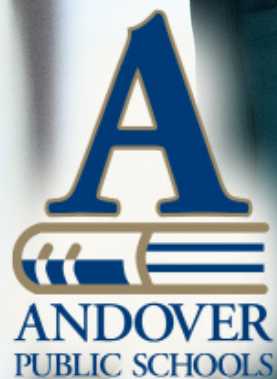


The Andover Update



A STEP AHEAD

BCC Academies offer students
an early start on college

WINTER 2024-25

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Board of Education

Jennifer Seymour, president | Josh Wells, vice president
Jake Ashley | Tim Brunson | Andrew Chaney
Pierre Harter | Jill Hodge
Jamie Bohannon, clerk | Sherame Kneisel, treasurer

District Administration

Brett White, superintendent
Jeremy Boldra, assistant superintendent for human resources
Jill Lachenmayr, assistant superintendent for academic affairs
Richard Bell, executive director of operations
Sherame Kneisel, chief financial officer
Aaron Miller, director of food service
Brad Niessen, director of technology
Terry Rombeck, director of communication

Portrait of a Graduate

- Academic preparation**
 - Has skills and knowledge to pursue life goals
 - Has real-world experience to succeed after high school
- Collaboration and communication**
 - Works well with others
 - Values teamwork
- Innovative thinking**
 - Thinks critically and independently
 - Solves problems creatively
- Integrity and character**
 - Has strong work ethic
 - Does the right thing
- Resilience**
 - Learns from mistakes and failures
 - Adapts to an ever-changing world



Seeing the positive in new enrollment law



Brett White,
Superintendent

We've all heard the expression, "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade."

In 2022, when the Kansas Legislature approved a new requirement for out-of-district students to attend our schools, if there was capacity, we thought we had been handed some lemons. We certainly didn't advocate or support this law, but we vowed to make it work out the best it could.

This fall is the first time out-of-district students have been allowed to attend Andover Public Schools (other than children of full-time staff members who were allowed previously). And while "lemonade" is in the eye of the beholder, I can tell you we have made the best out of the situation.

As a reminder, here is how our policy works to comply with state law:

- Each year, our district determines capacity by building and grade level. Our Board of Education determined, following community input, that we would leave a 10 percent buffer between expected enrollment and our district's class size guidelines. This would allow for any unexpected surges of in-district move-ins. Based on this system, we had a total of 344 spots available this school year for out-of-district students.
- For the 2024-25 school year, the application window was June 1-30, with notification made to families by July 15. For the 2025-26 school year, the Legislature has changed the window to Jan. 1-June 15, with notifications again made by July 15. Like last year, the number of spots available must be posted on our website by May 1.
- Out-of-district students must remain in good standing to continue attending our schools. Once they are accepted (and stay in good standing) they may attend our schools until graduation.
- Transportation for out-of-district students is not provided.

In all, we accepted 119 out-of-district students this year. Others who applied either were in grade levels that didn't have capacity or declined their offers for other reasons.

We are glad to welcome these 119 students for many reasons, including the diversity they bring to our district.

On the financial side, there are additional benefits.

Our society is experiencing a time of lower birth rates. Between 2019 and 2023, the live birth rate in Sedgwick and Butler Counties has decreased from 7,445 to 7,140 per year. In our district, we see those trends overtime, too. We currently have 463 seniors and 348 kindergarteners. Based on these trends, our student population will continue to decrease over time.

Of course, we're not alone – this follows a trend throughout the state of declining enrollments. This combines with local housing trends, in which older Andover district patrons who may have moved elsewhere after their children graduated are now staying in their homes. This makes it more of a challenge for young families with children to move into the district, with fewer houses available.

Our district's funding is based, in part, on student headcount. Welcoming those additional 119 students into our district resulted in approximately \$640,000 in additional funding. This has helped us offer additional compensation to our staff to settle negotiations earlier and ease the burden of increased insurance rates for staff, among other advantages.

We certainly are sensitive to concerns about class sizes. In some cases, however, classes actually decreased in size because of this change.

For example, we expected to have two kindergarten classes at Sunflower Elementary this year, based on the 42 students we were anticipating. Each class would have had 21 students. The kindergarten maximum class guideline for our district is 22 students. Because we were able to accept three out-of-district students at Sunflower, that pushed our average class size above 22, and we were able to hire an additional teacher. Now, the average kindergarten class size at Sunflower is 17.

