

A Message from our Board of Education

In the Olathe Public Schools, we are committed to our vision, "Their Future is Our Future", working together as a community from our board of education to our staff, students, families and community members. This year, our district theme was #OPSForwardTogether, which marked our commitment to approaching both challenges and successes as a team with a focus on the future of what is best for all students.

Together, we have navigated some tough conversations and decisions, but we have also had countless opportunities to celebrate our students and our staff throughout our district. We voted to approve new school start and end times in December 2023, which would begin in the 2024-25 school year. This was the solution to help our district allow for continued access to transportation for all students, honor our commitment to our 21st Century Academy students and provide equitable academic opportunities for all. We also navigated conversations around open enrollment in the state of Kansas and updated graduation requirements. We said a bittersweet goodbye to the old Santa Fe Trail Middle School, with an event that celebrated this school's rich legacy while

to looking forward to the new building's doors opening in August 2024. However, we also had some amazing accomplishments by our students and staff. One of our teachers was named the 2024 Kansas Teacher of the Year while another was named an Emporia State Master Teacher, and this was the most winningest year of athletic state championships in the history of Olathe Public Schools.

During the first semester of the 23-24 school year, Shannon Wickliffe served as President with Brad Boyd serving as Vice President. Wickliffe and board member Joe Beveridge chose not to run for their seats in the November 2023 election. Finally, board member Brian Connell resigned from his District 3 position on the board, effective Jan. 7, 2024. The board approved a resolution to appoint a new board member and Becky Johann was selected by the Board of Education to complete Connell's term. Board members Claire Reagan and Will Babbit were elected to fill Wickliffe and Beveridge's positions, respectively.

We thank you for your continued support of Olathe Public Schools and look forward to the many opportunities to support our mission of students prepared for their future in the year ahead.



BRAD BOYD
President



JULIE STEELE Vice President



WILL BABBIT



BECKY JOHANN



ROBERT KUHN



CLAIRE REAGAN



DR. STACEY YURKOVICH

Districtwide Changes Made in the 2023-2024 School Year

START AND END TIME CHANGES

After a two-year conversation with community members, at the regular December 2023 Board of Education meeting, the board voted to approve a new start and end time schedule beginning in the 2024-25 school year. After much discussion and evaluation of feedback from parents, students and staff, the Board approved the following schedule:

- High schools and Prairie Learning Center: 7:40

 a.m. 2:40 p.m.
- Middle schools and Heartland Early Childhood Center: 8:20 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.
- Elementary schools and Harmony Early Childhood Center: 8:55 a.m. - 3:55 p.m.

This recommendation is the least disruptive to the overall system, both survey data from families and staff and input from secondary students supported this schedule, and it is a long-term solution to address the labor market with annual financial savings.

Approving this new schedule before the start of second semester was important to give the district, families and staff a full semester and summer to make necessary plans and adjustments before the 2024-25 school year begins.

Olathe Public Schools wants to thank its students, staff and families for their engagement in the last two school years as we have worked to allow access to educational opportunities for all students while also addressing the national and local transportation staffing challenges head-on with a three-tier bus schedule.

KANSAS OPEN ENROLLMENT POLICY ADOPTED FOR 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR

The Olathe open enrollment policy was approved during the Dec. 7 Board of Education meeting. This is a direct result of Kansas House Bill 2567, which applies to all public schools in the state and takes effect in the 2024-25 school year. HB 2567 states all districts must allow non-resident students, who reside in Kansas, to enroll in and attend any school if the district has the capacity. All Kansas school districts were required to adopt an open enrollment policy outlining their own procedures by Jan. 1, 2024. According to the policy, transportation will not be provided. Once admitted to an Olathe school, the child could continue attending Olathe schools K-12 if they maintain good standing. Eligibility to participate in Kansas State High School Activities Association activities for open enrollment transfer students would

be determined by KSHSAA policies. A public hearing regarding this policy was held Nov. 2 before the regular November board of education meeting.

