

OFFICIAL MINUTES, VALTS BOARD OF EDUCATION

The regular meeting of the Valley Alternative Learning and Transitioning School Board of Education (VALTS BOE) was called to order by Board President, Brad Helgerson on Tuesday, September 8, 2026, at 12:01 PM at the Harms Center, 2620 College Park, Scottsbluff, NE. Meeting notice was published in the Star-Herald on September 3, 2026.

Mr. Helgerson referenced the Nebraska Open Meetings Act as posted and noted that the Board reserves the right to rearrange the order of the agenda and to convene an executive session in accordance with §84-1410.

Present: Kay Anderson, Brad Helgerson, Matt Kautz, Doug Keener, John Maser, Joe Muhr and Mark Spencer.

Absent: None.

Oath of Office: Matt Kautz, Gering Public Schools

Moved by Keener, seconded by Maser, that the agenda be approved as listed. Aye: Anderson, Helgerson, Kautz, Keener, Maser, Muhr, Spencer. Nay: None. Absent: None. Motion passed.

Moved by Maser, seconded by Spencer, that the consent action items (Minutes of June meeting and Fourth Quarter Billing) be approved as listed. Aye: Anderson, Helgerson, Kautz, Keener, Maser, Muhr, Spencer. Nay: None. Absent: None. Motion passed.

Public Forum: None

Reports:

- Student Report: Armando Esparza
 - Armando, a senior from Bridgeport High School, addressed the Board. He shared that he is scheduled to graduate from VALTS on October 15, 2026 and discussed how his experience at VALTS has positively changed his outlook on education. Armando also shared that he has been employed at U.S. Fabrication LLC since 2023. The hours he has worked at his job have allowed him to earn elective credit, helping him progress toward graduation. He noted that his brother also attended VALTS. Armando discussed the stigma surrounding VALTS students in some communities and emphasized that each VALTS student has a different story and individual reasons why the program works for them. He noted that

attending VALTS should not necessarily be viewed as a negative placement. Armando also shared that he applied for a scholarship through the VALTS for Veterans fundraiser to purchase tools that will support him in pursuing his welding trade after graduation.

- Teacher Report: Cynthia Brown
 - Cynthia Brown, the new Science and Social Studies teacher, addressed the Board. She shared that she is a former VALTS teacher who taught at the school several years ago. Cynthia explained that she is incorporating an integrated curriculum and project-based learning into her classroom. She also shared information regarding her teaching endorsements, which include Outdoor Recreation, Secondary Education, and Secondary Biology.
- Administrator's Report: Dr. Derek Peil
 - Dr. Peil provided a Google presentation to the board which included:
 - Student Outcomes
 - VALTS Summer School 2026 data
 - 2025-2026 data
 - Initial Strategic Expansion Plan
 - Value-Add Current Program
 - Expansion into the northern tier of the panhandle is no longer in the plan. VALTS Virtual will replace.
 - Augment Funds via Distance Learning
 - Launch Marketing
 - Clarify Communication
 - Outreach with Districts
 - Budget Wins
 - Cost Savings: \$90,308 staffing
 - Revenue Increases: \$32,000 Distance Education Units
 - Program Improvements: Promotional Video of VALTS for Veterans
 - Contact Information for Dr. Peil
- Future VALTS Board meeting dates:
 - December 8, 2026
 - March 9, 2027
 - June 8, 2027
- Board Member Comments:

- Kay Anderson emphasized the importance of spreading the word about VALTS, particularly given the program's high student success rate. She also expressed support for having alumni speakers participate in VALTS graduation ceremonies alongside current students, noting that hearing from alumni can be inspiring and enlightening for students.
- Doug Keener discussed with the Board how VALTS follows the "rigid rule of flexibility" when working with students.

Business: None

Adjourn

With nothing further to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 12:40 PM.