

**Regular Board Meeting**  
**August 14, 2024, at 7:45 PM**  
**Southern School District**

Notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Board of Education, Southern School District #1 on August 14, 2024, at 7:45 PM at Southern Jr./Sr. High School Board Room in Wymore. A current agenda is also available at the office of the Superintendent.

I hereby certify that the above notice was posted in three public places as follows:

Southern Elementary School

Southern Jr./Sr. High School

U.S. Post Office in Wymore

- I. Call Meeting to Order
  - I.A. Roll Call
  - I.B. Notice of Nebraska Open Meetings Act Posted
- II. Approval of Minutes from the July 8, 2024, Regular Board Meeting
- III. Communications, Audiences, and Recognitions
  - III.A. Public comments will not be received after this period of time. Public comment period is limited to 5 minutes per person and a total of 30 minutes overall.
- IV. Financial Statement: Items for Discussion, Consideration, and/or Action
  - IV.A. Approval of Bills
    - IV.A.1. General Fund, Special Building Fund, Depreciation Fund, and Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund Claims
    - IV.A.2. Lunch & Activity Claims

- V. Support Service
  - V.A. Facility Update
  - V.B. Personnel Items
  - V.C. Technology Update
- VI. Administrative and Committee Reports
  - VI.A. Student Board Member Report
  - VI.B. Elementary Principal's Report
  - VI.C. Secondary Principal's Report
  - VI.D. Superintendent's Report
- VII. Items for Discussion, Consideration, and/or Action
  - VII.A. Approve \$12,000 to Gage County to Cover a Portion (17%) of the School Resource Deputy (SRD) Position for the 2024-2025 School Year
  - VII.B. Discuss, Consider, and Take all Necessary Action to Adopt a Resolution Increasing the School District's Base Growth Percentage used to Determine the School District Property Tax Request by up to 7%
  - VII.C. Set the Budget Hearing for September 9, 2024, at 7:15 p.m. in the Boardroom in Wymore, NE
  - VII.D. Option Enrollment Applications
- VIII. Adjournment

# NEBRASKA OPEN MEETINGS ACT

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

**84-1408. Declaration of intent; meetings open to public.** It is hereby declared to be the policy of this state that the formation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret.

Every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public in order that citizens may exercise their democratic privilege of attending and speaking at meetings of public bodies, except as otherwise provided by the Constitution of Nebraska, federal statutes, and the Open Meetings Act.

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

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

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

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

(3) Virtual conferencing means conducting or participating in a meeting electronically or telephonically with interaction among the participants subject to subsection (2) of section 84-1412.

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

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

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

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

(c) Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**84-1411. Meetings of public body; notice; method; contents; when available; right to modify; duties concerning notice; virtual conferencing authorized; requirements; emergency meeting without notice; appearance before public body.**

(1) Until January 1, 2025:

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

(b)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (1)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in

subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's website.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village or such body's advisory committee or the governing body of a rural or suburban fire protection district, such notice shall be published by:

(A) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's website; or

(B) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city, village, or district. Such notice shall be posted in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (1) (b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(iv) In case of refusal, neglect, or inability of the newspaper to timely publish the notice, the public body shall (A) post such notice on its website, if available, and (B) post such notice in a conspicuous public place in such public body's jurisdiction. The public body shall keep a written record of such posting. The record of such posting shall be evidence that such posting was done as required and shall be sufficient to fulfill the requirement of publication.

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

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

(e) Such notice shall contain an agenda of subjects known at the time of the publicized notice or a statement that the agenda, which shall be kept continually current, shall be readily available for public inspection at the principal office of the public body during normal business hours. Agenda items shall be sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the meeting. Except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda shall not be altered later than (i) twenty-four hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting or (ii) forty-eight hours before the scheduled commencement of a meeting of a city council or village board scheduled outside the corporate limits of the municipality. The public body shall have the right to modify the agenda to include items of an emergency nature only at such public meeting.

(2) Beginning January 1, 2025:

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

(b)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (2)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committees, such notice shall be given by:

(A)(I) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction that is finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting, (II) posting on such newspaper's website, if available, and (III) posting on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper; or

(B)(I) Posting to the newspaper's website, if available, and (II) posting to a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers if no edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction is to be finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village, any advisory committee of such governing body, or the governing body of a rural or suburban fire protection district, such notice shall be given by:

(A)(I) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction that is finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting, (II) posting on such newspaper's website, if available, and (III) posting on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper;

(B)(I) Posting to the newspaper's website, if available, and (II) posting on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers if no edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction is to be finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper; or

(C)(III) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city, village, or district. Such notice shall be posted by the public body in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (2) (b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(iv) In case of refusal, neglect, or inability of the newspaper to publish the notice, the public body shall (A) post such notice on its website, if available, (B) submit a post on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers, and (C) post such notice in a conspicuous public place in such public body's jurisdiction. The public body shall keep a written record of such posting. The record of such posting shall be evidence that such posting was done as required and shall be sufficient to fulfill the requirement of publication.

(3)(a) The following entities may hold a meeting by means of virtual conferencing if the requirements of subdivision (3)(b) of this section are met:

(i) A state agency, state board, state commission, state council, or state committee, or an advisory committee of any such state entity;

(ii) An organization, including the governing body, created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, the Joint Public Agency Act, or the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act;

(iii) The governing body of a public power district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(iv) The governing body of a public power and irrigation district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(v) An educational service unit;

(vi) The Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council;

(vii) An organization, including the governing body, of a risk management pool or its advisory committees organized in accordance with the Intergovernmental Risk Management Act;

(viii) A community college board of governors;

(ix) The Nebraska Brand Committee;

(x) A local public health department;

(xi) A metropolitan utilities district;

(xii) A regional metropolitan transit authority; and

(xiii) A natural resources district.

(b) The requirements for holding a meeting by means of virtual conferencing are as follows:

(i) Reasonable advance publicized notice is given as provided in subsections (1) and (2) of this section, including providing access to a dial-in number or link to the virtual conference;

(ii) In addition to the public's right to participate by virtual conferencing, reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend at a physical site and participate as provided in section 84-1412, including reasonable seating, in at least one designated site in a building open to the public and identified in the notice, with: At least one member of the entity holding such meeting, or his or her designee, present at each site; a recording of the hearing by audio or visual recording devices; and a reasonable opportunity for input, such as public comment or questions, is provided to at least the same extent as would be provided if virtual conferencing was not used;

(iii) At least one copy of all documents being considered at the meeting is available at any physical site open to the public where individuals may attend the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act; and

(iv) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision or subsection (4) of section 79-2204, no more than one-half of the meetings of the state entities, advisory committees, boards, councils, organizations, or governing bodies are held by virtual conferencing in a calendar year. In the case of (a) an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas, (b) an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, (C) a governing body of a risk management pool and any advisory committee of such governing body, or (D) any advisory committee of any state entity created in response to the Opioid Prevention and Treatment Act, such organization, governing body, or committee may hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if such organization holds at least one meeting each calendar year that is not by virtual conferencing.

(4) Virtual conferencing, emails, faxes, or other electronic communication shall not be used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act.

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

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

(7) A public body may allow a member of the public or any other witness to appear before the public body by means of virtual conferencing.

(8)(a) Notwithstanding subsections (3) and (6) of this section, if an emergency is declared by the Governor pursuant to the Emergency Management Act as defined in section 81-829.39, a public body the territorial jurisdiction of which is included in the emergency declaration, in whole or in part, may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing during such emergency if the public body gives reasonable advance publicized notice as described in subsections (1) and (2) of this section. The notice shall include information regarding access for the public and news media. In addition to any formal action taken pertaining to the emergency, the public body may hold such meeting for the purpose of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action by the public body.

(b) The public body shall provide access by providing a dial-in number or a link to the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act. Reasonable arrangements shall be made to accommodate the public's right to hear and speak at the meeting and record the meeting. Subsection (5) of this section shall be complied with in conducting such meetings.

(c) The nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes. Complete minutes of such meeting specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of section 84-1413.

(9) In addition to any other statutory authorization for virtual conferencing, any public body not listed in subdivision (3)(a) of this section may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing if:

(a) The purpose of the virtual meeting is to discuss items that are scheduled to be discussed or acted upon at a subsequent non-virtual open meeting of the public body;

(b) No action is taken by the public body at the virtual meeting; and

(c) The public body complies with subdivisions (3)(b)(i) and (ii) of this section.

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

(1) Subject to the Open Meetings Act, the public has the right to attend and the right to speak at meetings of public bodies, and all or any part of a meeting of a public body, except for closed sessions called pursuant to section 84-1410, may be videotaped, televised, photographed, broadcast, or recorded by any person in attendance by means of a tape recorder, a camera, video equipment, or any other means of pictorial or sonic reproduction or in writing. Except for closed sessions called pursuant to section 84-1410, a public body shall allow members of the public an opportunity to speak at each meeting.

(2) It shall not be a violation of subsection (1) of this section for any public body to make and enforce reasonable rules and regulations regarding the conduct of persons attending, speaking at, videotaping, televising, photographing, broadcasting, or recording its meetings, including meetings held by virtual conferencing.

(3) No public body shall require members of the public to identify themselves as a condition for admission to the meeting nor shall such body require that the name of any member of the public be placed on the agenda prior to such meeting in order to speak about items on the agenda. The body shall require any member of the public desiring to address the body to identify himself or herself, including an address and the name of any organization represented by such person unless the address requirement is waived to protect the security of the individual.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(8) Public bodies shall make available at the meeting or the in-state location for virtual conferencing as required by subdivision (6)(c) of this section, for examination and copying by members of the public, at least one copy of all reproducible written material to be discussed at an open meeting, either in paper or electronic form. Public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room at a location accessible to members of the public. At the beginning of the meeting, the public shall be informed about the location of the posted information.

#### **84-1413. Meetings; minutes; roll call vote; secret ballot; when; agenda and minutes; required on website; when.**

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

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

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

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

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

(6) Beginning July 31, 2022, the governing body of a natural resources district, the city council of a city of the metropolitan class, the city council of a city of the primary class, the city council of a city of the first class, the county board of a county with a population greater than twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and the school board of a school district shall make available on such entity's public website the agenda and minutes of any meeting of the governing body. The agenda shall be placed on the website at least twenty-four hours before the meeting of the governing body. Minutes shall be placed on the website at such time as the minutes are available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of this section. This information shall be available on the public website for at least six months.

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

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

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

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

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

Revised 07/2024

MINUTES  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
July 8, 2024  
7:30 PM

I. Call Meeting to Order

President Dave Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and the following members were present: Betsy Frerichs, Dana Dorn, Dave Zimmerman, Debra Schlake, Jared McKeever, & Jeff Argo. The following administrator was present: Christopher Proski.

Reasonable advance publicized notice of the meeting was given according to law by publishing, a designated method for giving notice of the school district. Posted Location:

- Fairbury Journal-News

Posted Date: 7/3/2024

Reasonable advance notice was simultaneously given to board members and a copy of their acknowledgment of receipt of notice and the agenda attached. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

I.A. Roll Call

I.B. Notice of Nebraska Open Meetings Act Posted

President Dave Zimmerman announced that a complete copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was posted on the back of the board of education meeting room.

II. Approval of Minutes from the June 10, 2024, Regular Board Meeting, Student Fees Hearing, & Parental Involvement Hearing

Motion to approve minutes from the June 10, 2024, Regular Board Meeting, Student Fees Hearing, & Parental Involvement Hearing. This motion, made by Jared McKeever and seconded by Dana Dorn, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

III. Communications, Audiences, and Recognitions

III.A. Public comments will not be received after this period of time. Public comment period is limited to 5 minutes per person and a total of 30 minutes overall.

IV. Financial Statement: Items for Discussion, Consideration, and/or Action

IV.A. Approval of Bills

IV.A.1. General Fund, Special Building Fund, Depreciation Fund, and Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund Claims

Motion to approve the general fund, special building fund, depreciation fund, and qualified capitol purpose undertaking fund claims. This motion, made by Debra Schlake and seconded by Jeff Argo, passed.

yes: 6, no: 0

#### IV.A.2. Lunch & Activity Claims

#### V. Support Service

##### V.A. Facility Update

John Eisenhower provided the school board with a written report on installing new stair treads at the Jr./Sr. High School as per our insurance company requirements, painting the stair hand banisters, painting the van garage and football storage shed, replacing floor tiles at the 3-year-old preschool, needing to replace a compressor on the north AC unit at the elementary school, and working on AC at the Jr./Sr. High School.

##### V.B. Personnel Items

Dr. Prososki noted that Zachary Schuerman was just hired as the new assistant wrestling coach.

