent engages families and the broader community in meaningful ways to support student success and district goals.

● **Self-Reflection Questions:**

1. How have I built and maintained relationships with families, community members, and local businesses?
 - Over the past year, I have continued laying the groundwork for building strong relationships with families, community members, and local businesses. Our School Resource Officer (SRO) and safety team has strengthened our focus on creating a safe and supportive environment for students. Looking ahead, we are deepening these connections through increased community involvement in both strategic planning and district initiatives. One example is our Adopt-A-Legion partnership, where students can engage directly with local veterans through service projects, living history days, and community events. This initiative not only strengthens ties between generations but also builds character, civic pride, and a stronger sense of belonging for our students. These efforts

reflect our commitment to ensuring Homer Community School is not only a place of learning but also a hub of community connection.

2. In what ways have I communicated district achievements and challenges to stakeholders?
 - This year, my focus on communication has expanded beyond internal alignment to include stronger outreach with the broader community. Internally, principals and staff remain regularly updated on district priorities such as student engagement and instructional practices through ongoing meetings and collaborative discussions. Externally, I have begun to share these priorities during community events and informal interactions, which has helped build trust and visibility. Moving forward, we are committed to creating more structured and transparent communication systems, ensuring that families and community members stay informed and engaged as we finalize a strategic plan that openly addresses both our achievements and the challenges ahead.
3. What strategies have I used to engage the community in supporting district initiatives?
 - To date, my engagement with the community has been more supportive than strategic, with an initial focus on safety and building trust. Working with our SRO and safety team, we developed an updated Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), a critical step in ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment. A key part of this work is our One Knight attendance campaign, which emphasizes the shared responsibility of families, staff, and students in improving attendance. By connecting the campaign to our broader engagement efforts, we are reinforcing the message that every Knight matters, every minute matters, every day matters.

Rating:

- Exemplary
- Proficient
- Needs Improvement
- Unsatisfactory

5. Equity and Cultural Responsiveness

Standard: The superintendent promotes an inclusive district culture that values diversity and addresses disparities in student outcomes.

● **Self-Reflection Questions:**

1. How have I worked to close achievement gaps among diverse student populations?
 - Over the past year, we have focused on creating an inclusive environment that supports all students while addressing our ATSI designation with intentional, student-centered strategies. Building on the work started last

year, we set clear student engagement goals and expanded the use of learning targets to help ensure instruction is responsive to the diverse needs of our learners. At the same time, we improved our MTSS process, strengthening the systems we use to provide academic and behavioral support and monitor student progress. Our committee work—including Culture & Environment, Wellness, and MTSS—has been instrumental in guiding this work and ensuring staff voice in decision-making. We also restructured the master schedule to create dedicated intervention blocks, which allow us to better meet the needs of students who require additional support or enrichment. Finally, the addition of a new online program has expanded alternative pathways for students, giving them more flexibility and ensuring that every student has access to opportunities that align with their goals. Together, these initiatives are helping us close achievement gaps, foster equity, and strengthen learning outcomes across the district. We have also increased school-to-work opportunities, although the program is still in its infancy, steady growth has been made.

2. In what ways have I promoted culturally responsive teaching practices in the district?
 - This year, we have continued to make progress in aligning instruction with culturally responsive practices, with the goal of ensuring that all students feel safe, valued, and heard. Teachers are being encouraged to deepen relationships with students, incorporate culturally relevant materials, and adapt their instruction to reflect the diverse experiences of our learners. We have reinforced the importance of reflection and empathy in the classroom, with a strong emphasis on encouraging students to stand up for one another and report bullying or discriminatory behavior. Looking ahead, we are expanding our professional development offerings around culturally responsive teaching so that staff have the tools and strategies needed to embed these practices consistently across the district. These efforts are helping us build a school culture where every student feels they belong and are supported in achieving their fullest potential.
3. What steps have I taken to ensure all students have equitable access to resources and opportunities?
 - This year, we have strengthened our focus on ensuring that all students have equitable access to resources within a caring and supportive environment. By continuing to build on our foundation of student engagement and clear learning targets, we are giving every student the opportunity to succeed, regardless of background or circumstance. Our systems for reporting and addressing safety concerns and bullying have been reinforced, creating a more equitable learning environment where students feel safe and valued. Moving forward, we will continue to expand the resources and support systems available to students, ensuring that

every learner has what they need to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Rating:

- Exemplary
- X Proficient
- Needs Improvement
- Unsatisfactory

6. Ethical and Professional Leadership

Standard: The superintendent demonstrates ethical behavior and decision-making in leading the district.

● **Self-Reflection Questions:**

1. How do I model ethical decision-making for staff and students?
 - Over the past year, I have remained committed to leading by example through ethical decision-making that reflects fairness, integrity, and accountability. Whether in budgeting, personnel matters, or student discipline, I have worked to ensure that decisions are consistent, transparent, and grounded in what is best for students and the district as a whole. I continue to communicate openly with staff and students about the importance of making ethical choices and creating a culture of trust. By encouraging collaboration and valuing diverse perspectives, we are building a decision-making process that is both inclusive and responsible, strengthening confidence in our leadership and the direction of the district.
2. How have I handled conflicts or challenges in a transparent and professional manner?
 - This year, I have continued to approach conflicts and challenges with clarity, professionalism, and openness. When issues arise—whether involving staff, students, or community stakeholders—I address them promptly and work to create space for constructive dialogue. In financial matters, for example, I have collaborated closely with the business manager and district leaders to review spending trends and ensure transparency in decision-making. Across all areas, my goal has been to listen carefully, consider multiple perspectives, and work toward solutions that are collaborative and fair. By handling conflicts in this way, we are strengthening trust and reinforcing a culture of professionalism and accountability across the district.
3. How do I ensure that district policies reflect ethical considerations?
 - Over the past year, I have worked closely with NASB to review, organize, and update all district policies, ensuring they are clearly written, compliant, and accessible online for staff, students, and the community. This process has required ongoing collaboration, attention to detail, and

clear communication with both district leadership and NASB representatives. By streamlining our policy system and moving everything to an online platform, we are increasing transparency, consistency, and accountability across all areas of district operations. This work has also strengthened relationships within the district and with external partners, as we model the clarity, professionalism, and responsiveness that guide our daily decisions.

Rating:

- Exemplary
- Proficient
- Needs Improvement
- Unsatisfactory

7. School Climate and Culture

Standard: The superintendent fosters a positive school climate that promotes student engagement, staff collaboration, and a safe learning environment.

● **Self-Reflection Questions:**

1. How have I worked to improve the overall school climate and morale among staff and students?
 - This year, we have continued to strengthen a positive and collaborative school environment by combining structured professional growth with intentional community-building. Our PD Fridays have provided staff with valuable opportunities to connect, share best practices, and support one another, bringing positive energy into the district and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Alongside this, I have placed a strong emphasis on coaching principals, ensuring that leadership support, morale, and motivation flow from the top down. Just as important, we are focusing on building relationships at every level—greeting students at the door each day, establishing Kindness Clubs, and promoting the district-wide message that Kindness Matters. These efforts have created a stronger sense of belonging, improved the overall school climate, and reinforced our commitment to both academic success and a caring, supportive culture.
2. What strategies have I implemented to reduce student disciplinary issues and improve attendance?
 - This year, we have expanded our approach to student discipline and attendance by focusing on both accountability and support. Our tardy and attendance recovery programs provide students with structured opportunities to make up missed time, while also reinforcing the importance of consistent attendance. For students who are chronically absent, recovery plans are now in place to help them re-engage with

school and build stronger attendance habits. In addition, we are incorporating restorative approaches to discipline, where students are encouraged to give back to the school community when they are in trouble. These efforts, paired with our collaborative coaching focus on student engagement, are helping create classrooms where lessons are interactive and students feel connected to their learning. By setting clear expectations, supporting teachers, and emphasizing proactive discipline strategies, we are building a learning environment where accountability, responsibility, and respect are central to student success.

3. In what ways have I supported social-emotional learning and mental health initiatives in the district?
 - Supporting social-emotional learning (SEL) and mental health has remained a top priority this year. Together with principals and staff, we have continued to build a positive, supportive school climate where students feel cared for and connected. Our PD Fridays now integrate SEL strategies, equipping teachers with tools to foster emotional resilience and empathy in their classrooms. At the same time, our new attendance recovery program has been designed with SEL at its core—emphasizing restorative practices over punishment so students are supported while also being held accountable. Moving forward, we are committed to expanding mental health resources and creating sustainable systems that prioritize the well-being of both students and staff, ensuring that emotional growth and academic success go hand in hand.

Rating:

- Exemplary
- Proficient
- Needs Improvement
- Unsatisfactory

8. Personal Growth and Development

Standard: The superintendent engages in ongoing professional learning and reflection to improve their practice.

● **Self-Reflection Questions:**

1. How have I engaged in professional development to improve my leadership skills?
 - This year, I have continued to prioritize my own growth as a leader by actively engaging in professional development opportunities and collaborative networks. I regularly attend superintendent and ESU-level meetings, which provide valuable opportunities to exchange ideas and learn from colleagues across the region. I also participate in continuous improvement visits for multiple districts and mentor out-of-district administrators, which not only allows me to support peers but also brings

fresh insights back to Homer. At the same time, I remain committed to on-the-ground leadership by working closely with our principals through weekly meetings and instructional walkthroughs. These experiences provide opportunities for me to both coach and reflect on my own leadership practices. Collectively, these efforts ensure that I stay connected with classroom realities while continuously refining strategies to better support staff, students, and the district as a whole.

2. What steps have I taken to reflect on and learn from my experiences as a superintendent?
 - Reflection continues to be a central part of my leadership approach. Over the past year, I have used feedback from staff, principals, and community members to evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives and make thoughtful adjustments where needed. Weekly meetings with principals provide consistent opportunities to reflect on decisions in real time and ensure that leadership remains responsive to school needs. I also review outcomes from professional development days, coaching sessions, and instructional initiatives to measure progress toward our goals. This reflective practice has helped me learn from both successes and challenges, strengthening my ability to lead with clarity, adaptability, and a focus on continuous improvement.
3. How do I stay informed about educational trends and changes in state policies?
 - This year, I have deepened my engagement in educational leadership at both the state and regional levels to stay informed about emerging trends and policy changes. In addition to maintaining regular involvement with the Nebraska Department of Education and following updates on state and federal regulations, particularly Rule 10 compliance and teacher certification requirements, I actively participate in superintendent and ESU-level meetings, which provide valuable collaboration and insight. I also take part in continuous improvement visits for multiple districts and mentor administrators outside of Homer, experiences that not only support colleagues but also bring back new strategies and perspectives for our own district. By attending conferences, staying connected with professional networks, and tracking educational publications, I ensure that Homer Community School remains aligned with best practices and positioned to adapt proactively to shifts in state and federal policy.

