The meeting is archived on YouTube KSDE Livemedia channel. The time stamps are aligned with those videos.

Starts at the 9:20 mark

Kansas State Board of Education
April 14, 2026

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 14, 2026, in the boardroom of the Landon State Office Building, 900 SW Jackson Street, Topeka, Kansas. 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

Nine Board members were present:
(Mrs. Betty Arnold was absent due to family illness. She did join virtually for the new Commissioner vote on Tuesday morning)

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.

ACT ON MARCH MINUTES

Mr. Hershberger moved to approve the minutes for the March 10 & 11, 2026 Kansas State Board of Education meeting. Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. **Motion carried 8-0-1, with Mrs. Potter present but not voting.**

APPROVE APRIL AGENDA

Mrs. Haas moved to approve the agenda for April 14 & 15, 2026. Mr. Porter seconded the motion. **Motion carried 9-0.**

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Porter moved to approve the consent agenda without items D and E, Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-0.

Consent Items approved were:
a. Receive monthly personnel report
b. Act on local professional development plans
c. Act on recommendations for licensure waivers

SEPARATE VOTE FOR CONSENT AGENDA

*Item D approve extension of Board Attorney contract for 1 year

Mrs. Haas moved to approve the Board Attorney contract for 1 year, Mr. Porter seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-2-1 with Mrs. Potter and Mrs. O'Brien voting no and Mrs. Dombrosky present not voting.

*Item E (Clearinghouse contract) moved to May Agenda (This was pulled by Mrs. Dombrosky for discussion, however, as the Board is only meeting one day in April, it was decided the discussion/vote would take place in May. It will be on the Agenda but treated as a consent item and can be voted on in May.)

INTRODUCTION OF SUPERINTENDENTS 15:17 Super Intro

Senator Argabright, with the Kansas Educational Leadership Institute (KELI) staff, Dr. Mischel Miller, Executive Director, introduced some of the superintendents who are involved in leadership training: Jason Wheeler (USD 387 Altoona-Midway) , James Dawson (USD 504 Oswego) , Dustin Wilson (USD 243 Lebo-Waverly), Jason Scheck (USD 443 Dodge City), and Dr. David McGehee (USD 253 Emporia).

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Dr. Randy Watson 20:00 Watson

Dr. Watson described a markedly changed landscape in schools, particularly at the early childhood and elementary levels. He explained that national survey data and recent research had illustrated how students' daily experiences were being reshaped by increased exposure to personal electronic devices and digital media. The presentation emphasized that children were encountering screens earlier and more frequently than in previous generations and that these patterns were influencing attention, behavior, and learning environments in classrooms. Visual data reinforced the finding that media use among young children had become widespread and varied significantly by age and context.

Building on this backdrop, Dr. Watson shifted to policy implications for schools. It

summarized the work of a task force that examined personal electronic device use in K–12 settings and presented recommendations intended to create more focused and safe learning environments. The task force advised school districts to adopt bell-to-bell policies limiting student access to personal devices during the school day, to require secure storage of those devices, and to ensure that safety and emergency procedures did not depend on students' personal or school-issued devices for communication.

The presentation then distinguished between personal devices and district-issued electronic devices, noting that guidance related to school-issued technology had been formally presented to the State Board earlier in 2026. The report explained that research did not support rigid time-based limits on screen use in schools. Instead, it highlighted a consensus among major health and education organizations that the quality and purpose of device use mattered more than the number of minutes. Active, instructional uses of technology were contrasted with passive or entertainment-focused use, underscoring that not all screen time had equivalent educational value.

The commissioner's report articulated a set of principles for appropriate technology use in instruction. It emphasized that educators should be able to clearly explain when, why, and how devices were used to support learning goals and academic standards. Expectations for device use were described as needing to vary by grade level and developmental stage, with explicit guidance that technology should not replace hands-on learning, discussion, physical activity, creative play, or face-to-face collaboration. The report also cautioned against using devices as a default tool for managing student behavior or emotions.

