

Holdrege Public Schools

Board of Education Regular Meeting

March 20, 2026, 12:00 PM

HPS Central Office 505 14th Avenue, 505 14th Avenue, Holdrege, NE 68949

- I. Call to Order - Roll Call
- II. Recognition of Visitors
 - II.A. Presentation - Title I & RTI - Nancy Nelson & Markie Nelson
 - II.B. HEA Report
 - II.C. Student Council Report
 - II.D. Public Forum
- III. Board of Education Committee Reports
- IV. Business Items
 - IV.A. Action Items
 - IV.A.1. Consent Agenda
 - IV.A.1.a. Discuss, Consider, and Take Action on the Minutes - February 16, 2026 Regular Meeting
 - IV.A.1.b. Discuss, Consider, and Take Action on the Warrants/Bills
 - IV.A.1.c. Discuss, Consider, and Take Action on the Treasurer's Report
 - IV.A.1.d. Excuse Absent Board Members
 - IV.A.2. Discuss, Consider, and Take Action on the Bill(s) from InSPIRE - Holdrege, LLC.
 - IV.A.3. Discuss, Consider, and Take Action on the Resignation of Classified/Noncertificated Staff
 - IV.A.4. Discuss, Consider, and Take Action on the Resignation of Certificated Staff
 - IV.A.5. Discuss, Consider, and Take Action on the Employment of Certificated/Professional Staff
 - IV.A.6. Discuss, Consider, and Take Action on the Employment of Noncertificated Staff
- V. Reports
 - V.A. Administrative Reports
 - V.B. Superintendent's Report
- VI. Board Policies
- VII. Adjournment

Instructions for those who wish to speak during Public Forum:

Getting Started: When it is your turn to speak during the public forum portion of the agenda, please come forward to the Board Secretary, complete the form provided with your name and any organization represented, as well as your address, and then state your name and any organization represented to the Board of Education.

Time Limit: You may speak only one time and must limit comments to 5 minutes or less.

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 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.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
Holdrege Board of Education
Monday, February 16, 2026, 6:00 p.m.
High School Media Center

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of Holdrege Public Schools was convened in open session on Monday, February 16, 2026, at the High School Media Center at 6:00 p.m.

Notice of Meeting Posted 2/12/26 Holdrege Daily Citizen

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 in advance 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 may be hereinafter noted, were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

The meeting was duly called to order.

Announcement of Open Meetings Act Posting

At the beginning of this meeting, it was announced that a current copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted on the wall of the meeting room and directed the public to its location.

The following board members were present: Teresa Kroll, Alex McClymont, Chris McQuillan, Samantha Minnick, Brian Rust, and Nick Wells. Also present were Todd Hilyard, Superintendent, Sandy Dunaway, Secretary, and Elizabeth Piening, Business Manager.

Ashley Brock reported for HEA.

Hunter Mueller reported for the HHS Student Council.

President Rust recognized visitors and invited comments for the public forum.

Board committee reports were reviewed.

Motion by Minnick, seconded by Wells, to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

- a. Approval of Minutes of January 19, 2026 Regular Meeting
- b. Approve the Warrants/Bills
- c. Approve the Treasurer's Report
- d. Excuse Absent Board Members

On roll call vote: Kroll-yes, McClymont-yes, McQuillan-yes, Minnick-yes, Rust-yes, Wells-yes. Motion carried.

No action was taken on the agenda item for payment of the bill from InSPIRe - Holdrege, LLC.

Motion by McClymont, seconded by McQuillan, to approve the 2026-27 ESU #11 Services Contract, as presented, and to authorize the Superintendent to make minor adjustments as needed. On roll call vote: Kroll-yes, McClymont-yes, McQuillan-yes, Minnick-yes, Rust-yes, Wells-yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Minnick, seconded by McQuillan, to approve the 2026-27 ESU #10 Contract for School Age and Below Age Five Special Education Services and Cooperative Program Agreements covering Special Education Supplemental Supervision, Deaf Education, and Audiology, as presented. On roll call vote: Kroll-yes, McClymont-yes, McQuillan-yes, Minnick-yes, Rust-yes, Wells-yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Rust, seconded by Kroll, to approve an out-of-state travel request for the music department trip to New York City in May 2027, with administrative discretion to prohibit such travel should conditions warrant. On roll call vote: Kroll-yes, McClymont-yes, McQuillan-yes, Minnick-yes, Rust-yes, Wells-yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Minnick, seconded by McQuillan, to approve the 2026-27 Negotiated Agreement, as presented. On roll call vote: Kroll-yes, McClymont-yes, McQuillan-yes, Minnick-yes, Rust-yes, Wells-yes. Motion carried.

