

Pierce High School District #2
Monday, April 13, 2026- Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The Pierce Public School Board of Education met for the regular monthly meeting at 6:30 pm in the board room of Pierce High School. Members present were Dan Unseld, Lisa Freeman, Stefanie Dvorak, Adam Venteicher and Todd Wragge. Also, present were Superintendent Kendall Steffensen, Elementary Principal Trent Suehl, and thirteen guests.

Notice of the meeting was printed in the Pierce County Leader and posted on Pierce Public Schools website.

A welcome was extended to the public, the open meetings act pointed out, and roll call taken. Wragge moved to excuse Ryan Collison from the meeting due to illness. Venteicher seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Communication and correspondence from the Public

Jennifer Jackson from Heartland Counseling Services addressed the board regarding the continuation of Pierce Public Schools' contract with Heartland. She presented a chart outlining the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining these services, emphasizing that the primary benefits include cost-effectiveness for the district and that compliance and liability remain with Heartland rather than the school. She also noted that applicants have been received for a peer support position that would be provided to the district at no cost.

Mike Wagner expressed concerns regarding the budget and encouraged the board to prioritize financially responsible decision-making.

Consent Agenda

Wragge moved and Venteicher seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda consisting of the approval of minutes from the previous meeting, approval of claims and payment of bills, and financial reports. Venteicher pointed out that the general fund is larger than it typically is in April. Discussion was had on ensuring the general fund is used wisely and that during our budget meeting, a list of priorities is determined for the use of this money. Voting Unanimous, motion carried 5-0.

Reports and Information

Josie Painter reported on behalf of Student Council. The Student Council has several committees being worked on such as teacher appreciation and senior goodbye. The Student

Council has also decided to donate their fundraising money from the Bluejay clothing sales to Ethan Dohman.

Lillian Stern and Layken Prince reported for the FFA. The FFA chapter is working with those individuals going to state and planning their yearly banquet.

Les Painter also spoke and gave recognition to the board and his administration for doing a great job at the school. He states that he feels very supportive by both administration and school board.

Written reports were given to the board from the high school and elementary principal. A highlight from the elementary report include the current enrollment at the Pierce Elementary as well as the number of children registered for Pre-K and Kindergarten. Parent Teacher Conferences were very well attended (98% of parents attended). K-6 students will be completing their Acadience Reading (DIBELS) assessments on April 21st and 23rd. This data will be used to monitor student progress and make instructional decisions. 3rd-6th grade NSCAS testing is currently in progress and will be running through the beginning of May. MAP assessments will also be taking place this month for grades K-2. On April 30th, Pierce Elementary will be having the annual spring concert in the high school gym.

Brahmer included information teacher evaluations. He is almost done with the walk-through evaluations of the staff. Each teacher is evaluated 3 times per year and he focuses on student engagement and involvement in the classroom. The 7th and 8th graders started state testing this last week. Brahmer is currently working on teaching assignments, which he anticipates to look similar to this year. He is still searching to fill a coaching and sponsorship position. Prom took place on March 20th. Safety drills continue to occur with evacuation and tornado drills still to take place this Spring. The Senior's last day is May 1st with graduation on May 9th at 2pm. Parent Teacher Conferences were held and approximately 2/3 of the parents attended. All of the Spring sports are actively participating in competition.

Superintendent Steffensen included information on the upcoming bond. Informational flyers were mailed to household and there will be 3 informational meetings, with the first being held this Thursday, April 16th at 6:30pm. He also included information on the upcoming window and door replacement. Bids are due by April 14th. There are some concern with the contractors of being able to have this completed over the summer for both buildings. Once bids are received, we will discuss a more concrete deadline. Steffensen included a legislative update with some education related highlights. LB 265 related to PreK through 2nd grade suspensions and enrollment option provisions has been signed into law. LB 803 related to changing the timeline and procedures of the joint public hearing process and LB 937 related to many educational topics will likely be approved and signed into law. LB 1050, 1219, 937 and AM 2965 either failed to advance or failed to be added.

Discussion Items

For the first discussion item, the school board discussed scheduling a Board of Education/Administration retreat. This will be scheduled once the bond results are in, as this will drive the meetings priorities.

For the second discussion item, the Committee on American Civics had a meeting and opened the meeting for public comment. There was no public comment.

The third discussion item of administrative compensation will be held in executive session to protect the public interest.

Action Items

The first action item, Venteicher moved to continue the contract with Heartland Counseling Services for the 2026/2027 school year. The contract should include two LMHP and a peer support person if able. Wragge seconded. Discussion was had regarding the decision that was made at last month's meeting (discontinuing the contract with Heartland and hiring the districts own LMHP). Assuming the intention to return is accurate, extending the contract with Heartland produces the same result (having at least one LMHP for our district), which would cost the district substantially less and provides the possibility of continuing services as they are now. Voting unanimous, motion carried 5-0.

For the second action item of non-certificated employee compensation, Dvorak requested to go into executive session to protect the public interest.

Wragge moved to go into executive session to discuss discussion item number three and action item number two. Dvorak seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried 5-0.

Executive session started at 7:07pm. Executive session ended at 8:18pm.

For the second action item, Dvorak moved to change the hourly non-certificated staff wages to the greater of either a 5% increase or \$18 + \$0.15/year of service, with adjustments of \$25.90 for the head cook, \$35.30 for the business manager, \$23.62 for the elementary front desk, and \$25.98 for the high school front desk. For salaried non-certificated staff, an increase of 3% of salary. Adjustment to the nurse wage from a salaried position to an hourly non-certificated staff rate of \$45/hr. Unselde seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried, 5-0.

Board of Education Professional Development

Steffensen relayed Board of Education development opportunities.

Topics for next month's agenda

Steffensen provided topics for next month's agenda to include: school improvement report, curriculum report, determine a rate of pay for substitute teachers for the successive year, and determine of administrator compensation.

Adjournment

Wragge moved and Venteicher seconded to adjourn. Voting unanimous, motion passed, 5-0.
Meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.

Stefanie Dvorak, Secretary
Pierce Public Schools
Board of Education, District 2;Pierce, NE 68767