Student safety and responsible use were presented as critical considerations. Districts should define when devices were appropriate for instruction and when they should be restricted, and safeguards should be in place to limit access to inappropriate content and digital distractions during the school day. The Commissioner emphasized the importance of teaching students' digital literacy, including online safety, ethical and responsible technology use, appropriate use of artificial intelligence tools, and strategies for managing attention and focus.

He highlighted the importance of transparency and communication with families, noting that districts were encouraged to clearly explain their technology practices and expectations. It encouraged local school systems to regularly review their policies, gather input from educators, families, and students, and make adjustments as research, technology, and community needs evolved.

The presentation concluded by indicating that formal guidance and recommendations to school districts would be brought back to the State Board at the May meeting. It closed with a reaffirmation of the Kansas State Department of Education's broader vision, emphasizing that today's students were Kansas's future workforce and leaders and that, together, Kansans could lead the world in achieving success for every student.

CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM — Forum 43:10

Speakers included:

1. Harmony Jarratt, Kansas School for the Deaf teacher, spoke about the importance of keeping ASL American Sign Language the primary communication for the deaf community, and how that plays into the choice of superintendent for the school. She shared the testimony from Chriz Dally, Museum of Deaf History, Arts & Culture, on the direction of the KSD superintendent search. Ms. Dally was concerned there were no deaf persons on the search committee, and the task force from earlier in the year was also made up of hearing parents and very little deaf staff were able to contribute. She believes that to be a KSD superintendent must be someone who understands Deaf culture and Deaf education from the inside and who can serve as a language model and a role model for Deaf children.

2. Steve Roberts, former State Board member, spoke about paying teachers well. He recommended a "techno Tuesday" be implemented for younger children, so they do not have technology all day, but they are exposed to it. He also thanked the Commissioner for his many years of stellar service to Kansas students.

PRESENTATION: KANSAS TEACHER OF THE YEAR TEAM — KTOY 1:09:00

Rachel Marlow, Kansas Teacher of the Year (Olathe)
Tracie Betz (Quinter)
Jason Peters, Hesston
Susan Rogers, Derby
Lauren Sage, Kansas City
Julie Smith, Carbondale
Troy St. Clair, Topeka
Tranda Strnad, Belleville

The KTOY team gave an inspiring presentation with each teacher sharing their journey and what it meant to work together.

ACT TO SELECT A NEW KANSAS COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION — Action 1:45:28

Mr. Porter moved that the Kansas State Board of Education approve the appointment

of Dr. Jake Steel as the Kansas Commissioner of Education. Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. Motion carried 7-1-2 with Mrs. Dombrosky voting no and Mrs. Potter and Mrs. O'Brien present not voting. (Mrs. Arnold was able to vote virtually during this motion.)

PRESENTATION: LIFE AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS ASSESSMENT FOR KANSAS SPECIAL PURPOSE SCHOOLS

KESA 3:36:18

Dr. Jay Scott, Director, Accreditation and Design
Jon Harding, Superintendent, Kansas State School for the Blind
Mike Bonner, Superintendent, Heartspring School

Dr. Scott and the Superintendents of the Kansas State School for the Blind and Heartspring School, introduced the Kansas Special Purpose Schools *Life and Employability Skills Assessment* as a statewide effort to better measure student readiness for postsecondary life.

The assessment was developed in response to longstanding challenges with traditional academic measures, which did not accurately reflect growth or success for students served by special purpose schools. Graduation rates, standardized testing, and conventional postsecondary indicators were described as poor measures of progress for this population, often failing to capture meaningful outcomes or true student readiness.

The *Life and Employability Skills Assessment* was presented as a solution designed to provide a clearer picture of students' preparedness for life beyond school. It was described as a universal, skills-based assessment administered to every K-12 student in special purpose schools. Students will be assessed twice each year through a pre- and post-assessment model, allowing schools to measure growth over time rather than comparing students to one another.

The assessment focused on skills aligned with adult quality of life and real-world, postsecondary expectations. It emphasized flexibility and individualization while maintaining high expectations for all students. Rather than measuring success based on current placements or limitations, the assessment focused on skills students would need in future environments, including employment and independent living. Outcomes were described as more meaningful and understandable for families, as they focused on practical skills and authentic results.

