Administrative Reorganization

Superintendent Dr. Anthony Lewis announces that Lawrence High School Interim Principal Dr. Cynthia Johnson will continue serving Lawrence Public Schools as executive director of inclusion, engagement, and belonging, effective July 1, 2021, pending school board approval. This new position is a reorganization of district administrative duties following the resignation of Deputy Superintendent Dr. Anna Stubbsfield, who will lead the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools as superintendent next year.

The district’s strategic plan prioritizes equity and connections through strong relationships to ensure that every student and staff member feels welcome and a sense of belonging in school. In her new role, Dr. Johnson will inform and influence systemic change to develop, implement, and sustain culturally responsive systems through teaching, organizational policies and practices, and community engagement.

“I am thrilled that Dr. Johnson will remain an integral part of our leadership team. We have seen positive changes in the climate and culture during her tenure at Lawrence High. She has a proven record as a district leader and working with school districts across the country. I am eager for her to utilize her experience, knowledge, and skills to support all staff in better serving our scholars,” said Dr. Lewis.

After the resignation of former LHS Principal Dr. Matt Brungardt late in the spring hiring season of 2019, Dr. Lewis appointed Dr. Johnson as interim principal to enable the district to engage the school community in a thorough search process. As the global pandemic unfolded, Dr. Johnson agreed to continue serving a second year to provide continuity. She also has provided leadership as the school's nearly $50 million transformation progressed. The final project of an $87 million bond issue for secondary school improvements approved by voters in 2017, LHS renovations will wrap up in the fall.

“I am grateful for Lawrence High School and the brilliant students, amazing faculty and staff, and supportive families who embraced me when I arrived two years ago singing about ‘POWER!’ Nothing that we faced as a Chesty Lion family seemed impossible. Thank you for trusting me to lead during a seven-phase, two-year construction project and a global pandemic. I will always cherish being a Chesty Lion,” said Dr. Johnson.

“I am honored to continue to serve LPS and the Lawrence community as the executive director of inclusion, engagement, and belonging. Relationships are the foundation for every aspect of this new opportunity to serve and give back to others. By building collaborative partnerships with students, faculty, staff, families, and the community, we will develop systems to equip students with the culturally responsive, social-emotional, and mental health skills to navigate school and life. When these skills are in place, everything else is possible,” she added.
Dr. Johnson previously served 30+ years as a high school speech, forensics, and special education teacher; middle/high school principal, elementary principal leadership coach, and district-level project leader in Missouri, including in Kansas City, Grandview, Sedalia, Blue Springs, and Raytown. Since 1993, she has worked as an independent national educational consultant facilitating professional development in more than 40 states. She earned a bachelor’s degree at Central Missouri State University and her master’s and doctorate at Baker University.

LHS opened in 1954 and currently serves 1,556 students in grades 9-12. The district selected Jessica Bassett as the school’s new principal, beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

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