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

BOARD REPORT

May 11, 2026 **5:00 p.m.**

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Board Members Mrs. Jacquie Disque, president; Mr. Aaron Emerson, vice-president; Mrs. Karen Lindberg, Ms. Barbara Thoren, Mrs. Sarah Schenek, Mr. Randy Wetzel, Mrs. Sara Williams

Citizen Open Forum

- During the open forum, a parent requested to address the board, expressing concern about being unable to enter the building to pick up their student during a SECURE hold. The concern stemmed from a recent external threat to the school that turned out to be a false alarm. There were no board comments during the open forum. School safety procedures were on the agenda and discussed later in the Business Operations report.

Communications

- Board Member Comments
  The 2025 graduation ceremony on May 10 was a beautiful day for an outdoor graduation. As a humorous parting gift, several graduates presented Mr. Thexton with golf balls as they approached the stage.
- USD 428 Education Foundation
  Mini grants were presented at a reception and orders will be placed for items granted. Foundation members will meet later this week to discuss foundation business.

Recognitions / Presentations

- LPP American Heart Association Recognition
  Jennifer Clark of the American Heart Association recognized Mrs. Tandi Mai and Mrs. Taylor Paden for their fundraising efforts to raise awareness and benefit the American Heart Association. Little Panthers Preschool had 92 participants who raised nearly $10,000! Congratulations!
- GBHS Debate Recognition
  Last month, the Great Bend Forensics earned top honors at the Western Kansas District Forensics National Qualifier and the Forensics Coaches Invitations. Three students qualified for the National Tournament: Kendra Scheideman, Parker Coleman, and Quinton Heath. They will compete in the National Tournament in Richmond, VA, in June. Mrs. Kim Heath coaches the GBHS Debate team. Congratulations to the GBHS Debate team!

Approval of 2026-2027 Student and Teacher Handbooks, Athletics and Activities Handbooks

The 2026-2027 student and teacher handbooks were presented at the April meeting along with proposed updates. The Board approved the 2026-2027 handbooks listed below during this second reading.

- Elementary Student Handbook
- Middle School Student Handbook
- High School Student Handbook
- Athletics Handbook
- LPP supplement
- Elementary Teacher Handbook
- Middle School Teacher Handbook
- High School Teacher Handbook
- Activities Handbook

Second Reading of School Calendar

Review of the 2026-2027 school calendars and development of the 2027-2028 school calendars are underway, and both were presented to the BOE for first reading, review, and input in April. The Board approved the 2027-2028 calendar, selecting draft #1, which has a later start and dismissal date, noting that it aligns better with enrollment dates and new-teacher orientation.

Approval of GBHS Course Addition

Mr. Brock Funke, Mr. Matt Westerhaus, and Mr. Braden Schultz presented information on RefReps, an introductory sports officiating course, to be added as a semester elective with three modules per semester. The web-based course will provide students with proper instruction and exposure. Currently, 40 students are interested in the class. The Board approved the course for inclusion in the 2026-2027 Program of Studies.

Approval of Band/ Orchestra Curriculum Adoption

Ms. Alejandra Cornelio, GBMS Band Instructor, presented the Instrumental Music team's recommendation and quote for the band and orchestra curriculum. Strings Basics for orchestra and Essential Elements for band will provide students with music fundamentals that meet state standards, along with additional modules to teach music genre history. The new curriculum costs $14,035.17, and the Board approved its purchase.

Approval of Paper purchase for 2025-2026

Price quotes were requested from paper vendors for 8.5 x 11 copy paper and 40 cartons of 11 x 17 paper. A full truckload (840 cartons) is requested for the upcoming year to secure the best available cost. The prior year's paper bid projected a need for 840 cases of 8.5 x 11 and 40 cases of 11 x 17 paper (2025-2026 $27,240.00). The Board approved the lowest bid from Contract Paper Group for $26,964.80. Pastel, bright copy paper, and cardstock will be purchased as needed.

Approval of 2026-2027 BOE Meeting Schedule

A proposed schedule for 2026-2027 board meetings was presented. Regular meetings are scheduled for the second Monday of each month, and Noon meetings will be the last Wednesday of each month. Board members approved the meeting schedule, as noted below.

2026-2027 Regular Meetings:

July 13, 2026	January 11, 2027
August 10, 2026	February 8, 2027
September 14, 2026	March 8, 2027
October 12, 2026	April 12, 2027
November 9, 2026	May 10, 2027
December 14, 2026	June 14, 2027

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2026-2027 Luncheon Meetings:

Wednesday	August 26, 2026	at Park
Wednesday	September 30, 2026	at LPP
Wednesday	October 28, 2026	at Riley
Wednesday	November 18, 2026	at Eisenhower
(No December Luncheon Meeting)		
Wednesday	January 27, 2027	at Jefferson
Wednesday	February 24, 2027	at Lincoln
Wednesday	March 31, 2027	at GBHS
Wednesday	April 28, 2027	at GBMS
(No May Luncheon Meeting)		

Approval to Alter DEC Summer Schedule

The BOE approved to modify summer hours at the District Education Center by closing the office at noon on Fridays from May 22 through July 31. This follows the same summer schedule as the maintenance department. Employees will have the opportunity to fulfill their contracted hours.

Curriculum / Instruction Report

- Summer School

Mrs. Blevins provided an enrollment update for PreK-12 summer school, noting that 250-300 students will attend. Summer school will run from June 1 to June 28. USD 428 Food Service will provide breakfast and lunch through the summer food program.