The assessment was also positioned as a tool for strengthening postsecondary transitions. It was described as providing employer-ready evidence of student skills and supporting long-term tracking of success beyond graduation. Additionally, the assessment was presented as a cultural shift for staff, promoting purpose-driven

work, unified accountability, and coherence across programs and schools.

The presentation concluded with an outlined implementation timeline. Schools were scheduled to complete the post-assessment by the end of May 2026, marking the conclusion of the pilot phase. In mid-June 2026, a cohort of special purpose schools will meet to debrief the pilot, refine the assessment, and finalize processes for administration, aggregation, and reporting. In July 2026, the Kansas State Board of Education will receive the assessment as an alternative metric for graduation and postsecondary effectiveness in accreditation. Pending approval, the 2026–2027 school year was identified as the first year of full implementation.

Corner
4:05:57

MONTHLY PRESENTATION: READING CORNER
Hailey Hawkinson, Dighton reading teacher

In a recent article on schools that had extremely high reading scores, considered to be bright spots, Dighton was selected as one of the highest scoring schools in Kansas especially when considering the poverty rate of the community.

Ms. Hawkinson described her small western Kansas district, Dighton, which has been lifted up as one of the “most improved” schools in Kansas in terms of student improvement in reading. She described their rural context and emphasized a long-term commitment to foundational reading instruction grounded in evidence-based approaches.

The initiative was explained as beginning more than a decade earlier when the district adopted a structured phonics program for early elementary grades. Implementation required significant professional learning and a clear focus on strengthening core instruction. Teachers delivered direct, systematic instruction in phonics while also incorporating small-group instruction to meet individual student needs.

Teacher expertise and stability were identified as key contributors to success. Veteran teachers brought strong classroom management, deep curricular knowledge, and confidence in instructional decision-making. Low turnover and consistency in curriculum use allowed staff to refine practice over time and respond more effectively to student learning needs.

The presentation emphasized the importance of balancing academic rigor with developmentally appropriate practices. Recess, play, and brain breaks were intentionally preserved as essential supports for student focus, regulation, and overall learning. Literacy instruction was described as structured yet flexible, allowing teachers to adjust pacing and support based on student performance.

Data played a central role in guiding instruction and interventions. Teachers regularly reviewed assessment results to identify strengths, target specific skill gaps, and determine appropriate instructional responses. Interventions were delivered through direct instruction and were not limited to struggling students, as on-level and enrichment opportunities were also provided.

Professional learning communities, student improvement teams, and close coordination with special education services ensured shared responsibility for student progress. An "all hands on deck" mindset reinforced the belief that supporting literacy growth was a collective effort across roles and disciplines.

District leadership conveyed high expectations paired with strong support for staff. Teachers were described as deeply invested in students and committed to providing the best possible educational experience. This collective belief system fostered a culture of continuous improvement and mutual accountability.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION SCHOLARS' ANNOUNCEMENT — CTE
Assistant Director Natalie Clark — 4:33:55

Mrs. Clark announced the 2026 Kansas Career and Technical Education Scholars program and recognized students who demonstrated excellence in career and technical education, academics, and civic engagement. Eligibility criteria included completion of a CTE pathway, academic performance, technical skill attainment, and community service or civic involvement. Individual letters of congratulations were sent to each student from their Board representative. The presentation summarized statewide promotion efforts, reported participation and outcomes across districts, and described the formal recognition provided to scholars. It concluded with the public acknowledgment of individual scholars and districts and reaffirmed the state's commitment to career readiness and postsecondary success.

RECEIVE ITEMS FOR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION — CTE
a. Receive CTE Cluster Review — 4:54:45
b. Receive CTE Pathway Credentials
Assistant Director Natalie Clark and the CTE support staff

Mrs. Clark and her team brought the Board copious materials documenting the Cluster Review process and outcomes and the Pathway Credential lists.

