The time stamps refer to the KSDE Livemedia Channel YouTube video for this meeting

02:43 Start

Kansas State Board of Education
Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Call to Order

Chair Cathy Hopkins called the meeting of the Kansas State Board of Education to order at 10:00 a.m. Tuesday, April 7, 2025, in the boardroom of the Landon State Office Building, 900 SW Jackson Street, Topeka, Kansas. She welcomed special guests and in particular Senator Argabright, who came forward and introduced his Kansas Educational Leadership Institute (KELI) mentees. He introduced Dr. Ryan Most, Garnet; Scott Palser, Erie; Ty Rhodes, McPherson, and Mischel Miller, the director of the KELI program. Chair Hopkins read the mission statement for the Board and then asked for a moment of silent reflection or prayer, followed by everyone standing and joining in the pledge of allegiance.

Roll Call

The following Board members were present:
Mrs. Betty Arnold
Mrs. Michelle Dombrosky
Mrs. Melanie Haas
Mr. Dennis Hershberger
Mrs. Cathy Hopkins, Chair
Dr. Beryl New
Mrs. Connie O'Brien
Mrs. Debby Potter
Mr. Jim Porter
Mr. Danny Zeck, Vice Chair
Mr. Mark Ferguson, Board Attorney and Commissioner Watson were in attendance at the Board table.

Approval of March 11, 2025 minutes

Minutes motion 06:25

Mrs. Haas moved to accept the minutes of February 11, 2025. Mrs. Arnold seconded the motion. Motion carried 7-1-2 with Mrs. Potter voting no, and Mrs. O'Brien and Mrs. Dombrosky present not voting.

Approval of the Agenda

Agenda motion 14:33

Chair Hopkins asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda.
Mrs. Arnold moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Porter seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

Approval of the Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda Motion 15:08

Mrs. Haas moved to approve the items on the consent agenda. Mrs. Arnold seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-1 with Mr. Zeck voting no.

Items on the Consent Agenda:

- Receive monthly personnel report and appointments to unclassified positions
- Act on teacher licensure waivers
- Act on Local Professional Development plans
- Approve USD 367 Osawatomie, Miami County for Capital Improvement (bond and interest) state aid and to hold a bond election
- Notification of four private schools and one scholarship granting organizations to participate in the Tax Credit for Low Income Student Scholarship program

Commissioner's Report

Watson 15:40

Dr. Watson reported the KSDE Insight Podcast has been launched. There are two podcasts, the first about the History of Kansas Public Education and the second on Screentime in Schools.

He reported that the US Department of Education sent a letter notifying the department that ESSER funds would not be continued. The KSDE staff sent a request for more time, and that request has been received and is being reviewed. This funding affects LTRS training, the KELI program and many other important programs for Kansas Education.

The Commissioner used basketball championships as a metaphor for winning, losing and setting high standards. Championships can be won by coaches who have vastly different methods. However, winning coaches share is a strong drive to be excellent. He compared this to school attendance, school assessments and setting standards high, noting there are different methods to reach excellence, but the starting place is to have a strong drive for excellence in every student's journey.

Citizen's Open Forum

Forum 32:02

Chair Hopkins opened the Citizen's Forum and invited the following people to speak to the Board:

1. Dr. Shane Kirchner, from McPherson College, representing Kansas Association of Private Colleges of Teachers of Education (KAPCOTE), gave an update on private colleges in Kansas and specifically spoke about the Kansas Association of Teacher Educators (ATE-K) conference.

2. Dr. Kelly Hoelting, Eskridge Kansas, agriculture teacher at Mission Valley High School, spoke in support of funding the FFA Executive Secretary Position. She shared how FFA deeply influenced her own life for the better, and as an agriculture teacher she experiences daily how important this hands-on program is to students. (FFA has formerly been known as Future Farmers of America, but now is known only by the acronym.)

3. Dr. Kasey Johnson, School of Education department chair, Ottawa University asked the Board to be supportive of the smaller private universities. She spoke about KAPCOTE.

4. Nancy Moneymaker, DeSoto, a private citizen, shared her definition of education. She is concerned about government agencies and schools gathering data on students. Students are individuals and should not be defined as successful or not successful.

5. Erica Sheets, Blue Valley parent, representing Moms for Liberty, talked about *Parents as Teachers* program. She noted this program comes out of the Whole Child community model. There is a high level of data collection which concerns her.

Chair Hopkins thanked all the participants and closed the forum.

Act on recommendations for funding *Kansas Parents as Teachers*

Parents as Teachers 48:15

Mrs. Amanda Petersen, Director, Early Childhood, answered questions from the Board.

Mrs. Haas moved that the Kansas State Board of Education approve grant awards for the parent education program (Kansas Parents as Teachers) for 2025-2026, subject to legislative approval of funding. If a program is unable to spend funds awarded, the Kansas State Department of Education is authorized to reallocate funding among programs. Mrs. Arnold seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-4 with Mrs. Potter, Mr. Zeck, Mrs. O'Brien and Mrs. Dombrosky voting no.

Act to request to contract with Kansas State University to support the Executive Director of Kansas FFA (formerly known as Future Farmers of America)

FFA 1:06:45

Mrs. O'Brien moved that the Kansas State Board of Education authorize the Commissioner of Education to contract with Kansas State University to support the Executive Director of Kansas FFA at a total amount not to exceed $75,427.00 per year, up to a total of $301,708.00 for the four years, from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2029. Mrs. Arnold seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-0-1 with Mrs. Dombrosky present not voting.

