



# Lawrence Public Schools: Highlights of Progress

## End of Year Report 2025-26

Board of Education  
June 22, 2026

# Teaching & Learning

work in progress to align a system for critical mission



- **Guaranteed, visible, and viable curricula - Atlas**
- **Teacher professional practice drives this work**
- **Second professional plan time is key**
- **High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM)**
- **Framework for assessment & feedback**
- **Individual Plan of Study - align the system**
- **Reduction of screen time - elementary**
- **Alignment of Career & Technical education 7 all efforts to a vision of postsecondary success for every student**

# High-Quality Instructional Materials

2026-27 Enhancements - Consistent Learning Experiences



## Key Characteristics of HQIMs

- **Standards-Aligned and Coherent:** Materials are tightly aligned to state academic standards and organized in a clear sequence that builds knowledge and skills over time and over multiple grade-levels.
- **Evidence-Based and Rigorous:** Lessons incorporate proven instructional practices, promote deep thinking, and balance conceptual understanding, skill development, and application.
- **Support for Teachers and Students:** Materials include clear lesson structures, assessments, differentiation supports, and guidance that help teachers deliver consistent, high-quality instruction.



# High-Quality Instructional Materials

2026-27 Enhancements - Consistent Learning Experiences



## Quality Instructional Materials Impact Student and Teacher Experience

### *The average student spent...*

About 530 hours of the approximately 720 hours in their core classes on assignments that are not grade level appropriate.

### *The average teacher spent...*

**7 hours per week developing or selecting instructional materials and reported creating 57% of their assignments.**

\*\*\*TNP. (2018). *The Opportunity Myth: What Students Can Show Us About How School Is Letting Them Down—and How to Fix It.*



# High-Quality Instructional Materials

2026-27 Enhancements - Consistent Learning Experiences



## Focus on the Implementation of HQIMs

Making HQIMs central to school improvement efforts allows teachers to **focus on instruction** versus **curriculum design**.

***“If materials are an afterthought in our efforts to improve student outcomes, and we do not give sufficient professional development to properly implement those materials, we’ve made a hard job nearly impossible...”***

\*\*\* [The 74 \(2024\). 40 Years After ‘A Nation At Risk,’ Could Curriculum Reform Finally Move the Needle on Academic Improvement?](#)



# Individual Plan of Study

## Coherent Systems



- A student-driven, evolving roadmap that aligns student interest and coursework with post-secondary goals.
- Preschool-7 staff prepares students for postsecondary success daily through teaching and practice of employability skills, reading, and math.
- 8-12 focuses on individual discovery, career discovery, goal setting and academic planning, and competency and skill development.

# Individual Plan of Study

## Coherent Systems



### Individual Plan of Study Scope and Sequence

PRESCHOOL-GRADE 12

Grade 9 6 credits	Grade 10 6.5 credits	Grade 11 0 credits	Grade 12 0 credits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Algebra 1 (AMPED) S1 206921   Mathematics 9 <b>B+</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Algebra 1 (AMPED) S2 206922   Mathematics 9 <b>D-</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>English 9 S1 100191   English Language Arts 9 <b>A</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>English 9 S2 English 9 S2   English Language Arts 9 <b>CR</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Biology S2 305192   Science 9 <b>C</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Science - Individual Goals - S1 3999H   Science 9 <b>A</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Health 9 S1 8051H   Health 9 <b>C-</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Biology S1 305191   Science 10 <b>A+</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Intro to Law, Public Service and Safety... LP1012   Electives 9 <b>A-</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Hhrs English 9 S1 EN104A   Electives 9 <b>C</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>AVID S2 W00312   Electives 9 <b>B-</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Credit Recovery WC301   Electives 9 <b>A-</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated Algebra/Geometry 2 S1 206311   Mathematics 10 <b>B-</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Integrated Algebra/Geometry 2 S2 206312   Mathematics 10 <b>B</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>English 10 S1 100291   English Language Arts 10 <b>CR</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>English 10 S2 100292   English Language Arts 10 <b>A+</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Chemistry S1 310191   Science 10 <b>C+</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Modern World History S1 4053H   World History 10 <b>B+</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Modern World History S2 4053I2   World History 10 <b>D-</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Chemistry S2 310192   Science 11 <b>B</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Honors U.S. History S1 HS304A   Electives 10 <b>C</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Student Success Seminar 2 805722   Electives 10 <b>C</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Construction 2 S2 AC2522   Electives 10 <b>B-</b> 0.5 cr.</li> <li>AP English Language and Composi... EN500A   Electives 10 <b>A-</b> 0.5 cr.</li> </ul>	<p>Available period</p> <p>Available period</p> <p>Closed for submission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add Mathematics 12</li> <li>Add English Language Arts 12 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Add Science 12</li> <li>Add U.S. Government 12 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Add Elective 12 3.5 credits remaining</li> </ul> <p>Available period</p> <p>Available period</p> <p>Year-independent requirements 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add Social Studies - Elective 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Add Communications 0.5 cr.</li> <li>Add STEM 1 cr.</li> <li>Add Physical Ed. 0.5 cr.</li> </ul>