Cluster Review:
The presentation provided an overview of the 2025–2026 Career and Technical

Education cluster review process and shared recommended changes for future implementation. Updates included the Kansas modernized career cluster framework, which organized CTE into multiple industries, clusters, and pathways aligned to workforce needs. The review process incorporated input from secondary educators, postsecondary representatives, business and industry partners, and state agency staff.

The presentation summarized the clusters reviewed during the cycle, including Management and Entrepreneurship, Advanced Manufacturing, Digital Technology, and Supply Chain and Transportation, and described a modified review that resulted in a proposed Logistics and Supply Chain Management pathway. Review committees analyzed labor market data, industry standards, postsecondary alignment, assessments, credentials, and work-based learning opportunities to inform recommendations.

A public comment process was conducted, and recommendations were reviewed by the Kansas Advisory Committee for Career and Technical Education prior to being advanced for State Board consideration. Proposed updates included pathway revisions, course sequencing adjustments, expanded and consistent work-based learning opportunities, and the addition of entrepreneurship coursework across clusters. Approved changes were scheduled to take effect beginning with the 2027–2028 school year, with future cluster reviews planned on a rotating cycle.

Pathway Credentials:
The presentation provided an overview of Career and Technical Education pathway credential recommendations and related statutory requirements. It summarized updates to the Excel in CTE initiative and the annual review process for qualifying industry-recognized credentials aligned to high-demand occupations. The presentation highlighted recommended additions and updates to credential lists the 2026–2027 school year, including new and expanded certifications and proposed future considerations. It also reviewed statutory requirements for identifying, approving, and funding industry-sought credentials, the roles of state agencies and governing boards, and the use of credential lists to support pathway approval and student access to credentialing opportunities.

Teachers
5:28:00

PRESENTATION: TEACHER RETENTION SURVEY
Dr. Bret Church, Emporia State University

Dr. Church shared findings from the 2025 Kansas Teacher Retention Survey and examined factors influencing educator engagement, satisfaction, and long-term retention across the state. The purpose of the survey was described as understanding

why teachers stayed, why they considered leaving, and how engagement levels influenced both decisions and student outcomes.

The survey design and participation were reviewed, including response rates, regional representation, years of experience, and educator roles. The presentation emphasized that the survey provided a statewide snapshot rather than a single-year anomaly and allowed for trend comparisons across engagement levels. Respondents were grouped by engagement status, and differences in attitudes, intentions, and workplace perceptions were analyzed across those groups.

Findings indicated that teacher engagement was a strong predictor of retention. Highly engaged educators were described as more likely to remain in the profession and in their current districts, while disengaged educators were more likely to consider leaving either their district or the profession entirely. Engagement was also linked to perceptions of leadership, workload, compensation fairness, and professional respect. The presentation explored the financial and organizational costs of teacher turnover. Replacing teachers was described as costly for districts, not only due to recruitment and hiring expenses, but also because of onboarding, training, loss of institutional knowledge, and decreased continuity for students. High turnover was noted as disruptive to school culture, instructional consistency, and student achievement.

Several key drivers of engagement and retention were identified. These included supportive school leadership, trust in district administration, manageable workload expectations, access to resources, professional autonomy, and opportunities for growth and advancement. Compensation alone was not identified as the sole determinant of retention, but fairness, transparency, and alignment with responsibilities were shown to influence satisfaction and intent to stay.

The survey highlighted areas of lower satisfaction, including workload intensity, time demands, emotional exhaustion, and administrative burdens unrelated to instruction. Educators reporting lower engagement were more likely to feel that their voices were not heard in decision-making and that expectations continued to increase without corresponding support.

Differences in engagement and retention intent were also examined across career stages. Early-career educators were more likely to report uncertainty about staying long-term, while mid-career and veteran teachers cited burnout, workload sustainability, and leadership stability as key concerns. The presentation emphasized that retention strategies needed to be differentiated rather than uniform across experience levels.

