

Back-to-School 2026-27



Board of Education

July 27, 2026

Communications



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Public Schools

HUMAN RESOURCES

Supporting Families for Back-to-School

Multi-channel coordination

Back-to-School Webpage

One location for enrollment, transportation, school supply lists, important dates, and family resources

ParentSquare

Sent districtwide ParentSquare communications to all families

Direct Messaging

Support Enrollment Center communications sent directly to families of returning students

Social Media

Share timely reminders and directed families to district resources

Goal

Provide families with consistent, easy-to-access information through coordinated communications across the district website, ParentSquare, and social media.

ParentSquare

Back-to-School Reminders

Highlights:

- Annual Student Enrollment and Enrollment Center assistance
- Bus Transportation & assistance
- Free or Reduced Meal Application and resources
- Back-to-School webpage with comprehensive resources



Communication Reach

Website, ParentSquare, and social media performance

Website Resources

The district website is the primary hub for Back-to-School information.

28,500+

Combined page views*

14,400+

Combined active users*

ParentSquare

Districtwide communication sent to 12,114 recipients

11,819

reached

62%

overall view rate

Social Media

Three posts promoting enrollment, Back-to-School resources, and events generated approximately:

26,500

impressions

12,900

people reached

51

comments

79

shares

Save the Date: August 8th

Kids Expo 2026



Lawrence Schools Foundation
will host their **3rd Annual Kids
Expo** on **Saturday, August 8**

- **Time:** 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- **Location:** Lawrence Public Schools
Educational Support Center (110
McDonald Drive, Lawrence, KS)



Transportation



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Transportation Transition to Durham

Ready for Students

New Location

- Bus fleet consolidated at the Facilities & Operations Campus
- Central hub for oversight, fleet management, and staff coordination.

Unified Fleet

- Bus identification transitioned to Lawrence Public Schools naming
- Consistent district identity across the fleet
- Improved visibility and recognition for families and the community

Inspections & Preparation

- Kansas State inspections completed; fleet approved
- Final tagging and readiness activities underway



Welcome Sara Knight

General Manager, Lawrence Public Schools Durham School Services

- Strength, expertise, and commitment of the Durham team
- We welcome Sara Knight to Lawrence Public Schools!
- From Ames, Iowa and most recently served Anne Arundel County Public Schools, MD
- With more than 25 years in school district transportation work, Sara has a record of proven excellence characterized by service, and we are delighted to add her strength as a partner alongside our LPS team!



Transportation Operations Transition

Ready for Students

My Ride K-12 Platform

The new **My Ride K-12** registration platform has launched smoothly.

On-site, walk-in registration assistance is available to support families complete the process, and registration data is informing route and staffing.

REGISTRATION PROGRESS

~50%+

As of July 23rd, 50% of estimated eligible bus riders registered



Student Transportation Updates

Samsara Technology



Safety Benefits:

- Real-time driver alerts.
- Automated reporting capabilities.
- Improved incident awareness and response.

Operational Benefits:

- Modern routing and navigation platform.
- Increased visibility into fleet operations.
- Actionable data to support decision-making.

Driver Support:

- Predictive analytics.
- Fleet performance monitoring.
- Enhanced operational awareness.

Student Transportation Updates

Staffing

Recruitment & Incentives

Solid progress with approx $\frac{2}{3}$ transportation staffing complete

CURRENT HIRING BONUSES

\$4,000

Signing bonus — candidates with a Class B CDL

\$2,000

Signing bonus — candidates who complete training & obtain a CDL

\$1,000

Signing bonus — Bus Attendants

Driver Training Process

- One week of classroom instruction
- Two to three weeks of behind-the-wheel training
- CDL testing and certification preparation
- Route familiarization and district-specific procedures

Ensuring Route Coverage

Until staffing reaches full capacity, qualified personnel from other Durham locations will support route coverage — maintaining reliable service while local recruitment continues.

