



# 2021-22 Annual Report

## Accessible Version

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### About Blue Valley

For more than 50 years, Blue Valley Schools has been committed to providing students an education filled with opportunities by reimagining learning and changing the world. Located in suburban Kansas City, in the heart of Johnson County, Kansas, the 91-square-mile school district consistently ranks among the top school districts in the nation, striving to provide each student with the opportunity to experience personal excellence and life readiness through personalized student learning.

The district offers many special programs including the Blue Valley Academy, a nontraditional program for high school students; the 18-21 Program, a program teaching independent living skills for students with moderate to severe disabilities; and CAPS (Center for Advanced Professional Studies), an innovative program for high school juniors and seniors, providing real-world, hands-on learning experiences. Other programs unique to Blue Valley include: Language Immersion - The district offers a Chinese dual language immersion program beginning in kindergarten.

Social-Emotional Support - A comprehensive team supports student well-being, including licensed social workers from Children's Mercy Hospital, counselors, psychologists, teachers and administrators.

Blended Learning - An instructional practice that allows teachers to transform learning by leveraging technology to truly personalize instruction. All middle and high schools follow a 1:Learner model (one device per student), while elementary schools use a blend of shared devices and a 1: Learner model based on grade level and age appropriateness.

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# District Stats page

## Enrollment

K-12: 21,846

Elementary schools (grades K-5): 21

Middle schools (grades 6-8): 9

High schools (grades 9-12): 5

## High School Graduation rate:

97.2 percent

## Exemplary Educators

Certified staff: 1,888

Classified staff: 1,328

Administrators: 108

Percent of teaching staff with a master's degree or higher: 73 percent

National board certified: 55

## Languages Spoken

Blue Valley students identify 90 different languages as their primary home language with almost 11 percent of students reporting a home language other than English. The top five non-English home languages reported include Telugu, Spanish, Chinese, Urdu and Arabic.

## National Merit Finalists

54 Blue Valley seniors were named 2022 National Merit finalists by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

## Ethnicity

Caucasian/White: 68.83%

Asian: 15.07%

Hispanic: 6.61%

Multi-racial: 5.46%

African-American/Black: 3.61%

American Indian/Alaskan Native American: 0.34%

Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.07%

## Special Programs

- The Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS)
  - The Blue Valley Academy
  - The Wilderness Science Center
  - Hilltop Center including Early Childhood as well as the Parents as Teachers (PAT) program
  - 18-21 Services/GEAR
  - Career Ready Programs offered through partnerships with Johnson County Community College
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## Message from the superintendent

Blue Valley welcomed students back for the 2021-22 school year in person five days a week thanks to our staff, families and students who continued to exemplify hard work, resilience, flexibility and patience.

We were proud to bring back 21,846 students — an increase of 224 students from the previous school year. We also had a record kindergarten enrollment of 1,554 students.

This year I saw a return to the sense of pride, spirit and tradition that Blue Valley is known for and that we have needed and craved. I witnessed this in our schools, at sporting events, school musicals, plays, concerts, field days, graduation and several other fun school events.

The school year continued to prove itself to be a challenge as we navigated the many unknowns and uncertainties due to COVID-19. However, we never stopped in-person learning and students made progress. This was in large part because of the resiliency of our world-class educators. Our staff are our heroes, and their commitment to our students is unending. I have been in this district for 23 years and see their hard work and dedication every day, and it's all because they want to see our students succeed.

This year, and for years to come, our students and staff were positively impacted by upgrades and additions to their buildings thanks to the community's support of Bond 2020 projects. Go behind the scenes to see how some of the projects have progressed and impacted students and schools across the district at [www.bluevalleyk12.org/bond](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/bond).

Our school year came to an end by celebrating our 2022 graduates, and we had the opportunity to reflect on the great progress we made — and will continue to make — in our five core areas of focus — math, literacy, staff retention/attraction, mental health and expanding the high school experience and partnership with Johnson County Community College.

**Video updates from Dr. Merrigan:** Throughout the 2021-22 school year, Superintendent Tonya Merrigan provided regular video updates to the community. Watch video updates from Dr. Merrigan at [www.bluevalleyk12.org/superintendent](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/superintendent)

## **Superintendent's Cabinet**

Dr. Katie Collier  
Deputy Superintendent

Kyle Hayden  
Deputy Superintendent

Dr. Mark Schmidt  
Assistant Superintendent  
Special Education

Brian Daley  
Chief Information Officer

Kristi McNerlin  
Chief Communications Officer

Dr. Eric Punswick  
Chief Human Resources Officer

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## **Blue Valley Board of Education**

The Blue Valley Board of Education is responsible for providing leadership, vision, and support to Blue Valley Schools to ensure an equitable, world-class education and create lifelong learning by:

- setting strategic direction that ensures student achievement
- developing responsive policies
- promoting community collaboration
- being accountable to the patrons of the district

Members: Gina Knapp (NW), Amy Tysseling (NE), Jim McMullen (S), Patrick Hurley (NW), Kaety Bowers (NE), Tom Mitchell (At-large), Jodie Dietz (S)

Other members that served during the 2021-22 school year: Mike Sietz, Michele Benjamin, Stacy Obringer-Varhall

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# Strategic plan and goals/achievements

## **Mission statement**

The mission of the Blue Valley School District, committed to reimagining learning and changing the world, is to ensure life readiness and personal excellence for all students through a school culture characterized by exemplary educators, safe and inclusive environments, an atmosphere that fosters creativity and meaningful educational opportunities to maximize the potential of all.

