



Arkansas City Public Schools

BOE BRIEFS

An informal report from the Board of Education Meeting

January 12, 2026

School Board Recognition Month

In recognition of School Board Recognition Month, district administration formally thanked and recognized members of the USD 470 Board of Education during the January meeting. On behalf of the district, the administration expressed appreciation for the Board's volunteer service, leadership, and commitment to students, staff, and families. Board members devote significant time and care to policy decisions, district oversight, and stewardship of resources that support nearly 2,900 students and over 450 employees across USD 470.

Bond Sale Update

The Board authorized district administration to proceed with locking in an interest rate and selling the remaining bonds after Jan. 15, at a time that benefits the district. Bond financial advisor Greg Vahrenburg of Raymond James reported the remaining bonds will likely be issued at a lower average interest rate than anticipated during the election period. Vahrenburg said this would put USD 470 in a strong position to deliver what was promised to taxpayers, at or below projected costs.

KASB Policy Updates

The Board of Education approved several policy updates recommended by the Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB). These updates help keep district policies current and aligned with best practices:

- **BCBK – Executive Session:** Clarifies that executive sessions may not be recorded unless required by law.
- **BG – Membership:** Updates language related to school board association memberships.
- **IHF – Graduation Requirements:** Clarifies credit requirements for student graduation.

- **IKCA – Human Sexuality Education:** Updates terminology and removes outdated references.

The Board tabled the following policies for further review:

- **IIBE – Use of Artificial Intelligence:** Guides the use of artificial intelligence in schools.
- **IKB – Controversial Issues:** Reinforces expectations for addressing controversial topics in the classroom.

Additional policy recommendations will be reviewed at a future meeting.

PERSONNEL UPDATE

Resignations/Retirements:

- Elizabeth Ochoa – 2nd Grade at Jefferson
- Tyler Henderson – Head Girls Basketball Coach at ACHS

Reassignments/Transfers/Other:

- Ashley Legleiter – STUCO Sponsor at ACHS
- Blake McDonald – Assistant Girls Basketball Coach at ACHS to Head Girls Basketball Coach at ACHS (Interim, for the remainder of this season)
- Karmen Palmer – Building Sub at Jefferson to 2nd Grade at Jefferson (Replacement)

Hirings:

- Jordan Brooks – Temporary Building Sub at Jefferson
- Bryanna Butler – Bus Aide
- Alejandra Enríquez – ESOL SAT at Roosevelt
- Aurora Gonzalez-Torres – ESOL SAT at Adams
- Makynlee Hayes – SAT at Adams
- Emily Munoz – ESOL SAT at Jefferson
- Aubrey Stangl – Bus Aide

OTHER BUSINESS

- The Board accepted several generous gifts in support of students and programs across the district. Donations included \$100 from PEO Sisterhood, E.R. Chapter 1433 for the ACHS Girls Show Choir; \$400 in underwear from the Kiwanis Club of Arkansas City for USD 470 elementary schools; and mittens and gloves from Ark City United Methodist Church for students across all schools.
- The Board held an executive session to discuss the superintendent search.
- The Board authorized USD 470 to apply for continued Head Start funding for the 2026–2027 school year. This funding supports early learning services for young children and families, including education, health, and family support services. The full grant application will return to the Board for final approval later this

spring.

- The Board approved the purchase of four district vehicles from Friendly Ford to support daily operations across USD 470. The purchase includes two Ford Expeditions and two Ford F-150 pickup trucks through a state-aligned bidding process, at a total cost of \$208,446.
- The Board approved the purchase of a new forklift to support warehouse and operations needs across the district. The forklift will be purchased through a competitive request for proposals (RFP) process for \$40,555.
- The Board received an update regarding a request to include prayer at Board meetings. The district's legal counsel shared that adopting this practice would present a significant constitutional risk. Mr. Seitz noted the Board could consider a neutral alternative, such as a moment of silence. It was also noted that school board meetings differ from city or county meetings because students are often present and involved.
- The Board reviewed updated job descriptions and evaluation tools as part of the district's ongoing effort to ensure roles and responsibilities are clear and aligned with current practices. Formal approval is expected at a future meeting.
- The Board reviewed proposed non-CTE course changes at Arkansas City High School for the 2026–2027 school year. Proposed additions include Non-Competitive Debating and Speaking, Fundamental Geometry, and U.S. Wars and Military Conflicts. The proposal also provides for the deletion of the Music Appreciation course. These changes are intended to better align course offerings with student needs, enrollment trends, and graduation requirements. No action was taken.
- The Board reviewed plans for a comprehensive review of USD 470 student handbooks. Administration shared that the review will take place over the coming months and will focus on clarity, consistency, and alignment with district policies and requirements. No changes are being proposed at this time, and recommended updates will be brought to the Board later this spring.
- The Board received information and the annual report for the USD 470 Head Start program. The administration shared an overview of services that support early learning, health, and family engagement for children and families. The report highlights how Head Start helps prepare young learners for school success.
- The Board received an update on the district's E-Rate Category 2 cycle, which supports internal network equipment such as switches and wireless access points. Administration shared plans to bring a request for proposals to the Board later this month. The E-Rate program is expected to cover 80% of the costs, helping reduce the district's local share.
- The Board held three executive sessions regarding non-elected personnel. No

action followed.