Student Transportation Updates

Looking Ahead

Current Priorities & Next Steps:

- Complete student transportation registration.
- Finalize routes and schedules.
- Continue driver onboarding and training.
- Complete bus tagging and deployment.



A Message from the Durham Team Lawrence

As the transportation provider for Lawrence Public Schools, we are proud to be working alongside such a dedicated and professional team. We have experienced tremendous support from the Facilities & Operations staff and are building a strong partnership focused on student success.

This collaboration is a testament to the great things ahead. Working together as one team, we are committed to ensuring that every student has access to safe, reliable, and efficient transportation each day.



Preparing Schools Facilities & Operations



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School Improvement Projects

Renovations

- Family Engagement Center
- Centennial Campus
- Middle school auditoriums
- Preschool classrooms at Deerfield and Prairie Park Elementary Schools
- Track reconstruction at Free State and Lawrence High Schools
- Roof repairs at Billy Mills and West Middle Schools

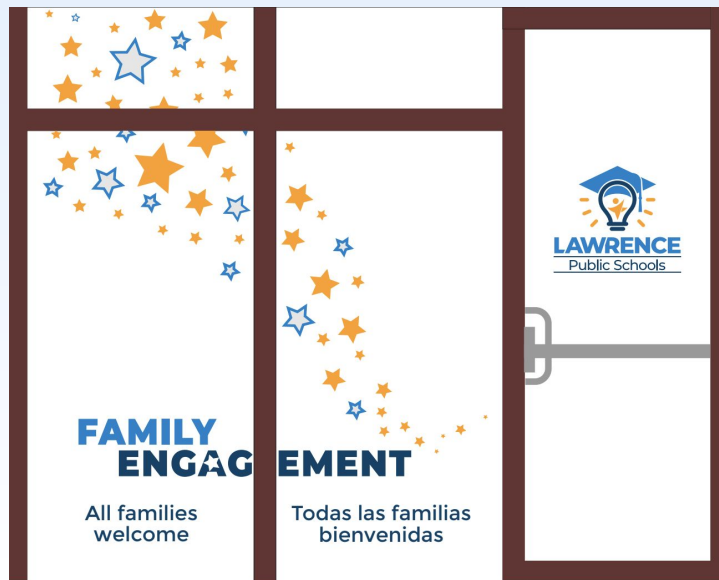


Family Engagement Center

Opening August 8th at KIDS Expo!

