GREAT BEND
PUBLIC SCHOOLS • USD 428
Barton County, 1809 24th Street, Great Bend, Kansas 67530

BOARD REPORT

October 13, 2025 **5:00 p.m.**

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Board Members Mrs. Jacquie Disque, president; Mr. Aaron Emerson, vice-president; Mr. Chad Burroughs, Mrs. Deanna Essmiller, Mrs. Karen Lindberg, Mr. Randy Wetzel, Mrs. Sara Williams

Communications

- USD 428 Education Foundation

The USD 428 Education Foundation's Annual Dinner & Auction will take place on November 13, 2025, at the Great Bend Events Center. The banquet is a Red and Black Ball theme with a business casual dress code.

Recognitions / Presentations

- ROSE Award

The Board of Education's ongoing efforts to recognize individuals and groups for their service to the school district have led to the creation of the R.O.S.E. (Recognizing Outstanding Support of Education) Award. The most recent recipients of a R.O.S.E. Award are GBHS educators Mrs. Karen Moeder and Mrs. Rachel Thexton.

When a fire broke out in a Great Bend High School bathroom trash can, Mrs. Karen Moeder and Mrs. Rachel Thexton immediately took action to protect students and staff. Karen grabbed the fire extinguisher and successfully extinguished the fire before it could spread, while Rachel helped by keeping the area clear and supporting everyone's safety. She stayed calm and composed to assist nearby students and staff in evacuating the area. Thanks to their teamwork, a potentially dangerous situation was quickly contained. Karen and Rachel demonstrated what we promote every day: doing what's best for our kids at GBHS. Neither hesitated for a second as they both quickly responded to keep everyone safe. We are incredibly proud and grateful for Karen and Rachel.

- Director's Report

Each month, a district director will present department updates to board members.

Ashley Riley, Assistant Superintendent of Special Services, presented a report to the board members at this meeting.

- ✓ Barton County Special Services is a cooperative that serves and provides PK-12 special education services to four school districts, including Great Bend, Hoisington, Ellinwood, Otis-Bison, and parochial schools. The foundation of the cooperative model is based on the motto *"Building Connections 4 Successful Students."* The cooperative model allows districts to share expertise, resources, and responsibilities to ensure equitable, efficient, and high-quality services for all students. Shared resources

reduce duplication to stretch budgets further. Aligning common special service practices and expectations across member districts creates continuity for students, families, and staff and centralized oversight ensures adherence to IDEA and KSDE regulations, protecting districts while maintaining high standards of service delivery.

- ✓ There is an increase in the severity of needs, the intensity of services, and the level of needs for special services are based on the amount of minutes spent outside the General Education classroom. Services range from general education classroom support, resource rooms, alternative learning classrooms, and transitional services (ages 18-21). BCSS also provides therapy services (speech/language, occupational, physical), vision and hearing services, social work, and work-study programs.
- ✓ BCSS employs 195 employees, including 75 certified staff and 120 classified staff. Professional development and specialized training is provided for employees.

Approval of Local Consolidated Plan Allocation

(Refer to Mr. Popp)

The 2025-2026 Local Consolidated Plan (LCP) amounts total $1,227,629, which compares to a prior-year total of $1,220,792. The administration recommends board approval to allocate state and federal program funds for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The Board approved allocations for the state and federal programs with the allocated amounts listed below.

Title I	Improving Education Programs	$ 905,959
Title II A	Supporting Effective Instruction	$ 145,642
Title III	English Learner and Immigrant Programs	$ 44,187
Title IVA	Grants for Student Support/Academic Enrichment	$ 57,171
Title I Part C	Migrant	$ 74,700
Total		$1,227,629

Notification of Title VI B (3-21) and VI B (3-5) Early Childhood Flow-Through Budget Application

Public notification of the Title *VI B* and *VI B ECH* budget, which covers salaries for licensed special education staff, is required. The 2025-2026 application amounts to $1,125,038 for Title *VI B* pass-through funds ($5,018 more than the prior year) and $43,104 for ECH ($2,270 more than the prior year). The budget application will be available for public review at the Barton County Cooperative of Special Education for the next thirty days.

Fleet Management Update

The Board is in the third year of participating in a vehicle lease program with Enterprise Fleet Management. Mr. Popp explained the fleet analysis, emphasizing the next phase of the lease program and noting that several vehicles are at the ideal time for rotations to maximize equity in sale proceeds. The Board approved continuing the fleet program to replace ten Chevrolet Traverses and seven other vehicles at a cost of just over $303,000 annually, which includes selling older vehicles for approximately $134,000.

Approval of Snow Blade Purchases

The Board approved the purchase of two Boss Snowplows from Kansas Truck Equipment Company, Inc., each priced at $9,118.00. The quote includes the purchase price and labor to attach the plows to trucks. The addition of the snowplows will help grounds crews assist with removing snow from school parking lots more quickly and efficiently.

Approval of UTV John Deere Gator Purchase

GBHS custodial staff currently uses two UTVs at Memorial Stadium for setup during football games, track meets, and other events. An additional UTV is requested for the high school, so an older one will be transferred to the soccer complex because the 1998 UTV there is no longer operational. The Board approved the quote from BTI for $11,250 to purchase a 2026 John Deere Gator UTV for use at the high school.

Curriculum / Instruction Report

Assistant Superintendent JoAnn Blevins

- October Professional Development

The October 17 Inservice Day featured a conference-style Learning Lab with various speakers and professional development sessions for teachers, including support for new educators. The new format was well received, and educators provided positive feedback. Mrs. Blevins intends to make the Learning Lab style of professional development an annual event each October.