The policy included an in-district transfer period that began on Jan. 4, followed by a district employee transfer period starting March 1. District enrollment capacity was determined by May 1 and posted on the district website by June 1. Non-resident applications were accepted June 1-30, followed by a non-resident lottery selection process July 1-15. By the end of July, there was a net gain of nearly 60 out-of-district students who could enroll in Olathe Public Schools for the 2024-25 school year.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENT CHANGES FOR CLASS OF 2028 AND BEYOND

In May 2023, the Kansas State Board of Education approved updated high school graduation requirements that will take effect with the class of 2028. High school credit will be awarded for Spanish I and French I in eighth grade, health will become its own class separate from physical education, and an additional STEM elective were all added for the graduation requirements. Finally, the district will transition from a class rank to a cum laude system with the class of 2028.

Legacy Night Hosted for Final Goodbye to Original Santa Fe Trail Middle School Building

Santa Fe Trail Middle School (SFT) hosted a night of celebration on April 24, 2024, honoring the school's history and providing an opportunity for members of the community to send the building out on a high note.

"We talk about memories and there are so many but I think all of them center around the relationships that staff had with staff, staff had with students and staff had with the parents and community as well," former SFT principal Phil Clark said.

SFT community members were given a chance to purchase bricks from the original building, and there were several different opportunities to share memories.

"I love this place because the faculty at SFT, we honestly, were just one big family," former staff member Jean Reuesser said. "We took care of each other; we kept each other going and patted one another on the back. We truly cared about each other. And I know that has not changed, because that's just SFT."

The event included a social in the courtyard, a brief time of recognizing the school's long history and then alumni and community members toured the halls of the original building one last time.

"What a positive climate it has been tonight," board member Dr. Stacey Yurkovich said. "It's been so fun to see everyone and hear all of the great memories that this place has held. The board, along with the school district, are so appreciative to the greater Olathe Public Schools community for passing the 2022 Bond so that this SFT legacy can live on in a new building."

"We truly cared about each other. And I know that has not changed, because that's just SFT."

> JEAN REUESSER Former Staff Member

While it was bittersweet to say goodbye to the current building, the 2022 Bond has allowed for a new building to be built behind the current school.

Newkirk Novak, construction manager of the project, collaborated with Hollis+Miller Architects, Henderson Engineers and Olsson for the project to be complete for the 2024-2025 school year.





Olathe Public Schools Debuts a New Look

In the 2023-24 school year, Olathe Public Schools embarked on a journey to reimagine the district brand and visual identity to better reflect our values, goals, and the community we serve. At the June 6, 2024 Board of Education meeting, the board voted to approve the district's new brand and logo concept. Our updated brand identity includes a new logo, color schemes and typography, as well as an enhanced vision statement to lead us into the future

Through partnership with creative consultant, Mammoth Creative Co., we sought community input from our staff, students, families and business partners through an online survey, focus groups and artwork submissions to help us examine our organization's values and what Olathe Public Schools means to our community.

Our new logo features an abstract apple with an 'O' in the middle, offering a modern twist on our historic Olathe Public Schools symbol, honoring our legacy and innovation that our district is known for. In addition, the 'O' at the core of the design symbolizes

the strong connection and unity that define 'Olathe Public Schools. The two halves of the apple interlocking reflect our dedication to collaboration and partnership in providing the best educational experiences for our students, and our commitment to educating the whole child through academic opportunities and social-emotional wellbeing.

In the Olathe Public Schools, we have a common purpose – our students – and we recognize that "Their Future is Our Future." This updated vision statement builds on "Students Prepared for Their Future," but widens the lens to remind us that when our students succeed, our community succeeds. We are a team and when we work together, our students thrive.

We want to thank our community for their collaboration throughout this process, as the elements of the district's new brand design, from the colors to the logo mark, came from the feedback through our survey, focus groups and community gallery submissions.





Prairie Trail Middle School Teacher Named Kansas Teacher of the Year

Taylor Bussinger, an eighth grade social studies teacher at Prairie Trail Middle School (PRT), was named the 2024 Kansas Teacher of the Year during the Dale Dennis Kansas Teacher of the Year Banquet in Wichita on Sept. 23, 2023. Bussinger became the Kansas nominee for the National Teacher of the Year.

