

# Board of Education Regular Meeting

November 14, 2022

Blair Public Library

2233 Civic Drive, Blair NE 68008

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Information concerning the Open Meeting Law, Chapter 84, Article 14 of Nebraska State Statutes, is posted in the room at a location accessible to members of the public and attached to the online agenda. The meeting notice was published in the Washington County Pilot-Tribune & Enterprise on Tuesday, November 8, 2022.

## 1. Call to Order

Mrs. Kari Loseke, President, called the Board of Education Regular meeting to order at 7:00pm.

## 2. Roll Call

Present Board Members: Kari Loseke, Denise Cada, Laura Ronning, Bob Schoby, Brittney Gunderson, Steve Callaghan, Deb Parks and Ginger Fredericksen.

### 2.1. Approval of Absent Board Members

**Motion Passed:** I move to approve the absence of Board Member(s): Brandi Petersen passed with a motion by Laura Ronning and a second by Bob Schoby.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Absent
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

## 3. Pledge of Allegiance

Dr. Gilson led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## 4. Approval of Emergency Additions to the Agenda – None

## 5. Call for Removal of Consent Agenda Items - None

## 6. Consent Agenda

**Motion Passed:** I move to approve the Consent Agenda as presented passed with a motion by Steve Callaghan and a second by Brittney Gunderson.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Absent
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

- 6.1. Waiver of reading minutes from previous meeting**
- 6.2. Acceptance of minutes of the previous meeting as published**
- 6.3. Receipt of Communications**
- 6.4. Treasurer's Report**
- 6.5. Audit of Claims**

**7. Business**

**7.1. Items removed from Consent Agenda - None**

**7.2. Recognitions**

**7.2.1. Blair Wrestling Club**

The Blair Wrestling Club has purchased software called Mat Boss for the Blair High School Girls Wrestling Program. The value of the software was less than \$1,000 and does not require Board approval but we thank them for their continued support.

**7.3. Acceptance of Gifts**

**7.3.1. Blair Wrestling Club**

The Blair Community Schools Foundation donated \$2,466.55 on behalf of the Blair Wrestling Club to help offset hotel expenses for the Blair High School Wrestling team this 2022-23 wrestling season.

**Motion Passed:** I move to accept the donation in the amount of \$2,466.55 from the Blair Community Schools Foundation on behalf of the Blair Wrestling Club to help offset hotel expenses for the 2022-23 wrestling season passed with a motion by Ginger Fredericksen and a second by Steve Callaghan.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Absent
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

**7.3.2. Dollar General Literacy Grant**

Otte Blair Middle School, with the assistance of Board Member Ginger Fredericksen, received the Dollar General Literacy Foundation grant in the amount of \$4,000. Through the grant investments in local schools, nonprofits and libraries, they support teachers, librarians and nonprofit leaders as they help individuals of all ages learn to read and prepare for the high school equivalency test or learn English.

**Motion Passed:** I move to accept the Dollar General Literacy Foundation grant in the amount of \$4,000 passed with a motion by Laura Ronning and a second by Brittney Gunderson

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes

Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Absent
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

#### **7.4. Consideration of Communications**

#### **7.5. Comments from The Public - None**

#### **7.6. Committee Reports**

##### **7.6.1. Policy Committee & Americanism Committee**

The Policy Committee & Americanism Committee met on Monday, October 24, 2022 at 12:00pm. A report from the committee was given by Deb Parks.

##### **7.6.2. BG&T Committee**

The Buildings, Grounds, and Transportation Committee met on Tuesday, November 1, 2022 at 4:30pm. A report from the committee was given by Bob Schoby.

##### **7.6.4. Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee met on Tuesday, November 8, 2022 at 12:00pm. A report from the committee was given by Laura Ronning.

**Motion Passed:** I move to accept the 2021-22 Audited Financial Statements and Audit Report from Dana F. Cole & Company, LLP as presented passed with a motion by Laura Ronning and a second by Steve Callaghan.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Absent
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

**Motion Passed:** I move to approve the purchase of new band uniforms from Stanbury Uniforms, Inc. in the amount of \$130,597.05. As this is a unique custom item, it does not require to be sent out for bidding purposes, passed with a motion by Laura Ronning and a second by Deb Parks.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Absent
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

### 7.7. Assistant Girl's Wrestling Coach

Blair Community Schools has 29 girls planning to participate in Girls Wrestling in Blair's first ever year of competition. The average coach per student for all activities is 11.3. Girls Wrestling would begin with one coach per 29 students. With the addition of an Assistant Coach added, the girls would begin with a 14.5 ratio. Boy's Wrestling is at 15 per coach for each student/athlete.

**Motion Passed:** I move to approve the Blair School's Administration to hire an Assistant Girls Wrestling coach for the 2022-23 season passed with a motion by Steve Callaghan and a second by Laura Ronning.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Absent
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

### 7.8. K-5 Configuration

For the past year and a half, two (2) Ad Hoc Committees have been formed to recommend a five-year plan for the most effective use of educational programming, personnel, and facilities to support current and projected increases in student enrollment. The first Ad Hoc team met for one year and was composed primarily of K-5 teachers and administrators. The second team has met to review the recommendations of the K-5 Ad Hoc team and to begin planning for the needs of grades 6-12. The goal of the Ad Hoc Committee was to develop a recommendation the school board could discuss and take action on in November 2022.

