



# NORTHERN VALLEY SCHOOLS USD 212

DISTRICT OFFICE  
512 WEST BRYANT PO BOX 217  
ALMENA KS 67622



ALMENA

PHONE (785) 669-2445

LONG ISLAND

A Monthly Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Northern Valley Schools was held Monday, March 10, 2025, beginning at 6:30 PM in the Almena High School , 512 W Bryant Street, Almena, KS 67622.

Shanna Hammond: Present  
Brandi Keith: Present  
Christopher Rogers: Present  
Laquita Smith: Present  
Hilary Van Patten: Present  
Rich Wenzl: Present  
Steven Whitney: Present

Also in attendance were Mr. Ken Tharman (Superintendent/HS Principal), Marvin Gebhard (GS/MS Principal), Amber Brown (Board Clerk), Nita Lewis, Jessie Thalheim, Dallas Gosselin, and Matt Van Patten.

## I. Call to Order

## II. Adoption of Agenda

I recommend the board approve the agenda as presented. This motion, made by Laquita Smith and seconded by Steven Whitney, Carried.

Shanna Hammond: Yea  
Brandi Keith: Yea  
Christopher Rogers: Yea  
Laquita Smith: Yea  
Hilary Van Patten: Yea  
Rich Wenzl: Yea  
Steven Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

## III. Approval of Minutes

I recommend the board approve the minutes as presented. This motion, made by Rich Wenzl and seconded by Brandi Keith, Carried.

Shanna Hammond: Yea  
Brandi Keith: Yea  
Christopher Rogers: Yea  
Laquita Smith: Yea  
Hilary Van Patten: Yea  
Rich Wenzl: Yea  
Steven Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

## IV. Approval of Bills



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I recommend the board approve the bills as presented. This motion, made by Steven Whitney and seconded by Christopher Rogers, Carried.

Shanna  
Hammond: Yea  
Brandi Keith: Yea  
Christopher  
Rogers: Yea  
Laquita Smith: Yea  
Hilary Van  
Patten: Yea  
Rich Wenzl: Yea  
Steven Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

## V. Hearing of Visitors

### A. Nita Lewis

Mrs. Lewis shared that she is getting the scholarships revamped and has put together a sheet with scholarship due dates for the seniors. There are becoming more scholarships available for Vocational Technical schools which is beneficial for our kids. Next year she is planning to have a FAFSA information night as well. The art class she is teaching this year is going very well. Mrs. Kuhl (6 - 8 Language Arts) has volunteered her kiln to help with some pottery projects. The freshmen English class is divided this year; second semester is a speech class to accommodate the new graduation requirements. KAY and Scholars bowl have been going well all year also.

### B. Dallas Gosselin

Dallas Gosselin (Norton County Economic Development) presented about the Neighborhood Revitalization Program. The board will continue to review this information before deciding to sign on.

### C. Matt Van Patten

Matt Van Patten wanted to let the board know that he had concerns about bullying in the Northern Valley Schools. The reports he has knowledge of have been occurring in locations that have no supervision (ie. Locker rooms, buses, etc). I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss nonelected personnel matters to protect the privacy interests of the individual to be discussed; retaining Matt Van Patten, Mr. Gebhard and Mr. Tharman and returning to open session in this room at 7:15 PM. Mrs. Lewis and Mr. Gosselin left the meeting at this time. This motion, made by Christopher Rogers and seconded by Shanna Hammond, Carried.

Shanna  
Hammond: Yea

Brandi  
Keith: Yea  
Christopher  
Rogers: Yea  
Laquita  
Smith: Yea  
Hilary Van  
Patten: Yea  
Rich  
Wenzl: Yea  
Steven Yea



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Whitney:

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 7:15 PM the meeting returned to open session. I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss nonelected personnel matters to protect the privacy interests of the individual to be discussed; retaining Matt Van Patten, Mr. Gebhard and Mr. Tharman and returning to open session in this room at 7:30 PM. This motion, made by Laquita Smith and seconded by Shanna Hammond, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi

Yea

Keith:

Christopher

Yea

Rogers:

Laquita

Yea

Smith:

Hilary Van

Yea

Patten:

Rich

Yea

Wenzl:

Steven

Yea

Whitney:

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 7:30 PM the meeting returned to open session. It was agreed that this is a valid concern and the administration agreed to continue finding ways to support students while reducing the opportunities for these actions to continue. Mr. Van Patten left the meeting.

