



Board of Education

Superintendent Report

Monday, September 23, 2024

Lawrence Schools Foundation Community Education Breakfast

I want to thank the Lawrence Schools Foundation staff and board for the wonderful Community Education Breakfast September 13th.

It was my honor to recognize Foundation Student Champions: **Cameron Hardie and Aubrie Magnuson, of Lawrence High School, and Daijah Preston and Ryan Weishaar, of Free State High School.**

Our high school bands and spirit squads, Firebird orchestra members, and Harrison Leiszler (LYZ-luhr), a Free State freshman violinist, represented our schools very well during their performances.

My thanks also to Jaunelle White of Lawrence High's Class of 1996 for returning home from Georgia to speak at this event; we were inspired by the message she shared with us.

Our schools are truly fortunate to benefit from tremendous community support. Foundation Executive Director Dena Johnston announced a record \$100,000 raised from sponsorships and ticket sales, and Truity Credit Union, a Master LEAP Partner, donated \$40,000 to the Foundation to continue its support of our student and staff needs.

National Merit Semifinalists

Congratulations to our Lawrence Public Schools eight National Merit Semifinalists: Amaya Gab, Malcolm Karman, Richard Li, Noah Pultz-Earle, Elinor Russo, Anwen Williams, and Lois Xie of Free State High and Elise N. Rathmel of Lawrence High.

These are students with exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies. As semifinalists, they are part of a nationwide pool representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors.

Elementary Professional Learning Day

I want to thank our team for planning and presenting a meaningful early childhood and elementary professional learning day last Wednesday.

I also appreciate our school families enabling our teachers to have this dedicated time to continue to perfect their professional practice.

5 – PD Day Video

The theme of Wednesday's Professional Learning Day was "Be the Educator Your Students Need You to Be." Andrew Beaven (*Last name sounds like heaven*) talked to some of our students and shared this video with our teachers to set the tone and inspiration for the day.

6 – LVS Day in the Park

I thoroughly enjoyed meeting Lawrence Virtual School elementary staff, students, and families face-to-face during their Day at the Park last Friday. This event in South Park was well attended, and I heard some powerful testimonials from families about their appreciation of the LVS staff and for having a high-quality virtual education option for their children.

7 – Safety

This morning Lawrence Police Chief Rich Lockhart and I filmed a video that we will share with our middle and high school students, their families, and our community about safety. Schools across the country, including ours, are dealing with an uptick in threats of violence and rumors about threats of violence.

We want our students, school families, and community to know that the Lawrence Police Department and Lawrence Public Schools are partners in making sure our schools are safe places to learn. We also want to impress upon them the seriousness of making threats and spreading rumors and the importance of immediately reporting safety concerns to an adult at school.

We need our school families' assistance in talking to their children about this serious issue and setting some of their own family expectations, consequences, and screen time limitations. Safety is a shared responsibility. We must work together to provide safe learning environments for all students and staff.

8 – Personal Community Engagement

I continue to enjoy getting to know Lawrence and meeting members of our community, including attending Art in the Park last weekend, and meeting with the Rainbow Kids and Families Board of Directors Monday and the Lawrence Schools Foundation Board of Trustees Tuesday.

I also attended the Lawrence Special Education Advisory Committee meeting Tuesday, visited with our outstanding elementary principal team on Thursday, and attended The Chamber's Taste of Lawrence Mixer and the Free State - Lawrence High soccer match Thursday evening.

9-11 – Fall Community Engagement

(BLANK FOR INSERTING INFORMATION)

12 October-November Community Conversations

We will be creating a website home and other marketing materials to share with our community several opportunities to come together for community conversations, including at each of our middle schools in October and November and a brown bag lunch conversation at the Lawrence Public Library.

13 – Community Engagement, continued

We will also share a community survey, and continue to meet with civic groups, faith communities, and others who would like me to attend their meetings. In December, I will share with the board and community a report about what we heard and learned and how we will use this information to plan the future direction of our Lawrence Public Schools.