# Strengthen Jayhawk Blueprint Partnership



- **Research Highlights the Importance of College Courses Taken During the High School Years:**

*Taking college coursework in high school, through programs like dual enrollment or early college, is an effective strategy, leading to increased college access, persistence in college & completion rates, as well as potential cost savings & a smoother transition to college.*



# Jayhawk Blueprint Enhancement

## 2026-27 Program Enhancements



- Continue Jayhawk Blueprint partnership with KU, offering students opportunity to earn college credit while in high school.
- **In 2026-27, expand Jayhawk Blueprint offerings** to reach more high school students at **Lawrence Virtual School**.
  - Beginning in the **spring 2026-2027**, KU Blueprint will offer **English Composition**
  - Further exploration and expansion - **Math 101 and Biology** for the **fall of 2027-2028**

# Study of Screen Time for Elementary Students Continues

## Next Steps:

- We look forward to continuing the conversation this fall to refine approach to elementary screen time in classrooms, particularly at early grades.
- Dr. Cole Amaya and Elementary Director Roberson will continue conversations with teachers, review of current research, and the clarification of shared expectations for technology use in elementary classrooms.

# Program Enhancements

# Program Enhancement: **Preschool Expansion**

Expansion of Preschool Offerings into Neighborhood Schools

***Vision: a Preschool Seat for Every Child in Lawrence***

- Decades of research demonstrate the **benefits of quality preschool programming for all 3 & 4 year olds**, with particular benefits shown for second language learners & students from economic disadvantage.
- **Expand access by adding preschool classrooms across USD 497 neighborhood schools; enhancing established quality preschool programming at Kennedy Early Childhood Center.**
- **In 2025-26, began a phased approach, opening preschool classrooms at Sunflower & Woodlawn elementary schools.**
- **In 2026-27, preschool classrooms will open at Deerfield & Prairie Park.**
- **NOTE: Students / families must either qualify - under at-risk indicators such as income or other eligibility - or pay tuition (\$690 per month)**





# Program Enhancement: Centennial Campus

## Meeting High School Students Where They Are

Goal: to meet students and guide them toward clearly defined post-secondary success whether in college, career, or other pathways by, combining multiple learning modalities and designing a **personalized high school experience aligned to each student's goals.**

*Students graduate with demonstrated mastery of academic standards, real-world skills, and a portfolio that reflects their growth and readiness for life beyond high school.*



# Centennial Campus

## A Place to Thrive

Centennial is a place where students who need something different can thrive within a structured, supportive, and personalized environment.

### Personalized Plans

Every student follows a plan that connects their interests and goals directly to their learning.

### Strong Relationships

Pathway Facilitators and teacher mentors who know each student.

### Clear Expectations

Consistent accountability for progress, engagement, and mastery.