"Congratulations to Taylor Bussinger, or 'Mr. Buss' as his colleagues and students call him," Superintendent Dr. Brent Yeager said. "He represents everything we want in a teacher and role model for our students. He teaches his academic content with excellence to ensure his students succeed, while also taking the time to care for his students' wellbeing so they feel valued and heard in his classroom. Taylor, we are all so proud of you here in Olathe Public Schools! Thank you for your commitment to preparing all students for their future."

Bussinger was stunned after hearing Kansas Commissioner of Education Dr. Randy Watson and the 2023 Teacher of the Year Brian Skinner announce his name. Several Olathe Public Schools administrators and educators were present and led the standing ovation as he made his way to the stage.

"True education is authentic," Bussinger said in his speech. "It's messy. It's real. It's full of energy. It's full of laughter. It's full of tears, and it's full of vibrant passion in which young people are inspired to be curious enough to know who they truly are in the context of an ever-changing world. And young people's voices should be included in the narrative of what school should be. After all, it's their future we are preparing them for."

Bussinger received a Bachelor of Science degree in education with an emphasis in social studies in 2014 from University of Kansas (KU). In 2018, Bussinger earned his master's in curriculum and instruction from KU. He has taught at PRT for nine years. He currently serves as the head boys' basketball coach, head cross-country coach, a member of the Positive

Behavioral Interventions and Supports team and he is the co-founder and sponsor of the Diversity Club.

"We are so grateful to have Mr. Buss on our team at PRT," Principal Dr. Jenna Jones said. "He is so deserving of this award. Mr. Buss works tirelessly every day to make a lasting impact on his students' lives through positive relationships, engaging instruction and making sure all of their voices are heard. He is a fantastic teammate, humble and always does what is best for kids. Congratulations to Taylor from his Husky family!"

As the Kansas Teacher of the Year, Bussinger traveled around the state to advocate for education and provide professional development for his fellow teachers. Bussinger was presented with a \$4,000 cash award, the Kansas Teacher of the Year Lifelong Learning Scholarship to attend participating universities free of charge during his duration of teaching in Kansas, funding for travel and other expenses with the Hubbard Foundation Kansas Teacher of the Year Ambassadorship, a Jostens, Inc. Leader in Education ring and the use of a rental car from Enterprise Rent-a-Car for Kansas Teacher of the Year travel all school year long.

"I'm incredibly honored and humbled to have accepted the Kansas Teacher of the Year award on behalf of these educators," Bussinger said. "I want to thank my family, friends, coworkers, the Olathe School District, my PRT school community, and, most importantly, the young people I've had the privilege to teach and learn from. My job has allowed me to figure out who I really am and for that I'm forever grateful."

"Mr. Buss works tirelessly every day to make a lasting impact on his students' lives..."

DR. JENNA JONES
Prairie Trail Middle
School Principal

There were 124 educators across the state nominated for the prestigious award with eight finalists being chosen at the state level. The Kansas State Department of Education appoints regional selection

panels comprised of teachers, district administrators and higher education representatives to select semifinalists and finalists from each region.

"As a former history teacher, it is truly an honor to announce Taylor as the 2024 Kansas Teacher of the Year," Dr. Watson said. "He brings history alive for his students at Prairie Trail and continuously inspires curiosity in them. I want to wish Taylor and the members of the 2024 Kansas Teacher of the Year team success as they travel across the state during 2024 representing Kansas education."





District: At a Glance

ENROLLMENT: 28,619

- Second-largest district in Kansas
- Largest district in Kansas City metro on either side of the Kansas-Missouri state line

NUMBER OF STAFF: 4,743

- 2.790 Certified staff
- 1,953 Classified support staff
- Average experience of classroom teachers: 15 years
- 8 Kansas Teachers of the Year
- 20 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching

 Olathe Public Schools is the fourth-largest employer and the third-largest public employer in the KC metro area.

SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS

- 36 Elementary schools (Grades K-5)
- 10 Middle schools (Grades 6-8)
- 5 High schools (Grades 9-12)
- eAcademy
- · Claire Learning Center
- Harmony and Heartland early childhood centers and Head Start Program
- Mill Creek Campus
- · Olathe Advanced Technical Center

- Prairie Learning Center
- West Dennis Learning Center



Strong Foundation of Learning and Student Involvement

LEARNING RESULTS

- 2023 ACT composite average: 22.1
 - Kansas Average: 19.9
 - National Average: 20.3
- 18 National Merit finalists in 2023

ACCREDITATION

 All schools accredited by the state of Kansas

GRADUATION RATE

• 91.2%

PROGRAMS

• Tiered math instruction at the middle level, including advanced classes

- Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) for increasing college readiness at all high schools
- 21st Century Academies
- Two-year Career and Technical Education programs at the Olathe Advanced Technical Center
- College-level classes Advanced
 Placement and College Now courses
 (dual-enrollment for college credit)
- eAcademy online education
- Physical fitness offerings at all levels
- Fine arts offerings at all levels visual

arts, general music, choral, orchestra, band and theatre

COLLEGE LEVEL COURSES

- 23 Advanced Placement courses
- 46 College Now courses
- 5 College Board College Level Equivalency Program (CLEP)
 Assessments offered

ACTIVITIES AND ATHLETICS

- 80 percent of students in grades 5-12 are involved in one or more activity or athletic opportunity
- Olathe's rich activity and athletic programs create a well-rounded student population





Outstanding Staff

- 2024 Rising Star Award from the Community for Coaches organization Anders Hanson, Olathe East High School
- One of seven 2024 Kansas State University High School Science Teacher of the Year awards Rhonda Reist, Olathe North High School
- Named by the Kansas State Department of Education as one of three state mathematics finalists for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching — Lindsay Croft, Central Elementary School
- Area 1 High School Principal of the Year as named by the Kansas Principals Association Chris Zuck,
 Olathe Northwest High School
- Latinx Counselor of the Year award from the Latinx Education Collaborative Samanta Landa, Olathe North High School
- 2024 Kansas Master Teacher Sara Hoffman, Canyon Creek Elementary School
- Section 5 Boys' Track and Field Coach of the Year as named by the National Federation of State High School Associations — Levi Huseman, Olathe North High School

Outstanding Staff

- Kansas State High School Activities Association Hall of Fame class of 2024 Jeff Hulse, Olathe East High School, retired
- One of three winners of the Principal Advocate Award from the Kansas School Counselor Association —
 Greg Oborny, Regency Place Elementary School
- $\bullet \ \ \text{Kansas Athletic Trainers' Society Hall of Fame inductee} \text{Wayne Harmon, Olathe North High School}\\$
- Top 10 finalist for the 2023 National History Teacher of the Year Award Rachel Swearengin, Manchester Park Elementary School
- 2024 Kansas Teacher of the Year as named by the Kansas State Department of Education Taylor Bussinger, Prairie Trail Middle School
- 2023 Kansas History Teacher of the Year as named by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History
 Rachel Swearengin, Manchester Park Elementary School







Outstanding District and Schools

- No. 4 Best Employer in Kansas as named by Forbes Magazine
- Third-best public school district in the Kansas City metropolitan area according to Ingram's magazine
- 2024 Best Communities for Music Education as named by the National Association of Music Merchants
- 2024 In-Print Award Graphic Communications Department
- Bronze status on the 2023 Advanced Placement Program School Honor Roll Olathe Northwest High School
- One of 726 schools in 36 countries to be named an Apple Distinguished School Central Elementary School
- Among the top 10 public schools in Kansas as named by U.S. News and World Report Olathe Northwest High School
- Civic Advocacy Network Award from the Kansas State Department of Education Heatherstone Elementary School, for its farm to table program

