
2025
ENROLLED • ENLISTED • EMPLOYED
ANNUAL
REPORT

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PIONEER PARK





WE ARE LPS

Offering a wide range of courses and extracurricular activities, the district continues to expand its educational opportunities by providing Makerspaces at every pre-K through fifth-grade site.

In addition, high school course offerings are available to seventh and eighth graders, and the Life Ready Center (LRC) continues to grow its number of offerings to include various Advanced Placement (AP) classes, concurrent enrollment courses, trade and skill course offerings, fine arts programs, as well as FFA and ag programs.

The district greatly expanded virtual learning opportunities to accommodate students who prefer to do work outside a traditional classroom. In addition, LPS is a 1:1 district with technology devices.

Preparing for the road ahead, LPS students work through one of four pathways: college, career, military, or trade. While enrolled at LPS, students can attend concurrent enrollment and/or technology courses for free. This includes books and fees and enables students to take college-level courses while still earning their high school diploma. Through initiatives and partnerships, LPS sets the standard for academic excellence in Southwest Oklahoma and across the state.

LPS is committed to ensuring all students have access to interest-specific educational opportunities in a safe and welcoming environment. Over the past few years, LPS has been able to upgrade its athletic facilities by replacing turf at all three high schools and building multipurpose facilities containing locker rooms for girls' athletics, concession stands and public restrooms.

A major project during the 2025-26 school year will be the construction of a combination gym/safe room at one of its elementary schools. The facility will provide an indoor space for students to play and learn as well as meeting the district's goal of providing safe rooms at all of its sites.

Recognizing that not all students are college bound, LPS has expanded its offerings of career courses, ensuring that students are employable when they graduate from high school. Courses include welding and construction trades, two career fields with a shortage of workers.

Every day at LPS is a collaboration between educators, parents, citizens, and community partners coming together to motivate and exhilarate young minds. LPS is preparing Life Ready Graduates!

Meet our BOARD OF EDUCATION

Each board member serves a five-year term, with one board position up for election annually. Fort Sill is represented on the board through a non-voting member appointed by the post's commanding general. Board member representation is determined by the physical address of each member. Each member is elected by voters in their respective areas.

Beginning in 2026, Board of Education meetings will be held once a month at Shoemaker Education Center Auditorium, 753 Fort Sill Blvd. Meetings are open to the public. Meeting agendas are posted on the district's website at lawtonps.org 24 hours before each meeting and are livestreamed on the district's LPS TV YouTube channel.



CARLA CLODFELTER
PAST PRESIDENT, AREA 1

Carla Clodfelter has been on the Board of Education since February 2016. She serves Area 1 which includes voting precincts 13, 14, 30, 36, 38, 51 and 52. Schools in Area 1 include Pat Henry Elementary, Freedom Elementary, Pioneer Park Elementary, Central Middle School and Lawton High School. Clodfelter graduated from Lawton High School in 1981 and attended Cameron University.



PATTY NEUWIRTH
PRESIDENT, AREA 2

Patty Neuwirth has served for more than 16 years on the Board of Education. She serves Area 2, which includes voting precincts 3, 8, 11, 15, 45 and 48. Schools in Area 2 include Almor West, Cleveland, Edison, Eisenhower Elementary, Eisenhower Middle School, Eisenhower High School, Learning Tree Academy and Ridgecrest. Neuwirth earned a degree in business from Oklahoma State University and moved to Lawton in 1971.



ELIZABETH FABREGA

VICE PRESIDENT, AREA 3

Elizabeth Fabrega joined the Board of Education in December 2022. She represents Area 3, which includes voting precincts 26, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 43 and 49. Schools in Area 3 include Carriage Hills, Sullivan Village, Lincoln, Pioneer Park, MacArthur Middle School and MacArthur High School. She is a native of Thibodaux, La., and moved to Lawton in 2011.



AMANDA MCBRIDE

BOARD CLERK, AREA 4

Amanda McBride joined the Board of Education in 2024 and represents Area 4. Voting precincts in Area 4 include 1, 2, 7, 9, and 50. Schools in Area 4 include Almor West, Brockland, Learning Center, Crosby Park, Edison, Eisenhower Elementary, Hugh Bish, Woodland Hills, Eisenhower Middle School and Eisenhower High School. McBride is a Lawton native. She graduated from Eisenhower High school in 2003 and attended Cameron University, majoring in business.



ZELDON RICE

MEMBER, AREA 5

Zeldon Rice joined the Board of Education in 2020 and represents Area 5. Voting precincts include 13, 17, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28 and 32. Schools in Area 5 include Cleveland, Lincoln, New Horizons Learning Center, Whittier, Central Middle School and Lawton High School. Rice first came to Lawton in 1974 as a member of the United States Army. He is a former educator and was employed by Lawton Public Schools, retiring in January 2018 as director of Information Technology.

THE DISTRICT

EISENHOWER HIGH
PRINCIPAL: KALLAN GLASGOW

5202 NW GORE
(580) 355-9144

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/EHS
@IKEEAGLES

EISENHOWER MIDDLE
PRINCIPAL: ODELL GUNTER

5702 NW GORE
(580) 353-1040

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/EMS
@LAWTONEMSVIKINGS

LAWTON HIGH
PRINCIPAL: TRAVIS POOL

601 FT. SILL BLVD
(580) 355-5170

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/LHS
@LAWTONHIGHSCHOOL

CENTRAL MIDDLE
PRINCIPAL: JULIANE HARDEMAN

1201 NW FT. SILL BLVD
(580) 355-8544

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/CMS
@LAWTONCENTRALMS

MACARTHUR HIGH
PRINCIPAL: ANDREA TRACY

4400 E GORE
(580) 355-5230

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/MHS
@MHSHIGHLANDERS

MACARTHUR MIDDLE
PRINCIPAL: LISA CULLISON

510 NE 45TH
(580) 353-5111

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/MMS
@HOMEOFTHESCOTS

LIFE READY CENTER
PRINCIPAL: LINDSEY HOERBERT

702 NW HOMESTEAD
(580) 585-6416

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/LRC
@LPSLRC

BROCKLAND
PRINCIPAL: KATIE CAUGHRON

6205 NW FERRIS AVE
(580) 353-0171

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/PREK
@BROCKLANDLEARNINGCENTER

LAWTON VIRTUAL
PRINCIPAL: JENNIFER MASON

102 E GORE
(580) 215-0255

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/LVA
@LVAANYWHERE

LEARNING TREE
PRINCIPAL: KELLY JONES

1908 NW 38TH
(580) 355-6197

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/PREK
@THELEARNINGTREEACADEMY

GATEWAY
PRINCIPAL: JENNIFER MASON

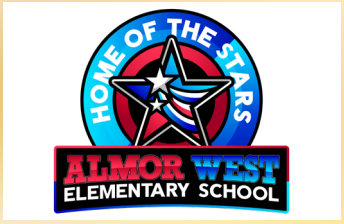
102 E GORE
(580) 353-4903

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/GSC
@LVAANYWHERE

NEW HORIZONS
PRINCIPAL: TREVAN WYATT

900 NW CACHE RD
(580) 956-8023

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/PREK
@LPSNEWHORIZONSLEARNINGCENTER