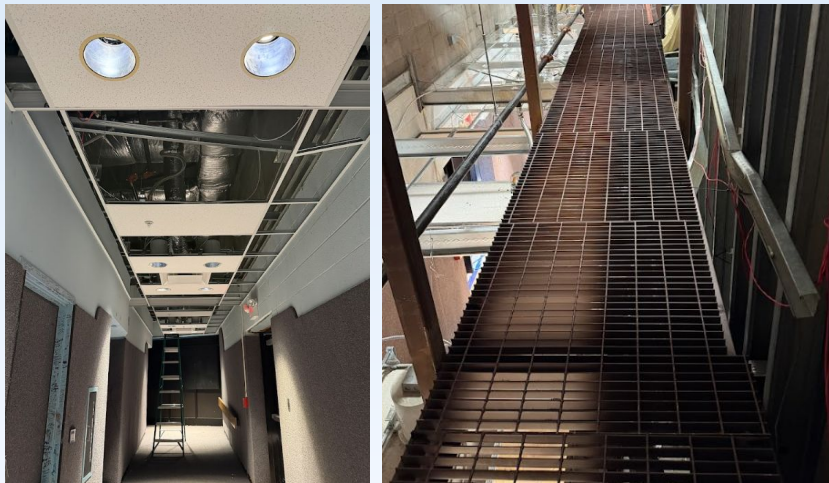


Lawrence Public Schools
connecting families, schools and community



School Improvement Projects

Renovations



Middle School Auditoriums



Centennial Campus

School Improvement Projects

Renovations

19



**Preschool Classrooms at Deerfield and Prairie Park
Elementary Schools**

School Improvement Projects

Renovations



Free State High School Press Box

School Improvement Projects

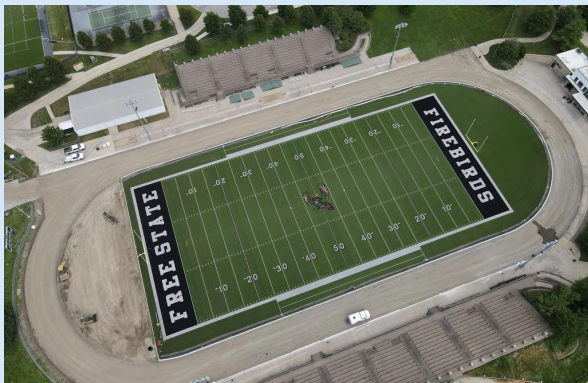
Finished Updates

- Press box reconstruction at Free State High School
- New athletic field lighting at Free State and Lawrence High Schools
- Upgraded HVAC systems:
 - Sunflower Elementary School
 - Southwest Middle School
 - Lawrence High School
- Asphalt and concrete work:
 - Kennedy Early Childhood Center
 - Prairie Park, Sunflower, and Quail Run Elementary Schools
 - Billy Mills and Southwest Middle Schools
 - Community Connections at Pinckney
- Solar installation at Woodlawn Elementary School
- Fire alarm system replacement at Cordley Elementary School
- Water Service Replacement at Sunflower and Southwest



School Improvement Projects

Completed Updates



Free State High School



Lawrence High School

School Improvement Projects

Finished Updates



Woodlawn Solar Installation



School Improvement Projects

Infrastructure Updates



Southwest HVAC



Lawrence High School Chillers



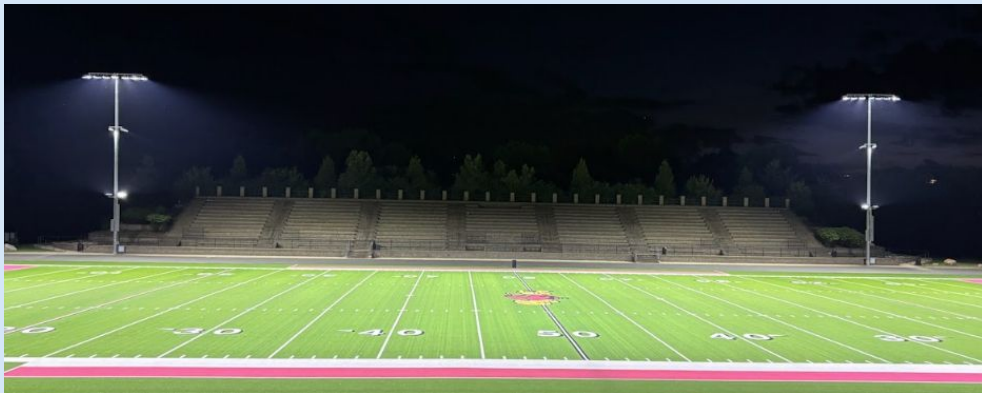
Cordley Fire Alarm System



Roof Repairs

School Improvement Projects

Completed



Athletic Lighting
Lawrence High School & Free State High School



Human Resources



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Summer Hiring

2026-27



Welcome to Lawrence Public Schools!

- **87 new certified staff**
- **8 new administrators**
- **Educational Support Professional new hires in process!**
- 3 certified orientations, 3 ESP orientations upcoming
- Paraprofessional Hiring Fair (32 attendees)



Fringe Benefits 2026-27

Plan Year September 1, 2026

- **Preparation for benefits plan year beginning September 1, 2026**
 - New brokerage agency, Holmes Murphy
 - **Active open enrollment for benefits 7/27-8/11 - note: mandatory participation in enrollment for staff this year**

Benefit Communications

New & Improved for 2026-27

- Benefits Microsite, Guide, Enrollment Portal



[Enrollment Support Tool Login](#)
[ENROLL HERE - SELERIX](#)

■ Welcome to Lawrence Public Schools

Employee Benefits Hub

At Lawrence Public Schools, your well-being comes first. Explore all your benefits in one place—from health insurance to retirement planning and wellness programs. Get the info you need to make informed decisions and stay updated on key deadlines. We're here to support you every step of the way.