### Real-World Application

Meaningful opportunities to apply learning beyond the classroom.

# Systems Enhancements

# Continuing Work

## Innovate to Increase Compensation

Progress this year - the 2026-27 total increase in allocation for each employee group is as follows:

- **Certificated Staff:**  
\$4,624,319 (**8.32% increase** to Certified Salary Pool)
- **Education Support Professionals (ESP):**  
\$2,478,290 (**11.87% increase** to Classified Salary Pool)
- **Administrative Staff:**  
\$202,198 (**2.91% increase** to Administrative Salary Pool)

*Approved by the board on 5/26/26.*

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# Benefits Redesign & Implementation

## Employee Experience

- **Continue to offer employee single pay plan provided at district cost**
- Improved support navigating healthcare decisions
- Enhanced enrollment and claims experience
- Preserved access to competitive benefits

## Financial Stewardship

- Maintained employee healthcare costs
- Supported meaningful compensation increases
- Advanced long-term workforce stability

*Benefits redesign → Competitive compensation → Increased retention*

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# Next Steps 2026

## Streamline 2026 - Continuing focus

- **Innovate & align district** to prioritize, direct resources to classrooms, quality educational experiences & opportunities for students
- **Continue work to ensure competitive staff compensation**



# Transportation: Durham School Services

## Recommendation for partnership with Durham based on multiple factors:

- Student & staff safety as top priority
- Demonstrated performance in customer satisfaction
- Focus on district partnership and service to students and parents
- Committed to working with the district on continued refinements, including a route efficiency study during the fall of 2026 to identify additional savings



# Transportation Enhancements

## Effectiveness and Efficiencies

- District procurement of fuel, providing **greater cost control and transparency**
- Increased route **efficiency & optimization**
- **Air conditioning** on all buses
- **Enhanced technology**: improved communication systems, safety features, real-time bus tracking for student ridership



# Transportation Enhancements

- **Bus driver wage increases** of \$1.50/hour
- **Signing bonuses** of up to \$2,000/employee
- **Employee benefits package**
- Bus barn relocation to **reduce lease costs & improve efficiency**



# Student Supports

# System: Title IX Implementation

In collaboration with Human Resources, Student Support Services implemented a district Title IX process and provided required training to all administrators on the 2020 Title IX regulations. This year's training introduced explicit procedural frameworks to guide building principals through the compliance process. Additionally, the district designated building-level Title IX coordinators and provided specialized training for investigators and decision-makers throughout the school year. We will continue to refine the Title IX process and monitor data.

**Action steps:** Trained all administrators for the 25-6 school year. Designated building coordinators.

- LPS Title IX Data 2025-26
- Copy of LPS June 2026 Title IX Building Department Coord Investigator Annual Training .pptx
- Strategies for Stopping Sexual Harassment in the Workplace.pdfLPS Title IX Process Flowchart 6.4.26.pdf

**Next steps:** Launch the Navigate 360 platform to support workflow and provide a centralized system for tracking cases, managing supportive measures and securely archiving documentation. Establish quarterly leadership reviews on Title IX, using leadership time to learn and calibrate on the process. Continue to provide professional development to designated investigators and decision makers to build district capacity.

# LPS Title IX - Guide



2026-2027 SY



Lawrence, USD 497

## Title IX Reporting & Investigation Procedures

*Title IX regulatory compliance guidance: Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.*

Title IX resolutions will involve the following steps, although the ordering of some steps may occur differently depending on the specifics of the incident and investigation.