Lemons? Lemonade? We'll let you decide. Either way, we are proud to serve our district and the amazing Andover community. We are thankful every day for our amazing students, families, community and staff.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brett White". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

A STEP AHEAD

High-schoolers advance their careers through BCC Academies

Delanie Hall knew early in life that she wanted to be a nurse.

“I’ve always had a passion for caring for people,” she says. “I’m also really fascinated by the human body — the science and anatomy of it. Nursing is a great combination of those.”

So when the time came to get a jumpstart on her nursing career in high school, she took full advantage.

By enrolling in the Health Sciences Pathway through Butler Community College’s Early College Academies, Hall earned her associate’s degree and Certified Nursing Assistant certification while at the same time completing her last two years of high school.

“Those,” Hall says, “were the best couple years of my life.”

BCC’s Early College Academies are celebrating 10 years of helping area high school students get a head start on their careers. High school juniors and seniors split their time between their high school buildings and BCC campuses, earning credits that count toward both high school graduation and their associate’s degrees. In all, 725 high school students have completed the academies; 148 of those are from Andover High or Andover Central High, having saved more than \$510,000 in college costs.

“Our students have an amazing opportunity to complete college classes along with high school requirements,” says Abby Thrash, a counselor at ACHS. “It’s a great way to get ahead in their careers, save money and create their professional networks earlier.”

‘Ahead of everybody’

Hall graduated from BCC in 2023, the day before she graduated from Andover High School. She spent her mornings at AHS before driving to the BCC campus in Rose Hill in the afternoons. Now pursuing her nursing degree at Newman University, she estimates her parents saved nearly \$30,000 because she attended the Early College Academy. Her CNA certification also has allowed her to work part-time at Kansas Medical Center.

“I figure the sooner I can start saving money for retirement, the better,” she says. “Plus, I want to go to grad school, so I’m saving for that.”

Her goal is to be a nurse practitioner working in Labor and Delivery.

“I’m ahead of everybody,” she says of others in her field.

Brooklyn Fleske, a 2023 graduate of ACHS and the Health Sciences Pathway, is now a student at the University of Arkansas. She cites another advantage of the Early College Academies — colleagues.

“We were in all the same classes together,” she says. “It was a really close experience. Even now, we’re still friends.”

Fleske, who wants to earn a master’s in athletic training, says her head start to college allowed her to be involved in undergraduate research, studying hydration and dehydration in athletes and those in the military.

BCC ACADEMIES

BCC offers Academies in a variety of fields:

Agriculture

Business

Cybersecurity

Culinary Arts

Diesel Technology

Digital Media

Education

Engineering Studies

Game and Simulation Design

Liberal Arts

Pre-Health Studies

Software Development

Welding

To learn more, visit butlercc.edu/academy

“The Academy really set me up with life skills,” she says. “It gave me a taste of what college classes are like. It’s really for students who are dedicated and passionate about learning.”

The right fit

Christy Streeter, associate dean of online, high school and community learning for BCC, says the Academy experience is meant for students who have a firm idea for their future career.

In contrast, the Andover Center for Advanced Professional Studies focuses on career exploration — students who are still trying to decide their future plans.

“We talk about fit,” Streeter says. “It’s not the right fit for everyone. But for those who are the right fit, it can be life-changing.”

She says BCC has worked to make sure that credits transfer to most four-year colleges. She notes that Academy students have received more than \$30 million in scholarship offers to four-year colleges and universities.

She also notes that the Academy isn’t intended to replace the high school experience. She says Academy students have been newspaper editors and class presidents.

“We still want students to have the full high school experience,” she says. “This is in addition to, not instead of.”



Delanie Hall speaks to her supervisor, Adrienne King, at Kansas Medical Center.

A head start

Ethan Kramer, a junior at ACHS, is attending the BCC Engineering Pathway. He plans to continue his education at Kansas State University to pursue a bachelor’s in mechanical engineering.

He says his BCC degree should cut a year off his time at KSU.

“It’ll be less pressure,” he says. “I want to enjoy college and not stress out.”

Aneila Williams, meanwhile, is getting a head start on her teaching career. She’s a senior at AHS, and her father is a school principal. She’s known she wanted to be an educator most of her life.

“I’m excited that I’ll be able to jump into my career at an earlier age,” she says.

For Hall, the BCC experience has allowed her to serve her home community at Kansas Medical Center while attending Newman. It’s an experience that she says has made her a better full-time college student.

