Arkansas City Public Schools

BOE BRIEFS

An informal report from the Board of Education Meeting

October 13, 2025

Wilkins Foundation awards $105,000 to support music programs

The Board recognized the V.J. Wilkins Foundation for awarding $105,192 in grant funding to support music and performing arts across USD 470. The grant includes $45,192 for new instruments and equipment districtwide and $60,000 to help the ACHS Marching Band participate in the 2026 Veterans Day Parade in Washington, D.C. The district expressed sincere appreciation for the foundation's continued support of students and the arts.

Board approves next phase of high school intercom project

The Board approved continuing progress on the Arkansas City High School Intercom Project. The multi-year project was launched with support from the Kansas Safe and Secure Schools Grant, which provided $39,636 in matching funds during fiscal year 2025. Although the Legislature did not allocate funds for fiscal year 2026, USD 470 will use up to $81,034 in Capital Outlay funds to complete the second phase. The district remains hopeful that the state will reinstate grant funding next year to help finish the final phase of the project.

ACMS air quality testing confirms clean, healthy environment

The Board received positive results from a recent indoor air quality study conducted at Arkansas City Middle School. Environmental testing by American Metropolitan Environmental, Inc. found no elevated mold or fungal levels, with indoor air quality rated well above national standards. Only a few small, localized areas required cleaning or minor repairs, which were completed by Stover's Restoration. The report confirms that ACMS ventilation systems are functioning effectively and maintaining a safe, healthy learning environment for students and staff.

PERSONNEL UPDATE

Resignations/Retirements:

- Mirella Granillo – ESOL SAT at Roosevelt
- Jeff Shaw – 8th Grade Science (*retirement after 2025-2026 school year)*
- Cindy Townsend – SAT at C-4
- Ronna Vanderpool – SAT at Adams
- Brenda Wood – Custodian
- Anthony Whetstone – Asst. Football coach at ACHS, Head Girls Wrestling coach at ACHS, and StuCo Sponsor at ACHS

Hirings:

- Harlee Bullard – SAT
- Brittni Burris – Bus Aide
- Tyler Clair – Maintenance
- Tanner Spencer – Head Boys Basketball Coach at ACMS
- Destiny Stewart – Asst. Girls Basketball at ACHS

OTHER BUSINESS

- A few members of the ACHS Marching Band performed portions of their Etzanoa-themed show.
- The Board accepted several generous donations from local organizations and individuals. Central Christian Church donated funds to provide clothing essentials for students at every elementary school, while the Soroptimist Club of Arkansas City contributed additional funds for clothing and hygiene items. Rogers Family Dentistry and Marlana Mills supported middle school activities, including music and Kona Ice events. USD 470 sincerely thanks all donors for their continued support of students and schools.
- The Board acknowledged Governor Laura Kelly's proclamations recognizing October as Safe Schools Week, Kansas School Transportation Appreciation Day, and National Head Start Awareness Month. USD 470 joins districts statewide in promoting safe learning environments, honoring transportation staff, and celebrating 60 years of the Head Start program's success.
- The Board acknowledged that the Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce presented USD 470 with its Open Arms Award for outstanding community support. The recognition highlights the district's summer meal program, which provided free meals to local youth through the efforts of dedicated food service and transportation staff.
- The Board authorized Arkansas City High School administrators to attend the Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA) Regional Rules Meeting on October 28 at Maize South High School. The meeting allows schools

to receive updates, discuss activity-related topics, and vote on statewide proposals that impact athletics and activities.

- The Board approved updates to supplemental job descriptions and evaluation forms for fall coaching and sponsorship positions. The revisions align responsibilities and performance criteria with current district standards, ensuring clarity, consistency, and alignment with district goals and professional expectations.
- The Board received a report on fall FastBridge screening results, which help identify students' academic strengths and areas for support in reading and math. The data guide instruction, interventions, and curriculum planning across grade levels. Results show continued improvement in early literacy and foundational skills, reflecting the district's focus on strong Tier 1 instruction and early intervention.
- The Board reviewed information about Cowley College's new four-day instructional schedule, set to begin in spring 2026. The change affects a small number of students from Arkansas City High School enrolled in concurrent classes. High school and college leaders are working together to align schedules, explore on-site course options, and expand access to college-credit opportunities for ACHS students.
- The Board received the fall supplemental report, which outlines staff members who receive additional pay for coaching, sponsoring activities, and other duties beyond their regular assignments. The report, updated each season, reflects current personnel changes and helps ensure consistency with the district's master agreement.
- The Board heard a report outlining Arkansas City High School's expanded efforts to support student success on the ACT. Plans include launching an ACT Academy on November 22, offering a prep course during tutorial periods, and strengthening communication with families. These initiatives align with district goals to improve college and career readiness.
- The Board received an update on ongoing communication efforts surrounding the upcoming bond election. In recent weeks, USD 470 has published feature articles, distributed informational materials, and shared updates through newsletters, social media, and school events. The district also hosted a Coffee Chat, provided materials for PTO and Site Council meetings, and prepared direct-mail pieces and advertisements to help ensure voters are well-informed ahead of the November election.
- The Board held two executive sessions to discuss non-elected personnel.
- No action was taken following the executive sessions.