Act to request contract for Summer Food Service Program Public Service Announcements

Public Service Announcements 1:06:16

Mrs. Haas moved that the Kansas State Board of Education authorize the Commissioner of Education to enter into a contract with the Kansas Association of Broadcasters in an amount not to exceed $20,000 for the purpose of disseminating a Public Service Announcement to promote summer meal service sites. Mr. Porter seconded the motion. Motion failed 5-5 with Mr. Hershberger, Mrs. Potter, Mr. Zeck, Mrs. O'Brien and Mrs. Dombrosky voting no.

Act to add KBOR's literacy training to the state-approved training list and to add ETS reading specialist test (code 5302) to the state-approved testing list.

KBOR literacy 1:10:54

Mr. Porter moved that the Kansas State Board of Education approve the Foundations of the Science of Reading: Understanding and Applying Structured Literacy Principles courses to the state-approved training list and ETS Reading Specialist test (code 5302) to the state-approved testing list. Dr. New seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

State Assessments: The role of the Kansas Assessment Advisory Council (KAAC) with Dr. Daniel Gruman, Director of Assessment of Research at Shawnee Mission USD 512.

State Assess KAAC 1:27:43

Beth Fultz, Director, CSAS, explained why a new assessment is being developed and what the role of KAAC is in that process.

Dr. Gruman, Director of Assessment and Research at Shawnee Mission USD 512, shared the process of how the assessments are formed with the reccomendations of the KAAC.

The KAAC was created in 2003 as an advisory group to provide support and feedback about Kansas assessments. Bylaws were proposed and adopted in 2013. On the Council are 33 district representatives, KSDE staff, and a representative from the Kanas State School for the Deaf or Kansas State School for the Blind. Collectively, all school districts and all areas of the state are representated.

KAAC made recommendations on performance level descriptors. In March of 2023, they recommended that there needs to be a clearer definition of 'proficient." They encouraged vertical scaling, want to make sure that performance level descriptors clearly describe what the assessments measure and that KSDE consider changing the number of performance levels.

Dr. Gruman compared the descriptors as of 2015:

- A student at Level 1 shows a limited ability to understand and use the *reading, writing, and listening* skills and knowledge needed for college and career readiness.
- A student at Level 2 shows a basic ability to understand and use the *reading, writing, and listening* skills and knowledge needed for college and career readiness.
- A student at Level 3 shows an effective ability to understand and use the *reading, writing, and listening* skills and knowledge needed for college and career readiness.
- A student at Level 4 shows an excellent ability to understand and use the *reading, writing, and listening* skills and knowledge needed for college and career readiness.

With the descriptors as of 2024:

- A student at Level 1 shows a limited ability to understand and use the *reading, writing, and listening* skills and knowledge needed for postsecondary readiness.
- A student at Level 2 shows a basic ability to understand and use the *reading, writing, and listening* skills and knowledge needed for postsecondary readiness.
- A student at Level 3 shows an effective ability to understand and use the *reading, writing, and listening* skills and knowledge needed for postsecondary readiness.
- A student at Level 4 shows an excellent ability to understand and use the *reading, writing, and listening* skills and knowledge needed for postsecondary readiness.

From these recommendations, KAAC did not want to change the number of performance levels, and did not want to address vertical scaling, but they did want to define "proficient" and ensure that the performance level descriptors clearly describe what the assessments measure.

These are the proposed level descriptors which KAAC recommends:

- A student at Level 1 shows a limited ability to demonstrate their knowledge and skills of (third, fourth, fifth, etc.) grade (ELA, Math, Science) standards.
- A student at Level 2 shows a basic ability to demonstrate their knowledge and skills of (third, fourth, fifth, etc.) grade (ELA, Math, Science) standards.
- A student at Level 3 shows a proficient ability to demonstrate their knowledge and skills of (third, fourth, fifth, etc.) grade (ELA, Math, Science) standards.

- A student at Level 4 shows an advanced ability to demonstrate their knowledge and skills of (third, fourth, fifth, etc.) grade (ELA, Math, Science) standards.

There was a time of questions and answers with the Board members.

School District Cash Balances

Cash Balances 2:05:25

Dr. Frank Harwood, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Fiscal and Administrative Services
Dr. Harwood explained that there are misconceptions about the cash balances held by districts. His presentation was an explanation of how the fiscal year works for schools, taking into account when funds are received and when expenses are due.

Cash balances are reported as the fund balance for specified budget accounts as of July 1 of each year. Cash balances vary during the fiscal year and the timing of the report has an impact on the balance reported for each account. Dr. Harwood emphasized that it is important to understand the purpose and restrictions on cash balances. Districts do not simply have huge amounts of cash that they are keeping, but rather funds are needed prior to the time they are distributed by federal and state sources, so there needs to be cash held so that expenses can be paid when necessary.

Reported Cash balances can be divided into four categories:
Capital Funds (capital expenditures);
Levied Funds (funds from a specific tax levy);
Operational Funds – for general or specific operational purposes;
Special Purpose Funds – funds with restricted.

With the Capital Fund balances, which are restricted to capital expenditures, the ending cash balances will be higher than the annual expenditures. In terms of capital outlay, increases in property insurance and construction prices necessitate holding higher balances to be ready for increased expenses. Due to tax distribution dates, the district must have the full amount of bond payment plus needed cash balances.