## **Initiatives**

- **Strategically Agile Systems:** We will create strategically agile systems to fulfill our purpose
- **Exemplary Educators:** We will assure every Blue Valley student has exemplary educators assisting in their transformation
- **Extraordinary Educational Opportunities:** We will ensure engaging, meaningful and extraordinary educational opportunities for all students
- **Balanced Health and Wellbeing:** We will foster cultures of balanced health and well-being

## **Five areas of focus**

Math, literacy, mental health, expanding the high school experience, teacher retention and attraction

## **Revised 2021-22 Goals & Achievements**

### Goals

#### **Finance and operations**

- Review school start and dismissal times and develop a plan to utilize resources to maximize operating efficiency
- Articulate a budget plan that strategically aligns resources for optimal student success
- Design and program bond 2020 and capital construction projects for the 2021-22 school year

#### **Academic Services**

- Design response to the impact of the pandemic on student learning along with social and emotional needs
- **Literacy**
  - Expand screening measures at the secondary level to monitor struggling readers or students showing dyslexia characteristics

- Implementation and monitoring of new phonics instructional resource
- Demonstrate evidence of screening, monitoring and intervention within multi-tiered support system at each school level
- **Math**
  - Complete curricular and pedagogical revisions in math beginning at elementary and middle school aimed at raising student math achievement
- **High School Experience**
  - Develop high school study team to analyze high school learning experiences
  - Implement Year 1 components of BVEdge designed to increase real-world learning opportunities and career-ready programming for students
  - Continue to plan for enhanced opportunities within high school special education program designed to expand community connectedness and job preparedness
- **Mental health**
  - Utilize trauma-sensitive approaches in classrooms, other settings to assist with reintroduction to traditional school experiences
  - Provide additional social-emotional learning resources/strategies to support staff
  - Provide students, families opportunities to give feedback on climate/culture, mental health support, school connectedness
  - Partner with community resources to provide ongoing education to families regarding social, emotional and mental health needs of students

### **Exemplary educator**

- Attract and retain diverse employees
- Support all employees returning to work after COVID-19

Allocate resources based on student enrollment, needs

### **Achievements**

#### **Finance and operations**

- Developed plan to successfully balance the 2022-23 budget
- Successfully sold the remaining 2020 bonds
- **Bond 2020 projects:** Constructed new gyms at BVN and BVH, and a performing arts addition at BVH
- Created plan to reduce an estimated 14-16 bus routes for the 2022-23 school year and position Blue Valley to deliver students to and from school on time. Made slight changes to school start times
- **Bond 2020 projects:** Implemented safety upgrades through fire panel, alarm replacements, door hardware and laminated glass. Replaced mechanical HVAC units across district.
- **Bond 2020 projects:** Flexible learning environment (FLE) updates at seven elementary schools
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#### **Academic Services**

- Facilitated professional learning for all school admin on data analysis reviews on targeted assessments, trauma-sensitive learning environment strategies,

- response and intervention for K-12 literacy screenings
- Established student growth measures for the 22-23 school year
- **Literacy**
  - Shifted from balanced literacy to structured literacy
  - Implemented K-5 95% Group resource
- **Math**
  - Revised K-8 math curriculum
  - Identified and selected new K-8 math resource after analysis of current resources to meet curriculum and state standards
- **High School Experience**
  - High school study team established five key areas for deeper study and reimagination of implementation
  - Input gathered from high school staff regarding early findings and recommendations of action teams.
  - Steps taken to prepare special education students for transition to paid employment
  - Expanded Career-Ready program enrollment
- **Mental health**
  - Continued ensuring presence of counselors, social workers and school psychologists in each building
  - Eight more social workers were added for the 21-22 school year
  - Provided resources and professional learning to facilitate trauma sensitive learning environments

#### **Exemplary educator**

- Moved paper processes to digital workflows
- More than 5% of new hires represent diverse backgrounds
- Expanded recruitment to included historically Black colleges, diversity focused events
- Provide leave support for staff facing COVID-19 absences
- Increased pay for custodial and paraeducators

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## Measuring Student Success

### **Blue Valley students continue to achieve at extraordinary levels**

Academic excellence has been a cornerstone of Blue Valley's foundation for more than 50 years and is characterized by students achieving at unprecedented levels. Today, our students

are still the ones who are outperforming state and national benchmarks and setting records along the way.

We know that our students' academic success can not be judged by a "point-in-time test" but a more comprehensive look at a variety of assessment opportunities throughout their educational experience.

## **ACT**

24.2 Blue Valley

19.6 Kansas

20.3 US

1731 students took the ACT

## **SAT**

1313 - BV

1237 - KS

1051 - US

## **Graduation rate (KSDE outcome for measuring progress)**

97.2% Blue Valley

88.3% KS

## **Post-secondary success (KSDE outcome for measuring progress)**

82% BV 5-year success average

56% KS 5-year success average

## **Within 2 years of HS graduation a student will:**

Obtain industry recognition

Earn postsecondary certification

Earn postsecondary degree

Enroll in postsecondary institution

## **Kansas Assessments**

Blue Valley students continue to exceed the Kansas average in effective or excellent ability to understand the use of skills and knowledge needed for College and Career Readiness.