### Facilitated by Building/Department Level Administrators

- Receive report of alleged misconduct incident immediately notify Building/Department Title IX Coordinator

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### Facilitated by Building/Department Title IX Coordinator

- If alleged conduct is potentially criminal in nature, immediately notify Department so they can assist in conducting TIX
- In non-criminal cases, conduct initial inquiry to determine the nature of incident includes sex-b
  - If any allegations or evidence of physical minor, report to the Department of CI
- Notify Complainant of Supportive Measures (i.e. measures for the alleged Respondent), i.e. No-Contact Order, Determine what supportive measures
- Once preliminary inquiry is gathered, the Building/Department Title IX Coordinator will contact the Building/Department Title IX Coordinator by emailing "Please Call" to [Titelx@usd497.org](mailto:Titelx@usd497.org)
  - If urgent, do a follow-up call to Kristen 330-2350 or Ron May, Director Human Resources

### Facilitated by District Title IX Coordinator - In Coordination with Building/Department Title IX Coordinator

- Preliminary Assessment of Fact-Finding (Determine if sexual harassment)
  - The alleged conduct is based on sex
  - The alleged conduct is severe, persists
  - Objectively Offensive (Reasonable Person Standard)
  - Limits or deprives individuals of educational opportunity
- Determine if sexual misconduct will be screened based on severity of offense, warrants court involvement

### Facilitated by District Title IX Coordinator - In Coordination with Building/Department Administration

- If screened and documented through Building/Department Code of Conduct investigation, determine if Building/Department Title IX Spreadsheet
- If the alleged conduct, as given, aligns to the Code of Conduct
  - District Title IX Investigators will complete the investigation
    - advise the complainant of Title IX process
    - advise how to complete the Title IX process

- advise to return completed Title IX Complaint form to the Building/Department Title IX Coordinator
  - Building/Department Title IX Coordinator will be directed to document initial inquiry information on the Title IX Incident Report Google Document shared by District Title IX Coordinator's Office (completed ASAP or within the first 24 hours)
  - Once the Title IX Incident Report Google Document is completed, the Building/Department Title IX Coordinator sends an email to [titelx@usd497.org](mailto:titelx@usd497.org) (CC to Director of Schools, and Building/Department manager) to indicate the forms is completed.
  - Once the Building/Department Title IX Coordinator receives the completed Title IX Complaint form from the student(s), they send the completed Title IX Complaint form to [titelx@usd497.org](mailto:titelx@usd497.org) (CC to ED of Schools, and building principal/department manager).
- Facilitated by District Title IX Coordinator - In Coordination with Building/Department Title IX Coordinator**
- If the complainant indicates on the complaint form they DO NOT wish to proceed with the formal Title IX Grievance Process, the District Title IX Coordinator will:
    - Refer the alleged conduct back to the Building/Department Administration to review and investigate under Student or Employee Code of Conduct Policies. Building/Department Administrators will investigate according to Student or Employee Code of Conduct Policies, determine finding and sanctions, and document sanctions on the Title IX Incident Report Form Google Document and in PowerSchool or via HR staffing documentation guidelines.
    - Determine that signing the formal complaint over the wishes of the complainant is not directly align to the criteria for resolving under the formal Title IX Grievance Process.
  - If the complainant indicates on the complaint form they DO wish to proceed and the alleged conduct does NOT align to the criteria for resolving under the formal Title IX Grievance Process:
    - The District Title IX Coordinator will issue a Title IX Formal Letter of Dismissal and refer the conduct back to the Building/Department Administration to review the conduct under Student or Employee Code of Conduct Policies. Administrators will investigate according to Student or Employee Code of Conduct Policies, determine finding and sanctions, and document sanctions on the Title IX Incident Report Form Google Document and in PowerSchool or via HR staffing documentation guidelines.
  - If the alleged conduct does meet the criteria for resolving under the formal Title IX Grievance Process, District Title IX Investigator(s) will proceed with a formal Title IX investigation as the direction of District Title IX Coordinator.

