



Superintendent of Schools Report to the Board

January 12, 2026

Jessica Kerr Swift



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Legislative Outreach

- Douglas County Legislative Delegation briefing – Thursday, Jan. 8
- Lawrence Chamber of Commerce Legislative Priorities Breakfast – Friday, Jan. 9

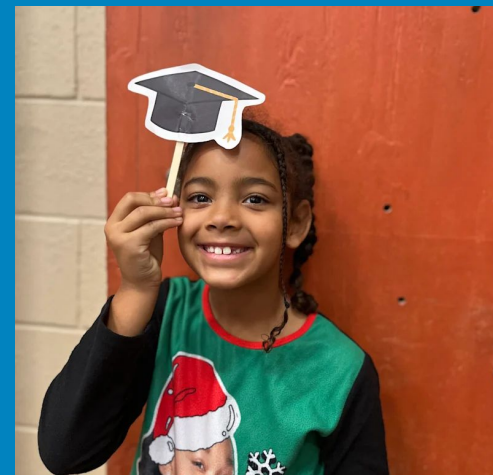


AVID Honors Sunflower Elementary



Sunflower Elementary is **1 of 45 schools nationwide** recognized for excellence in exemplifying the mission and impact of AVID.

- Out of >8,000 participating schools!



AVID School of Excellence



LPS Learning Exchange

For teachers. By teachers. With teachers. In service of students.

Certified professional learning experience:

- Teacher led
- Across grade levels and content areas
- Reflecting on practice
- Sharing strategies

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School Spotlight

Sarah Kingsley, 2nd grade teacher at **Quail Run**, was surprised by a one-of-a-kind gift from her student & his family—now Kingsley’s official reading chair!

The upcycled wooden chair was repainted by **2nd grader Memphis, his sister, & his mom.**



School Spotlight

Shari Flakus' AVID class at **Billy Mills Middle School** started 2026 turning back the clock to 2017 with special guest speaker: **BMMS & LHS alumna Trinity Shorter**.

A recent Howard University grad, Shorter shared advice about AVID, high school, college, careers, & life as a young adult.



**Trinity Shorter & Shari Flakus.*



**Trinity Shorter in AVID at BMMS*



**Above: BMMS AVID classes*

School Spotlight

Free State High School Theatre Troupe 5773 performed *The Addams Family School Edition* at the **2026 Kansas Thespian Festival**.



2026-27 Preschool Enrollment

Preschool classrooms coming to **Deerfield** and **Prairie Park** Elementary Schools in the 2026-27 school year.



The graphic features the word "Preschool" in large, colorful letters (P: red, r: blue, e: green, s: red, c: blue, h: yellow, o: blue, o: red, l: blue). Below it, "Early Enrollment Window" is written in orange on a blue banner. A calendar icon is on the left, and a yellow school bus is on the right. The Lawrence Public Schools logo is in the top right. A QR code is in the bottom right. The enrollment date "February 2 - March 22" is in large blue letters. A blue box says "Acceptance notifications sent by April 1" with a checkmark icon. Below that, a location pin icon is followed by the list of sites. At the bottom, an orange arrow points to a blue box with the enrollment website.

Preschool

Early Enrollment Window

February 2 – March 22

Acceptance notifications sent by April 1
Based on eligibility, availability, and at-risk verification.

Sites: Kennedy Early Childhood Center, New York Montessori, Deerfield, Prairie Park, Sunflower, & Woodlawn Elementary School.

Enroll at www.usd497.org/preschool



2026 Community Conversations Winter Series

Provide feedback online. Surveys available next week at:

www.usd497.org/future

Provide feedback in person (more opportunities will be added):

- **New York Montessori** — Jan. 20, 6:00 p.m.
- **Educational Support Center (Boardroom)** — Jan. 28, 6:00 p.m.
- **Hillcrest Elementary** — Feb. 5, 6 - 7 p.m.
- **Woodlawn Elementary** — Feb. 10, 5:30 p.m.
- **Billy Mills Middle School** — Feb. 17, 6:00 p.m.

MLK One Dream 2026

Mission Possible 2: Building Community



THURSDAY, JANUARY 22

@ the Lied Center of Kansas

- Gallery opens - 6:00 PM
- Celebration begins - 6:30 PM



A banner for the event. On the left is the 'ONE DREAM' logo featuring a portrait of Martin Luther King Jr. and the text 'MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. CELEBRATION' and 'LAWRENCE Public Schools'. In the center, the text reads 'MISSION POSSIBLE 2: BUILDING COMMUNITY' with the tagline 'Uniting a nation, the nonviolent way'. On the right is a black and white photograph of Martin Luther King Jr. gesturing with his hand.



LAWRENCE
Public Schools

Important Dates



- **Monday, January 19**
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
EC-HS No School / District Closed
- **Thursday, January 22**
MLK One Dream Celebration
@ the Lied Center (doors open 6:00, begins 6:30 p.m.)
- **Monday, Jan. 26 (6:00-7:00 p.m.)**
Board of Education Meeting