##### V.C. Technology Update

#### VI. Administrative and Committee Reports

##### VI.A. Student Board Member Report

##### VI.B. Elementary Principal's Report

##### VI.C. Secondary Principal's Report

##### VI.D. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Prososki went over the adjusted taxable valuation, and he noted that the free market is a huge driving force in terms of valuations going up. He noted that residential real property has gone up the most during the past five years and agricultural land has gone down over the past five years in our district. Next, Dr. Prososki said that the administration will be attending Administrators' Days at the end of July. He then went over the upcoming annual safety and security meeting, he gave the school board an update on the budget, and he said that the district has been classified as accredited for the upcoming school year by the Nebraska State Board of Education. Dr. Prososki gave the school board an update on the federal Fair Labor Standard Act overtime rules. Next, Dr. Prososki said that the House of Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and Human Services, Education released their Fiscal Year 25 proposal, which represents a 14% cut to the Department of Education or a 4.7 billion dollar cut to Title I funding. Dr. Prososki said that every year the feds require schools to do more and more, but with less and less funding each year (e.g., New Title IX Regulations, Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, Uniform Grant Requirements, USDA Regulations, & Fair Labor Standards Act Requirements). Next, Dr. Prososki went over an option enrollment presentation from KSB School Law. He said that he recently completed a SPED

grant, and the district will receive around \$127,027 for this grant. Dr. Prososki noted that the summer months are one of the busiest times of the year for superintendents, and he shared his superintendent checklist, which outlined all of the federal and state reports or data collections that have to be completed, in addition to everything else like the budget, handbooks, and policies updates. Lastly, Diller-Odell, Freeman, and Southern met with the Gage County Sheriff's Office, and they were wondering if each school district could pay \$12,000 towards the new school resource deputy program for the upcoming school year that started in January. Dr. Prososki thought this was a reasonable amount, and he noted that the safety and security of all of the students and staff members is his number one priority and responsibility of the superintendent.

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

### VII.A. Set Substitute Compensation for the 2024-2025 School Year

Motion to set Substitute Compensation at \$160 for the 2024-2025 School Year. This motion, made by Jeff Argo and seconded by Dana Dorn, passed.  
yes: 6, no: 0

### VII.B. Approval of the District Handbooks for the 2024-2025 School Year

Motion to approve the district handbooks for the 2024-2025 school year. This motion, made by Dana Dorn and seconded by Betsy Frerichs, passed.  
yes: 6, no: 0

### VII.C. Approve the Track Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with the City of Wymore

Motion to amend the agreement under Section 2 Terms, and the term shall be for one year starting on April 1, 2024, and ending on March 31, 2025. This motion, made by Jared McKeever and seconded by Debra Schlake, passed.  
yes: 6, no: 0

Motion to approve the Track Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with the City of Wymore with the amended changes. This motion, made by Jared McKeever and seconded by Dana Dorn, passed.  
yes: 6, no: 0

### VII.D. Option Enrollment Applications

## VIII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 p.m. This motion, made by Jeff Argo and seconded by Debra Schlake, passed.  
yes: 6, no: 0

The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for 7:30 p.m., August 14, 2024, at Southern Jr./Sr. High School Boardroom in Wymore. The Board of Education will usually adhere to the

sequence of the published agenda, but reserves the right to adjust the order of items if necessary and may elect to amend the agenda as deemed necessary.

BY  
President of the Board of Education  
Of this School District

ATTEST  
Secretary of the Board of Education  
of this School District

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

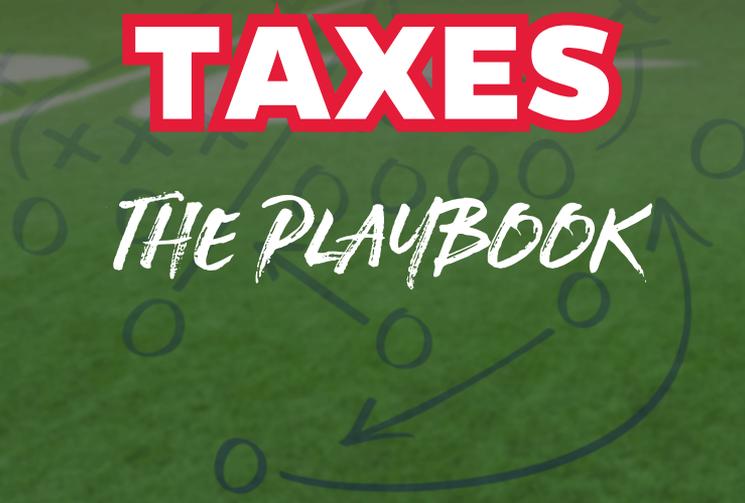
INSTRUCTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO WISH TO SPEAK:  
This is the portion of the meeting when members of the public may speak to the board about matters of public concern.

- **Getting Started:** When you have been recognized, please identify yourself, including an address and the name of any organization you represent. The board may waive the address requirement to protect the security of the individual.
- **Time Limit:** The board will generally allow a total of 30 minutes for the presentation of all public comments. Individuals may speak only one time, and must limit comments to around 5 minutes. If there are more than 6 individuals who wish to address the board, the 30 minutes will be divided equally between the number of speakers. These time limits may be changed by a majority vote of the board members in attendance to extend the time for a specific item or speaker.
- **Personnel or Student Topic:** If you are planning to speak about a personnel or a student matter involving an individual, please understand that the district has a complaint policy and/or procedures to resolve such complaints and concerns. The Board requests that you follow the policy and procedures before addressing these matters with the Board. Board members will generally not respond to any questions you ask or comments about individual staff members or students.
- **General Rules:** This is a public meeting for the conduct of business. Comments from the audience while others are speaking will not be tolerated. Lewd, obscene, profane, slanderous, threatening and hostile conduct or statements and fighting words (words whose mere utterance entails a call to violence) will not be tolerated.
- **No Action by the Board:** The board will not act on any matter unless it is on the published agenda.



# **THE NEBRASKA PLAN TO CUT PROPERTY TAXES**

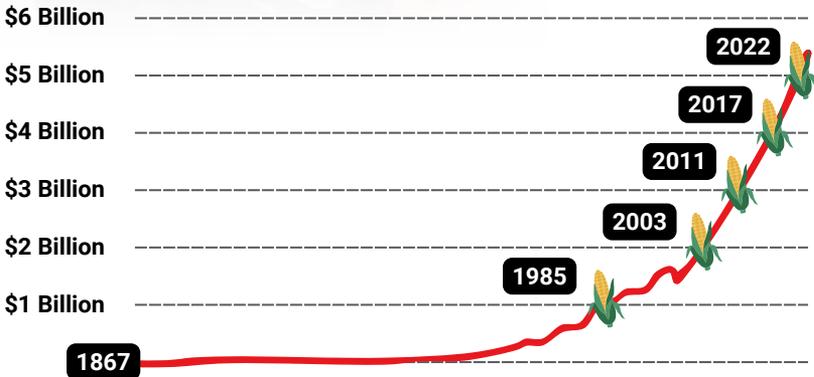
*THE PLAYBOOK*





**NEBRASKA FAMILIES**  
**have been hurting for**  
**GENERATIONS as**  
**property tax collections**  
**by local governments**  
**spiral out of control.**  
**THE PROBLEM IS**  
**ACCELERATING.**

**HISTORICAL TOTAL LOCAL PROPERTY TAXES COLLECTED**



It took the first 118 years of statehood for Nebraska to reach the first \$1 billion in total local property taxes collected, the next 18 years to reach the \$2 billion mark, eight years to reach \$3 billion, six years to reach \$4 billion, and only the next five years to hit the \$5 billion threshold.

**THIS CRISIS IS ON TRACK TO HIT THE GRIM MILESTONE OF LOCAL PROPERTY TAXES GROWING AT A TOTAL OF**

***\$1 MILLION A DAY***

**FOR A TOTAL OF \$6 BILLION ANNUALLY, BY 2026.**

**INCREASE IN PROPERTY TAXES OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS**

Year	Total Taxes	% Change
2013	\$3,400,720,239	
2014	\$3,565,078,704	4.83%
2015	\$3,781,433,467	6.07%
2016	\$3,904,884,977	3.26%
2017	\$4,054,737,530	3.84%
2018	\$4,179,992,372	3.09%
2019	\$4,378,148,328	4.74%
2020	\$4,541,712,238	3.74%
2021	\$4,728,843,465	4.12%
2022	\$5,021,777,070	6.19%
2023	\$5,307,865,388	5.70%

From 2013 to 2023, property tax collections grew by nearly \$2 billion, a percentage increase of 56.08%.

This is unfair to Nebraska homeowners and renters.

You do not even need to own property to feel the negative impact of these increases.

The magnitude of this problem is such that there is no easy, silver bullet solution. We need to comprehensively and systematically fix this broken system.



**HOME OWNERSHIP** is a major engine for the creation of individual and family wealth. For many, it represents the **AMERICAN DREAM**. This dream is becoming unattainable for many with soaring property taxes and home insurance costs.

As valuations increase, money should be returned to the taxpayers by lowering the levy proportionately to reduce paying more in taxes rather than be a windfall for the local government. Homeowners should be the winners from greater home values, **NOT** the government. Every local government has overridden the statutes 100% of the time.

## **EXCESSIVE SPENDING**

by local governments

is the **ROOT CAUSE**  
of the problem, rather than

## **PROPERTY VALUATIONS**

## **SPECIAL INTEREST TAX BREAKS**

Nebraska's tax code is in desperate need of reform. Government at all levels in Nebraska collect revenue from three main sources of taxation: **PROPERTY, INCOME, and SALES TAXES**. Our sales tax code in particular has been a frequent target of special interest groups and lobbyists seeking exemptions and loopholes for **SPECIFIC INDUSTRIES**.

Our state currently exempts nearly \$7 billion from sales tax collections. Some of these exemptions make sense, like exemptions for food and medicine. But many of the others are only on the books due to a paid lobbyist who got the exemption passed when Nebraska had the money.

## **SALES TAX = YOU'RE IN CONTROL**

You get to choose **WHAT** you purchase,  
**WHEN** you purchase it, and **AT WHAT PRICE** you're willing to pay!

**NEBRASKANS** are not the only ones who pay into our sales tax system. Out-of-state travelers and visitors to Husker events, the College World Series, Henry Doorly Zoo, Sandhill Crane migration and more – they also make purchases that generate sales tax revenue.



## NEBRASKA'S PLAN

for property tax reform has been generated based on **STATEWIDE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT** to gather ideas for solving the property tax issue.

26 TOWNHALLS ACROSS

# NEBRASKA

IN 56 DAYS!



“ Our retirement funds will NOT cover the property taxes. ”

— “

As Nebraska homeowners since 1977 and retirees, we built our home four years ago in good faith that we would be able to remain living here in our final years. However, if our current tax levies remain in place, we will see another increase of 25 percent making our real estate taxes over \$15,000 per year. As retirees, we will find ourselves priced out of our homes with pending increases in our property insurance, Medicare, Supplemental and Part D premiums, personal property taxes, income taxes and of course IRS payments! We are fortunate that my husband retired after teaching 35 years in Papillion; however, because we paid into a pension, we are now penalized as we do not qualify for the Homestead Exemption.

” —



“ This tax situation is really a serious thing especially for the very small rancher. We are being taxed to the point where we are not going to be able to stay on our ranch any longer. ”



“ Just because we keep our house in decent shape doesn't mean that our pockets are filled with gold coins. ”

# ALL LEVELS OF NEBRASKA'S GOVERNMENT HAVE A SPENDING PROBLEM.



## HARD CAP ON PROPERTY TAX COLLECTION GROWTH OF 0% OR CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI)

## COMMONSENSE EXCEPTION FOR NEW BUILDINGS OR IMPROVEMENTS

- ✓ Nebraskans don't have the choice to arbitrarily increase their salaries. They must stick to a budget within their means, and so should their local government.
- ✓ Local governments should not be able to collect on valuation windfall increases. By providing for a CPI cap, we ensure homeowners are protected from 10-15% spikes, while ensuring we are adequately funding our local governments.

- ✓ Our plan implements a cap but has the flexibility to fund new growth within a community. This makes sense, because new houses and businesses create new demands for local government services. So, if a new building is built in your town, local governments should be able to collect taxes on that new investment.
- ✓ New growth only applies to new properties and improvements to existing properties. Meaning, your taxes will not go up because of arbitrary valuation increases if you make no significant changes or upgrades to your property.

## CUTS IN STATE SPENDING TRANSLATE TO TAXPAYER RELIEF

For taxpayers to fully experience tax reform, **SPENDING NEEDS TO BE CUT** at **ALL LEVELS** of government. That is why **WE** are leading the way at the State level to tighten our belts. Our team has been hard at work identifying efficiencies. In total, we have cut \$350 million in state spending to help fund this transformational tax reform plan and finally put our state on a pathway to reduced spending. The State will also leverage an additional \$235 million in idle cash funds to support the Nebraska Property Tax Plan.

