



USD 497 News Release

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Board Hears Inclement Weather Make-up Plan; Approves 2025-2026 School Calendar

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Dr. Jeanice Kerr Swift shared information with the board and community about the district's commitment to student safety, outlining several safety procedures. [Read this report on our website.](#)

Superintendent Contract

The board unanimously approved the superintendent's contract, effective July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2028, at a salary of \$235,000. President Kelly Jones said that the board is excited to retain an excellent superintendent.

Inclement Weather Make-Up Plan

Dr. Swift presented a plan to make up instructional hours necessary to meet state requirements. This follows our district's use of nine inclement weather days this winter. The plan includes these key elements:

- The 2024-2025 School Calendar includes April 21 as a designated inclement weather make-up day. **All schools will be in session April 21.** Since the calendar includes, and our district plans to use, this make-up day, the state "forgives" an equivalent day.
- The addition of 15 minutes to the end of every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday school day for the remainder of the school year, beginning March 24.
- The addition of 25 minutes to the end of every Wednesday school day for the remainder of the school year, starting March 26.
- Thursday, May 22, will expand from a half-day to a full day of school for all students.
- Students will attend school for the last time this school year on Friday, May 23, with early dismissal based on individual school schedules. Schools will share these details prior to spring break.
- **There will be no end-of-year adjustments for seniors; however, our district expects seniors to attend the additional minutes outlined above in the make-up plan.**

2025-2026 School Calendar

The school board approved the Calendar Committee's recommended 2025-2026 School Calendar. Swift shared with the community that the new calendar represents increased instructional minutes to support our critical mission, better aligns school days across all grade levels – elementary, middle, and high school, and expands the district's "cushion" for managing inclement weather days.

Calendar highlights include:

- Student contact time extended by five minutes daily.
- First day of school: August 12 (Transition Day) for Grades K, 6, & 9; August 13 First Day of School K-12; and August 19 Early Childhood First Day.
- October and February Parent/Teacher Conferences.
- Fall Break: November 24-28; Winter Break: December 22-January 5; and Spring Break: March 13-20
- Last Day of School: May 15 Early Childhood & seniors; May 21 Kindergarten-Grade 11.
- Seniors get out earlier in May than prior years.

MORE

“One of the goals we have had through negotiations and with our calendar is that we don’t have 6-7 weeks without a break. We are really proud that the longest stretch in this calendar is five weeks,” said Josh Spradlin, LEA negotiations co-chair and an LMCMS science teacher.

“I really love this calendar. You all did a great job!” said Past President Shannon Kimball.

The community will note that Inclement Weather Make-Up Days will not appear on the public-facing calendar. Director of Data and Assessment James Polk explained that staff has been working with the Kansas Department of Education in the development of the calendar. It includes four inclement weather make-up days noted internally and reported to the state. Polk said that according to state officials, these days can be placed anywhere in the school calendar, and as they are used as designated for school or for staff development/planning, the state will “forgive” equivalent days.

Consent Agenda

As part of its consent agenda, routine items considered in one motion, the board approved:

- Increasing by \$25,000 its original service contract with Favorite Healthcare Staffing for substitute nursing services coverage for the 2024-25 school year. The total amount of \$57,000 will be funded by the State of Kansas K-12 Infectious Disease Management Funding Grant.
- Contracting with Lankford Enterprises Inc. to sand and refinish the auxiliary gym floor at LHS in an amount not to exceed \$23,875 to be paid from Capital Outlay funds.
- Contracting with BSN Sports, LLC., to purchase and install windscreens and rail padding on the baseball and softball fields at LHS in the amount of \$32,998.07 to be paid from Capital Outlay funds.
- Purchasing 145 uninterruptible power supply units from TwoTrees Technologies, LLC., to replace existing units and provide stable and reliable electricity to network equipment, protecting against power disruptions. Using E-rate funding to cover 60% of the expense, the total cost is \$80,040.

Executive Session

The board used two Executive Sessions to discuss non-elected personnel matters and matters protected by attorney-client privilege, taking no action after these discussions.

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