“I don’t think I could be doing what I do at Newman without the Academy,” she says. “You just have to be disciplined to put in the hard work and get it done.”



Ethan Kramer, a junior at ACHS, right, works on a project in an engineering class at BCC.



Josh Hatfield teaches fourth-graders about the poem “Casey at the Bat” at Robert Martin Elementary School.

The science of stories

New curriculum, knowledge help teachers improve reading skills

First-graders at Sunflower Elementary School are huddled around microscopes, identifying different types of body cells. Next door, other students are measuring their heart rates after running down the hallway. Still others are examining X-Rays of broken bones.

Science class? Nope. This is English Language Arts.

With the implementation of a new reading curriculum this fall, Andover elementary students are increasingly finding themselves living out the topics found on their textbook pages. It’s just one of many pieces of a concerted effort to improve reading levels across the district.

“Reading is fundamental to a wide range of life activities,” says Traci Holder, director of instruction and intervention. “Proficient reading is linked to student success.”

Reading proficiency is one of Andover Public Schools’ two current goals for accreditation. (The other is developing success skills that will prepare students for life

after high school.)

The reading effort is multi-pronged, including the new elementary curriculum (Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts, or CKLA), professional learning on the science of reading, a new focus on vocabulary and support structures for students who are struggling.

“As a teacher, all of this is giving me so many more tools to help students,” says Josh Hatfield, who teaches fourth grade at Robert Martin Elementary School. “It’s all-encompassing.”

New curriculum

Unlike many elementary reading curricula, Amplify CKLA’s reading passages are thematically focused on social studies, science and literary topics. Instead of reading and writing about random or loosely related topics throughout a week, students focus on topics such as the Middle Ages, Early American Civilizations or Astronomy

to build wide knowledge that support reading comprehension.

The first-graders learning about science at Anatomy Day had been reading and writing about the human body. Anatomy and physiology students at Andover Central High School organized the hands-on activities for students.

“Students are just soaking up the knowledge,” says Heather von Merveldt, who teaches first grade at Sunflower. “I love hearing how much some of them talk about ELA at home. They are super interested in all of the real-world information.”

First-graders at Cottonwood Elementary also had several hands-on opportunities stemming from ELA lessons in their “Different Lands, Similar Stories” unit. The theme focused on folktales from different regions that were similar yet different. One was about Cinderella, and the students held a Royal Ball complete with dancing, etiquette lessons and a meal.

“The kids love it,” says first-grade teacher Maggie Carney. “They’re really into it. They are retaining so much more than I expected.”

Meanwhile, the curriculum is intentional about introducing students to new vocabulary words.

“It really helps develop their vocabulary, and listening and speaking skills,” von Merveldt says. “One day I overheard a student say, ‘Knowledge time is the best part of my day!’ That’s just awesome to hear.”

Science of reading

As there is new excitement among students with the new reading curriculum, teachers are learning new ways to help students learn to read. The district is helping teachers understand the science of reading through an eight-part training known as LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling). Currently, 140 teachers throughout the district are taking the courses.

“We need to understand how the human brain learns to read,” Holder says. “Our brains are designed to learn language — but learning to read does not happen naturally. We have to understand the complex process of learning to read to

know how to help those who are struggling.”

Hatfield, who is part of the LETRS training, says that understanding has already helped him provide new strategies for some of his students who need extra help to read.

“You don’t learn this in college,” he says. “This is giving me a roadmap to be able to help individual students.”

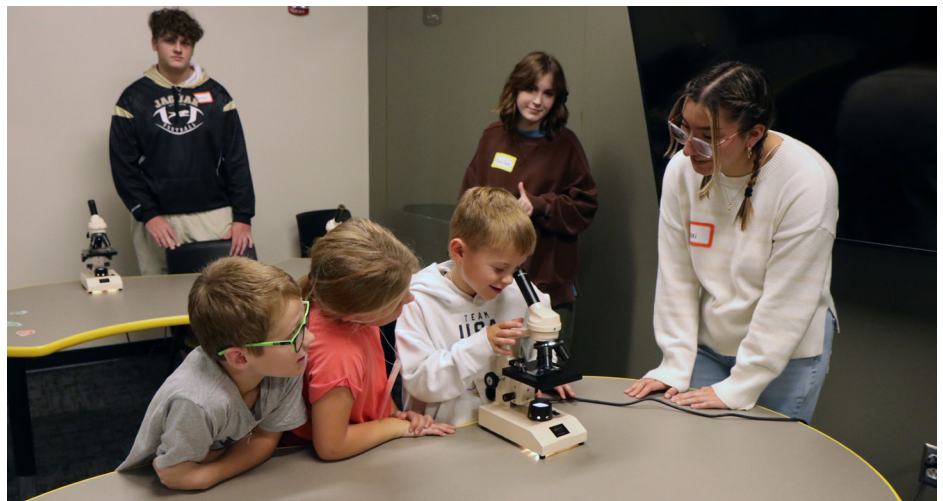
The district also has moved to a more systematic way of helping students who need additional help. Known as Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), students are part of reading groups that provide as much help as they need, whether that’s with a classroom teacher, a trained instructional aide or a reading specialist. Andover Public Schools has had reading specialists in elementary schools for years, but recently invested in having reading specialists at each middle and high school, as well.

