

August 12, 2024 Regular Board of Education Workshop

Board Items

Calendar Revisions for 2024-25 and 2025-26

Dr. Darren Dennis, chief academic officer, outlined proposed revisions to the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school calendars.

The revisions were made in response to feedback from interested parties who wanted to eliminate the need for students to return on the Tuesday after Memorial Day for the last day of school. In order to accommodate this request, the calendar needed to be changed to move student contact time from after Memorial Day to earlier in the year on a day that was not scheduled as a student attendance day.

Working in collaboration with NEA Shawnee Mission, the district was able to accommodate the change in the 2024-2025 school year by exchanging Tuesday, May 27, 2025 (a student contact day) with Friday, April 18, 2025 (no school; parent communication flex day).

For the 2025-2026 school year, employees and students will begin the year one day earlier, and the district exchanged Monday, May 26, 2026 (student contact) with April 3, 2026 (parent communication flex day).

These changes comply with state regulations, contract language, as well as the preferences of students, staff, families and the community.

The Board of Education approved the calendar update in the consent agenda portion of the meeting.

[Click here to view the presentation slides.](#)

Communications Program Update

David A. Smith, chief communications officer, introduced Kristin Babcock and Michaela Scruggs, communications coordinators, and Jillian Hodges, media specialist, who presented a communications team program evaluation to the Board of Education. The presentation showcased how the team shares important information and stories about the district and schools to a broad and diverse audience. They also highlighted the many ways the communications team supports staff and students behind the scenes. Additionally, the presentation shared data on the expansion of social media platforms and the success of the [Shawnee Mission Mic'd Up podcast](#). Community members are welcome to provide story tips for highlighting school activities, students and staff to the team at adcommun@smsd.org.

[Click here to view the report.](#)

From the Superintendent Report



Thank You Team 512! Superintendent Dr. Michael Schumacher began his report by sharing how excited the Shawnee Mission team is to welcome students back over the next few days. Since the last board meeting, educators have returned for professional development and to get ready for another outstanding school year with our students.

Last week, the district hosted the New Team Member Academy and welcomed more than 200 new educators to Shawnee Mission. “I am so proud of the Shawnee Mission team and all of the work that is being done to start the year for our students,” shared Dr. Schumacher. “It’s going to be an incredible school year!”



History Teacher of the Year Kimberly Gilman, a teacher at Hocker Grove Middle School, is the 2024 Kansas History Teacher of the Year. The honor is presented by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and recognizes exceptional elementary through high school teachers for their outstanding contributions to American history education, according to a press release. Gilman receives a \$1,000 honorarium, an archive of American history books, and educational materials curated by the Gilder Lehrman Institute. She also will be honored at a ceremony where she will be recognized as one of 53 finalists for the 2024 National History Teacher of the Year award.



Strategic Plan Nomination Form The district's updated Strategic Plan was adopted by the Board of Education in June. Currently, teams are working on implementing the Strategies and Action Steps of this plan. Dr. Schumacher emphasized that the involvement of the community and staff has made the update of this plan a success and continued engagement will make the implementation successful. The district is seeking nominations for individuals to serve on teams that will put this plan into action. There are opportunities for involvement across the strategies of learning, belonging, people, technology, and mental health. [Click here to submit a nomination form.](#)



New Rushton Opening The newly rebuilt Rushton Elementary School will open to students and staff this week. Tonight, Monday, August 12, the school is hosting their back-to-school night where visitors will get their first look at the new space. The new building features large corridors for collaborative learning, a covered outdoor classroom, and a maker's lab. This is one of five elementary school rebuilds that were made possible by

the \$264 million bond referendum approved by voters in 2021. Dr. Schumacher expressed gratitude to the community for the support that makes this grand opening possible.



Shawnee Mission Mic'd Up The new season of Shawnee Mission Mic'd Up has arrived. Dr. Schumacher shared that he is co-hosting the podcast with Dr. Brittany Gonser, director of professional learning. The first episode highlights the excitement surrounding the start of the school year. New episodes will drop

every other Thursday wherever you get your podcasts. This is a great way to stay up-to-date on the Shawnee Mission School District. [Click here to watch or listen.](#)



All In Video This week students of every grade level will return for the 2024-2025 school year. Dr. Schumacher shared a back-to-school video and encouraged everyone to be ALL IN!

[Click here to view the video.](#)

This publication, provided after each Shawnee Mission Board of Education meeting, provides a recap of some actions taken by the Shawnee Mission Board of Education and information about activities in the school district.

An archive video of the meeting can be found [here](#).

Links to board policies, agenda, and meeting minutes can be found [here](#).