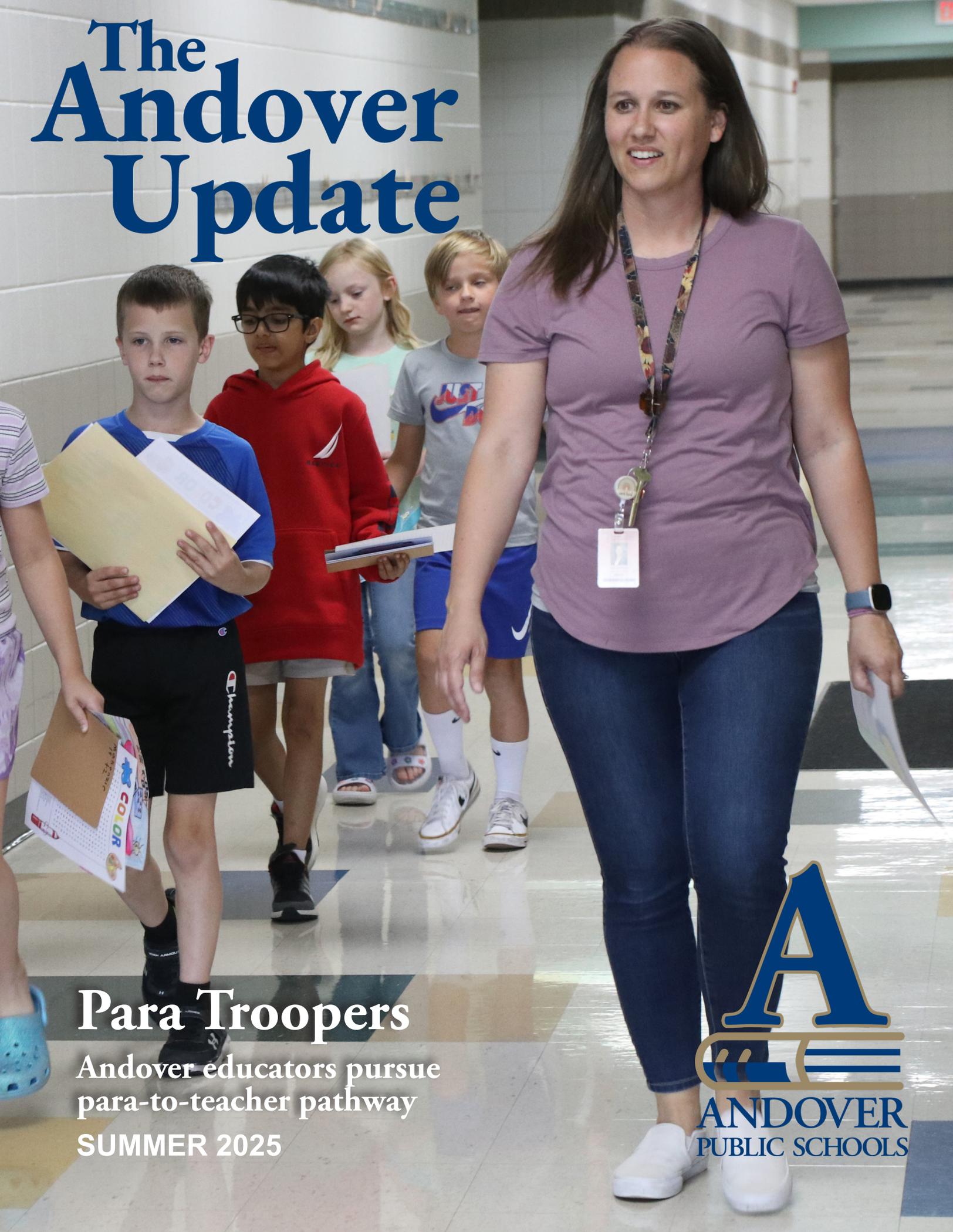


The Andover Update



Para Troopers

Andover educators pursue para-to-teacher pathway

SUMMER 2025



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Meet the team

Board of Education

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

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Jeremy Boldra, assistant superintendent
for human resources
Traci Holder, 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



2024-25: A Year of Celebrations



Brett White,
Superintendent

Three-time Olympic gold medal winner Gail Devers, one of track & field's most accomplished athletes, once said, "The mind is absolutely instrumental in achieving success, and it's the determination and commitment of the mind that allows champions to be made."

Participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities strengthens both mind and body. Competing on a team builds character and discipline, and

develops the mindset of a champion. Sports and activities also build relationships and teach many of the qualities in our Andover Public Schools Portrait of a Graduate. Fields, courts, stages and auditoriums are really just extensions of the classroom.

The 2024-25 school year was filled with successes and championships for our students and teams. We are very proud of our students, teams, sponsors, and coaches who demonstrated the commitment and determination to achieve a state championship. Here's a recap of those extraordinary accomplishments:

- The Andover High School girls tennis team won its fourth straight 5A state championship. Molly Gaddis took the singles championship, while Nadia Kaewsai and Biz Gaddis won the doubles championship.
- The Andover Central High School football team won its first-ever state championship.
- Six middle school singers, 19 high school singers and 20 elementary school singers were named to all-state choral ensembles.
- Samuel Riley, seventh-grader at Andover Middle School, won the Sunflower State Spelling Bee.
- The AHS boys swimming and diving team won its third straight state championship. Sophomore Clark Young also took an individual championship in the 200 individual medley.
- The ACHS bowling team recently won its first 5A state championship. In addition, junior Paxton McLeod won the individual state championship.

- Eleven high school students were named to the Kansas Music Educators Association's All-State ensembles.
- Ryan Byun, a junior at ACHS, earned a spot in the National Youth Orchestra.
- The AHS Science Olympiad won the Small School category at state competition. Overall, nine Andover teams took individual championships.
- Andover High School students finished first in 12 events at state for Future Business Leaders of America.
- The AHS boys tennis team won the 5A state tennis championship. In addition, the team of sophomore Andrew Chan and senior Isaac Homan took the doubles championship.
- The girls swim and dive team at AHS won the 5-1A state championship. Senior Mari Griffin took the championship in the 100 backstroke, setting a new state record of 54:88. The 200 medley relay team won its championship with a new meet record of 1:46:09.
- The AHS speech and competitive acting team won its first 5A state championship. Fueling the victory, Annie Nguyen took first in impromptu speaking, and Sean Mansoor took first in informative speaking.
- The AHS performance of "Little Shop of Horrors" won Best Overall Production at the Music Theatre Wichita Jester Awards, and theater teacher Megan Upton-Tyner won best director.
- Andover schools won three events at the state track and field championships this year:
 - Annaliese Vitosh, of ACHS, won the wheelchair 100-meter for all classes.
 - Shal Ruud, of AHS, won the 5A state high jump.
 - Allison Saunders, of ACHS, won the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 43:70.

We eagerly anticipate what successes the 2025-26 school year brings, both in the classroom and outside it!

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



PARA TROOPERS

Homegrown helpers become classroom teachers

Saylis Long had worked with kids for years. But she vividly remembers her first day as a teacher in charge of her own classroom.

“They’re looking up at me for the answers to all their questions,” she says. “I could see they were really nervous. I was, too.”

Long is one of several teachers in Andover Public Schools who have used their experience as paraeducators or instructional aides to become certified educators. And there are more on the way.

Paraeducators provide support for students who receive special education services, and instructional aides primarily support students in grades K-5 in the area of reading. Paras and instructional aides collaborate closely with licensed teachers and administrators.

This year, two instructional aides will join the district’s new connection to the Kansas Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Model. In a time of national teacher shortages, this is a way to help districts “grow their own” to better fill educator openings.



Triplett instructs her class.