Hatfield says the higher level of rigor in the CKLA curriculum is challenging and inspiring all of his students, no matter their reading ability.

“The struggle is one of the most important elements,” he says. “There’s such a wide expanse of knowledge. They’re thinking critically and with more depth.”

Holder says she hopes the gains seen this fall will only continue as teachers adapt to the new curriculum and learn more about the science of reading. Students, she says, will reap the benefits for the rest of their lives.

“Our teachers are invested in learning everything they can to help students become successful readers,” Holder says.



First-graders from Sunflower Elementary take turns looking through a microscope, a project that stemmed from ELA curriculum.

KANSAS → TAIWAN

Fulbright program provides alumna opportunity to teach overseas

Living halfway around the world has made Kylie Litavniks feel closer to home in Andover.

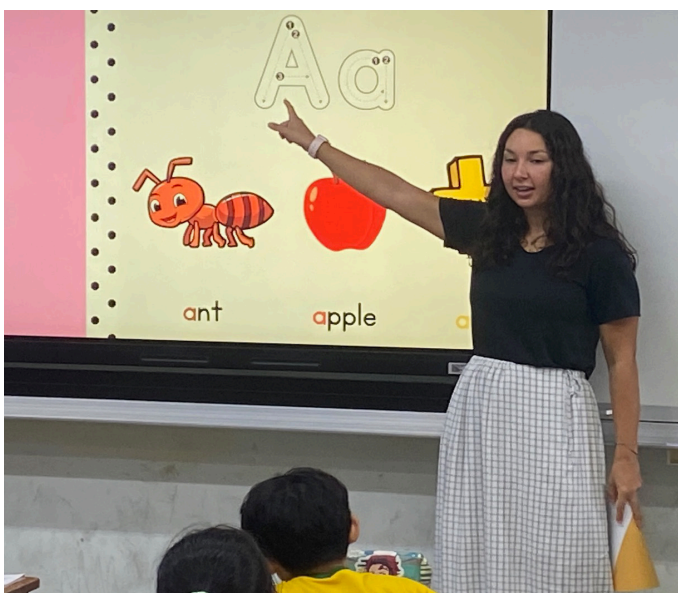
Litavniks, a 2020 graduate of Andover Central High School, is spending this school year in Taiwan, where she is teaching English through the Fulbright Taiwan program.

“I feel as though I have deepened my love for Kansas and my Andover roots,” she says. “I find myself educating my fellow Fulbrighters about Kansas and our values of hard work, community and the all-around friendliness that we exhibit.”

Litavniks is teaching English to students in first through sixth grades. Taiwan has set a goal of being a bilingual country by 2030, with English seen as a way to open doors for business and education opportunities overseas.

She says most students only know a few phrases in English — and she doesn’t know much of their native Mandarin — so communicating is a challenge.

“I play tag with some of the kids at recess or read English books aloud in the library, but I am unable to have conversations of substance with the kids,” she says. She’s confident that will improve as she continues her fellowship, which runs through June of 2025.



8 Kylie Litavniks teaches her students in Taiwan.

In her free time, Litavniks attends Mandarin lessons, goes to the gym or shops at night markets. She says Taiwanese people are always excited to meet an American.

“When I come to class, they don’t want me to teach the textbook, they want to teach exciting cultural topics in English because they see me as not only an English teacher but an American cultural ambassador,” she says.

She says the life lessons she’s already learned from living abroad have made her more adaptable and calm under pressure. When she first arrived in Taiwan, someone mistakenly took her luggage at the airport, thinking it was theirs. She had to use Google Translate to communicate the situation and complete the necessary paperwork.

