



BOARD MEETING RECAP

Board Items

Human Resources Program Update Dr. Jeremy Higgins, associate superintendent of human resources, Dr. Chris Kase, director of secondary human resources, Michelle Lord, director of elementary human resources, Judd Remmers, director of classified human resources, Dr. Brittany Gonser, director of professional learning, and Kaitlin Shulman, coordinator of diversity equity and inclusion, led a presentation update about the Human Resources department. The team shared employee experience highlights, as well as details about recruitment efforts, support for current employees, advisory councils, retention rates, professional learning opportunities, and leadership and wellness initiatives.

Amy Sachse, instructional coach, and Siena Meyrer, second grade teacher, both from Merriam Park Elementary, spoke about the benefits of the Professional Development Program with the University of Kansas. This program intentionally places student teachers in Title I schools. (Title I is a federally-funded program that provides financial assistance to help students receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education). Erin Best, a Lenexa Hills fourth grade teacher, described her experience with the SMSD mentorship program and the New Team Member Academy. Vicky Kopp, student services secretary, spoke about the importance of professional development for classified staff.

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

Board Policy- First Reading

The Board of Education held a first reading on the following policies:

[New Board Policy JGFGA: Administration of Emergency Opioid Antagonists](#)

[Revised Board Policy JH: Student Activities](#)

[Revised Board Policy ID: Instructional Program](#)

[Revised Board Policy BCBK: Executive Session](#)

[Delete Policy BBG: Consultants](#)

[Revised Board Policy CJ: Use of Consultants](#)

[Revised Board Policy KK: Sale of District Property](#)

From the Superintendent Report



Fall Breakfast Just last week, the SMUSD community celebrated being ALL IN at the 2024 Shawnee Mission Education Foundation Fall Breakfast. “What an incredible event,” Dr. Michael Schumacher, superintendent,

expressed. “I am so proud that our community had the opportunity to see so many of our amazing students, educators, and programs from across the district. I enjoyed presenting a special live episode of our podcast, Shawnee Mission Mic’d Up, with student hosts Coop and Viv.” The Fall Breakfast was a fundraising event for the [Shawnee Mission Education Foundation](#). “We are so grateful for all of the ways the Foundation supports our students and staff,” Dr. Schumacher added. “Thank you to everyone who attended the event, and to everyone who helped us put on a wonderful presentation for the community!”



Scholarship Shawnee Mission Since the last Board of Education meeting, the Shawnee Mission Education Foundation also presented some very exciting information to SMSD high school juniors and seniors. Through

Scholarship Shawnee Mission, offered by the Foundation, students received more than \$5.7 billion in scholarship offers from colleges and universities across the country. During celebrations at five Shawnee Mission high schools, students received letters outlining scholarships they would receive if they attended a certain school. They also had a chance to speak with college representatives about possible future plans.

“We all thank the Foundation for the opportunities this provides to our students,” Schumacher stated. “What a great example of supporting our district efforts to have every student be college and career ready!”



Horizon Award Nominees Recently, two Shawnee Mission School District educators were honored for the outstanding work they are doing early in their careers. Ryleigh Diskin, a first grade teacher at Ray Marsh

Elementary, and Christopher Heady, journalism teacher at Shawnee Mission Northwest, are the district's 2024-2025 Kansas Horizon Award nominees. This honor recognizes teachers for the exceptional promise they show in the first year of their career. Eventually, 32 educators will be notified that they are Horizon Award winners for the state of Kansas.



Apply Kansas Honors Shawnee Mission North, Shawnee Mission Northwest, Shawnee Mission South, and Shawnee

Mission West were named All Star High School award winners. This recognition was presented to only 148 high schools in Kansas through the Apply Kansas: College Application campaign. This recognizes schools that provide support to students in completing admissions applications, seeking financial aid, and celebrating all postsecondary paths.

Sporting KC Samaritan Adam Shirley, a forensic science teacher at Shawnee Mission Northwest, was honored as a BlueKC Sporting Samaritan in September. This honor is presented to honor students and teachers who make the Kansas



City community a better place to live, work, and play. “Adam found an interest and used his skills and abilities to create a program for large quantities of students to learn the inner workings of forensic science,” Christina Lively, Blue KC Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, said in a press

release.



National Merit

The National Merit Program has named 11 Shawnee Mission seniors as semifinalists in the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program. These students took the 2023 Preliminary

SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The 16,000 semifinalists named represent less than 1 percent of United States High School seniors. These students earned semifinalist distinction and will have an opportunity to advance in the competition for National Merit Scholarship awards, worth nearly \$28 million. Finalists will be notified of this designation next spring. [Click here for a complete list of the honorees!](#)



Seal of Biliteracy This year, 150 students from the Class of 2024 earned 157 Seals of Biliteracy in 11 different languages. This is a

record number of students in the SMSD earning this distinction.

The Seal of Biliteracy is a credential for high school students who

have attained intermediate and advanced proficiencies in English and one or more additional languages.



Thought Exchange on Action Item 4.1.3:

The Shawnee Mission's Strategic Plan Cycle II work is off and running. Action teams scheduled to begin meeting in quarter one of this year have started their work. One of the [new strategy areas](#) in this plan, adopted by the board in June, is technology. It has been a priority of the

district for technology action team 4.1.3 to dig into their work immediately. This team's work is focused on creating a developmental guide related to age-appropriate usage of technology (to include the use of personal devices) with consideration for students who may require individualized support.

This action team's work is challenging, and they are working to thoroughly gather research and critically important feedback from our school district community. To assist in the process, a ThoughtExchange is being launched to gather community feedback. The action team has developed a question prompt that will be shared through ThoughtExchange, which allows the district to receive input through comments from the community. Individuals are also able to rate thoughts that have been submitted to provide further insight. The topic of age-appropriate use of technology, including the use of personal devices, is of great interest and concern in our community, so the community engaging in this action step process is appreciated. "We are committed to bringing forward a thoughtful recommendation to the board as early as we are able," Dr. Schumacher added. [Click here to participate in the ThoughtExchange related to age-appropriate use of technology.](#)

All in the SMSD community are invited to participate and to share the link with others. Feedback from the ThoughtExchange will be reviewed by the action team to assist in informing their work.



Note on Katherine Carpenter Building

Dr. Schumacher pointed out that on the consent agenda there was an item for architectural work related to the demolition of the former Katherine Carpenter Elementary School. As a reminder, the demolition of Katherine Carpenter was included as a project in the last bond referendum. This item is for the first steps in preparation for the demolition. The SMSD is continuing to analyze future district needs as it relates to that property. Deputy Superintendent Dr. David Stubblefield has begun communication with the City of Overland Park to ensure that proper communication with the neighborhood will take place as future options are considered for the property.



Read Across SMSD

Dr. Schumacher expressed excitement about kicking off a new season of Read Across SMSD. Shawnee Mission presents this celebration of reading in partnership with NEA-Shawnee Mission and the [Shawnee Mission Education Foundation](#). Modeled after the National Education Association's Read Across America campaign, the program highlights a monthly theme and educational resources. Through the Foundation, books related to the monthly theme are provided to each Shawnee Mission school. Read Across SMSD supports our district academic goals and our district [strategic plan](#) belief that our community's strength is derived from its diversity. "It's an

opportunity for all of us to celebrate stories and cultivate a culture of belonging for every student, Dr. Schumacher shared.

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