



**Board of Education
Superintendent Report
Monday, August 10, 2026**

Hello Members of the Board and Lawrence Public Schools Community,

The back-to-school countdown clock measures in hours now, rather than days, and we are beyond excited to welcome our students back to school on this coming Thursday, August 13, 2026.

We are pleased to share the following highlights from across the district:

The 3rd Annual Kids Expo Supports a Record Number of Students

What an incredible day of community and partnership we experienced Saturday at the [3rd Annual Kids Expo](#), hosted by the Lawrence Schools Foundation!

Approximately 2,500–3,000 students and family members joined at the Educational Support Center for a day filled with free shoes, backpacks and school supplies, haircuts, health screenings, food, activities, educational resources, entertainment, and connections with **more than 75 community vendors and organizations**. The Expo is designed to help students and families begin the school year feeling supported, connected, and ready for a great start.

I want to extend a tremendous thank you to Dena Johnston and the Lawrence Schools Foundation team, Jamie Sinclair, Michelle Jennings, the Foundation Board, and the many volunteers, including district staff members, school leaders, community partners, and everyone who dedicated countless hours to planning, organizing, collecting supplies, and serving families throughout the event.

The Kids Expo is a wonderful example of what is possible when our schools and community come together in partnership for students. Thank you to everyone who made this event such an extraordinary success.

We can hear directly from a parent and a student who shared their thoughts about their EXPO experience.

Communities are known for their ability to mobilize support for children and for public schools; and our 3rd Annual KIDS EXPO tells the story of our Lawrence community: the individuals, organizations, business partners our Lawrence Schools Foundation, and all in the Lawrence community.

Additional Details: The Foundation has additional backpacks filled with school supplies, new shoes in sizes ranging from Early Childhood through high school and Adult Education, and classroom supplies available for students and schools with additional needs. Remaining shoes will later become part of the district clothing closet at Community Connections @ Pinckney so families may continue accessing them throughout the school year.

Summer Meals Provided Food for Thousands

Over the summer months, our Nutrition & Wellness team served an incredible 112,787 meals, including:

49,777 breakfasts

63,010 lunches

This is an increase of more than 3,100 (2.8%) meals served overall when compared to last summer. We were pleased to expand access this year, with all three Boys & Girls Club sites eligible to participate in the [Summer Meals Program](#), compared with just one site last year.

I want to thank Director Julie Henry, and our entire Nutrition & Wellness team and our community partners for the tremendous work behind these numbers. Their efforts throughout the summer helped ensure thousands of children continued to have access to nutritious meals while school was not in session.

As we return to school, I also want to remind families that the [2026–27 Free and Reduced-Price Meal application](#) is available, and a new application must be completed each school year.

ParentSquare Virtual Phone

As we continue strengthening our partnership and communication with families, Lawrence Public Schools is adding **Virtual Phone to ParentSquare**, our district's official communication platform.

Virtual Phone provides each staff member with a dedicated calling number using our local area code, allowing employees to call or text families directly through ParentSquare from the app or a web browser. This means staff can communicate with families without using a personal cell phone number, separate hardware, or an additional login.

This is another important step in making communication with our families more accessible, consistent, connected, and documented across our district.

Additional details: The feature also provides the ability to time-stamp and log calls, and staff may add a reason and notes or use optional transcription. Employees can also establish office hours so calls received outside those hours are directed to voicemail.

Welcome Back to all of Team Lawrence

Last Friday, we welcomed all on Team Lawrence back together!

After a summer of various activities, including preparing classrooms, improving facilities, welcoming new colleagues, and readying our schools for the year ahead, on Friday, all [staff](#)

[returned to their buildings](#) to reconnect, collaborate, and prepare to welcome more than 10,000 students.

In our opening message to staff, we shared my deep appreciation for the many different ways our employees show up each day for one shared purpose—our students.

This year's district focus, **together in partnership, with intention and by design**, reflects how we will approach that work together. We are committed to creating classrooms, schools, and workplaces where students and staff experience dignity and belonging; where students feel seen and their voices are heard; and where every child has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.

Building on a foundation of dignity and belonging, working to develop and extend practice aligned to a vision of quality instruction, supports and safety, we are together in partnership, with intention and by design.

Our teachers and educational support professionals are ready. Our custodial, maintenance, nutrition, transportation, technology, administrative, and district teams are ready. Across Lawrence Public Schools, we are ALI ready to begin another school year together!

We're ready and excited – Welcome Families to 2026-27 School Year!

And finally, to our students and families: Welcome back!

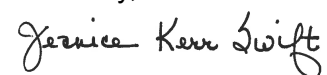
On **Wednesday, August 12**, we will welcome our kindergarteners, sixth graders, and ninth graders for an important Transition Day, giving students entering new school levels an opportunity to begin the year and become comfortable in their new environment.

Our youngest preK learners will transition into their classrooms next Tuesday on **August 18**.

And a BIG day on the annual calendar, we look forward to celebrating our first full day for K–12 students on this Thursday, August 13th.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this Superintendent Report, and for the honor of serving the Lawrence Public Schools.

Sincerely,



Jeanice Kerr Swift
Superintendent of Schools
Lawrence Public Schools