Levied fund balances, which are collected by local levied property tax, have specific purposes and limits. Balances in levied funds are used to reduce future levies or mitigate delinquent taxes (or successful tax appeals).

Operational funds are used for day to day expenses like special education, career and post-secondary education, textbook and student materials, professional development, etc. The budgeted general and supplemental general fund for 2024-25 is $5.8 billion. Operations cash balances represent 15.7% of operational revenues for 2024-2025. Recent legislative studies recommend 15% cash balances. More certainty in funding streams and cashflow reduce the reliance on cash balances. The operations budgeting timeline for the general fund starts in February of the previous year to May, when districts must estimate enrollment. They negotiate staff salaries from February to June. In the current year September 20th is the preliminary enrollment date when the budget is due. Then from January to April there are audits to finalize enrollment data and in June there is the final budget notification and payment.

In contrast, the special education fund has a different timeline. In the previous year, February to May is the time to estimate enrollment and staffing. Then in the current year, throughout the year districts must adjust staffing and services. The first state aid payment comes in October. In June there is the final budget notification and payment. Because of this timeline, special education requires a higher ending cash balance, in order to be prepared to pay bills prior to the first state aid payment in October.

There was a time of questions and answers with the Board and Dr. Harwood.

The Power Of Theater Education in Kansas Schools

Theater
3:30:29

Joyce Huser, Fine Arts, KSDE introduced Megan Upton-Tyner, teacher at Andover High School and Director of Thespian Troupe 3540 chapter and all of the students and Ryan McCoy, teacher from Washburn Rural

Mrs. Upton-Tyner shared information about the organization Kansas Thespians.
The presentation started with Weston Widman and Addison Resch. Weston presented two monologues, one from *Greater Tuna* and one from *I Never Sang for my Father*. Addison Resch sang "Me and the Sky" from the musical *Come From Away*. Both actors were excellent and much appreciated by the Board members.

Students spoke about how being involved in theater has given them skills that will assist them throughout their lives and careers. Ashlyn Warren, Weston Widman, Kennedy Pence, and Morgan Sponholtz each shared their involvement with Kansas Thespians and how the skills they learned by participating have contributed to their path, even if they are not continuing with theater as a profession.

Ryan McCoy, Director of Theatre at Washburn Rural High School, shared his joy at being part of this extra-curricular organization. He observes many skills are developed and also there is a strong sense of community involvement.

Both teachers and students encouraged the Board to consider adding Kansas Thespians to the graduation post-secondary assets list.

Kansas Teacher of the Year Team

KTOY
4:09:00

Denise Kahler, Director, Communications, introduced the Kansas teacher of the year and the Kansas regional teachers of the year
Kansas Teacher of the Year is Elizabeth Anstine who teaches business at Leavenworth High School.
The regional teachers are:
Whitney Aves, Family and Consumer Sciences, Hutchinson High School.
Benjamin Eckelberry, First Grade, Tecumseh North Elementary School.
Ryan Mellick, Industrial Technology, Bonner Springs High School.
Amber Pagan, Pre-K, Nieman Elementary School in Shawnee.
Eric Stone, Band and Vocal Music, Gordon Parks Academy in Wichita.
Maegen Stucky, Fifth Grade, Roosevelt Elementary School in McPherson.

Olivia Winegeart, Second Grade, Paul B Cooper Elementary in Wichita.

Each teacher spoke on the theme of hard truths. They shared their experience on such topics as Social Emotional learning and the crisis of literacy. They encouraged the Board to support teacher mentoring programs which they have experienced as highly effective in retaining new teachers.

Career Technical Education CTE Scholars

CTE Scholars 5:00:00

Natalie Clark, KSDE Career, Standards and Assessment Services

There are five criteria to be a Kansas CTE Scholar:

- Senior level status,
- three CTE credits within one pathway
- with at least two credits from technical and application-level courses,
- 3.5 GPA minimum in CTE classes
- and a civic engagement project or 40 hours of community service.

200 students were given the honor of being named as CTE Scholars. They represent 25 pathways and 15 career clusters, and more than 8,000 hours of community service and work on civic engagement projects. Students who earn this honor receive a certificate, graduation honor cord, commemorative pein, statewide news release, and KSDE website recognition. This honor also helps many students obtain scholarship opportunities in postsecondary education. The list of all the scholars was placed on the KSDE website.

Legislative Update

Update 5:14:50

Dr. Frank Harwood, Deputy Commissioner, Fiscal and Administrative Services

Dr. Harwood explained three bills which were recently signed by the Governor, one that was vetoed, and many which were awaiting action. The Legislature is close to being finished and is now awaiting the veto session, which begins April 10th. He went through SB125/HB2007, the education budget, which is currently in the conference committee process.

Federal Government Update

Dr. Harwood asked KSDE General Counsel R. Scott Gordon to give a report on the situation with federal ESSER funding, originally granted during the COVID pandemic.

Federal 5:59:12

<u>Esser Funding</u>

Mr. Gordon explained every state was given an extension to spend the final ESSER funds. However on March 28th, 2025, a letter came from the US Department of Education saying that all funds needed to be spent by March 28th, 2025. However, if a state wanted to ask for other consideration, they could submit documentation and a request. KSDE did that and is now waiting to see what determination will be made.

