

The Sterling Jet Brief is designed to provide our community with a clear and concise summary of the key discussions and decisions made at each Sterling School Board meeting. Our goal is to keep you informed about the progress of our schools and to foster an open dialogue between the board and the public.

Next Meeting

Date: March 25, 2026 (Working)
Time: 3:00pm
Location: Sterling Public Schools Library

The Public is welcome to attend

Our Guiding Principles

Our Mission

Sterling Public Schools will educate students to excel, prepare to compete, inspire to serve, and challenge to learn.

Our Vision

All Sterling Public Schools Students will achieve their full potential.

Board Goals

Goal III: Facilities Maintenance and Management Leadership

Objective: Provide visionary leadership that ensures the maintenance and upkeep of district facilities and grounds in excellent condition by uniting sound financial stewardship, proactive facility management, and active board-and-community partnership.

Strategy I: Prioritize the assessment of the current facilities and grounds to support the development of the Capital Improvement Plan to safeguard district facilities and demonstrate accountability to our patrons and community.

Sterling Board of Education

Mark Horstman, President
 Julie Saathoff, Vice President
 McKenzie Saathoff, Secretary
 Russ Trauernicht, Treasurer
 Rick Vollman, Board Member
 Lauren Weyers, Board Member

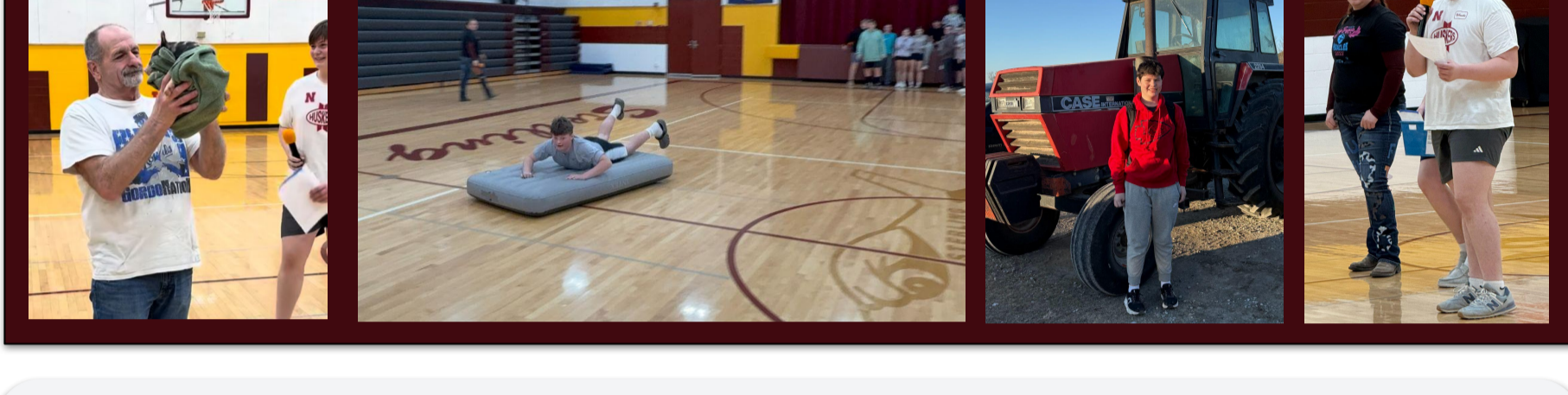
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A month in review at Sterling



Read across America: Our elementary students recently celebrated Dr. Seuss Week with a week full of fun activities that promote reading. Students participated in dress-up days throughout the week, bringing favorite book characters to life. Families also joined us for special parent reading times, giving students the chance to hear stories from familiar faces. Students had fun guessing which staff members were featured in the Masked Reader contest. It was a great celebration of literacy and school spirit.



FFA Week: Students also celebrated FFA Week with a variety of activities for students of all ages. Elementary students joined in with a coloring contest, showing off their creativity. The week wrapped up with a pep rally featuring games and the announcement of the Kiss the Pig contest winners, bringing a little laughter to the celebration.



District Champs! Congratulations to our speech team on an outstanding performance at districts, bringing home the District Championship! This is a great reflection of the hard work and dedication shown by the team members the season. A special congratulations goes to Coach Matkins for her leadership, as well as our state qualifiers—David, Joie, Ellen, and Gideon. Best of luck as you prepare for the state competition!