Outstanding Students

- Blue Star Ceremony Ensemble Scholarship Award Delainey Mock, Olathe East High School
- Blue Star Community Impact Award Olathe South High School
- Blue Star Outstanding Orchestra Olathe East High School for their performance of "Sister Act"
- Blue Star Outstanding Lead Performer Sydney Carter as Deloris Van Cartier in "Sister Act"
- Qualified for the International Science and Engineering Fair Mahi Kohli, Olathe North High School
- Qualified for the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium national event Mahi Kohli, Olathe North High School
- Two of the four Grand Awards given at the Greater Kansas City Science and Engineering Fair —
 Soyee Cho and Mahi Kohli of Olathe North High School
- One of 45 recipients of the Rudd Scholars full-ride scholarship program Martha Garcia, Olathe West High School
- First-place honors in the Kansas Association of Broadcasters competition Adam Donner, Emma Stanfield and Evan Stanfield of Olathe Northwest High School
- Kansas Career and Technical Education Scholars Zeina Adnan, Audrey Bryant, Adriana J. Cazares,
 Alexandria Decker, Mikayla Ezala, Avalyn Gehlen, Malorie McRostie, Anna Persaud, Reese Pritchard
 and Chloe Tyrrell of Olathe East High School; Lizbeth Garcia-Crisanto and Scarlett Shade of Olathe
 North High School; Kellan Quinn of Olathe Northwest High School; Belinda Chen of Olathe South
 High School; Laci Lester, Addison Smith, Ellen Steer and Elizabeth Taylor of Olathe West High School





Outstanding Students

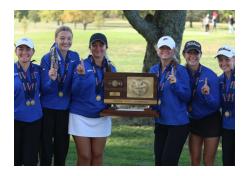
- Gold medals in the Kansas SkillsUSA championships Jordan Chenoweth, Cameron Fehrenbacher and Addie Johnson, Olathe Advanced Technical Center
- Five top-10 finishers in the KC BizFest business competition for high school students
- First place at the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium regional competition Mahi Kohli,
 Olathe North High School
- First place in the Overall Culinary competition of the Kansas ProStart Invitational Olathe Advanced Technical Center team
- Regional Science Bowl champions Olathe North High School team
- 2024 National High School Spirit of Sport Award from the National Federation of State High School Associations — Merik Dismang, Olathe East High School
- Spirit of Sport Award from the Kansas State High School Activities Association Student Advisory
 Team Merik Dismang, Olathe East High School
- Thespy performances at the 2024 Kansas Thespian Festival Lake Sowles, Olathe South High School, Solo Musical; Tess Conner-Ortiz and Lilyanna Brown, Olathe North High School, Duet Musical Dance; Evan McCoy, Aidan Davis and Aaron Shirley, Olathe West High School, Group Musical
- 2024 Kansas Thespian Festival top honors second place in Creative Costumes, Olathe Northwest High School; first and third place in Quiz Bowl, Olathe North High School; second place in Tech Challenge, Olathe West High School

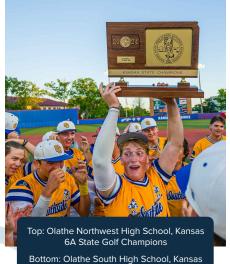
Outstanding Students

- Top 20 finalist in the Burns & McDonnell Battle of the Brains STEM competition Olathe East High School team
- Selected as president of the Area 1 Kansas Association for Youth (KAY) Elsie Cordell, Mission Trail Middle School
- Placement at Northeast Educators Rising Regional Conference, advancing to state Brooklyn Bowers, Halle Bruss, Hailey France, Isabella Hermansen, Colt Hughey, Khloe Luckey, Madisynn Milstead, Olathe East High School
- National Merit Semifinalists Ruoping Li, Olathe East High School; Sahitha Chunduru, Andrew Dai, Edward Eastland, Soren Flannery, Anjali Hocker Singh, Luke Hui, David Lye, Anna Mayfield, Luke Montemayor, Landon Pribyl and Eva Smith, Olathe North High School; Andrea Diehl, Ian Edwards and Ella Novion, Olathe Northwest High School; Logan Carr, Jakob Kuehnen, Garrett Ledford and John McCarthy, Olathe South High School; Caleb Chacon and Connor Lyons, Olathe West High School
- Third in the National Catholic Forensic League Grand National Tournament Isabella Foster and Hannah Cleveland, Olathe North High School









6A State Baseball Champions

Outstanding Student Athletes

FALL

- The Olathe Northwest High School girls' golf team won the title, officially making them back-to-back state championship winners.
- The Olathe West girls' cross-country team placed first at state.
- Olathe North senior Anjali Hocker Singh won the girls state title for the fourth year in a row, which has only been accomplished by an individual seven times in state history.
- The Olathe East boys' soccer team won its fifth state title in school history.
- The Olathe North gymnastics team won the 6A state championship.
- Olathe Northwest junior Emmy Keller placed first in all-around and bars.
- Olathe North senior Lindsey Ray placed first in beam and floor.
- The Olathe Northwest dance team won its second state title in program history.

