



PIPER USD 203

January 13, 2026
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Piper USD 203 Swears In New Board of Education Members

Kansas City, Kan. — Piper Unified School District 203 officially welcomed new leadership during the Board of Education meeting on Monday, January 12, as two new board members were sworn in and one returning member began another term of service.

Melanie Bakarich and Patty Jurich were sworn in as new members of the Piper USD 203 Board of Education, bringing deep community roots and decades of service to the district.

Bakarich is a lifelong Kansas City, Kansas resident and proud Piper alumna from the Class of 1991. She and her husband, John, have raised three sons in the Piper School District, with two recent graduates from the Class of 2025 and one current freshman. Bakarich holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Communications from the University of Kansas and works with Baron Contracting, the commercial general contracting company founded by her husband. She is deeply involved in Piper schools and the broader community, currently serving as President of the Piper Educational Foundation, Treasurer of Piper PTA, and a member of the Piper Booster Club. She also co-founded Train It Forward, a nonprofit dedicated to teaching lifesaving and water safety skills throughout the Kansas City community.

Jurich has been a Piper resident since 2009 and a lifelong Wyandotte County resident. She and her husband, Michael, raised three children in the Kansas City, Kansas School District and are proud grandparents, with two granddaughters attending Piper schools. Jurich brings more than 40 years of volunteer service to education, including extensive involvement with PTAs at the local, district, and state levels. She served as Kansas PTA President from 2021–2023 and has contributed to numerous education-focused organizations and committees, including the Kansas Teacher of the Year State Selection Committee, KSDE Accreditation Advisory Council, and the KSDE Professional Standards Board.

In addition to the new members, Julian Wells was sworn in for a second consecutive term, continuing his service to the Piper USD 203 community.

“We are incredibly fortunate to have such dedicated, experienced, and community-minded individuals serving on our Board of Education,” said Dr. Jessica Dain, Superintendent of Piper USD 203. “Melanie and Patty each bring a deep understanding of public education and a genuine passion for students, staff, and families. We are also grateful for Julian’s continued leadership and commitment to our district. Together, this Board will play a critical role in guiding Piper forward.”

Following the swearing-in ceremony, the Board of Education conducted its monthly meeting, during which members voted to elect the Board President and Vice President for the coming year. Ashley Biondi will serve as Board President and Allison Armstrong will serve as Board Vice President.

For more information about the Piper USD 203 Board of Education, visit www.piperschools.us.

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