



**BARBER COUNTY
UNITED**

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BCU Awards Grant

USD254 RECEIVES PATHWAYS FUNDING THROUGH BARBER COUNTY UNITED

Medicine Lodge, KS – Barber County United is proud to award North Barber USD 254 with a \$25,000 Pathways to a Healthy Kansas grant. The purpose of the Education Grant is to provide new opportunities and greater access to healthy living options for district students, staff, and community. The grant is made available through Barber County United's collaboration with *Pathways to Healthy Kansas* an initiative of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas.

The district Wellness Committee has been working together to create a plan to implement new physical activity opportunities for students while providing solutions to previously unmet needs at both the grade school and junior/senior buildings. A requirement of the Pathways grant, the projects identified by the Wellness Committee must also align with Kansas State Department of Education Wellness Policies. "We are so thankful to Barber County United for their assistance in enhancing opportunities for our students to move and be healthy!" says Medicine Lodge Grade School Principal, Ryan Cunningham.

At their January 10, 2022, meeting, the USD 254 Board of Education approved updating the USD 254 Wellness Policy to include the Kansas State Department of Education wellness language that aligns with the projects proposed by the Wellness Committee to be funded by Pathways grant funding.

USD 254 Wellness Committee President, Karla Capansky, acknowledges the district's role in encouraging students and staff to lead healthier lives and says, "We have an opportunity to promote healthy choices for the students and hope those habits stay with them as adults". Projects USD 254 can look forward to from the Wellness Committee include an outdoor basketball, four-square and lighting remodel, and additional table tennis equipment at the junior/senior building, and a new gaga-ball pit and lighting on the grade school playground with a new sound system in the gym. In the 2022-23 school year staff will benefit from increased access to drinking water and stainless cups as part of wellness measures and the Student Wellness Advisory Counsel, currently Alexis Stivers and Brooke Boyce, will become more active as it welcomes junior high and grade school representatives.

Pictured USD 254 Wellness Committee L-R: Deb Kolb, Karla Capansky, Amanda Stivers, Mark Buck, Adam Maloney, Judd Dohrmann, Ryan Cunningham, Kami Hahn, Jordan Lindsey. Not pictured, Sandy Short



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Barber County UNITED

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Barber County United is a local quality-of-life coalition focused on new approaches to rural wellness. The coalition strives to strengthen Barber County communities by bringing its people together to become healthier Kansans. The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas initiative, Pathways to a Healthy Kansas, combines community-wide evidence-based solutions and promising practices for improving active living, healthy eating, and tobacco prevention to make a large impact across multiple sectors in communities. The program provides community coalitions with the tools and resources needed to engage their communities and remove barriers to healthy living. Debra Kolb, Barber County United Coordinator of the Pathways program, manages the collaborative project addressing social determinants of health across the county.