



Arkansas City Public Schools

BOE BRIEFS

An informal report from the Board of Education Meeting

October 12, 2026

Good News Across USD 470

The Board of Education recognized some great things happening across the district.

Kerri Beard (ACMS) and Ashlee Rose (Adams) were recognized as USD 470's Kansas Teacher of the Year nominees, and Tiffany Rhoades (ACHS) was named the district's Kansas Horizon Award nominee.

The Board also recognized our September Top DAWGS: Lin Gardner, Jennifer Graham, Bryson Hasty, and Hailey Kilpatrick. Union State Bank was recognized as our latest Bulldog Backer for its continued support of USD 470 students and staff.

Congratulations to ACHS senior Shihan Fang, who was named a National Merit Scholarship semifinalist. Semifinalists represent less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors and are among the nation's highest-scoring students on the qualifying test. He now has the opportunity to continue in the competition for National Merit Scholarships.

We have a lot of great people doing great things in USD 470, and we're happy to celebrate them!

Strategic Planning Update

The Board received an update on the district's strategic planning process. A community survey was shared in September to gather feedback from students, staff, families, and

community members. About 35 people also participated in the first planning session on Sept. 30.

Feedback from the survey and planning session has helped shape an early draft of the district's mission, vision, core values, and priorities. A second stakeholder meeting is being planned to review and refine the draft before it returns to the Board for further discussion.

PERSONNEL UPDATE

Hirings:

- Marissa Francisco – ESOL SAT at Jefferson
- Maya Gentry – SAT at Jefferson
- Melony Harmon – Bus Driver
- Heidi Howcroft – SAT at IXL
- Briant Osborn – Head Girls Wrestling Coach at ACMS
- Braylee Ruyle – Asst. Girls Wrestling Coach at ACMS

Reassignments/Transfers

- N/A

Resignations/Retirements:

- Sierra Elms – SAT at IXL
- Emily Munoz – ESOL SAT at Jefferson

OTHER BUSINESS

- The Board accepted \$700 in donations from Soroptimist of Arkansas City to help provide clothing for students at all six USD 470 elementary schools and Arkansas City Middle School.
- The Board amended the agenda to remove the special education report item, to add Action Item 3.3 regarding building substitute pay, and to add an executive session to discuss non-elected personnel.
- Athletic Director Aaron Bucher shared information with the Board about esports, flag football, KSHSAA classifications, and league updates. The report follows a recent discussion about middle school soccer and was intended to keep Board members informed about possible activities and athletic options as the district plans for the future. No decisions have been made.
- The Board authorized Superintendent Will Pfannenstiel to finalize an Environmental Use Control Agreement for district property at 715 S. First St., the site of a former gas

plant. The agreement is part of an ongoing environmental cleanup process and limits digging or disturbing soil in a small area of the property without state approval.

- The Board approved a request to seek proposals for employee benefits insurance brokerage and consulting services. The district has worked with Gallagher for many years and wants to compare available services, costs, and support for employees. No changes to employee benefits are being made at this time, and a recommendation is expected in December.
- The Board approved a three percent pay increase for the district's six building substitutes for the 2026-27 school year. The increase will be applied retroactively to the start of each employee's work this school year.
- The Board reviewed proposed technology purchases for the 2027-28 school year, including student devices, teacher computers, classroom equipment, and network upgrades. The discussion focused on balancing technology needs and costs with the district's efforts to reduce student screen time. No purchases were approved at this meeting.
- The Board received a bond construction update. Construction continues at Adams and Roosevelt elementary schools, while planning moves forward on other bond projects. District leaders are also reviewing HVAC bids and replacement priorities to make sure the most important needs are addressed within the available budget.
- The Board held an executive session to discuss non-elected personnel. No action followed.