Arkansas City Public Schools

BOE BRIEFS

An informal report from the Board of Education Meeting

November 25, 2024

Adams Elementary Gave a Special Report

Adams Elementary shared a report with the USD 470 Board of Education about its efforts to involve parents in student success. The school hosts monthly reading and math events to teach parents ways to help their kids at home. Community-building events also strengthen family connections. Principal Rosann Meier and her team highlighted how these activities support academic goals, shared attendance data, and showed photos of families participating. The Board praised the school for helping parents take an active role in education.

2025-2026 High School Course Updates

USD 470 is updating courses to align with state CTE guidelines:

- **New Courses:**
  - Agriculture: Agriscience, Plant & Soil Science, and Capstone in Agriculture.
  - Computer Science: Electrical Theory, Robotics I & II.
  - Health Science: Health Care Essentials I & II.
- **Removed Courses:**
  - Select Agriculture, Engineering, and Public Safety courses (e.g., Horticulture, Digital Electronics).
- **Changes:**
  - Business Communication now counts as a speech credit.
  - CTE courses require prerequisites for advanced levels.
  - Discontinuing Project Lead the Way (PLTW) due to cost and low enrollment.

These updates aim to improve career readiness and meet state standards.

PERSONNEL UPDATE

New Staff:

- Emma Badley – SAT at IXL

- Carly Collins – Building Substitute

Resignations/Retirements:

- Pam Barbour – Principal at Roosevelt (*Retirement following school year*)
- Bonnie Condit – Nurse at ACHS (*Retirement following school year)*

OTHER BUSINESS

- The Board accepted a gift of a scholarship for Board member Jamie Pieper from the Kansas School Board Resource Center
- Dr. Ballard shared about his recent visit with ACHS StuCo members and how impressed he was with the students' sincerity.
- The Board authorized issuing a request for proposals (RFPs) for both Wide Area Network (WAN) and Internet services. Proposals for single-year and multi-year contracts will be evaluated on cost, compatibility, scalability, security, and E-Rate eligibility to enhance connectivity and network reliability across the district.
- The Board approved adding a Human Resources position to be filled this Spring.
- The Board approved the purchase of a Bluebird bus from Kansas Truck using Head Start grant funds. The bus includes integrated seats for Pre-K students, a camera system, a horn upgrade, and undercarriage storage, with a total cost of $156,827.24.
- Braden Smith updated the Board on the district's work with KESA 2.0, Kansas' new accreditation model. The focus areas include structured literacy, aligned standards, balanced assessments, and quality instruction. Teams are working on areas like MTSS, health, and post-secondary success. The district has started professional development and aligning materials with Kansas standards. The Board was informed about key deadlines, including submitting the action plan to KSDE by Dec. 16, 2024, and plans for implementation over the next three years.
- Dr. Ballard shared an update on the KASB Annual Convention and Delegate Assembly, held Nov. 15-17 in Wichita. Board members Jon Oak and Jamie Pieper attended. Key topics included constitutional amendments, 2025 legislative priorities, and sessions on parent engagement, mental health, and educational technology.
- Braden Smith reported on the district's participation in the National Homeless Education Conference, where staff gained strategies to identify and support homeless students, build stability in schools, and strengthen community partnerships.
- Dr. Ballard outlined the district's planning process for the 2025-2026 school year, focusing on academic calendars, budgeting, staffing, curriculum updates,

enrollment trends, and facility improvements. He emphasized community engagement and safety planning to support students and staff.

- Will Pfannenstiel discussed the transition to Software Unlimited, highlighting its benefits for payroll, budgeting, and accounting. The system improves efficiency and compliance but needs ongoing adjustments for data integration and workflow. Future updates, like timekeeping integration, are being considered.
- Dr. Ballard and Mr. Pfannenstiel shared the final mill levy report for FY 2025, showing a slight decrease from budgeted rates. The total levy for the district is now 50.619 mills, reflecting adjustments in capital outlay and bond interest rates.
- The Board moved into executive session to discuss non-elected personnel.