



Arkansas City Public Schools

BOE BRIEFS

An informal report from the Board of Education Meeting

March 10, 2025

State Wrestlers and RESIST Essay Contest Winners Celebrated at Board Meeting

USD 470 leaders celebrated the achievements of Arkansas City High School wrestlers and the RESIST essay contest winners.

The wrestling program made history as senior **Alondra Garcia became the first-ever girls' state placer**, earning sixth place at the 5A State Tournament. The boys' team tied for ninth place, with several athletes earning individual medals:

- Third place: Teague Munson, Zackry Mosier
- Fourth place: Cameron Bruce
- Fifth place: Kolby Quint
- Sixth place: Owen McAnulty

The Board also recognized students for their efforts in the RESIST essay contest, which focused on the dangers of vaping. The contest, sponsored by the student-led RESIST program, received powerful submissions from Arkansas City Middle School and High School students.

- ACMS: First place, Clarissa Whyde; second place, Kenlee Chattam
- ACHS: First place, Brooklyn Gleason; second place, Alizabella Meile

USD 470 is proud of all students for their hard work, dedication, and leadership in academics, athletics, and advocacy.

Board Approves 2025 ACHS Commencement Plan

The USD 470 Board of Education has approved the 2025 Arkansas City High School graduation ceremony. The event is Saturday, May 10, 2025, at 7 p.m. at Bulldog Stadium.

If the weather does not allow for an outdoor ceremony, graduation will be moved to the ACHS gymnasium. The ceremony will include a formal processional, student performances, the presentation of diplomas, and the traditional cap toss.

More details will be shared with students and families as the event gets closer.

PERSONNEL UPDATE

Resignations/Retirements:

- Melissa Cochran – Secretary at Adams

Hirings:

- Jordan Collison – Bus Aide
- Ashley Monroe – Nurse
- Halie Nellsh – SAT at Adams

OTHER BUSINESS

- Levi Anstine expressed concerns about potential Board micromanagement.
- The Board accepted the following gifts:
 - \$1,500 from Legacy Foundation for Head Start Read and Stroll
 - \$6,600 from Golden State Foods – KanPak 65F Foundation so that every classroom teacher (grades K-5) will have \$100 to buy books for their classroom.
 - \$60 from VFW Auxiliary Post #1254
- The Board approved the 2025-26 Head Start Grant Application, which includes a General Budget of \$1,819,703 and a Training and Technical Assistance budget of \$17,552, for a total of \$1,837,255.
- The Board approved issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to install an irrigation system at Arkansas City High School. This project will help maintain and improve the front lawn. Proposals will be reviewed based on cost, vendor experience, and long-term maintenance.
- Dr. Ballard shared information about the 2025 Kansas legislative session, including proposed bills that could impact public education. Key topics included graduation rate calculations, private/homeschool student participation in public school activities, school funding, and local tax policies. The Board will continue to monitor legislative developments and their potential effects on the district.
- The Board discussed the recent visit from Kansas Education Commissioner Dr. Randy Watson on March 3, 2025. Dr. Watson met with Board representatives and district leaders to discuss key education issues, including teacher shortages,

professional development, student assessments, and graduation requirements. He also emphasized the importance of strengthening school-community connections.

- The Board reviewed the Local Option Budget (LOB) percentage for the 2025-26 school year. No increase is expected, assuming state funding remains stable. The district will submit the required notice by April 1, 2025, and finalize the LOB percentage in fall 2025, making sure it does not exceed the submitted amount.
- The Board reviewed the latest NWEA MAP assessment results, which track student growth in core subjects. Middle school students showed strong progress and some grade levels exceeded expected growth. With some grade levels showing lower scores or slower growth, the district is focused on strengthening foundational skills to support long-term success. Teachers and administrators use this data to adjust instruction, provide targeted support, and build on effective strategies to help all students grow.
- The Board received an update on the Student Handbook review. The committee is gathering stakeholder feedback on a possible bell-to-bell cell phone use restriction and working with legal and truancy officials to improve attendance tracking and support. Formatting updates are also in progress to align with state requirements. A draft is expected in April, with final approval planned before the end of the school year.
- The Board moved into executive session to discuss safety and security.
- The Board held two additional executive sessions to discuss non-elected personnel.