Regular Monthly Meeting of the Kearney Public Schools Board of Education
Kearney Public Schools Board of Education
Monday, November 9, 2026 at 5:30 PM
2nd Floor Staff Development Room, Administration Building
320 W 24th Street
Kearney, NE 68845

1. **Routine Business**

1.A. **Call to Order**
President Hazard called the meeting to order at 5:29 PM.

1.B. **Open Meetings Act Announcement**
This is an open, public meeting of the Kearney Public Schools Board of Education, and a copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted in this room.

1.C. **Board Meeting Decorum Expectations**

1.D. **Pledge of Allegiance**

1.E. **Roll Call**
Attendance Taken at 5:31 PM.

Amy Barth:	Present
Drew Blessing:	Present
Niki Deeds:	Present
Paul Hazard:	Present
John Icenogle:	Present
Amanda Smallcomb:	Present

1.E.I. Excuse Absent Board Member

1.F. **Approval of the Agenda**
Move to approve the agenda for the meeting, as presented. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Drew Blessing, Passed.
Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

2. **Recognitions**

2.A. Recognition of Kearney High School Senior Andrew Petzet for being named NSAA Believers and Achievers Honoree

- Nathan LeFeber, Kearney High School band teacher, recognized Andrew Petzet as one of 48 students statewide selected for the NSAA Believers & Achievers Award. Students are nominated by teachers and peers based on outstanding citizenship, involvement in sports and activities, and academic achievement. Mr. LeFeber nominated Andrew and expressed pride in seeing him selected for this prestigious honor.

- Andrew expressed appreciation for the opportunities and support provided by the district, recognizing the positive impact they have on his daily experiences. He thanked those involved and shared his commitment to continuing to work hard. Andrew is considering attending UNL, majoring in mechanical engineering and being involved in their fine arts program.

2.B. Recognition of the KHS Boys Soccer Team for Receiving the National United Soccer Coaches Team Academic Award and the Nebraska Coaches Association Team Academic Award

- Scott Steinbrook, Kearney High School soccer coach, praised Andrew for his accomplishments in both athletics and fine arts, highlighting his involvement in soccer and marching band. He noted that Andrew is an example of a student who successfully pursues multiple passions while contributing to his teams.
- Coach Steinbrook recognized the KHS boys' soccer team for earning a 3.56 team GPA, continuing its tradition of strong academic achievement. He emphasized the team's commitment to balancing demanding athletic schedules with classroom success and expressed pride in the high expectations and standards the student-athletes continue to uphold. The KHS boys soccer team has received this award every year for close to ten years. Coach Steinbrook expressed appreciation for having student-athletes in Kearney who are committed to excellence in multiple areas.

2.C. Resolution of Support of Military Students and Families

- John Icenogle, Board member, read the Resolution of Support for Military Students and Families.

Move to adopt the resolution of support for military families in Kearney Public Schools. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Niki Deeds, Passed.
Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

3. **Presentations**

3.A. Presentation from Amber Taylor, Principal of Northeast Elementary School, about Building Teacher and Staff Leadership

- Amber Taylor, Northeast Elementary School principal, shared a new teacher leadership model, developed to strengthen instructional practices and address academic gaps identified through data analysis. After receiving an Additional Targeted Support and Improvement designation for its special education population in 2023, the school formed a teacher leadership team to increase teacher ownership, collaboration, and instructional effectiveness. With support from ESU 10, teacher leaders participated in professional development, including personality assessments, to better understand leadership styles and team dynamics. Grade-level leaders now guide weekly meetings, while the building leadership team meets monthly to review academic data, technology use, instructional planning, and areas for improvement. The new approach is helping

improve K-5 instructional alignment, communication between grade levels, teacher leadership capacity, and data-driven decision-making. Mrs. Taylor expressed pride in the staff's hard work, noting that Northeast has earned an Excellent designation for the second consecutive year and remains committed to continued academic growth and improvement.