WINTER

- Olathe South sophomore Nicole Redmond won the 6A state girls wrestling title in the 120-pound weight class.
- Olathe West junior Makayla Rivera won the 6A state girls wrestling title in the 235-pound weight class.

Outstanding Student Athletes

- Olathe North juniors Cael Alderman and Alec Samuelson won the 6A state boys wrestling title in the 126-pound weight class and 152-pound weight class, respectively.
- Olathe East senior Keaton Kristoff won the 200 Individual Medley and 100 Backstroke at the 6A state swimming championship.
- Olathe East won the 200 Medley Relay team state swimming title, which included seniors Keaton Kristoff and Micah Leslie and juniors John Costello and Kobe Otero.
- Olathe East senior Micah Leslie won the 100 Butterfly at the 6A state swimming championship.
- Olathe East won the 400 Freestyle Relay state swimming title, which included seniors Micah Leslie, Keaton Kristoff, Garrett Seyler and Blake Nelson.

SPRING

- The Olathe South baseball team won the 6A state championship.
- The Olathe West boys golf team won the 6A state championship.
- The Olathe West boys track team won the 6A state championship.
- The Olathe Northwest girls track won the 6A state championship.
- The Olathe Northwest softball team won the 6A state championship.
- Olathe North senior student Ian Quarles won first place in pole vault.





Outstanding Student Athletes

- Olathe North senior Elijah Madden won first place in long jump and triple jump.
- Olathe South junior Dylan Plath won first place in the 800M Dash.
- Olathe West junior Dayton Richardson won first place in the 400M Dash.
- Olathe West students Braeden Gillam, Bryce Austin, Dylan Velasco and Tevyn Gasaway won the 4 X 100 state track and field championship.
- Olathe West students Gunnar Hornung, Isaac Shilling, Logan Montgomery and Owen Diediker won the 4 X 100 state track and field championship.
- Olathe Northwest senior Val Galligan won first place in discus, javelin and shot put.
- Olathe West senior Bree Newport won first place in the 1600M Dash.
- Olathe West students Jasmine Stiede, Kolby Brown, Laynie Clements and Kalyn Willingham won first place in the 4 X 800 track and field relay.
- · Olathe East freshman Irene Gettya won first place in diving.

Financial Statement - Percentage of Budget

Mill Levy

General Fund	
Supplemental General	
Capital Outlay	
Special Liability0.18	
Extraordinary Growth 2.47	12
Cost of Living	54
Bond & Interest	8(
Special Assessments	19
Total 63.48	2

Sources Of Revenue (Operating Funds)

Local & County Taxes	59,754,529
State Funds	258,873,909
Federal	
Total	\$327,192,066

Assessed Valuation

\$3.246.594.976

Base State Aid Per Pupil

2022-23			 	 \$4,846
2023-24			 	 \$5,088
An increa	ise of 4	199%		. ,

Operating Fund Expenditures By Function Area

Instructional Services
Support Services - Students
Support Services - Instruction
Support Services - General Administration 3,305,045
Support Services - School Administration 24,317,265
Central Services
Operations & Maintenance Services 13,794,153
Transportation Services
Other
Total \$328.146.826

Operating Fund Expenditures By Object Area

Salaries & Benefits 289,008,166 Professional & Technical Services .4,185,256 Purchased Property Services .743,616 Other Purchased Services 4,598,841 Supplies & Materials 6,830,328 Equipment/Property .320,658 Utilities 7,020,381 Transportation 15,326,593 Other .139,987
Other

Operating Budget Per Pupil

Operating Total\$328,146,826
Student Enrollment 2023-24
Total\$11,399.13

