



USD 497 News Release

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Board Hears Reports from Community Conversations and 2025-26 End of Year Highlights of Progress

Community Conversations 2026

Dr. Swift presented findings to the board from Community Conversations held throughout Lawrence Public Schools last Winter. During January through March 2026, the district solicited feedback from students, families, staff, and community members through a variety of inputs, including online surveys and facilitated small group discussions.

This school community input is utilized to prioritize next steps of continuous improvement, and align district efforts, directly with the feedback shared from constituents.

[Click here for the informational presentation slides.](#)

25-26 End of Year Report – Highlights of Progress

Dr. Swift provided the Board of Education with an End of Year Report highlighting progress from all aspects of the school district, including Teaching & Learning; Program Enhancements; System Enhancements; Student Supports; Communication; Human Resources; Finance; and Facilities and Operations.

[Click here for the informational presentation slides.](#)

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Swift shared a wide range of updates and highlights from throughout Lawrence Public Schools, including:

- [Lawrence Juneteenth Parade](#) was held last weekend, and multiple board members represented our schools in celebration of the National Independence Day. Appreciation was shared with everyone that participated commemorating freedom, resilience, and the rich history of the African American community.
- Free State High Students competed at the 2026 [National Speech & Debate Association National Tournament](#) held in Richmond, Virginia last week. **Lena Hasiuk** and **Carter Fite** advanced to elimination rounds in Policy Debate, placing 42nd in the country among 200 competing teams at Nationals. **Breahna Randall** also advanced to the Octofinal round in Poetry, finishing in 114th out of 400 entries.
- **Chuck Law** was recognized as the [2nd-Ever Julie Boyle Heart and Spirit Award](#) recipient. This award was established one year ago by the Foundation, and was created in honor of the district's former communications director, who served in Lawrence Public Schools for over 27 years. The award recognizes an individual who exemplifies the same big heart, unwavering dedication, and

passionate commitment to children, schools, and the broader community that Julie demonstrated throughout her career.

Mr. Law has been a teacher and coach at Lawrence Free State High School for the past 26 years. His love for education and unwavering support for each student earned him the district's recognition as Lawrence Master Teacher for the 2008-09 school year.

- As part of our ongoing efforts to [welcome our visiting neighbors from Algeria](#), the district has elevated our visible welcome to the Algerian National Team staying across the street from our office during FIFA World Cup play. The iconic yellow bus parked at the southwest corner of our lot has been decorated and has received a steady stream of individuals stopping and taking photos in front of the bus.
- Human Resources hosted a **New Educator Orientation** last week, welcoming teachers and staff who will be joining our district for the 2026-27 school year. The event helped to familiarize our newest staff members with the district, and provide helpful onboarding information to get them integrated with Lawrence Public Schools.
- **Lawrence LEADS**, was introduced, which is central to the district's ongoing post-secondary readiness work, led by our Teaching and Learning Team. Lawrence LEADS emerged through a thoughtful process that emphasized themes such as **achieving, connecting, and elevating**, and represents our commitment to ensuring every student graduates prepared to lead and succeed in their chosen future.
- [Annual Student Enrollment will open for all Lawrence Public Schools families on July 8](#). This year marks an important transition as the district moves annual enrollment from the spring to the summer months. The change allows families to provide the most current contact, health, and emergency information prior to the start of school while helping our schools prepare class schedules, staffing, transportation, and student supports with the most accurate information possible.

Annual enrollment is required for all returning and new students and serves as the district's official back-to-school registration process. In the coming weeks, families will receive additional details, enrollment instructions, and important reminders directly through ParentSquare, email, social media, the district website, and other district communication channels.

[Read](#) and [watch](#) the full Superintendent's Report online.

Consent Agenda

The board approved a consent agenda including approvals for Athletic Training Service Contract – Lawrence Memorial Hospital (3 years - \$109,200 total); software renewal of Open Eye Security Camera monitoring Software American Digital Security (\$69,120); property and liability insurance and educators legal liability insurance for 26-27 through Kansas Insurance Cooperative for Schools (\$1,480,000); change order for Press Box Remodel Free State High School (\$71,824.12 from Capital Outlay funds); renewal of Advancement Via Individual Determination/AVID (\$68,060); purchase of Nienhuis Montessori Classroom Materials; personnel report; monthly vouchers; and meeting minutes (June 8, 2026).

Consent agenda was approved with a 7-0 vote.

Board Reports

Board President Gordon-Ross shared an overview from last week's meeting of the Lawrence Schools Foundation board, and that the date for their fall breakfast is on September 11, and the annual Kids Expo event will be held on August 8. He also shared a summary of last week's meeting of the AI Advisory Group, and previewed a future briefing to the board on this topic.

Member Lancaster expressed appreciation for the Center for Innovation, Design, and Digital Learning (CIDDL), and presenting information and insights to the AI Advisory Group.

Access a link to the [full meeting agenda](#) online.

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