46.55% effective or higher in math

56.31% effective or higher in reading

50.53% effective or higher in science



According to the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), Kansas assessment standards are on average among the highest in the nation.

### **Market Value Asset (MVA)**

2021 – 52.4% graduates

MVAs are industry-valued and recognized skills that aid in transition from school to postsecondary/workplace. Ex. college credit, internships, client-connected project, industry-recognized credential. The Goal is to increase this 10% each year until we reach 100%.

### **AP Scholars**

615 BV students received honors from AP for scoring a 3 or higher on at least three AP exams  
70% of 2021 grad took at least one AP class

### **National Merit semifinalists**

District record 58 Blue Valley seniors were named 2022 National Merit semifinalists by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. This is the most of any district in Kansas.

### **Kansans Can Star Recognition Program**

Program recognizes district success in KSDE outcome measures

Gold Honors for postsecondary effectiveness and graduation

Bronze Honors for preparation for high school graduation

Commissioner's Award with Honors for Postsecondary Effectiveness Rate

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## **Endless 'PawsAbilities'**

Anna Brabston sits at a table in the PawsAbilities' bakery. In front of her is a glass measuring cup sitting on a digital scale. She spends the afternoons carefully placing dog treats one by one into the measuring cup until the scale reads six ounces.

Brabston then puts the dog treats into a paw printed plastic bag. A shiny gold twist tie secures the bag. A sticker on the packaging reads, "Thank you."

The pride and joy Brabston, who is legally blind, feels when completing this task is thanks to her role in Blue Valley's 18-21 Services' PawsAbilities program.

The district's 18-21 Services offer young adults with disabilities the opportunity after high school to continue building work and life skills through programs like PawsAbilities and its Career

Development Opportunities Program (CDOP).

“There are some students who continue to show a need and qualify for special education services beyond the traditional four years of high school,” said Cassandra Delmont, Blue Valley’s Assistant Director of Special Education. “The 18-21 Services center around daily living skills, independent living skills and vocational training. Our goal is to provide students with the skills and resources necessary to live and work as successfully and independently as possible within their community.”

Students are able to stay in 18-21 Services until they are 21 years old. Participation is dependent upon each individual’s needs.

A Blue Valley West graduate, Brabston, 20, suffered a hemorrhagic stroke in utero resulting in cortical vision impairment. The stroke caused her to develop intellectual disabilities and cerebral palsy. She only has use of the right side of her body, has limited speech and autism.

Diane Brabston, Anna’s mother, said her daughter was not ready upon high school graduation to find a job and needed to further develop work and life skills.

“The 18-21 program was a natural fit for her,” Diane Brabston said.

About two years ago, 18-21 Services was looking to revamp its program. PawsAbilities, a local retail store that employs individuals with disabilities and owned by Inclusion Connections, was interested in collaborating with 18-21 Services.

Inclusion Connections, a local non-profit organization founded by Debbie Horn, started its PawsAbilities retail store in 2013 to provide employment services to the individuals with disabilities it serves.

Inclusion Connections’ PawsAbilities and Blue Valley’s PawsAbilities operate at two separate locations but hone in on the same life and work skills and use the same packaging.

“Every aspect of the business is able to be run by students with supervision,” said Erica Warren, Blue Valley’s Special Education Administrator.

Students can make dog treats, bandanas, dog toys, snuffle mats and lanyards.

Blue Valley’s PawsAbilities workshop is located inside of Blue Valley Service Center and houses a bakery where students make dog treats. A second room features various stations for students to measure, cut, and assemble the dog accessories and toys.

During the afternoons, Brabston finds herself weighing dog treats. It is a task that might seem impossible for someone who is blind but 18-21 Services has made it possible for Brabston. When Anna Brabston was participating in virtual school last year, her teachers in PawsAbilities made sure she could continue to work from home.

Anna Brabston had never used a weighted scale prior to PawsAbilities, Diane Brabston said. But her teachers were able to work with Anna Brabston to find an electric scale with a large and bright readout that she could see.

The task came with challenges. Anna Brabston only has use of her right hand, making it difficult for her to hold open and place the treats in a bag. Her 18-21 Services teachers had the idea to place a piece of cardstock in the bag so it would sit open and she could place the treats inside. “The teachers in the program are so good at thinking outside the box and trying to find what skill set each student has and trying new things,” Diane Brabston said.

Now that Anna Brabston is working in-person in the Blue Valley PawsAbilities bakery, she is still responsible for weighing and bagging the treats — a job her mom said she’s found immense joy in completing.

“She loves to work and it’s just trying to find something that she can do,” Diane Brabston said. “She loves sorting things. She’s so enthusiastic to go to her job and weigh dog treats.” Diane Brabston said she noticed her daughter becoming more independent and confident since joining 18-21 Services.