### Facilitated by District Title IX Coordinator

- Upon receipt of an alleged Title IX incident, the District Title IX Coordinator will:
  - Assigning investigator
  - Notice of formal investigation to parent/guardian
  - Notice of formal investigation to complainant (provide additional Notice of Investigation)
  - Use to drafting the Title IX investigation report, witness, etc.
  - Request and review any relevant photographs, videos, etc.
  - Draft investigation report
  - Provide results of investigation to complainant
- District Title IX Investigator will provide the investigation report to the District Title IX Coordinator

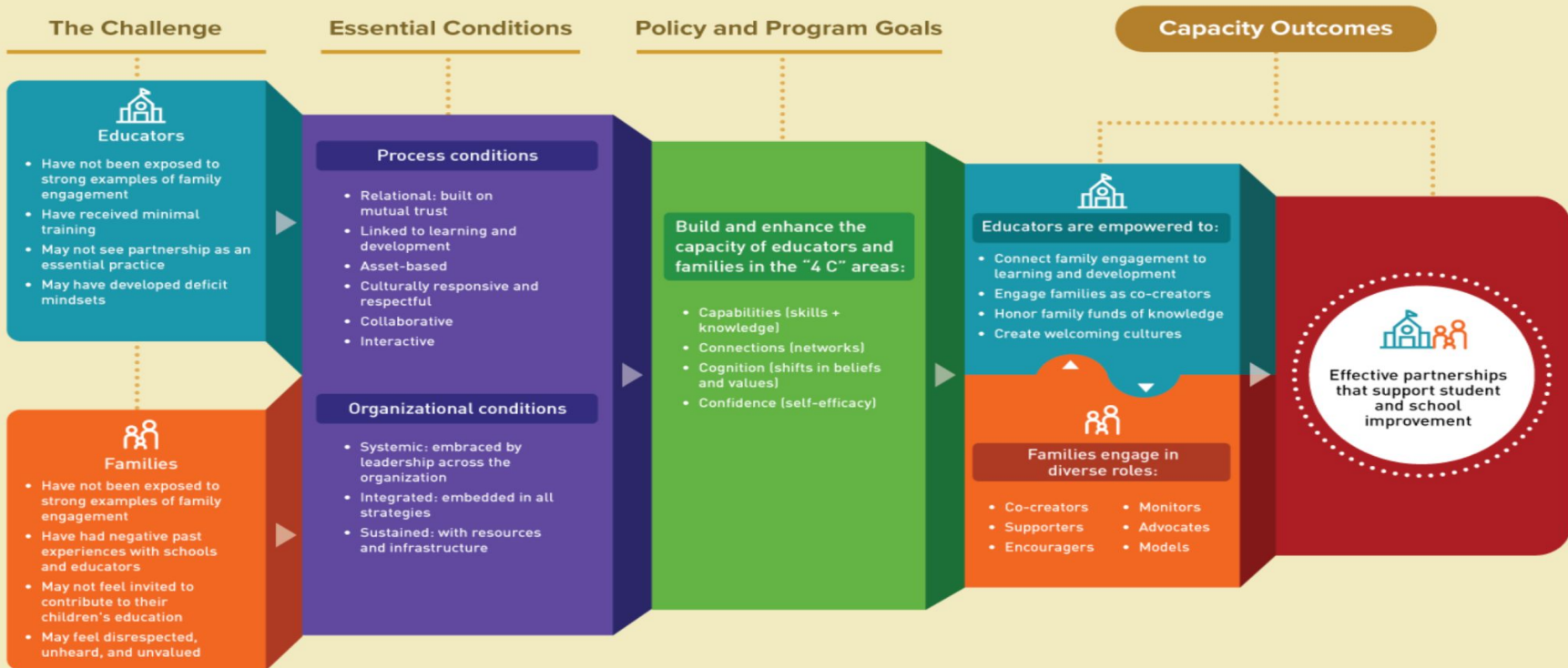
2026-2027 SY

- Upon conclusion of the 30-day review period, the District Title IX Coordinator will refer the formal Title IX investigation report/witness to the District Title IX Decision-Maker for a 30-day decision-making window.
- District Title IX Coordinator will provide notice to the complainant and respondent the investigation report has been completed, upon which time they will have a 21-day review period (during the 1st half of the Decision-Maker's 30-day decision-making window) to contact the District Title IX Decision-Maker to review the investigation report and submit in writing, questions or comments related to the investigation.
- The District Title IX Decision-Maker will determine if policy violations have occurred and will consider sanctions according to the Student/Employee Code of Conduct Policies. In the case of a student/employee, sanctions will be determined in coordination with the SPEI/Student Services and/or Human Resources departments.
- Complainant and respondent may appeal the outcome according to Lawrence, Kansas Public Schools Board of Education Policy IX-10, Grievances.

