



Arkansas City Public Schools

# BOE BRIEFS

*An informal report from the Board of Education Meeting*

**December 9, 2024**

Jefferson Elementary highlighted its "Be a Purple Person" initiative as a key part of its efforts to foster a positive school culture. This initiative emphasizes qualities like kindness, collaboration, and perseverance, aiming to instill these values in students. The program includes:

- **Purple Families:** A community-building effort to create small, supportive groups within the school where students feel a sense of belonging.
- **Student Experiences:** Participants shared personal stories of how the initiative has positively impacted their school experience, promoting teamwork and mutual respect.

Additionally, Jefferson Elementary shared state assessment highlights, showing significant progress in student performance. Notable improvements included gains in reading proficiency and growth in math scores reflecting successful intervention strategies.

## **KESA 2.0 Action Plan Summary**

The Board approved the district's KESA 2.0 Action Plan, which focuses on continuous school improvement. Key priorities include:

- **Focus Areas:** Structured Literacy, Standards Alignment, Balanced Assessment Systems, and Quality Instruction.
- **Progress Measures:** Professional development, data-driven student interventions, and family engagement initiatives.
- **Collaboration:** Five district teams leading efforts in assessment, stakeholder engagement, MTSS, health, and post-secondary success.

The plan, aligned with Kansas accreditation requirements, aims to enhance instructional quality and student success over the 2024-2027 school years.

## **PERSONNEL UPDATE**

#### New Staff:

- Coy DeWaal – Social Studies at ACHS
- Nikolette Morrissey – Building Substitute (Spring 2025)
- Jazmin Lukacic – Food Service Clerk/Accounts Liaison at ACMS
- Jerica Mueller – Building Substitute (Spring 2025); Elementary Teacher (Starting 2025/2026)
- Kirsten-Ann Smith – SAT at IXL

#### Resignations/Retirements:

- Howard Levy – Art Teacher at ACHS (*Retirement effective 1/1/2025*)
- Andrew Stone – Head Boys Soccer Coach at ACHS
- Jamie Testerman – Elementary Music Teacher
- Dustin Ward – SAT at Frances Willard

#### OTHER BUSINESS

- The Board accepted \$52.75 in snacks for Adams from First Presbyterian Church and \$500 in carpet for putt-putt at ACMS from Traver's Furniture & Carpet
- The Board heard from Shanna Graham, ACTA Co-President, regarding concerns brought to the union about a scholarship offered by the Kansas School Board Resource Center to Jamie Pieper to attend the Education Policy and Training Summit in Orlando, Florida this January. This gift was accepted by the Board at its last regular meeting.
- The Board heard from Dr. Tracy Frederick as she introduced herself and the goals of the Kansas School Board Resource Center.
- The Board approved the 2025 USD 470 Negotiating Team, including Rhoda MacLaughlin-Ramirez, Bob Squires, Braden Smith, and Will Pfannenstiel.
- The Board authorized the ACHS Drivers Education program to be offered this spring and summer.
- The Board confirmed Jon Oak and Jacinda Kinzie as USD 470 representatives for the Head Start on-site visitation and review scheduled for January 6-10, 2025.
- The Board authorized the Business Office to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for two pickup trucks and two nine-passenger vehicles with specifications outlined by the Kansas State Contract for Vehicles.
- Asst. Superintendent Will Pfannenstiel shared the E-rate Category 2 report, which details plans to use federal funding to replace aging network equipment and upgrade fiber connections at Adams and Frances Willard schools. These improvements aim to enhance internet delivery and strengthen the district's technology infrastructure.

- The Board reviewed the ESSER III Final Report, which outlined the district's use of federal funding to support pandemic-related programs, technology upgrades, and curriculum enhancements. Funds were utilized to retain staff, expand summer and after-school programs, update student devices, and adopt new textbooks in core subjects, ensuring compliance with federal guidelines and addressing student and staff needs.
- The Board discussed the district's use of non-traditional certification pathways to address staffing shortages and explored ways to better support individuals in alternate licensure programs, long-term substitute roles, and those with specialized licenses. Currently, 13 positions are filled through these approaches, highlighting a growing need for innovative recruitment and retention strategies amid statewide teacher vacancies.
- The Board discussed the proposed addendum to renew the district's food service contract with Compass Group/Chartwells for the 2025-2026 school year. Highlights included positive student feedback on menu variety and service, meal fee adjustments tied to the Consumer Price Index, and continued compliance with USDA regulations.
- Alisha Call, Director of Communications, presented a report on efforts to enhance stakeholder engagement and communication. Highlights included the "No-Miss November" attendance campaign, "Every Choice Matters" safety initiative, and Top DAWGS recognition program. The report emphasized using tools like e-newsletters to foster pride, transparency, and connection while keeping stakeholders informed.
- Mr. Pfannenstiel shared a 2025-2026 district calendar draft being proposed by the calendar committee.
- Jamie Pieper addressed the Board regarding her acceptance of the Kansas School Board Resource Center scholarship.
- The Board moved into executive session to discuss non-elected personnel.
- The Board gave Dr. Ballard authority to extend Mr. Pfannenstiel's and Mr. Smith's contracts.