Rating:

- Exemplary
- Proficient
- Needs Improvement
- Unsatisfactory

Goals for Next Year

1. Develop and Implement a Strategic Plan for Long-Term District Growth

- **Goal:** By the end of the school year, work with district stakeholders (staff, students, parents, and community members) to create a comprehensive strategic plan that outlines clear educational priorities, academic goals, and operational improvements.
- **Why it Matters:** A strategic plan will provide a clear vision for the district's future, guiding decision-making, resource allocation, and academic initiatives to ensure continuous improvement.
- **Action Steps:**
 - Survey stakeholders for input.
 - Use data to identify key areas of focus (achievement gaps, resource needs, etc.).
 - Establish a timeline for plan implementation and regular reviews.

2. Enhance Student Engagement and Achievement through Targeted Professional Development

- **Goal:** Increase student engagement and improve instructional practices by expanding collaborative coaching, setting clear student engagement goals, and utilizing learning targets for instruction by the end of the school year.
- **Why it Matters:** Improving teaching practices and student engagement directly impacts student success and achievement, closing gaps and fostering a more dynamic learning environment.
- **Action Steps:**
 - Continue PD Fridays with a focus on best practices in student engagement.
 - Monitor progress through instructional walkthroughs and feedback sessions with teachers and principals.
 - Provide teachers with tools for differentiated instruction and student-centered learning.

3. Create a Positive and Safe Learning Environment for All Students

- **Goal:** By the end of the school year, implement initiatives that foster a positive, safe, and inclusive learning environment, focusing on student well-being, social-emotional learning, and proactive discipline measures.
- **Why it Matters:** A supportive school climate is essential for both academic success and student well-being, helping students feel safe, valued, and ready to learn.
- **Action Steps:**

- Roll out the tardy and attendance recovery program next quarter to address attendance issues proactively.
- Expand social-emotional learning (SEL) and mental health initiatives, including staff training and student programs.
- Strengthen anti-bullying policies and encourage a culture of respect through restorative practices, standing up, and reporting mechanisms.
- Continue working with the SRO and safety team to refine and communicate the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) to ensure the physical safety of the school environment.

CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT WITH SUPERINTENDENT

THIS CONTRACT is made by and between the Board of Education of the **Dakota County School District Number 22-0031, a/k/a Homer Community Schools**, hereinafter referred to as “the Board,” and Dr. Joseph Lefdal, hereinafter referred to as “the Superintendent.”

WITNESSETH: That in accordance with action taken by the Board, as recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting held on the 11th day of March, 2024, the Board agrees to employ the Superintendent, and the Superintendent agrees to accept such employment, subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Term of Contract. This Contract is for a term of two (2) years beginning on the 1st day of July, 2024, and expiring on the 30th day of June, 2026. A “contract year,” for purposes of this Contract, shall be from July 1st to June 30th.

2. Renewal and Rollover. This Contract may be extended in one (1) year increments under the terms of this Paragraph. An extension will extend the Contract for one additional contract year (July 1st through June 30th), unless otherwise agreed to in writing by both parties. Neither party is obligated to extend this Contract. Any extension under this Contract must occur as follows:

a. Superintendent's Request to Extend. In each contract year, the Superintendent shall, by December 31st of such contract year, notify the Board President in writing if the Superintendent desires to extend this Contract for one additional year. If Superintendent does not notify the Board President in writing by December 31st, then this Contract shall not be extended and shall end on the final day of the existing Contract, unless both parties otherwise mutually agree in writing.

b. Board Action on Request to Extend. If the Superintendent timely submits a request to extend this Contract for one additional year, then the Board shall, in each contract year, have until February 16th of such contract year to decide whether to extend the Contract. If the Board votes to extend the Contract for one year, or if the Board takes no action by February 16th, then this Contract shall automatically be extended by one contract year. If the Board decides against extending the Contract, then the Contract will not extend and will automatically end on the last day of the existing Contract.

c. Notice of Non-Renewal. The parties agree that this Paragraph takes the place of and foregoes the need for the Board to deliver a notice of non-renewal of the Contract. Further, the Superintendent affirmatively waives the April 15th non-renewal deadline and acknowledges that this Paragraph shall have the same force and effect of a formal notice of non-renewal, if the Board votes against extending this Contract.

3. Salary. The total compensation (salary and benefits, including insurance) shall be \$192,500.00. Said annual salary shall be paid in equal installments in accordance with the policy of the Board governing payment of certificated employees of the District.

In the event that the Superintendent is elected to any other office or offices of the Board of Education or in connection with the District, the Superintendent shall perform the duties of such other office or offices without remuneration other than that as provided in this Contract.

The District, acting by and through its Board of Education, reserves the right to adjust the annual salary during the term of this Contract, said salary adjustment, however, shall not reduce the annual salary to any lesser amount than that as above stated. Any adjustment in salary made during the term of this Contract shall be in the form of an amendment or complete restatement and shall become a part of this Contract; provided, however, that in making any such salary adjustment, it shall not be considered that the District has entered into a new Contract, nor shall the ending date of this Contract be thereby extended unless the Board of Education, by specific action, shall expressly extend such end date. In no event shall any such extension, together with the unexpired term of this Contract or any prior extension, be for a period in excess of three (3) years.

This Contract shall conform to the regulations governing deductions with reference to Mandatory Withholdings, Internal Revenue Service and Nebraska Department of Revenue Tax regulations, Social Security, and the Nebraska School Employees' Retirement Act. Other deductions may be withheld as required or otherwise agreed to by the parties to this Contract.

4. Benefits. As further consideration for the services to be performed by the Superintendent, it is agreed as follows:

- A. Leave Benefits. Paid leave is available to the Superintendent when the following specific conditions are met: (1) the Superintendent is currently employed by the District; and (2) the paid leave day is taken on a day Superintendent would otherwise be expected to be at work.
 - 1. Vacation. The Superintendent shall be allowed 20 working days of vacation leave during each contract year. Vacation shall not be taken at times that would interfere with the Superintendent's attendance at regularly scheduled Board meetings or at times when the Superintendent's duties require the Superintendent's attendance at school (e.g., beginning and end periods of the school year).
 - 2. Carry-over and Accumulation of Vacation Days. Vacation is to be used during each contract year. Any unused vacation days remaining from a prior contract year shall be subtracted from the number of vacation days the Superintendent has for the following contract year, such that the total vacation days at the beginning of each contract year be twenty (20) days. Upon ending employment, unused vacation days available in the final contract year will be paid to the Superintendent at the rate of \$100.0 per day; provided that there shall be no pay for unused vacation days in the event the Board determines that the Superintendent has engaged in misconduct which provides just cause for cancellation of this Contract.

3. Sick and Bereavement Leave. The Superintendent shall be allowed 10 working days of sick and bereavement leave at the beginning of each contract year.
 4. Carry-over and Accumulation of Sick Days. Unused sick leave may be carried over from one contract year to the next succeeding contract year to a maximum of 40 sick leave days. Once the maximum is accumulated, no further sick leave days will be available or granted for the ensuing contract year or years until the accumulated number of days is less than 40, and then only to the extent necessary to restore the total number of available sick leave days to the maximum of 40 days. There shall be no pay for unused sick leave either during or upon ending of employment.
 5. Holidays. The following days shall ordinarily be considered holidays and not working days: July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and Memorial Day. However, there may be times where pressing business requires the Superintendent to work on such holidays and, in the event of such pressing business, the Superintendent will be expected to attend to such pressing business on such holiday.
 6. Log. The Superintendent shall maintain a current log of used leave days and shall present such log, upon request, to the Board President.
- B. Health and Dental Insurance. The Superintendent may participate in health and dental insurance for which the Superintendent is qualified under the District's group insurance plan, with coverage equal to that provided to teachers.
 - C. Disability Insurance. The Superintendent may elect to enroll in the District's group long term disability insurance program at the Superintendent's expense.
 - D. Retirement Plan. The Superintendent may elect to designate part of the Superintendent's annual salary to be invested in a tax-exempt deferred income retirement plan of the Superintendent's choice.
 - E. Meetings and Dues. The Superintendent shall attend appropriate professional meetings at the local, state and national levels, provided that such attendance does not interfere with the proper performance of Superintendent's duties. The reasonable and necessary expenses of such meetings shall be reimbursed by the District consistent with Board policies. In addition, the District shall pay the Superintendent's annual dues to the Nebraska Council of School Administrators and may pay dues to other professional organizations suitable for the Superintendent's position upon the Superintendent's request.
 - F. Transportation Expenses. The reasonable and necessary expenses of transportation required in the performance of Superintendent's official duties shall be reimbursed

at the rate set annually by the Board for District travel or in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service's standard mileage rates.

- G. Indemnification. The District shall, to the extent permitted by law, defend, hold harmless, and indemnify the Superintendent from any and all demands, claims, suits, actions, and legal proceedings brought against the Superintendent in the Superintendent's individual capacity or the Superintendent's official capacity as an agent or employee of the District, provided that the incident arose while the Superintendent was acting (or, in good faith, reasonably believed that the Superintendent was acting) within the scope of the Superintendent's employment with the District and the District is not in an adverse position in the legal proceedings.
- H. Avoidance of Fines or Penalties. The Board may elect to not provide any benefit set forth in the Contract in the event the Board determines, in its discretion, that the provision of the benefit would result in a fine, penalty, or would otherwise be deemed unlawful or contrary to the best interests of the School District. In the event that the Board makes such an election, then the Board shall negotiate with the Superintendent to obtain a like-benefit that would not result in a fine, penalty, or the like, and in the event such is not available, then the Superintendent's salary shall be grossed up in an amount equal to the cost savings from not providing the benefit (excluding the costs of fines and penalties).
- I. Relocation. The Board shall reimburse the Superintendent for the reasonable and necessary relocation and moving expenses incurred, as a direct result of acceptance of this Contract, in an amount not to exceed \$2,500.00. The Superintendent shall provide to the Board President the written invoice(s) and statement(s) from the moving company or other entity employed to accomplish the Superintendent's move, and the Superintendent will be entitled to reimbursement only for the actual amounts paid by the Superintendent for the move.