The presentation emphasized that survey data could be used as a leading indicator rather than a reactive measure. Districts were encouraged to use engagement data proactively in strategic planning, negotiations, professional development planning, and school improvement efforts. Survey results were positioned as a tool to identify risk areas before large-scale attrition occurred, rather than responding after teachers had already decided to leave.

Dr. Church emphasized that improving teacher retention was not a single policy solution but required a systemic and sustained focus on educator experience. Engagement was described as a central lever that districts could influence through leadership practices, communication, workload management, and culture-building efforts. Improving engagement was presented as mutually beneficial for educators, students, and communities.

ACT ON PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
Scott Gordon, General Counsel

PPC
6:15:00

A. Act on Complaint (breach of contract)
Mr. Zeck moved that the Kansas State Board of Education suspend the educator's license in case 26-PPC-10 for the remainder of the term of the current contract for breach of contract. Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-0-1 with Mrs. Potter present not voting.

(B) Act on Complaint (breach of contract)
Mr. Zeck move that the Kansas State Board of Education suspend the educator's license in case 26-PPC-12 for the remainder of the term of the current contract for breach of contract. Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-0-1 with Mrs. Potter present not voting.

RECEIVE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM WAIVERS
Kelly Chanay, Director, Child Nutrition and Wellness

Waivers
6:17:30

Director Chanay reviewed the statutory requirement that all Kansas public schools offer the School Breakfast Program and explained the State Board of Education's authority to grant waivers from this requirement. It outlined the eligibility criteria schools were required to meet to qualify for a waiver, including enrollment thresholds for free and reduced-price meal eligibility and evidence related to student need or participation. The presentation described circumstances under which schools could receive a waiver, such as low student participation despite offering breakfast, lack of demonstrated need, or the presence of policies and procedures addressing students' morning nutritional needs. The item was presented for board consideration as a receive item and it will be voted on in May.

BOARD POLICY REVISION OF THE CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM POLICY
Melanie Haas, Chair of Policy Committee

Policy
6:26:00

Mrs. Haas introduced the following text as a replacement for the present policy in the Board

Receive item in April 2026:

1012

POLICY: CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM

Policy Type: Governance Process

The Citizens' Open Forum is an opportunity for the general public to provide input on educational issues in the state of Kansas which are germane to the business of the board. Board members may not file a card to speak during Citizens' Open Forum as they do have the opportunity to be heard in other ways. This forum is for non-Board members only. Addressing the Board is a privilege and not a right.

Elected officials are encouraged to contact the board secretary to request speaking time on a monthly agenda, if they would like to have the opportunity to converse with board members on an education or legislative topic. Citizens' Open Forum is not a time for discussion, but an opportunity for the board to listen to the concerns of others.

Procedures for the Citizens' Open Forum are as follows:

(1) Each speaker shall be allowed to speak for three minutes.

(2) State Board of Education members may ask clarifying questions of the person making the presentation. The speaker will have up to one minute to respond. The presiding officer may grant additional time at his/her discretion.

(3) By consent of the Board, the agenda time may be extended. While offering a limited public forum is important to the Board, it is also necessary to ensure that the Board allows enough time to conduct its regular business.

(4) Information may be submitted to the Board in written form. Thirteen (13) copies should be provided.

(5) At the discretion of the chair and with regards to the timeliness of the agenda, the Citizens' Open Forum may be closed and reopened at a later time or date to be announced.

(6) Any person wishing to speak shall sign in prior to the commencement of the Citizens' Open Forum and shall complete a presenter's card, giving his or her name and address, the subject of the comments (which must be confined to topics which are germane to the business of the Board), and the name of any group he or she is representing. Speakers shall be recognized according to the order in which they signed in. If the Chair determines that the speaker is

attacking someone personally, the speaker will be asked to stop. If the Chair determines that the speaker is speaking about topics that have nothing to do with

educational issues, the speaker will be asked to stop. (7) To maintain consistent expectations among all parties involved, the following script shall be read by the board chair, to open and close this section of the meeting. **CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM SCRIPT [TO OPEN:]** I now declare the Citizens' Open Forum of the Kansas State Board of Education meeting open at [_exact time_]. The State Board provides this opportunity for citizens to share views about topics of interest or issues currently being considered by the State Board. Speakers will identify themselves by name and the name of the group they represent, if applicable. Per policy, speakers are required to focus their remarks on issues or topics. Personal attacks will not be tolerated. Each speaker shall be limited to 3 minutes. Any Board questions will be for clarification only, not to engage in discussion. Our first speaker is _____, followed by _____. **[TO CLOSE:]**

