

From: [Kyrene School District](#)
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January 29, 2026

The Kyrene Governing Board continues its work this winter with a focus on listening, stewardship and long-term stability for Kyrene schools. Over the past several months, board members have engaged the community, worked through complex decisions and carried out their core governance responsibilities with care and intention. As the district moves through a period of change, the Board remains committed to transparency, thoughtful oversight and partnership with families, staff and the broader community.

Board Leadership Transition

At its first meeting of the calendar year, the Kyrene Governing Board selected its leadership team for 2026. During the January meeting, Vice President Triné Nelson was elected to serve as Board President, following a nomination from Board Member Cedric Collins. Nelson succeeds Kevin Walsh, who completed five consecutive terms as Board President. Board Member Ruth (Bunny) Davis nominated Amy Satre to serve as Vice President, and both leadership positions were approved unanimously by the Board. Board leaders are selected annually at the first meeting of the calendar year.

The leadership transition took place during National School Board Recognition Month, and Superintendent Laura Toenjes thanked Board members for their dedication, collaboration and commitment to students.

Moving Kyrene Forward Together

In December, after an extensive and deeply personal process, the Kyrene Governing Board took action on the district's long-range plan, voting to consolidate schools over the next two years. This decision followed months of study, data review, public hearings and community engagement, and it reflects the Board's responsibility to balance community input with the long-term sustainability of the district. Throughout the process, board members listened closely to families, staff, students and community members, reviewing public comment, participating in community meetings, and weighing enrollment trends and financial projections alongside the real human impact of these decisions.

The Board recognizes that Kyrene schools are more than buildings. They are places filled with memories, relationships and traditions that span generations. The decision to move forward with school consolidations and boundary changes was not made lightly. It was made with empathy and a shared commitment to preserving the Kyrene experience—small class sizes, strong academic programs, dedicated staff and meaningful student support—for generations to come.

Listening and Learning: Gifted Education in Kyrene

As the Governing Board continues to listen to community feedback, it is addressing questions raised by gifted families during the long-range planning process, regarding a potential gifted academy and the structure of gifted services throughout the district.

In response, the Governing Board approved a formal review of Kyrene's gifted education programs at its November meeting. The purpose of the review is to better understand the strengths and challenges of the district's current gifted services and to explore models that are sustainable, equitable and responsive to student needs.

The Board believes that sound decisions require both community input and reliable data. This review will include stakeholder engagement, analysis of current programs and an examination of best practices. The goal is to ensure that Kyrene's gifted services continue to meet students' needs while remaining competitive and accessible.

Kyrene Governing Board members are committed to listening to the community, making informed decisions, and keeping students at the center of every action. The Board is grateful for the engagement, trust and partnership of families, staff and community members, and looks forward to continuing this important work together.

Connect with Kyrene

The Kyrene Governing Board consists of five members, each elected to a four-year term. Kyrene is grateful to the individuals who volunteer their time to serve in such an important capacity. Community members may contact the Board by emailing governingboard@kyrene.org. A governing board is a collective body, and individual board members' replies may not be representative of the entire board. Regular board meetings, study sessions, and board retreats

are open to the public and live-streamed on the Kyrene website and the [Kyrene YouTube channel](#). For more information about Governing Board meetings, policies and responsibilities, visit the [Kyrene Governing Board](#) online.



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