“I can see the pride she has when she does it,” Diane Brabston said. “When she finishes a bag, she will start clapping and cheering for herself like, ‘Way to go, Anna, you did it.’” The 18-21 PawsAbilities branch hopes to soon bring its products to Blue Valley’s schools so the students can sell their products to the public and further develop job skills.

Selling products is not about making a profit.

“For us, money goes back into PawsAbilities,” Warren said. “They then go back into our flour and peanut butter and items that we need.”

PawsAbilities also accepts donations of old t-shirts that 18-21 Services’ students can transform into dog toys. Pleasant Ridge Middle recently took part by donating several bags of t-shirts and showing their support of PawsAbilities.

Once Anna Brabston turns 21 years old, her time working at PawsAbilities will end. Diane Brabston is already thinking about her daughter’s job opportunities thanks to 18-21 Services. “I think it is a good program that shows people with disabilities can find work to do in the community if they have the right accommodations,” Diane Brabston said. “Once you get those accommodations in place, and it does take a little practice and patience initially, but her production rate is now just as good as any able-bodied person.”

In addition to PawsAbilities, CDOP is another great program offered by 18-21 Services. Many students benefit from the chance to work at various community partner businesses.

Ryan Gress, a Blue Valley Southwest graduate who has Down syndrome, is just one student taking part in CDOP.

Gress, 20, currently works at Price Chopper. Working at different businesses in the community has made Gress more independent, talkative and self-assured.

To learn more about all of 18-21 Services' great opportunities visit [www.bluevalleyk12.org/18-21Services](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/18-21Services).

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## See how your investment in Blue Valley is coming to fruition

Students heading back to school for the 2021-22 school year will notice some small and large upgrades to buildings across the district. Teams have been working all summer on projects that reinvest, reinforce and reimagine Blue Valley—all because of the community's investment in its youth.

“Immediately following the passing of the 2020 Bond, our teams got right to work designing and constructing projects throughout the district,” said Jake Slobodnik, director of facilities and operations.

In January 2020, Blue Valley community members voted to pass a \$186,855,000 bond issue that students and staff will benefit from for years to come.

“It has been an incredible journey, and we have already implemented nearly two thirds of the planned projects in just short of two years since the passing of the bond,” Slobodnik said. “While we still have much work to do, we know the work we put in place will have a tremendous impact on the teaching and learning in our buildings and we are excited to see all the amazing ways our students, staff and community will benefit from these upgrades.”

Check out the progress being made on several projects, including the progress made on Elementary 24, and follow along on the district's social media channels for #BvBond2020 project updates. For more information on Bond 2020 work and a recap video visit [www.bluevalleyk12.org/bond](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/bond).

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# Providing Extraordinary Educational Opportunities: Blue Valley's new Fire Science and Emergency Medical Career Ready program launches

"What do I want to be when I grow up?" It's an age-old question with the potential for limitless answers. For AJ Reed, a senior at Blue Valley North, a life experience combined with a new opportunity helped him answer that very question.

"When I was at a really young age, my family experienced a total-loss house fire," Reed said. "It never really affected me or crossed my mind on how I could shape that negative experience into a more positive light, until this opportunity came about."

That opportunity for Reed came in the form of the new Fire Science and Emergency Medical program through Blue Valley's Career Ready Programs. In partnership with the Overland Park Fire Department (OPFD), Blue Valley juniors and seniors in high school can engage in hands-on learning and earn college credit in fire science. This program is unique to Blue Valley students and offers them a fast-track pathway into fire, emergency medical services, and other public service career fields upon graduation.

"I want to be a firefighter," Reed said. "The idea and reality of high schoolers coming in here (to OPFD) and having this opportunity is huge, especially for me."

Reed isn't the only Blue Valley student that will benefit from this new program. The inaugural class is made up of 15 students, with at least one student from all five of the district's high schools. Like some of Blue Valley's other Career Ready Programs, students take traditional classes in the morning at their home high school. In the afternoon, the students head to OPFD's training center for hands-on-learning, sometimes alongside other OPFD trainees. This program is a dual-credit option, so students earn credit at their high school and also receive college credit in fire science from Johnson County Community College (JCCC).

"We have real professionals around us and real professionals teaching us," said Jenni Clarkson, a senior at Blue Valley Northwest taking advantage of the program. "What also adds to the experience is that normally all of the Blue Valley high schools have a little rivalry between us. But when we are here, there's no rivalry. We are really just one big group, kind of like a family because we see each other every day, ready to learn."

Clarkson, like Reed, became interested in the program to jump-start her future career. However, her career aspirations are slightly different from Reed's.

"I started this program because I could see myself being a paramedic," Clarkson said. "I've had a person unconscious in front of me and I had no idea what to do. I felt helpless. That's what got me interested in EMS, so I'm excited to learn more about that side of the class next semester."

The program is divided into three portions, allowing students with aspirations in fire science, medical professions, or other public service paths to find success. Students who come into the program as juniors will benefit most, as they can progress through all courses from their junior to senior year. However, students who start the program as seniors will also gain valuable career skills. In the first semester, students complete a hazardous materials course and an introduction to public safety course. During the next semester, students will shift to emergency medical science, where students will take courses like first aid, CPR, and emergency medical response. Starting in August 2022, current juniors in the program will take two courses, Fire I and Fire II, completing the two-year program.