Motion by McClymont, seconded by Wells, to approve a three-year contract for Superintendent Todd Hilyard, effective July 1, 2026, as presented. On roll call vote: Kroll-yes, McClymont-yes, McQuillan-yes, Minnick-yes, Rust-yes, Wells-yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Rust, seconded by Minnick, to approve 2026-27 administrative contracts and salaries for Jeremy Ham, Casey Klein, Jacob McLain, Amber Porter, Dylan Sullivan, and Lacie Wright, as presented. On roll call vote: Kroll-yes, McClymont-yes, McQuillan-yes, Minnick-yes, Rust-yes, Wells-yes. Motion carried.

Motion by McQuillan, seconded by Kroll, to accept the resignation of the following certificated staff effective at the end of the 2025-26 contract year: Ashlynn McLain, early childhood education, and Darla Steinbrink, 7th science. On roll call vote: Kroll-yes, McClymont-yes, McQuillan-yes, Minnick-yes, Rust-yes, Wells-yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Minnick, seconded by McQuillan, to rescind the resignation of Paige Dryden, 5th math teacher, and to reinstate her employment as a teacher with Holdrege Public Schools for a projected assignment of 1st grade for 2026-27. On roll call vote: Kroll-yes, McClymont-yes, McQuillan-yes, Minnick-yes, Rust-yes, Wells-yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Kroll, seconded by Rust, to approve the employment of the following certificated/professional staff with projected assignments for the 2026-27 school year: Megan Urbom, 1st grade; Jon Wegner, 5th math; Kara Faber, secondary English language arts; Preston Peterson, secondary social studies; and Stephanie Erickson, school psychologist. On roll call vote: Kroll-yes, McClymont-yes, McQuillan-yes, Minnick-yes, Rust-yes, Wells-yes. Motion carried.

Motion by McClymont, seconded by Minnick, to approve the 2026-27 Classified Staff & Substitute Salary Guideline, as presented. On roll call vote: Kroll-yes, McClymont-yes, McQuillan-yes, Minnick-yes, Rust-yes, Wells-yes. Motion carried.

Motion by McQuillan, seconded by Minnick, to approve 2026-27 Classified/Noncertified and Administrative/Professional Exempt Staff Salaries as presented, with administrative discretion to make adjustments to meet student and program needs. On roll call vote: Kroll-yes, McClymont-yes, McQuillan-yes, Minnick-yes, Rust-yes, Wells-yes. Motion carried.

Administrative reports were reviewed.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

The next regular monthly meeting will be held on Friday, March 20, 2026 at 12:00 p.m. at the HPS Central Office.

Sandy Dunaway

Sandy Dunaway, Secretary
Holdrege Board of Education

Holdrege High School

Board Report

March 20, 2026

Jeremy Ham, Principal

1. **HHS Staffing:** Currently we are searching for a Special Education teacher, otherwise all staff positions for the 26-27 school year are filled at HHS, pending board approval of our most recent hire in Math.
2. **ACT Testing, Government Field Trip:** April 8th will be a big day at HHS. Freshmen and Sophomore students will be taking the Pre ACT test, the Junior class will take the ACT, and the Senior class will attend the government field trip to the state capitol in Lincoln. We facilitate these activities at the same time in effort to significantly reduce the classroom disruptions caused by each of these activities happening on different days in the spring semester. The staff have all been trained to be ACT proctors, Mrs. Wright and Mrs. Mach have coordinated all of the necessary accommodations to meet our students' needs. Students may be released early after testing is complete, this will be communicated early to parents through Infinite Campus.