Local government spending has caused property taxes to balloon \$1 billion in five years. They are on track to increase by another \$1 billion in three years. To stop these out-of-control increases, the State must control property tax collections by local government by capping them. Nebraskans have flooded email boxes and voice mails with requests to put limits on government spending. The **NEBRASKA PLAN** includes a hard cap on local property tax collections.



**EXEMPTION FROM HARD CAP FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT**

**ONLY THE PEOPLE CAN VOTE TO OVERRIDE THE HARD CAP**

✓ Our police and firefighters are on the front lines daily keeping Nebraskans safe. Nebraskans 'back the blue' and our plan ensures that we protect key investments in the following public safety and criminal justice areas:

- Police
- Fire
- Emergency Medical Services
- County Attorneys
- Public Defenders

✓ If local governments want to collect more in property taxes, the people should decide.

✓ Our plan allows for local governments to exceed the cap with a vote of the people.

✓ The number one job of government is to keep its people safe. Local governments should keep that objective front and center.



# NEBRASKA'S PLAN



**The Legislature shall provide for the free instruction in the common schools of this state of all persons between the ages of five and twenty-one years.**

*-Article VII-1 of the Nebraska Constitution*

**THE JOB OF THE STATE IS TO PAY FOR THE EDUCATION OF OUR CHILDREN, **NOT** LOCAL PROPERTY TAXPAYERS. THAT PRINCIPLE IS EMBEDDED IN THE STATE'S CONSTITUTION.**

## ✓ **PROPERTY TAXES ATTRIBUTED TO EDUCATION**

In 2023, school districts collected \$3,090,270,647 in property taxes. Building off the success of the state funding the community colleges, the State must step up to pay for the cost of educating our kids. This will cut property taxes in half for many Nebraskans.

## ✓ **FUNDING BREAKDOWN**

The plan is simple. The State will cover the instruction of our kids, and local taxpayers will cover buildings and any physical assets. Three taxing programs would remain in place: Voter approved bond taxes, Special Building Tax, and the Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking (QCPUF) Tax. These three taxes amount to \$497 million. That leaves \$2.6 billion to be covered by the State.

# NEBRASKA'S PLAN

## ✓ PHASED-IN ELIMINATION OF THE LEVY

To ensure a smooth funding transition from local tax payers to the State, the plan calls for phasing in the property tax cut over three years. The current General Fund levy for school taxes is maxed out at \$1.05. We are proposing the following cut:

2023 Levy	2024 Levy	2025 Levy	2026 Levy
\$1.05	\$0.15	\$0.075	\$0.00

This action will reduce the amount by a further \$500 million. This leaves \$2,183,486,390 for the State to fund.

## ✓ EXISTING PROPERTY TAX PROGRAMS

The State has existing property tax relief programs that cover a portion of school taxes. However, the majority of dollars dedicated to these programs are too onerous and complex for many taxpayers to claim. In 2022, over half of Nebraska property taxpayers did not claim these benefits, defeating the purpose of the credits. These programs total \$898,135,000 and retooling them will ensure all Nebraskans will benefit from the tax relief passed by their representatives. Taking these retooled programs into account, \$1,285,351,390 remains for the State to fund.



# NEBRASKA'S PLAN CONTINUED

## ✓ NEW REVENUE SOURCES TO FUND PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

In 2023, the State collected over \$3.6 billion in individual and corporate income taxes, \$2.3 billion in sales and use taxes, and \$5.3 billion in property taxes. To better balance Nebraska's three-legged tax stool, we must end special interest tax breaks and loopholes. This plan eliminates 114 tax exemptions, thus, bringing them on the tax rolls. This is good tax policy. It is fair to middle-class Nebraskans, and it will produce \$950 million in property tax relief.

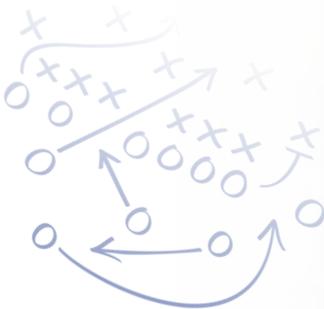
The remaining amount will be covered by increasing sin taxes on cigarettes, candy, pop, vaping, spirits, keno gambling, games of skill, and consumable hemp. This will generate over \$200 million in property tax revenue when fully implemented. Compared to other states, Nebraska is behind in deciding to assess an appropriate tax on these items. This plan doesn't even cause Nebraska to rise to the top of state rankings for these items, but it will finally make us competitive.

## ✓ BACKSTOP TO PROTECT LOCAL CONTROL

Under our plan, no school district will go backwards in funding. If the State does not meet its obligation to local school districts, then the local districts will be able to levy property taxes to make up the difference.

## ✓ VOTE OF THE PEOPLE

If a local school district would like to receive more funding than what is provided, it can opt for a vote of the people to levy property taxes.



*THIS PLAN*



**CUTS**

**TAXES!**

*FOR NEBRASKANS*

When implemented, Nebraska property owners will see a significant reduction on their property tax bill. Many will see their property taxes cut by more than half!

**TO SEE HOW YOUR PROPERTY  
WILL BENEFIT FROM**

*NEBRASKA'S PLAN*

**USE THE TOOL IN THE WEB LINK BELOW:**

<https://bit.ly/3VViRyI>



*HOW CAN YOU  
JOIN THE TEAM?*

**CALL  
YOUR  
STATE  
SENATOR.**

**THIS PLAN** is transformational,  
but it will be opposed by special  
interests, lobbyists, and opponents  
of property tax reform.

**ASK YOUR STATE SENATOR  
TO VOTE FOR THIS PLAN!**



Jim Pillen  
Governor of Nebraska



# 2024 NEBRASKA UNICAMERAL LEGISLATURE

## ALPHABETICAL LIST

District	Senator	Capitol Phone	City	Email
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14	Arch, John	<a href="tel:(402)471-2730">(402) 471-2730</a>	La Vista	<a href="mailto:jarch@leg.ne.gov">jarch@leg.ne.gov</a>
18	Armendariz, Christy	<a href="tel:(402)471-2618">(402) 471-2618</a>	Omaha	<a href="mailto:carmendariz@leg.ne.gov">carmendariz@leg.ne.gov</a>
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25	Bosn, Carolyn	<a href="tel:(402)471-2731">(402) 471-2731</a>	Lincoln	<a href="mailto:cbosn@leg.ne.gov">cbosn@leg.ne.gov</a>
29	Bostar, Eliot	<a href="tel:(402)471-2734">(402) 471-2734</a>	Lincoln	<a href="mailto:ebostar@leg.ne.gov">ebostar@leg.ne.gov</a>
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32	Brandt, Tom	<a href="tel:(402)471-2711">(402) 471-2711</a>	Plymouth	<a href="mailto:tbrandt@leg.ne.gov">tbrandt@leg.ne.gov</a>
43	Brewer, Tom	<a href="tel:(402)471-2628">(402) 471-2628</a>	Gordon	<a href="mailto:tbrewer@leg.ne.gov">tbrewer@leg.ne.gov</a>
9	Cavanaugh, John	<a href="tel:(402)471-2723">(402) 471-2723</a>	Omaha	<a href="mailto:jcavanaugh@leg.ne.gov">jcavanaugh@leg.ne.gov</a>
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49	Day, Jen	<a href="tel:(402)471-2725">(402) 471-2725</a>	Omaha	<a href="mailto:jday@leg.ne.gov">jday@leg.ne.gov</a>
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34	Lippincott, Loren	<a href="tel:(402)471-2630">(402) 471-2630</a>	Central City	<a href="mailto:llippincott@leg.ne.gov">llippincott@leg.ne.gov</a>
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45	Sanders, Rita	<a href="tel:(402)471-2615">(402) 471-2615</a>	Bellevue	<a href="mailto:rsanders@leg.ne.gov">rsanders@leg.ne.gov</a>
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7	Vargas, Tony	<a href="tel:(402)471-2721">(402) 471-2721</a>	Omaha	<a href="mailto:tvargas@leg.ne.gov">tvargas@leg.ne.gov</a>
4	Von Gillern, R. Brad	<a href="tel:(402)471-2621">(402) 471-2621</a>	Elkhorn	<a href="mailto:bvongillern@leg.ne.gov">bvongillern@leg.ne.gov</a>
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13	Wayne, Justin T.	<a href="tel:(402)471-2727">(402) 471-2727</a>	Omaha	<a href="mailto:jwayne@leg.ne.gov">jwayne@leg.ne.gov</a>
27	Wishart, Anna	<a href="tel:(402)471-2632">(402) 471-2632</a>	Lincoln	<a href="mailto:awishart@leg.ne.gov">awishart@leg.ne.gov</a>

## CAPITOL MAILING ADDRESS:

SENATOR \_\_\_\_\_  
 DISTRICT #    STATE CAPITOL  
 PO BOX 94604  
 LINCOLN, NE 68509-4604



# NEBRASKA'S PLAN

50% PROPERTY TAX CUT

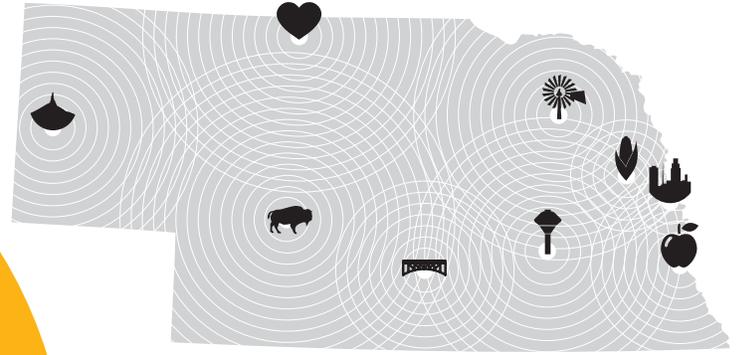
MORE MONEY FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PROTECTS POLICE

HARD CAP ON TAX COLLECTIONS

FUNDED BY RUNNING STATE  
GOVERNMENT LIKE A BUSINESS

**THIS IS A TAX CUT  
FOR NEBRASKANS**



# 2024 AREA MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Leadership - Training - Recognition - Networking - Vision

North Platte - Gering - Valentine - Kearney - York - Norfolk - Nebraska City - Omaha - Fremont

[www.NASBonline.org](http://www.NASBonline.org)

# 2024 REGISTRATION

## REGISTER NOW FOR THE MEETING NEAREST YOU

Tuesday, August 20	North Platte	Register by August 14
Wednesday, August 21	Gering	Register by August 14
Thursday, August 22	Valentine	Register by August 14
Tuesday, August 27	Kearney	Register by August 22
Wednesday, August 28	York	Register by August 22
Wednesday, September 4	Norfolk	Register by August 29
Wednesday, September 11	Nebraska City	Register by September 6
Tuesday, September 24	Omaha	Register by September 20
Wednesday, September 25	Fremont	Register by September 20

### TO REGISTER

Go to [www.NASBonline.org](http://www.NASBonline.org), and log in using your email and password. If you do not have an email and password to log in or have forgotten it, please contact NASB at 402-423-4951 for assistance.

Registration fees for each meeting and dinner are as follows:

NASB Member Registration	\$89
Cancellation Fee	\$25

*No refunds after the deadlines.*

# 2024 AGENDA

4:30 PM - REGISTRATION, NETWORKING & EXHIBITORS

5:00 PM - OPENING SESSION

5:15 PM - LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

5:50 PM - BREAK & EXHIBITORS

6:05 PM - TRAINING SESSIONS #1

6:35 PM - BREAK & EXHIBITORS

6:50 PM - TRAINING SESSIONS #2

7:25 PM - NETWORKING DINNER & AWARDS/RECOGNITION

15 AWARDS OF ACHIEVEMENT POINTS WILL BE EARNED FOR ATTENDING



# 2024 SESSION BREAKDOWN

**5:00 PM - WELCOME & OPENING SESSION**  
JOHN SPATZ, NASB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND MEMBERS OF THE NASB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**5:15 PM - LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: A TALE OF TWO SESSIONS - REGULAR AND SPECIAL**  
COLBY COASH, NASB ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS  
A look back at what was passed in the 2024 Legislative Session, who is campaigning towards victory in November, and the results of the Special Session!

## 6:05 PM - TRAINING SESSIONS 1

**HOW DOES NEBRASKA COMPARE?** ... Attend this session to hear about five-year trend data on Nebraska student demographics and performance. How do we rank educationally, invest in students, and financially support students compared to other states? An update on the Shortage Steering Committee will be shared.

- Shari Becker, Director of Education Leadership Search Service, and John Spatz, Executive Director

**SCHOOL CLAIMS, INSURANCE TRENDS AND HIGH-RISK ACTIVITIES** ... Come to this session to hear about Best Practices for schools. No one wants to read about the district, on the front page of the local newspaper, unless it's for passing a school bond or winning a state championship. Let's talk about school insurance and how we can prevent hitting the headlines.