- Curriculum Meetings
  - Curriculum Steering Committee: Minutes 5/5/26, Next meeting TBA
  - Professional Development Council (PDC) Minutes 5/4/26, Next meeting 6/1/26

Business and Operations Report

- Project Updates
  - Summer Projects
    - District Camera System – Park and Riley will have new cameras installed this summer, and their older cameras will be repurposed at Jefferson until new ones can be purchased for Jefferson.
    - Summer Maintenance Projects – Summer crews will focus on regular seasonal maintenance, including HVAC inspections, grounds upkeep, and deep cleaning of the facilities. Maintenance summer concrete projects include a driveway west of the DEC, GBHS south of the library doors, GBMS east handicap area, and areas at Eisenhower, Jefferson, and Lincoln.
    - Larger summer projects include the GBMS parking lot, a classroom wall modification at Eisenhower, and GBHS pressbox improvements, GBHS HVAC.
    - Roofing Projects: Park, GBHS Gym, PAC/Fieldhouse connection area, will be completed during the summer months.

- Safety Meeting Update
  - USD 428 prioritizes student safety by utilizing the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) from the "I Love U Guys" Foundation. This widely recognized framework uses five clear commands—Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter—to ensure everyone speaks the same language during an emergency.
    Standard Response Protocol: *(posted in every classroom so that staff and students are familiar with the command)*
    - ***HOLD*** *("In Your Room or Area"):* Used when hallways need to be clear, such as for a medical emergency or to keep students in classrooms during a passing period. Business continues as usual inside the room.
    - ***SECURE*** *("Get Inside. Lock Outside Doors"):* Used when there is an external threat or hazard *outside* the building (e.g., police activity nearby, dangerous animal). Activities continue inside with increased situational awareness.
    - ***LOCKDOWN*** *("Locks, Lights, Out of Sight"):* Used for a threat *inside* or immediately surrounding the building. Lights are turned off, doors are locked, and occupants remain silent and out of sight.
    - ***EVACUATE*** *("To a Location"):* Used to move students and staff from one location to a different, safer location, often accompanied by a specific destination (e.g., "evacuate to the gym").
    - ***SHELTER*** *("For a Hazard and Safety Strategy"):* Used for personal protection against natural disasters or hazardous materials (e.g., "shelter for tornado," "shelter for hazmat")
  - During the recent bomb threat at a district school, administrators activated the SECURE protocol. Because the threat involved an individual allegedly en route to the school, GBPD emergency responders were on site to manage the situation, and students were kept safely inside the building until the external risk was cleared. The SRP's research-based approach enables the district to provide specific, evidence-based guidance to students and staff. Parents are encouraged to review the SRP materials emailed to them at the beginning of the year, and SRP information is available on the district website: greatbendschools.net. The ultimate goal in every situation is the safety and protection of our students and staff.
  - District Safety Committee: Over the past three years, several members of the District Safety Committee and the GBPD have attended various safety conferences. The committee has been planning an all-staff drill to practice reunification methods, ensuring every employee knows their role in keeping students safe and in making the reunification system work effectively. Local emergency responders will participate. The drill will be held on a fall in-service day when school is not in session. The committee has also been working on risk levels, noting that when in doubt, measures to keep students safe will be raised to a higher level.

Superintendent's Report

- Legislative Update

Mr. Thexton briefly discussed current House of Senate legislative bills potentially affecting public education.

- End of Year Activities

The district has a busy week with several end-of-year activities, including Good Attendance Bike Giveaways, 8th Grade recognition, and end-of-year celebrations. The last day for students is Wednesday, May 13, and the teacher's last day is Thursday, May 14, 2026.

- Summer Meal Update

In June and July, USD 428 food service will provide complimentary breakfast and lunch for all students up to age 18. The Summer Meal Program begins Tuesday, May 26 – July 26, and is available at Eisenhower, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Riley Elementary Schools in June, and at Eisenhower, Jefferson, and Riley in July from 11 am to 1 pm. Sites are closed on July 3. More information can be found at www.greatbendschools.net.

- Approval of Contributions

The BOE approved the grants and contributions noted below.

- Reward Incentive contributions for the following schools have been received.

School	Amount	Company
Lincoln Elementary	$ 280.59	Dillons Community Rewards
GB Middle School	$ 32.20	Box Tops

- The GBHS wishes to accept a Wheatland Electric Sharing Success grant of $4,500 for the Student Ambassador Program.

- USD 428 wishes to apply for a KSDE Safe and Secure School Grant for $185,000. If granted, the grant will be used for security cameras and other security measures in the schools.
- USD 428 Food Service Department wishes to accept a $2,000 contribution from the LF Harper Family Foundation towards unpaid student meal balances.

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: April 13 and April 29, 2026
- Bills and Financial Reports: As presented.
- Personnel Report:

  Licensed Resignation

  ✓ Mrs. Katelyn Schiffelbein, teacher of Science at GB High School

  Licensed Retirement

  ✓ Ms. Jami Reed, teacher of Grade 3 at Jefferson Elementary School

  Licensed Appointments

  ✓ Mrs. Amy Herter, teacher of Grade 3 at Jefferson Elementary School

Upcoming Events

Board members were reminded of the forthcoming events.

- Last Day of School: May 13, 2026
- IBB Negotiations, Session #3: May 14, 2026
- BOE Regular Meeting: The next BOE regular monthly meeting is scheduled for June 8, 2026, at the District Education Center, located at 1809 24th St. in Great Bend.
- 2026-2027 School Year: Enrollment- August 3-4, First Day of School- August 19, 2026

Adjournment

The Board of Education meeting was adjourned.