Last year this date was earlier in March. The teaching staff requested we move this date later in the state allowed window for ACT testing. The later date allows for more teaching and learning in core areas to better prepare for this important test.

3. **Prom:** Prom planning is in full swing, the event takes place on Saturday, April 18th and the theme is "Great Gatsby." Last year we planned an alternate walk-up option to be used in the case of inclement weather. We are prepared again this year to have students enter through the north west math hallway entrance to check in, then the walk-up could take place in the main hallway to the commons area. This will only be used as a back-up if needed for rainy weather. With nice weather, we plan to continue the practice of attendees driving south to the gym doors for check-in, then driving up to the north High School entrance for walk-up on the wide sidewalk.
4. **2026-2027 Scheduling Update:** All 8th through 11th grade student course requests are completed. Work is underway to establish the master schedule for next year based off of the course numbers. Mrs. Mach and Mrs. Nelson did an excellent job of planning ahead and navigating this process efficiently. Student schedules will be worked through the month of April, and will be complete well ahead of the last day of school.
5. **Graduation:** Graduation is Sunday, May 17th at HHS, we are planning on 73 graduates. We have populated a list of seven senior students currently at risk of falling short on graduation requirements. All seven of these students should be in good shape, their teachers are keeping a close eye on progress in the 4th quarter.

Holdrege Public Schools
Special Education & Early Childhood Report

Director: Casey Klein

March 16, 2026

	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Birth-3 years	7	7	7	7	8	9	9	9
3-5 years with IEP attending NON -HPS Preschool	10	10	7	6	7	8	8	8
3-5 years with IEP attending HPS preschool	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7
Holdrege Elementary	91	89	85	85	88	88	92	92
Holdrege Middle School	72	71	69	70	71	66	66	65
Holdrege High School	48	47	47	46	44	41	42	42
Special Services Students	234	230	221	220	225	219	224	223
<i>3-5 without IEP Attending HPS Preschoolers</i>	24	25	23	24	25	25	25	25

NDE Focused Monitoring - On Monday, March 16 the following team members Mrs. Klein, Mrs. Larson, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Dobish, Mrs. West, and Mrs. Gibreal met with the NDE Lead for Focused Monitoring Clarification. The Letter of Findings will come out on April 10th.

NSCAS - For the Spring 2026, here are some details based on the latest Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) guidelines that further clarify your categories:

1. Presentation (How the test is delivered)

Beyond digital text and Braille, the NSCAS platform includes Embedded Universal Tools available to *all* students, which should be distinguished from specific accommodations:

- Text-to-Speech (TTS): On NSCAS, TTS for Math and Science is often a universal tool, but for Reading/ELA, it is strictly an accommodation that must be documented in an IEP or 504 plan because it changes what the test is measuring (decoding vs. comprehension).
- Visual Aids: High-contrast themes and magnification (zoom) are built into the testing interface.
- Spanish Side-by-Side: For English Learners with disabilities, a side-by-side English/Spanish presentation is a common linguistic support for Math and Science.

2. Response (How the student answers)

Nebraska has specific rules regarding "non-embedded" resources:

- Calculators: While there is an embedded calculator for specific grade-level math items, the use of a handheld calculator as an accommodation is generally restricted to students with a documented disability that severely limits their ability to calculate.

- Scribes: If a student uses a human scribe, the scribe must record the student's responses verbatim, including spelling and punctuation, unless a specific "no-scoring-for-mechanics" accommodation is active.
- Speech-to-Text: For 2026, students using speech-to-text software often require a second device or a specific web extension (like Co:Writer), as this is not always natively built into the lockdown browser.

3. Setting, Timing, and Scheduling

One of the most important things to remember for NSCAS 2026 is that the assessment is untimed for all students.

- Extended Time: Because the test is inherently untimed, "extended time" is often implemented as "completing the test over multiple sessions" or "additional days," rather than just extra minutes in one sitting.
- Medical Devices: NDE 2026 guidelines explicitly allow students to have medical devices (like glucose monitors on a cell phone) present, provided the device is restricted to that single use to maintain test security.