- Megan Boldt, Associate Executive Director, Director of ALICAP/Insurance

**ACCOUNTABILITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT** ... The research is clear. Community and parent engagement fosters goodwill, brings in new partners and resources, and will positively impact support of students, expanded learning opportunities, and facility upkeep and expansion. Does the board know what the staff, students, parents, and community are thinking, what they expect of the school district, and what they support? This session will address the importance of engaging stakeholders, managing the feedback, and how the board assures stakeholders voices have been heard.

- Marcia Herring, Director of Board Leadership

## 6:50 PM - TRAINING SESSIONS 2

**NETWORKS OF SUPPORT: INSPIRING LOCAL LEADERSHIP** ... Leadership does not have to feel lonely! Support systems are all around us to share the love of local leadership. But where do school leaders reach out to find such support? Hear from local representatives from the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation about the many programs, services, and funding they can offer districts in support of students and families!

- Caden Frank, Board Leadership Community Engagement Specialist

**OPEN MEETINGS, OPTION ENROLLMENTS, AND OUCH, TITLE IX!** ... The last Unicameral session made a lot of changes calling for policy revisions, but that doesn't mean the Feds can't match them with a long-dreaded Title IX update. All these and more for 2024.

- Jim Luebbe, Director of Policy Services

**SUPPORT FOR BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT LEADERSHIP SUCCESS** ... Transition is not an event, but a process that is important to the success of the board and superintendent as non-incumbent board members prepare for their new role. Do you have a plan for board orientation, when is the best time to engage, and what information will be presented and discussed? This session will provide orientation materials for new members, and a checklist that outlines how the board and superintendent work collaboratively for positive outcomes for the school district.

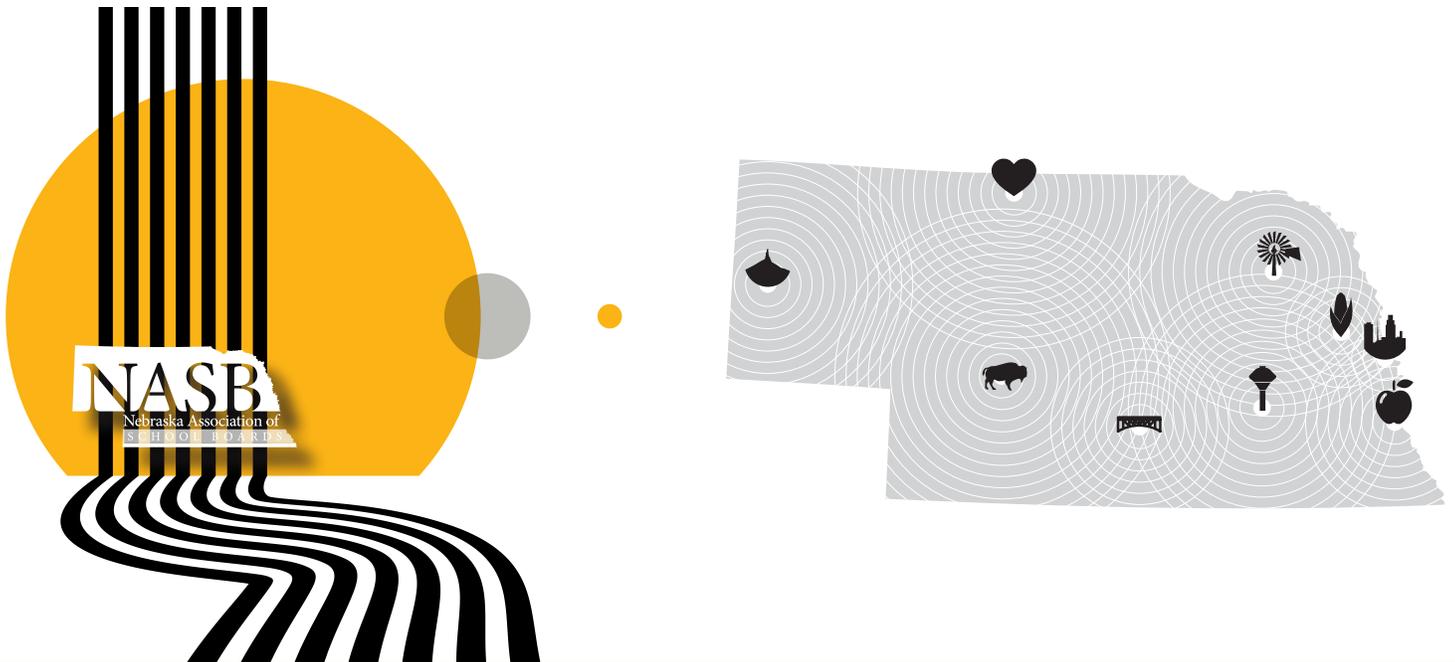
- Marcia Herring, Director of Board Leadership





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# 2024 AREA MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Leadership - Training - Recognition - Networking - Vision

North Platte - Gering - Valentine - Kearney - York - Norfolk - Nebraska City - Omaha - Fremont

# Southern School District #1

## *A Small-School Community, with Big Opportunities*

115 S. 11th Street Box 237 Wymore, NE 68466

Phone: 402.645.3326 Fax: 402.645.8049

<http://www.southernschools.org>

### **Administration**

Dr. Christopher Prosocki – Superintendent  
Jeff Murphy – Secondary Principal  
Kane Hookstra – Elementary Principal

### **Board of Education**

Dave Zimmerman – President  
Dana Dorn – Vice President  
Debra Schlake – Secretary  
Betsy Frerichs  
Jeff Argo  
Jared McKeever

August 1, 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians & Students:

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! I hope everyone is having a relaxing summer and you are finding some time to spend with your family and friends. The summer months are a great time to refuel for the upcoming school year. The start of a new school year brings a promise of new hope, new challenges, and new opportunities for students to grow. As we begin the 2024-2025 school year, I want to wish the greatest success to all students and staff at Southern Public Schools.

I would like to highlight some of the new staff members in our district for the 2024-2025 school year:

- Bonnie Creek is the new Food Service Provider/Bus Driver;
- Brenda Gonewold is the new JAG (Jobs for America's Graduates) teacher;
- Drake Adams is the new Jr./Sr. High School Science teacher;
- Kimberly Brown is the new Head Food Service Provider;
- Melisa Reed is the new K-6 Paraprofessional;
- Nicole Stevens is the new K-12 Vocal Music teacher.

### **Annual Title I Notification (Grades K-6):**

Parents/Guardians in Southern Public Schools have the right to know about the following qualification of their child's teacher: state licensure requirements for the grade level and content areas taught, the current licensing status of your child's teacher, and baccalaureate/graduate certification/degree. For general information about the Title I program contact: Kane Hookstra, Principal, Southern Public Schools, 315 West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Blue Springs, NE 68318, 402-645-3359. Inquiries regarding professional qualifications of teachers should be directed to: Dr. Christopher Prosocki, Superintendent, Southern Public Schools, 115 South 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Wymore, NE 68466, 402-645-3326.

### **Anonymous Reporting System (Safe2Help):**

Our district is using an anonymous reporting system called Safe2Help, a tip reporting service that allows students, staff, and parents to submit safety concerns to our administration in five different ways: App, Email, Phone, Text, & Website. You and your child can easily report tips on bullying, harassment, drugs, vandalism, threats of violence, or any safety issue you're concerned about through Safe2Help. I have also provided a handout that covers Safe2Help in more detail.

### **Child Find Notice:**

Pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the District has a duty to identify, refer, evaluate and if eligible, provide a free, appropriate public education to disabled students. For additional information about the rights of parents of eligible children, or for answers to any questions you might have about identification, evaluation and placement into Section 504 programs, please contact the District's Section 504 Coordinator, Dr. Christopher Prosocki at 402-645-3326.

### **Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) – Federal Free Breakfast & School Lunch Program:**

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The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) provides an alternative approach for offering school meals to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and schools in low-income areas, instead of collecting individual

applications for free and reduced-price meals. The CEP allows schools that predominantly serve low-income children to offer free, nutritious school meals to all students through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. When a child's nutritional needs are met, the child is more attentive in class, has better attendance, and has fewer disciplinary problems. Families with tight food budgets can rest assured that their child is getting two nutritious meals at school, reducing financial strain at home.

Instead of using traditional paper applications, the CEP program uses information from school-age children who are participating in the following public assistance programs or are eligible based the following criteria:

#### Public Assistance Programs

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) or the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- Medicaid Federal Poverty Level (FPL)

#### Eligible Based the Following Criteria

- Foster Children
- Head Start
- Homeless
- Migrant
- Runaway

The district resubmitted our Identified Student Population (ISP) numbers this spring and our 4-year CEP cycle will be extended by 2 extra years moving forward. Our old CEP cycle was from the 2022-2023 school year to the 2025-2026 school year. Our new CEP cycle will run from the 2024-2025 school year and until the 2027-2028 school year.

**Please Note:** All school districts in the United States are required to follow the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines when it comes to school breakfast and school lunch programs. This pertains to both free student breakfast and lunches and paid student breakfast and lunches. The USDA prohibits the sale of any foods or brining in food in competition with the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs anywhere on school/institution premises during the period beginning one half hour prior to the serving period for breakfast and/or school lunch and lasting until one half hour after serving of breakfast and/or school lunch.

#### **Early Out on March 24, 2025 (Jr./Sr. High School Only):**

All Jr./Sr. High School students will have an early out on March 24, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. because we are hosting a Junior High School Pioneer Quiz Bowl starting at 1:00 p.m. All students at the Jr./Sr. High School can still receive a sack lunch on March 24, 2024, and both the Little Raiders Preschool and the Elementary School will be in session the entire day.

#### **Nebraska Seat Belt Safety Reminder (LB 42):**

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All children up to age eight must ride in a correctly secured federally approved car seat or a booster seat. Children must ride in a rear-facing car seat until up to age **two** or until they reach the upper weight or

height limit allowed by the car seat's manufacturer. Children under age **eight**, must ride in the back seat, as long as there is a back seat equipped with a seatbelt and is not already occupied by other children under eight years of age. This requirement is effective for all persons operating a motor vehicle within the State of Nebraska. No matter the length of the trip, all riders age eight and below are required buckle up in a secured federally approved car seat or a booster seat at all times in a motor vehicle.

### **New Secure Entrances:**

The safety and security of all the students and the staff members is of the utmost importance to the administration and the school board. Based on Rule 10 (Regulations & Procedures for the Accreditation of Schools), all schools in Nebraska must have a yearly safety visit. This review includes a visit to school buildings to analyze plans, policies, procedures, and practices, and provide recommendations. Over the past 20 years, Bruce Lang, the former Chief of Police at Beatrice, has recommended that we upgrade our building entrances so they are more safe and secure. The district recently completed new secure entrances at both the Elementary School and the Jr./Sr. High school facilities. I would like to personally thank the school board and the district's safety committee for making the safety and security of all the students and the staff members a number one priority for the district.

### **Notice of Nondiscrimination:**

The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

### **Paperless Board Meetings (Sparq Data Solutions):**

Parents & patrons can subscribe to Southern Public Schools board meetings for free to keep up-to-date with meetings, agendas, minutes, and policies. **Link:** <https://bit.ly/2sHz0dM>

### **Power Lunch:**

Our current Student Information System (SIS) is called Power School. Power Lunch is the lunch management portion of Power School. The district switched over to Power Lunch during the 2022-2023 school year because it will integrate with our SIS. Power Lunch is a one stop shop for parents to check lunch balances and the other components associated with Power School.

### **Preschool Sliding Fee Scale:**

The Little Raiders Preschool will offer enrollment to children according to the following tuition guidelines (Sliding Fee Scale):

#### **Little Raiders Preschool Sliding Fee Scale (3- & 4/5-Year-Old Preschool Programs):**

Special Education (IEP):	No Cost
Free Meal Program Eligibility:	No Cost
Reduced Meal Program Eligibility:	\$60.00/per month
Full Pay Meal Program Eligibility:	\$120.00/per month

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Annual tuition is to be made in nine payments of \$120 for Full Pay Meal Program eligibility. The first payment is due on or before August 22 and covers tuition for August and May combined. Subsequent

payments are to be paid on the first of each month beginning on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Other tuition payment options include advance quarterly, semester, and annual payments. **Failure to remit payment for the program tuition for two straight months will result in discontinued enrollment.** Based on the Constitution of the state of Nebraska, only children 5-17 in age are afforded a free, appropriate public education. Based on the state aid funding formula (TEEOSA), Nebraska schools currently do not get state funding for 3-year-old preschool programs and they currently only get 60% funding for 4/5-year-old preschool programs.

