Arkansas City Public Schools

BOE BRIEFS

An informal report from the Board of Education Meeting

July 27, 2026

Board Approves Staff Online Activities Policy

The Board approved Policy IIBGC: Staff Online Activities in response to House Bill 2299. The law prohibits employees from privately or directly communicating with students via social media and requires school-related two-way electronic communication to occur through district-approved tools.

The Board-adopted policy reinforces expectations for appropriate professional boundaries in all online interactions. It is not intended to regulate lawful personal communications or activities that exist independently of the school setting. Employees remain responsible for maintaining professional boundaries and complying with district policy and applicable law.

The district will update handbooks, guidelines, and procedures to reflect the policy and will provide staff with additional guidance on appropriate communication practices.

Board Approves Construction Manager Contract

The Board approved a contract with McCownGordon Construction for the district's voter-approved bond projects. The agreement outlines how McCownGordon will help manage the work and sets the overall project budget at $60.9 million.

Specific project costs will return to the Board for approval before construction moves forward.

Board Approves Employee Insurance Renewal

The Board approved the district's health and ancillary insurance plans for 2026-27. Following negotiations, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas reduced health insurance rates by 2.9%.

The district will also begin setting aside funds as it continues to explore whether a self-funded insurance plan could be a good long-term option.

PERSONNEL UPDATE

Resignations/Retirements:

- Yolanda Mendoza – ESOL SAT at ACHS

Hirings:

- William Beeson – SAT at Frances Willard
- Gracelan Dixon – PreK SAT at Adams
- Madison Dunbar – PreK SAT at Frances Willard
- Cheyenne Lambdin – SAT
- Mariana Medina Lopez – Lunch Clerk at Roosevelt
- Anayansi Melo Ambriz – ESOL SAT at Adams
- Nancy Travis – SAT at IXL
- Michelle Williams – PreK SAT at IXL

OTHER BUSINESS

- The Board approved guaranteed maximum prices totaling $3.85 million for secure entrance improvements at Adams and Roosevelt elementary schools, and the first phase of the district's new technology space.
- The Board authorized the district to invest bond funds that are not immediately needed. This will allow the district to earn additional interest while keeping funding available to cover construction costs.
- The Board approved a one-time waiver allowing a foreign exchange student to start school after the first day because of limited international flight options.
- The Board reviewed draft guidelines to help staff use technology in purposeful, age-appropriate ways. The district will begin using the guidance during the 2026-27 school year. Staff training and feedback will help prepare for full implementation the following year.
- The Board worked with ESSDACK's Dr. Chad Higgins and Dr. Shiloh Vincent to develop goals with much of the discussion focused on student achievement, school culture and climate, and fiscal stewardship and governance. These goals will guide the Board's work during the next year and help support the district's strategic planning process, which begins this fall.