Comparison of Accessibility Tiers

It is helpful to view these supports in three distinct tiers as defined by the NDE:

Tier	Who is it for?	Documentation Required?
Universal Tools	All Students (e.g., Highlighter, Zoom, Eraser)	No
Linguistic Supports	English Learners (ELs)	Yes (EL Plan)
Accommodations	Students with Disabilities	Yes (IEP or 504 Plan)

Targeted Improvement Plan Update - The Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP) is due on May 1st. The team recently attended a workshop at ESU 11 to learn about the new platform and reporting process. We are currently in the process of gathering data and summarizing the information needed for the final report.

Preschool Hire for 2026-2027 (Pending board approval) Hanna Swearingen - Currently, Hanna is a teacher candidate (student teaching) with Mrs. Taylor 4th grade and then with Mrs. DeWald, Special Education. She will graduate in May 2026.

Progress Reports will be going home Friday, March 20th.

Elementary Board Report

Amber Porter

March 20, 2026

Parent/Teacher conferences were held February 11 and 12 at the Holdrege Elementary School. We had a 95% attendance rate for families due to the weather. Several families made their conferences up later.

The 1st and 2nd grade music program will take place on April 16 at 7:00 at the Tassel.

NSCAS Reading and Math Assessments—Third and Fourth grade students will be taking the NSCAS Reading Assessment (April 21) and Math Assessments (April 22). We have been preparing students for these assessments throughout the year. The NSCAS Assessments are very similar to NWEA MAP Assessments. The NWEA MAP Assessments will be April 8 and 9. The same company creates both assessments. We will take Dibels as well later this spring. There is continual change with state assessments as Nebraska just adopted a new set of options for state assessments We will continue to also use MAP assessments for K-4 assessments. We are blessed to have been using DIBELS all of these years because the state of Nebraska has adopted this to be the statewide reading assessment screener.

We had a family reading night on February 26. We had approximately 75 people attend. Students enjoyed a reading walk and STEM activities connected to the book. Mrs. Nancy Nelson always organizes great family events. She will be missed in her Title I role as she is retiring.

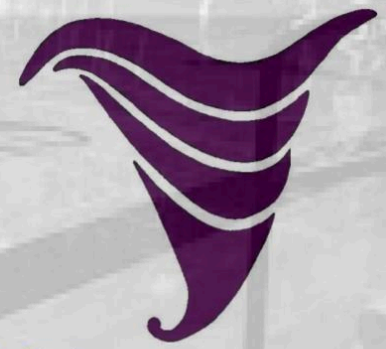
We celebrated Read Across America in March with many special events. We had a Fairy Tale theme and had many decorations throughout the building. We had a door decorating contest as well that students were able to vote. Students and staff enjoyed the week and the focus on reading.

On April 23, we will be having an Open House for families of incoming Kindergarteners. This will be an evening event and students and parents will be able to attend together. We are excited to meet our incoming students.

Certified staffing for 2026-2027 is currently complete. We are seeking paraeducators for the fall.



Holdrege Activities Department



Dylan Sullivan
Activities Director
(402)643-0423

Kelli Hale
Activities Assistant
(308)995-6558

Holdrege Public Schools – Activities Board Report March 2026

NSAA Winter Academic All-State: 3.70 GPA or above

Boys Basketball: Brycen Samuelson & Barrett Schroeder

Girls Basketball: Jaclyn Nelson & Addyson Stutzman

Speech: No report from speech coach yet

Wrestling:

Speech

- Holdrege High School hosted the Southwest Conference Speech Meet on March 10th.
- Districts were held on March 16th in Aurora, Holdrege ended up finishing runner-up.
- The state speech will take place at Kearney High School on March 27th.

Spring Sports:

Started practices on Monday, March 2nd with the first contests scheduled to start on Thursday, March 19th with soccer hosting Columbus Lakeview and track at UNK indoor on March 20th.

Spring Sports Pictures button pictures are going to be held on Tuesday, March 17th. Thank you to the booster club for all of their help with organizing this.

Below are the spring participation numbers.