3.B. Presentation from Vicky DeWald, Theater Director at Kearney High School, on the Upgrades to the KHS CHAT

- Vicky DeWald, Kearney High School theater director, shared an update on how Board-approved funding was used to purchase and upgrade lighting, sound, microphones, stage equipment, and special effects. By finding cost savings and reallocating funds, the program was able to purchase more equipment than originally anticipated. These upgrades have improved production quality and eliminated the need to rent microphones for the fall play.
- Mrs. DeWald also highlighted the growth of the technical theater program, which now involves approximately 35 technical students who operate lighting, sound, backstage operations, set construction, costumes, and special effects. The program provides students with hands-on experience, transferable skills, and opportunities to take leadership roles in productions. Appreciation was expressed to the Board for its support and to those who helped identify and purchase the equipment.
- Superintendent Mundorf praised Kearney High School's theater and performing arts programs, encouraging attendance at the fall and spring musicals and Musicalia to experience the students' outstanding talent. He also highlighted KHS students selected to participate in the annual Nebraska Theater Showcase in Omaha, recognizing the district's strong theater, music, and performing arts programs.
- Paul Hazard, Board member, emphasized that upgrading the theater lighting system was necessary, as the equipment had not been updated in nearly 10 years. Mr. Hazard noted the importance of maintaining district facilities, recognized the growth of the technical theater program and thanked KHS teachers for building a program that provides meaningful opportunities for so many students.

3.C. Annual Report on Computer Science & Technology Required Course

- Superintendent Mundorf presented an update on Nebraska's computer science requirements, including course enrollments and personal finance education. Kearney Public Schools offers a comprehensive curriculum ranging from elementary digital citizenship and keyboarding to middle and high school business, computer science, coding, and advanced technology courses. Enrollment numbers were shared for required and elective courses, including 415 freshmen enrolled in Foundations of Computing and 251 students in Intro to Personal Finance. Dr. Mundorf confirmed that administration is addressing all state-required areas, including AI literacy, coding, cybersecurity, computer science, and personal finance. The report will be submitted to the state as required by law.

4. **Public Participation/Comment**

5. **Board Reports**

6. **Consent Agenda**
Move to approve the items on the Consent Agenda, as presented. This motion, made by Amanda Smallcomb and seconded by Amy Barth, Passed.
Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

6.A. Approval of Minutes of the October 12, 2026, Regular Meeting and the November 4, 2026, Board Committee of the Whole Meeting, of the Board of Education

6.B. Approval of the November 2026 Claims

6.C. Approval of the November 2026 Financial Reports

7. **Regular Agenda - Personnel**

7.A. Acceptance of Resignations and Retirements

- Dr. Mundorf reported that November 5th was the deadline for staff members to submit retirement notices and receive a $500 district incentive. The early notification allows KPS additional time to recruit and secure replacements. As a result, the district reported a higher number of retirements this month.

Move to accept, with regret, the resignation and retirements as presented. This motion, made by Drew Blessing and seconded by Amanda Smallcomb, Passed.
Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

7.B. Approval of the Employment of Certificated Staff
Move to employ the certificated staff at Kearney Public Schools for the 2026-2027 school year as presented. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Niki Deeds, Passed.
Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

8. **Regular Agenda - Business**

9. **Regular Agenda - Miscellaneous**

9.A. Conduct a Performance Evaluation of the Superintendent

- Board members shared positive feedback during the superintendent's annual evaluation, recognizing Dr. Mundorf's leadership, trust in staff, knowledge of district operations, community involvement, and advocacy for students. They praised his vision and accomplishments, including the JAG and JROTC programs, Cottonwood's new direction, facility improvements, and curriculum updates. Board members also emphasized the importance of ensuring recent initiatives are successful, allowing time to evaluate progress, and continuing to make decisions guided by Board policy. They

expressed appreciation for Dr. Mundorf's accessibility, willingness to take responsibility for district decisions, and commitment to keeping communication open with staff and the community.

10. **Closed Session**

- The Board moved to closed session at 6:19 PM.

Move to enter closed session for the purpose of conducting a performance evaluation of the Superintendent, and to prevent needless injury to the reputation of the person, and if the person has not requested a hearing. This motion, made by Paul Hazard and seconded by Drew Blessing, Passed.
Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

11. **Return to Open Session**

- The Board returned to open session at 7:37 PM.

12. **Next Meeting**

13. **Adjournment**

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 PM.

Move to adjourn the meeting. This motion, made by John Icenogle and seconded by Niki Deeds, Passed.
Amy Barth: Yea, Drew Blessing: Yea, Niki Deeds: Yea, Paul Hazard: Yea, John Icenogle: Yea, Amanda Smallcomb: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0

Notice of Meeting
This meeting was publicized in the Kearney Hub on November 5, 2026; radio stations KGFW and KKPR; and KSNB and KHGI T.V.

_____
Niki Deeds, Secretary