“We’re so excited to help these valued instructional aides fulfill their dreams of becoming teachers,” says Traci Holder, assistant superintendent for academic affairs. “They already have experience in the classroom and a connection to our community, so we have confidence they’ll strengthen their teaching skills, grow their knowledge, and become fully licensed teachers through this program.”

Under the new program, school districts pay paras or aides, and provide a compensated mentor, while the state provides tuition assistance.

It’s a path that will help teachers like Long. She studied to be an audiologist but later realized she didn’t have a passion for the trade. She got hired at Meadowlark Elementary School as a reading aide and realized K-12 education was her future.

“I really enjoyed it and wanted to become a teacher,” Long says. “It took me back to my roots.”

Long, a 2016 graduate of Andover Central High School, decided to join the Teacher Apprenticeship Program (TAP) at Wichita State University, an intensive online undergraduate program that serves paras and aides who are working at schools.

After her first year as a full-time teacher, she says her students have excelled in their test scores.

“I’m part of the reason they’re doing well,” she says. “I’m proud of that.”

‘Home for us’

Lindsay Triplett has a similar story.

She was a stay-at-home mom with a bachelor’s degree from WSU. She taught classes at the YMCA before becoming involved with the PTO at Prairie Creek Elementary School, where her children attended.

At the urging of a former principal, Shelley Jonas, Triplett

Long receives a group hug from her students on the last day of school.

NOW HIRING PARAS & AIDES

Looking for a way to give back to your community? We’re currently seeking paraeducators and instructional aides for the 2025-26 school year.

Learn more at usd385.org/jobs.

accepted an aide position at Prairie Creek.

“Very quickly I realized I really like this,” Triplett says. “When something clicks for students – these lightbulb moments – it makes me so happy.”

Like Long, she joined TAP at WSU. She appreciated learning from multiple Prairie Creek teachers while attending school.

“You get to see what you’re learning,” she says. “You get to ask teachers questions.”

Triplett says she’s especially excited to give back to a school that helped educate her children.

“I love making connections and building relationships,” she says. “I want my students to want to be here, and to be excited to be here. It’s a big family here. It’s home for us.”





Baking Up Success

Bakery providing life opportunities for students

It's mid-morning at Andover High School, and the aroma of baking cookies is wafting from Room 1308.

A peek inside shows two high school boys packaging cookies in cellophane wrapping, while a girl uses a stand mixer to prepare the next batch of goodies.

Beth Hollenbeck keeps a watchful eye on the entire process.

"This isn't about cookies," she says. "It's not just about baking. It's so much more than that."

This is District Bakery, an immersive vocational skills program that is opening doors for special education students.

About a dozen high school students spend part of their day in the bakery, where they create 17,000 cookies a year, plus hundreds of other baked items. Previously housed at District Stadium under the name Stadium Bakery, the program has been at AHS since 2020.

In addition to baking, students learn money skills by shopping for groceries, using a time clock, washing dishes and doing laundry for much of the district. Students deliver their baked goods in the community to learn social skills. On Thursdays, they sell 500 cookies to AHS students in a matter of minutes.



Lyndsay Devience, a student at District Bakery, pours sugar into a bowl to make cookies.

“My ultimate goal,” Hollenbeck says, “is for special education students to graduate with baseline life skills. I want them to be people who are a part of a community.”

For students, the experience is nothing short of life-changing.

“The days he works at the Bakery or does laundry, it’s always the first conversation when he gets off the bus,” says Celeste Utter, whose son Jon works in the program. “He’s so excited about it.”

Utter says Jon, who has Down Syndrome, never showed interest in the kitchen at home until he started at the Bakery. Now, he uses the microwave, turns on the stove and helps to clean up after dinner.

“He absolutely loves school,” Utter says. “This gives them more skills. Things that are simple to us aren’t for them. And he loves having that pride in giving back to the community.”



Students at Andover High School line up to purchase cookies during District Bakery’s weekly cookie sale.