The new partnership with OPFD allows Blue Valley's young adults to explore career paths or interests outside of the current traditional high school setting.

"A really unique factor is that this is a one- or two-year interview process for these students," said Andrew Bobka, OPFD training officer and Blue Valley's fire science and emergency medical instructor. "Upon graduation, they will almost be ready for employment and will have already built the relationships with a professional fire department."

Finding the right fit for students requires options and these career-ready courses are exactly what many students need. This notion of hands-on learning experiences is not new to Blue Valley. From programs like the district's Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS) at the high school level to the career and technical education courses that are available to students as electives starting in middle school, Blue Valley is committed to providing relevant learning experiences to students of all ages.

Through the Career Ready Programs, college is still an option for many of the participating students. But for students who decide to enter the workforce instead, this real-world experience will provide them a solid foundation to make a seamless transition into their careers. "We may have students who go through this program and are hired as firefighters or paramedics—that's a huge win," said Adam Wessel, Blue Valley Director of Career Ready Programs. "However, we may have students who go through this program, or any of our Career Ready Programs, and decide the career path is not a fit. That's still a tremendous win because it allows them to see if a career path is right for them before they even graduate high school and move on if it isn't. They are still gaining valuable lessons from these experiences, professional development, high school credit, and even college credit."

### **Blue Valley offers several career ready programs, each offering different opportunities for students based on interests and personal goals.**

- Automotive Technology
- Automation Engineer Technology
- Construction Management
- Culinary and Hospitality Management

- Dual Degree Program
- Electrical Technology
- Electronics Technology
- Fire Science and  
Emergency Medical Program
- HVAC
- Plumbing Technology
- Welding and Metal Fabrication

### **In 2022, Blue Valley Career Ready Programs will expand to include**

- Cyber Security • Nail Technician

**Students interested in learning more or enrolling in any of Blue Valley's Career-Ready Programs should contact their high school counselor and visit [www.bluevalleyk12.org/CareerReady](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/CareerReady) for more information.**

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## **Beyond the Badge: Blue Valley Campus Officers and School Resource Officers**

On any given day, officer Tony Latas can be seen at Blue Valley North greeting, eating and playing hoops with students, or at after-school events supporting them. Wherever you see officer Latas, one thing is for sure — he is keeping the building safe while cultivating relationships. He has truly made North his home away from home.

“North made it a home for me here,” Latas said. “The entire school makes it feel like the work I do is important.”

Blue Valley campus officers and school resource officers (SROs) strive each day to build relationships with students. While safety is of the utmost importance, developing relationships with everyone in the building is the first step in creating a safe environment for students to learn. Tony Latas, Blue Valley North's campus officer, exemplifies that every day.

“Tony is 100% student-centered in everything he does,” Blue Valley North principal Tyson Ostroski said. “Kids look at him not just as a police officer but a friend and a resource for support.”

Officer Latas retired after 32 years of service from the Overland Park Police Department (OPPD). He decided in 2018 his path was calling him to work in a school setting. He joined Blue Valley North as a campus officer.

“It’s personal for me to be here for these kids,” Latas said. “I have a 21-year-old son who has autism. He’s very functional, but his high school experience was not a good experience for him. So I’m here to help all students feel like they have a place in school. I’m drawn to helping students with special needs or students facing troubles, but I’m here for everyone.”

In all middle and high schools throughout the district, there is a campus officer and/or an SRO — in partnership with OPPD and the Leawood Police Department — assigned to each school. Elementary schools share a campus police officer.

Adam Vendetti has served as an SRO at Blue Valley Academy (BVA) since 2019 and, like Latas, shows his love and passion for the position every day. Students flock to him in the hallways to talk about shoes, cars or perhaps advice on a situation in their life.

“Students don’t look at officer Vendetti as a person with gear and a badge,” Blue Valley Academy principal Scott Kreshel said. “They talk to him in the morning, during passing hours, after school, outside of school and know him on a personal level. Underneath, he’s a person that genuinely cares about all students.”

A former graduate of Blue Valley Schools — where he attended Blue Valley High for three years before transferring and graduating from Blue Valley Northwest in its inaugural year in 1993 — Vendetti is invested in the school community he serves. His work does not stop outside of school hours. Having first-hand experience interacting with students, he brings training tips and helps create programs at OPPD that cater to adolescents.

Like Vendetti and Latas, many campus officers and SROs in Blue Valley are embedded in the school community. They serve as parents of children in the district, softball coaches, football coaches, sponsors for school activities, advocates for students in the community and more.

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## Accountability (Finances)

During the 2021-22 school year, Blue Valley served 22,588 early childhood through high school students with total operating expenses of \$229.7 million. The District mill levy decreased by 1.536 mills from the previous year. The components of this mill levy and assessed valuation are listed below. To put this into more individual terms, the owner of a \$500,000 home in the Blue Valley School District paid \$3,345 in taxes to support schools in 2022, down from 3,433 in 2021.

