

Board Report
Technology Department
September 2026

What a great start to the school year! Things have been running smoothly, and we have lots of great things happening with technology for our students and teachers.

Our back-to-school training with teachers went well. We had great discussions about cell phone and social media policies and use. We also focused on responsible use of Artificial Intelligence in the classroom, worked through the official policy and the district “operating document” for best practices, and trained with both ChatGPT for Teachers and SchoolAI. The education-specific tools meet the standards set out by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Over the past year, across the nation there has been a lot of talk about limiting screen time with students, and we’ve had those discussions too. The Kansas Board of Education has been having meetings focused on screen time throughout the summer, and they are expected to make recommendations in the coming months. As a district, we have always believed in a technology-infusion model, meaning the technology should be infused into the learning that it almost seems like it isn’t there. We’ve never had the belief that every lesson needs technology; teachers have never been required to include technology in a lesson. We have always said – teach your lesson using the best resources – if that resource happens to be a worksheet made 30 years ago -- use it. If the lesson is best taught with a computer-simulation – use it. At this point, we will continue to focus on best-use practices and have asked teachers to make conscious efforts to think about how, when, and how much technology they are using with students.

Christy Hess and I attended the Kansas Kids Count Day workshop to review needs for the upcoming enrollment count day and data submissions for the school year, and I’ll be attending the Career and Technical Education coordinator’s workshop on September 24th to learn about current and upcoming changes in the state’s CTE programs.

There’s a lot of great hands-on, learning-centered uses of technology happening in the buildings!

At the elementary school, Fall AIMSweb testing has been completed which contains a technology-based component for testing and scoring. Computer lab rotations have begun. During the first two weeks, the focus has been on the “Wildcat Way Digital” curriculum. We are teaching students what it means to be safe, responsible, and respectful Wildcats in the classroom and online.

At Burlington Middle School, Fastbridge testing is complete. In the fifth-grade technology rotation, students have been developing important digital literacy skills by learning how to check their grades in Skyward and use Microsoft Outlook to communicate safely and responsibly through email. Fifth-grade students also explored a variety of Microsoft Word tools, including adjusting font size and color, centering text, and using other formatting features. They concluded the lesson by learning how to save, organize, and locate their documents in OneDrive.

Mrs. Haller shared: In 6th grade we used Microsoft Word to create collages over Family Traditions. In 7th grade, the students completed a WebQuest over the New Food Pyramid and recommendations from the USDA. The students are also using Kahoot and Blooket to create study tools for their first unit test. I’ve used ChatGPT for teachers to reduce assignments for students on IEP’s. It’s been great because I can upload the assignment I have already created, give it guidelines of how much needs to be reduced and what kind of format I want it in, and it will create it for me. I have also used it to help me create a meal planning project for students, by giving it my standard, the guidelines of what I wanted the students to do, and the grade level. Then I’m able to take that same assignment and have it modify the project to meet individual student needs.

Students in Mrs. Over's class used Canva to make Vision Boards for social-emotional learning in Cat time. Her students also used a shared PowerPoint to collaborate on research over Kansas history.

At the high school, students in Mrs. Gifford's English classes have used Word and Canva to create and update their resumes.

Mr. Over's students created animated caricatures as Patriots of the Revolutionary War, and he uses Microsoft Teams to share assignments and have students submit their work. They also use Gimkit and Kahoot for review. He has also used features in SchoolAI for bellringer activities and used VideoExplorer in SchoolAI which stops videos at different points to ask students question about the content.

Ms. Carden and her students have been using Inkscape and SolidEdge to create projects and then transferring the designs to the new CNC torch cutter.

In Mr. Bruening's science, students are creating, sharing, and modifying data in Excel documents including data run analysis. Engineering students are using CAD software and 3-D printing slicing software to design a create prototypes and projects. Physics class is studying the physics of Minecraft for Education, creating Redstone timers, calculating velocity on different terrains, and finding acceleration due to gravity using Minecraft. He also uses his Newline board to annotate over PowerPoints and use the "Glass feature" to show examples over PDFs of worksheets.

Mrs. Ecton shared that internship students share a document out to her at the beginning of the year, and there are assignments and interviews which they must conduct throughout their internship. She is able to check their continued progress at any time through the shared document and can comment back to them regularly.