<u>Title VI</u>

The second issue has to do with Title VI. (Title VI, 42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq., was enacted as part of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.) Any recipient of federal funds

agrees to not discriminate on the basis of race, color or national origin. Any time a state applies for federal funds, specifically for special education, they must have a consolidated plan to comply with non-discrimination. KSDE created such a plan in 2017 and has continued to use that plan. In 2017 KSDE provided a certification signed by the Commissioner and also the Governor of Kansas, stating that Kansas would abide by all the laws, including the laws pertaining to Title VI for special education. KSDE also agreed to get certification from all the districts that they would also comply with Title VI. KSDE has maintained those certifications, and they are presently in place.

On April 3, 2025, there was a letter that was sent from the US Department of Education to all of the chiefs of the State Education agencies, stating they wanted to have that certification again. Not only did this letter ask for states to recertify compliance with Title IV but also in response to a Supreme Court case that states would not discriminate in terms of enrollment and acceptance policies for higher education. (The Supreme Court case was dealing with Harvard and North Carolina.) General Counsel Gordon assured the Board that this letter is being discussed as to a state response, and there has been an extension granted to all states to decide how to best respond to this request. The requests asks for KSDE to recertify but also for all the Local Education Agencies (LEA) to recertify. This is a new requirement. KSDE presently holds certifications from Kansas LEAs but have never been asked to recertify and collect these certifications on behalf of the federal education agency. The original deadline for this was March 13th, but that has been extended.

Mr. Gordon explained that typically when such a request comes to collect data/information from the federal agency, there is an OMB number attached, Office of Management and Budget. There is a process that the federal government goes through when asking for data, which is they go through the office of Management and Budget, where the request is reviewed and if it is approved the asking agency is given an authorization, and a number. There was no such number assigned to this request, as well the letter was not signed by anyone. There was a generic email address from the US Education Department Office of Civil Rights.

Records Access

The third issue was a request from the US Dept. of Education, based on information they have heard from families that some school districts are not providing access to educational records to parents. The letter stated that some districts were not providing that access saying the request was not about educational data and that some information was protected by FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act). Mr. Gordon stated that no State Department of Education has ever been responsible for enforcing FERPA. The request was that KSDE state they know what FERPA is and that they will start enforcing FERPA on a local level. Mr. Gordon stated that KSDE will provide a response and that they are working on it.

The Chair moved that the Kansas State Board of Education recess into Executive Session to discuss the subject of legal matters with legal counsel, which is justified pursuant to the exception for matters which would be deemed privileged in the Attorney-Client relationship under KOMA, in order to protect privilege and the Board's communications with an attorney on legal matters. Starting at 4:25 for 15 minutes. No action will be taken during this session, and the open meeting will resume at 4:40. Commissioner Watson, Attorney Scott Gordon, Board Attorney Mark Ferguson and Deputy Commissioner Harwood are invited to be present. Vice Chair Zeck seconded the motion. Motion

carried 10-0.

There was an Executive Session. The meeting resumed at 4:40.

Professional Practices Commission (PPC)
R. Scott Gordon, KSDE, General Counsel
Mr. Gordon shared the two PPC recommendations.

PPC
6:42:12

Mrs. Arnold moved the Kansas State Board of Education suspend the licenses of 25-PPC-14 and 25-PPC-15 through May 29th, 2025. Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

Mrs. Arnold moved that the Kansas State Board of Education deny the licenses in 24-PPC-33 and 25-PPC-04. Mr. Hershberger seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

Committee Reports

Dr. New and Chair Hopkins reported on the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Central States zoom call. One topic was a discussion on how to simplify rules and regulations.

Jim Porter reported that the Legislative Funding Task Force met and reviewed funding methods of neighboring states. The task force is now meeting monthly.

Michelle Dombrosky shared a meeting recently at Kansas School for the Deaf. In attendance were Dr. Watson, Cathy Hopkins, Michelle Dombrosky, superintendent Barron and parents who are concerned about reading. Lisa Karney, a KSDE employee, assigned to KSSB and KSD will coordinate with staff and parents. The science of reading and literacy issues are different for deaf students. They will look at possible instruction training materials for deaf or hard of hearing students.

Melanie Haas reported the Board policy committee met on zoom and discussed possible items. They were asked about the possibility of using WEB Ex or Zoom for the Citizen's Open Forum. The committee made a decision that to do so is untenable. They will, however, consider this method when it comes to public hearings.

Dennis Hershberger and Melanie Haas, spoke about the Elementary School Educational Advisory ESEA. This group had not met for a long time. The initial meeting was on zoom and was an overview of the group and why they are reconvening.

Chair Hopkins spoke about the Professional Standards Board PSB. There was a presentation by Jamie Finkeldei on a possible third tier of accreditation. History and government standards are going through review.

Chair Hopkins recessed the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Chair Hopkins called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. All the members were present.

SMHAC
1:08

School Mental Health Advisory Council

Betty Arnold, District 8, Kansas State Board Member
Kent Reed, Counseling, SECD, Academic Behavioral and Technical Integration, Juvenile Justice, KSDE Staff
Dr. Huff-Johnson, Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC)

Mrs. Arnold, Chair of the School Mental Health Advisory Council (SMHAC) opened the presentation. The Council was formed in 2017 to advise the Kansas State Board of Education of unmet needs in the area of school mental health. One of the ongoing needs is bullying prevention.

Mr. Reed shared that at this time of year the most frequent calls to KSDE are about teacher licensure and bullying. The first thing to look at is the definition of bullying. The bullying prevention statute was adopted in the early 2000s, and the first amendment was to add cyberbullying. Theno vs. Tonganoxie USD was a court case that changed the definition of bullying. Previously the definition was directed towards students only, but staff members and parents were added. The overall idea was to create a bully-free zone in schools. He went over the statute and the definition of what bullying is and what it is not.