This year number	2026	2025 #'s	2024 #'s	2023 #'s	2022 #'s	2021 #'s
• Boys Golf –	12	13	14	10	15	14
• Girls Tennis –	28	23	18	21	12	8
• Boys Soccer –	22	22	28	25	20	20
• Girls Soccer –	20	17	18	26	16	21
• Baseball –	18	19				
• Track						
Boys Track –	35	28	34	28	34	34
Girls Track –	36	29	26	24	17	22

- o Middle School- TBD (today is their meeting)

Holdrege has 125 boys 9-12

87 (62 last year) boys participating this spring {69%} (Last Year 49%)

Holdrege has 122 girls 9-12

84 (69 last year) girls participating this spring {68%} (Last Year 53%)

Spring Participation: This is the highest spring participation number that I have seen since I have been working at Holdrege. At the same time, this is also the highest rate of students eligible to participate in activities with passing grades/tardies/absences, primarily due to the high standard Mr. Ham has set and holding students accountable.

Soccer Officials Change: Due to the extremely low number of officials for soccer in the surrounding Holdrege area, I decided to book an assigner for soccer this year. The positive is that he was able to book all of the games for me very quickly. The negative is that most of them will travel from Lincoln and it will be significantly higher rates as we will also be paying mileage fees on top of an increased officials fee as well. Michael Barton books games for most of Lincoln and school all along the interstate all the way out to Holdrege.

Track Upgrade: We have finished a new discus ring on the Southwest corner of the throwing area on the Northwest property by the soccer fields. This will give us the ability to throw from all 4 corners for a track meet depending on wind direction. We will look to update 1 ring per year, as the others are starting to show their age. After we finish the remaining 3 rings, I think we will have one of the nicer, more updated track facilities around. I would like to put in to host the district track meet in another year or two.



NSAA Classification #'s by Sport/Activity & Class



Fall Sports

Cross Country (2024)
 Football (2024 & 2025)***
 Girls Golf (2024)
 Softball (2024)
 Boys Tennis (2024)
 Unified Sports, Bowling (2024)
 Volleyball (2024)

Teams in					
Class A	Class B	Class C/C1	Class C2	Class D/D1	Class D2
33	32	60*	-	122**	-
32	25	35	36	52	53
33	32	81*	-	-	-
32	39	43*	-	-	-
31	31	-	-	-	-
32	55	-	-	-	-
32	33	55	55	55	55

Winter Sports

Boys Basketball (2024-25)
 Girls Basketball (2024-25)
 Boys Bowling (2024-25)
 Girls Bowling (2024-25)
 Swimming/Diving
 Boys Wrestling (2024-25)
 Girls Wrestling (2024-25)

Teams in					
Class A	Class B	Class C/C1	Class C2	Class D/D1	Class D2
32	34	53	55	55	55
31	34	54	55	55	55
30	33	-	-	-	-
30	32	-	-	-	-
<i>One Class</i>					
32	48	64*	-	98**	-
56	65				

Spring Sports

Baseball (2025)
 Boys Golf (2025)
 Boys Soccer (2025)
 Girls Soccer (2025)
 Girls Tennis (2025)
 Boys Track & Field (2025)
 Girls Track & Field (2025)
 Unified Sports, Track & Field

Teams in					
Class A	Class B	Class C/C1	Class C2	Class D/D1	Class D2
32	25	25*	-	-	-
32	48	48*	-	79**	-
32	39	-	-	-	-
32	42	-	-	-	-
32	41	-	-	-	-
32	60	88*	-	104**	-
32	60	88*	-	104**	-
<i>One Class</i>					

Activities

Journalism (2025)
 Music (2024-25)
 Play Production (2024)
 Speech (2024-25)
 Debate

Teams in					
Class A	Class B	Class C/C1	Class C2	Class D/D1	Class D2
27	43	53	-	-	-
AA - 42, A - 16	43	74*	-	117**	-
25	49	49	42	47	45
34	46	53	51	53	51
<i>No Classifications</i>					

*Class C

** Class D

***Class D6 (six-man football) - 32

Board Report
Holdrege Middle School
Lacie Wright-Principal & Jacob McLain-Assistant Principal/AD
March 20, 2026

I hope you all had a wonderful spring break! It was a great opportunity to rest, relax, and reset as we head into the final stretch of the school year. Here are some key updates from our middle school:

March has been a busy and exciting month at HMS, with a lot of student involvement and progress both inside and outside the classroom. Here are some key updates:

- **Track Participation:**

We currently have 90 student-athletes out for track, with a few still deciding if it's the right fit for them. It's great to see such strong participation as we head into the spring season.

