Arkansas City Public Schools

BOE BRIEFS

An informal report from the Board of Education Meeting

June 23, 2025

Architect Presents Facility Planning Report

Troy Hertel of Schaefer Architects shared findings from recent work with the USD 470 School Facility and Safety Steering Committee. The team reviewed districtwide needs related to building and safety upgrades, space for early childhood programming (primarily PreK with the potential for daycare services), technology infrastructure, and middle school improvements. Hertel presented a draft master plan and discussed potential next steps, including opportunities for public input.

Updated Handbook Language Supports Phone-Free Learning

To support student focus and classroom engagement, the Board approved updated handbook wording outlining the district's bell-to-bell phone-free policy. The revised language requires students to power off and store personal electronic devices—including phones, smartwatches, and headphones—from the start of the school day until dismissal. Implementation will be supported by the use of secure Yondr pouches, promoting a consistent, distraction-free learning environment across all secondary campuses.

Board Adopts Updated Policies

The Board of Education approved several policy updates recommended by the Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB).

- **BBC – Board Committees**
  Clarifies how Board committees are formed, their roles, and responsibilities.
- **CN – Public Records**
  Outlines procedures for managing public records and complying with open records laws.
- **DFE – Investment of Funds**
  Updates guidance on how the district may invest public funds responsibly and securely.
- **DFH – Fundraising Activities**
  Establishes parameters for school fundraising efforts to ensure compliance and oversight.
- **GAACB – Employee Whistleblower** *(New Policy)*

Provides protections for employees who report unethical or unlawful behavior.
- **IB – School Site Councils**
  Defines the purpose and structure of school site councils to support school improvement planning.
- **JB – Enrollment**
  Clarifies enrollment procedures, including eligibility and documentation requirements.

PERSONNEL UPDATE

Resignations:
- Charles Miller – Bus Mechanic
- Jessy Tarrant – Custodian

OTHER BUSINESS

- The Board approved the renewal of the district's insurance package with EMC, brokered by ICI, for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The package covers property, liability, and other key areas, totaling $522,596. Student accident insurance was also renewed through Guaranty Trust Life for $36,250.
- The Board approved planning and fundraising for two out-of-state student trips in the 2025-2026 school year. The ACHS Symphonic Choir is preparing for a trip to Dallas, Texas, and the AC Travelers group is planning a visit to Washington, D.C.
- The Board discussed possible updates to Policy GACC to clarify recruitment and hiring practices across the district. The policy addresses the Board role in the interview and hiring process. Action on the policy was tabled pending input from the district's HR Director.
- The Board approved the 2025-2026 Procurement Plan for the district's Child Nutrition Programs. The plan outlines purchasing procedures and compliance requirements for all federally funded nutrition services, ensuring alignment with USDA and Kansas State Department of Education guidelines.
- The Board approved the renewal of the meal contract with Sacred Heart Catholic School for the 2025-2026 school year, allowing USD 470 to continue providing meal services under USDA Child Nutrition Program guidelines.
- District administration reported to the Board about the needs assessment. Building leaders completed the assessment in collaboration with site councils and staff. The report highlights each school's progress, priorities, and resource needs, and will help guide budget decisions and support continuous improvement across the district.
- Athletic Director Aaron Bucher reported increased student participation, especially in girls wrestling and boys soccer. Recent facility upgrades include

new scoreboards, shot clocks, and livestream equipment. Future projects under consideration include stadium improvements and softball turf installation.

- The Board received a report on recent storm damage affecting multiple USD 470 buildings and vehicles. High winds and hail caused roof damage at several schools and significant harm to over 70 district-owned vehicles. Temporary repairs are underway, and the district is working with insurance to assess and address all damages.
- More than 130 teachers have signed up for this summer's Curriculum Camp, set for July 16–17. The professional learning event will focus on standards alignment, assessment literacy, and Tier 1 instruction. Sessions will support PreK–12 educators and align with district goals for instructional coherence and student achievement.
- The Board participated in an executive session to discuss employer-employee negotiations. No action was taken following the session.