### **School Bus Information:**

Under current provisions of the Nebraska Rules of the Road, section 60-6,175 requires that the driver of a motor vehicle:

- a) must reduce the speed of such vehicle to not more than 25 miles per hour upon meeting or overtaking, from the front or rear, any school bus on which the yellow warning signal lights are flashing,
- b) must bring such vehicle to a complete stop when the school bus is stopped, the stop signal arm is extended, and the flashing red signal lights are turned on, and
- c) must remain stopped until the flashing red signal lights are turned off, the stop signal arm is retracted, and the school bus resumes motion.

### **School Resource Deputy (SRD):**

The Gage County Board of Supervisors approved a School Resource Officer (SRD) for Diller-Odell, Freeman, & Southern starting in January of 2024. The SRD is in our district 1.5 days a week. The administration and the school board would like to personally thank the Gage County Board of Supervisors again for making the safety and security of all the students and staff members a number one priority for all Gage County schools. This new position will serve as another line of defense to combat any potential threats of violence that may occur within the school walls of the 3 districts.

### **Social Media Platforms:**

Social media is a great way to post family reunion photos, share a business opportunity, or express an opinion, but social media can cause harm when it spreads gossip and inaccurate information about a student, a staff member, or our school district. Over the years, social media has been a marketplace for misinformation, innuendos, and trading false or incomplete, or even harmful narratives. The district does not respond to comments on our social media platforms because there is simply not enough time in the day. If a parent or a community member witnesses or hears a concern related to a student or our school, we ask that you respectfully report it to the building principal. Please be assured that the building principal will address the issue appropriately and fairly. At a time in our country when there is fear, anxiety, mistrust, and misinformation spreading out of control, let's take this opportunity as adults to pause, calibrate our emotions, and then collaborate with the school staff at Southern to support one another in this endeavor.

**Please Note:** The following information was adapted from Daniel Gutekanst Superintendent's blog.

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### **Standard Response Protocol (SRP):**

Southern Public School has utilized the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) in our district over the past seven years. The Standard Response Protocol is a set of research-based actions that are designed to prepare students, staff, and visitors for emergency situations. Throughout the school year, all students and staff members participate in various drills to educate students on the five possible actions associated with the Standard Response Protocol: Hold, Secure, Lockdown (Active shooter drill), Evacuate, and Shelter. Signs detailing the protocols are posted in each classroom and in various locations throughout our school buildings. Our hope is that these signs will serve as a visible reminder, not only for students and staff, but also for visitors regarding how to act if anyone should hear a specific action in the protocol over the public address system while in any of our school buildings. I have also provided a handout that covers each of the five possible actions associated with the Standard Response Protocol for parents/guardians to review.

### **Student Privacy Law (Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act or FERPA):**

Based on the federal student privacy law or FERPA, the district cannot release student matters that may occur during a given school year, such as a discipline matter or a safety matter to the general public. FERPA protects the reputation of juveniles or students at Southern that may make mistakes from time to time. The same hold true when it comes to elected school board members and their right to know about school happenings. The district cannot legally inform school board members about a discipline or a safety matter that is related to a student at Southern based upon the FERPA regulations. All school districts in the United States have to abide by this federal law.

### **Website & Distribution of School Related Items:**

During the 2024-2025 school year, we will only be sending out a district newsletter once a year in August. Everything that students and parents will need will be available on the district website. The district will also not print any student handbooks. All of the handbooks are available on the district website for anyone to review under the Resources tab. You will find a copy of the Student Handbook receipt page in the Back-to-School letter for your convenience. Please sign and return the signature page to either building by **Thursday, September 5, 2024.**

The first day for students is August 22, 2024. We will run both a regular start and a regular dismissal time on that day. Our goal at Southern Public Schools is to provide the best possible education to the youth in our community. This goal can be accomplished when each of us accepts our share of the responsibility. The efficient operation of our school program rests on the daily performance of a united staff and family.

I hope you enjoy the remaining days of summer and I look forward to seeing everyone on August 22. Go Raiders!

Sincerely,

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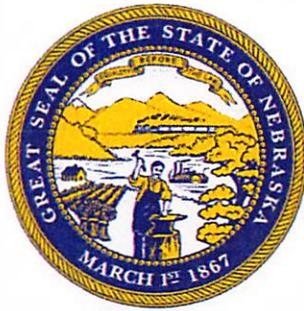
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## Funding K-12 Education

Category		FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27
#	<b>Property Tax Breakdown</b>	<b>2024 Property Taxes</b>	<b>2025 Property Taxes</b>	<b>2026 Property Taxes</b>
1	School Property Taxes	3,182,978,767	3,278,468,130	3,376,822,174
2	Bond Taxes	(329,428,957)	(340,958,970)	(352,892,534)
3	Special Building Tax	(139,597,639)	(144,483,556)	(149,540,481)
4	QCPUF Tax	(28,155,781)	(29,141,233)	(30,161,176)
5	<b>15¢/7.5¢/0¢ Levy</b>	<b>-568,000,000</b>	<b>-298,200,000</b>	<b>0</b>
6	<b>School GF Prop Taxes</b>	<b>2,117,796,390</b>	<b>2,465,684,370</b>	<b>2,844,227,983</b>
7				
8	<b>Existing Property Tax Programs</b>			
9	LB 1107 Frontload	(565,135,000)	(649,373,000)	(674,000,000)
10	Property Tax Credit Fund	(235,000,000)	(265,000,000)	(290,000,000)
11	Homestead Exemption	(110,000,000)	(115,000,000)	(120,000,000)
12	<b>Remaining Total</b>	<b>1,207,661,390</b>	<b>1,436,311,370</b>	<b>1,760,227,983</b>
13				
14	<b>Potential Revenue Sources</b>			
15	Education Future Fund Utilization	(160,000,000)	(160,000,000)	(160,000,000)
16	General Fund Savings	(200,000,000)	(95,000,000)	(95,000,000)
17	Cash Fund Interest Balances	(35,000,000)	(35,000,000)	(35,000,000)
18	"Allocation for Potential Deficits"	(5,000,000)	(5,000,000)	(5,000,000)
19	GF Reserve Change	0	0	(168,000,000)
20	Usual/Customary Transfers	0	(47,500,000)	(47,500,000)
21	<b>Tax Exemptions &amp; Service Economy List</b>	<b>(663,369,992)</b>	<b>(1,030,077,627)</b>	<b>(1,055,829,568)</b>
22	<b>Sin Taxes</b>	<b>(137,004,831)</b>	<b>(205,031,185)</b>	<b>(206,418,604)</b>
23	<b>Advertising Services</b>	<b>(29,774,345)</b>	<b>(48,038,490)</b>	<b>(49,719,837)</b>
24	<b>Software as a Service (Cloud) &amp; Data Services</b>	<b>(18,594,056)</b>	<b>(30,900,000)</b>	<b>(31,827,000)</b>
25	<b>Grand Total Needed</b>	<b>(41,081,833)</b>	<b>(220,235,932)</b>	<b>(94,067,026)</b>
26	<b>Personal Property Taxes for Ag Machinery</b>	<b>47,634,380</b>	<b>49,301,584</b>	<b>51,027,139</b>
27	<b>Personal Property Taxes for Manufacturing Machinery</b>	<b>10,662,186</b>	<b>11,035,362</b>	<b>11,421,600</b>
28	<b>Total Funding Necessary</b>	<b>17,214,733</b>	<b>(159,898,987)</b>	<b>(31,618,288)</b>



# Governor Jim Pillen

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## Property Tax Plan

### 1. Hard cap on City and County property tax collections

This hard cap is designed to control property tax collections on cities and counties which constitute a third of persons property tax bill. The cap includes:

#### a. 0% or CPI increase

The base of the cap will be determined by change in the consumer price index for all urban consumers published by the bureau of labor statistics, as reported for December of the prior calendar year for the preceding twelve-month period.

- b. Reasonable Exemption for Public Health & Safety
- c. Other Exemptions

Other exemptions in the cap include:

- Revenues needed to respond to a declared emergency as defined by 81-829.39
- Voter approved bonds
- Voter approved increases.

#### d. New growth

New growth will be defined as: the percentage increase in taxable valuation due to improvements to real property as a result of new construction, additions to existing buildings, any improvements to real property which increases the value of such property, and any increase in valuation due to annexation.

#### e. Vote of the people

Voter approved increases must reach a 60% vote threshold and must be conducted during a statewide primary or general election.

## 2. State fulfilling its constitutional obligation

Article VII-1 of the Nebraska Constitution states: "The Legislature shall provide for the free instruction in the common schools of this state of all persons between the ages of five and twenty-one years."

This plan proposes that the state meet its constitutional obligation and provide free instruction for public education across the state. The plan would allow local school districts to still assess property taxes to cover some of the costs to physical assets. The total cost to take over the funding of K-12 public education under this plan will cost roughly \$1.2 billion in the first fiscal year.

### a. Local property taxes still assessed by schools

- i. Voter Approved Bonds
- ii. Special Building Tax
- iii. Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking (QCPUF)

### b. Phased-in elimination of the General Fund levy

The plan calls for a phase-in elimination of the general fund levy for schools. This elimination will be phased in over three years:

2023 Levy	2024 Levy	2025 Levy	2026 Levy
\$1.05	\$0.15	\$0.075	\$0.00

### c. Utilization of existing property tax programs

In fiscal year 2024, the state has budgeted \$910,135,000 for direct school property tax relief. These programs include:

- i. LB1107 credits
- ii. Property Tax Relief Credit Fund
- iii. Homestead Exemption

### d. New revenue sources (Appendix A & B)

To finance this new obligation, the plan proposes to bring on 132 new items to the sales tax base, as well as increase existing sin taxes.

### e. Elimination of personal property taxes

To ensure that there is not double taxation, there will be an elimination of personal property taxes on items that are brought onto the sales tax rolls.

### f. Backstop

A backstop will be enshrined in law to ensure that no funding is cut to any school district, like the Community College Future Fund.

Beginning in fiscal year 2024-25, if the state fails to provide full funding of the amounts set in the legislation, each school district may, if approved by a majority vote of the school board, levy an amount to cover the delta of funding.

### **g. Vote of the people**

If a district is not satisfied with the levy of funding provided by the state, it may levy property taxes with a vote of the people. Voter approved increases must reach a 60% vote threshold and must be conducted during a statewide primary or general election.

- **Year 1 & Beyond** 2024 school property taxes accounted for in fiscal year 2025 will be reduced through a credit on the property tax statement.
- 2025 school property taxes will allow for a 7.5 cent levy for the General Fund levy for all school on the property tax statement.
- 2026 and beyond will allow for a 0-cent levy for the General Fund levy for schools.

A proposal on rewriting the education formula to boost student outcomes will be presented during the 2025 legislative session.

### **3. Cutting Spending at the State Level**

To ensure this is a total tax reduction, a portion of financing will come from spending cuts at the state level. These spending cuts have been identified through efficiencies found by Cabinet members and the Epiphany study financed by the Legislature.

# The Youngest Pandemic Children Are Now in School, and Struggling

Teachers this year saw the effects of the pandemic's stress and isolation on young students: Some can barely speak, sit still or even hold a pencil.

Claire Cain Miller & Sarah Mervosh – New York Times – Jul 1, 2024

The pandemic's babies, toddlers and preschoolers are now school-age, and the impact on them is becoming increasingly clear: Many are showing signs of being academically and developmentally behind.

Interviews with more than two dozen teachers, pediatricians and early childhood experts depicted a generation less likely to have age-appropriate skills — to be able to hold a pencil, communicate their needs, identify shapes and letters, manage their emotions or solve problems with peers.

A variety of scientific evidence has also found that the pandemic seems to have affected some young children's early development. Boys were more affected than girls, studies have found.

"I definitely think children born then have had developmental challenges compared to prior years," said Dr. Jaime Peterson, a pediatrician at Oregon Health and Science University, whose research is on kindergarten readiness. "We asked them to wear masks, not see adults, not play with kids. We really severed those interactions, and you don't get that time back for kids."

The pandemic's effect on older children — who were sent home during school closures, and lost significant ground in math and reading — has been well documented. But the impact on the youngest children is in some ways surprising: They were not in formal school when the pandemic began, and at an age when children spend a lot of time at home anyway.

The early years, though, are most critical for brain development. Researchers said several aspects of the pandemic affected young children — parental stress, less exposure to people, lower preschool attendance, more time on screens and less time playing.

Yet because their brains are developing so rapidly, they are also well positioned to catch up, experts said.

The youngest children represent "a pandemic tsunami" headed for the American education system, said Joel Ryan, who works with a network of Head Start and state preschool centers in Washington State, where he has seen an increase in speech delays and behavioral problems.

Not every young child is showing delays. Children at schools that are mostly Black or Hispanic or where most families have lower incomes are the most behind, according to data released Monday by Curriculum Associates, whose tests are given in thousands of U.S. schools. Students from higher-income families are more on pace with historical trends.

But "most, if not all, young students were impacted academically to some degree," said Kristen Huff, vice president for assessment and research at Curriculum Associates.