Jasmine Vu also saw that pride in her son, Thai, who graduated from AHS in May after his first year at the Bakery. Thai is autistic, and his mom saw an evolution in her son last year.

“He’s developed a sense of responsibility,” Vu says. “He built confidence, self-esteem and self-worth. He’s so proud.”

Vu says she’s seen her son develop time management, the desire to cook at home and a newfound interest in his future.

“We accepted that he might not go to college,” Vu says. “We have a different perspective after the Bakery. We’re willing to give him a chance.”

He’s planning to attend Wichita State University this fall.

Hollenbeck, an occupational therapist by background, says that’s what she hopes most from the Bakery: To get students and parents thinking differently about their futures. She wants to give them confidence for the rest of their lives.

“These kids can walk into a business and think, ‘I know how to do that,’” she says. “These are people who will contribute to our community.”



ANDOVER GRADS

POWER

SHOCKER NATION



**BEN
RICKE**

Andover HS grad 2025

Major
mechanical engineering



**AMAYA
WHITE**

Andover Central HS grad 2025

Major
computer engineering



**LUKE
OSBURN**

Andover HS grad 2025

Major
aerospace engineering



**HAYLEY
WOOLSONCROFT**

Andover eCademy HS grad 2025

Major
biological sciences

STREAMING IN MAY 2025

THE COLLEGE TOUR

AMAZON PRIME STREAMING SERIES



Ryan Byun named to National Youth Orchestra

Ryan Byun, junior at Andover Central High School, has earned a spot in the 2025 National Youth Orchestra. Ryan, a violinist, will attend a residency at Purchase College in New York before performances in July at Carnegie Hall and at the Edinburgh International Festival in Scotland. The orchestra will be joined by conductor Rafael Payare and cellist Alisa Weilerstein for both concerts.

Ryan also served as concertmaster of the Kansas Music Educators Association's All-State Full Orchestra in March.

Listen to him play on YouTube: @RyanByun



Green School

Sunflower Elementary earns state environmental award

Sunflower Elementary School has been named Kansas Green School of the Year by the Kansas Association for Conservation & Environmental Education.

Sunflower “has long been dedicated to environmental sustainability and green initiatives, a commitment that has only grown stronger with the leadership of the SOLAR Committee. SOLAR, which stands for Sunflower Outdoor Learning and Recreation, spearheads many eco-friendly projects and envisions the expansion of these initiatives to create an even more sustainable and educational environment for students,” the group said in announcing the award.

Among the projects KACEE cited included:

The creation of an Outdoor Learning Space, sensory garden beds, planting trees, a pollinator garden and outdoor seating options made from recycled materials.

- A garden club that teaches students proper planting and plant care.



The Sunflower Garden Club enjoys their harvested lettuce and herbs.

- A student-led recycling program that helps students understand the importance of waste management.
- A partnership with Wichita State University students to explore the effects of idling car engines on air quality near the school.

In the future, the committee wants to add a story walk, sunflower garden and continuing the tradition of planting Dedication Trees to honor the fifth-grade class.

The award is part of the KACEE's 2025 Excellence in Conservation and Environmental Education Awards. Awardees were recognized in April during an event at the Sunset Zoo in Manhattan.

news in brief

AMS' Samuel Riley wins state spelling bee



Congratulations to Samuel Riley, seventh-grader at Andover Middle School, who won the Sunflower State Spelling Bee in March. Samuel correctly spelled “columbarium” (a structure to hold cremated remains) to take the title.

He advanced to the Scripps National Spelling Bee May 26-30 in Washington, D.C. This is the second straight year that an AMS student won the Kansas bee. Carey Chesire, then an eighth-grader, won the title in 2024.

Anderson, Flory receive nation’s top award for STEM teachers



Robin Anderson

Robin Anderson, math teacher at Andover Middle School, and Todd Flory, fourth-grade teacher at Wheatland Elementary School, have received Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, the nation’s highest honor for teachers of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Only 336 of these awards were announced nationwide, so it’s exceptional that two of these recipients teach at Andover Public Schools.