Schools need to have:

- bullying prevention (training for staff and students),
- intervention (plan that will occur if bullying is reported)
- and postvention (follow up summary for parents and progress monitoring to avoid future incidents.

Dr. Huff-Johnson, Kansas Parent Information Resource Center, went over four types of bullying: verbal bullying, physical bullying, cyberbullying, and social bullying. She shared a document that is available for all schools. She spoke about engaging families in bullying prevention. She showed an example of what one principal has done to engage families. There were ten short videos that can be watched by parents and students together.

Mr. Reed shared that physical assaults are more than bullying. Assault is a criminal action and needs to be reported to the police. There is a line between bullying and criminal action.

Literacy
47:41

Literacy Initiatives in Kansas Schools

Dr. Laurie Curtis, Dyslexia Coordinator
Jeri Powers, Reading Specialist, Baldwin City
Amy Bybee, Asst. Superintendent, Ottawa USD 290

The Early Literacy/Dyslexia team is made up of 10 specialists: Hailey Hawkinson, Melissa Brunner, Jeri Powers, Amy Bybee, Casey Peine, Sam Cool, Mary Larkin, Katie, Orr, Taylor Fegan, and Deanna Frost.

Her team provides literacy instruction in pre-K12 aligned to the science of reading and assures teachers and administrators are well-trained and knowledgeable in the elements and implementation of structured literacy.

Dr. Curtis shared the statement from the Kansas State Board of Education on February 14, 2024: *The Kansas State Board of Education requires all accredited schools in Kansas to use **evidence-based methodology** fully aligned with the **science of reading**, specifically **Structured Literacy,** to provide literacy instruction for students. The Kansas State Board of Education **prohibits the use of practices and pedagogy identified in research to be counterproductive to reading acquisition** in addition , the State Board recommends literacy specific **universal screening** measures, and **diagnostic formative and summative assessments** to be utilized by accredited districts.*

This requirement has taken very seriously. She shared a definition of the Science of Reading which is being instituted throughout Kansas education and teacher training:

> The science of reading is a vast, interdisciplinary body of scientifically based research about reading and issues related to reading and writing. This research has been conducted over the last five decades across the world and is derived from thousands of studies conducted in multiple languages. The science of reading has culminated in a preponderance of evidence to inform how proficient reading and writing develop; why some have difficulty and how we can most effectively assess and teach and, therefore, improve student outcomes through prevention of and intervention for reading difficulties.
>
> *The Science of Reading Defining Guide*
> *The Reading League 2021*

She shared a graph showing how learning to be a skilled reader takes many skills that are woven together in the science of reading.

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. Dr. Curtis is the Dyslexia Coordinator for Kansas. She explained the challenges of dyslexia and developmental language disorder (DLD). These are two different types of challenges for skilled reading.

Structured Literacy is phonemes, graphemes, syllable and stress patterns, morphemes, vocabulary, sentence structure, and text structure. How this happens is through teaching that is explicit, systematic, cumulative, interactive, has prompt feedback and is data driven.

Dr. Curtis shared the goals and progress of the Dyslexia Legislative Task force through the Kansas Education Framework for Literacy. There are many support systems for all districts in the area of dyslexia and literacy.

Screens in the Classroom: Healthy Initiatives

Susan Dunaway, LCPC, Olathe

Mrs. Dunaway is a therapist and the co-founder of Amend Neurocounseling. In 2015, she began discussing the negative impact of screen time on brain health.

Mrs. Dunaway shared a video of her comments to the Shawnee Mission School Board open forum 10 years ago. In that video she warned the Board that self-harming would increase due to increased screentime. She stated that 10 years later, sadly, her warnings were highly accurate. Since 2015, self-harm resulting in ER visits rose by almost 50% in boys and girls. Test scores have declined. Major depressive episodes have increased by 50% in girls and 100% in boys. There has been a 66% increase in prescriptions of antidepressants to teens and there are theories that increased screen use has increased ADHD II. She recommended the book *Anxious Generation*.

EdTech, which she defined as students doing academic work on an iPad or laptop, is a challenge to keeping kids healthy around screens. Some have responded that screen time is not "our problem." Everyone seems to blame someone else, teachers, administration, school boards, culture and covid. She argued that it does not matter whose problems it is, it needs to be addressed. She recommended that the State Board ask "What are the unintended consequences of EdTech and what is it that you control? How can we be part of the solution and not add to the problem? How can we ask different questions to get to different results?"

Neil Postman was a professor of media ecology at NYU. He spoke about what technology could do to society. In 1997, he gave a talk called "The Surrender of Culture to Technology." She quoted Postman, "Only a fool would blithely welcome any technology without giving serious thought not only to what that technology will do but also what it will undo?" He recommended asking four questions when considering new technology:

1. What is the problem to which this technology is the solution?
2. Whose problem is it?
3. What new problems might be created because we solved this problem?
4. Which people and what institutions might be more seriously harmed by a technological solution?

Postman stated that in the technology game there are winners and losers. Winners profit from the technology and spend a lot of effort spinning it so the losers don't recognize they are losing. Mrs. Dunaway proposed that EdTech should be viewed in light of those four questions.