Recovery is possible, experts said, though young children have not been a main focus of \$122 billion in federal aid distributed to school districts to help students recover.

"We 100 percent have the tools to help kids and families recover," said Catherine Monk, a clinical psychologist and professor at Columbia, and a chair of a research project on mothers and babies in the pandemic. "But do we know how to distribute, in a fair way, access to the services they need?"

## What's different now?

**"I spent a long time just teaching kids to sit still on the carpet for one book. That's something I didn't need to do before."** – David Feldman, kindergarten teacher, St. Petersburg, Fla.

**"We are talking 4- and 5-year-olds who are throwing chairs, biting, hitting, without the self-regulation."** – Tommy Sheridan, National Head Start Association

Brook Allen, in Martin, Tenn., has taught kindergarten for 11 years. This year, for the first time, she said, several students could barely speak, several were not toilet trained, and several did not have the fine motor skills to hold a pencil.

Children don't engage in imaginative play or seek out other children the way they used to, said Michaela Frederick, a pre-K teacher for students with learning delays in Sharon, Tenn. She's had to replace small building materials in her classroom with big soft blocks because students' fine motor skills weren't developed enough to manipulate them.

Perhaps the biggest difference Lissa O'Rourke has noticed among her preschoolers in St. Augustine, Fla., has been their inability to regulate their emotions: "It was knocking over chairs, it was throwing things, it was hitting their peers, hitting their teachers."

Data from schools underscores what early childhood professionals have noticed.

Children who just finished second grade, who were as young as 3 or 4 when the pandemic began, remain behind children the same age prepandemic, particularly in math, according to the new Curriculum Associates data. Of particular concern, the students who are the furthest behind are making the least progress catching up.

The youngest students' performance is "in stark contrast" to older elementary school children, who have caught up much more, the researchers said. The new analysis examined testing data from about four million children, with cohorts before and after the pandemic.

Data from Cincinnati Public Schools is another example: Just 28 percent of kindergarten students began this school year prepared, down from 36 percent before the pandemic, according to research from Cincinnati Children's Hospital.

### How did this happen?

**"They don't have the muscle strength because everything they are doing at home is screen time. They are just swiping."**

– Sarrah Hovis, preschool teacher, Roseville, Mich.

**"I have more kids in kindergarten who have never been in school."** – Terrance Anfield, teacher, Indianapolis

One explanation for young children's struggles, childhood development experts say, is parental stress during the pandemic.

A baby who is exposed to more stress will show more activation on brain imaging scans in "the parts of that baby's brain that focus on fear and focus on aggression," said Rahil D. Briggs, a child psychologist with Zero to Three, a nonprofit that focuses on early childhood. That leaves less energy for parts of the brain focused on language, exploration and learning, she said.

During lockdowns, children also spent less time overhearing adult interactions that exposed them to new language, like at the grocery store or the library. And they spent less time playing with other children.

Kelsey Schnur, 32, of Sharpville, Pa., pulled her daughter, Finley, from child care during the pandemic. Finley, then a toddler, colored, did puzzles and read books at home.

But when she finally enrolled in preschool, she struggled to adjust, her mother said. She was diagnosed with separation anxiety and selective mutism.

"It was very eye-opening to see," said Ms. Schnur, who works in early childhood education. "They can have all of the education experiences and knowledge, but that socialization is so key."

Preschool attendance can significantly boost kindergarten preparedness, research has found. But in many states, preschool attendance is still below prepandemic levels. Survey data suggests low-income families have not returned at the same rate as higher-income families.

"I have never had such a small class," said Analilia Sanchez, who had nine children in her preschool class in El Paso this year. She typically has at least 16. "I think they got used to having them at home — that fear of being around the other kids, the germs."

Time on screens also spiked during the pandemic — as parents juggled work and children cooped up at home — and screen time stayed up after lockdowns ended.

Many teachers and early childhood experts believe this affected children's attention spans and fine motor skills. Long periods of screen time have been associated with developmental delays.

Heidi Tringali, a pediatric occupational therapist in Charlotte, N.C., said she and her colleagues are seeing many more families contact them with children who don't fit into typical diagnoses.

She is seeing "visual problems, core strength, social skills, attention — all the deficits," she said. "We really see the difference in them not being out playing."

### Can children catch up?

**"I'm actually happy with the majority of their growth."**  
– Michael LoMedico, second-grade teacher, Yonkers, N.Y.

**"They just crave consistency that they didn't get."**  
– Emily Sampley, substitute teacher, Sioux Falls, S.D.

It's too early to know whether young children will experience long-term effects from the pandemic, but researchers say there are reasons to be optimistic.

"It is absolutely possible to catch up, if we catch things early," said Dr. Dani Dumitriu, a pediatrician and neuroscientist at Columbia and chair of the study on pandemic newborns. "There is nothing deterministic about a brain at six months."

There may also have been benefits to being young in the pandemic, she and others said, like increased resiliency and more time with family.

Some places have invested in programs to support young children, like a Tennessee district that is doubling the number of teaching assistants in kindergarten classrooms next school year and adding a preschool class for students needing extra support.

Oregon used some federal pandemic aid money to start a program to help prepare children and parents for kindergarten the summer before.

For many students, simply being in school is the first step.

Sarrah Hovis, a preschool teacher in Roseville, Mich., has seen plenty of the pandemic's impact in her classroom. Some children can't open a bag of chips, because they lack finger strength. More of her students are missing many days of school, a national problem since the pandemic.

But she has also seen great progress. By the end of this year, some of her students were counting to 100, and even adding and subtracting.

"If the kids come to school," she said, "they do learn."

## **Supplemental Information (Special Session)**

The Model of State Aid for 2025/26 using the 2024/25 certification information with a reduced Local Effort Rate (LER) to \$0.25 has been completed and is attached. For reference the current LER is \$1.00 and is multiplied by your district's adjusted valuation to determine the Yield from Local Effort Rate in the TEEOSA formula. The change to the LER is the only change to this model from what was certified for the 2024/25 State Aid certification.

*Please note, this document is for informational purposes, may change, and does not constitute a certification of State Aid pursuant to Section 79-1022.*

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN  
GAGE COUNTY, NEBRASKA AND**

**FREEMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, SOUTHERN SCHOOLS, AND DILLER-ODELL PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS**

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is made and entered as of the date fully executed below, by and between the Gage County, Nebraska ("County") and Freeman Public Schools, also known as Gage County School District 34-0034 ("Freeman"), Southern Schools, also known as Gage County School District 34-0001 ("Southern"), and Diller-Odell Public Schools, also known as Gage County School District 34-0100 (Diller-Odell) (and collectively "School Districts").

**WHEREAS**, the School Districts and the County share the goal of promoting school safety and a positive school climate;

**WHEREAS**, all parties acknowledge that crime prevention is most effective when the School Districts, the County, parents, behavioral health professionals, and the community are working in a positive and collaborative manner;

**WHEREAS**, the School Districts and the County agree it is important to create a school environment in which conflicts are deescalated and students are provided developmentally appropriate and fair consequences for misbehavior that address the root causes of their misbehavior, while minimizing the loss of instruction time;

**WHEREAS**, the School Districts' staff should generally not involve the Gage County Sheriff's School Resource Deputy(s) ("SRD/SRO") in enforcement of the School Districts' discipline policies;

**WHEREAS**, the School Districts and the County recognize that student contact with the County's SRD/SROs and the School Districts' staff builds positive relationships leading to better student outcomes; and

**WHEREAS**, the School Districts and the County agree that student discipline practices and referrals to the juvenile justice system need to be closely monitored for fair and equitable treatment for all School Districts' students.

NOW, THEREFORE, the School Districts and the County agree as follows:

**Section 1. Employment of the School Resource Deputy**

1. The County, by and through the Gage County Sheriff's Office, agrees to employ and provide a full-time Deputy Sheriff to be assigned to the School Districts during the school year as an SRD/SRO pursuant to the terms of this MOU. It is clearly understood, acknowledged, and agreed to by the parties that the SRD/SRO is an employee of the Gage County Sheriff, subject to the administration, supervision, and control of the Sheriff.
2. The County will furnish training, uniforms, equipment, and schedule of deployment required under Nebraska law or that is needed for the operation of this MOU. The School Districts shall coordinate with the Sheriff to also provide the SRD/SRO with applicable training, supplies, and equipment needed for the operation of this MOU.
3. The SRD/SRO shall be subject to all personnel policies and practices of the Sheriff, except as such policies or practices may be modified by the terms and conditions

of this MOU.

4. The Sheriff, in his/her sole discretion, shall have the power and authority to hire, replace and rotate, discharge, and discipline the SRD/SRO.
5. As an employee of the Sheriff, the SRD/SRO will be subject to the chain of command of the Sheriff's Office .
6. If a School District's Superintendent is dissatisfied with the SRD/SRO who has been assigned to the school, then that School District's Superintendent may request that the Sheriff assign a different law enforcement officer as the SRD/SRO for the school. Unless the nature of the concerns warrants immediate replacement, such a request should normally occur after the Superintendent has met with the Sheriff or his/her designee to discuss concerns and allow a reasonable amount of time for the Sheriff to remediate the issues. If mutually agreed by the Sheriff and School District, the Sheriff or his/her designee shall assign a new SRD/ SRO to the school. The Sheriff reserves the right to remove/re-assign any SRD/SRO along with notification given to the Superintendent and the school board of each participating school district.

## **Section 2. Term**

This MOU shall begin August 1, 2024 and end July 31, 2025. This MOU may be renewed for additional one-year periods upon mutual written agreement of the Parties.

## **Section 3. Contact Persons**

The principal(s) at each participating school building shall be the School Districts' on-site contact persons for any SRD assigned to that school building. In addition, the SRD/SRO Program liaison for each School District shall be that School District's Superintendent, and for the Sheriff shall be the Shift Supervisor.

## **Section 4. School Discipline and Law Enforcement Program Goals**

The parties seek to:

1. Create a common understanding that (a) school administrators and teachers are ultimately responsible for school discipline and culture; (b) SRD/SROs should not be involved in the enforcement of school rules; and (c) a clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities of SRD/SROs as to student discipline is essential, and should include a regular review by all stakeholders;
2. Minimize student discipline issues so they do not become school-based to the juvenile justice system;
3. Promote effectiveness and accountability;
4. Provide training as available and appropriate to SRD/SROs and School District staff on effective strategies to work with students that align with program goals;
5. Employ accepted industry standards so that all students are treated impartially and without bias by the Sheriff's SRD/SROs and the policies of the Sheriff and his/her Office, and also by the School District staff in alignment with rules and procedures applicable to the School Districts' equity policies; and
6. Utilize accepted industry standards for training and oversight with the goal of reducing any existing disproportionality.

## Section 5. Roles and Responsibilities regarding School Discipline

1. Disciplining students is the responsibility and authority of each School District. Law enforcement is the responsibility of the Sheriff. The School Districts and the Sheriff shall follow the principles in this MOU regarding the division between school discipline and law enforcement.
2. The Sheriff can provide assistance when: (a) required by law under NEB. REV. STAT. §§ 79-262 and 79-293 or other state or City/County/Security Agency law; (b) there is a threat to the safety of students, teachers, or public safety personnel; (c) to assist with victims of crime, missing persons, and persons in mental health crisis; (d) in an attempt to prevent criminal activity from occurring; (e) it is required as part of emergency management response; or (f) it is required or allowed by this MOU.
3. The SRD/SRO and school administrators will coordinate to differentiate between school disciplinary issues (school administrator responsibility) and criminal issues (SRD responsibility) and respond appropriately, deescalating school-based incidents whenever possible. Examples of student offenses best handled by the SRD, include, but are not limited to: gang related activity; possession of a weapon; possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs; possession, use, or distribution of pornography; criminal activity such as theft, graffiti, etc.; sexual assault; hazing; behavior that is an immediate threat to others; terroristic threats; and other criminal law violations that may constitute a class I misdemeanor or a felony. Examples of student offenses best handled by school administrators, include, but are not limited to: dress code violations; disruptive behavior that is not a threat to others or to the public safety, such as defiance of authority; profanity; possession of inappropriate items; inciting, but not actively participating in inappropriate behavior; truancy or attendance violations; offenses that would be considered to be less than a class I misdemeanor, an infraction, or a status offense (i.e., a violation of the law that would not be a violation but for the age of the offender, such as certain alcohol and tobacco offenses) under criminal law; and other minor violations of School District policies. Student suicide threats wherein the student and possibly others may be placed at risk should be handled expeditiously and coordinated between the SRD/SRO and school administrators to determine the best course of action in which to address the situation.
4. The SRD/SRO should not act as a school disciplinarian. School District staff should not involve the SRD/SRO in disputes that are related to issues of school discipline. However, the SRD/SRO may serve as a complement to school staff, provide education, or act in the role of a mentor, counselor, or trusted adult as herein provided. The SRD/SRO will be involved in school discipline when it pertains to certain criminal matters and preventing a disruption that would, if ignored, place students, school personnel, and others at risk of harm, so the SRD/SRO will resolve the problem to preserve the safe school climate. In all other cases, disciplining students for policy violations is a school responsibility. In those situations, the SRD/SRO may, if appropriate under the circumstances, take students who violate School District conduct policies to the administration offices for discipline to be administered by school administrators.
5. The SRD/SRO may confer with school administrators for student offenses that constitute a minor violation of the law. After consultation, a determination will be made as to whether such matters will be best handled by school administration or the SRD/SRO.