## VI. Old Business

### A. Board Walk Through

After some discussion .... April 3rd was the date that was chosen for the board walk-through postponed date.

### B. Rule 10 Coaches

Jessie Thalheim visited the board about the proposed evaluations of Rule 10 coaches. Mr. Tharman had provided three samples. The board's reasoning in pursuit of this change is to support new coaches/sponsors and to develop an open line of communication to keep issues from getting out of hand. I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss nonelected personnel matters to protect the privacy interests of the individuals to be discussed; retaining Jessie Thalheim, Mr. Gebhard and Mr. Tharman and returning to open session in this room at 7:50 PM. This motion, made by Christopher Rogers and seconded by Steven Whitney, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi

Yea

Keith:

Christopher

Yea

Rogers:

Laquita

Yea

Smith:

Hilary Van

Yea

Patten:



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Rich  
Wenzl: Yea

Steven  
Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 7:50 PM the meeting returned to open session. I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss nonelected personnel matters to protect the privacy interests of the individuals to be discussed; retaining Jessie Thalheim, Mr. Gebhard and Mr. Tharman and returning to open session in this room at 8:00 PM. This motion, made by Christopher Rogers and seconded by Steven Whitney, Carried.

Shanna  
Hammond: Yea

Brandi  
Keith: Yea

Christopher  
Rogers: Yea

Laquita  
Smith: Yea

Hilary Van  
Patten: Yea

Rich  
Wenzl: Yea

Steven  
Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 8:00 PM, the meeting returned to open session. It was decided to move forward with developing a tool that can be used to help develop and improve all coaches/sponsors in the district. At the May in-service, coaches and sponsors will collaborate for this purpose and the resulting tool will be added to the Activity Handbook.

## C. KESA Update

Mr. Tharman shared with the board the Action Plan the District Leadership Team developed to turn into the state for its annual accreditation. I recommend the board approve the Action Plan as presented. This motion, made by Brandi Keith and seconded by Steven Whitney, Carried.

Shanna  
Hammond: Yea

Brandi  
Keith: Yea

Christopher  
Rogers: Yea

Laquita  
Smith: Yea

Hilary Van  
Patten: Yea

Rich  
Wenzl: Yea

Steven Yea



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Whitney:

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

D. Uniform Rotation

Mr. Gebhard and Mrs. Thalheim discussed the uniform rotation. JH football has more of a need than volleyball this year, so those were shuffled. Golf was also discussed as it had been left off the rotation. There was a bid for JH football uniforms presented. I recommend the board approve the bid presented for JH football uniforms. This motion, made by Steven Whitney and seconded by Rich Wenzl, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi

Keith: Yea

Christopher

Rogers: Yea

Laquita

Smith: Yea

Hilary Van

Patten: Yea

Rich

Wenzl: Yea

Steven

Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

I recommend the board approve adding Golf to the uniform rotation and allowing them purchase polos for this year. This motion, made by Shanna Hammond and seconded by Steven Whitney, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi

Keith: Yea

Christopher

Rogers: Yea

Laquita

Smith: Yea

Hilary Van

Patten: Yea

Rich

Wenzl: Yea

Steven

Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 8:25 PM, Mrs. Thalheim departed from the meeting.

