



## USD 497 News Release

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**July 29, 2024**

### **Board President Calls Special Meeting; Board Begins Interim Superintendent Interviews**

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Lawrence Board of Education President Kelly Jones has called a special meeting of the board from 5:30- 8:30 tonight. The agenda includes public comment to enable community feedback on the 2024-2025 Student Handbook, which the board will consider approving on second reading. The board also will consider approval of the tentative negotiated agreement with PAL-CWA, the union representing classified staff.

Two executive sessions will be held tonight for the purpose of board discussion of non-elected personnel matters. These include an interview with a finalist candidate for interim superintendent. No action is planned after the executive sessions.

Additional finalist interviews for interim superintendent will be announced this week. This hiring process began following the June 29 resignation of Dr. Anthony Lewis, superintendent of schools since 2018.

“We are excited to have highly qualified finalists for this one-year role,” said Kelly Jones, board president. “A July resignation is challenging. The board is determined to make sure the important work of serving our students, staff, school families, and community doesn’t slow down. We are working diligently to appoint an interim superintendent who has strong relationship skills, proven experience as a talented district leader, and is ready to lead on day one.”

Applicants for the interim superintendent position were collected and thoroughly vetted by the Kansas Association of School Boards, enabling the board to work to fill the position on a short timeline. Finalists’ names and background information will be shared prior to their interview day in our district. All information about the search will be available at <https://www.usd497.org/InterimSuperintendentSearch>.

Each interview day this week will include a tour of our district led by educators, students, and building administrators, as well as candidates meeting with the school board, certified and classified staff union leadership, and district committees that include school family and community members. Individuals meeting with the finalists will have the opportunity to provide the board feedback via a survey. The board aims to fill the interim superintendent role by August 12. Dr. Lewis’ last day in our district is August 9.

“We are genuinely excited about our finalists,” Jones said. “They each offer an impressive track record of service to students, families, and their local communities. Our district will be in good hands in the coming year, no matter who fills this position.”

This fall the board will hire a firm to conduct a national search for a long-term superintendent to begin their service July 1, 2025. This timeline provides ample opportunity for expanded community engagement to guide the board in hiring the best person to lead Lawrence Public Schools and serve our community moving forward.

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