6. The **SRD/SRO** should confer with school administrators on issues that do not involve a real and immediate threat to persons or to the public safety, such as public order offenses, including disorderly conduct, disturbance/disruption of schools or public assembly, trespass, loitering, and fighting that does not involve physical injury or a weapon. After consultation, a determination will be made as to whether such matters will be best handled by school administration or the **SRD/SRO**.
7. The **SRD/SRO** should not interview students or collect evidence for solely School District disciplinary purposes.
8. The **Sheriff's** policy that addresses when a parent or guardian will be notified or present, if a student is subjected to questioning or interrogation by a School Resource Officer or other employee of the County is Sheriff's Dir. 080124. The School Districts' policy that addresses when a parent or guardian will be notified or present if a student is subjected to questioning or interrogation by a school official or by an **SRD/SRO** in conjunction with a school official is Policy 5022 - Investigations, Arrests, and Other Student Contact by Law Enforcement and Health and Human Services. The School District will make this information available to all parents or guardians in a language that such parent or guardian understands.
9. The **Sheriff's** policy that addresses under what circumstances a student will be advised of constitutional rights prior to being questioned or interrogated by an **SRD/SRO** or other employee of the Sheriff is Gage County Sheriff's Office Miranda Policy Section M, page 5, or regulation addressing students being advised of constitutional rights prior to being question or interrogated by a school official or by an SRO in conjunction with a school official is Policy 3055 – School Resource Deputy(s).
10. The School Districts' policy required by NEB. REV. STAT. § 79-262 that addresses the type or category of student conduct or actions that will be referred to law enforcement for prosecution and the type of student conduct or actions that will be resolved as a disciplinary matter by a school official and not subject to referral to law enforcement is **Policy 5035 – Student Discipline**.
11. The **Sheriff** shall keep records on each student referral by an **SRD/SRO** for prosecution in response to an incident occurring at school, on school grounds, or at a school- sponsored event and ensure that such records allow for analysis of related data and delineate: (a) The reason for such referral; and (b) Federally identified demographic characteristics of such student.
12. School Resource **Deputy** of the **Sheriff** will maintain confidentiality of all matters regarding the School Districts, staff, and student information as required by law or applicable policy.

## **Section 6. Duties of the School Resource Deputy**

1. The purpose of the **SRD/SRO** is to provide for and maintain a safe, healthy, and productive learning environment, emphasizing the use of restorative approaches to address negative behavior, while acting as a positive role model for students by working in a cooperative, proactive, problem-solving manner between the **Sheriff** and the School Districts.
2. The **SRD/SRO** must build relationships, enhance community-policing activities, identify safety concerns within the schools, develop problem solving strategies with school administrators and staff, and collaboratively develop a comprehensive school safety plan with school administrators and staff.
3. The **SRD/SRO** shall attend and participate in applicable school meetings and to

- communicate and coordinate with the school principals, superintendent, and other appropriate school personnel concerning the needs of the school and its students.
4. In coordination with school administrators, the **SRD/SRO** may provide presentations to the school in safety, crime prevention, bullying, sexting, digital citizenship, etc., and may also provide additional services to the school if requested.
  5. The **Sheriff** and the **SRD/SRO** will work closely with School Districts' officials to improve the social and behavioral skills of students in order to maximize their ability to achieve academically and become successful, contributing citizens. Issues to be addressed may include substance abuse, violence reduction, social skills, problem-solving skills, and other areas of School Districts and community concern.
  6. The **Sheriff** and School Districts understand that the **SRD/SRO** may use measures to secure school property as followed through established protocols of the **Sheriff's Office** and the School Districts in the event of an emergency situation that requires the activation of emergency response procedures (i.e., critical incident protocols such as "lock down" and "lock out").
  7. The **SRD/SRO** will be a visible, active law enforcement figure dealing with the schools' law enforcement matters at school and at school activities and events.
  8. The **SRD/SRO** shall initiate positive interaction with students in the classroom and general areas of the school campus to promote the profession of **Deputy Sheriff's** and be a positive role model, while increasing the visibility and accessibility of **Law enforcement** to the school community.
  9. The **SRD/SRO** will share information with the schools' administrators about persons and conditions pertaining to school campus safety concerns to the extent allowed by law and the **County Sheriff's** policies.
  10. The **SRD/SRO** may assist with resolving law enforcement issues that affect the students, the schools, the School Districts, or the broader community. However, matters that are not of a significant or urgent nature or do not directly relate to the students, the schools, the School Districts, or to issues concerning child abuse or neglect, but only concern the broader community, should first be coordinated between school administration and law enforcement before being conducted at the school in order to minimize the effect on student education and the school environment. Outside law enforcement agencies shall first coordinate with school administration.
  11. The **SRD/SRO** shall notify school administration upon removing a student from the school campus.
  12. The **SRD/SRO** shall notify a parent as soon as possible when minor students are issued a criminal citation or arrested.
  13. If a student arrest is warranted, the **SRD/SRO** shall use the least disruptive and the least obtrusive manner reasonably available to conduct the arrest of the student. The **SRD/SRO** should be accompanied by a school principal **Sheriff's Office Supervisor**, if available, when arresting a student unless exigent circumstances require otherwise for the safety of the student, the **SRD**, and/or others.
  14. The **SRD/SRO** shall not use physical force or restraints on a student, including handcuffs, Tasers, mace, or other physical or chemical restraints unless a student's actions pose a threat or they are subject to arrest.
  15. The **SRD/SRO** shall question students in a manner and a time when it has the least impact on the student's education so long as the delay in questioning does not interfere with the effectiveness of an investigation, the disappearance or unavailability of a criminal suspect or evidence, or risk public safety or significant

- damage to property.
16. The **SRD/SRO** shall become familiar with School Districts' student conduct and discipline policies.
  17. The County and School Districts may coordinate and jointly fund other beneficial training opportunities for the **SRD/SRO** and school administrators.

## **Section 7. Duties of School Administrators**

1. School administrators shall provide the **Sheriff** with appropriate school administrator names and contact information to facilitate communication.
2. School administrators shall provide an office/storage or workspace for the **SRD/SRO**'s materials and personal effects.
3. School administrators shall provide a classroom, equipment, and supplies for classes or other training as discussed in this MOU provided by the **SRD/SRO**, if any.
4. School administrators will arrange meetings with the **SRD/SRO** as needed by the school administration.
5. School Administrators and the **SRD/SRO** will coordinate to differentiate between school disciplinary issues (school administrator responsibility) and criminal issues (**SRD/SRO** responsibility) and respond appropriately, deescalating school-based incidents whenever possible. Examples of student offenses best handled by the **SRD/SRO**, include, but are not limited to: gang related activity; possession of a weapon; possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs; possession, use, or distribution of pornography; criminal activity such as theft, graffiti, etc.; sexual assault; hazing; behavior that is an immediate threat to others; terroristic threats; and other criminal law violations that may constitute **a class I misdemeanor or a felony**. Examples of student offenses best handled by school administrators, include, but are not limited to: dress code violations; disruptive behavior that is not a threat to others or to the public safety, such as defiance of authority; profanity; possession of inappropriate items; inciting, but not actively participating in inappropriate behavior; truancy or attendance violations; offenses that would be considered **less than a class I misdemeanor**, an infraction, or a status offense (i.e., a violation of the law that would not be a violation but for the age of the offender, such as certain alcohol and tobacco offenses) under criminal law; and other minor violations of School District policies. Student suicide threats wherein the student and possibly others may be placed at risk should be handled expeditiously and coordinated between the **SRD/SRO** and school administrators to determine the best course of action in which to address the situation.
6. School administrators shall confer with the **SRD/SRO** for student offenses that constitute a minor violation of the law. After consultation, a determination will be made as to whether such matters will be best handled by school administration or the **SRD/SRO**.
7. School administrators shall confer with the **SRD/SRO** on issues that do not involve a real and immediate threat to persons or to the public safety, such as public order offenses, including disorderly conduct, disturbance/disruption of schools or public assembly, trespass, loitering, and fighting that does not involve physical injury or a weapon. After consultation, a determination will be made as to whether such matters will be best handled by school administration or the **SRD**.
8. School administrators will make an effort to handle routine student conduct and disciplinary matters without involving the **SRD/SRO** in a law enforcement capacity,

unless it is absolutely necessary or required by law.

9. School administrators will facilitate **SRD/SRO** -initiated investigations and actions.
10. School administrators will provide ongoing feedback to the County for **SRD/SRO** evaluation purposes.
11. School administrators should notify the **SRD/SRO** responding to a school-based infraction if any student involved has a disability with an accompanying Individualized Education Program ("IEP"), Section 504 Plan, or Health Care Plan, and who therefore may require special treatment or accommodations to the extent such notice is permitted by law.
12. The School Districts acknowledge that the **SRD/SRO** is required by the **Sheriff's Office** policies and procedures to attend mandatory trainings and/or meetings.
13. If applicable and deemed necessary, school administrators will provide opportunities for the **SRD/SRO** and school administration to meet with parents and community members during the school year.
14. The County and School Districts may coordinate and jointly fund and provide other beneficial training opportunities for the **SRD/SRO** and school administrators.

## **Section 8. Student Rights**

### **SRD** Search and Seizure

1. The **SRD/SRO** may conduct or participate in a search of a student's person, school locker, personal belongings, electronic devices, or vehicle only where there is "probable cause" to believe that the search will turn up evidence that the student has committed or is committing a criminal offense.
2. It is recommended that in addition to having probable cause, the **SRD/SRO** should follow state and federal law and the **Sheriff's Office** policies and procedures when conducting searches of persons and property which may require a search warrant.
3. Except in the event of exigent circumstances, the **SRD/SRO** shall inform school administrators prior to conducting a "probable cause" search where practicable.
4. The **SRD/SRO** shall not ask school administrators to search a student's person, school locker, personal belongings, electronic devices, or vehicle in an effort to circumvent the student's legal rights and protections.

### School Administrators Search and Seizure

1. A school administrator may conduct a search of a student's person, personal belongings, electronic devices, or vehicle in accordance with the "reasonable suspicion" legal standards.
2. Absent a real and immediate threat to any person or to the public safety, a school administrator shall not ask the **SRD/SRO** to be present or participate in a search when no probable cause has been established.
3. Strip searches of students by school administrators are prohibited.

### Student Questioning

1. **SRD/SRO**. The **SRD/SRO** may question a student as provided in School District policy 3055 – School Resource Officers and/or 5022 – Investigations, Arrests, and Other Student Contact by Law Enforcement and Health and Human Services.
2. School Administrators – Student Interviews and Questioning. School administrators are

free to communicate, interview, and question students for any academic and non-academic matters, including, but not limited to, issues relating to school and student safety, policy compliance and violations, student discipline, etc.

#### Access to Education Records

1. School administrators shall allow the **SRD/SRO** to inspect and copy any public records, including student "directory information," maintained by the school to the extent allowed by state and federal law and School District policy.
2. If some information in a student's educational record is needed in an emergency to protect the health or safety of the student or others, school administrators shall disclose to the **SRD/SRO** the information that is needed to respond to the emergency situation based on: (i) the seriousness of the threat to the health or safety of an individual; (ii) the need of the information to meet the emergency situation; and (iii) the extent to which time is of the essence.
3. If the **SRD/SRO** needs confidential student educational record information, but no emergency situation exists, the information may be disclosed only as allowed by applicable state and federal law.
4. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary within this Agreement, the Parties shall fully comply with the requirements of NEB. REV. STAT. § 79-2,104 or any other state or federal law or regulation, including Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232g), and its implementing regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 99), regarding the confidentiality of student information and records. All the **Sheriff** requests for student records made to the School District shall be in compliance with this provision. The **Sheriff** represents, warrants, and agrees that it will: (1) hold the student records in strict confidence and will not use or disclose student records except as (a) permitted or required by this Agreement, (b) required by law, or (c) otherwise authorized by the School District in writing. At the request of a School District, the **Sheriff** agrees to provide the School District with a written report of the student records and information disclosed to third parties. A breach of these confidentiality requirements shall constitute grounds for the immediate termination of this MOU.