Admin & Committee Reports

Superintendent's Report: The Superintendent's Report included updates on several key legislative issues impacting school operations and funding. A proposed change related to the Open Meetings Act was discussed that would allow for digital publication of notices in cases where a publication does not have a print version. An update was also provided on LB 1087, which includes a reduction in special education reimbursement funding while maintaining the statutory goal of 80% reimbursement. LB 1701 was also reviewed, which would establish an Education Savings Account (ESA) scholarship program to assist Nebraska students who wish to attend private schools, with funding targeted to qualifying families. Additionally, LB 1219 was discussed, highlighting a proposed 2% cap on property tax growth and the potential financial challenges it could create for school districts.

The Superintendent's Report also included updates from MUDECAS and the Pioneer Conference. Both groups addressed rising event costs and approved increasing admission prices for conference tournaments to \$7 for adults and \$5 for students. The upcoming MUDECAS All-Star basketball game on March 21 was noted, with Brody selected to represent Sterling in the boys game. Pioneer Conference discussions included consideration of limiting conference pass use to member schools, though it was ultimately decided to leave that decision up to individual schools. There was also discussion about adjusting hosting rotations, but the group agreed to continue with the current system.

Principal's Report: The principal's report presented results of the perceptual data survey that has been circulating for the past month. The results of the survey are pleasing, however, the number of responses is significantly down in comparison to previous years.

[Perceptual Data Survey Results](#)

AD/Transportation Report: The Transportation and Activities Director's Report included updates on vehicle maintenance, upcoming projects, and athletics. Vehicle inspections over the past month identified several repairs, including: a route bus with a coolant hose replacement; the white Chevy van receiving new front and rear shocks, and front-end alignment; the short white bus with a front overhead light out and a transmission hose leak; the blue Chevy van needing a couple of wheel sensors replaced; and a route bus requiring a power steering hose replacement, a new mudflap, and two clearance lights. Also two new vans were purchased this past week to support transportation needs.

Looking ahead, plans include refinishing the high school gym floor during the week of August 3rd, with the gym closed for the remainder of that week to allow the finish to dry. High school track practice is underway, with 17 boys and 11 girls participating. The junior high track team has 14 boys and 11 girls involved this year, and the first high school track meet is scheduled for just over a week away.

Building & Grounds Committee: The Building and Grounds Committee Report included updates on the district's upcoming bond projects. The Construction Manager selection committee chose Hausmann Construction to serve as the construction manager for the projects. On March 11, the committee met with CMBA architects and Hausmann Construction to onboard the team and review progress to date. The meeting provided an overview of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing aspects of the project, and several updated renderings were shared to illustrate current design updates. The board is scheduled to meet with CMBA and Hausmann again on March 25 to review civil plans, the interior design of the elementary addition, and overall design development.



Negotiations Committee: The Negotiations Committee met to review the policy outlining classified staff benefits and worked on alignment of the policy with the staff contracts and handbook. Classified staff compensation was also discussed, with plans to organize and present proposed updates at the regular April board meeting.

Action Items

Property Purchase: Discussion was held on the purchase of the property at 275 Lincoln street. The previous offer of \$130,000 was not accepted but discussion will continue and no action will be taken at this time.

Discussion Items

Policy Review: The board reviewed policies 1000–1003 and 3001–3015. The 1000 series of Nebraska School Board Policies covers foundational governance topics, including the district's vision, mission, goals, and board responsibilities. The 3000 series addresses general administration, including operational procedures, staff roles, and administrative responsibilities. No actions or revisions were needed.

Cum Laude Discussion: Discussion revolved around the cum laude system recognizes all high achievers by grouping them into clearer categories like cum laude or summa cum laude. It encourages students to take harder, more challenging classes because they focus on overall achievement instead of tiny GPA differences. It also standardizes the threshold for graduation honors and, in some cases, can raise the standard needed to earn them, pushing students to aim higher.

Next Meeting

Next Meeting: The next scheduled board meeting will be a working meeting with CMBA Architects and Hausmann Construction on March 25, 2026 at 3:00pm in the Sterling High School Library. The next regular meeting will be held on April 13, 2026 at 7:00pm in the Sterling High School Library.