[Home](#)
[You & Your Family](#)
[YOUR BENEFITS](#)
[Sign & Submit](#)

Need Help? Call 866-760-8857

Medical

Listed below are the options and coverage choices available to you.

- To enroll or continue your current coverage, click the option that represents your election.
- You can edit which dependents will be covered by using the pencil icon next to the list of Covered People when available.
- When you are finished, click on the **Enroll** button to continue.

[View Existing Coverage](#)

CORE PPO	BUY UP PPO	BUY UP HDHP
Your Cost: Per Pay Period ☒ Employee Only: \$0.00	Your Cost: Per Pay Period ☒ Employee Only: \$85.10	Current Your Cost: Per Pay Period ☒ Employee Only: \$22.76

My Benefits

- ☒ Medical \$0.00
- ☐ Dental \$0.00
- ☐ Vision \$0.00
- ☒ Health Savings Account \$0.00
- ☐ HealthCare FSA \$0.00
- ☐ Dependent Care FSA \$0.00
- ☒ Supplemental Life \$14.10
- ☐ Supplemental Spouse Life \$0.00
- ☒ Supplemental Child Life \$0.00
- ☐ Voluntary Short Term Disability \$0.00
- ☐ Critical Illness \$0.00
- ☐ Group Hospital Indemnity \$0.00
- ☒ Accident \$4.61
- ☐ Identity and Fraud Protection \$0.00
- ☐ Legal \$0.00
- ☐ EAP \$0.00

Benefit Communications

New & Improved for 2026-27



2026

Benefits Guide

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Annual Enrollment:
July 27 – August 11, 2026

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Medical

BOARD PAYS:

- Full premium
 - Medical, dental and vision
 - If work > 75 FTE (6 hours/day) or more
 - Core PPO, employee only plan
- Prorated contribution
 - If work less than > 75 FTE (6 hours/day)

EMPLOYEE PAYS - PRETAX:

- Prorated contribution
 - Medical, dental, vision
 - If work less than > 75 FTE (6 hours/day)
 - Basic, employee only plans
- Buy-ups
 - Premiums for family member's coverage

MEDICAL INSURANCE- BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF KANSAS 800-432-3990 / kcbshs.com.

We offer three plans. Two PPO Plans and one High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP). The deductible for medical insurance runs on a calendar year, January 1 – December 31. Below is an overview. Please view full benefit summaries, SBCs and rates on microsite usd.phhealth.com.

Considering the HDHP w/HSA? Please review the HSA information on page nine, as well as the benefits website for important details and tax implications about the HDHP, HSA contributions and HSA rules and regulations.

	Cost PPO Plan \$1,000 PPO	Buy Up PPO Plan \$1,000 PPO In-Network	Buy Up Qualified High Deductible Health Plan \$1,000 HDHP In-Network
Plan Overview:			
Calendar Year Deductible			
Single	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000
Family	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$4,000
Coinsurance Limit:	90% / 80%	80% / 70%	90% / 80%
Out-of-Pocket Maximum			
Single	\$6,000	\$5,000	\$3,000
Family	\$12,000	\$10,000	\$6,000
Plan Features:			
Routine exams	No copay	No copay	No copay
Physician Visit			
Office visits	\$30 / \$60	\$20 / \$30	Deductible then 10%
Specialty Care:			
Specialist	Deductible then 30%	Deductible then 20%	Deductible then 10%
Emergency Room	\$200 Copay + 30%	\$175 Copay + 20%	Deductible then 10%
Urgent Care Facility	\$75 copay	\$50 copay	Deductible then 10%
Prescription Drugs			
Retail - 30-day supply	\$12 / \$20 / \$12 / \$12 / 20% up to \$200	\$12 / \$20 / \$12 / \$12 / 20% up to \$200	Deductible then 10%

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Employee Well-Being

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM - ALLONE HEALTH

800-431-1834 / portal.allonehealth.com

ALLONE Health provides individuals and families with voluntary, confidential services that empower them to live their best lives. This program is fully funded by Lawrence Public Schools. Employees and members of household will receive up to 6 counseling and coaching visits per issue per plan year plus a wealth of online resources at no cost to you.

