

# Community students graduate ESU

EMPORIA — Emporia State University announced its list of more than 500 student who graduated in May.

Students from this area include Taylor Hahn, Allen, with a Bachelor of Science in Sociology; Ashley Araiza, Auburn, with a Master of Library Science with a concentration in Archives Studies; Haley Atwood, Auburn, summa cum laude, with a B.S. in Education in Elementary Education; Miah McCue, Burlingame, with a Master of Science in Health, Physical Education & Coaching; Audrey Berthot, Lebo, with a Bachelor of Music in Music with concentrations in Music Education and Spanish; Colin Whalen, Lebo, with a Bachelor of Science in Health and

Human Performance; Emmarie Miller, Melvern, with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology; Carly Spicer, Osage City, with a Master of Science in School Counseling; Austin Michaelis, Overbrook, with a B.S. in Education in Speech & Theatre; Reid Crawford, Reading, with a Bachelor of Science in Sport Leadership & Recreation; Maximus Kelly, Reading, with a B.S. in Business in Business Administration; Abby Peek, Reading, magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Health and Human Performance; Adrienne Greenfield, Scranton, cum laude with a B.S. in Education in Biology and Earth Science; and McKenzie Jacobs, Scranton, with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

# Area students graduate, make honor roll

WICHITA — More than 1,950 students completed a total of 2,122 degrees and certificates at Wichita State University (WSU) in spring 2025. Undergraduate students who have attained a GPA of 3.9 out of a possible 4.0 received the summa cum laude award; those with an average of 3.55 received the magna cum laude award; and those with an average of 3.25 received the cum laude.

Area students who completed degrees include Dalton Sporing, Burlingame, Doctor of Physical Therapy, Physical Therapy; Avery Rush, Eskridge, Bachelor of Arts in Education, ECU/Elementary Education Apprentice, cum laude; Aubrey Beyer, Lyndon, Master of Arts, Communication Sciences

and Disorders; Kali Moon, Lyndon, Bachelor of Arts, Anthropology, summa cum laude; and Amber Gist, Overbrook, Master of Arts in Teaching, Teaching-Early Childhood Unified.

WSU also announced more than 3,700 students who were named to the dean's honor roll. To be included on the dean's honor roll, a student must be enrolled full time and earn at least a 3.5 GPA.

Students from this area who made the list include Ann Fawl, Carbondale; Avery Rush and Matthew Shults, Eskridge; Kali Moon and Kylie Ratzloff, Lyndon; Braden Reed, Melvern; and Gavin DeBaun, Bryson Murphy and McKenna Stump, Osage City.

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with the student paying the remainder; combination locker set at \$5; and season passes, \$50 for a single pass, free for seniors over age 60.

Other items approved include 2025-2026 meal prices; mileage rate of 70 cents per mile reimbursement; substitute teacher pay set at \$125 per day; the activity funds report; certified resignation; and certified employment. In addition, Jamie Bowman was appointed as the special education board member representative, with Pam Masters as first alternate and Audrey Ross as second alternate; Melissa Droege as KASB Governmental Relations Network representative; and Melissa Droege, Pam Masters and Krista Rowley as negotiation representatives.

Five additional executive sessions were held. The first was to discuss potential candidates for employment pursuant to non-elected personnel exception under KOMA; the second and third were to discuss certified employee performance pursuant to non-elected personnel exception under KOMA; the fourth was to discuss classified

employee wages pursuant to non-elected personnel exception under KOMA; and the fifth executive session was to discuss supplemental employee performance pursuant to non-elected personnel exception under KOMA.

There were no communications made to the Board, but an agriculture program update was provided.

There was no administrative report or Three Lakes report.

**In other action, the Board:**

- approved payment of the warrants and treasurer's reports.
- approved the classified wage recommendations for the 2025-2026 school year.
- approved the employment of Jordyn Green as agriculture teacher for the 2025-2026 school year.
- approved the certified and classified handbooks with recommended changes.
- approved the junior-senior high school student/parent handbook for 2025-2026 school year with corrections.
- approved the EVCO milk bid for the 2025-2026 school year.
- approved the Three Lakes Educational Cooperative lease addendum.

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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Do you have any information about an Osage County Crime?

Call Osage County Crimestoppers

877-OSCRIME (672-7463)

# State basketball sites and format set for 2026-27

TOPEKA — The Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA) State Basketball Tournament format and sites have been selected for the next two seasons.