ALMOR WEST

PRINCIPAL: ELLEN DRISKILL

6902 NW DELTA

(580) 536-6006

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/AWE

@ALMORWESTELEMENTARYSCHOOL



LINCOLN

PRINCIPAL: STEPHANIE SHIPLEY

601 SW PARK

(580) 355-4799

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/LIN

@LINCOLNELEMENTARYRAIDER



CARRIAGE HILLS

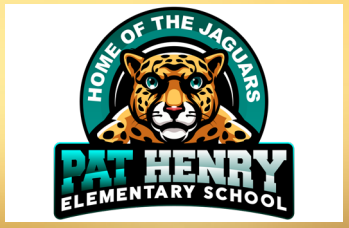
PRINCIPAL: KIM HARRISON

212 SE WARWICK WAY

(580) 248-6161

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/CHE

@CARRIAGEHILLSELEMENTARY



PAT HENRY

PRINCIPAL: ELLA SNAVELY

1401 NW BESSIE

(580) 355-2617

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/PHE

@PATHENRYJAGUARS



CLEVELAND

PRINCIPAL: SHELBY CARPENTER

1202 SW 27TH

(580) 353-8861

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/CLE

@CLEVELANDFALCONS



PIONEER PARK

PRINCIPAL: ASHLEY MCPHAIL

3005 NE ANGUS

(580) 355-5844

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/PPE

@PIONEERPARKELEMENTARY



CROSBY PARK

PRINCIPAL: JR HOYT

1602 NW HORTON BLVD

(580) 353-7107

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/CPE

@CROSBYPARKELEMENTARYLONGHORNS



RIDGECREST

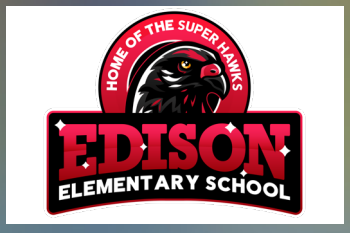
PRINCIPAL: OSCAR CASTRO

1614 NW 47TH

(580) 355-6033

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/RGE

@RIDGECRESTHAWKS.LAWTON



EDISON

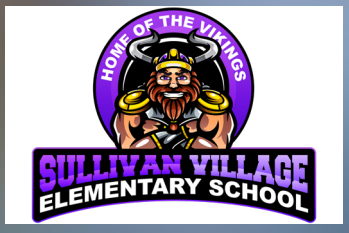
PRINCIPAL: JENNY LANGSTON

5801 NW COLUMBIA

(580) 536-4223

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/EDI

@EDISONELEMENTARYSUPERHAWKS



SULLIVAN VILLAGE

PRINCIPAL: AMY WILCOX

3802 SEE ELMHURST

(580) 355-0800

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/SVE

@SULLIVANVILLAGEVIKINGS



EISENHOWER

PRINCIPAL: CHARITY WILLIAMS

315 SW 52ND

(580) 355-4599

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/EES

@EESGENERALS



WHITTIER

PRINCIPAL: BRENDA WALKER

1115 NW LAIRD

(580) 355-5238

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/WHI

@WHITTIERELEMENTARYCARDINALS



FREEDOM

PRINCIPAL: SARA BREEZE

PRINCIPAL: LANA WELCH

5720 GERONIMO

(580) 713-0060

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/FRE

@FREEDOMELEMENTARYLPS



WOODLAND HILLS

PRINCIPAL: ASHLEY MCCARTER

405 NW WOODLAND

(580) 536-7991

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/WHE

@WOODLANDHILLSWOODSMEN



HUGH BISH

PRINCIPAL: KOURTNEY COLLEY

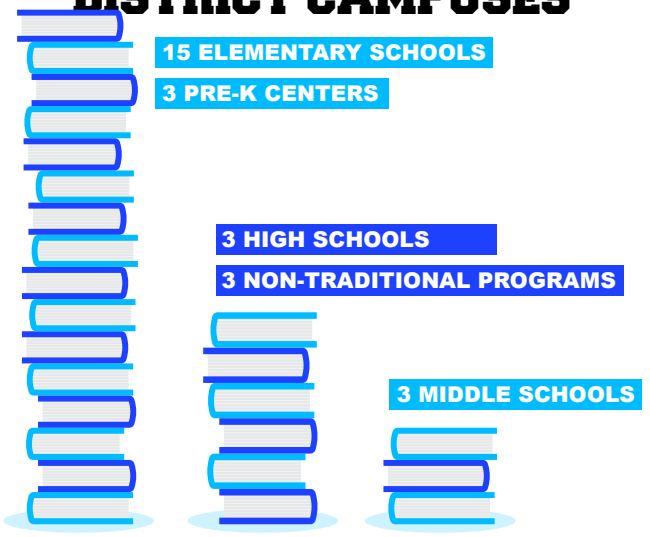
5611 NW ALLAN-A-DALE

(580) 248-2244

WWW.LAWTONPS.ORG/HBE

@HUGHBISH

DISTRICT CAMPUSES



15 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

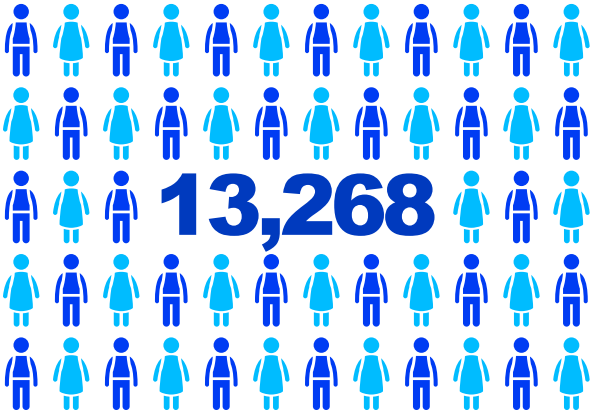
3 PRE-K CENTERS

3 HIGH SCHOOLS

3 NON-TRADITIONAL PROGRAMS

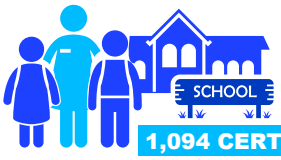
3 MIDDLE SCHOOLS

STUDENT ENROLLMENT



DISTRICT STAFF

2,193 EMPLOYEES



1,094 CERTIFIED



1,099 SUPPORT

FOUR STRATEGIC GOALS

Student Achievement
OBJECTIVE 1: Increase life readiness
OBJECTIVE 2: Improve mastery of core content

Culture & Climate
OBJECTIVE 1: Improve student behavior
OBJECTIVE 2: Increase parental involvement
OBJECTIVE 3: Improve stakeholder satisfaction

Personnel Enhancement
OBJECTIVE 1: Enhance staff through training and development
OBJECTIVE 2: Improve student-centered use of technology
OBJECTIVE 3: Recruit and retain staff

Resources
OBJECTIVE 1: Improve and maintain facilities and technology
OBJECTIVE 2: Improve student programs
OBJECTIVE 3: Increase the number of grant requests