In announcing the news, the National Science Foundation said, “Robin is passionate about making her students effective problem solvers. She strives to have minds-on class discussions and allows their forward thinking to guide their Math Genius Hour projects and presentations.



Todd Flory

Most of her students and their parents believe her communication is what helps students develop into confident, logical thinkers.”

Of Flory, the NSF said, “Todd believes teachers need to create global citizens in a global classroom to empower students to shape their future and the world.

He regularly connects his students to other students around the world for collaborative projects, including a coding challenge, a cooking cultural exchange, and a 16-hour Connect Around the World day, where students virtually visit classes around the world to learn about new cultures.”

Both Anderson and Flory will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to receive their award and \$10,000 from the NSF.

AHS senior named recipient in WISE competition

Luke Osburn, recent graduate of Andover High School, was named a recipient of a Wallace Invitational for Scholarship in Engineering (WISE) competition at Wichita State University. Luke is one of two recipients out of 198 participants and will be awarded a \$30,500 scholarship disbursed over four years.



STATE CHAMPIONS

AHS boys win swimming, diving three-peat

The Andover High School boys swim team won its third straight 5-1A state championship Feb. 22 at the Shawnee Mission School District Aquatic Center. The Trojans cruised to a victory with 318 points, 108 more than second-place Kapaun Mt. Carmel. Sophomore Clark Young also took an individual championship in the 200 individual medley. The team is coached by Kelsie Biebighauser.

ACHS boys bowling win first state championship

The ACHS boys bowling team won their first 5A state championship. The Jaguars took home the title on March 6 in Wichita with junior Paxton McLeod claiming the individual state championship and senior Dayden Cunningham placing fourth. The team is coached by Mark Cross.

AHS wins 5A state tennis title

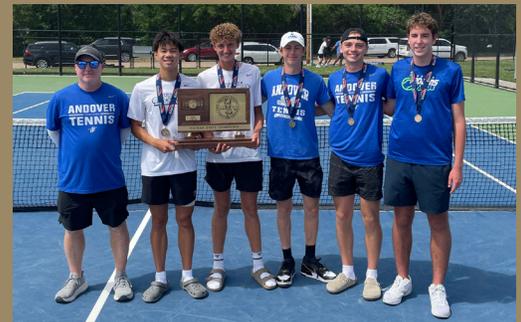
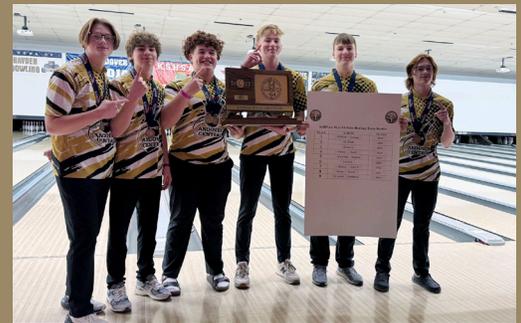
Congratulations to the Andover High School tennis team for winning the 5A state tennis tournament May 17. In addition, the team of sophomore Andrew Chan and senior Isaac Homan took the doubles championship. AHS scored 33 total points, 10 points ahead of second-place Bishop Carroll. Andover Central High School took third with 21 points. AHS is coached by Stephen Alexander and Mark Cross.

AHS girls win state swim & dive championship

Andover High School had an amazing day on May 24 at the 5-1A State Swimming and Diving Championships in Topeka. The team took the state championship with 304 points. In addition, senior Mari Griffin took the championship in the 100 backstroke, setting a new state record of 54:88. The 200 medley relay team won its championship with a new meet record of 1:46:09. That team consisted of Griffin, senior Kiersten Elliott, senior Sophia Mandanis, and freshman Hollyn Griffin. The team is coached by Bethany Bastian.