The State Board's Citizens' Open Forum is closed at [_exact time_]. We would like to thank our speakers for sharing their views with the Board. The State Board will determine if any of the issues should be addressed as an Agenda item at a future meeting.
Adopted: August 9, 1989
Amended: March 10, 1998; April 12, 2000; Nov. 14, 2001; Nov. 14, 2007; March 11, 2014; March 11, 2020; October 11, 2022, April 14, 2026

ACT ON EVALUATION REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ACCREDITATION APPROVAL/PROGRAM REVIEWS

ERC
6:27:00

Dr. Catherine Chmidling, Teacher Licensure

Mr. Hershberger moved that the Kansas State Board of Education accept the recommendations of the Evaluation Review Committee for educator preparation provider accreditation for Bethel College, MidAmerica Nazarene University, and Washburn University and program approvals for MidAmerica Nazarene University, Pittsburg State University, and Wichita State University. Dr. New seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-0.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Legislative
6:31:41

Dr. Frank Harwood

Dr. Harwood gave a summary of the bills that passed the Kansas State Legislature that would affect the education community. The presentation provided an overview of the 2026 Kansas legislative session as it related to education policy and funding. The Legislature adjourned sine die in the early morning hours of April 11, 2026, concluding the second year of the biennium. Lawmakers introduced more than 600 bills during the session, with 147 ultimately passing. Because it was the final year of the biennium, any bills that did not pass were no longer eligible for consideration.
Significant budget actions affected the Kansas School for the Blind and the Kansas School for the Deaf. Both agencies received authorization to extend employee contracts by six days and

to increase salaries for fiscal years 2026 and 2027. Procurement language was modified to permit the use of local school district purchasing processes rather than state agency procedures. Capital improvement funding was increased, with specific projects approved, including roof replacement, remodeling efforts, demolition, and vehicle purchases. Despite the inclusion of a 1.5 percent lapse for fiscal year 2027, several vetoes related to these budgets were overridden by the Legislature.

The Kansas State Department of Education budget was addressed primarily through substitute legislation making appropriations for fiscal years 2026 through 2028. The budget funded an estimated cost-of-living adjustment tied to CPI-U, added new funding for special education, expanded safe and secure school grants, and provided support for military student compact dues. Funding was allocated for AEDs and CPR equipment while other proposed appropriations, including a virtual math program and portions of a mental health initiative, were eliminated. Additional resources were directed toward professional development, mentor teachers, National Board certification, E-Rate matching funds, academic assessment tools, and career-focused programs.

The budget also imposed reporting requirements on federal funds and special education expenditures, with the release of new special education funding contingent on timely completion of those reports. Policy provisions within the budget legislation addressed student walkouts, participation in federal assessment waivers, and changes to state assessment cut scores. Some of these provisions were sustained following a gubernatorial veto, while others were overridden by the Legislature. Collectively, these measures reflected an emphasis on accountability, assessment alignment, and fiscal oversight.

Numerous education-related bills were signed into law during the session. These included measures expanding access to school nutrition programs, revising timelines for innovative district applications, addressing postsecondary credentialing and workforce development, strengthening literacy reporting requirements, and establishing career readiness assessments with transferable credentials. Other enacted legislation regulated student use of personal electronic devices, clarified school enrollment rights for children in state custody, licensed speech-language pathology assistants, expanded examination provider options, and enabled interstate practice for athletic trainers. Additional laws addressed virtual student assessment administration, exchange student enrollment, nonpublic school participation in activities, school safety drills, fentanyl education, and naloxone availability.