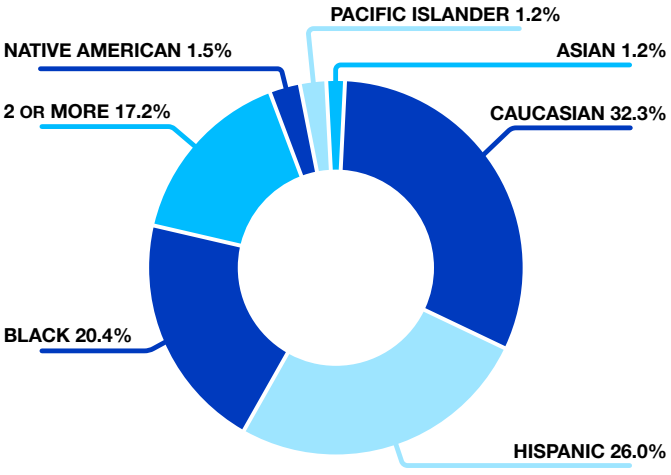
DISTRICT REVENUE



Local: 15.1%
State: 53.8%
Federal: 31.1%

Starting Teacher Pay:
$43,162 (above state average)

ETHNICITY BREAKDOWN



MILITARY FAMILIES



28.2%

Parents are active duty military or work on Federal property

AT A GLANCE

DISTRICT REVENUE

Local/County: 15.1%
State: 53.8%
Federal: 31.1%

DISTRICT STAFF NUMBERS

31.9% with advanced degrees, 11.1 average years teaching experience

Teachers: 1,094
Administrators: 50
Counselors: 51
Support Staff: 1,099

AVERAGE ENROLLMENT TRENDS

2024/25: 13,541
2023/24: 13,932
2022/23: 14,355
2021/22: 13,626
2020/21: 12,669
2019/20: 13,475

STUDENT POPULATION

Caucasian: 4,245
Hispanic: 3,422
Black: 2,678
2 or More Races: 2,270
Pacific Islander: 193
Native American: 431
Asian: 160

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Identified as Gifted and Talented: 11%
Identified in Special Education: 20.1%
Identified as English Language Learners (ELL): 4.7%

SCHOOL SITES AND GRADE LEVELS

HIGH SCHOOLS: 3 SCHOOLS (GRADES 9-12)

Lawton High
Eisenhower High
MacArthur High

NONTRADITIONAL PROGRAMS: 3 SCHOOLS (GRADES 9-12)

Gateway Success Center
Life Ready Center
Lawton Virtual Academy: (Grades Pre-K-12)
Lawton Second Start: 21-29 years old

MIDDLE SCHOOLS: 3 SCHOOLS (GRADES 6-8)

Central Middle
Eisenhower Middle
MacArthur Middle

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: 18 SCHOOLS (GRADES PK-5)

Almor West Elementary
Brockland Learning Center (PK Center)
Carriage Hills Elementary
Cleveland Elementary
Crosby Park Elementary
Edison Elementary
Eisenhower Elementary
Freedom Elementary
Hugh Bish Elementary
Learning Tree Academy (PK Center)
Lincoln Elementary
New Horizons Learning Center (PK Center)
Pat Henry Elementary
Pioneer Park Elementary
Ridgecrest Elementary
Sullivan Village Elementary
Whittier Elementary
Woodland Hills Elementary

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS



NEW LAWS

New Oklahoma state laws affecting student cellphones and high school diplomas went into effect July 1, 2025.

Senate Bill 139 prohibits students in grades kindergarten through 12th grade from using cellphones and personal electronic devices from "bell to bell" during the instructional day, beginning with the August 2025-26 school year. In response to the law, Lawton Public Schools enacted a new policy requiring students to turn their personal electronic devices off and place them in a special bag designed to block Wi-Fi signals. The policy does not pertain to school-issued devices such as iPads and Chromebooks, which are used for instruction.

The bags will be locked when students enter the school building and will be unlocked when they exit the building for the day.

Exceptions to the policy are made for certain situations, such as emergencies and medical reasons.

Disciplinary action, including in-school detention for secondary students, will be enacted. Disciplinary action for elementary students will be enacted by grade level.

Another bill pertaining to education was Senate Bill 745 which raised the age of students who may seek a high school diploma from age 26 to age 29. The law applies to students who may have been unable to complete their high school course of study.

Under the new law, residents up to age 30 may enroll in virtual classes through Lawton Public Schools Lawton Virtual Academy and complete courses in order to earn their high school diploma.

"It is for adults looking to obtain a high school diploma," said Jennifer Mason, principal for Lawton Virtual Academy. "They may be in the workforce already and are trying for a better job."

Mason said, under the law, students may only attend classes virtually, which allows them to work around their schedules and at their own pace.

"This is something great for our state and workforce and for our pride," Mason said.

Senate Bill 139

- The bill prohibits students from using personal electronic devices "bell to bell" during the school day. If Lawton Public Schools students bring their personal electronic devices to school, the devices must be put in a district-approved bag that blocks Wi-Fi signals. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

Senate Bill 745

- The bill allows residents who are aged 21-29 the opportunity to attend virtual classes in order to earn their high school diplomas.

House Bill 3958

- The bill specifies that school personnel who contact students electronically or digitally must include the parent/guardian in the communication.



House Bill 3958, which mandates that school personnel who engage in digital or electronic communications with students must include the parent or guardian in all communications, also is in effect. An exception to the law is made if the "communication is made on a school-approved platform and related to school and academic communications," according to the bill.

In essence, school personnel, including teachers, coaches, school bus drivers, and administrators, must include parents/guardians in digital or electronic communications with students.

PURPLE STAR

Military students in Lawton Public Schools are a vital part of the student body and are celebrated every April during Month of the Military Child.

The annual observance was established in 1986 as a national observance recognizing the sacrifices of children whose parents serve in the armed forces.

At Lawton Public Schools, 24 percent of students are military dependents, thanks to the presence of Fort Sill just to the north of Lawton.

An annual celebration, featuring students from Freedom Elementary, is held for parents and Fort Sill dignitaries during the first part of April to kick off Month of the Military Child.

All of Lawton's schools have completed the process to earn designation as Purple Star schools, making Lawton a Purple Star district. In order to earn that distinction, 70 percent of the schools in the district earn their own campus-level Purple Star designation by meeting a set of criteria exhibiting commitment to military families and students. The Purple Star designation lasts for three years before a school must reapply.

Those schools designated as Purple Star schools have a military liaison who identifies military-connected students enrolled at those schools; serves as a contact between the school and military-connected families and the district; determines services available to students whose families are in the military; and helps coordinate programs for those students.

Purple Star status is important to help students of military families feel at home in their new community.

- Lawton Public Schools affirms its commitment to military students through the Purple Star Program, which helps military families and their students integrate into the school district and the Lawton-Fort Sill community.
- Lawton Public Schools became the first public school district in Oklahoma to earn the Purple Star designation and Freedom Elementary School, situated on Fort Sill military post north of Lawton, became the first school in the Lawton district to receive the honor, which it did in 2021. Since then, all the other schools in the Lawton district have achieved Purple Star status.
- For more information, on LPS' Military Child and Purple Star Programs, visit the Military Child page on the LPS website, https://www.lawtonps.org/page/military-child





FIRST CLASS





- The goal of First Class Academy is to provide support to first-time teachers, those who have just graduated from college or are emergency certified.
- About 80-90 new teachers attend the academy each year, which is mandatory for new teachers with no experience.
- Meetings are held monthly and cover such topics as classroom management and collaboration.
- Each new teacher is assigned a mentor who is available to assist them throughout the school year.
- The ultimate goal of the program is teacher retention.
- For more information, contact Meghan Haley, director of New Staff Development, at meghan.haley@lawtonps.org.