Some say we must educate our children in technology because our society is in a Technology Age. She offered that we are now in an Attention Age. Our society is being wired, pulled every moment to some new post on our phone. Digital media is constantly competing for our attention. Attention impacts learning, memory, self-perception and has much to do with emotional and physical health. Teachers, professors, and businesses all note that younger people have poor attention.

Mrs. Dunaway went on to describe the ways technology has changed our physiology and ability to read deeply. She encouraged the Board to establish new state standards in healthy interactions with technology, one that addresses the harm the devices can do and promotes activities to fill in

the gap in essential skills resulting from interaction with devices and the time missed in the real world.

Students need to be taught how to handle the effects of screen use, such as loss of attention span, impulse control and other executive functions. They should be educated in how to add protective factors to build connections in the real world. On one hand, learning what the effect of screen time is and how to avoid it, and on the other hand, learning how to engage in activities to encourage essential life skills such as face-to-face dialogue with peers and technology-free challenges.

Ultimately she offered these guidelines:

- Ask the questions;
- Be willing to change course;
- Teach the consequences;
- Build essential skills.

Child Nutrition Awards

Awards
2:42:40

Kelly Chanay, Director, Child Nutrition and Wellness

Mrs. Chanay gave certificates for completing the Child Nutrition Management Course to:
Amy Sherman of Prairie View
Erin Taff of South Brown County
Kim Fitzgerald of Wamego
LaDonna Schuetz of Jefferson West
Lynn Fry of Wamego
Margeryann Erckert of Olathe
Theresa Cattrell at Atchison County Community Schools
Tiffany Marmon at Prairie View

The Board was very appreciating of these women and there were pictures taken with all.

Lifelong Kansas Educator, Craig Elliott

Elliot
2:58:00

Dr. Watson honored Mr. Craig Elliot, who has served as a bus driver, teacher, principal, superintendent, and professor. He started in 1981. He spent 26 years in Maize. He then worked in higher education, training principals and superintendents. He continued mentoring through the KELI program. After a lifetime of education, with his wife who is also a well-known and impactful educator, he is finally retiring. The Elliots spent their lives in service of the students, schools and families of Kansas. Mr. Elliot spoke briefly and eloquently about his love for education and his gratitude for his family. His parents were both educators, and his dad said to him, "If you don't want to watch kids and adults make mistakes, don't get into education." He also mentioned his mentor Joe Hickey, who would say, "Just remember your only job is to help people."

The Board showed their appreciation with a standing ovation.

Purple Star Schools Presentation

Dale Brungardt, Director, School Finance

Purple Star
4:01:30

Mr. Brungardt shared that April is the month of the military child. In Kansas, approx. 10,000 students have an active-duty military parent. That number rises to 13,000 when considering reserve and guard forces. 168 districts have military connected students. This is the 14th largest student population of military families in the US.

Kansas has nine Purple Star Schools, a designation that recognizes schools that show a major commitment to students and families connected to our nation's military. This program helps ensure that military children transition successfully into new schools and stay on track for graduation.

The new schools for this year are: USD 203 Piper, USD 253 Emporia, USD 394 Rose Hill, and USD 320 Spring Hill. Each school district gave an inspiring report about what they are doing to support military students.

Receive recommendations for approving Pre-School Aged At-Risk programs for 2025-2026

At-Risk Pre-School
4:35:27

Amanda Petersen, Director, Early Childhood
Natalie McClane, Early Childhood
Mrs. Petersen shared an overview of the Preschool-Aged At-Risk program for 2025-2026 and discuss the State Board's role in approving programs in preparation for taking action in May 2025.

From the PowerPoint:
The Kansas state school finance formula (K.S.A 72-5132) defines two categories of preschool students who each count as a ½ student (0.5 FTE) when calculating a district's enrollment and accompanying weightings:

- "Preschool-aged exceptional children" are 3- and 4-year-old students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) who receive special education and related services.
    - State and federal special education laws require that preschool students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (K.S.A. 72-3410 and 20 U.S.C. § 1412).
- "Preschool-aged at-risk students" are 3- and 4-year-old students, who meet at least one Preschool-Aged At-Risk criterion, who are enrolled and attending a district's approved Preschool-Aged At-Risk program.

The standards that districts confirm that they will meet for the duration of the school year include commitment to:

    - Implement a research-based curriculum aligned with the Kansas Early Learning Standards.
    - Provide a minimum of 465 hours of instruction.
    - Maintain an adult-to-child ratio of 1:10 or better and a maximum class size of 20.
    - Ensure that all staff are qualified and hold appropriate licensure.
    - Provide opportunities for meaningful family engagement.
- In 2023-2024, Kansas public schools enrolled 23,817 preschool students:
    - 11,770 preschool-aged at-risk students

    - 6,887 preschool students with disabilities
    - 5,160 other preschool students (who did not generate school finance formula funding)
- In 2023-2024 the Preschool-Aged At-Risk program generated at least $48.9 million in school finance formula funding for schools.
    - *Considers preschool-aged at-risk enrollment plus the at-risk weighting for students who qualified for free meals, at a BASE of $5,088.*

State enrollment aid:
11,770 preschool-aged at-risk students at 0.5FTE Base ($5,088) would be $29,942,880.
At risk weighting:
7.708 preschool-aged at-risk students qualified for free meals 0.484 Base ($5,088) would be $18,981,659.
$29,942,880 + $18,981,659 - $48,924,539.