### Mill Levy and Assessed Valuation

#### Blue Valley Mill Levy

General	20.000
Supplemental General LOB	12.902



Capital Outlay	8.000
Bond and Interest	15.154
Special Assessment	0.132
Special Liability	0.351
Extraordinary Growth	0.572
Cost of Living	1.856
Total	58.967

### **Blue Valley Assessed Valuation**

Real Estate	\$3,492,276,696
Personal Property	\$11,854,265
State Assessed Utilities	\$52,924,328
Total	\$3,557,055,289

### **Operating Revenue**

### **Blue Valley Assessed Valuation**

Real Estate	\$3,492,276,696
Personal Property	\$11,854,265
State Assessed Utilities	\$52,924,328
Total	\$3,557,055,289

### **Operating Expenditures**

- Certified Salaries- \$134,100,000 (1)
- Classified Salaries- \$33,000,000 (3)
- Benefits/Payroll Tax- \$34,200,000 (2)
- Utilities- \$8,600,000 (4)
- Transportation- \$8,400,000 (5)
- Contract Services- \$3,100,000 (7)

## **District Celebrations**

- Niche’s 2022 rankings are in and Blue Valley is still the one topping the lists, ranking as the #1 Best School District and #1 District with the Best Teachers in Kansas. In addition, the district was named one of the top 100 Best School Districts in America coming in at #82. Other top Blue Valley rankings include Best School Districts for Athletes in Kansas

City Area and Johnson County and Best Places to Teach in Johnson County. Niche's grades and ranking are calculated using dozens of public data sets and millions of reviews.

- Blue Valley Schools was named to the 2021 Forbes Best-in-State Employers list, ranking #2 overall among Kansas employers. Coming in at number two, Blue Valley is the top-ranked school district employer in the state for the third straight year.
- The Learning Counsel recently recognized Blue Valley Schools for attaining an EduJedi Gainer level of achievement. This recognition is awarded for providing a robust blended learning program with instructional use of apps, websites and other technology to make learning more active, engaging and relevant.
- The 2022 U.S. News and World Report listed all five Blue Valley high schools ranked among the top 10 Best High Schools

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## Staff Celebrations

- Rachel Benson, world language coordinator, was recognized as the Best of Kansas for her presentation entitled "Maximizing YOUR Proficiency in Teacher Effectiveness." Benson presented at the 2020 Kansas World Language Association Virtual Conference October 2021 and was selected as the Best of Kansas by participants.
- Retired longtime Blue Valley educator Diane DeNoon was named recipient of the Phyllis Farrar Leadership Award. The award recognizes an individual in Kansas who has made outstanding contributions over time to the profession as world language educators.
- Blue Valley Northwest teacher Karen Stohlmann Henderson was named to the 2022 class of Kansas Master Teachers. Stohlmann Henderson has been at Blue Valley Northwest since 1993 and has played a major role in the expansion of engineering classes offered in Blue Valley. She was also honored with Wolfe Teaching Excellence Award from the University of Kansas.
- The National Art Education Association (NAEA) named Leawood Middle art teacher So Choi the Western Region Middle-Level Art Educator. The award honors one outstanding NAEA member from each of the seven divisions within each of the four geographic regions, and recognizes exemplary service and achievement of regional significance within each division.

- The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) awarded NFHS citations to 16 high school athletic directors at the 52nd annual National Athletic Directors conference. Kevin Simmerman, CMAA, assistant principal/athletic director, Blue Valley West, was one of the 16 honorees. NFHS Citations are presented annually to outstanding athletic directors in recognition of contributions to interscholastic athletics at the local, state and national levels.
  - BVNW head football coach Clint Rider was awarded the Eric Driskell Coach of the Year. This award recognizes and rewards one Kansas City area coach for superior performance while also shaping today's youth and tomorrow's leaders. He was also selected as one of 50 2021 FNF Coaches of the Year.
  - Gladys Hernandez, CAPS custodian, was awarded the grand prize in Tennant Company's 3rd annual Custodians Are Key contest. Gladys was one of 12 finalists chosen from nearly 1,000 nominations from around the US and Canada. The award includes a \$15,000 prize package, \$10,000 of which is designated for CAPS.
  - Zac Johnson, an interrelated resource teacher at Blue Valley West, was named a Horizon award recipient. The Horizon Award program, sponsored by the Kansas State Department of Education, recognizes 32 exemplary first-year teachers across the entire state.
  - Cherin Palermo, sixth-grade teacher at Leawood Middle, was named a National Board Certified Teacher. This is a challenging and esteemed accomplishment and is the most respected professional certification in education.
  - Lizzy Boyle, art teacher at Sunrise Point, and Kate Tankel, Spanish teacher at Blue Valley North, were selected from the entire district as Blue Valley's candidates for the 2023 Kansas Teacher of the Year.
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## Student Celebrations

- Three Blue Valley North students were selected for the NAFME All-National Concert Band — Logan Amato, tuba; Harry Wang, alto saxophone 1 alternate; and Oliver Zhang, trumpet.
- Blue Valley High won the Business Professionals Association (BPA) state championship. Several Blue Valley students won individual or group state championships including: Rebecca Xue, Blue Valley West; Shriya Dave, Blue Valley West; Cooper Contrucci, Blue Valley West; Leena Dudi, Blue Valley West; Mika Montonen, Blue Valley West; Srihari Meyoor, Blue Valley West; Dan Nguyen, Blue Valley West; Aileen Ng, Blue Valley West; Kavya Parikh, Blue Valley West; Sadiya Abid, Blue Valley West; Jacob Tieves, Blue