# Focus on Family Engagement

1. Clarify the foundational definition and understanding of ***family engagement***
2. Implement the ***Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships***
3. Open and operationalize the Lawrence Public Schools ***Family Engagement Center***

# The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships (Version 2)



# Authentic Family Engagement

## Family Involvement

A school striving for family involvement **leads with its mouth**



Identifies projects, needs, and goals, then **tells parents how they can contribute**



Goal is to **serve clients**



## Family Engagement

A school striving for family engagement **leads with its ears**



**Listens to parents** and what they think, dream, and worry about



Goal is to **gain partners**

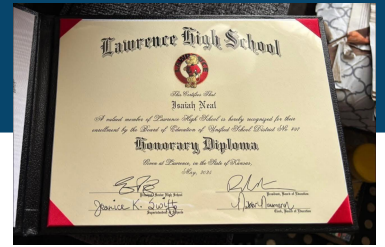


# Honorary Diploma

During the wrap up of 2025–26 school year, honorary diplomas were presented to the families of seven former students from the Classes of 2025 and 2026.

Of the 10 student losses within these graduating classes, seven families requested honorary diplomas in recognition of their student's time in Lawrence Public Schools and contributions to the school community.

The awarding of honorary diplomas aligns with the dignity-centered focus in the district and reflects a continued commitment to recognizing students and families in respectful, intentional, and affirming ways.

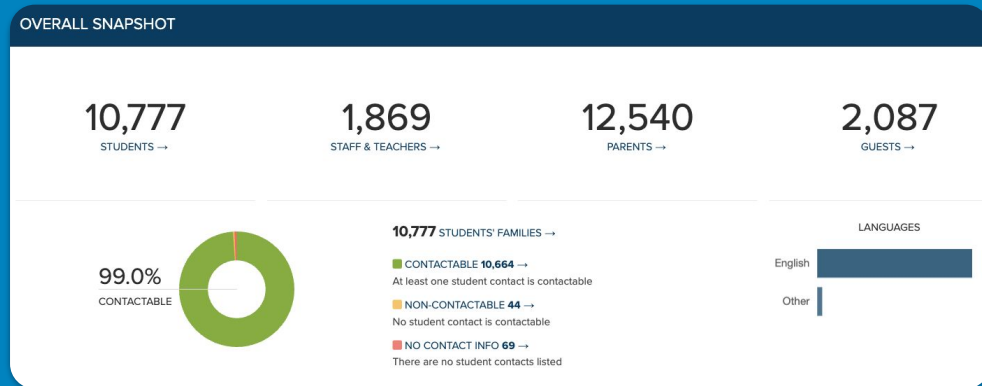


# Communication

# ParentSquare: Highlights Usage Data

- 20,700+ Posts (districtwide)
- Approximately **399,000 Direct Messages** (districtwide)  
→ *across 63,102 Threads*

*\*\*Stats current 6/8/2026*



# Communications: ParentSquare Implementation

## Implementation

A robust implementation of ParentSquare began in July 2025 led by the data, technology, and communications teams.

## Functionality

Consolidates all school and district alerts, attendance notices, newsletters, and two-way messaging into one platform.

## Reach

99.2 % of LPS families are contactable through the platform

## Language Access

About 3.5% of families have set communications to their home language. 12 languages are represented.

## Aligned with State Law

LPS is prepared for compliance with recent State legislative action on educator and district communications with families and students

## Engagement

20,700+ posts districtwide  
399,000 direct messages districtwide, across 63,102 threads

# Let's Lift Lawrence

All **20 school sites & our ESC** have mobilized as food collection locations.