5. Duties. The Superintendent is employed as the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall perform the duties of such position as are regularly and customarily expected for such positions and such duties and responsibilities as are set forth in Board Policy or Regulation for such position. The Superintendent shall be subject to such other duties as the Board may assign. The Superintendent agrees to devote full time to the assigned duties, provided that, with the advance agreement of the President of the Board of Education, the Superintendent may undertake consultative work, speaking engagements, writing, lecturing, or other professional duties outside of employment with the District.

For purposes of this paragraph, "working time" shall not include established breaks during the academic year (between the first day of the first quarter and the last day of the fourth quarter) during which students and teachers are not present within the District's school facilities; provided however, Superintendent may from time to time be required to perform such duties during these breaks as are usually and customarily performed by an individual who is employed as the Superintendent of a school district.

In performing the assigned duties, the Superintendent shall be governed by the policies, regulations, directions, and expectations of the Board of Education. The Superintendent shall, in all respects, diligently and faithfully perform the assigned duties to the best of the Superintendent's professional ability. Regular, dependable, in-person attendance at meetings of the Board and committees of the Board, and other assigned duties, is an essential function of the Superintendent's position.

6. Board-Superintendent Relationship. The Board shall have primary responsibility for formulating and adopting Board policy. The Superintendent shall be the chief administrative officer for the District, and shall have primary responsibility for implementation of Board policy. The Superintendent shall be responsible for development of policies for adoption by the Board and for development of regulations and rules consistent with Board policy. In the absence of Board policy on matters which require prompt action, the Superintendent shall have the authority to act using the Superintendent's professional judgment and consistent with legal requirements; provided that the Superintendent shall report the nature of the matter and the action taken to the Board no later than the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The parties agree, individually and collectively, to promptly refer all criticism, complaints, and suggestions called to their attention to the Superintendent for action, study or recommendation, as appropriate. The parties further agree that a good and positive working relationship between the Board and the Superintendent is an essential function of the Superintendent's position and a material term of this Contract.

7. Evaluation of the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall be evaluated twice during the first contract year and once during each subsequent contract year, unless the Board deems additional evaluations are appropriate. The Superintendent shall receive a copy of the evaluation and shall have the right to submit a response to the evaluation, which response shall be placed in the Superintendent's personnel file. By November 1st of each contract year, the Superintendent shall remind the Board President of the need to evaluate the Superintendent. Nothing in this Paragraph prevents the Board, or individual Board members, from providing additional feedback to the Superintendent outside of a formal evaluation.

8. Contract Cancellation. In the event the Superintendent violates any of the provisions of this Contract, or performs any act, or does anything which is materially harmful to the District, or which substantially inhibits the Superintendent's ability to discharge the duties as set forth herein, including, but not limited to: (1) becoming legally disqualified to perform as a superintendent in the State of Nebraska; (2) participation in any fraud; (3) causing any intentional damage to property; (4) engaging in any unlawful act; (5) any representations in this Contract being determined to be false or incorrect; (6) failure to indicate in writing, upon request by the Board President, whether the Superintendent desires to remain employed by the District and extend this Contract beyond the Contract's current end date; (7) failing to establish and maintain a good and positive working relationship with the Board; (8) lying or making a material misrepresentation or omission during the job application process; and/or (9) just cause, including: (a) incompetency, which includes, but is not limited to, demonstrated deficiencies or shortcomings in knowledge of subject matter or administrative skills; (b) neglect of duty; (c) unprofessional conduct; (d) insubordination; (e) immorality; (f) physical or mental incapacity; (g) failure to give evidence of professional growth as required by law; or (h) other conduct which interferes substantially with

the continued performance of duties; then the Superintendent may be discharged in accordance with applicable law. Suspension or other disciplinary action may be implemented by the Board President and enforced in accordance with applicable law. Upon lawful cancellation or the ending of this Contract, the compensation to be paid hereunder shall be an amount which bears the same ratio to the annual salary specified as the number of months or fraction thereof to the date of such ending bears to the twelve months in the annual salary period in which ending occurs. Any portion of the salary paid, but not earned, prior to the date of the ending of this Contract, and any sums owing to the District by the Superintendent, shall be set off from sums due to the Superintendent and, if the sums owing to the District are in excess of the sums due the Superintendent, the amount owing shall be immediately refunded by the Superintendent.

The Board of Education may require a certificate of health and physical fitness of Superintendent, in accordance with applicable law, at any time while this Contract is in force. Should the Superintendent be unable to perform the Superintendent's duties by reason of mental or physical incapacity, or any reason beyond the Superintendent's control, and said disability exists for a period exceeding the Superintendent's sick leave allowance, the Board of Education may, in its discretion, make a proportionate reduction from the salary and benefits, and if such disability continues or is permanent, or of such nature as to make the Superintendent unable to perform essential functions of the position for which the Superintendent is employed, the Board of Education may cancel this Contract whereupon the respective duties, rights and obligations hereof shall end.

9. Residency. The Superintendent shall reside within the School District's boundaries during the term of this Contract. In the event the Superintendent is unable to find suitable housing within the School District's boundaries, then the Superintendent shall continue looking for suitable housing and keep the Board President apprised, at least monthly, of the housing availability and opportunities within the School District's boundaries. If the Superintendent does not reside within the School District's boundaries by January 1, 2025, then the Parties agree to revisit this Paragraph to determine the Superintendent's residency requirements.

10. Representations and Legal Requirements. The Superintendent affirms that: (1) the Superintendent holds or will hold a valid and appropriate certificate to act as a certificated employee in the State of Nebraska to perform the assigned duties throughout the term of this Contract and any extensions of this Contract; (2) the required certificate to perform the assigned duties shall be registered as required by law; it being understood and agreed to that this Contract is not valid until the required certificate is registered in accordance with law and that the Superintendent shall not be compensated for any services performed prior to the date of registration of this certificate; and (3) the Superintendent is not under contract with another board of education within the State of Nebraska covering any part of or all of the same time of performance as provided for in this Contract.

The Superintendent further warrants and represents as follows: (1) all information set forth in the Superintendent's application for employment and other information provided by the Superintendent in seeking employment is true and accurate, and if said information ceases to be true, Superintendent will advise the Board of Education immediately; (2) Superintendent has never been convicted or plead no contest or otherwise been adjudicated as having committed a felony,

any other offense involving moral turpitude, or any other offense involving abuse, neglect, or sexual misconduct as defined in Sections 003.12 through 003.14 of 92 NAC 21; and (3) Superintendent has not suffered suspension or revocation of any educational professional license or certificate, nor voluntarily surrendered such a license or certificate where charges or potential charges were pending or imminent.

11. Release of Contract. There shall be no penalty for release by the Superintendent from this Contract so long as the resignation becomes effective at the end of the remaining term of the Contract.

12. Governing Laws. The parties shall be governed by all applicable Nebraska and federal laws, rules, and regulations in performance of their respective duties and obligations under this Contract.

13. Amendments and Severability. This Contract may be modified or amended only in writing, duly authorized and executed by the Superintendent and the Board. If any portion of this Contract shall be declared invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, such declaration shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the remaining provisions of this Contract.

The failure to return a signed copy of this Contract to the President or Secretary of the Board of Education on or before March 18, 2024 shall constitute a rejection by the Superintendent of the offer of employment.

<p>Executed this 11th day of March, 2024.</p> <p>_____ Joseph Lefdal, Superintendent</p>	<p>Executed this 11th day of March, 2024.</p> <p>Board of Education of Dakota County School District Number 22-0031, a/k/a Homer Community Schools</p> <p>By: _____ President</p> <p>Attest: _____ Secretary or Other Authorized Officer</p>
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SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT AND CONTRACT NONRENEWAL

It shall be the responsibility of the board to provide the contract for the position of superintendent. The length of the contract for employment between the superintendent and the board shall be determined by the board, but shall not exceed three years. The contract will begin on July 1 and end on June 30. The contract shall state the terms of employment.

Before the board approves a proposed contract for superintendent services, or any proposed amendment to an existing contract, the board shall publish a copy of the contract or amendment, and a reasonable estimate and description of all current and future costs to the district if the proposed contract or amendment were to be approved, at least three days before the board meeting at which it will be considered. This publication shall also specify the date, time, and place of this public meeting. Electronic publication on the web site of the district shall satisfy this publication requirement if it is prominently displayed and allows public access to the entire proposed contract or amendment.

After the board approves the contract or contract amendments the board shall publish a copy of the contract, and a reasonable estimate and description of all current and future costs to the district that will be incurred as a result of the contract, within two days after the board meeting at which it was approved. Electronic publication on the web site must be prominently displayed as described above.

After approval of the contract or contract amendments, the board shall file a copy of the contract or amendments with the State Department of Education on or before August 1.

The superintendent serves the board as a probationary certificated employee, regardless of length of service. ~~(The superintendent's contract shall be deemed renewed and will remain in full force unless it is amended or not renewed.)~~ The superintendent and board may mutually agree to terminate the superintendent's contract at any time.

In the event of nonrenewal, termination or amendment of a contract, the board shall afford the superintendent appropriate due process, including notice of its intent by April 15. Unless continued by mutual written agreement according to statutory procedures, the board shall take final action on the contract by May 15.

If the superintendent wishes to resign, to be released from a contract, or to retire, the superintendent must comply with board policies dealing with retirement, release or resignation.

Legal Reference: Neb. Statute 79-822 et seq.

Approved: July 21, 2014 Revised: July 21, 2014

SUPERINTENDENT SALARY AND OTHER COMPENSATION

The board has complete discretion to set the salary of the superintendent. It shall be the responsibility of the board to set the salary and benefits of the superintendent at a level that will include consideration of, but not be limited to, the economic condition of the school district and the training, experience, skill, and demonstrated competence of the superintendent. The salary shall be set at the beginning of each contract term.

In addition to the salary and benefits, the superintendent's actual and necessary expenses shall be paid the school district when the superintendent is performing work-related duties. It shall be within the discretion of the board to pay dues to professional organizations for the superintendent. The information and professional relationships offered by these organizations are an important component in assisting the superintendent with the successful completion of his or her duties.