New teachers find themselves in the classroom again through Lawton Public Schools First Class Academy, which is targeted to teachers who have never been in the classroom before. Attendees include teachers fresh out of college and those who are emergency certified. The class is not for teachers who have taught before but are new to the Lawton district.

"If they have never taught before, they are getting college-level training," Meghan Haley, director of New Staff Development, said of the academy.

The purpose of the program is teacher retention, which is achieved by providing support at the building level, according to Haley. New teachers are mentored by a retired rehire, a teacher who has retired but is employed by the district in a different capacity.

"When a teacher feels supported, they stay," Haley said of purpose of the academy.

First Class starts with three days of new teacher induction, which Haley likened to "drinking from a fire hose." Teachers receive information about teaching and about the Lawton Public Schools district.

Once school begins, the class, which is mandatory for new teachers, meets once a month to discuss such topics as classroom management, role playing, curriculum, collaboration with adults and students, how to use data, and best practices during assessments.

Support doesn't end with attendance at the monthly meetings; mentors continuously provide feedback.

"We are non-evaluative," Haley said. "We provide them feedback before they are evaluated. They find it really valuable. They find other people are in the same boat."

The ultimate goal is to provide support beyond the first year of teaching, Haley said.

NATIVE AMERICAN

Dan Ninham, a member of the Oneida tribe from Minnesota, brought his cultural games to Lawton middle schoolers.

Ninham travels the country teaching students to play Indigenous games native to North American tribes.

"We share a lot of Southern Plains games, but we don't go outside (our culture)," said Raylisha York Stanley, Indian Education Liaison for Lawton Public Schools. "That is one of our goals is to go outside our culture. He seems to have a passion for teaching Indigenous games."

Most of the students responded to his instructions with enthusiasm once they got over the surprise of being given greetings in a language other than English. Several faces registered surprise and confusion. Ninham told short stories about how the games related to tribal culture, demonstrated the concept, then had the students up and moving.

For the dreamcatcher game, students were given a length of rope, told to hold it in their right hand and form a circle. Then students reached out to someone across from them and grabbed the other end of their rope, resulting in a dreamcatcher. Ninham explained that dreams go through the holes in the dreamcatcher.

Students then had to untangle themselves without dropping an end of their rope. They had to go under and around people to accomplish the task.

That is the second part of Ninham's goal — to teach students to solve their own problems and to work as a team.

Rika Darino, 11, said she liked that the games were different, as she paused during a game of stickball.

"This is like an old-school game that people used to play," Darino said. "We are running back and forth like we usually do, but we have to hold it (a stick holding a ball) steady so it doesn't fall out."

Not only is getting students exercising important to Ninham, so is laughter. A laughter game is also in his repertoire.

"Laughter is medicine," he said. "It helps people to laugh, that's where healing comes into play."

One student may have summed up the experience best: "This is the best PE day ever," she said.

- Three programs — Title VI, Johnson O'Malley (JOM) and Native American Language — assist the nearly 2,000 Native American students enrolled in Lawton Public Schools.
- Those programs help students with a variety of services, including one-on-one after school tutoring, grade and credit checks, school-to-family liaison, dropout prevention, college visits, senior cap and gown assistance, and scholarship opportunities.
- "Our goal is to help our Native American students become successful in both worlds (tribal and non-tribal)," said Raylisha York Stanley, Indian Education Liaison.
- Another goal of the program is to honor the heritage of the nearly 75 tribes represented by students in LPS. The recent addition of the 2024-25 Native American Language grant reinforces the district's commitment to expanding its resources. Recently, the district added Kiowa language to the Comanche language offerings at the Life Ready Center. The Comanche language has been taught in LPS for several years.
- For more information about the program, contact Raylisha York Stanley at raylisha.stanley@lawtonps.org.



PROJECT AWARE



- Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education) is a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration funded initiative focused on the mental health of youth in schools.
- Project AWARE's purpose is to promote youth mental health awareness among schools and communities and improve connections to services for school-age youth through:
  1. Increased awareness of mental health issues among school-age youth.
  2. Training educators and other youth-serving adults to detect and respond to mental health issues.
  3. Connect children, youth, and families who may experience behavioral health issues with appropriate services.
- For more information, contact Danna Bross, Project AWARE Community Manager, at dbross@lawtonps.org.

The mental health well being of students is the No. 1 priority of Project AWARE, and to that end the program has obtained funding to purchase eight Action Based Learning Labs for elementary and prekindergarten students.

Students will begin using the labs in the 2025-26 school year.

"Students learn a lot through movement. It helps with their behavior," Danna Bross, Project AWARE community manager, said of the Action Based Learning Labs. "Some students have a hard time sitting still."

The labs include different stations for students and incorporate learning with motion. For example, one station is an elliptical ABCs where students have to do a motion for each letter in order to spell a word. Four pre-K centers will be recipients of the labs as will four elementary schools. Bross said the labs are for all ages, but LPS is starting with these eight.

She said the goal is to focus on academics and behavior while students are young.

"Hopefully we will get more schools," Bross said of the Action Based Learning Labs. Although the district is starting with elementary schools, equipment also is available for secondary students.

Lawton Public Schools also has the SPARCS (Structured Psychotherapy for Adolescents Responding to Chronic Stress) program for students at all grade levels. Bross, citing a parallel between academics and mental health, said mental health intervention teams meet in each school.

In the SPARCS program, high school student groups are designed around specific problem areas, allowing students to freely discuss challenges they are experiencing. Students can discuss their situations with one another and with a trained therapist, Bross said. At the elementary level, students work one-on-one with a counselor.

All students involved in the SPARCS program must have parental/guardian permission.

Bross said four school districts in Oklahoma have some type of mental health program, but LPS is the largest district that provides mental health resources for its students. She said the goal is to have every counselor in LPS trained in SPARCS.

"The administration is really supportive of student well being," Bross said. The ultimate goal, she said, is to include mental health outreach to staff as well.

LPSF

Grants provided by the Lawton Public School Foundation allow teachers to provide innovative programs for not only their classrooms, but for other students in their schools also.

Such was the case with Holly Phillips, third grade teacher at Eisenhower Elementary School. A personal incident brought home to her the need for students to know basic first aid.

"Last summer I was burned in a cooking accident," she said. "While I was recuperating, I realized we have kids who are home alone or taking care of their little brother or sister. I wondered if they would know what to do in an emergency."

So Phillips organized the FUNfirst Aid assembly with the assistance of local RNs who presented life-saving information to students in third through fifth grade.

Susan Milam, RN at a local hospital, said the goal is to give students knowledge about what is contained in a first aid kit and what to do in an emergency.

"There is a lot of anxiety and fear," she said of emergency situations. "We try to take away some of that. Maybe one day one of these kids will save a life."

Students learned some first aid basics such as how to stop a nosebleed, what to do if someone has a tooth knocked out, how to treat a burn and how to remove a bee stinger.