The EAP Plus help for everyday life including:

- Counseling: Call or go online to access no-cost sessions with a provider.
- Legal & Financial: Navigating finances and the legal system with a no-cost 30-minute telephonic consultation per issue.
- Work/Life: Referrals and resources for family, career, caregiving, health, and wellness needs.
- Coaching: Sessions with a life coach to promote self-awareness and clarify goals.



Call: 800-451-1834
Visit: portal.allonehealth.com
Company code: USD497

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAM

<https://usd497.sharespoint.com/sites/Wellness>

The Lawrence Public Schools encourages all employees to pursue a healthy and well-balanced lifestyle. The Wellness Program strives to support the physical, social, emotional, and mental health of all school employees, thus promoting better overall health, improved morale, increased productivity, and decreased absenteeism.

What can the Wellness Program do for you? Here is a small sampling of our diverse programming:

- Motivating wellness challenges
- Wellness resources
- Healthy eating support
- Personalized wellness care
- Affordable fitness access
- Education of chronic illnesses
- Education on meditation, mindfulness and relaxation
- Work-life balance

ELIGIBILITY:

- All USD 497 employees are eligible for program participation, regardless of insurance coverage, including para-educators and less-than-full-time employees.
- All spouses and dependents over the age of 16.
- All early retirees covered by our health insurance.



PowerSchool Perform - Evaluations

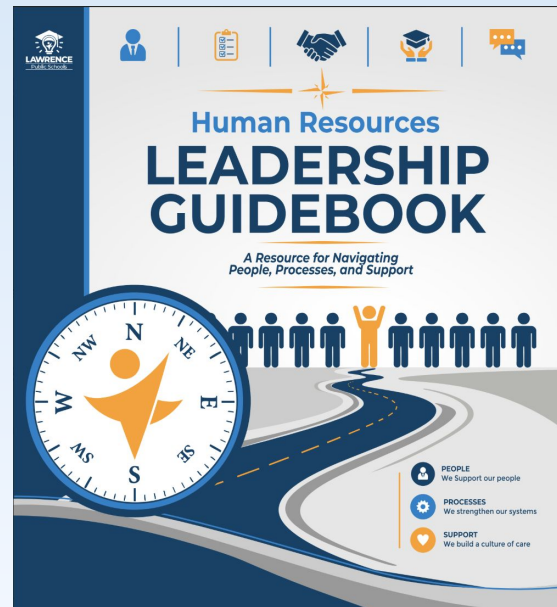
New Evaluation Platform 2026-27

- **New evaluation platform for all staff beginning 2026-27**
 - Integrates with existing employee records system
 - Significant improvements in access, tracking, analysis, and navigation for both evaluatees and evaluators
 - Dashboard, reminders, data analysis, digital signatures, & more

Upcoming Events

July-August 2026

- **Professional Development for Administrators** — July 31
- **ESP Orientation** — August 3, 13, 19
- **Welcome, Student Teachers!** — August 6 (29 attendees)
- **Haskell University Junior Education Students Orientation** — August 31



Finance



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2026-27 Budget

Work in Progress

- Mill levies - submitted to counties on July 20
- **Next Steps:**
 - **August 10** - School finance presentation
 - **August 24** - 2026-27 budget presentation; seeking approval to publish maximum mill levies
 - Notice of Budget Hearings published at least 10 days prior to the budget hearings
 - **September 14** - Budget hearings and approval of 2026-27 budget

Point of Sale Solutions

Implementation In Progress

- **Credit card payments will be accepted on-site**
at all schools and district buildings

- **Online credit card payments will continue**

May pay for more items online through *My School Bucks*, the current meal payment platform

Our Schools



Early Childhood

Preparing for Expansion

- Preschool classrooms at **Deerfield and Prairie Park** open this fall.
- Welcome largest preschool cohort in history!
- Staffing, onboarding continue for new preschool classrooms.
- Preparing for a successful launch of the **HighScope curricula** through classroom readiness and professional learning.



