



Legislative Platform 2026

Piper USD 203 by the Numbers

Piper USD serves approximately **2,950** students

2nd fastest growing district in the state of Kansas

- 1 Early Childhood Center
- 2 Elementary Schools
- 1 Middle School
- 1 High School

98.5% high school graduation rate

98.4% graduating with at least one Market Value Asset (MVA)

27 different languages spoken within the school district

44% of students represent a diverse background

18% of students receive special education services

Spotlight Issues for the 2026 Legislative Session

High Quality Staffing & KPERS

- Flexibility in the path to teacher licensure while retaining appropriate standards set by the State Board of Education.
- To recruit and retain high quality staff:
 - Provide increased funding that keeps pace with rising operational costs in order to enable public schools to offer competitive wages.
 - Reduce or end KPERS “working after retirement” penalty and maintain or improve retirement benefits for public school employees.

Special Education

- Special Education services are mandated by federal law (IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and Kansas regulations and statutes (SEECA, Kansas Special Education for Exceptional Children Act.) Kansas law requires that 92% of the excess cost of special education be funded by the state (K.S.A 72-3422.)
- Currently the state is funding an average of approximately 76% of the excess cost of special education.
- Fund special education at the 92% statutory level

Universal Preschool

- Fund full-day preschool education for all four-year-olds
- Fund, at minimum, full-day preschool education for special education students and preschool-aged at-risk students
- Fund early childhood education programs such as Parents as Teachers and infant/toddler special education.

Mandated Kindergarten Attendance

- The Piper School District advocates for a statewide mandate requiring all eligible children to attend kindergarten, ensuring equitable access to early education and fostering essential academic and social development for long-term success.

Ongoing Legislative Priorities for USD 203

Governance

- Uphold the Kansas constitutional requirement that public schools be governed by locally elected board of education.
- Ensure public funds are exclusively used for public schools.
- Reduce the amount of state mandates to allow locally elected officials greater flexibility to meet their district's needs (e.g., open enrollment requirements, selling of district real estate, at-risk appropriations, etc.).

Ongoing School Funding

School Finance

- Provide constitutionally suitable school finance.
- Maintain and continue implementation of school funding and inflationary adjustments as approved by the Legislature, the Governor, and the Kansas Supreme Court.

Bond & Interest

- Fund state aid for bond and interest projects using the district's assessed valuation per pupil.

Transportation Aid

- Study and expand transportation aid eligibility to include students living less than 2.5 miles from their assigned school.
- Allocate funding to cover transportation for students in hazardous areas.

Opposing Diverted Public Funds

- Reject programs that divert public funds from public education, including vouchers, education savings accounts, and tuition tax credits.
- Protect equitable access by ensuring funding stays with schools that serve all students, including disadvantaged, disabled, and high-need populations.

School Safety and Supports

- Maintain and expand reliable funding for the Safe and Secure Schools Grant to help ensure safe learning environments.
- Increase resources for schools to address student and mental health needs, including ongoing support and expansion of the Mental Health Intervention Program Grant.