MyKhinzee Revels, fourth grader, said she learned how to assess a scene for danger, to call 911 if someone is bleeding and it can't be stopped, how to clean out a wound and dress it, and how to stop a nosebleed.

"Put pressure on the nose and lean forward," she said as she demonstrated the technique. Revels said she didn't know any of these things before the assembly.

To drive the lesson home, students had to pass a quiz the next day about what they had learned before they received their first aid kits.

The LSPF grant funded first aid kits for the students to take home.



- For more than 30 years, the Lawton Public School Foundation has funded grants to teachers for creative and innovative programs. In 2024-25, the Foundation provided more than $120,000 for grants.
- In order to fund those grants, the Foundation sponsors several fundraisers each year, including a breakfast at Golden Corral every September, a golf tournament, and Ladies Bingo.
- In addition to fundraisers, community members may become Pillars of the Foundation by contributing annually. Businesses can contribute $1,000 a year, families can contribute $500 and LPS employees can contribute $250 a year. One hundred percent of the Pillar donations go to teacher grants. For other donations, 95 cents of every dollar goes to classrooms.
- A new way to donate is through the Oklahoma Education Tax Credit program. Those who use the program receive a tax credit rather than a tax deduction, thereby reducing the income they pay taxes on.
- Those who make a one-year commitment are eligible for a tax credit up to 50 percent based on maximum allowable tax credit per individual, married couple or business, according to information provided by Lawton Public School Foundation. Those making a two-year commitment are eligible for a 75 percent tax credit.
- Each year, teachers submit a request for grants, which are evaluated by the LPS Foundation Grant Committee using a scoring system to determine recipients. Those receiving grants are notified during the Fall semester.
- For more information, go to https://www.lawtonpsf.org/.

MCKINNEY-VENTO

- The program is based on the 1987 McKinney-Vento Act that protects educational rights of students who lack a "fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence due to loss of housing or economic hardship."
- Every school district must have a liaison to ensure educational youths in pre-K through 12th grade living in homeless situations are enrolled in school.
- The program is funded through a federal grant administered by the State of Oklahoma, and the school district must reapply every few years. Those funds are then used to meet the needs of students, which can be wide-ranging, including clothing, transportation and school supplies, including athletic equipment. For seniors, that means using grant money to pay for caps and gowns for graduation.
- Examples of living situations under McKinney-Vento include:

1. Sharing housing/doubling up due to a loss of housing due to eviction, foreclosure, economic hardship or other similar reason.
2. Living in hotels/motels, trailer parks or campgrounds due to a lack of alternative adequate housing.
3. Living in emergency/transitional shelters.
4. Living in public or private places not designed for, or normally used as regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
5. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar places.
6. Unaccompanied homeless youth (minors or age 18+ high school students living away from their parent/guardian due to loss of housing/housing crisis).

— Source: McKinney-Vento Act

- For information, contact Andrea Winstead at awinstead@lawtonps.org.



A collaboration between Lawton Public Schools and the Comanche County Health Department makes it easier for high school students in the McKinney-Vento program to sign up for benefits and obtain needed documentation.

Andrea Winstead, Lawton Public Schools liaison for the McKinney-Vento program, said a health department representative will come to the high school to help students sign up for SoonerCare and for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits as well as help them obtain a copy of their birth certificate.

"Now they come to the high school and the mentor does not have to do it," Winstead said. "We don't have to send the students somewhere else."

Winstead said when several students at a particular school need assistance obtaining the services or documents, a mentor will contact the health department to set up an appointment at the high school.

"It makes a big difference," Winstead said. Students are able to receive the assistance they need at school and not have to make arrangements to go to the health department.

Health department officials also are able to help students obtain a copy of their birth certificate, which Winstead said is vital in order for students to find work.

"With their birth certificate, they can get an ID and then they can look for a job," she said.

Students in the McKinney-Vento program also receive assistance with school supplies, clothes, transportation to school and the purchase of graduation caps and gowns. Two mentors at each secondary school also assist students with community referrals.

The program also pays for driver's education courses for students in the program. Winstead said students must qualify to take driver's ed by having good attendance and showing improvements in their grades.

"It is an incentive to come to school," she said.

GRANTS

Lawton Public Schools is expanding the reach of its educational opportunities through an aggressive grant-writing program. Grants often provide funds for resources the district might not otherwise receive.

"Grants support creativity, pride and resilience in instruction," said Diane Landoll, director of grants for LPS. "When a teacher writes and receives a grant for their innovative idea to teach or solve a need in their classroom, it is a powerful affirmation that the grant provider believes the teacher can and will make a difference to their student's lives."

For school year 2024-25, LPS received more than $20,000 through several TSET (Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust) Healthy Incentive Grants aimed at improving the health of local students. One of Lawton's high schools received funds to add outdoor workout stations, while several elementary schools received grants for outdoor picnic tables, funds to build a walking path, money for an outdoor garden and funds for a hydroponics system.

Seven schools also received physical education grants after PE teachers at selected schools participated in a program to model lesson plans after the state adopted new physical education requirements. Schools that participated in the program were awarded points and were then able to purchase equipment for their physical education classes, according to Landoll.

Several teachers in the district also have received funds through the Oklahoma Lottery Grants program, which funds career tech programs.

A woodworking teacher at Eisenhower Middle School received funds to purchase tools and workbenches while two culinary teachers at the Life Ready Center received almost $30,000 to modernize that school's teaching kitchen. Another teacher received funds to purchase wind tunnels for the aviation program.





A $50,000 Perkins Grant will fund cybersecurity equipment for the cybersecurity program at Life Ready Center.

Landoll said the district will apply for more TSET grants, which is restructuring and increasing the amount of grants it will fund.

"The goal of the bigger awards is to make more meaningful projects," Landoll said.

SECURITY

- Lawton Public Schools Police Department has 16 full-time officers and five Reserve officers.
- All officers are CLEET-certified.
- Officers provide security for LPS' physical property and security at events after school hours.
- LPS officers have the same authority as Lawton police officers, including the ability to write citations to students and adults and to make arrests.
- The district has two K-9 units: one specializes in drug interdiction and one in explosives and firearms detection.
- In Summer 2025, the district established its own dispatching center, which is operational during school hours.



In an effort to dispatch its police officers in a more efficient manner, Lawton Public Schools established its own dispatching center in Summer 2025, which will allow principals to call the dispatcher directly during school hours. After hours, a lieutenant will be available to dispatch calls.

The dispatcher will be able to run criminal histories, check license plates, check driver licenses, keep a running radio log to know when an officer is called and also keep a record of the disposition of the call, said LPS Police Chief Josh Seely.

Seely said it is uncommon for a school district to have its own dispatching center; most utilize local resources, he said.

"It is more efficient to have a direct line to our own dispatcher," he said.

LPS also employs 16 full-time officers and five Reserve officers who work sporting events, homecomings, dances, patrol buildings regularly, and make sure doors are secured, in addition to traffic control.

All officers are CLEET certified and have the same rights in the LPS jurisdiction as Lawton police officers. In addition, LPS officers have jurisdiction on roads adjacent to LPS schools.