In May, the State Board will consider approving Preschool-Aged At-Risk programs for 2025-2026. In districts operating approved programs, 3 & 4 year old students who meet an at-risk criterion for the Preschool-Aged At-Risk program and who are enrolled and attending a program that meets all of the Preschool-Aged At-Risk program requirements on Count Day will automatically count as a ½ student (0.5 FTE) in calculating a district's enrollment and accompanying weightings.

Descriptors
5:06:07

Receive updated performance level descriptors for 2025 Assessments

Beth Fultz, Director, Career, Standards and Assessment Services

These are the recommendations for updated descriptors, to be voted on in May:

- A student at Level 1 shows a **limited** ability to demonstrate their knowledge and skills of (third, fourth, fifth, etc.) grade (ELA, Math, Science) standards.
- A student at Level 2 shows a **basic** ability to demonstrate their knowledge and skills of (third, fourth, fifth, etc.) grade (ELA, Math, Science) standards.
- A student at Level 3 shows a **proficient** ability to demonstrate their knowledge and skills of (third, fourth, fifth, etc.) grade (ELA, Math, Science) standards.
- A student at Level 4 shows an **advanced** ability to demonstrate their knowledge and skills of (third, fourth, fifth, etc.) grade (ELA, Math, Science) standards.

This is the timeline for developing the new assessments:

- May 9 – State Assessment Window Closes
- May 13 – KS BOE Standard Setting Methodology Presentation
- May 14 – KS BOE Vote on Performance Level Descriptors
- June 9 – 13 – Standard Setting by Kansas Educators
- July 8 – KS BOE Standard Setting Results Presentation
- August 8 – KS BOE Vote on *Cut Scores* for Performance Levels
- Approximately September 1 – scores released to parents, teachers, buildings, and districts on the KAP secure website.

Receive funding request for 2025-2026 AmeriCorps Kansas Grant Awards
Dr. Jessica Dorsey, Executive Director, Kansas Volunteer Commission
Dr. Dorsey shared the grants that are being requested:

Boys & Girls Club of Hutchinson $100,800
The Boys & Girls Club of Hutchinson will have 14 AmeriCorps members provide academic support to students in Boys & Girls Clubs of Hutchinson sites at Avenue A School and Shadduck Park Community Center. At the end of the program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for improved school attendance and/or improved academic performance.

Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence $773,273
The Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence will have 98 AmeriCorps members providing academic interventions in Lawrence, KS. At the end of the program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for supporting 1,050 youth to meet the expected seven-month gain in measurable development.

Boys & Girls Club of Manhattan $501,945
The Boys & Girls Club of Manhattan will have 53 AmeriCorps members in Manhattan, Ogden, and Wamego, KS. AmeriCorps members will mentor students before, during, and after school. At the end of the program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for 318 students with improved academic engagement.

Center for Supportive Communities $171,462
The Center for Supportive Communities will have 28 AmeriCorps members support students, families, and schools in Douglas County, KS, including Lawrence, Eudora, Baldwin City, and Perry. At the end of the program year, the AmeriCorps members will support 60 students with 70% showing an improvement in their school attendance.

Elizabeth Ballard Community Center $107,999
The Ballard Center will have 6 AmeriCorps members who reduce hunger and food insecurity in Lawrence, Kansas. At the end of the program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for expanding services for those in poverty.

Emporia State University $143,983
The Emporia State University Teachers College AmeriCorps Program will have 26 AmeriCorps members provide literacy interventions to Pre-K students in Emporia. At the end of the program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for serving 156 students and 124 students will show an increase in academic achievement.

Fort Hays State University $88,200
Fort Hays State University will have 12 AmeriCorps members train community-based Reading Partners to effectively teach foundational reading skills using structured literacy principles in Western Kansas communities. At the end of the program year, AmeriCorps members will be responsible for providing training to 250 Reading Partners, with at least 90% reporting they feel more effectively prepared to teach literacy skills to youth.

Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education $151,200

The Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education will have 6 AmeriCorps members provide environmental education for PreK-12 students and support EE professional development for area teachers at six sites: Pittsburg, Olathe, Emporia, Manhattan, Junction City and Wichita. At the end of the program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for providing environmental education to an estimated 3000+ teachers and students in Kansas and will evaluate improved understanding of nature and ecological principles among at least 1250 participants.

The Educator Academy $151,200

The Educator Academy will have 6 AmeriCorps members who serve in lead teachers' classrooms supporting classroom instruction in USD 500, 204, and 202. At the end of the program year, AmeriCorps members will be responsible for securing enrollment as full-time educators at high-need school sites.

Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas $75,600

The Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas Public Health Department will have 5 AmeriCorps members who serve in health insurance education and navigation, tobacco cessation and youth violence prevention and education. At the end of the program year, AmeriCorps members will increase the number of patients enrolled in health insurance and tobacco cessation and will decrease the numbers with students with disciplinary incidents.

USD 260 Derby $166,776

The Derby Schools AmeriCorps Tutoring Program will have 41 AmeriCorps members tutor academically at-risk students and support kindergarten readiness in the Derby Public Schools. At the end of the program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for increasing student achievement and expanding kindergarten readiness opportunities.

USD 491 Eudora $176,400

The Eudora School District will have 11 AmeriCorps members implement structured early literacy interventions for children from agricultural worker families who meet program eligibility criteria in the Kansas City, Eudora, Lawrence, and Manhattan regions. At the end of the program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for 312 children demonstrating gains in school readiness.