In 2026, the 1A Division I semifinals and finals will be played at United Wireless Arena in Dodge City. The 2A and 1A Division II semifinals and finals will be played at White Auditorium in Emporia, while the 3A and 4A semifinals and finals will be played at The Hutchinson Sports Arena at Hutchinson Community College. In the largest school classifications, 5A and 6A semifinals and finals will be played at Koch Arena at Wichita State University. This will mark the first time since 1953 when state championship games of multiple classes were played at the same place.

In 2027, both Divisions of 1A semifinals and finals will be played at Tony's Pizza Events Center in Salina. Class 2A and Class 4A semifinals and finals will be played at Bramlage Coliseum in Manhattan. The 3A semifinals and finals will be played at The Sports Arena at Hutchinson Community College. The 5A and 6A semifinals will be played at White Auditorium in Emporia.

"The KSHSAA is an association of member schools, and the school leaders have asked for class consolidation of championships," said KSHSAA Executive Director Bill Fafllick. "This new format will achieve that result and provide a greater focus on the student athletes competing at the highest level with four state title games being played consecutively on championship Saturday. This modification allows basketball to follow the

recently implemented format for championship soccer and football championship games. With more titles being determined at one location, the atmosphere in the championship arenas will be at an all-time high."

The state tournament begins with the quarterfinal round, which will be hosted at seven venues in five cities. To advance to the semifinals and finals sites, teams will need to win the state quarterfinal round games which will be played at United Wireless Arena, Tony's Pizza Events Center in Salina, Mabee Arena at Kansas Wesleyan University, Koch Arena, Garvey Center at Friends University, White Auditorium and the Kansas City Kansas Community College Fieldhouse in Kansas City.

The 2026 state basketball tournament quarterfinals schedule includes:

- 6A, 4A and 2A girls and 5A, 3A and 1A boys quarterfinals March 10 at United Wireless Arena, Koch Arena, Friends University, Tony's Pizza Events Center, Kansas Wesleyan University, White Auditorium, KCKCC Fieldhouse.
- 5A, 3A and 1A girls and 6A, 4A and 2A boys quarterfinals March 11 at United Wireless Arena, Koch Arena, Friends University, Tony's Pizza Events Center, Kansas Wesleyan University, White Auditorium, KCKCC Fieldhouse.

The quarterfinal round games are determined by proximity to the higher seed, not class. The highest four seeds of the state tournament will be placed as close to home as possible in the 28 quarterfinal round games across the state. If the distance from the lower seed is

greater than 250 miles from where the game would be played near the higher seed, that game will be played at one of the quarterfinal sites centrally located. State brackets will not be reseeded after the state quarterfinals.

"With the top four seeds earning the right to play close to home, the quarterfinal rounds will provide a better environment and experience allowing more friends and family to attend the quarterfinal round," said Kyle Doperalski, KSHSAA Assistant Executive Director and Basketball Administrator. "This new format is a win for teams and school communities with an incredible atmosphere of four state championship games in the same venue on the same day. Fans and media, along with non-advancing teams and coaches, will have less decisions to make about what site to go to and watch the teams and players they want to see at the state tournament."

The dates of the quarterfinal games are March 10-11, 2026, and March 9-10, 2027. The dates of the semifinals and finals are March 12-14, 2026, and March 11-13, 2027.

Two years ago, the membership expressed desire through the October Regional Administrator Meetings to combine classes at the state basketball tournament. Each class individually supported this concept. Working with the host sites to ensure top level tournament management, it was determined that the best course of action is the final four in each class advance to the site of the semifinals and finals, with state quarterfinal games being played in proximity to the higher seed at neutral/college sites.

# Commission

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plan, which includes ADA compliance, user training, and an estimated six- to eight-month redesign process. The first-year cost would total \$19,526, with subsequent annual service fees of \$8,886 – similar to the county's current rate. Commissioners requested a formal presentation before

finalizing any decision.

The commission adjourned with plans to continue budget discussions at the next regular meeting.

**In other action, the Board:**

- approved payroll in the amount of \$712,685.19.
- passed two resolutions to transition the sheriff's deputies to the Kansas Police and Fire-

men's Retirement System (KPF), effective Jan. 1, 2026. Optional group life insurance was also approved under the system.

- accepted a bid for 2025 asphalt work from Bettis Asphalt totaling \$930,394.20.
- approved payment of \$1,913,246 for bills.
- approved personnel changes, including the resignation of Emily Ham and the hiring of Mia Escalante in the sheriff's

department.