Farrow wins 5A state golf title

Colt Farrow, junior at Andover Central High School, won the 5A individual golf championship May 28. He shot a 64 in the last round for a two-day score of 131. The Jaguar golf team is coached by Doug Snyder.



STATE CHAMPIONS



Three Andover track & field athletes take home state titles

Three Andover athletes took home titles at the Kansas State High School Activities Association State Track and Field Championships. Annaliese Vitosh, sophomore at Andover Central High School, won the wheelchair 100-meter for all classes and set a meet record at 22:61. Shal Ruud, junior at Andover High School, won the 5A state high jump with a mark of 6-6. Allison Saunders, junior at ACHS, won the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 43:70.

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Andover USD 385

2025-26 District Calendar



2025

July

M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

August

M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

September

M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

October

M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

November

M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

December

M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

2026

January

M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

February

M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27

March

M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

April

M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

May

M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

June

M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

July	
15	Online registration begins
August	
4-6	New teachers report
7	Professional learning day
8	Flex work day
11-12	Professional learning day
13	First day, grades 1-6, 9 and new students in grades 10-12
14	First day, grades 7-8 and 10-12
18	First day, Kindergarten, Pre-K and Early Learning
September	
1	Labor Day
29	Professional learning day
October	
16	End of first quarter
17	Morning flex work day
November	
3	Professional learning day
24	Conference credit day
25-28	Thanksgiving break
December	
19	End of second quarter; dismiss two hours early
22	Morning flex work day
23-Jan 1	Winter break
January	
2, 5	Professional learning day
19	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February	
16	Professional learning day
March	
12	End of third quarter
13	Morning flex work day
16-20	Spring break
April	
3	Conference credit day
27	Professional learning day
May	
14	eCademy graduation
17	AHS and ACHS graduations
22	Last day for students; dismiss two hours early
25	Memorial Day
26	Morning flex work day

- School not in session
- All schools closed - Conference credit day
- All schools closed - Teacher professional learning
- Registration begins
- All schools closed - Teacher flex work day
- End of Quarter

This calendar may be altered at the discretion of the Board of Education and/or the administration. The policies of the Board of Education of USD 385 prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, religion and sex in all programs and activities of the district. Additionally, discrimination on the basis of age is prohibited in employment.

Equal Opportunity Employer. **Adopted by the Board of Education 11/11/2024.**

UPCOMING EVENTS

**SATURDAY
JULY 12** CITY WIDE
CLEAN UP

**THURSDAY
JULY 31** AARON LEWIS
AND THE
STATELINERS
7 P.M.

**SATURDAY
AUG. 2** CHRIS YOUNG
7:30 P.M.

**THURSDAY
SEPT. 4** BLUES TRAVELER
& GIN BLOSSOMS
6 P.M.

**THURSDAY
SEPT. 11** THE RED CLAY
STRAYS
5-9 P.M.

**FRIDAY
SEPT. 26** THREE DOG
NIGHT
5-9 P.M.

Summer Concert Series

Presented by Audacy

FRIDAY, JUNE 20..... Across the Pond

FRIDAY, JUNE 27..... King Midas

FRIDAY, JULY 11..... Jet City

FRIDAY, JULY 18..... Big Fat Fun

All concerts are free and open to the public. Held at the Capitol Federal Amphitheater®. Gates open at 6:30 p.m., music starts at 8 p.m.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:



- Parade
- Business/Craft Expo
- Corn Hole
- Art Show
- Jeep Night
- Car Show
- Volleyball
- Disc Golf
- Pet Show

**FRIDAY - SUNDAY
SEPT. 26 - SEPT. 28**

Registration is now open:
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City of Andover KS



andover_kansas

2025 SUMMER READING

COLOR OUR WORLD™

May 30th-July 31st



© CSLP

The Summer Reading Kickoff will be May 30th at 10:30AM at the Capitol Federal Amphitheatre with special guest Dino O'Dell! Scan the QR code to see what else we have in store this Summer and more information on how to sign up! You can start signing up May 19th on Beanstack.



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