LPS officers, who receive 40 hours of state training every year, also have the authority to arrest or cite students and adults for violations on school property. Students who are arrested may be taken to the juvenile detention center and adults may be taken to the Comanche County Detention Center, Seely said.

The district also has two K-9s, one who specializes in drug interdiction and one who specializes in explosives and firearms detection. The K-9s and their officers make regular sweeps through secondary schools and will sweep elementary schools on request. The K-9s and their handlers also conduct demonstrations in elementary schools.

Two DARE officers assigned to the district do drug recognition and provide information to students.

"Our No. 1 responsibility is safety of students and staff," Seely said of the LPS police department. "We want to make sure their day runs smoothly with as little interruption as possible."

CHILD NUTRITION



The Child Nutrition program is tasked with providing breakfast and lunch to thousands of students each day, but a special event attracts the attention of some elementary students each year — the Future Chefs program.

Creating good nutrition habits is one goal of Lawton Public Schools' Future Chefs program. Another goal is just to have fun.

The annual competition is open to fourth and fifth grade students. Students submit recipes online for the national competition and the entrants are narrowed down to two per school. The entrants all gather at a central kitchen in a timed cookoff that is judged by community members.

The winner of the local contest is eligible to compete at the state level and the state winner advances to the national competition.

Sometimes students prepare family favorites and sometimes they decide to try new dishes. The 2025 winner was one of those who chose a new dish.

Poseidon Valdez, a fifth grader at Lincoln Elementary School, won for his caprese chicken dish, which he had never made before, not even before the competition.

Valdez said first he cuts the chicken into little pieces, seasons it with salt and pepper and fries it. He then melts mozzarella cheese on top of the chicken and tops it all off with basil and cherry tomatoes cut in half.

"It looks good and nice and it is ready to serve," he said.

Valdez said he thinks he won because of the taste. He said he likes to cook at home, and often makes breakfast for his family.

His mother, Julie, was surprised and pleased with her son's first-place finish.

"This is our first experience and we were doing it just for fun," she said. "It turned out better than expected. We just looked at ideas and this looked the best."

One of those who stuck with the tried-and-true family recipe was Amya Johnson, fifth grader at Pat Henry Elementary School, who made her aunt's recipe for broccoli alfredo, which she said is her favorite meal to make at home.

"She helps me in the kitchen all the time," said Johnson's aunt, Dawn Selvaggi. "It's one of those things she knows how to do. She doesn't like to clean up, but she likes to cook."

Johnson, who admitted to being nervous when presenting to the judges, said she was surprised when they called her name for third place.

Each young chef is assigned a helper — usually a cook from an LPS school — who takes the dishes in and out of the ovens and provides any other assistance needed.

- Lawton Public Schools provides free breakfasts and lunches to all of its students. The free meals are part of Lawton Public Schools' goal to remove barriers that keep students from having access to food. The free meals are funded by several different renewable federal grants. Breakfast has been free for many years, as has the summer feeding program. Lunch was recently added to the menu of free meals.
- The district deliberately steers students toward opportunities for nutrition. For elementary students, that means funneling them through a line where breakfast items are offered as they enter the building in the morning. For secondary students, that means offering them four or five breakfast items such as a breakfast sandwich or oatmeal in a cup that they can grab between classes.
- Child Nutrition also oversees the summer meal program, which provided more than 26,000 meals to children aged 18 and under during Summer 2024. The meals are offered at various sites across Lawton where children are likely to congregate.
- For more information, contact Daniel Ghrayyeb, director of Child Nutrition, at daniel.ghrayyeb@lawtonps.org

PRE-K CENTERS



- Lawton Public Schools' youngest students have their own place to call home – three pre-K centers housed in separate buildings across Lawton and one on Fort Sill at Freedom Elementary just for 4-year-olds. The Lawton centers are: Brockland Learning Center, Learning Tree Academy and New Horizons Learning Center.
- Before the centers were established, each elementary school had its own pre-K class or classes, said Donna Catlin, pre-K coordinator for Lawton Public Schools. The goal of the district was, over time, to have free-standing centers, which create a more conducive learning environment, she said.
- "It's really important that pre-K students are with peers of their own age so they can engage in learning through play. Everything is focused on 4-year-olds," Catlin said.
- Students are taught how to conduct themselves in a school setting, from sitting in their seat to dealing with lunch trays. Activities are geared toward how 4-year-olds learn. Among other things, students learn their ABCs, numbers, days of the week and months. Most activities are interactive and hands-on.
- Teachers also benefit from the pre-K centers through collaboration. Teachers meet once a week to share ideas, resources and strategies.
- Contact Donna Catlin at dcatlin@lawtonps.org.

Lawton Public Schools has four centers dedicated to educating 4-year-old students, where they are introduced to their first school experience. At these centers, instruction is centered around learning through play.

Classes normally are held in individual classrooms, but at New Horizons everyone comes together once a year to learn about and celebrate Thanksgiving — with a unique twist — the children become chefs for a day.

New Horizons calls it Friendsgiving because each child brings a can of soup, which is combined with like flavors and heated up in slow cookers. At the end of four hours, you have a meal fit for a roomful of 4-year-olds.

Oh, don't forget the secret ingredient — friendship.

Each student is asked to bring a can of soup; flavors don't matter. The soups are divided into chicken-based and beef-based and each child adds his or her can of soup to a slow cooker.

Four hours later New Horizons faculty and staff transform the cafeteria into a Thanksgiving feast to rival anything the best chefs in the world could create. On the menu for lunch is a bowl of soup, pumpkin pie, a cookie or two, some chips and juice to wash it all down with.

Victori Swinford, New Horizons teacher, said the feast is an opportunity to enjoy a meal as a family. Normally, students eat lunch in their classrooms. The one exception is the Friendsgiving meal.

"We teach them about Thanksgiving and they all bring different soups so they can do something together," Swinford said. The friendship lesson sinks in, she said, once they all start adding their soups to a slow cooker.

Fellow teacher Hannah White said it is important for all of the students to eat together.

"Some don't have a normal Thanksgiving," she said. "They like to bring something. They were excited to bring me a can of soup this morning. They really like dumping the soups in. They all get to eat together. They are excited. They think it is a party."

MAKERSPACE

- Makerspace is a program that teaches elementary students about STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) in fun and engaging ways.
- A Makerspace teacher is assigned to every elementary school. Students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade spend time each week engaged in hands-on activities designed to help them work through real-world problem-solving situations using different technologies and materials.
- Contact Doris Biegler, doris.biegler@lawtonps.org.

Makerspace classes allow elementary students to use various technologies and materials to arrive at solutions to real-world problems — and to have fun along the way.

Fun is the No. 1 goal of the annual Cardboard Race where elementary students are tasked with making a boat using only cardboard, duct tape and their imaginations. Each elementary school chooses a team of students to build and captain their boat on race day. Students may build prototypes and test their design theories before the day of the race, but on race day everyone gathers in Rinehart Fitness Center on Fort Sill to build their boats from scratch.

Students have 3 hours to build their boats before launching them — and themselves — in the pool at the gym. Captains of the ships then have 3 minutes to paddle from one end of the pool to the other — or sink trying.

Doris Biegler, STEM coordinator for LPS, said the race is important for several reasons.