The board may approve the payment of dues and other benefits or compensation over and above the superintendent's contract. Approval of dues and other benefits or compensation shall be included in the records of the board in accordance with board policy.

Reviewed: February 12, 2014

Cross Reference: 302 Superintendent

SUPERINTENDENT DUTIES

The board employs a superintendent of schools to serve as the chief executive officer of the board. The board delegates to the superintendent the authority to implement board policy and to execute decisions made by the board concerning the internal operations of the school district, unless specifically stated otherwise.

The superintendent shall be responsible for the implementation and execution of board policy and the observance of board policy by employees and students. The superintendent shall be responsible for overall supervision and discipline of employees and the education program.

In executing the above-stated duties, the superintendent shall consider the financial situation of the school district as well as the needs of the students. Specifically the superintendent:

- Interprets and implements all board policies and all state and federal laws relevant to education;
- Supervises, either directly or through delegation, all activities of the school system according to, and consistent with, the policies of the board;
- Represents the board as a liaison between the school district and the community;
- Establishes and maintains a program of public relations to keep the public well-informed of the activities and needs of the school district, effecting a wholesome and cooperative working relationship between the school district and the community;
- Attends and participates in all meetings of the board, except when the superintendent's employment or salary is under consideration when the superintendent has been excused, and makes recommendations affecting the school district;
- Reports to the board on such matters as deemed material to the understanding and proper management of the school district or as the board may request;
- Assumes responsibility for the overall financial planning of the district and for the preparation of the annual budget, and submits it to the board for review and approval;
- Establishes and maintains efficient procedures and effective controls for all expenditures of school district funds in accordance with the adopted budget, subject to the direction and approval of the board;
- Files, or causes to be filed, all reports required by law;
- Makes recommendations to the board for the selection of employees for the school district;
- Makes and records assignments and transfers of all employees pursuant to their qualifications;
- Employs such employees as may be necessary, within the limits of budgetary provisions and subject to the board's approval;
- Recommends to the board, for final action, the promotion, salary change, demotion, or dismissal of any employee;

SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION

The board will conduct an ongoing evaluation of the superintendent's skills, abilities, and competence. At a minimum, the board will formally evaluate the superintendent twice in the first year and annually thereafter. The goal of the superintendent's formal evaluation is to ensure the education program for the students is carried out, promote growth in effective administrative leadership, clarify the superintendent's role, clarify the immediate priorities of the board, and develop a working relationship between the board and the superintendent.

The formal evaluation will be based upon the following principles:

1. The evaluation criteria shall be in writing, clearly stated and mutually agreed upon by the board and the superintendent. The criteria will be related to the job description and the school district's goals;
2. At a minimum, the evaluation process will be conducted annually at a time agreed upon;
3. Each board member shall have an opportunity to individually evaluate the superintendent, and these individual evaluations will be compiled into an overall evaluation by the entire board;
4. The board as a whole shall discuss its evaluation with the superintendent;
5. The board may discuss its evaluation of the superintendent in closed session upon a request from the superintendent if the board determines its discussion in open session will needlessly and irreparably injure the superintendent's reputation;
6. The individual evaluation by each board member, if individual board members so desire, will not be reviewed by the superintendent. Board members are encouraged to communicate their criticisms and concerns to the superintendent in the closed session; and
7. The board will complete the evaluation process by reaching consensus on goals or priorities for the superintendent for the next period of evaluation.

The board president will develop a written summary of the individual evaluations, including both the strengths and the weaknesses of the superintendent, and place it in the superintendent's personnel file to be incorporated into the next cycle of evaluations.

This policy supports and does not preclude the ongoing, informal evaluation of the superintendent's skill, abilities and competence.

Reviewed: February 12, 2014

Legal Reference: Neb. Statute 79-828

Cross Reference: 202.03 Board Self-Evaluation
204.06 Closed Sessions
302.01 Superintendent Qualifications, Recruitment, Appointment

Homer Community School Attendance Recovery Plan

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

Date: _____

Accumulated Absences/Tardies:

- Total Number of Tardies: _____
- Total Number of Absences: _____
- Total Time Owed: _____ (in hours/minutes)



Recovery Plan Details:

- Date(s) of Makeup Time:

- Time Made Up (Hours/Minutes):

- Location:

- Staff Supervisor:

- Activities Completed During Recovery Time (Tutoring, coursework, community service, etc.):

Plan for Completion:

- The student will complete all required recovery time by **(Final Completion Date)** _____.
- Failure to complete the recovery plan may result in additional consequences, including loss of privileges or credit recovery requirements.

Signatures:

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Staff Supervisor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (if applicable): _____ **Date:** _____

Additional Notes:

Thank you for your commitment to attendance and academic success!



Home of the Knights



BOARD MEMBERS

Paul Tigh, President
Byron Hall, Vice-President
Kristina Nelson, Secretary
Tyler Kirkholm, Treasurer
Ryan Harris, Member
Sam Johnson, Member



HOMER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

SUPERINTENDENT
Dr. Joey Lefdal
SECONDARY PRINCIPAL
Jake Brand
ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL
Abbie Uhl
BUSINESS MANAGER
Amy Brand

212 S. 3RD STREET • P.O. BOX 340 • HOMER, NEBRASKA 68030 • PHONE: (402) 698-2377 • FAX (402) 698-2379

Homer Community School Attendance Recovery Plan

As part of our “Every Knight, Every Minute, Every Day” attendance campaign, Homer Community School has implemented an Attendance Recovery Plan to ensure that students take responsibility for all instructional time missed. This plan applies to students with more than 18 absences in a school year or those who have accumulated excessive tardy time. All tardy time must be recovered through structured, meaningful opportunities designed to support both academic and personal growth.

Students and staff collaborate to create individualized recovery plans that may include after-school tutoring, Saturday school, project-based recovery, service learning, or reflective activities that restore missed learning and reinforce accountability. Each plan documents the total time owed, recovery options, and completion deadlines, with parent involvement and staff oversight to ensure follow-through.

The goal is not only to recover minutes but to rebuild engagement, responsibility, and connection, promoting a schoolwide culture where attendance matters. At Homer, Every Knight, Every Minute, Every Day counts.

Thank you,
Joey Lefdal
Superintendent
Homer Community School



ACCREDITATION

2025-26 Rule 10 Public School System Assurance Statement

Purpose: The Annual Assurance Statement serves to affirm School District compliance with the accreditation requirements of Rule 10.

003.07 Assurance Statement. Each school system shall, by November 1 of each year, submit to the Department an Assurance Statement, as prescribed by the Department, signed by a representative of the school system governing body affirming compliance or specifically noting any noncompliance with the regulations contained in this Chapter. Assurance Statements received after 11:59 p.m. on November 1, will be considered late and subject to a formal notice of noncompliance.

An abbreviated Rule 10 compliance checklist is available [HERE](#)

Regulatory questions directed to nde.accreditation@nebraska.gov

Survey Support questions directed to nde.research@nebraska.gov

District: HOMER_COMMUNITY_SCHOOLS

District ID: 22-0031-000

Instructions on How to Complete the Rule 10 Public School Assurance Statement

1. Please review the list of compliance areas required under 92 NAC 10 and check YES or NO to reflect whether or not your district is meeting the regulation. In certain cases, the compliance requirement may not pertain to your district, in which case you can simply respond with "N/A".

2. For unmet regulations, please indicate a “No” on the appropriate Regulation number. At the end of the each section a text box is available for the school representative to describe the context of non-compliance and any efforts that are being made to address and/or correct the regulation. The Accreditation Section will respond to individual school systems and communicate requests for additional Plans of Correction as needed.

3. Your electronic signature will be required at the end of the Rule 10 Assurance Statement. The signature must be time stamped by 11:59 p.m. on November 1st. Users will also be able to download a PDF of responses for their records.

As you complete the Assurance Statement, your responses will be saved automatically. There is no need to click any sort of "save" button. If you must close your web browser before completing the form, simply return and complete any remaining items.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important annual requirement.

For each area of compliance, please select the appropriate response.

*** Code Section 003: Mandatory Requirements for Legal Operation**

	Yes	No
003.01 Certificated Teachers and Administrators	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
003.05 Graduations requirements: Language Arts = 40 credits	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
003.05 Graduations requirements: Math = 30 credits	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
003.05 Graduations requirements: Science = 30 credits	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
003.05 Graduations requirements: Social Studies / History = 30 credits	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
003.06 School Year meets the 400/1032/1080 hours of instruction	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
003.08 Reports are submitted by due dates	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

003.12 Period of time established for recitation of Pledge of Allegiance (K-12)

Please complete a self-report statement for any unmet regulations in Section 003.

Our librarian is currently .5 FCS and .5 library with a full-time para. She is working through both an alternative certification for FCS and library. She will have her library degree completed by the start of the 2026-27 school year. Her certificate number is 20240009927. We have a veteran library assistant who is working with her this year.