Valley High; Garrett Claypool, Blue Valley High; Jon Kiekbusch, Blue Valley High; Robert Brown, Blue Valley High; Eddy Jiang, Blue Valley High; Genevieve Jarrell, Blue Valley High; Henry Hornung, Blue Valley High; Carter Hagen, Blue Valley High; Tori Wingrove, Blue Valley High; Julia Walsh, Blue Valley High; Nathan Staley, Blue Valley High; Eleanor Warren, Blue Valley High; Julia Denny, Blue Valley High; Charlotte Warren, Blue Valley High; Adela Lipari, Blue Valley High; Evanna Dominic, Blue Valley Southwest

- CAPS Technology Solutions students Dylan Kneidel, Dellie Wright and Madeline Watson won the 2021 Congressional App Challenge for the Kansas 3rd Congressional District. The goal of their app “Credo” is to educate the community on both cryptocurrencies and cryptography.
- Blue Valley Southwest’s Evanna Dominic received first place in the second annual High School Elevator Pitch Competition hosted by Kansas State University’s College of Business – National Strategic Selling Institute.
- The 2020-21 The North Star newspaper was announced as a National Scholastic Press Association Pacemaker Award winner. The Pacemaker Award is the highest honor in high school journalism.
- Blue Valley Northwest’s Mikey Pauley was named the 39th annual Thomas A. Simone Memorial Award winner. This honor is presented to the most outstanding high school football player in the greater Kansas City metropolitan area.
- The Kansas City high school contemporary vocal a cappella group Soundproof competed in the International Championship of High School A Cappella in New York City. The group took first place becoming the 2022 National Champions. Blue Valley members include: Aiden Smith, Blue Valley West; Brett Oplotnik, Blue Valley Northwest; Ella Weigel, Blue Valley Northwest; Lauren Robinson, Blue Valley Northwest; Mia Cabrera, Blue Valley Southwest; Natalie Policky, Blue Valley Northwest; Maggie Bunch, Blue Valley Northwest; Sam Illum, Blue Valley Southwest; Sofia Ortiz, Blue Valley High; Reece Dickerson, Blue Valley High
- Pleasant Ridge Middle School’s Science Olympiad team won the state championship at the State Science Bowl regional Science Bowl champions.
- Blue Valley High senior Aiden Shaw was named the 2022 DiRenna Award winner given to the top basketball player in the KC Metro area.
- CAPS Innovate students Tyler Lively and Jackson Bruechner placed first in the high school division and were selected Best of Show in the 2022 KC Invention Convention. Their submission, MetaCar, aims to relocate the car dealership into the metaverse providing real 3D lidar scans of car dealership lots translated to be viewed with a mobile or VR device.

- CAPS bioscience student Aniela Cabrera was selected as the 2022 Kansas Stockholm Junior Water Prize winner. She will present her paper, “The Effects of Water Quality in Kansas City Streams on Planaria” at the national competition competing for a chance to travel to Stockholm Sweden to attend the international competition in August, as well as win scholarships.
- Six Blue Valley students left the BPA 2022 National Leadership Conference as national champions:
  - Evanna Dominic, Blue Valley Southwest
  - Genevieve Jarrell, Blue Valley High
  - Eleanor Warren, Blue Valley High
  - Nathan Staley, Blue Valley High
  - Carter Hagen, Blue Valley High
  - Eleanor Warren, Blue Valley High
- Five Blue Valley seniors were named 2022 Kansas City Star scholar athletes: Michael Allen, Blue Valley High; Ty Farrington, Blue Valley North; Megan Yates, Blue Valley Northwest; Hayden Mills, Blue Valley Southwest; Katherine Soule, Blue Valley West
- National Merit Scholarship Corporation announced this year’s National Merit \$2,500 scholarship winners. Blue Valley winners include: Audrey C. Beckman, Blue Valley North; Jordin R. MacKenzie, Blue Valley North; Samuel Eric Peterson, Blue Valley North; Younggi Daniel Moon, Blue Valley Northwest; Shashank Aitha, Blue Valley West; Puneet S. Bagga, Blue Valley West; Saisharan Narayan, Blue Valley Northwest; Sachin S. Shenoy, Blue Valley West; Samuel Wang, Blue Valley West; George C. Xue, Blue Valley High; William J. Creamer, Blue Valley High
- Blue Valley High School and student Charlie Trent took home Blue Star Awards at Starlight’s annual awards ceremony. Starlight hosts The Blue Star Awards annually to honor the best performances and productions from high school musical theater programs across the Kansas City metro. Blue Valley High School — Outstanding Orchestra for *Anastasia*. Charlie Trent (Blue Valley High) — Outstanding Actress in a Supporting Role for her performance as Odette/Swan Lake dancer/Ensemble in *Anastasia*
- CAPS Bioscience student Maggie Zhang was selected to participate in the 2022 Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair. Maggie’s submission, “The Effect of Polymer Coating on Taste-Masking Ability,” was in the translational medical science category.
- A Blue Valley student-run organization, Future Is Female Inc., is a category winner in the national 2022 Changemaker Challenge. This nationwide contest is aimed at unleashing big ideas to champion change resulted in 15 winning teams of visionary teens.