Elementary

Ready to Start!

- Elementary building leadership teams are preparing for a successful start, including four incoming principal leaders.
- Preparing for a successful launch of CKLA new ELA curricula, continuing AVID, and Responsive Classroom.
- Classroom materials and instructional resources are on delivery to schools.



Secondary

Achieve, Connect, Elevate

- **School Readiness:** Finalizing preparations for the opening of the 2026–27 school year, including staffing, academics, operations, and co-curricular and extracurricular programs.
- **Instructional Implementation:** Launching Amplify ELA in all middle school classrooms and intentional focus on High Quality Instructional Materials across classrooms.
- **Professional Collaboration:** Strengthening collaborative Professional Plan time to support effective professional learning communities (PLCs) and continuous improvement in student outcomes.

Student Support Services



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Family Engagement

Educator Network and Principal Learning Series 2026-27 School year

KAREN L. MAPP, ILENE CARVER, AND JESSICA LANDER

POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS

A Teacher's Guide to Engaging Families for Student Success

 SCHOLASTIC

*Stronger Partnerships.
Stronger Schools.
Stronger Students.*

AUTHENTIC FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

*Stronger Partnerships.
Stronger Schools.
Stronger Students.*

AASA Modules + Everyone Wins! (Mapp et al., 2022)

 **PURPOSE** Strengthen school leadership capacity to build authentic, research-based family-school partnerships that improve student engagement, attendance, and achievement.

WEEK	Icon	Topic	Reading
1		WHY FAMILY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS AASA Module 1 Family engagement as a driver of student success, belonging, and achievement.	 READING: Introduction + Chapter 1 (Students)
2		UNDERSTANDING FAMILY PERCEPTIONS AASA Module 2 Educator beliefs, trust, and how perceptions shape engagement.	 READING: Chapter 2 (Educators)
3		DEVELOPMENTAL LENS FOR ENGAGEMENT AASA Module 3 Align engagement strategies with student developmental needs.	 READING: Chapter 3 (Families)
4		IMPACT ON SCHOOLS & SYSTEMS AASA Module 4 How engagement transforms school culture and community partnerships.	 READING: Chapter 4 (Schools, Districts, & Community Institutions)
5		LEADERSHIP FOR ENGAGEMENT AASA Module 5 Principal actions that build sustainable family engagement systems.	 READING: Chapter 4 (Continued Focus)
6		STRATEGIC ACTION PLANNING AASA Module 6 Turn research into school-based action plans and systems change.	 READING: Chapter 5 (Implications for Practice)

 **KEY LEADERSHIP REFLECTIONS**

- How are we building trust with families?
- Where are families true partners in decision-making?
- What systems support or hinder engagement in our school?
- How does engagement impact attendance and achievement?

 **OUTCOMES FOR PRINCIPALS**

- Strengthen family engagement systems
- Align practice with research
- Improve attendance and student belonging
- Lead equity-centered school-family partnerships

 **SYSTEM ALIGNMENT**

This learning connects to:

- MTSS Framework
- Dual Capacity-Building Framework
- Attendance & "Partners in Attendance" Initiative
- Equity & Student Success Goals

STRONG SCHOOLS ARE BUILT ON STRONG PARTNERSHIPS
between educators, families, and communities.