“I want to learn more about myself and what I want, and to be OK with being uncomfortable in the unknown,” she says.

After high school, Litavniks attended Kansas State University, where she earned bachelor degrees in finance, French and political science in May. She plans to attend Georgetown University beginning in fall 2025 and pursue a master’s in foreign service. She eventually wants to work at U.S. embassies overseas.

“The Foreign Service is highly competitive, so I’m hoping that having experience teaching and serving as a cultural ambassador for the United States will reflect positively throughout the application process,” she says.

All along the way, she says her education in Andover Public Schools – and specifically Sunflower Elementary, Andover Central Middle School and ACHS – has provided a solid foundation to pursue her further studies. Specifically, she mentions English with Mark Fleske, which helped her be a better student, and Advanced Placement U.S. History with Nicole Kallenbach, which sparked her interest in world affairs.

“I am very grateful to have grown up in Andover,” she says. “I often find myself reflecting on my own elementary school experience and trying to draw lesson ideas from that and think about what I was like as a kid. I still remember every teacher I had in elementary school and the impact they had on me. I hope I can do that for the kids here and make learning English fun.”



ANDOVER GRADS



POWER

SHOCKER NATION



**ALIA
MICHAELIS**

Andover HS grad 2020
Wichita State grad 2024

Major
biochemistry



**DIMITRI
SENEVIRATNE**

Andover HS grad 2020
Anticipated graduation 2025

Major
product design and
manufacturing
engineering



**ANNA
TRI**

Andover Central HS grad 2019
Wichita State grad 2023

Major
biomedical engineering

Current job
Systems engineer in defense
with Textron Aviation

COMING SOON

THE COLLEGE TOUR

AMAZON PRIME STREAMING SERIES



AVAILABLE FEBRUARY 2025 ON WICHITA.EDU

Football tackle leads to Character Champion award

Integrity and Character are important parts of what our schools teach to prepare students for their lives after school.

Drennan Tiemstra, seventh-grader at Andover Central Middle School, was part of a football tackle that resulted in Reed from Goddard Eisenhower Middle School being hospitalized. That evening, he tracked down Reed's number from a mutual friend and texted him to make sure he was OK and to send messages of encouragement.

These two young men met in person for the first time Nov. 1, and Reed helped Superintendent Brett White present Drennan the district's Character Champion Award. The award goes to those who go above and beyond to show kindness and empathy.



Drennan Tiemstra, center right, is pictured with Reed, a Goddard Eisenhower student, at center left, after receiving a Character Champion award. Also pictured are members of the ACMS administration, football coaching staff, and Supt. Brett White.

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Bright Beginnings Brighter Futures

Andover Early Learning

Set your learner up for success with Andover Early Learning!

Our half-day classes for children ages 3 and 4 create a firm foundation to prepare them for kindergarten and beyond. High-quality teachers and low student-teacher ratios ensure students receive the individualized attention they need to be their best. And they'll have plenty of time for library, art, music, PE and the playground – just like the big kids!

- Classes in session Monday through Thursday at Prairie Creek Elementary School
- Morning and afternoon sessions available
- Available to anyone living in the Andover Public School boundaries
- State subsidies available for those who qualify
- Transportation is available for a fee, or free to those who qualify
- Students must be at least 3 years old by Aug. 31, 2025



Online applications for the 2025-26 school year open at 7 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 22. Visit www.usd385.org/preK or scan the code for more information!

Early Learning Info Night
6-7 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 16

Come learn about our program, tour classrooms, meet teachers and ask questions. We ask that this be an adult-only event.



DRIVEN to learn

Small Engine Club connects students at Andover eCademy

It's a Tuesday afternoon, and four high school students are gathered around machinery.

One is reassembling a power washer. Three others are dismantling an old lawn edger to clean the fuel line. The group already has fired up two push mowers whose engines had seized. A riding mower and an air compressor stand nearby, ready to be serviced.

You really wouldn't know these students attend a virtual school.

This is the Small Engine Repair Club, one of many in-person, hands-on activities offered by Andover eCademy. In its second year, the club started after several eCademy students helped a peer fix a tire issue on her car.

"I thought, 'What a way to bring people together around a shared interest,'" says Kevin Fox, the science teacher who is the club's sponsor.

Once a week, the group gets together to work on machinery that has been donated, or that they find for free online. The two push mowers they worked on? Fox found those on the side of the road.