"It gets the kids ready for the real world," she said. She explained that while employers can teach their employees the skills they need to do the job, teamwork is different.

"The No. 1 thing I hope they learn is teamwork and working together," Biegler said. "Learning how to work as a team is a lot harder than learning a skill."

The competition also helps students put into practice the engineering skills they have learned in Makerspace and pre-engineering classes.

"It introduces them to the engineering design process and teaches them to think outside the box," she said. "It teaches them to be problem solvers."

Another event which tests students' STEM skills is the annual robotics competition. In 2024, LPS switched to the Junior Robotics LEGO League Challenge, which allows students to build robots out of LEGOs. Students spend part of the first semester building and programming the robots to conduct specific missions before the annual competition involving most of the schools in the LPS district.

One purpose of the competition is to show students that engineering and programming are not as difficult as they may think, Biegler said.

Being involved in robotics also introduces students to career paths they may not have considered.





CTE





- The program provides students an introduction to various career fields, including fashion design, business, health care, agriculture, trades and industry, and marketing.
- The goal is to allow students as early as middle school the opportunity to sample different professions.
- What makes Career and Technical Education different from other career programs is that every career field has a student leadership program. The leadership programs are important because they teach students workplace skills — how to work with others on a team, how to dress for a job interview, and how to be at work on time. Students also gain new perspectives by working with other students across the United States.
- Most CTE courses are offered at Lawton's three high schools or at the Life Ready Center. STEM courses have been incorporated into the program for middle school students.

Most students on Lawton Public Schools Career and Technical Education pathway will more than likely get their hands dirty.

Starting in middle school, Career and Technical Education (CTE) allows students to explore various careers, seeing which ones interest them and which ones don't.

In the words of Life Ready Center Principal Lindsey Hoerbert, students are allowed to "fail forward."

"It gives students an opportunity to try something different. They get an introduction to what they hope their career field will be," Hoerbert said.

For those who discover that a particular career field may not be for them, they may still pick up valuable skills along the way. Such was the case last year when students in John Cullison's construction trades class built their own classroom in one of the gymnasiums at the Life Ready Center. Even students who chose not to pursue a career in the trades industry gained knowledge in how to use tools and in basic home repairs and construction.

For several students, framing the classroom was the first time they had used a nail gun, a saw or a hammer.

In addition to job skills some students, like Douglas Rogers, also learned some life skills. Rogers said he learned the art of communicating and the value of teamwork.

"I learned that if you don't have the proper communication, you will get the measurements wrong," he said. "I almost got measurements wrong and we would have had to start over. Having everyone work together as a group was important. I would start losing calculations and everything, and if I did, everything would start moving slower."

Cullison said he had an offer for the LPS framing class to do the project in one day.

"But this way the kids will see something they did instead of something someone else did," he said. "Once we get the classroom built, it will be our own little microcosm."

Once students choose a career path, they may continue their education at Great Plains Technology Center. Students can earn industry-backed certification and be employable right out of high school. Students who are college-bound can continue their education at Cameron University.

LTAP

Recognizing that not every student wants to pursue a college degree, Lawton Public Schools has created a Technology Applications Program which allows students to begin exploring various careers as early as middle school.

The program fits into LPS's goal of educating students who are life-ready. Not only can the students explore careers, they also can gain life skills such as learning to communicate and how to handle money.

One example is the Farm-to-Table program.

Lawton's three middle schools, which all have chickens and roosters, teamed up with Lawton's Farmers Market to sell surplus eggs. Reaping the profits from the egg sales is a side benefit of the project, the Farm-to-Table teachers say. Another benefit is gaining real-world experience, such as working with the public.

"We want to teach the kids how to sell properly, how to dress appropriately," said Cindy Nocton, Farmers Market manager. "Even if they are not going to be a farmer, we want to teach them how to sell."

The students got tips on selling from the pros when they were teamed up with some older farmers who taught them how to sell and how to meet the public.

"We want to teach them the ropes on how to be in the public eye," Nocton said.

- Ensuring students have access to a variety of career paths is the object of Lawton Public Schools' Technology Applications Program, which allows middle school students to explore various careers.
- To that end, the school district has created programs to give students hands-on experience in a variety of fields, including welding, woodworking, basic home maintenance, basic carpentry, Farm-to-Table, introduction to plumbing, health, and automotive. After middle school students have completed the basic courses, they will be better prepared to continue their education in those fields at the Life Ready Center or Great Plains Technology Center.
- For more information, contact Adam McPhail, director of Workforce Development, at adam.mcphail@lawtonps.org.





FINE ARTS







- Lawton Public Schools' fine arts coordinator is responsible for helping hire fine arts teachers and assisting LPS's 53 elementary and secondary fine arts teachers network and share techniques.
- In school year 2024-25, the coordinator helped cast and direct a play involving students from all of Lawton's high schools and coordinated joint band performances at the intracity football games.
- For more information, contact Charlotte Oates at charlotte.oates@lawtonps.org.

Recognizing that the arts play a vital role in contributing to well rounded students, Lawton Public Schools provides several opportunities for students to participate in arts-related activities. The district also seeks to foster a spirit of unity and diversity among those in the arts programs.

For students in grades three through six, the district offers students the opportunity to participate in the Children's Choir, which includes students from all across the city. Students must audition in order to join the choir, which performs at special events throughout the district and community.

Also at the elementary level, students are encouraged to participate in the annual Showcase event where students showcase their talents ranging from singing, dancing, jumping rope, gymnastics and bucket drums.

Another opportunity elementary students have is to participate with the Lawton Philharmonic Orchestra during Carnegie Hall's "The Orchestra Swings" Link Up. The goal of the annual event is for students to learn about and perform music. Students learn to play a recorder at school and then participate with an orchestra.

Keeping with the theme of unity, in 2024-25 Lawton's high school fine arts programs combined for a production of "Grease." This was the first time all three high schools had put on a joint production.

"We are trying to be as inclusive as possible," said Charlotte Oates, LPS fine arts coordinator who also was director for 'Grease'. "Kids have found people across town that have the same talents and interests. They create magic. I think a lot of the kids have found lifelong friends."

Community members also became involved in the "Grease" production, with a wrecker business supplying the car for the role of Greased Lightning.

Band members from all three high schools also played the national anthem at one of the last intracity games of the season. During other intracity games, bands of the respective high schools also performed together.

CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT

- Lawton Public Schools is making it easier for high school students to earn a college degree through its concurrent enrollment program, which pays tuition, fees and books.
- High school students must meet admission requirements of the college or university they would like to attend and must have ACT or PreACT test scores or grade point average to enroll in college courses.
- Once a student has been approved to participate in concurrent enrollment, they will meet with a college adviser and go over the courses they would like to take.
- Several concurrent college classes are offered at Life Ready Center and are taught by Cameron University professors; students also may attend classes in-person at Cameron University or take classes online.
- To find out more about concurrent enrollment in Lawton Public Schools, visit https://www.lawtonps.org/page/concurrent-enrollment or call 580-585-6416.

Four Lawton Public Schools students got a head start on their college careers last year through the district's concurrent enrollment program when they graduated from Cameron University with associate degrees.

The four began taking concurrent classes when they were sophomores, and accumulated 60 hours or more of college credit through LPS's concurrent enrollment program which allows students to take college courses while they are still in high school — all for free.