Wichita State University Community Engagement Institute $243,133

The Wichita State University Community Engagement Institute will have 31 AmeriCorps members to mentor and develop youth. At the end of the program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for equipping youth with practical and emotional life skills.

Wichita State University School of Education $144,000

The Wichita State University School of Education will have 15 AmeriCorps members implement structured literacy practices grounded in the Science of Reading to address foundational literacy gaps among K–5 students at three target schools in Wichita, Kansas. At the end of the program

year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for 178 students showing improved academic performance.
Total amount not to exceed $2,995,971

Receive educator preparation provider standards for History, Government, Social Studies 5-8 and 6-12

Educator Prep Standards 5:59:00

Dr. Catherine Chmidling, Teacher Licensure
Dr. Alan English, Standards Committee Chair

Dr. Chmidling explained the type of standards that were being presented today.
Dr. English gave an overview of the History, Government and Social Studies 5-8 and 6-12 standards that are being presented for the Board to vote on in May.
(From PowerPoint)

- Standard 1: The History, Government, and Social Studies teacher candidate demonstrates competency in knowledge of History, Government, and Social Studies disciplines, including: US History, Kansas History, World History, Government and Civics, Economics, Geography, and Behavioral and Social Sciences.
- Standard 2: History, Government, and Social Studies teacher candidates design, implement, and justify engaging learning sequences that incorporate and effectively utilize a variety of sources (e.g., primary and secondary).
- Standard 3: History, Government, and Social Studies teacher candidates effectively design, implement, and reflect on appropriate, meaningful, and varied assessments (e.g., formative, interim, summative, etc.).
- Standard 4: HGSS teacher candidates reflect and utilize their social studies knowledge, inquiry skills, and civic dispositions to incorporate various students' backgrounds and community perspectives (which may include race, gender, tribal citizenship/affiliation, social economic status, language, status, disability status, and/or family status), to implement effective, engaging, and equitable learning sequences.
- Standard 5: The History, Government, and Social Studies teacher candidate demonstrates the knowledge and skills to engage in appropriate collaboration and communication with students and families.

Receive contract with the Kansas Office of Administrative Hearings

Hearings 6:07:48

Scott Gordon, General Counsel, KSDE

Mr. Gordon explained the need for administrative hearing officers.
The Kansas State Department of Education contracts with the Office of Administrative Hearings at the rate of $115.00 per billable hour. The pending contract would lock in that hourly rate for the next five years.

Hearings fall within three separate categories:
Professional Practices Commission The contractor will provide presiding officer/administrative law judge services including but not limited to the following: conduct prehearing conferences, issue prehearing orders, rule on discovery requests, assist the PPC chairperson with the hearings, rule on evidentiary issues at hearings, and draft the PPC's initial orders.

Special Education The Kansas State Board of Education is required by law to provide school districts parents with an administrative appeal of a hearing officer's ruling in due process cases. The State Board is required to provide these review officers per K.S.A. 72-974(b). The review officer appointed by the State Board shall conduct an impartial review of hearing officer's decisions within 20 calendar days after the notice of appeal is filed.

Child Nutrition and Wellness Hearings requested by Child Nutrition Program Sponsors due to fiscal action by KSDE and hearings appealing the audits of the Child Nutrition Program Administrative Review.

The Board will vote on this item in May.

Coop
6:16:40

Act on Cooperative Separation

R. Scott Gordon, General Counsel, KSDE

Mr. Gordon explained the separation of Piper School district from the other two districts that had been part of the Wyandotte Comprehensive Education Cooperative. All three schools were in agreement. He added that they simply needed the Board's approval.

In order to take action on this immediately there will be a motion to suspend the rules.

Mrs. Arnold moved that the Kansas State Board of Education suspend the rules which require a receive item first and then vote one month later, but rather to allow for an action item to be voted on immediately. Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-0. Mr. Potter was not present.

Mrs. Haas moved that the Kansas State Board of Education approve the updated Articles of Agreement to organize and operate the Wyandotte Comprehensive Education Cooperative. Mrs. O'Brien seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-0. Mr. Porter was not present.

Travel
6:18:00

Board Travel Requests

Mr. Hershberger moved that the Kansas State Board of Education approve the Board travel requests. Mrs. Dombrosky seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-0. Mr. Porter and Mrs. Arnold were not present.

Future Requests by Board Members

Mrs. Dombrosky requested a presentation on data, informed consent, and user agreement.

Mrs. Haas requested a presentation on the KSDE longitudinal data system.

Chair Hopkins requested items on AI issues, continued conversation about technology and the licensing of social workers in the Kansas schools.

Mr. Hershberger asked for more information on mental health and screen time/technology effects on students.

Concerns
6:25:05

Board Attorney Mark Ferguson addressed Mrs. Potter's concerns that were brought up on April 8th at the beginning of the meeting. He shared that Mrs. Potter and he had a robust conversation about the situation. The Chair expressed her thoughts and invited a Board discussion. Mrs. Potter appealed to the Board go through some policy points she had identified to determine if there had been violations. The Chair asked the Board if they would like to review policy at this time and there was no member who was in support of that. The Chair directed the Policy Committee to review current policy regarding Mrs. Potter's concerns. The entire conversation is recorded on the YouTube KSDE Live-media live stream April 9, 2025, starting at 6:25:05.

Chair Hopkins adjourned the meeting at 3:45 p.m. until May 13th & 14th, 2025.

_____ _____

Chair Cathy Hopkins Board Secretary Deborah Bremer