## VII. Personnel

### A. Staffing



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I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss nonelected personnel matters to protect the interests of the individuals to be discussed; retaining Mr. Tharman and returning to open session in this room at 8:32 PM. This motion, made by Christopher Rogers and seconded by Laquita Smith, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi

Keith: Yea

Christopher

Rogers: Yea

Laquita

Smith: Yea

Hilary Van

Patten: Yea

Rich

Wenzl: Yea

Steven

Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 8:32 PM the meeting returned to open session. I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss nonelected personnel matters to protect the interests of the individuals to be discussed; retaining Mr. Tharman and returning to open session in this room at 8:37 PM. This motion, made by Christopher Rogers and seconded by Laquita Smith, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi

Keith: Yea

Christopher

Rogers: Yea

Laquita

Smith: Yea

Hilary Van

Patten: Yea

Rich

Wenzl: Yea

Steven

Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 8:37 PM the meeting returned to open session. I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss nonelected personnel matters to protect the interests of the individuals to be discussed; retaining Mr. Tharman and returning to open session in this room at 8:42 PM. This motion, made by Christopher Rogers and seconded by Laquita Smith, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi

Yea



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Keith:

Christopher  
Rogers: Yea

Laquita  
Smith: Yea

Hilary Van  
Patten: Yea

Rich  
Wenzl: Yea

Steven  
Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 8:42 PM the meeting returned to open session. I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss nonelected personnel matters to protect the interests of the individuals to be discussed; retaining Mr. Tharman and returning to open session in this room at 8:46 PM. This motion, made by Christopher Rogers and seconded by Laquita Smith, Carried.

Shanna  
Hammond: Yea

Brandi  
Keith: Yea

Christopher  
Rogers: Yea

Laquita  
Smith: Yea

Hilary Van  
Patten: Yea

Rich  
Wenzl: Yea

Steven  
Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 8:46 PM the meeting returned to open session; no action taken.

### B. Administration Contracts

I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss nonelected personnel matters to protect the interests of the individuals to be discussed; retaining board members only and returning to open session in this room at 9:00 PM. This motion, made by Steven Whitney and seconded by Brandi Keith, Carried.

Shanna  
Hammond: Yea

Brandi  
Keith: Yea

Christopher  
Rogers: Yea

Laquita  
Smith: Yea

Hilary Van Yea



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Patten:

Rich  
Wenzl: Yea

Steven  
Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 9:00 PM the meeting returned to open session. I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss nonelected personnel matters to protect the interests of the individuals to be discussed; retaining board members and Mr. Tharman and returning to open session in this room at 9:05 PM. This motion, made by Steven Whitney and seconded by Brandi Keith, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi  
Keith: Yea

Christopher  
Rogers: Yea

Laquita  
Smith: Yea

Hilary Van  
Patten: Yea

Rich  
Wenzl: Yea

Steven  
Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 9:05 PM the meeting returned to open session. I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss nonelected personnel matters to protect the interests of the individuals to be discussed; retaining board members and Mr. Tharman and returning to open session in this room at 9:10 PM. This motion, made by Steven Whitney and seconded by Brandi Keith, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi  
Keith: Yea

Christopher  
Rogers: Yea

Laquita  
Smith: Yea

Hilary Van  
Patten: Yea

Rich  
Wenzl: Yea

Steven  
Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0





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At 9:10 PM the meeting returned to open session. I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss nonelected personnel matters to protect the interests of the individuals to be discussed; retaining board members and Mr. Tharman and returning to open session in this room at 9:15 PM. This motion, made by Steven Whitney and seconded by Brandi Keith, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi

Keith: Yea

Christopher

Rogers: Yea

Laquita

Smith: Yea

Hilary Van

Patten: Yea

Rich

Wenzl: Yea

Steven

Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 9:15 PM the meeting returned to open session. I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss nonelected personnel matters to protect the interests of the individuals to be discussed; retaining board members and Mr. Tharman and returning to open session in this room at 9:20 PM. This motion, made by Steven Whitney and seconded by Brandi Keith, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi

Keith: Yea

Christopher

Rogers: Yea

Laquita

Smith: Yea

Hilary Van

Patten: Yea

Rich

Wenzl: Yea

Steven

Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 9:20 PM the meeting returned to open session. I recommend the board extend Mr. Tharman and Mr. Gebhard's contract for one year; making them both two-year contracts. This motion, made by Steven Whitney and seconded by Christopher Rogers, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi

Yea



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Keith:

Christopher  
Rogers: Yea

Laquita  
Smith: Yea

Hilary Van  
Patten: Yea

Rich  
Wenzl: Yea

Steven  
Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

C. Supplementals

I recommend the board approve the supplemental resignations from Amber and Lacey as presented and approve Jim Cole for the JH Assistant Track coach position. This motion, made by Shanna Hammond and seconded by Brandi Keith, Carried.

