



USD 497 News Release

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Board Reviews Preliminary State Assessment Data & District/School Needs Assessment Work

Chief Academic Officer Patrick Kelly shared with the board on Monday that preliminary 2023-2024 Kansas Assessment Program (KAP) data shows that nearly 70% of Lawrence Public Schools students performed at Levels 2-4 in English language arts (ELA) and math. Each year, students in grades 3-8 and 10 are assessed in ELA and math. A science assessment is administered in grades 5, 8, and 11.

The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) defines KAP performance Levels 1-4 as follows:

- Level 1: The student is below grade level and may need additional support.
- Level 2: The student is at grade level, but not on track for college or career readiness.
- Level 3: The student is at grade level and on track for college or career readiness.
- Level 4: The student exceeds grade-level expectations and is on track for college or the workplace.

District goals for reading, math, and postsecondary success are as follows:

- **Reading:** *By the end of the 2025-26 school year, 75% of students in grades K-10 will score as low-risk or on-track on the Spring FastBridge aReading or earlyReading assessment.* This spring, ninth graders nearly met the goal and 60%+ of students in grades 2, 6, 7, and 10 scored as low-risk/on-track.
- **Math K-2:** *By the end of the 2025-26 school year, 75% of students in grades K-2 will score as low-risk or on-track on the Spring FastBridge aMath or earlyMath assessment.* This spring, kindergartners exceeded the goal and students in Grades 1 and 2 nearly met it.
- **Math Grades 3-8:** *By the end of the 2025-26 school year, the number of students in grades 3-8 and entry level high school math courses scoring at level 3 and 4 on KAP math assessment will increase by 10% each school year.* This year, students in grades 4, 5, 7, 8, and 10 improved; no grade levels met the target.
- **Postsecondary Success:** *By the end of 2025-26, Lawrence Public Schools will increase to 54% postsecondary effectiveness.*
 - Our district's 5-year postsecondary effectiveness average was 48%, up by 2% (2017-2021).
 - KSDE calculates this measure by multiplying graduation rates by the number of students earning industry-recognized or postsecondary certificates, postsecondary degrees, or enrolled in postsecondary education two years after high school graduation.

School principals and Building Leadership Teams met June 2-5 to review student data and discuss and complete building needs assessments, school improvement goals, and Ci3T primary action and professional development plans. All of these contribute to the 2024-2025 district and building needs assessments, which will be presented to the board August 26, as part of its budget planning process.

"I am very confident that we are doing good work and I thank your team for its efforts. I really appreciate all the information you have provided about how extensive and detailed this process is. It represents what this process is designed to do, which is to help us determine how we allocate our resources in a way to drive student achievement," said Board Past-President Shannon Kimball. "This is very much an educator-led process, as it should be, with educators telling us what they need. I appreciate that."

Kelly thanked the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Team, district and building administrators, and each school's Building Leadership Teams for the many hours involved in developing the needs assessment. "I also want to express gratitude to the board because we have a lot of data tools here... that help us make these recommendations to you. Thank you for giving us those tools," he said.

MORE

Page 2 – June 10, 2024, Board of Education Meeting

Kelly also noted that KSDE will introduce new state assessments next year. Its Kansas Educational Systems Accreditation (KESA) process also has changed, focusing now on four fundamentals: structured literacy, standards alignment, balanced assessment, and quality instruction. The Kansas State Board of Education also has five outcomes for public schools in the areas of social emotional learning, kindergarten readiness, Individual Plans of Study, graduation rates, and postsecondary success rates.

“We really need to focus on aligning what we teach with the Kansas state standards. I think we are right on track as a district with (the KESA fundamentals),” said Kelly.

Board President’s Report

During her President’s Report, Kelly Jones requested the Boundary Advisory Committee review high school boundaries starting this summer or early fall, so that a recommendation can be made to the board in mid-to-late December or early January that may or may not include boundary shifts for the 2025-26 school year.

“In my opinion, we need to work toward growing LHS enrollment. Growth might come from future boundary changes and accepting out-of-district transfers. The boundary shifts may not need to be dramatic to achieve the desired outcome of a balanced high school enrollment and distribution of students by socioeconomic status,” Jones said. “The historic 15th Street boundary line may have made sense when it was drawn; however, the city’s growth pattern has shifted, and we need to evaluate boundary lines with a continued equity focus, per the committee’s charge.”

Free State High served 1,792 students this school year; LHS enrolled 1,515. Jones said that she does not think elementary or middle school boundaries should be altered at this time.

Under her authority as board president, Jones also announced the creation of an ad hoc committee to study, discuss, and recommend, no later than March 2025, guidelines, practices, and/or policies related to Artificial Intelligence (AI). The board cited interest in further discussion of this topic after hearing three students who make up Lawrence Virtual School’s E-Cybermission team present their AI study in April.

In addition, Jones encouraged board members to submit nominations of board officers (president and vice president) to the Board Clerk or during the board’s June 24 meeting, which is the last board meeting of the fiscal year and Jones final meeting as president. Board members will use paper ballots to make their selections, and the Clerk will read their choices and announce the election of officers for the 2024-2025 school year.

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