"I work on cars and have farmed, so I knew I wanted to be part of this," says Preston Turner, a senior. "This is such a great way for us to get involved at school."

Learn more

Interested in learning more about Andover eCademy? You're invited to an Open House from 5:30-7:30 April 3 at eCademy, 1411 N. Main St. in Andover. For additional information, visit andoveracademy.org, email info@usd385.org or call 316-218-4470.

Fox says he does some teaching in the club, but students also learn from one another. And if they're stumped, a large computer monitor is nearby to learn from everybody's trusted repair service — YouTube.

For Preston, the club is a perfect balance to why he and his sister, junior Trinity Turner, chose eCademy for their education. They enjoy the in-person connection while appreciating the flexibility to complete their school work on their own.

"I can work ahead all I want," Preston says. "It's just a lot more freedom."

"I love the connections you have with your teachers," Trinity says. "It has a great community."

Fox says it's gratifying to be part of a group that is driven to further their knowledge. Though the class meets on Tuesdays, students often come in on other days and ask if they can tinker with projects.

"It's fun to watch them learn," Fox says. "I don't have to push them to do anything — they want to be here."



Kevin Fox assists Trinity Turner and Henry Sherrow as they work on a power washer engine.

Foundation awards \$50,000 in educator grants

The Foundation for Andover Schools spent Nov. 19 spreading joy throughout Andover Public Schools.

Members of The Foundation's Board of Directors, along with district administrators and cheerleaders, surprised educators in their classrooms and schools to inform them they had received Foundation grants for the 2024-25 school year. In all, the Foundation awarded \$50,000 in grants to create new opportunities for students.

In addition to many individual educator grants, the Foundation funded larger district initiatives such as Reality U for eighth-graders, the Saturday Academy for middle schoolers and high schoolers to learn about history, a service to help high schoolers secure college scholarships, and a fund to help with travel expenses for students who qualify for national competitions.

More information about each grant and how to contribute to The Foundation can be found at fundandoverschools.org.



Kayla Nelson, kindergarten teacher at Meadowlark Elementary, receives a grant for outdoor play and learning space.

Virtual learning

Real-world results

eCademy offers flexible virtual learning paired with opportunities for in-person projects, clubs and field trips

State-certified teachers guide students through professionally developed curriculum, allowing students to progress at their own pace. And students of all ages can gather at eCademy to meet with their teachers, get to know their classmates and participate in enrichment activities.

There is no one "typical" eCademy student. But our model is great for:

- Families who want the flexibility to be involved in school on their own schedule and want support from teachers.
- Students who want to work ahead on projects.
- Families who want to spend more time together.
- Students who have medical issues that require treatment.
- Students who aren't at their best in a traditional school environment.
- Elite athletes who want to spend more time honing their craft.



Scan the QR code, visit www.andoveracademy.org or call 316-218-4470 to learn more!



Substitute teachers provide key service to district students

Substitute teachers are a vital part of keeping our district running and students learning when classroom teachers are gone. Here are the stories of two of our subs.

We are always looking for additional people who are looking to give back to their community with this flexible job. To learn more, please contact Sherry Adams, substitute coordinator, at adamss@usd385.org.



Carol Anne Sewell

Years subbing: 27 (10 in Andover)

Grades: Typically middle school and high school, three or four days a week.

Why do you serve as a sub? I decided to substitute teach in Liberal, and then go back for the student teaching. I enjoyed it so much – the variety of classes and students – that I just continued subbing and have loved every minute.

What do you like about subbing in Andover? When I moved to Andover, I felt the school system was home. We have great schools and terrific students. I truly enjoy the students and I hope they know and feel it.



Mackenzie Martine

Years subbing: First year

Grades: Elementary school, several days a week.

Why did you become a sub? I stayed at home with my first and only child for 2 ½ years. During that time, I fell in love with the way a young child's mind works. I came to a realization that I wanted to become a teacher. I looked into subbing so I could dip my toes into the world of teaching.

What is the most fulfilling part of subbing? Getting an enthusiastic high five, a hug or even a compliment can feel like a ray of sunlight. Today, a little boy came into class, gave me a hug and said, "You are so nice!"

Two seniors named National Merit Semifinalists



Alex Cozine

Two Andover seniors have been named National Merit Semifinalists for the 2024-25 school year.

