



USD 497 News Release

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Superintendent Statement Jeanice Kerr Swift

Leadership Appointments for 2026-27 School Year

Lead Principal, Kennedy Early Childhood Center and Early Childhood Programs



Lorelea Hubert has been named to serve as Lead Principal of Kennedy Early Childhood Center and Early Childhood Programs in the District. Ms. Hubert has served as the Director of Early Childhood for the Auburn-Washburn School District since July 2023. Prior to Auburn-Washburn, Hubert gained relevant educational experience with East Central Kansas Cooperative in Education; DeSoto School District; The American International School of Muscat (Muscat, Oman); and Manhattan-Ogden Public Schools. She also worked previously for Lawrence Public Schools from 2009-2014 as an early childhood special education teacher.

Swift shares, **“It’s an exciting step as we add Ms. Lorelea Hubert to team LPS; with her selection, we add experience, expertise, and a demonstrated commitment to our youngest children and families that will support, strengthen, and realize the potential of quality early childhood experiences at Kennedy Early Childhood Center and across Lawrence Public Schools. We know the transformative impact of quality early learning in a child’s educational experience and life, and look forward to taking the next exciting steps with Ms. Hubert in supporting our impressive preschool team and in moving forward.”** Many thanks to the Kennedy team, and to all who shared their input and served on selection and interview teams during this robust selection process.

“I am honored to join the district and excited to become part of a community that values and recognizes the impact of early childhood education. I look forward to listening, learning, and building relationships with staff, families, and community partners as we work together to create meaningful opportunities for our youngest learners. Early childhood provides the foundation for lifelong success, and I am excited to support a shared vision that helps every child learn, grow, and thrive within our schools and throughout our community,” said Ms. Hubert.

Hubert earned her Bachelor of Science in Communication Sciences and Disorders from Kansas State University; and a Masters of Arts in Early Childhood Education from the University of Kansas.

Interim Principal, Lawrence High School

Mike Gillman has been named as Interim Principal at Lawrence High School. Mr. Gillman has served his career in Lawrence Public Schools, having served at Lawrence High School since 2021, currently serving as associate principal, and previously as an athletic director/assistant principal. He previously served as assistant principal/athletic director at Liberty Memorial Central Middle School. Gillman's teaching experience was gained at Prairie Park Elementary, West Middle School, and Free State High School.



“In selecting Mr. Gillman as Interim Principal, we gain a school leader with a demonstrated commitment to the students, staff and community of Lawrence High School. Mr. Gillman will partner with the exemplary LHS team in continuing the excellent work in service to students first, to ensure a Chesty Lion culture of belonging, strengthen community connections in support of students, and extend the long tradition of excellence that is Lawrence High School.”

"I am excited and honored to step into the role of Interim Principal at Lawrence High School. The unwavering support from our community is what makes Lawrence High School truly exceptional, and I feel it every day since I've been part of this school. I am dedicated to leading our Chesty Lion family toward even greater achievements, ensuring that staff, students, and our entire community can celebrate what we accomplish together. It's a great day to be a Lion!," said Mike Gillman.

Gillman earned his Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Haskell Indian Nations University; and Masters of Education and Masters of School Leadership from Baker University.

Note: a full selection process will begin late fall, featuring the engagement of LHS students, staff, families and community in the multi-step process for selecting the permanent principal of Lawrence High School.

Assistant Principal/Athletics Director, Lawrence High School



Nick Wood has been named as Assistant Principal/Athletics Director at Lawrence High School. Wood previously served in the Assistant Principal/Athletics Director role at LHS for the 2020-21 school year, and has most recently been a co-teacher learning coach for Lawrence Public Schools and been the head boys basketball coach at Lawrence High since 2023. Wood is also a proud alum of Lawrence High School.

“Nick Wood is an exceptional leader with great leadership experience. His commitment to Lawrence High School and Lawrence Public Schools

makes him an ideal Assistant Principal/Athletic Director for our community. We are so excited to have him continue serving our Lawrence High family,” said Mike Gillman, associate principal, Lawrence High School.

He has served in a variety of high school teaching and coaching roles throughout Lawrence, and also brings professional experience from Washburn University; The American International School of Muscat (Muscat, Oman); Eudora School District; Fort Riley School District; and Kansas State University.

Wood received his Bachelor of Science in Business Marketing, with a minor in physical education, from Baker University; and Master of Science in Student Counseling and Personnel Services.

Associate Principal, Free State High School



Matthew Renk has been named as Associate Principal of Free State High School. He has served as an Assistant Principal at Free State since 2020, after earning building leadership experience at Atchison High School and Atchison County Community Junior/Senior High School. Renk’s teaching experience includes English and Journalism at Riley County High School, Salina South High School, and Atchison High School.

"Matt brings extensive knowledge and experience to his role as Associate Principal at Free State High School. During his tenure at the school, he has demonstrated strong leadership and a steadfast commitment to student-centered practices. Matt develops constructive relationships with staff, students, and families and consistently prioritizes the needs of the school community," said Amy McAnarney, Principal, Free State High School.

Renk earned his Bachelor of Science in Secondary English Education from Kansas State University; and his Master of Science in Educational Administration from Emporia State University.

Assistant Principal, Free State High School



Jayme Savage has been named as Assistant Principal of Free State High School. Mrs. Savage has served as the Head Volleyball Coach at Free State High School since 2018, and also as a health and physical education teacher there since 2022. She previously taught special education, and adaptive physical education for Lawrence Public Schools.

“Jayme will bring strong enthusiasm and strategic energy to her role as Assistant Principal at Free State High School. A proud Firebird alumna, she is deeply committed to the school’s mission. In this position, Jayme will work to ensure that every student is respected, fully engaged in the

high school experience, and prepared for the next steps after graduation," said Amy McAnarney, Principal, Free State High School.

Savage earned a Bachelor of Science in Education from the University of Kansas and a Master of Science in Curriculum and Instruction from Emporia State University.

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