*** Code Section 004: Curriculum and Standards**

	Yes	No
004.01A Board-approved instructional program based on written purposes or standards	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.01A Board-approved instructional program based on written purposes or standards provided to each certificated staff member	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.01B Adopted academic content standards in accordance with Rule 10 guidelines	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.01C Written guides, frameworks, and standards for all other curricular areas	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.01C Written descriptions of the library media and guidance programs	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.01D Writing experiences incorporated in all curricular areas K-12	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.01E Educational computer/technology incorporated in instructional programs at all grade levels	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.01F Multicultural education incorporated in all curricular areas at all grade levels	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.01F1 Statement of philosophy or mission and goals for the multicultural education program	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.01F2 Multicultural education incorporated in curriculum guides, frameworks, or standards	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Yes	No
004.01F3 Multicultural education program includes process for selecting appropriate	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

instructional materials		
004.01F4 Process for provision of staff development for all administrators, teachers, and support staff in multicultural education	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.01F5 Process for periodic assessment of multicultural education program	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.01F5 Annual status report on multicultural education provided to local board of education	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.02A Elementary weekly schedule includes Reading/Language Arts	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.02A Elementary weekly schedule includes Mathematics	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.02A Elementary weekly schedule includes Social Studies	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.02A Elementary weekly schedule includes Science	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.02A Elementary weekly schedule includes Health	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.02A Elementary weekly schedule includes P.E.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Yes	No
004.02A Elementary weekly schedule includes Visual Arts	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.02A Elementary weekly schedule includes Music	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.02B Kindergarten – all age eligible children admitted on an unqualified basis §79-214(2)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.02B2 Board-approved recognized assessment procedure for determining early admittance to kindergarten	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.02C Athletic contests not to include K-6 unless exception applies due to enrollment numbers	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.03A Middle grades includes instruction in Reading	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.03A Middle grades includes instruction in Language Arts	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.03A Middle grades includes instruction in Mathematics	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.03A Middle grades includes instruction in Social Studies	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.03A Middle grades includes instruction in	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Science	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Yes	No
004.03A Middle grades includes instruction in Health	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.03A Middle grades includes instruction in Art	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.03A Middle grades includes instruction in Music	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.03A Middle grades includes instruction in P.E.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.03B Career education is included in the middle grades program	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.03C Interscholastic athletic contests (grades 7 and 8) do not exceed number allowed in Rule 10	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.04A High School Program consists of 400 instructional units	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.04B1 Language Arts - 60 instructional units	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.04B2 Social Science - 40 instructional units	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.04B3 Mathematics - 40 instructional units	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Yes	No
004.04B4 Science - 40 instructional units	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.04B5 World Language - 20 instructional units or 2 years of daily classes in the same language	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.04B6 Career Education - 80 instructional units	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.04B7 Personal Health and Physical Fitness - 20 instructional units or 2 years of daily classes in personal health and physical fitness (Note: Inclusion of CPR in the curriculum)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.04B7 Practice for and participation in interscholastic athletic activities not used as substitute for any part of personal health and physical fitness requirement	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.04B8 Visual and Performing Arts - 40 instructional units	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.04B8 Visual and Performing Arts - 40 instructional units including Instrumental Music	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

004.04B8 Visual and Performing Arts - 40 instructional units including Vocal Music	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.04B8 Visual and Performing Arts - 40 instructional units including Visual Arts	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
004.04D2b(e) Availability of properly endorsed monitor with aligned Distance Learning course generating instructional units	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For each area of compliance, please select the appropriate response.

*** Code Section 005: Statewide System for Assessment of Student Learning and for Reporting the Performance of School Districts**

	Yes	No
005.01A Assessment according to Appendix E/Performance Reporting	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
005.02 Report of student achievement provided to NDE	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
005.03 Student assistance process designed to provide problem solving and intervention strategies	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*** Code Section 006: Media and Technology Resources**

	Yes	No
006.01A Library media area(s) available all day	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
006.01A Library media resources properly cataloged according to standard classification system	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
006.01A Encyclopedia or electronic format copyrighted in past five years	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
006.01B Elementary acquires new library media resources in accordance with Rule 10 guidelines	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
006.01C Middle level acquires library media periodicals in accordance with Rule 10 guidelines	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
006.01D Secondary level acquires library media periodicals in accordance with Rule 10 guidelines	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*** Code Section 007: Instructional Staff**

	Yes	No	N/A
007.01A 95% of elementary teachers appropriately endorsed	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
007.01B Pre-kindergarten coordinator has at least 9 credit hours in Early Childhood Education (If not applicable, select N/A)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
007.02A 90% of middle grades teachers appropriately endorsed	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
007.03A 80% of instructional units offered in secondary grades assigned to appropriately endorsed teachers	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
007.04A ½ FTE media specialist endorsed or acquiring 6 hours per year of professional development or college credit	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
007.04A1 Building library media specialist staff in required ratio	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
007.05A Guidance staff – in required ratio; endorsed or acquiring 6 hours per year in professional development or college credit	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
007.05B Guidance staff – in required ratio for middle/secondary grades	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
007.05C Elementary guidance program and services: 300 or more students (If not applicable, select N/A)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
007.06A Certificated employee evaluation policy – approved by NDE	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Yes	No	N/A
007.07A Each teacher participates in at least ten hours of staff development activities each year	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For each area of compliance, please select the appropriate response.

*** Code Section 008: Administrative Staff**

	Yes	No	N/A
008.02A Elementary administration: Elementary principal or superintendent	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
008.02A Elementary administration: 10+ teachers, half-time principal (If not applicable, select N/A)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

008.02A Elementary administration: 20+ teachers, full-time principal (If not applicable, select N/A)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
008.03A Middle grades principal, endorsement required	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
008.03B Middle grades administration: Middle grades principal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
008.03B Middle grades administration: 10+ teachers, half-time principal (If not applicable, select N/A)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
008.03B Middle grades administration: 20+ teachers, full-time principal (If not applicable, select N/A)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
008.04A Secondary administration: Secondary principal	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
008.04A Secondary administration: 10+ teachers, half-time principal (If not applicable, select N/A)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
008.04A Secondary administration: 20+ teachers, full-time principal (If not applicable, select N/A)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Yes	No	N/A
008.05A Head administrator has superintendent's endorsement	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
008.05B Other administrators hold appropriate endorsements (If not applicable, select N/A)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
008.05C All required certificates and permits on file in school administrative office	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*** Code Section 009: Continuous School Improvement**

	Yes	No
009.01A Multicultural education incorporated in continuous school improvement plan	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
009.01A Review and update of mission and vision statements incorporated in continuous school improvement plan	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
009.01A Collection and analysis of data including student performance, demographics, learning climate, and former high school students incorporated in continuous school improvement plan	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



009.01A Selection of improvement goals including at least one academic achievement goal incorporated in continuous school improvement plan

009.01A Development and implementation of an improvement plan aligned to a professional development plan incorporated in continuous school improvement plan



009.01A Evaluation of progress incorporated in continuous school improvement plan



009.01B External team visit hosted every 5 years



*** Code Section 010: Accountability Reporting**

Yes

No

010.01A Annual written report of performance, demographics, improvement goals, financial information



010.01B Policy for preparing and distributing annual report of performance (010.01A)



*** Code Section 011: School Environment**

Yes

No

011.01A Safe, healthful, and sanitary conditions maintained in each building including meeting fire, safety, and health codes



011.01B Safety and security plan



011.01C Safety and security committee



011.01D Safety and security plan reviewed annually including a visit



011.01E Seclusion and Restraints policy



011.01F Bullying policy



011.01G Dating violence policy



*** Code Section 012: School System Governance**

Yes

No



012.01A Written board policies accessible in each building	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
012.01B Written policy assuring schools meet instructional hours requirement (400 for kindergarten, 1032 for elementary, 1080 for high school (9-12))	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
012.01C Ratio (pupils to certificated staff) 25 to 1	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*** Appendix F - Statutory Compliance**

	Yes	No
School Board has an Americanism Committee to carry out §79-724	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Character education instruction emphasis in public and nonpublic classrooms §79-725	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public, private, denominational, and parochial schools educate staff as outlined in The Seizure Safe Schools Act §79-3201	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meet Financial Literacy component as outlined in NE Revised Statute 79-3001 through 79-3004	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*** Name** (first name, last name)

Joseph Lefdal

*** Date** (mm/dd/yyyy)

10/13/2025

*** Email**

joylefdal@homerknights.org

*** Signature** (use your mouse if on a desktop, or your finger if on a mobile device)

1. [187054246-150378642-signature.png](#)



Please note that by clicking the "Submit" button below, your responses will be submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education. Please review all of your responses carefully as you will not be able make any changes upon clicking the "Submit" button.

Annual Review
Of
Homer Community School
Safety and Security Plan

Walk Through Conducted on
September 24, 2025

By
Craig Frerichs
September 24, 2025

Overview

Craig Frerichs completed the annual review of Homer Community School Safety and Security Plan on September 24, 2025. This review is required and conducted in accordance with rules and regulations established by the Nebraska Department of Education. This specific rule is NDE, Rule 10, Section 004.01B4.

The review was a process that included:

1. A checklist of considerations was discussed during the process with Mr. Lefdal, Mr. Horner and Sgt. Brian Fernau.
2. A quick walkthrough of the facility was made with Sgt. Fernau.
3. A review of your safety and security plans was discussed.
4. An exit review of the findings was made with Sgt. Fernau.
5. A written report of all findings is to be forwarded to the Superintendent Lefdal.

I have had the pleasure visiting the Homer Community School facility again this year. Your school building continues to be a well-maintained facility that is in excellent condition. Having Sgt. Fernau present at your school again this year has really helped with safety and security at your school and at activities. Your Library location is so inviting for students and much better assessable.

Suggestions and Compliments during my visit:

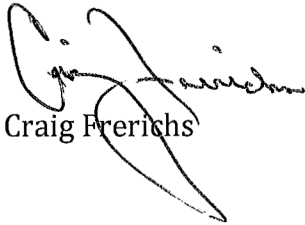
Keep posting the iloveyouguys posters as well as tornado and fire escape routes in every classroom. The SRP posters need to be updated to the new edition. All three should be placed near each classroom door.

- Operational Safety Plan is being updated.
- Custodial closets need to be **LOCKED** at **ALL** times! It is very unsafe for chemicals to be available to kids when these doors are not locked.
- A few cameras need to be added to the exterior of the building to help with security issues.
- P.E. Storage area is better organized than in the past for egress.
- Make a playground inspection spreadsheet to be signed after each inspection.
- Electrical panels in several places need to have a 3-foot egress to each. All Mechanical, Electrical, and storage areas need organized. You might have a custodian assigned to them making sure they are organized and have safe egress. After they have been organized have the staff keep organized!!!
- Your Resource Officer has been positive for your school.
- Continue CPR, AED, and First Aid Training for coaches/sponsors and staff.
- Narcan is now available within your school. Get board approval if not already done so.
- Mental Health team meets twice a month to review at-risk students and their situations.

- I suggest putting a sidewalk along the East side of the building where bus and car traffic take place. It would be a small price to pay if someone would ever get injured in this area.
- Safety straps were added to your baskets. Great Job!!
- Your Library location is now such a welcoming room and much more assessable for students.
- Your new display monitors and sound system in your gym are awesome!

Continue to schedule drills for your HOLD, SECURE, LOCKDOWN, EVACUATE, SHELTER, and Reunification. The more drills you can have the better students and staff will react if ever a need.

My observations/concerns for each facility and each room reflect only one person's observations and opinions based on that particular day and time. They should not be considered final judgments that schools must enact immediately.