- **JAG Program:**

Our JAG students recently returned from a successful trip to the Career Development Conference in Omaha, where our qualifying students represented us well. They will also be participating in Legislative Day next week, continuing to gain valuable real-world experiences through this program.

- **POPP Project Success:**

Our People of the Past and Present (POPP) event was a success, raising \$1,031.55! The goal this year was to purchase a Gaga ball pit for recess. Thanks to a very generous \$3,000 donation from the Optimist Club, the Gaga ball pit has been ordered and should arrive within the week.

- Concrete was poured over spring break as an additional cost to prepare the space.
- Our 8th graders are especially excited to see this project come to fruition before they move on to high school.

- **Curriculum & School Improvement:**

From the curriculum side, perceptual surveys have been sent out to stakeholders. I look forward to reviewing and analyzing the results as we continue to look for ways to improve our school and move forward with our continuous improvement cycle.

- **Student Expectations & Growth:**

As a middle school team, we are being very intentional about reinforcing that students are respectful, safe, and responsible as they grow each year. We are focusing on teaching these expectations and using restorative practices and conversations when they are not met. Our goal is continuous improvement—getting better each week. Here is the data that Mr. McLain has been tracking since starting some referral challenges and incentives

5th Grade									
Challenge #		1	2	3	4				Total
# of school days		5	9	9	10				33
Referrals		5	5	8	9				27
APD by week		1	0.6	0.9	0.9				
Ave per day	0.8			0.8					
Improvement					0.1				

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6th Grade									
Challenge #		1	2	3	4				
# of school days		5	9	9	10				33
Referrals		4	30	23	26				83
APD by week		0.8	3.3	2.6	2.6				
Ave per day	2.5			2.5					
Improvement					0.1				

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7th Grade									
Challenge #		1	2	3	4				
# of school days		5	9	9	10				33
Referrals		21	31	37	26				115
APD by week		4.2	3.4	4.1	2.6				
Ave per day	3.48			3.87					
Improvement					-1.2				

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8th Grade									
Challenge #		1	2	3	4				
# of school days		5	9	9	10				33
Referrals		4	19	11	12				46
APD by week		0.8	2.1	1.2	1.2				
Ave per day	1.39			1.48					
Improvement					-0.3				

- **Staffing Update:**

Pending board approval, the only remaining opening at the middle school is in the music department. We are actively moving forward, with interviews being lined up today.

Thank you for your continued support of our students, staff, and programs. We are proud of the opportunities our students are experiencing and the growth we are seeing across the building.

- Upcoming Events:
 - Band & Choir Concerts – Coming up in April, always a highlight of the spring semester!
 - State Assessments – Testing season is upon us, where students will demonstrate their growth and compare their progress to peers across the state.

Superintendent's Report
3/20/2026

- 1) New Expeditions - Our three new Ford Expedition Max's should be arriving any day now. As I am sure that you remember, we will need to trade those out for the three Ford Transit vans that we currently use for student transportation.
- 2) Handbook Updates - The administrative team has been discussing handbook changes for next year throughout this school year in order to try and stay ahead of the game. Those will get polished up this summer and you'll likely be asked to approve them in July.
- 3) Preopening Schedule - We've had a good working draft of the preopening schedule for staff completed for many months. That will also be finalized this summer and sent to staff. These days will be August 10, 11, and 12.
- 4) Certified Staff Openings - As of the typing of this report we have two certificated openings yet to be filled. Those positions are secondary special education and 5th-8th vocal & instrumental music. So far this year we have hired 11 new teachers for next year.
- 5) Master Teacher Award - Nominations for this award are due by March 31st. We like these nominations to be from community members if at all possible.