Everyone Wins! The Evidence for Family-School Partnerships & Implications for Practice (Mapp et al., 2022)

TITLE IX

Summer Learning 2026

- **Leadership Learn:**
 - **2020 Title IX Regulations, Definitions and Terms and Requirements**
 - **Forms and LPS Title IX Process**
 - **Location of Title IX Resources**
 - **Application of 2020 regulations, forms and process into case scenarios**

Responsive Classroom Professional Learning

- **Summer Learning 2026**
 - All Elementary Principals trained
 - Prairie Park and Deerfield Elementary School staff trained
 - Student Support Services staff received Responsive Classroom Management Training



Responsive Classroom®

Teaching & Learning



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Multi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

Supporting All Students

July - MTSS Leadership Development

- Focusing on tier 1 (Core Instruction)
- Aligning supplemental support/intervention to effective tier 1 (Core Instruction)

AIR
Advancing Instruction
Improving Lives

Center on
Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Section 4: Multi-Level Prevention System

The multi-level prevention system is the organization of supports for students that includes three tiers of increasing intensity for instruction and intervention.

Tier 1: Core Programming

Tier 1 is high-quality, schoolwide programming and supports designed to meet the needs of all students.

Indicator	1	2	3
Articulation of Teaching and Learning	Teaching and learning objectives are not articulated from one grade to another or within grade levels.	Teaching and learning objectives are partially articulated from one grade to another and within grade levels.	Teaching and learning objectives are well articulated from one grade to another and within grade levels.
Curriculum Materials	The core materials are neither evidence-based for the student population and subgroups nor aligned with state standards.	The core materials are evidence-based for the student population and subgroups and aligned with state standards.	The core materials are evidence-based for the student population and subgroups and aligned with state standards.
Instructional Characteristics	Tier 1 instruction meets none or only one of the following: (1) delivered using agreed-upon evidence-based instructional practices, (2) led by staff trained in curriculum materials, (3) includes adequate time to teach the content and provide sufficient opportunity for students to respond, practice, and receive feedback, and (4) has procedures in place to ensure consistent use.	Tier 1 instruction follows the following: (1) delivered using agreed-upon evidence-based instructional practices, (2) led by staff trained in curriculum materials, (3) includes adequate time to teach the content and provide sufficient opportunity for students to respond, practice, and receive feedback, and (4) has procedures in place to ensure consistent use.	Tier 1 instruction follows the following: (1) delivered using agreed-upon evidence-based instructional practices, (2) led by staff trained in curriculum materials, (3) includes adequate time to teach the content and provide sufficient opportunity for students to respond, practice, and receive feedback, and (4) has procedures in place to ensure consistent use.
Differentiated Instruction	Few staff use student data to design and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of students on, below, and above grade level.	Some staff use student data to design and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of students on, below, and above grade level.	Most staff use student data to design and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of students on, below, and above grade level.

7 | CENTER ON MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS | MTSS4SUCCESS.ORG

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Defining MTSS

A multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) is a proactive and preventative framework that integrates data and instruction to maximize student success from a strengths-based perspective.

Essential Components of MTSS

- Prevention
- Early Identification
- Intervention
- Monitoring
- Support

Core Programming at Tier 1

Tier 1 includes high-quality, schoolwide programming and supports designed to meet the needs of all students.

Supplemental Interventions at Tier 2

At Tier 2, schools provide small group, standardized supports using validated intervention programs.

Intensive Intervention at Tier 3

Tier 3 offers evidence-based intervention practices that are individualized and differentiated based on student need.

Individualized supports should be:

- Individualized and differentiated interventions based on student data, including diagnostic data
- Aligned with and complement Tier 1 as a student by student basis

The multi-level prevention system provides increasingly intense levels of instruction and support to address student need:

Tier 3 (Intensive Intervention)

Tier 2 (Supplemental Interventions)

Tier 1 (Core Programming)

For more information & additional resources, visit <https://mtss4success.org/>



Atlas

Guarantee & Viable Curriculum

- Atlas for families launched on district website
- Onboard Amplify ELA and CKLA curricula into platform