Families are taking home meal kits & food stocked from our pantries each day.

- **1,149 students** live in households directly impacted by loss of federal food assistance.

Right: **Free State's** food pantry gets some love & support from students.



Above: **Deerfield** food pantry & more than 10 meal kits lining their walls.



# Community Conversation 2026

Hosted conversations across Lawrence.

- Principal-led staff focus groups
- Middle and high school student focus groups
- Hosted in-person events at school buildings
- Sent surveys to all families electronically



 **Join the Conversation!**

Share your feedback online via survey:

[www.usd497.org/future](http://www.usd497.org/future)

# Communications: Digital Storytelling

## District Website

Continued integration of the Finals site platform and hub for district communications, enrollment, recruitment, and news.

- 900,000+ website views
- 175,000+ unique users visits (average engagement time per user: 1 minute 39 seconds)
- Most visited pages:
  - 1) District homepage
  - 2) GO.USD497.org
  - 3) Staff

## District Facebook

From August 2025 through June 2026, the Communications Team expanded digital reach and community engagement through strategic storytelling and consistent coverage of student and staff success.

- **Audience grew by 3,600+ followers (+29%)**
- **Page & profile visits increased 166%**
- **From January–June 2026 alone, content received 1.76 million+ views (48% increase over the same period in 2025)**

# Human Resources

# Recruitment & Retention Efforts

- Certified employee turnover reached its lowest level in four years (9.2%).
- Beginning teacher salary increased to \$51,000.
- Educational Support Professional starting wage increased to \$20/hour.
- 95.5% substitute fill rate, up from 92.6% the previous year.
- Expanded recruitment fairs, hiring events, and onboarding efforts to strengthen staffing.
- Increased opportunities for preservice teachers to learn and train in Lawrence Public Schools.

# Exit Data Highlights

Certified employee turnover has steadily declined over the past four years, reaching 9.2% in 2025–26, the lowest rate in recent years. Total certified exits decreased from 177 employees in 2022–23 to 81 in 2025–26, reflecting increased workforce stability and the district’s commitment to supporting, valuing, and investing in its employees.

School Year	Certified Employees	Total Certified Exits	Exit Rate
2022–23	951	177	<b>18.6%</b>
2023–24	875	105	<b>12.0%</b>
2024–25	871	93	<b>10.7%</b>
2025–26	880	81	<b>9.2%</b>

# Substitute Fill Rate 2025-26

The district concluded the 2025–2026 school year with a **95.5% substitute fill rate**, an increase from **92.6% in 2024–2025**. Despite increased employee absences and more substitute requests, the district successfully filled a higher percentage of vacancies, providing greater stability and support for schools.

School Year	Substitute Fill Rate
2024–25	92.6%
2025–26	95.5%

# Facilities & Operations

# Facilities and Operations : Focus of Support

## Instructional Programing Support

### Renovation of Centennial Campus

The Centennial Choice Campus will provide students with an additional opportunity to complete their high school education through programs designed to adapt to their individual academic and personal needs.

### Development of an Architectural Design Team

Lawrence Public Schools will benefit from the expertise and collaboration of three architectural firms working together to plan for future improvements to district facilities.

### Renovation of High School Tracks

The renovation of track facilities at Lawrence High School and Free State High School will provide students with high-quality instructional and competition venues for years to come.

## Budget Support

### Health Benefits Broker Identification

The engagement of a new Health Benefits broker, combined with the transition from a fully insured plan to a self-funded model, will provide greater flexibility and improved cost control in the coming years. These changes position Lawrence Public Schools to deliver more effective and efficient management of its health benefits program

### Student Transportation RFP and Contract

Durham Student Services will serve as a valued partner, sharing Lawrence Public Schools' commitment to strengthening and enhancing student transportation. This partnership will emphasize student safety, high-quality customer service, and timely communication, while also pursuing system efficiencies to improve the overall experience for students and families.

# Preview of 2026-27 Lawrence Leads



