Arkansas City Public Schools

BOE BRIEFS

An informal report from the Board of Education Meeting

September 14, 2026

Strategic Planning Moves Forward

The Board selected Lori Barnes and Levi Anstine to represent the Board of Education in USD 470's strategic planning process. They will join a selected group of students, staff, families, and community members to help identify priorities and guide the district's future direction. The first stakeholder meeting is Sept. 30.

There's still time to share your input, too. Staff, students in grades 7-12, parents and guardians, and community members are encouraged to complete the Strategic Planning Survey by Sept. 18. Your feedback will help shape the conversation and the district's future priorities.

Take the Strategic Planning Survey: https://tinyurl.com/bdhsv2us

Good News

We had a lot to celebrate at this meeting.

KanPak was recognized as the first recipient of our new Bulldog Backer Award. KanPak has been a longtime supporter of USD 470, providing backpacks and school supplies for first graders, new school shoes, bicycles, books, and more. We are grateful for the many ways they continue to support our students and families.

The Board also recognized our August Top DAWGS: Payton Milner, Maria Olmeda, Ashlee Rose, and Bryson Turner. Each was nominated by coworkers for the positive impact they

make on students, staff, and their schools. We also appreciate Steamy Joe for providing gift certificates for our monthly Top DAWGS.

Summer Learning Makes an Impact

The Board heard an update on USD 470's summer learning programs. The MindCraft Pre-K-8 program served 180 students in 14 sessions, with activities focused on academics, career exploration, science, the arts, fitness, and life skills. More than 40 staff members helped support the program.

The summer food program also served more than 8,000 meals to children in the community. At the high school, 97 students participated in summer school, with most completing two or three courses.

PERSONNEL UPDATE

Hirings:

- Sierra Elms – SAT at IXL

Reassignments/Transfers

- N/A

Resignations/Retirements:

- Shannon Gurnee – ESOL SAT at ACMS
- Aaron Hollins – Asst. Girls Basketball Coach at ACHS
- Amy Lawson – Elem. Art Teacher *(Retirement eff. end of 2026-27)*
- Kimberly Mora – ESOL SAT at ACHS

OTHER BUSINESS

- USD 470 enrollment was reported at 2,726 students as of Sept. 10, an increase of one student from the Aug. 19 count.
- The Board accepted several gifts to support students and schools: $100 in school supplies and backpacks from Friendly Ford for Roosevelt Elementary; $150 in toothbrushes from Twin Rivers Development for Head Start family resources; a $5,625 YELL Grant from United Way of the Plains for IXL Elementary; and $3,000 from Scott and Nicole Rogers for new ACMS cheer uniforms.

- The Board received the latest Head Start information and program update.
- The Board received monthly reports from district departments.
- The Board corrected some dates on its 2026-27 meeting calendar to align with the regular second- and fourth-Monday schedule.
- The Board gave administration permission to apply for state funding to support CPR/AED training and the purchase or maintenance of AEDs.
- The Board received an update on bond construction projects, including work getting underway at Adams and Roosevelt elementary schools. Updates on bond progress will continue to be shared with the Board and community as projects move forward.
- The Board heard a recap of the June 2026 student trip to Washington, D.C., including highlights and learning opportunities from the experience.
- The Board approved the 2026-27 After-School Program budget. Students in grades 3-8 will take part in MindCraft-style activities focused on hands-on learning and academic support, while high school students will have access to tutoring and homework help before and after school. The program begins Oct. 13.
- The Board reviewed its representatives and meeting dates for the Board-Teacher Panel, which gives Board members and teachers a chance to discuss any concerns and stay connected.
- The Board discussed plans to seek proposals for insurance brokerage services. The process will allow the district to compare available services, costs, and overall value.
- The Board reviewed updates to its Title I policy to make sure it reflects current federal requirements and KASB guidance.
- The Board reviewed a draft Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy outlining how families can be informed, involved, and included in school improvement efforts.
- The Board discussed next steps for the ACHS Aquatics Facility after the pool heater failed, including replacement costs and the district's agreement with the Recreation Commission. The Board also approved issuing a Request for Proposals to get more firm cost estimates.