- 28 Blue Valley students scored a perfect 36 on the ACT: Kevin Fan, Blue Valley North; Anna Hamilton, Blue Valley North; Humphrey Luo, Blue Valley West; David Stutz, Blue Valley North; Christian Vaz, Blue Valley West; Gavin Goldston, Blue Valley Northwest; Katherine Kirby, Blue Valley Northwest; Audrey Beckman, Blue Valley North; Daniel Cheng, Blue Valley Northwest; Rishit Chilappa, Blue Valley North; Matthew Freeman, Blue Valley North; Anusha Gampala, Blue Valley Northwest; Logan Garber, Blue Valley Southwest; Ethan Guo, Blue Valley West; Lauren Herrington, Blue Valley North; Thomas Kywe, Blue Valley North; Renee Liou, Blue Valley Northwest; Kushala Madduru, Blue Valley West; Liam Mann, Blue Valley West; Younggi Moon, Blue Valley Northwest; Cole Mueller, Blue Valley High; Yaeesh Mukadam, Blue Valley West; Nihith Ravikanti, Blue Valley Northwest; Aastha Sharma, Blue Valley West; George Xue, Blue Valley High; Janna Goodman, Blue Valley High; Lisa Ji, Blue Valley West; Carter Hagen, Blue Valley High
- Blue Valley West golfer Julia Misemer helped lead her team to win the Kansas' Class 6A Championship. She also won her 4th-straight Individual State Championship, becoming just the second golfer — boy or girl — in Kansas State High School Activities Association's history to accomplish this feat. She was also awarded the Kenneth Smith Award for the best female golfer in the KC metro area
- Grant Stubblefield, Blue Valley Northwest boys basketball, and Jadyn Wooten, Blue Valley High girls basketball, were named boys and girls basketball player of the year by Sports in Kansas
- Jordin Mackenzie, was named a finalist for the Presidential Scholar award this school year. The Presidential Scholar award recognizes the nation's most distinguished high school seniors for their academic success, artistic excellence, leadership and demonstrated commitment to high ideals.
- Blue Valley Northwest 2022 graduate Renee Liou was named to the Kansas' All-State Academic Team. Liou is headed to Amherst College and plans to pursue a career as an attorney.
- Blue Valley High's Will Jones recorded the fastest 400m time in Kansas state history at the Shawnee Mission North relays. The time of 46.29 is the second fastest in the country this year.
- Blue Valley Southwest senior Evanna Dominic was selected as a 2022 Coca-Cola Scholar. Dominic was selected alongside only 149 other scholars nationally for her commitment to making a significant impact on her school and community.

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## Athletics and Activities championships

### TEAM STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

5A Baseball  
Blue Valley Southwest

6A Baseball  
Blue Valley West

6A Boys' Golf  
Blue Valley High

5A Cheer  
Blue Valley Southwest

6A Cheer  
Blue Valley Northwest

6A Football  
Blue Valley Northwest

5A Soccer  
Blue Valley Southwest

6A Volleyball  
Blue Valley North

6A Girls' Golf  
Blue Valley West

Band  
Kansas Bandmasters Marching Band — Blue Valley High

6A Scholars Bowl  
Blue Valley North

6A Girls' Soccer  
Blue Valley West

### **INDIVIDUAL, RELAY TEAM OR ACTIVITY STATE CHAMPIONS**

6A Boys' Golf  
Carson Baker, Blue Valley West

6A Boys' Tennis  
Doubles — Matt Crossland and Zachary Amsterdam, Blue Valley North

5A 4-Speaker Debate  
Brett Cranor, Shiza Khan, Vinny Sandhu, Ben Ziegelman — Blue Valley Southwest

6A Girls' Track and Field

800m and 1600m run – Olivia Bakker, Blue Valley West  
4X400 relay — Alli Kneller, Audrey Brown, Natalie Jones and Delia Grocery — Blue Valley North

6A Boys' Track and Field

400m run — Will Jones, Blue Valley High  
Javelin — Henry Martin, Blue Valley North

6A Girls Swim and Dive

50 yard freestyle – Sophia Paduano, Blue Valley Northwest  
Diving — Claire Garrelts, Blue Valley Northwest  
100 yard butterfly and 100 yard backstroke — Annika Finzen, Blue Valley West  
200 yard free relay — Sarah Blake, Siena Masillonis, Abi Patterson, Caroline Blake, Blue Valley North  
400 yard free relay — Sarah Blake, Margo Hauser, Charlotte Barton, Caroline Blake, Blue Valley North

6A Speech and Drama

Oration — Rishabh Barve, Blue Valley West  
Poetry – Mahika Meesa, Blue Valley West

6A Girls' Golf

Julia Misemer, Blue Valley West

5A-6A Girls' Wrestling

120 lb. division — Hannah Glynn, Blue Valley Southwest

6A Boys' Swim and Dive

Dive — Spencer Eyen, Blue Valley North  
200m free — Sam Peterson

6A Boys' Wrestling

220 lb. division — Brooks Lowe, Blue Valley West

5A Boys' Wrestling

132 lb. division — Hayden Mills, Blue Valley Southwest

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