Both Ad Hoc teams determined that the enrollment is likely to increase due to the following facts. There has been an average of 50 new housing permits issued within the Blair city limits for the past three years. Blair is forecasted to continue to build 50 new houses per year. 59 houses per year equal about 2% growth or two new students per grade per year.

There has also been considerable new housing development throughout Washington County and there has been 25-45 new housing permits issued per year. Plus, growth in existing and new industry gives reason for the Ad Hoc committees to believe there will be a steady increase of about 2% in enrollment per year. In fact, it may be possible for Blair to receive additional growth beyond 2% some years. For example, between 2021 and 2022 BCS had a 5% increase or about 4.8 more students per grade level. This resulted in BCS adding an 8th section of K-2.

The Ad Hoc Committee shared many positive educational advantages to switching from a K-2 to a K-5. First, siblings only get to remain together in the same building for a short period of time making transportation and planning difficult for families. Educationally, the K-2 buildings have not had a counselor or principal in each building. Specials teachers and Special Education teachers have to travel shortening the time they can work directly with students. K-2 schedules are determined by specials schedules and travel availability of support staff instead of based on students' educational needs.

The gyms at North and South also must be used as cafeterias, so it forces specials times to occur during prime time reading and math instructional times. This shortens the time students get the opportunity for reading, literacy, and math instruction. The K-2 teachers also do not have daily planning time together due to having staff at three buildings.

Another benefit of having a K-5 configuration is that there would be a full-time principal, counselor, and high abilities teacher in each building. Plus, special education staff and reading specialists will be available on site. Also, the school personnel would get to know students more deeply because students would remain with their same school from kindergarten through 5th grade.

The committee studied the most efficient and effective grade level configurations and found only six similar size school districts (Falls City, Waverly, Norris, Nebraska City, Alliance, and Chadron) shared a K-2 configuration. These districts spent more per student \$13,743 than students in a K-5 configuration (\$13,146). The K-5 configuration was the most common for Nebraska schools of similar size. The cost per pupil in Blair for all schools in the 2020-21 school year was \$12,008 per student overall, but in K-2 it was (\$14,316).

The Committee determined that BCS could save as much as \$800,000 in certified staff and \$220,000 in classified staff annually if it were to move from a K-2 to a K-5 configuration. At a recent joint public meeting between the school district, county, and city agencies. 133 taxpayers attended and were firm in asking the school district to 'tighten their belts' and search for creative ways to control spending. The savings could be reinvested in the needs students have and can be used to reduce property taxes.

The Arbor Park building would house four sections of K-5 for all students who have attended North and South Elementary school. The Deerfield building would serve as a K-5 building for all students who have or will attend Deerfield.

The Ad Hoc committee also learned that there is a community-wide need for expanded early childhood education opportunities. The South building is ideal for allowing BCS to offer the same and expand on early childhood and preschool opportunities. The North Building would house the district's program to support students with behavioral and social needs. These students have been contracted outside the district from \$30,000 - \$40,000 per student. North would also house district office staff and some special education staff.

New playground equipment is necessary at Deerfield and Arbor Park. Preschool playground equipment would be added at South Elementary. The district also would look at adding restrooms for kindergarten classrooms at Arbor Park.

There are currently 65 third grade students at Arbor Park who attended Deerfield and 57 fourth graders. If a proposal is passed by the school board to convert from a K-2 to K-5 configuration, these students would return to Deerfield to make up three sections at each grade level. All students attending North and South would attend K-5 at Arbor Park.

The School Board will discuss the Ad Hoc Recommendation and determine if more time and investigation is needed.

Additional meetings were scheduled as follows:

- Parents Meeting on K-5 Configuration - Monday, November 21st @ 12:00pm (Blair Public Library)
- Parents Meeting on K-5 Configuration - Tuesday, November 22st @ 12:00pm (Blair Public Library)
- Parents Meeting - Monday, November 28th @ 7:00pm (BHS Auditorium)
- Special Board Meeting - Thursday, December 8th @ 7:00pm (Blair Public Library)
- Regular Board Meeting - Monday, December 12th @7:00pm (Blair Public Library)

**7.9. Approval of New Teachers – None**

**7.10. Acceptance of Resignation**

A letter of resignation was received from Dr. Ryan O’Grady, Director of Special Education and Student Services, effective November 14, 2022.

**Motion Passed:** I move to accept the resignation of Dr. Ryan O’Grady, Director of Special Education and Student Services, effective November 14, 2022 passed with a motion by Ginger Fredericksen and a second by Bob Schoby.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Absent
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

**7.11. Strategic Plans & District Goals**

**7.12. Superintendent Report**

**7.13. Informational Item**

**8. Adjournment**

**Motion Passed:** I move to adjourn meeting at 8:26pm passed with a motion by Bob Schoby and a second by Steve Callaghan.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	No
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

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Angie Conety  
Secretary Board of Education

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Randall Gilson, Ed.D.  
Superintendent