

Board Briefs

BLUE VALLEY SCHOOLS

Education Beyond Expectations

May 13, 2024

Board honors Melodie Edison and Jane Barboza with Distinguished Service award

The Board honored two staff members with the Distinguished Service award:

- Melodie Edison, a senior IT support application specialist, has been in the district for 10 years.
- Jane Barboza, an administrative assistant for Harmony Elementary School, has been in the district for 32 years.

Board honors Ryan Worland with Excellence in Education award

The Board honored Ryan Worland with the Excellence in Education award. Worland is a social worker at Sunrise Point Elementary School and has been in the district for seven years.

Board recognizes 2024 Female DiRenna Award winner, Jady Wooten

The Board recognized Jady Wooten, a senior at Blue Valley High, for being named the 2024 Female DiRenna Award winner. This award is given to the top female basketball player in the Kansas City area. Wooten averaged 19 points, 7.3 rebounds and 6.4 assists per game.

Board recognizes Jim McCrossen for Kansas Scholastic Press Association (KSPA) Hall of Fame induction

The Board recognized Jim McCrossen, Blue Valley Northwest journalism instructor and publications adviser, for being inducted into the Kansas Scholastic Press Association (KSPA) Hall of Fame. Individuals are inducted into the hall of fame based upon service to KSPA and contribution to the field. McCrossen has been a journalism teacher for 33 years, with 31 of those years spent at Blue Valley Northwest.

Board recognizes 2024 Jackie Engel Award winner, Rachel Chushuk

The Board recognized Rachel Chushuk, Blue Valley Southwest journalism teacher and publications adviser, for being named the 2024 Jackie Engel Award winner by Kansas Collegiate Media. This award is given to an individual who exhibits excellence in scholastic publications advising. Chushuk has been a publications adviser at Blue Valley Southwest since 2014.

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Board recognizes students named Shooting Stars by the Arts Council of Johnson County

The Board recognized seven students for being selected as Shooting Stars by the Arts Council of Johnson County. The Shooting Stars program celebrates student artists and their art educators with first and second-place recognition and college scholarships. The seven winners include:

- Lucas Nguyen, Blue Valley West, 3D Visual Art, 1st place winner
- Elizabeth Ford, Blue Valley West, Photography, 2nd place winner
- Harrison Jones, Blue Valley High, Literature, 1st place winner
- Alexa Newsom, Blue Valley North, Literature, 2nd place winner
- Alea Shrock, Blue Valley Southwest, 3D Visual Art, 1st place winner
- William Clark, Blue Valley North High School, Voice, 2nd place winner
- Noah Tarjan, Blue Valley North High School, Voice, 2nd place winner

Board honors Friends of Education recipients

For more than 20 years, Blue Valley has recognized people or organizations in the community who have made outstanding contributions to public education. This group is known as Friends of Education. The 2024 recipients included:

- Tom Mitchell, former board member who served for 12 years
- Thomas Herzog, Chief Operations Officer at Netsmart and former Blue Valley parent
- The Overland Park Fire Department, partners with Blue Valley to offer Fire Science and Emergency Medical program through Career Ready Programs
- Johnson County Mental Health Center, partners with Blue Valley to offer Zero Reasons Why and other resources to support students from early childhood through high school

For more information on why these organizations were honored as Friends of Education, [visit the district website](#).

Board hears district updates from Superintendent

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The Board heard district updates from Superintendent, Dr. Tonya Merrigan. The updates include details about upcoming graduations, retirements and other student and educator achievements. You can view all of this month's updates in [Dr. Merrigan's presentation](#).

Board hears curriculum draft proposals

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The Board heard curriculum draft proposals from Kelly June, Executive Director of Academic Services. During the presentation, June explained the process of creating curriculum, highlighted

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classes, and prepared the Board for approval in June. You can view this information in [June's presentation](#).

Board approves revised 2024-25 school calendar

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The Board approved the revised 2024-25 school calendar. In an effort to increase elementary collaboration and plan time, the district added eight non-student attendance days at the elementary level. This calendar will still meet the state requirements for hours required at the elementary level with the addition of these eight days. The added dates for the 2024-25 school year include:

- August 30, 2024
- September 27, 2024
- November 1, 2024
- December 6, 2024
- January 31, 2025
- February 28, 2025
- April 11, 2025
- May 2, 2025

Board approves revised 2025-26 school calendar

[Jump to this section in the livestream](#)

The Board approved the revised 2025-26 school calendar. In an effort to increase elementary collaboration and plan time, the district added eight non-student attendance days at the elementary level. This calendar will still meet the state requirements for hours required at the elementary level with the addition of these eight days. The added dates for the 2025-26 school year include:

- August 29, 2025
- September 26, 2025
- November 7, 2025
- December 5, 2025
- January 30, 2026
- February 27, 2026
- April 10, 2026
- May 1, 2026

Board hears Legislative update from Superintendent

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The Board heard legislative updates from Superintendent, Dr. Tonya Merrigan. The updates include updates to bills and legislature post-legislative sessions. Visit www.bluevalleyk12.org/legislative to read these updates, learn about Blue Valley's priority positions, contact information for state representatives and more.

Board approves Children's Mercy Hospital contract

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The Board approved the Children's Mercy Hospital contract. This contract provides 40 masters-level social workers to serve both general education and special education needs within EC-21 schools and programs. These social workers work in collaboration with school counselors and school psychologists to provide large and small group instruction, as well as individual services.



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Board Briefs is published by the Blue Valley School District Communications Department following each Board of Education meeting.