Alex Cozine of Andover Central High School and Tate Hutchinson of Andover High School were informed of the honor in September.

They were surprised with the news in class Sept. 12. To be named a semifinalist, they scored in the top 1 percent of last year's juniors who took the PSAT/NMSQT exam.

As a Jaguar, Alex has been active in band, cross country, scholars bowl, track and National



Tate Hutchinson

Honors Society. He also has volunteered at Habitat for Humanity. He's interested in attending school in Colorado or Arkansas and majoring in mathematics or engineering.

At AHS, Tate has been involved in wrestling, football and track. He has served on the Principal Advisory Council and Superintendent's Student Advisory Team, and has volunteered at youth football camps. He's planning to major in pre-med, possibly at the University of Tulsa.



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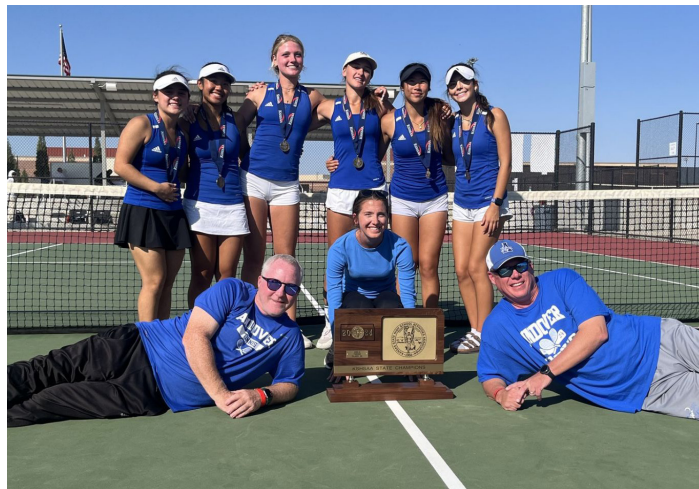
AHS girls win fourth straight state tennis title

The Andover High School girls tennis team won its fourth straight 5A state championship Oct. 19 at the Andover Public Schools Tennis Complex.

The Trojans received 58 total points, winning the title by 36 points. Molly Gaddis took the singles championship, while Nadia Kaewsai and Biz Gaddis took the doubles championship. Both championship matches went to a deciding third set.

Kaewsai and Gaddis defeated teammates Emma Jittawait and Ada Tantemsomboon for the title. Mia Jaramillo took third in singles.

The Trojans are coached by Stephen Alexander, Mark Cross and Abby Stevens.



ACHS claims first-ever state football championship

The Jaguars defeated Bishop Miege 49-42 Nov. 30 at Emporia State University's Welch Field. Fueled by senior Maddox Archibald's record-setting 341 rushing yards, the Jaguars outscored the Stags by a touchdown in the fourth quarter to come home with the win.

"A lot of it is just their inherent belief in each other, the team and the program," Coach Derek Tuttle told the Butler County Times-Gazette following the win. "Even when we had success this year, there's times in the season

they could have fallen apart or crumbled, they just kept sticking together."

The group of 23 seniors on the team also reached the state title game their freshman and junior seasons.

"We knew we wanted to win this game," quarterback Jace Jefferson told the Times-Gazette. "This was our last chance to play with each other. We knew we wanted to win this and just battling adversity."

Woods, Flory nominated for Kansas Teacher of the Year



Lacey Woods

Two outstanding Andover educators have been nominated as the district's representatives for 2026 Kansas Teacher of the Year.

Lacey Woods, who teaches culinary arts at Andover Central High School, is the district's secondary-level nominee. She started the school's ProStart Program team, which has won the state championship in the culinary management division four straight years.

Students flock to her program because of her kindness, patience and the skills she teaches them. Woods also partners with the ACHS special education department to teach



Todd Flory

life skills.

Todd Flory, who teaches fourth grade at Wheatland Elementary, is the district's elementary-level nominee. His students often video chat with people around the world to broaden their horizons. He recently started a school-wide hydroponics gardening program to teach about botany and nutrition.

He has participated in a fellowship with the Cosmosphere, helped with the science team at the Kansas State Department of Education, and has been named a Kansas Master Teacher.

Bullinger nominated for Kansas Horizon Award

Lexie Bullinger, fourth-grade teacher at Robert Martin Elementary, has been named the district's nominee for the 2025 Kansas Horizon Award.

