

Board Briefs

B L U E V A L L E Y S C H O O L S

Education Beyond Expectations

December 11, 2023

Board honors Erin Fine with Excellence in Education award

The Board honored Erin Fine, a teacher at Blue Valley Southwest, with the Excellence of Education Award. Fine has been in the district for 13 years.

Board recognizes Kansas Master Teacher candidates

The Board recognized Bre McGranahan, an intensive resource teacher at Stanley Elementary, and Kale Mann, a science teacher at Blue Valley High, for being selected as Blue Valley's candidates for Kansas Master Teacher. This program, founded by Emporia State University, awards seven teachers across the state who have served the profession well. Early next year, a selection committee will select the Kansas Master Teacher finalists.

Board recognizes Makena Reno

The Board recognized Makena Reno, a senior at Blue Valley Southwest, for being selected as one of seven facilitators for the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) National Honor Society (NHS) Student Leadership Network on Mental Health. In this role, Reno will facilitate in-person and virtual meetings with student leaders from across the country to discuss mental health challenges high school student leaders face and look for solutions that can be implemented at the school level.

Board recognizes Brianna Childers

The Board recognized Brianna Childers, the district's communications coordinator, for being named Newcomer of the Year by the Kansas School Public Relations Association (KanSPRA). The award is given to a KanSPRA member who advocates for public education in Kansas through their work, is committed to a creative, dedicated and professional approach to school communications and has leadership aspirations.

Board honors outgoing board member, Tom Mitchell

The Board honored Tom Mitchell as an outgoing board member. During his 12.5 years on the board, Mitchell led the district through COVID-19 as the board President, advocated for the addition of a social worker in every school with the district's partnership with Children's Mercy, and developed relationships with every student or staff he encountered. Mitchell holds the second-longest tenure as a board member in Blue Valley's history.

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 Blue Valley alumni achievements, Blue Valley Southwest's successful football season—including senior Dylan Dunn, winning the Thomas A. Simone award, and other student and staff accomplishments from the month. You can view all of this month's updates in [Dr. Merrigan's presentation](#).

District earns highest opinion in annual audit report

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The Board heard from an officer of Allen, Gibbs & Houlik, L.C., who completed Blue Valley's 2022-2023 audit. The district received an unmodified opinion on the audit, which is the highest and best opinion a school district can receive. For more information on Blue Valley's budget and financial documents, please [visit the District's finance page](#).

Board approves new enrollment and nonresident transfer policies

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The Board voted to approve enrollment policies [3111](#) & [3122](#) and rescind current policies 3114, 3115, 3116 and 3121. The rescinded policies have been revised and expanded into enrollment policy [3111](#). [Policy 3122](#) includes language regarding open enrollment and the state required acceptance of out of district students for any identified open seats in the district.

Board approves the legislative positions for the 2024 legislative session

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The Board voted to approve legislative positions for the 2024 Legislative Session. The district endorses:

- Measures and appropriate funding levels that encourage all school districts to pursue exemplary, and not just merely proficient, educational and well-being outcomes for their students.
- School finance policies that allow greater opportunities for local control.
- School finance policies that allow greater opportunities for increased funding levels in higher-cost areas

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Blue Valley's legislative priority positions include:

- Fully Fund Special Education
- Apply At-Risk Funding to Defined Student Measures
- Funding on Current Year or Largest of Two Previous Years
- Enhance Student Mental Health
- Recruitment, Retention, and Alternative Teacher Certification

For more information [visit the district website](#).

Board approves three technology contracts

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The Board approved three technology contracts for student devices:

- Apple Inc. Contract for new Macbook devices for incoming ninth grade students in the 2024-25 school year
- Greenbush Contract for the continuation of one-to-one Chromebook devices for middle school students
- Dell Contract for specialized computers for CAPS students enrolled in the engineering program



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