- recessed briefly to convene as the Public Building Commission (PBC) and approved a \$102,173.69 payment to Goldberg Group Architects.
- discussed budget hearing scheduling and other budgetary planning, including concerns about increasing costs for health insurance, KPNF contributions, and long-term capital needs.

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Education regular board meetings will be held at 6 p.m. the second Wednesday of each month, in the high school media center.

Patty Brenner was appointed as the Freedom of Information officer, and also as the food service representative. Superintendent Ted Hessong was authorized to transfer funds as needed, was appointed as the hearing officer for free and reduced-price meal application appeals, was appointed as the compliance coordinator for the Federal/Title Programs/Section 504, and was also appointed as the coordinator for Homeless Children and Educational Services. Fred Pallesi as appointed as the District Asbestos representative.

Classified handbooks and student handbooks were provided to the Board to review for approval at a later date.

Hessong will provide the Board with the RNR rates prior to sending them to the county clerk on July 18. Hessong discussed the process on the steps to go through to have the budget approved, and reviewed quotes for the Managed Technology Provider.

After much discussion, Hessong recommended having Ali Nunez manage technology for the district for a trial period.

Hessong and Lohmeyer gave the Three Lakes report.

Hessong then gave his monthly report, which included that online enrollment will open July 28, with in-person enrollment Aug. 5-6. Teachers will report to school Aug. 12, with students starting Aug 15. Pallesi reported on summer maintenance in the district.

The Board recessed at 7:40 p.m. for a tour of the district, and returned to the board room at 8:40 p.m. The Board then went into executive session with Hessong to discuss negotiations topics matters pursuant to exception for employer-employee negotiations under KOMA. There was no action taken upon return to open session, and the meeting was adjourned.

**In other action, the board:**

- adopted the 1,116 Hour Resolution, which states that the school term for 2025-2026 shall consist of a minimum of 465 hours for kindergarten, 1,116 hours for grades 1-11, and 1,086 hours for grade 12.
- adopted the Home

Rule Resolution.

- adopted a resolution to waive the annual requirement of general accepted accounting principles and fixed asset accounting for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025.
- adopted a resolution, which states that all policy statements found in the minutes of the Board of Education prior to July 1, 2025, be rescinded, and the Board of Education adopt the policy manual as presented and recommended by the superintendent of schools, to govern the school district during the 2025-2026 school year, subject to periodic review, amendment, and revision by the Board of Education.
- approved the minutes of the June 11 regular board meeting.
- approved the treasurer's report of June 30.
- reimbursed petty cash funds in the amount of \$160.64 for the elementary school, \$32.91 for the middle school, \$51.92 for the high school, and \$45 for the superintendent.
- approved payment of bills in the amount of

\$550,093.67 for July 9.

- approved June, July, and August 2025 payroll in the amount of \$1,552,033.63.
- approved the recommendation of the proposed KASB policy updates.
- approved continuing with Blue Cross Blue Shield as the district's health plan carrier.
- named OFG Financial through Bay Bridge Administrators, LLC as the district's cafeteria plan carrier.
- set petty cash limits at \$350 for the superintendent, and at \$200 each for the high school, middle school and elementary school.
- established the mileage reimbursement rate at 70 cents per mile for the 2025-2026 school year.
- established the substitute teacher pay rate at \$125 per day for the 2025-2026 school year.
- added the Cardiac Emergency Response Team to the district's emergency operations plan.
- approved hosting a faculty-staff luncheon Aug. 15 in the cafeteria.

DEMOLITION DERBY

\$ 15,000 Total purse

Classes: Bonestock 80s

• Bonestock Compact

• Van/SUV/Truck

Driver Fee: \$50 • Pit Pass: \$25

General Admission: \$ 15 adults/\$5 children (6 & under)

Saturday, July 26 • 7 p.m.

Memorial Stadium, Kelley Park - Burlington

Sponsored by Coffey County Fair Association

PUBLIC AUCTION

SATURDAY, JULY 19 • 9 A.M.

1390 Osborne Rd., Pomona, KS

4 miles east of Pomona, 1 mile north on Idaho Rd., 1/2 west on Osborne.

PROJECT VEHICLES – TRUCK & CART PARTS & EQUIPMENT – COLLECTIBLES – HOUSEHOLD

seller: **Tanner & Amanda Thill**

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Photos and complete sale bill on [www.kansasauctions.net](http://www.kansasauctions.net)