#### **Section 9. Training**

1. Within six months of being assigned as **SRD/SRO**s to the School Districts, each **SRD/SRO** shall have completed a minimum of twenty hours of training focused on school-based law enforcement, including but not limited to, coursework focused on school law, student rights, understanding special needs of students and students with disabilities, conflict de-escalation techniques, ethics for School Resource **Deputies**, teenage brain development, adolescent behavior, implicit bias training, diversity and cultural awareness, trauma-informed responses, and preventing violence in school settings. Assignments as an **SRD/SRO** that do not meet the definition of "school resource **deputy/officer**" found at NEB. REV. STAT. § 79-2702 are not subject to the requirements of this MOU, but the use of such assignments should not be used to circumvent the training requirements set forth in in this paragraph.
2. Within six months of an **SRD/SRO** being assigned to a school building, a minimum of one administrator in each elementary and secondary school building will have completed a minimum of twenty hours of training, excluding previous college

coursework, focused on school-based law enforcement, including, but not limited to course work focused on school law, student rights, understanding special needs of students and students with disabilities, conflict de-escalation techniques, ethics, teenage brain development, adolescent behavior, implicit bias training, diversity and cultural awareness, trauma-informed responses, restorative justice, and preventing violence in school settings.

## **Section 10. Program Review**

1. The Sheriff's student and parent complaint process or policy to express a concern or file a complaint about an SRD/SRO and the practice of the SRD/SRO with the Sheriff is Section R, pages 1-13. The School Districts' student and parent complaint policy to express a concern or file a complaint about an SRD/SRO and the practice of the SRD with the Sheriff Policy 2006- Complaint Procedure.
2. The School Districts, in collaboration with the Sheriff, shall conduct an annual review of the program and shall: (a) make modifications as necessary to accomplish stated program goals; and (b) create a report of the review to be provided to both parties and, to the extent permitted by law, made available online. The parties will establish an evaluation process, to include community stakeholders, as part of the regular review of program goals and relevant data, including the specific measures, data points, and metrics included in the report. The first of the annual report will be for the first full school year following the formation of this MOU.

## **Section 11. Community Partnerships**

The School Districts and the Sheriff shall continue to collaborate with community and governmental agencies to further program goals, support strategies to divert students from the criminal justice system, and access additional support services for students.

## **Section 12. Payment**

The monthly cost per SRD is \$6,000.00. The Sheriff shall invoice each School District for one-third of the cost of the SRD services rendered under this MOU in ten (10) monthly installments of \$1,200.00 with the first invoice being delivered in September, 2024. Subsequent invoices will be delivered on a monthly basis, with the final invoice being delivered in June, 2025. The School Districts shall make payment for SRD/SRO services within thirty (30) days of its receipt of an invoice from the Sheriff.

## **Section 13. Inspection of Records**

The Sheriff shall establish and maintain books, records, and documents (including electronic storage media) sufficient to reflect all income and expenditures of funds provided by the School Districts under this MOU. All records relating to the SRD/SRO Program, regardless of the form in which they are kept, shall be open to inspection and subject to audit, inspection, examination, evaluation, and/or reproduction, during normal working hours, by the School Districts' agent or its authorized representative to permit the School Districts to evaluate, analyze, and verify the satisfactory performance of the terms and conditions of this MOU and to evaluate, analyze, and verify any and all invoices, billings, payments, and/or claims submitted by the Sheriff pursuant to this MOU.

## **Section 14. Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs)**

All parties agree that any use of BWCs by **SRD/SRO**s must be subject to and in compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding their use and operation. The **Sheriff** shall use its best efforts to notify the School Districts at least two weeks before its officers assigned to the School Districts are to begin use of BWCs, and it will provide written information and training to the building principals and superintendent of the schools in which the officers may enter. Training shall include the objectives and procedures for the use of BWCs in public and in schools. Every **SRD/SRO** equipped with a BWC shall be trained in the operation of the equipment prior to its use. To maximize the effectiveness of the BWC and the integrity of the video documentation, **SRD/SRO** shall adhere to the objectives and procedures outlined in this MOU and the **Sheriff's** general operations orders or similar policies or procedures when they utilize BWCs. The **Sheriff** may, if not otherwise prohibited by law, provide to the School Districts copies of any such filming of students, parents, employees, or others upon school property, upon request for such copies by the applicable School District, as a law enforcement record. In the event that the **Sheriff** receives advice that providing a copy of such video is prohibited, the **Sheriff** agrees to utilize its best efforts to facilitate the availability of its officer(s) that made the video to testify, upon request by the applicable School District, in any school disciplinary hearing concerning his/her/their knowledge of the facts and circumstances of the videoed incident. Any such film or video taken by, and kept in the possession of the **Sheriff** may be considered law enforcement records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. sec. 1232g and 34 C.F.R. Sec. 99.8. Any copy of such film or video, if permitted by law to be provided to the School Districts, may become an educational record of that District. The **Sheriff's Deputies** shall at all times recognize and comply with the confidentiality of student and education records and may only seek such records in accordance with the requirements of School Districts' policy and state and federal law.

## **Section 15. Nondiscrimination**

The Parties shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant who is to be employed for performance of this MOU with respect to his or her hire, tenure, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of his race, color, religion, sex, disability, or national origin.

## **Section 16. Employment Eligibility Verification**

The Parties shall use a federal immigration verification system to determine the work eligibility status of employees hired on or after October 1, 2009 and who are physically performing services within the State of Nebraska. If a party employs or contracts with any subcontractor in connection with this MOU, the contracting party shall include a provision in the contract requiring the subcontractor to use a federal immigration verification system to determine the work eligibility status of new employees physically performing services within the State of Nebraska.

## **Section 17. Termination**

Either party may terminate this MOU for any or no reason and at any time by giving the other party at least **sixty (60)** days prior written notice of the same. Any joint funds or property in possession of the Parties as a result of this MOU shall be divided and distributed to the party that contributed it or funded its purchases.

## **Section 18. Appropriation of Funds**

The Parties' obligations under this MOU are expressly subject to the appropriation of funds by the School Districts' Boards of Education and the **Sheriff's** governing authority. Further, in the event that funds are not appropriated in whole or in part sufficient for performance of the obligations under this MOU, the parties may terminate this MOU.

## **Section 19. Default**

A party shall be in default under this MOU if it breaches, defaults on or otherwise fails to perform or satisfy any agreement, obligation, term, covenant, condition or provision set forth herein or arising hereunder, and such breach, default or failure to perform continues for a period of thirty (30) days after the party receives written notice of such breach or failure to perform from the other party; or, if such breach cannot reasonably be cured within such 30-day period, and the breaching party fails to commence to cure such breach within such thirty (30) days after notice from the non-breaching party or fails to proceed diligently to cure such breach within a reasonable time thereafter. Upon default by a party, the remaining parties may pursue any remedy provided by law.

## **Section 20. Liability Insurance**

Each party shall obtain and pay for its own liability insurance coverage for their participation in this MOU. The minimum coverage under such insurance shall be \$1,000,000 for one accident and \$5,000,000 in the aggregate.

## **Section 21. Notice**

Each Party giving any Notice ("Notice") under this MOU must give written Notice by personal delivery, registered or certified mail (in each case, return receipt requested and postage prepaid), or electronic mail to each School Districts' superintendent at the e-mail address on file with the Nebraska Department of Education and to the **Gage County Clerk** at **(Gage County Clerk, Dawn Hill at Dhill@gagecountyne.gov)**. Notice is effective only if the party giving the Notice has complied with this section.

## **Section 22. Indemnification**

To the extent permitted by applicable law, but without waiving any rights under any applicable state governmental immunity act or constitutional provision, each party agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the other party from and against any loss, cost, or damage of any kind (including reasonable outside attorneys' fees) to the extent arising out of its breach of this Agreement, and/or its negligence or willful misconduct.

### **Section 23. No Third-Party Beneficiaries**

This MOU does not and is not intended to confer any rights or remedies upon any person other than the Parties.

### **Section 24. Independent Contractor**

The Parties to this agreement shall at all times be acting in the capacity of independent contractors and not as an officer, employee or agent of one another. Neither party nor its respective agents, employees, subcontractors, or assignees shall represent to others that it has the authority to bind the other party unless specifically authorized in writing to do so. The Sheriff shall at all times be responsible for all aspects of the employment, control, and direction of SRD/SROs assigned under this MOU. Nothing within this MOU is intended to create an agency or employment relationship between the School Districts and any deputy assigned by the Sheriff to participate in the SRD/SRO Program. All compensation, wages, salaries, benefits and other emoluments of employment payable to the SRD/SROs shall be the sole responsibility of the Sheriff. No right to School District retirement, leave benefits, or any other benefits of School District employees shall exist as a result of the performance of any duties or responsibilities under this MOU. The School Districts shall not be responsible for social security, withholding taxes, contributions to unemployment compensation funds, or insurance for the Sheriff's Deputies, employees, agents, subcontractors, or assignees.

### **Section 25. Amendments and Modifications**

The Parties may amend or modify this MOU only by a signed, written unanimous agreement that identifies itself as an amendment or modification to this MOU. No other alterations in the terms of this agreement shall be valid or binding.

### **Section 26. Severability**

If any provision of this MOU is determined to be unenforceable, the remaining provisions of this MOU remain in full force, if the essential terms and conditions of this MOU for each party remain enforceable.

### **Section 27. Counterparts**

The Parties may execute this MOU in multiple counterparts, each of which constitutes an original, and all of which, collectively, constitute only one agreement. The signatures of all of the Parties need not appear on the same counterpart, and delivery of an executed counterpart signature page by facsimile or other electronic means is as effective as executing and delivering this MOU in the presence of the other Parties to this MOU. This MOU is effective upon delivery of one executed counterpart from each party to the other party. In proving this MOU, a party must produce or account only for the executed counterpart of the party to be charged.

### **Section 28. Assignment**

The Parties shall not assign or otherwise dispose of this MOU or any duty, right, or responsibility contemplated in this MOU to any other person or entity without the previous written consent of the other Parties.

### **Section 29. Publication and Posting**

Within three months of the adoption of this MOU, the School Districts' Superintendents shall provide a copy of it to the Nebraska Department of Education and post it on the School Districts' websites. If any change is made to this MOU, each School District's Superintendent shall provide an updated copy of the MOU to the Nebraska Department of Education and post a copy on the School District's website no later than January 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year.

### **Section 30. Entire MOU**

The MOU is the complete and exclusive expression of the Parties' agreement on the matters contained in this MOU. All prior and contemporaneous negotiations and agreements between the Parties on the matters contained in this MOU are expressly merged into and superseded by this MOU.

**GAGE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 34-0034,  
A/K/A FREEMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**GAGE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 34-0001,  
A/K/A SOUTHERN SCHOOLS**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**GAGE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 34-0100,  
A/K/A DILLER-ODELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**GAGE COUNTY, NEBRASKA**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**GAGE COUNTY SHERIFF, NEBRASKA**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO  
INCREASE BASE GROWTH PERCENTAGE TO  
DETERMINE ITS PROPERTY TAX REQUEST AUTHORITY**

WHEREAS, the Board of Education ("Board") for **Gage County School District 34-0001**, commonly known as **Southern Public Schools** (the "School District"), is planning the School District's annual budget for the 2024–2025 school year; and

WHEREAS, the funding needed for the School District to meet its obligations to its students will require an increase in the base growth percentage used to determine the School District's property tax request authority under NEB. REV. STAT. § 79-3403; and

WHEREAS, Nebraska law authorizes the Board, upon an affirmative vote of at least seventy percent (70%) of the Board, to increase such base growth percentage by up to 7%.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that, pursuant to NEB. REV. STAT. § 79-3405(2), the Board hereby increases the base growth percentage used to determine its property tax request authority for the 2024–2025 budget in an amount of 7%.

Said Resolution was adopted by the Board of Education by a vote of \_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the Board of Education

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary of the Board of Education

# Property Tax Request Authority

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Year	Property Tax Request Authority	Additional Base Growth Percentage if 70% Board Approval	Property Tax Request Authority including Board Approved Amount
2023-2024	\$4,710,097	\$461,836	\$5,172,040
2024-2025	\$4,493,897	\$471,180	\$4,965,077
Difference	(\$216,200)	\$9,244	(\$206,963)



# Prior Year Unused Property Tax Request Authority

2023/24 Property Tax Request Authority	2023/24 Additional Base Growth Percentage 70% Board Approval	2023/24 Property Tax Request Authority including Board Approved Amount	2023/24 Total Property Tax Request	Prior Year Unused Property Tax Authority
\$4,710,204	\$461,836	\$5,172,040	\$4,571,619	\$600,421
2024/25 Property Tax Request Authority	2024/25 Additional Base Growth Percentage 70% Board Approval	2024/25 Property Tax Request Authority including Board Approved Amount	2024/25 Total Property Tax Request	Prior Year Unused Property Tax Authority
\$4,493,897	\$471,180	\$4,965,077	\$4,725,000	\$240,077