Supt. Brett White, Asst. Supt. Jeremy Boldra and Principal Amy Petricek made the announcement in front of Mrs. Bullinger's cheering class Sept. 12. The statewide awards, which will be announced in January, honor outstanding second-year teachers in the state.

Some thoughts from students about why Bullinger is a great teacher:

"She's really nice."

"She lets everybody have a chance."

"She's going to help us grow stronger and learn more."

"She's helpful when you get frustrated."

"She's really fair."

"She let us have fun."

"It means a lot to me," she says. "You're always wondering if you're doing things correctly. This is confirmation that things are going well and you're doing things right."

She says she knew as early as kindergarten that she wanted to be a teacher.

"One of the teachers said, 'Lexie, you need to be a



Students applaud as Lexie Bullinger is named a nominee for the Kansas Horizon Award.

teacher someday," she recalls. "I really don't remember changing my mind from there."

She says she's driven by one motivating factor.

"The kids — they are the first thing I think of in the morning, and the last thing I'm thinking of at night. I just love working with the kids."



MAYOR'S MESSAGE



As 2024 comes to a close, I want to take a moment to look back on all the great things we've accomplished this year and share some exciting plans for 2025. It's been a year full of growth and celebration here in Andover, and I couldn't be more proud of how our community has come

together to make this a great place to live, work and play.

One of the biggest highlights of 2024 was the grand opening of 13th Street Sports Park. This new facility has already become a popular spot for families and anyone who loves the outdoors. The park has sports fields, walking trails and a splash pad (which will reopen again in the spring), making it the perfect place to gather for a game, a walk or just to enjoy the fresh air.

Another exciting project that was completed this year was the Harry Street Nature Trail Park, located off Harry Street just east of the Wastewater Treatment Plant, located at 2115 E Harry St. This beautiful outdoor space is a great place for nature lovers to explore and enjoy the outdoors. It's inspiring to see Andover continue to grow with more parks and trails for everyone to enjoy.

We also continue to see residents moving into the Skyloft Apartments at The Heritage, a new area off Kellogg and Yorktown that will bring more places to live, shop and eat in Andover. This October, we celebrated the opening of Livingston's Café, which is the first of many businesses that will be part of The Heritage. As we move into 2025, there will be even more in this area, adding to the vibrant energy of Andover.

Looking ahead, 2025 is going to be a year full of fun

events and improvements. One of the things I'm most excited about is our very first-annual spring event in May. This will be a day for the whole community to come together and celebrate with so many fun activities. It's the perfect way to kick off the warmer months and enjoy all that Andover has to offer.

As our city continues to grow, we're also working hard to maintain our high-quality roads and infrastructure that Andover residents are accustomed to. Preliminary engineering is underway for the Yorktown Parkway BASE Grant Project from Central Ave. to 13th St. Bidding the work is anticipated in January 2025 for completion of construction in 2025. This is an important project for the future of Andover, and we look forward to construction beginning.

We're also making improvements in Central Park, working to rebuild the Lodge. This new space will be updated and accessible, making it a great spot for events, gatherings, and community programs, along with enhancing the Capitol Federal Amphitheater® offerings. We look forward to sharing more details with you soon, including a groundbreaking ceremony for this project.

As we head into the holiday season, I encourage you to take a moment to reflect on all we've accomplished together this year. Let's celebrate the successes of 2024 and look forward to the new year with hope and excitement for all the great things ahead.

On behalf of the City Council, I want to wish you and your families a joyful and peaceful holiday season.

Here's to an exciting 2025 and beyond!

Stay healthy, happy, and safe,

Ronnie Price
Mayor of Andover

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HOLIDAY CLOSURES FOR CITY DEPARTMENTS

To allow employees to spend more time with their families during the holidays, all non-emergency city departments will be closed the following dates:

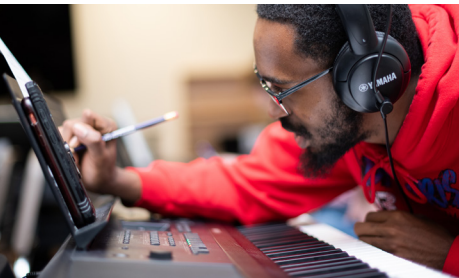
- Christmas – Tuesday, December 24 and Wednesday, December 25
- New Year's Day – Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Emergency personnel will be available and ready to assist should they be needed.

SAVE THE DATE



New spring event for the entire family set for Saturday, May 17, 2025
Visit www.andoverks.gov/springthing for more information.



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