Craig Frerichs

Rule 10 School Safety Recommendations

School District: Homer Date: September 24, 2025

- | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|
| 1. School district has safety committee: | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| a. Composition includes representatives from each work department | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| b. Composition (includes local law enforcement, fire department, rescue)
Two staff members belong to the volunteer fire dept. One staff member is an EMT. | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| c. Meetings (Recommended to meet at least quarterly) | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| d. Safety committee conducts an annual review of the safety and security plan | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| e. External visitation. | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| 2. School district has adopted the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) http://iloveyouguys.org
They have a modified SRP. | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| 3. The school system has established Standard Response Protocol (SRP) procedures to monitor school Safety and security protocols for off-campus school sponsored events. | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| 4. The school system has policies and protocols regarding security and visitor management in alignment With Readiness and Emergency Management of Schools (REMS) | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| 5. The school system has developed and implements security and visitor policies and protocols for Specialized areas (pools, gyms, pre-kindergarten, playgrounds, fences, vehicles/buses, vehicle facilities, Bus barns, science labs, sporting venues, cafeterias, kitchens, and classrooms with exterior doors, portables) | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| 6. The school system has planned protocols for required drills, including, but not limited to: | | |
| a. Fire Drills | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| b. Tornado Drills Two each year – one in the Fall and one in the Spring | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| c. Bus Evacuation Drills Done
<i>(The school system shall provide training for the specified employees in the required drill areas
In compliance with local, state, and federal regulations)
Are there maps in each room indicating where to go for each drill</i> | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| 7. The school system has planned protocols for non-required drills, including but not limited to: | | |
| a. HOLD Drills are planned for this year. | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| b. SECURE Drills are planned for this year. | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| c. LOCKDOWN Drills (multiple sites) Are planned for this year. | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| d. EVACUATE Drills are planned for this year. | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| e. SHELTER Drills are planned for this year. | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| f. Reunification Should be considered for this year. | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
| 8. The school system has assessed positive relationships between employees and students | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| 9. The school system has assessed positive relationships between students and students | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| 10. The school system has a process in place to assist and address identified individuals who exhibit signs Have risky, harmful, or violent behaviors and /or pose a threat of committing criminal activity (THREAT ASSESSMENT)
I would suggest attending another Threat Assessment seminar. | <u>Yes</u> | NO |
| 11. All school employees wear picture ID's | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| 12. School personnel monitor entrances at the beginning of the day | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| 13. School personnel monitor entrances after open-campus lunch | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| 14. School personnel monitor hallways between classes | <u>Yes</u> | NO |
| 15. School personnel monitor hallways and exits at the end of the day | <u>Yes</u> | No |

16. School personnel monitor parking lots	<u>Yes</u>	No
17. The school building has a clearly marked main entrance	<u>Yes</u>	NO
18. The external doors are locked during the school day	<u>Yes</u>	No
19. The school building has a controlled entry (buzz-in system with camera identification)	<u>Yes</u>	No
20. The school building has surveillance cameras and recording equipment	<u>Yes</u>	No
21. All classroom doors and offices can be locked	<u>Yes</u>	No
22. The school has visible signage to identify interior/exterior spaces for emergency responders. All drills will Be pre-arranged.		
a. Tornado Shelter(s) Signs needed in Hallways indicating where to find them.	<u>Yes</u>	No
b. Chemical Supply Rooms	<u>Yes</u>	No
c. Boiler Room/Mechanical Rooms	<u>Yes</u>	No
23. Outside entry/exit doors are numbered (large numbers visible from the street)	<u>Yes</u>	No
24. Fire exit route and tornado shelter route are posted in each classroom and office	<u>Yes</u>	No
25. Exit lights are in proper working order	<u>Yes</u>	No
26. Emergency lights are in proper working order	<u>Yes</u>	No
27. All state fire codes are being followed	<u>Yes</u>	No
28. All safety and security plans include the needs of students, employees, and persons with and without Disabilities or any person(s) with limited English proficiency	<u>Yes</u>	No
29. Classrooms numbered inside and out for identification.	<u>Yes</u>	No
30. Have Maps of your school been distributed to Fire/ Law/Rescue	<u>Yes</u>	No
31. All drills include bus drivers, cooks, custodians, Substitutes, etc.	<u>Yes</u>	No
32. Is each drill recorded, discussed, for future reference.	<u>Yes</u>	No
33. Have you met with your staff and students on cyber bullying (speaker/workshop?	<u>Yes</u>	No

School: Homer

Date: 9/24/25

What year was your EOP last updated? 2024

How often does your Safety and Security Team meet? Quarterly

Has Narcan been approved by your school district? Y

Has your staff been trained on the use of Narcan? Y

Do you have Epipen's on hand and are they updated yearly? Y

Has your staff been trained on the use of the Epipen? Y

Has your staff been trained in First Aid? Y

Has your staff been trained with seizures? Y

Has your staff been trained on Stop The Bleed? Y (This year)

Has your staff been trained with CPR? Coaches/First Res.p

Has your staff been trained with AED's Y?

Is your Suicide Awareness policy up to date? Y

Do you participate with the Safe2Help initiative? Y

Do you adopted the State Cell Phone Policy? Y

Do you Post 988 Suicide Hotline posters in your School? Y

Do you Post "See Something Say Something" Posters in your school? Y

Does your school provide Dating Violence training in your school? Y

Do you have Behavioral Intervention Training for your teachers? Y

Is a resource officer available in your school? Y

When was the last time you attended a Threat Assessment workshop? Last Year

When did you hold your Bus Evacuation drills? 2 times/year

How many SRP drills have you had in the last year? 2x a year

How often is your playground inspected each year? Para professionals -

Fire Drills take place once per month? Yes

Fire Extinguishers are inspected annually? Yes

How many Tornado drills have you had in the last year? 2

When was your last Reunification Drill? Couple of years

A secure vestibule is found at your school? No



Administrator/Safety Chairman

HOMER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT 2025-26

September 30, 2025

Grade	Total	Boys	Girls	Teachers	Option Enrollment	
Preschool 4 year	26	11	15	All		
PK-4	13			Heaton	-	
PK-4	13			Murphy	-	
Kindergarten	29	12	17	All	14	
K – 1	15			Scott		
K – 2	14			Olson		
1 st Grade	26	17	9	All	10	
1 st – 1	13			Boelter		
1 st – 2	13			Dorcey		
2 nd Grade	36	18	18	All	15	
2 nd – 1	19			Ford		
2 nd – 2	17			Morgan		
3 rd Grade	26	15	11	All	10	
3 rd – 1	13			Wright		
3 rd – 2	13			Hermelbracht		
4 th Grade	26	10	16	All	7	
4 th – 1	14			Jump		
4 th – 2	12			Sanchez		
5 th Grade	32	15	17	All	9	
5 th - 1	16			Olson		
5 th - 2	16			Bennier		
Total K – 5	175		Total PreK - 5	201	Total Elem. Option	65
Comparison to 2015/2016 (PK-6) - 219 Students (71 Opt.) Comparison to 2016/2017 (PK-6) - 215 Students (73 Opt.) Comparison to 2017/2018 (PK-6) - 206 Students (69 Opt.) Comparison to 2018/2019 (PK-6) - 225 Students (90 Opt.) Comparison to 2019/2020 (PK-6) - 217 Students (83 Opt.) Comparison to 2020/2021 (PK-6) - 243 Students (78 Opt.) Comparison to 2021/2022 (PK-6) - 245 Students (70 Opt.) Comparison to 2022/2023 (PK-6) - 238 Students (68 Opt.) Comparison to 2023/2024 (PK-5) – 212 Students (66 Opt.) Comparison to 2023/2024 (PK-5) – 201 Students (67 Opt.)						
6 th Grade	41	21	20		16	
7 th Grade	31	10	21		15	
8 th Grade	43	15	28		14	
9 th Grade	27	10	17		12	
10 th Grade	43	20	23		17	
11 th Grade	30	14	16		14	
12 th Grade	37	14	23		14	
13-16 Year	0	0	0		0	
Total 6 – 12	252				Total JH/HS Option	102
Year 13	0					
Comparison to 2015/2016 (7-12) – 180 Students (61 Opt.) Comparison to 2016/2017 (7-12) – 175 Students (63 Opt.) Comparison to 2017/2018 (7-12) - 171 Students (56 Opt.) Comparison to 2018/2019 (7-12) - 163 Students (58 Opt.) Comparison to 2019/2020 (7-12) - 171 Students (65 Opt.) Comparison to 2020/2021 (7-12) - 190 Students (74 Opt.) Comparison to 2021/2022 (7-12) - 181 Students (75 Opt.) Comparison to 2022/2023 (7-12) - 192 Students (80 Opt.) Comparison to 2023/2024 (6-12)- 224 Students (97 Opt.) Comparison to 2023/2024 (6-12) – 240 Students (107 Opt.)						
Total K – 12	427		Total PreK - 12	453	Option Total	167
Comparison to 2015/2016 (PK-12) - 399 Students (132 Opt.) Comparison to 2016/2017 (PK-12) - 390 Students (136 Opt.) Comparison to 2017/2018 (PK-12) - 377 Students (125 Opt.) Comparison to 2018/2019 (PK-12) - 388 Students (148 Opt.) Comparison to 2019/2020 (PK-12) - 418 Students (148 Opt.) Comparison to 2020/2021 (PK-12) - 433 Students (152 Opt.) Comparison to 2021/2022 (PK-12) - 426 Students (145 Opt.) Comparison to 2022/2023 (PK-12) - 430 Students (148 Opt.) Comparison to 2023/2024 (PK-12) – 436 Students (168 Opt.) Comparison to 2024/2025 (PK-12) - 445 Students (166 Opt.)						

Homer Community School 2025-26 Student Movement

	In	Out
August	1	2
September	4	3
October		
November		
December		
January		
February		
March		
April		
May		
	Totals	
	5	5



Homer Community School 2025-26

Average Daily Attendance

Percentage of Students in Attendance Daily

	%
August	95
September	95
October	
November	
December	
January	
February	
March	
April	
May	



7-12 Houghton Mifflin

To compare how Houghton Mifflin social studies textbooks align with Nebraska's social studies standards, it's essential to break the evaluation into a few key areas, focusing on the content, grade-level appropriateness, and specific skill and knowledge expectations laid out by the state standards.

