



**Superintendent Report
Board of Education
Monday, March 23, 2026**

Hello Members of the Board and Community,

Welcome back to this first day of 4th quarter following spring break, and thank you to all our students, staff, parents and community, for your diligent work to finish this 2025-26 year strong.

Student Spotlight: Maci Perrins Ties for 4th Place at the State Spelling Bee

Congratulations to Southwest Middle School 7th-grade student Maci Perrins on an outstanding performance at the Sunflower State Spelling Bee, where she tied for 4th place. This marks Maci's fourth year competing at the state level, representing Douglas County after winning the county spelling bee.

Maci is a four-time consecutive Douglas County Spelling Bee champion, an extraordinary accomplishment that reflects sustained excellence over multiple years. She told our team that she continues to carry with her a favorite "lucky word," *porcelain*. This is the word she spelled to win her first county bee when she was in 4th grade. She also said that competing has taught her to work hard and has definitely expanded her vocabulary.

We are proud of Maci's perseverance and commitment to excellence as she represented her school and our district on the state stage.

Prairie Park Elementary Brings the Olympics to Learning

[Prairie Park Elementary recently brought the excitement of the Winter Olympics to students through an engaging, cross-curricular experience in physical education \(PE\) and art classes.](#)

In PE, students participated in creative Olympic-style events including curling, bobsledding, hockey shootouts, and Prairie Park originals like figure skating relay and airless air hockey. Students demonstrated strong sportsmanship while representing their classrooms in friendly competition.

In art, students extended the experience by creating Olympic torches and painting a mural of the Olympic rings, helping bring the spirit of the games to life throughout the school. This innovative approach highlights how engaging, hands-on learning can connect creativity, movement, and global awareness.

Liberty Memorial Central Middle School Career Day

[Students at Liberty Memorial Central Middle School explored future career pathways during a dynamic Career Day experience](#) featuring both community professionals and student presenters.

Local professionals included an archaeologist, nurse practitioner, chemist, criminal investigator,

photographer, social worker, and others who shared firsthand insights into their careers, providing students with a real-world perspective on a wide range of opportunities.

In addition, students presented their own research on careers of interest, highlighting fields such as pediatric medicine, interior design, psychology, authorship, and more. This combination of professional insight and student voice created a meaningful learning experience that helps students begin to envision their future pathways.

Free State DECA Success at State Conference

Congratulations to Free State High School students for their outstanding performance at the DECA State Conference:

- Neel Sabarwal – 1st Place, Personal Financial Literacy
- Allen Shao – 1st Place, Principles of Finance
- Ruth Yang – 2nd Place, Principles of Business Management
- Carter Dinges – 4th Place, Principles of Finance
- Grace Mosconi – 5th Place, Principles of Entrepreneurship
- Dale He – 5th Place, Principles of Finance

We also extend appreciation to business teacher Kimberly Hawks for her leadership in supporting these students. Their success reflects the strength of our Career and Technical Education programming and student dedication to excellence.

Students Across Lawrence Represent at the State Chess Championship

Lawrence Public Schools students demonstrated strong performances at the Kansas Scholastic Chess Association's State Chess Championship, held March 14 at Emporia State University. Led by Dwight Souders' 6th-place finish, Lawrence High School earned 2nd place in Class 6A. Many students from across the district also earned individual recognition at the state level.

K-12 Division:

- Dwight Souders, Lawrence High School – 6th place
- Guthrie Bricker, Lawrence High School – 36th place

K-8 Division:

- Aditya Nagarajan, Southwest Middle School – 45th place

K-5 Division:

- Anika Kumbhare, Langston Hughes Elementary – 15th place

K-3 Division:

- Sam Jordan, Cordley Elementary – 16th place
- Ansh Kumbhare, Langston Hughes Elementary – 29th place
- Hunter Burghart, Prairie Park Elementary – 45th place
- Teddy Elliott, Cordley Elementary – 58th place
- Beck Kells, Prairie Park Elementary – 59th place
- Aiden Foster, Prairie Park Elementary – 69th place
- Coralynn Johnson, Cordley Elementary – 70th place
- Etta Killan, Prairie Park Elementary – 72nd place
- Rohan Khan – 74th place
- Elyana Khan – 75th place

We extend our appreciation to Coach Phil Wedge and each staff member who supported student participation in chess across our schools.

Community Connections at Pinckney (CCAP) Career Exploration

Nearly 20 [students recently participated in a hands-on career exploration experience at Community Connections at Pinckney](#) as part of the district's long-standing partnership with [Project SEARCH](#).

Students engaged with partners from Lawrence Memorial Hospital and the University of Kansas, completing skills assessments and learning about potential internship pathways. The experience is designed to help students identify strengths, build confidence, and explore meaningful employment opportunities as they transition into adulthood.

Since the district's partnership began in 2010, Project SEARCH has provided more than 140 students in Lawrence Public Schools with valuable workplace experience and job placement opportunities. This continued partnership reflects our commitment to inclusive, real-world learning experiences that prepare all students for success beyond graduation.

Project SEARCH is just one of many programs housed at CCAP including the district's Community Transition Program (C-Tran), Secondary Therapeutic Programs (STC), Suspension Alternative Program (SAP), the Community Connections Bakery, and the Lawrence Public Schools Clothing and Shoe Closet. Since 2021, [Community Connections at Pinckney has supported more than 200 students across each of these programs](#).

Langston Hughes Elementary: Community Input on Future Construction

We recently hosted two important input sessions focused on future construction planning at Langston Hughes Elementary. One was held with staff and one with families and site council representatives.

These opportunities allowed us to engage with dozens of staff members and parents to hear about the most pressing needs at the building. These conversations brought to light several key themes and priorities around safety and building access, space and flow, student and staff spaces, as well as ensuring that program and learning spaces are large enough to accommodate.

We know that students learn best when they feel not only a sense of pride and safety in their space, but have equitable access to instruction in appropriate learning environments. We are grateful for the thoughtful feedback and partnership as we continue planning to meet the needs of current and future students at Langston Hughes.

Communications & Engagement: Quarter 3 Analytics

Since the start of 2026, Lawrence Public Schools has shared more than 100 stories, updates, and celebrations of student and staff success across our website and social media platforms, generating over 650,000 views.

Our direct communication with families remains strong. My [March 12th Superintendent Message](#) was viewed more than 18,700 times, with an open rate of 62%, which is well above the 32% benchmark in the education sector. Links within the message were clicked on hundreds of times, which means that our readers are not only opening our messages, but actively engaging with the resources that we provide.

Across social media platforms, our content also drives meaningful engagement. [Our top-performing post](#) reached 45,890 views and generated 685 interactions, including reactions and comments. I want to note that 76% of viewers were non-followers of our pages, which

demonstrates our ability to extend our district storytelling beyond our immediate community.

These results reinforce the importance of storytelling and highlighting the experiences of our students and staff members as we work to ensure that families and our community remain informed, connected, and engaged in the work of our schools.

Communications & Engagement: Quarter 3 Analytics

It's an exciting time in Lawrence Public Schools as we enter this spring season; we are pleased to share the appointments of several leaders in key roles beginning in the 2026-27 school year. In all of the following appointments, a clear pattern emerges: experienced, proven leadership, commitment, talent and passion are matched to areas of challenge and opportunities for growth in the Lawrence Public Schools organization.

Thank you for all your support of our 10,000 students, and for the teachers, support staff and leaders who serve them.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this Superintendent Report, and for the honor of serving the Lawrence Public Schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeanice Kerr Swift".

Jeanice Kerr Swift
Superintendent of Schools
Lawrence Public Schools