Several bills were vetoed by the Governor, including proposals related to scholarship tax credits and protest petition thresholds for property tax increases. However, the Legislature overrode vetoes on other measures, including legislation concerning biological sex designations in public facilities, participation in federal scholarship tax credit programs, and transparency requirements for contingency fee contracts. At the close of the presentation, several education-related bills remained with the Governor, addressing civics education requirements, daily recess mandates for elementary students, and revised protest petition standards for property tax increases, with specified exemptions.

Reports
Requests
7:15:00

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mrs. Dombrosky spoke about the upcoming KSD site council that will be held in May.

Mr. Porter will be attending the KS Legislature Task force on School finance this coming week as well as the KSHSAA meetings.

Chair Hopkins reported on the Teacher Vacancy meeting.

Mrs. Potter visited the Cheney school and learned about recipe preparation.

FUTURE AGENDA REQUESTS

Mrs. Potter requested that on the May agenda there be an item which would make certain documents available to the public: Invoices from Board Legal Counsel, itemized expense reimbursement paid to Board members, pre and post agenda informational letters to the Board as a whole by the Commissioner (Friday Notes).

Mrs. Dombrosky questioned how the career assessments were implemented. Dr. Watson has a brief explanation for her.

Mr. Hershberger would like more information on using devices in classrooms and on learning more about the effects of students writing by hand, as opposed to typing on devices.

TRAVEL REQUESTS

Mrs. Dombrosky moved that the travel requests from April be approved. Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-0.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mrs. Potter questioned whether she was under legal counsel or not by the Board Attorney. Board Attorney replied that she is covered as a Board member. She had questions about why she had received letters from the Board Attorney in November of 2025.

There was a brief discussion and the Chair then recessed the meeting until the following day when the Board met at the Kansas State School for the Blind at 8:30 a.m.

There was no video recording for the visits to the Kansas Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

Kansas State Board of Education
April 15, 2026

Once a year the entire Board visits the two special schools; the Kansas State School for the Blind (KSSB) in Kansas City and the Kansas School for the Deaf (KSD) in Olathe. Everyone was present except for Mrs. Arnold. They visited KSSB first and Superintendent Harding had several reports, and they went on a short tour before having lunch with the students. There was one item the Board officially voted on.

Kansas State School for the Blind motion on additional contract days for KSSB Certified Staff FY 26

Mr. Porter moved that the Kansas State Board of Education suspend the rules and vote immediately on the item about additional contract days for KSSB certified staff. Vice Chair Zeck seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-0.

Mr. Porter moved that the Kansas State Board of Education approve the six additional contract days for certified staff at the Kansas State School for the Blind for the 2025-2026 school year to support the extended school year program. Mrs. O'Brien seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-0.

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After lunch, the Board drove over to KSD in Olathe. Superintendent Barron met them and had several reports, they went on some tours with students and then met for some official votes.

Kansas school for the Deaf motion to agree to the land transfer for municipal improvements

Mrs. Haas moved that the Kansas State Board of education suspend the rules and vote on the land transfer item immediately. Mrs. O'Brien seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-0-1 with Mrs. Potter present not voting. Mrs. Arnold was not present.

Mrs. Haas moved that the Kansas State Board of Education agree and codify the land transfer as recommended by the City of Olathe and the Kansas School for the Deaf. Mr. Hershberger seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-0.

The Board went into Executive Session to discuss the subject of non-elected personnel matters. When they returned they made the following motion:

Motion to continue the interview process for the Kansas School for the Deaf Superintendent

Mrs. Dombrosky moved that the Kansas State Board of Education continue interviewing for the KSD Superintendent position and find a permanent replacement in late winter, while having Joan Macy and Joelle Alan as interim replacements with a one year contract, until the superintendent is hired. Vice Chair Zeck seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-0-1 with Mrs. Potter present not voting.

After the votes, the Board went up to the KSD auditorium to participate in a celebration of the amazing years of service that Superintendent Barron has given to KSD and to the deaf community.

_____ _____

Chair Cathy Hopkins Board Secretary Deborah Bremer

Note: Some of the presentation summaries were developed using Copilot (AI tool).