- Adoption Updates

The 7-12 ELA curriculum resource adoption is piloting new materials this fall, and their recommendations will be brought to the board during the second semester.

The Pre-K team is assessing strengths and weaknesses and will decide which programs best meet their goals. The K-12 Social Studies team is evaluating resources and potential programs, reviewing samples, and will have pilots ready by spring 2026. K-12 Art is requesting supplemental materials and resources to enhance their current curriculum. GBHS: Theatre is reviewing resources and will present recommendations to the board in December, while Band & Orchestra are currently exploring curriculum options and will propose suggestions to the board in the spring.

- Kansas Reads to Preschoolers

Little Panthers Preschool will take part in the State Library of Kansas' 2025 Kansas Reads to Preschoolers event. This year's selected book is Little Nita's Big Idea, authored by Anna W. Bardaus and illustrated by Carolina Farias. The program encourages literacy and motivates young children to enjoy reading at home.

- HB 2382 Update

House Bill 2382 requires school districts to include a presentation on human fetal development in courses about human growth, development, or sexuality. In response to this bill, Wichita schools have created and shared a human growth video that meets the requirements, and the USD 428 team has reviewed and approved the video for the required courses. Parent letters explaining the bill will be mailed to families, and parents will have the option to opt their child out. Mrs. Blevins will continue to update the board members on any legislative discussions regarding HB 2382.

- Curriculum Meetings
  - Curriculum Steering Committee: 10/7/25 canceled, next meeting 12/2/25
  - Professional Development Council (PDC): 10/6/25 minutes, next meeting 11/3/25

Business and Operations Report

Assistant Superintendent John Popp

- Public School Works training

The Public School Works program automatically assigns our staff annual state and federally mandated training courses through an online testing format. Staff members have completed over 10,000 training modules, covering a wide range of topics, from fire extinguisher safety to suicide prevention, and the majority of employees consistently finish the assigned training on time.

- District Flu Vaccination Clinics

For several years, USD 428 nurses have partnered with the Barton County Health Department to hold BCHD flu vaccination clinics at each school for students and staff. Flu vaccinations will be billed through each individual's insurance provider.

- Snow Removal RFQ

USD 428 requested quote proposals from qualified and experienced contractors to provide snow removal services for school properties during the 2025-2026 winter season. The district received two quotes with very similar pricing structures and will utilize the services of Stone Sand Co., Inc. for extreme snow removal services.

- District Surplus

The district occasionally has surplus furniture and items for sale, which are now listed and regularly updated on the district website. These items are available to the public, and sales terms can be found there. Currently, elementary lunch tables, stacking chairs, bookshelves, and various other items are for sale at reasonable prices to other schools or individuals.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Khris Thexton

- Enrollment Numbers Update

An official student count for 2025-2026 shows 2,840 students enrolled. Enrollment has remained steady over several years; the current count is 30 students fewer than last year. The KSDE Superintendent Organization Report (SO66) submitted to KSDE determines the budgeted numbers for the 2025-2026 year.

- Bus Safety Week, October 20-24, 2025, *"Safe Rides, Everyday Heroes"*

National School Bus Safety Week promotes awareness of bus safety all year round. Bus drivers' stop arm surveys are submitted to the state, as passing a bus with the stop arm out is illegal. Bus drivers offer excellent service to children and are valued throughout the year.

- Anti-Bullying Awareness Month

October is a month dedicated to preventing childhood bullying and promoting kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. October 22 is the designated day to wear orange in support of Unity Awareness.

- Strategic Plan Development

Mr. Thexton reported that the process of developing the Strategic Plan involves SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) to evaluate internal and external factors. Board members provided several topics to initiate the process, and the list will be expanded with input from other community stakeholder groups. Newly elected board members will have the opportunity to participate in this process as it concludes in the spring of 2026.

- Personnel Report

Recruiting quality teachers for the 2025-26 school year has already started, with upcoming virtual and in-person recruiting fairs scheduled. Additionally, new teachers graduating in December will be considered for positions currently held by long-term substitutes, depending on the availability of a permanent role.

- Approval of Contributions

The BOE approved the grants and contributions noted below.

School	Amount	Company
GBMS Reality U	$209.08	Pizza Hut (Main St) fundraiser night

- Great Bend High School would like to accept a $600 contribution from Zoetis for vendor incentive rewards designated to FFA by Animal Medical Center.
- Great Bend High School Athletics requests approval to accept the following contributions:

P&S Equipment	$2,500	towards the purchase of a simulator for GBHS golf
Panther Booster Club	$2,700	for Rudis bags for GBHS Wrestling Team

Financial Report

Mr. Popp presented the warrants, financial report, travel summary, energy report, unencumbered cash balance details, and health insurance status to board members.

Consent Agenda

Board members approved the following items.

- Approval of BOE Meeting Minutes: September 8, September 24. 2025
- Bills and Financial Reports: As presented.
- Personnel Report: *None*

Executive Session

The Board recessed into executive session to discuss an individual employee's performance pursuant to non-elected personnel under KOMA. No action was taken after the session.

Upcoming Events

Board members were reminded of the forthcoming events.

- BOE Luncheon Meeting: at noon on October 29, 2025 (GB High School)
- Education Foundation Annual Dinner & Auction: on November 13, 2025
- Annual KASB Convention: on November 14-16, 2025, in Wichita, KS
- BOE Regular Meeting: The next BOE regular monthly meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2025, at the District Education Center.

Adjournment

The Board of Education meeting was adjourned.