Shanna  
Hammond: Yea

Brandi  
Keith: Yea

Christopher  
Rogers: Yea

Laquita  
Smith: Yea

Hilary Van  
Patten: Yea

Rich  
Wenzl: Yea

Steven  
Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

D. Leave Request

I recommend the board approve the leave requests as presented. This motion, made by Christopher Rogers and seconded by Steven Whitney, Carried.

Shanna  
Hammond: Yea

Brandi  
Keith: Yea

Christopher  
Rogers: Yea

Laquita  
Smith: Yea

Hilary Van  
Patten: Yea



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Rich  
Wenzl: Yea

Steven  
Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

E. Negotiations

I recommend the board go into executive session to discuss negotiations to protect the public interest in negotiating a fair and equitable contract; retaining Mr. Tharman and returning to open session in this room at 9:35 PM. This motion, made by Laquita Smith and seconded by Shanna Hammond, Carried.

Shanna  
Hammond: Yea

Brandi  
Keith: Yea

Christopher  
Rogers: Yea

Laquita  
Smith: Yea

Hilary Van  
Patten: Yea

Rich  
Wenzl: Yea

Steven  
Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 9:35 PM the meeting returned to open session; no action taken.

## VIII. New Business

### A. 2025-26 School Calendar

I recommend the board approve Option B for next year's calendar. This motion, made by Shanna Hammond and seconded by Laquita Smith, Carried.

Shanna  
Hammond: Yea

Brandi  
Keith: Yea

Christopher  
Rogers: Yea

Laquita  
Smith: Yea

Hilary Van  
Patten: Yea

Rich  
Wenzl: Yea

Steven  
Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

### B. Preschool Program



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Mr. Gebhard shared about the preschool program and suggested changes their committee has made for next year. I recommend approving the option for an all-day four-year-old preschool program. This motion, made by Steven Whitney and seconded by Brandi Keith, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi

Keith: Yea

Christopher

Rogers: Yea

Laquita

Smith: Yea

Hilary Van

Patten: Yea

Rich

Wenzl: Yea

Steven

Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

C. Summer Helpers

Mr. Tharman shared that summer is just around the corner and that employing some summer helpers would be advantageous for completing projects. The board agreed and asked Mr. Tharman to move forward with accepting applications.

### IX. Administrative Reports

#### A. Superintendent / 9-12 Principal Report

Mr. Tharman shared the following: HS track practice starts today/ WKLL music contest in Ransom tomorrow/ NHS Induction Ceremony tomorrow (7 PM)/ Sophomores to Goodland/ Teacher collaboration (Wednesday)/ Student - led conferences (Thursday)/ Spring Break/ (elevator construction work - electrical poles) Golf practice starting/ Senior class trip (26 - 27)/ Freshmen job shadowing (27)/ Prom (5th)/ ACT testing (juniors 8th)/ WKLL Forensic meet - Teacher workday (9th)/ Spring pictures (10th)/ School board on the (14th)/ Phone system renewal.

#### B. K-8 Principal Report

Mr. Gebhard shared that state assessments would be starting after spring break/ a big Thank You to those that helped with hosting the JH Scholars Bowl meet (8th grade got 1st place and 7th grade got 4th place)/ Attended the presentation "Think Before You Post"/ Jumprope for Heart was a big success with Vanessa Hickman as the top fundraiser/ Student-led conferences went well last week/ Teacher in-service was over student engagement, KESA, prep for conferences and curriculum review.

### X. Reports of Board Members

### XI. Adjournment

With no further business, I recommend the board meeting adjourn. This motion, made by Shanna Hammond and seconded by Laquita Smith, Carried.

Shanna

Hammond: Yea

Brandi Keith:

Yea

Christopher

Rogers: Yea

Laquita Smith:

Yea

Hilary Van

Yea



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Patten:

Rich Wenzl: Yea

Steven Whitney: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

At 9:55 PM the meeting adjourned.