"They can have a full-ride associate's degree in two years if they want it and they qualify," said Life Ready Principal Lindsey Hoerbert.

The program allows students to earn a college degree and high school diploma at the same time.

In some cases, the students' parents encouraged them to take concurrent classes while others pursued it on their own.

"My parents pushed me to do it," said Bailey Anderson, 18, a senior at MacArthur High School. "My freshman and sophomore years, I was not super career-oriented. LPS pays for it and I just had to do the work. It gets me ahead." Anderson earned a degree in interdisciplinary studies.

Nicolas Raso, 18, also a student at MacArthur, credits his sister with setting the example for him to attend college. Raso said he and his sister, who has a bachelor's degree in psychology, are the first college graduates in their family.

"I helped my sister with studying. Her influence is why I started with psychology. Without her, I wouldn't be able to do this," said Raso, who was introduced to courses at Cameron through the concert band. He has earned a degree in interdisciplinary studies.

Lawton High student Alyssia Diaz, 18, said she was drawn to concurrent courses because of the subject matter.

"One thing that drew me to it was federal government classes. I decided to get Comp I and II out of the way. I liked the fast pace," Diaz said. She has earned an associate degree in interdisciplinary studies.



Gabriella O'Brien, 18, senior at Eisenhower High School, said she found out about concurrent enrollment from her school counselor. O'Brien then went to Cameron's website and did the math to see if she could fit in the classes.

"And I did it," she said. She has earned an associate degree in business.

All four plan to continue pursuing their college education.

LAWTON VIRTUAL ACADEMY





- Lawton Virtual Academy offers virtual classes for students in kindergarten through 12th grade who live in the Lawton district.
- All classes are taught by teachers certified to teach those subjects.
- Students may attend full-time virtual or a combination of virtual and in-person.
- Students are enrolled under their home schools and are eligible to participate in athletics and other extracurricular activities offered at those schools.
- Students may enroll in virtual classes through the enrollment portal on the Lawton Public Schools website, lawtonps.org, and choose the virtual option.
- Lawton Virtual Academy is housed at Douglass Learning Center, 102 E. Gore.
- Jennifer Mason is principal of Lawton Virtual Academy and maybe contacted at jmason@lawtonps.org.

Lawton Virtual Academy offers an alternative to students in Lawton who choose not to attend classes in-person.

The academy, which has offered high school classes since 2019, allows students in kindergarten through 12th grade to attend classes from home under the tutelage of certified teachers. Principal Jennifer Mason said virtual classes are set up just like a normal school day, only at home. For instance, secondary students have a teacher for each subject instead of the same teacher all day for every subject.

Students enrolled in Lawton Virtual Academy are enrolled in classes under their home school and may participate in extracurricular activities offered by those schools, such as clubs and athletics.

Lawton Virtual Academy also offers a wide variety of activities including field trips to local museums and other attractions, trips to the county fair and livestock shows and STEM-related events. Students in kindergarten through 12th grade have an in-person STEM event every month and elementary students have an online Makerspace lesson every Friday and an in-person event once a month.

Lawton Virtual Academy also has special education classes, and gifted and talented options.

In addition, guest speakers and other activities such as a mobile dairy and Lyric Theatre performances are offered on a routine basis. Students may attend Great Plains Technology Center and the Life Ready Center.

Students also may attend a combination of virtual and in-person classes, Mason said.

“Whatever works for them,” she said. “Anything they can think of, we try to make it work.”

ATHLETIC FIELDS

- Lawton Public Schools is nearing completion of a project to upgrade its athletic program.
- Within the past two years, LPS has installed new turf at its football, softball and baseball fields, built bleachers and press boxes for home fans at the football fields, and built multipurpose buildings that include locker rooms for girls' sports, concession stands and public restrooms. The final project will be installing bleachers at the three football fields for visitors.
- For more information, contact Gary Dees at gary.dees@lawtonps.org

Football is coming home. Beginning with the 2025-26 school year, some home games will be played on the fields at Lawton's three high schools.

The games will be the culmination of a project started in 2023 when new turf was installed at all three high schools. The new turf was followed by press boxes and bleachers for home fans. Bleachers for visiting fans will be installed this year, allowing each of Lawton's three high schools to host at least one home game, according to LPS Athletic Director Gary Dees.

"We want to have as many games as we can at the home school," Dees said. "The coaches and players love it. They don't have to load up all their equipment and get on buses."

A total of four games are planned to be played on the home fields this season, Dees said. Lawton High and Eisenhower will each play one game while MacArthur will play two games.

The visiting bleachers will be slightly smaller than ones for the home team, Dees said. The home-side bleachers will seat about 1,000 people while the visitor side will seat about 750.

All intracity games and games against area rivals still will be played at Cameron University, Dees said.

Upgrades to athletic fields are not the only improvements to Lawton's athletic program. Dees said district officials are preparing to install shot clocks in the high school gymnasiums after the Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activities Association voted to put high school basketball games on shot clocks for those schools in Class 3A and up.

Although the shot clock rule does not go into effect until the 2026 basketball season, Dees said the clocks will be installed now so coaches and players can get used to them.

A project begun in 2024 to provide locker rooms for girls' high school sports came to fruition July 14 when ribbon cuttings were held at all three sites. Each multipurpose building contains several locker rooms, a coach's office, a concession stand and public restrooms.







PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

PROBLEM SOLVER

Students learn how to problem solve, using this critical skill for life readiness. Students learn to look at challenges from a fresh perspective. Therefore, they take more calculated risks. If students practice problem solving consistently, they can develop greater situational and social awareness. Problem-solving is essential to a child's development because confident and productive children usually grow up as successful and confident adults.

COLLABORATOR

Each student brings a unique skill set to the classroom. Being a strong collaborator helps students integrate into a team quickly and effectively. Collaborative skills, such as effective communication, conflict management, and active listening are skills that will be useful for the rest of a student's life. Appreciating another's perspective helps to build empathy. Students will relate to their decision-making process and can better recognize their contributions as valuable.

INNOVATOR

Innovation in education encourages students to explore, research and use all the tools to uncover something new. Teachers, lessons, and curriculum have to be flexible. The thinking process that goes into being innovative will help students develop their creativity and problem solving skills. We have to give them tools that will make them productive in their future careers. Students are innovators when given the opportunity to be creative with their learning.

COMMUNICATOR

At all levels of education, students must be able to communicate effectively. Communication is a life skill that will allow students to express themselves and ensure thoughts and information are received effectively. Effective communicators will be active listeners who can write, speak and engage others through visual and nonverbal communication.

CREATOR

Creators are not only innovators, but they are also problem solvers when it comes to completing tasks. Being a part of the solution versus the problem is something creators thrive on. A creator plays a critically important role in learning and personal development, as well as building self-esteem. Look for your creators to find multiple pathways to success and let them take the lead.

LIFE READY

Preparing Life Ready Graduates includes coursework aligned with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities needed for success after graduation. Lawton Public Schools fosters a passion for learning, and offers opportunities for our students to engage with those in and outside of the classroom. Ensuring students have opportunities and not roadblocks during their educational journey is just one way to a successful Life Ready Graduate!



ANNUAL REPORT



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