Beginning of the Year Support

Professional Development

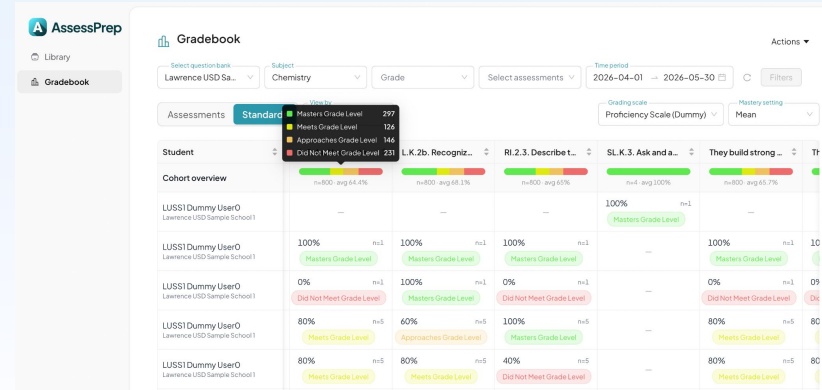
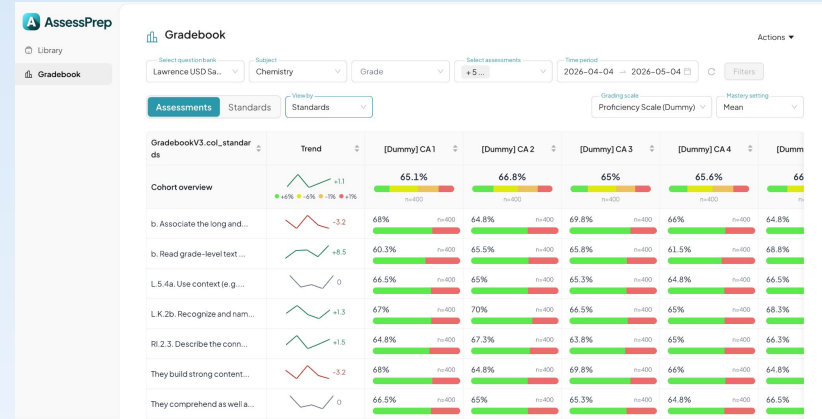
- **New Staff Induction: August 3-5**
- **Certified Staff Development: August 10**
- **Education Support Professional (ESP) Development: August 10**



AssessPrep

Curriculum Assessment

- Training on AssessPrep will begin in July/August for administration and teachers
- Monitor ELA and mathematics standards for all students



Instructional Materials and Resources

Purchase and Distribution

Curriculum

- Received and distributed CKLA and Amplify instructional materials to K-8 schools

Materials

- Purchased and distributed elementary classroom supplies across the district
- Purchased Montessori materials to support program expansion

Data & Technology



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Annual Student Enrollment

- Launched on July 8th
- As of July 23rd, **6,232** students and families have completed, **70%** of anticipated enrollment
- **Up +14% from this same time last year**
- At this same time last year (when enrollment opened in April), **56%** of families had completed enrollment by this end of July date.
- **Next Steps**
- Targeted reminder messaging over coming days
 - Engagement events: Kids Expo, Back to School Nights, HS Device Handout, & More

School Instructional Device Preparation

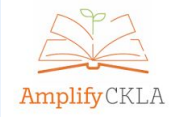
Macbooks, iPads, TV's, Projectors, & More

- **Collected, cleaned, re-imaged, and prepared devices for staff and students in preparation of the school year:**
 - **3000+ Student Macbooks**
 - **950 Student iPads**
 - **420 Staff Macbooks**
- **Ensure all TV's and projectors are functioning properly:**
 - **713 TV's**
 - **161 Projectors**
 - **435 Apple TV's**

Integration

- **Effective integration of new instructional tools for teachers and students.**

- Amplify ELA (Grades 6-8) 

- CKLA (Grades K-5) 

 AssessPrep (K-12)

- Atlas (K-12)  Atlas

 My School Bucks

- Perform (Staff Evaluations)


PowerSchool