Key Focus Areas:

1. Content Alignment:

Nebraska's social studies standards emphasize a well-rounded understanding of history, geography, civics, and economics. Textbooks should align with these four strands while highlighting:

- **American History:** Nebraska requires students to understand the founding and development of the U.S., including key figures, constitutional principles, and major historical events.
- **Geography:** Students must demonstrate spatial awareness, including physical and political maps, and human-environment interactions.
- **Civics and Government:** Nebraska places a strong focus on democratic principles, the Constitution, and the responsibilities of citizenship.
- **Economics:** Key economic principles such as supply and demand, entrepreneurship, and the role of government in the economy are important.

2. Houghton Mifflin Textbooks: Generally, these textbooks offer strong content coverage in American history, world geography, and government, and they often align well with national standards. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) also tailors its curriculum to state standards, including specific adaptations for different regions. For Nebraska, this would likely include localized content related to Nebraska's history, geography, and government.

Potential Gaps or Strengths:

- **State History:** Nebraska's standards emphasize knowledge of state history and regional studies, which may require supplemental materials beyond what's offered in a general textbook from HMH.
- **Contemporary Issues and Civics:** Nebraska's emphasis on current events and civic participation may align well with HMH's recent focus on critical thinking and discussion-based learning.

3. Skill Development: Nebraska's standards emphasize the development of critical thinking, inquiry, and analysis skills. Students are expected to:

- Analyze primary and secondary sources.
- Construct evidence-based arguments.
- Engage in civic discussions and debates.

4. Houghton Mifflin Textbooks: HMH textbooks often incorporate these types of inquiry-based activities. They typically include primary source documents, timelines, and maps for students to analyze, promoting these critical thinking skills. Additionally, they

offer structured activities aimed at developing evidence-based reasoning, which aligns well with Nebraska's goals.

5. **Grade-Level Appropriateness:** Nebraska's standards are organized into grade-specific goals, with particular emphasis on:
 - **Middle Grades:** A deeper dive into American history, world geography, and the foundations of government.
 - **High School:** Comprehensive study of U.S. and world history, government, economics, and geography, preparing students for civic life and post-secondary education.
6. **Houghton Mifflin Textbooks:** HMH offers a range of textbooks for various grade levels, and they are typically aligned with national standards, which have significant overlap with Nebraska's. However, certain state-specific standards might require the inclusion of more regional history and geography at different grade levels.

Potential Gaps or Strengths:

- HMH's broad coverage of U.S. history and government aligns well with Nebraska's high school standards. However, for younger grades, Nebraska's emphasis on local community and state history may require additional state-specific resources.
7. **Civics Focus:** Nebraska standards have a strong civics education component, encouraging students to actively participate in civic life and understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens. The state aims for students to engage in discussions around current events and understand the Constitution and government processes.

Houghton Mifflin Textbooks: HMH incorporates civics education into its social studies curriculum, particularly in middle and high school grades, where students learn about the Constitution, government systems, and political processes. This approach aligns well with Nebraska's focus on democratic principles, though Nebraska's specific emphasis on contemporary civic engagement may require additional, local resources.

Thoughts:

Overall, **Houghton Mifflin social studies textbooks align well with Nebraska's social studies standards** in many key areas, including content coverage in U.S. history, geography, and civics, and the development of critical thinking skills. However, there are a few areas where supplemental materials might be needed, particularly for **Nebraska-specific content** such as state history and geography and the state's particular emphasis on civic participation and contemporary issues. Schools using HMH textbooks may need to integrate **state-specific resources** or additional lessons on Nebraska's unique history and role in the broader context of American history.

This comparison can serve as a guide when evaluating whether or not HMH textbooks need supplementation or adaptation to fully meet Nebraska's educational goals.

Using SIT (Standards Instructional Tool)

Using the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) Standards Instructional Materials Tool, we can assess how well the Houghton Mifflin (HM) social studies textbooks for grades 7-12 align with Nebraska's social studies standards, which cover history, geography, civics, and economics. The evaluation focuses on content alignment, depth, instructional strategies, skills development, assessment, and state-specific content.

1. Standards Alignment

The Nebraska social studies standards for grades 7-12 emphasize a comprehensive understanding of U.S. and world history, government, economics, and geography. They are designed to help students understand the principles of democracy, the role of government, geographic relationships, and economic systems, and how history informs contemporary society.

- **Content Focus:**
 - **History:** Nebraska's standards require in-depth coverage of U.S. and world history, including major historical events, themes, and figures from ancient civilizations to modern times.
 - **Civics and Government:** Students must understand democratic principles, the U.S. Constitution, government structures, and their role as citizens.
 - **Geography:** The standards expect students to interpret geographic data, understand physical and human geography, and analyze geographic patterns.
 - **Economics:** Students must grasp economic principles, including supply and demand, market structures, government's role in the economy, and global economic systems.
- **Houghton Mifflin Textbooks:**

HM textbooks are designed to align with national social studies standards, and many of these overlap with Nebraska's expectations. They typically cover U.S. history in detail, include a strong civics and government component, and emphasize geographic literacy. The economics textbooks from HM also offer robust coverage of micro and macroeconomic principles.

NDE Tool Score: Strong alignment for general content coverage in U.S. and world history, geography, government, and economics. However, state-specific content may require additional materials.

2. Depth and Rigor

Nebraska's social studies standards for grades 7-12 emphasize higher-order thinking skills, requiring students to engage with complex concepts, analyze primary sources, and construct evidence-based arguments.

- Houghton Mifflin Textbooks:
HM's high school textbooks are designed to promote critical thinking and in-depth analysis. They typically include activities that require students to analyze primary and secondary sources, timelines, maps, and charts. These textbooks also encourage students to make connections between historical events and current issues, supporting Nebraska's standards for developing inquiry-based thinking.
NDE Tool Score: High alignment in promoting depth of learning through source analysis, critical thinking, and inquiry. HM textbooks generally support rigorous academic exploration.

3. Instructional Strategies and Student Engagement

Nebraska's instructional materials tool assesses the variety and effectiveness of instructional strategies used to engage students and meet diverse learning needs.

- Houghton Mifflin Textbooks:
HM's textbooks typically provide a variety of instructional strategies, including guided reading, critical thinking questions, debates, and interactive online resources. These strategies are designed to engage students with different learning styles and ensure comprehension of complex topics. They often include multimedia resources and interactive activities, which can enhance student engagement and understanding.
NDE Tool Score: Strong alignment in terms of diverse instructional strategies and student engagement. HM textbooks include a wide array of approaches to keep students engaged in learning.

4. Skills Development

Nebraska's standards require that students develop specific social studies skills, including source evaluation, argumentation, geographic reasoning, and civic participation.

- Source Evaluation: Nebraska places a strong emphasis on analyzing primary and secondary sources, constructing arguments, and evaluating evidence.
- Geographic Skills: Students need to be able to read and interpret maps, graphs, and geographic data to understand spatial relationships and human-environment interactions.
- Civics and Participation: Nebraska's civics standards emphasize understanding democratic principles and engaging in civic discussions.

Houghton Mifflin Textbooks:

HM textbooks typically provide a variety of primary sources, from historical documents to speeches and maps, supporting Nebraska's standards for source evaluation and critical analysis. Geography sections often include case studies, interactive maps, and exercises that build geographic reasoning. The civics materials offer practical lessons on government structure and citizenship, promoting engagement with civic processes.

NDE Tool Score: High alignment in terms of building essential social studies skills. HM

materials align well with Nebraska's focus on critical thinking, geographic literacy, and civic engagement.

5. Assessment

Nebraska's standards expect that instructional materials provide both formative and summative assessments that align with learning objectives and help track student mastery of content and skills.

- Houghton Mifflin Textbooks:
HM textbooks include a wide variety of assessments, such as chapter quizzes, unit tests, writing assignments, and project-based assessments. These assessments are designed to measure not only content knowledge but also students' abilities to apply critical thinking and analysis skills. The online platforms often include adaptive assessments that can help teachers track student progress over time.
NDE Tool Score: Strong alignment in terms of offering aligned assessments that track both content mastery and skills development.

6. Cultural Representation and Diversity

Nebraska's standards emphasize the inclusion of diverse cultures, perspectives, and experiences, ensuring that students understand multiple viewpoints and cultural contexts.

- Houghton Mifflin Textbooks:
HM textbooks typically include diverse perspectives, especially in U.S. history and world history materials. These textbooks often incorporate the stories and contributions of historically marginalized groups, such as women, Indigenous peoples, and other minority groups, promoting a broader understanding of history and society.
NDE Tool Score: High alignment in terms of cultural representation. HM materials generally reflect diverse perspectives, which aligns with Nebraska's standards for teaching cultural awareness.

7. Local and State Content

Nebraska's standards require the integration of local and state history, particularly in the middle school and high school grades. Understanding Nebraska's role in national and global contexts is essential.

- Houghton Mifflin Textbooks:
HM textbooks may not include extensive content specific to Nebraska's history, government, or economy. While they provide strong coverage of U.S. history and government in general, Nebraska-specific lessons (such as in government and local economics) may require additional resources or supplements.
NDE Tool Score: Moderate alignment. While HM textbooks provide comprehensive coverage of national and global topics, state-specific content may be lacking. Schools

will likely need to supplement with local resources or Nebraska-specific lessons to meet this requirement fully.

Conclusion Using the NDE Instructional Materials Tool:

Houghton Mifflin's social studies textbooks for grades 7-12 align well with Nebraska's social studies standards in most categories. They provide comprehensive content in U.S. and world history, geography, government, and economics, and they support the development of critical thinking, source analysis, and civic engagement. The instructional strategies are diverse, engaging, and effective for promoting in-depth learning, while the assessments are well-aligned with Nebraska's learning goals.

However, there is a potential gap in Nebraska-specific content, particularly in areas like state history, government, and economics. While Houghton Mifflin offers a strong foundation in national and global topics, teachers may need to supplement with local resources to fully address Nebraska's standards for state and local content.

Overall, Houghton Mifflin textbooks score highly in most areas using the NDE Instructional Materials Tool but may require additional Nebraska-specific materials to ensure full alignment with state standards.

K-5 Studies Weekly

When comparing "**Studies Weekly**" for elementary social studies to Nebraska's social studies standards, the focus will be on content alignment, grade-level appropriateness, and skill-building, particularly for K-5 students.

