



USD 497 News Release

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Administrative Announcement: Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning



Superintendent Dr. Jeanice Kerr Swift announces the selection of Cole Amaya as assistant superintendent of teaching and learning, effective July 1, 2025. Amaya is completing his second year as director of secondary diploma+ and curriculum and instructional programs in the Kansas City, Kansas, school district, where he also served as a high school principal, assistant principal, and instructional coach for seven years.

The assistant superintendent position is part of an administrative restructuring as our district prioritizes directing resources to support student needs and improve staff compensation. Amaya will work primarily with classroom teacher leaders in overseeing the curriculum, instruction, and assessment functions that support our critical teaching and learning mission.

Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Jana Craig-Hare has led the department since Chief Academic Officer Patrick Kelly's retirement last year. Dr. Craig-Hare resigned, effective June 30, 2025, and accepted a superintendent position in St. John-Hudson USD 350 in south-central Kansas.

"We are delighted to welcome Cole Amaya, a proven leader who demonstrates a commitment to quality learning and opportunities for **all** students; he has lived that commitment through his record of service. His experience in inspiring a culture of teaching and learning, collaborating to improve practice by working alongside gifted teacher leaders and principals in schools, as well as his skills in the adept use of data and strengthening of systems to inform the work make him a strong selection. We are fortunate to add Cole Amaya to Team Lawrence Public Schools and look forward to welcoming him in July," said Dr. Swift.

"My thanks to the many individuals on our team who gave their time to serve during a robust interview process that has extended through June," she added.

Amaya previously served seven years as a student services coordinator, a teacher leader on a team that developed curriculum and created a teacher mentorship program, and a high school teacher and soccer coach in the Independence, Missouri, schools. He taught high school and coached soccer for two years in Kansas City, Missouri. He also participated in Leadership Academies in both Independence, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas schools.

After earning a bachelor's degree at Buena Vista University, Amaya earned bachelor's, master's, and educational specialist's degrees at the University of Central Missouri. He is currently completing his doctorate through William Woods University.

"I'm excited to step into the role of assistant superintendent of teaching and learning for Lawrence Public Schools. I'm committed to empowering our students and staff, driving innovation, and building a vibrant learning community together!" Amaya said.

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