Key Focus Areas:

1. Content Alignment:

Nebraska's elementary social studies standards focus on early foundations in history, geography, civics, and economics, progressively introducing concepts that students revisit in greater detail in later grades.

Studies Weekly:

"Studies Weekly" provides a weekly newspaper-style format that integrates U.S. history, geography, government, and economics into grade-specific content. It tends to align with national standards, offering a well-rounded introduction to key social studies concepts.

- **American History:** Nebraska emphasizes the foundations of U.S. history, including early civilizations, exploration, colonization, and the founding of the

nation. "Studies Weekly" introduces students to these themes, often with accessible language and engaging articles.

- **Nebraska History:** Nebraska's standards require students to learn about the state's history, symbols, and geography, especially in the 4th grade. **Studies Weekly** offers some state-specific editions, and Nebraska's version may include tailored content covering local history, state government, and significant Nebraska figures.
- **Geography:** Nebraska standards include understanding spatial relationships, maps, and basic geography skills. "Studies Weekly" often incorporates activities and lessons on reading maps and understanding geographic features, aligning well with these goals.
- **Civics:** Nebraska emphasizes understanding democratic principles, citizenship, and basic government structures starting at a young age. "Studies Weekly" typically includes civics-focused content in each grade level, offering lessons on government functions and civic responsibilities.

2. **Potential Gaps or Strengths:**

- **State-Specific Content:** If "Studies Weekly" provides a Nebraska-specific edition, the alignment is likely strong, particularly in the 4th-grade study of Nebraska history. Without state-specific editions, additional resources may be necessary to cover all Nebraska-focused content.

3. **Skill Development:** Nebraska standards emphasize the development of skills like critical thinking, source analysis, map reading, and inquiry-based learning from an early age.

Studies Weekly:

"Studies Weekly" offers interactive features like primary source documents, analysis questions, and activities that promote critical thinking and discussion. The weekly quizzes and hands-on projects can support Nebraska's inquiry-based learning approach. The format of short, engaging articles encourages students to develop comprehension and retention skills.

Potential Gaps or Strengths:

- **Inquiry-Based Learning:** "Studies Weekly" encourages students to ask questions and engage with the material, which aligns well with Nebraska's inquiry-based learning model.
- **Source Analysis:** The weekly format often includes activities that ask students to analyze primary sources or answer questions based on what they've read, supporting the critical thinking and analysis components of Nebraska's standards.

4. **Grade-Level Appropriateness:** Nebraska organizes its social studies standards into grade-level expectations, starting with community, citizenship, and basic geography in early grades and progressing to more complex historical and government-related concepts in upper elementary.

Studies Weekly:

- **Kindergarten to 2nd Grade:** "Studies Weekly" aligns well with Nebraska's focus on basic community roles, national symbols, and simple geography. It provides

lessons on community helpers, American holidays, and symbols like the flag, which match Nebraska's early social studies goals.

- **3rd Grade:** Nebraska's 3rd-grade standards emphasize national history and geography, including understanding continents, oceans, and early American history. "Studies Weekly" covers basic U.S. history and geographic concepts, which aligns with these goals.
 - **4th Grade:** Nebraska's 4th-grade standards focus heavily on state history. If "Studies Weekly" offers a Nebraska edition, it likely covers this in detail. Without a Nebraska-specific version, additional resources on Nebraska history and geography may be needed.
 - **5th Grade:** Nebraska's standards in 5th grade focus on early U.S. history, including exploration, colonization, and the Revolutionary War. "Studies Weekly" provides a strong foundation in these areas, often covering similar content in its weekly format.
5. **Potential Gaps or Strengths:**
- **Local History:** While "Studies Weekly" generally covers national history well, the degree of alignment with Nebraska's focus on state-specific history, especially in the 4th grade, depends on the availability of a Nebraska-specific edition.
6. **Civics and Citizenship:** Nebraska's elementary social studies standards place a strong emphasis on teaching the principles of citizenship, government structures, and the roles and responsibilities of individuals in a democracy.

Studies Weekly:

"Studies Weekly" often includes civics content in each issue, addressing the basics of government, democratic values, and what it means to be a good citizen. This aligns well with Nebraska's standards for teaching students about civic engagement and responsibility.

Potential Gaps or Strengths:

- **Engagement:** "Studies Weekly" promotes civic engagement through activities like mock elections or discussions about current events, which aligns with Nebraska's goals of fostering active and informed citizens from a young age.

Thoughts:

"Studies Weekly" aligns well with Nebraska's elementary social studies standards in terms of content coverage, skill-building, and fostering civic engagement. If the school district can access Nebraska-specific editions, this will ensure that 4th-grade standards focused on state history and geography are fully met. For younger grades, the emphasis on national history, community, and government closely aligns with Nebraska's expectations. Some minor supplementation with state-specific materials may be needed for full compliance, especially in state history, but overall, "Studies Weekly" provides a comprehensive and engaging resource that is well-suited to Nebraska's standards.

Using SIT (Standards Instructional Tool)

To evaluate the alignment of "**Studies Weekly**" with Nebraska's social studies standards using the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) **Instructional Materials Tool**, we will break down the comparison into the categories the tool emphasizes. This tool helps assess how well instructional materials align with the Nebraska standards, with a focus on content, skills, and teaching methods across grade levels.

Here's an analysis of "Studies Weekly" based on categories outlined by the NDE tool:

1. Standards Alignment

This category assesses how closely materials align with the core content of Nebraska's social studies standards, focusing on key domains: history, geography, civics, and economics.

- **Content Focus:**

"Studies Weekly" generally covers the four major strands of social studies required by Nebraska:

- **History:** Includes content on U.S. history, covering exploration, colonization, and key historical events.
- **Geography:** Lessons include map skills and geographic features, which align with Nebraska's emphasis on spatial understanding.
- **Civics:** "Studies Weekly" promotes civics knowledge and democratic principles at every grade level, matching Nebraska's push for civic education.
- **Economics:** Elementary concepts of needs, wants, and economic decision-making are introduced, which are aligned with state standards.

- **NDE Tool Score:** High alignment for foundational content, with Nebraska-specific content integrated where available.

2. Depth and Rigor

Nebraska standards expect students to engage deeply with the material, especially through inquiry-based learning, source analysis, and critical thinking.

- **Studies Weekly** encourages students to engage in source analysis through primary documents, historical photos, and interactive activities. Weekly quizzes and projects ask students to reflect critically on what they've learned, supporting the inquiry-based approach Nebraska promotes.

NDE Tool Score: Strong alignment in encouraging depth of learning through critical thinking and analysis of sources. This meets Nebraska's inquiry-based learning goals.

3. Instructional Strategies and Student Engagement

Nebraska's instructional tool emphasizes the importance of diverse instructional strategies to meet the needs of all learners, including differentiation, student engagement, and interactive activities.

- **Student Engagement:** "Studies Weekly" uses a newspaper format that is highly engaging for elementary students, with articles, activities, and graphics tailored to younger learners. The interactive nature of the weekly issues aligns with Nebraska's focus on engaging students with hands-on activities.
- **Differentiation:** "Studies Weekly" offers different levels of reading material and supplemental online resources, which can help teachers adjust lessons based on student ability. The NDE tool emphasizes differentiated instruction, and the multiple formats available with "Studies Weekly" support this.

NDE Tool Score: High engagement, with interactive and differentiated activities that meet various learner needs.

4. Skills Development

Nebraska's standards require the development of specific social studies skills, including critical thinking, analysis, decision-making, and collaboration.

- **Studies Weekly** promotes skill-building in a number of ways:
 - **Map Skills:** Nebraska standards place strong emphasis on geography and map reading, and "Studies Weekly" incorporates maps, globes, and geographic discussions into lessons.
 - **Source Analysis:** Primary sources, timelines, and images are used for critical thinking activities, which align with Nebraska's standards on historical analysis.
 - **Civic Responsibility:** The materials encourage civic participation and discussion of democratic values, which is a core component of Nebraska's civics standards.
- **NDE Tool Score:** Strong alignment in developing key social studies skills, particularly in historical analysis, civic engagement, and geography.

5. Assessment

The NDE tool assesses whether instructional materials provide adequate assessment tools that align with learning objectives and support mastery of Nebraska standards.

- **Formative and Summative Assessment:** "Studies Weekly" includes weekly quizzes, writing prompts, and discussion-based questions, allowing for both formative and summative assessments. These align with Nebraska's focus on assessing content knowledge, as well as the critical thinking and analysis skills students are expected to develop.

NDE Tool Score: High alignment for providing frequent, aligned assessments that measure mastery of key standards.

6. Cultural Representation and Diversity

The NDE tool evaluates how well instructional materials reflect diverse cultures, perspectives, and experiences, ensuring that all students see themselves represented in the curriculum.

- **Studies Weekly** incorporates multiple perspectives in its articles, often including stories and lessons on historically marginalized groups, civil rights movements, and different cultures. This diversity in representation aligns with Nebraska's standards for teaching cultural awareness and respect for different perspectives.

NDE Tool Score: High alignment in representing diverse cultures and perspectives, which is essential for meeting Nebraska's cultural awareness standards.

7. Local and State Content

Nebraska's standards emphasize state-specific history, geography, and government, particularly in the 4th grade when students focus on Nebraska history.

- **State-Specific Content:** If using a Nebraska-specific edition of "Studies Weekly," the content will likely include information about Nebraska's history, government, and geography, which is crucial for meeting the state's specific standards. If the edition lacks state-specific content, supplemental materials will be needed to ensure full alignment.

NDE Tool Score: Depends on availability of Nebraska-specific editions. If available, this will ensure full alignment with local standards; if not, some gaps may exist, especially in 4th grade.

Conclusion Using the NDE Instructional Materials Tool:

"Studies Weekly" aligns well with Nebraska's social studies standards, scoring highly across most categories of the NDE Instructional Materials Tool. It provides engaging, rigorous content, promotes key skills like critical thinking and source analysis, and includes assessments that support mastery of standards. The inclusion of diverse perspectives ensures cultural alignment, and the flexible instructional strategies meet the needs of various learners.

However, **state-specific content is a key factor**. If Nebraska-specific editions are available, "Studies Weekly" will fully align with the state's expectations, particularly in 4th grade when students focus on Nebraska's history and geography. If a Nebraska edition is not available, teachers may need to supplement with additional materials to cover local content.