The meeting is archived on YouTube KSDE Livemedia channel. The time stamps are aligned with those videos. (there were quite a few changes in the agenda, so the times are correct but not the order)

Kansas State Board of Education
Tuesday, March 10, 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, March 10, 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

All ten 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.

MINUTES

(February Minutes) Mrs. Haas moved to approved the minutes for the February 10 & 11, 2026, Kansas State Board of Education meeting. Mrs. Arnold seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-0 with Mrs. Potter present not voting.

AGENDA

Mrs. Arnold moved to approve the agenda for March 10, 11 & 12, 2026. Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

CONSENT 6:00

Mrs. Arnold moved to approve the consent agenda (without item f). Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. Motion carried 7-1-2, with Mr. Zeck voting no, and Mrs. O'Brien and Mrs. Potter present but not voting.

Consent Agenda items approved:

- Notified of monthly personnel report
- Act on local professional development plans
- Act on recommendations for licensure waivers
- Act on Licensure Review Committee recommendations
- Act on Professional Standards Board Nominations: Local School Board Member
- Notification of the intention of one scholarship granting organization (Word of Life Ministries and School, Inc.) in Wichita, to participate in the Tax Credit for Low Income Student Scholarship Program)

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM F.

Mrs. Haas moved to approve Adding Programs to the Approved List of State At-Risk Evidence-Based programs. Mrs. Arnold seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-4, with Mrs. Potter, Mrs. O'Brien, Mr. Zeck and Mrs. Dombrosky voting no.

CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM

FORUM 36:30

Speakers included:

1. Michael Kratky, Citizen, Wilson, Kansas, spoke about the school closing in Wilson District 112. He will be requesting an administrative review.

2. Shane Kirchner, McPherson, Representing the Kansas Association of Private Colleges of Teacher Education (KAPCOTE) greeted the Board and spoke about teacher preparation for literacy education, which the private colleges strongly support.

3. Dr. Amber Wheeler, Superintendent in USD 258 Humboldt, spoke about her district's support for the IADA pilot assessment project.

4. Steve Roberts, previous member of the State Board, stated he believes not every teacher needs to complete teaching college courses. Some are natural teachers and should be supported as such.

5. Nancy Moneymaker, Private Citizen, Desoto, urged the Board members to diligently pursue their goals for student achievement above all else on the board. Also, appointing the new Commissioner will define the members' time on the board. The trajectory of Kansas education will be shaped by their decision.

(Note: In place of the regular Commissioner's report there was a presentation on the Comprehensive Literacy Plan)

PRESENTATION: COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY PLAN — PART 1 7:00 PART 2 1:01:12

(Note: during the Board meeting this presentation was given in two parts – separated by the Citizen's Forum which is traditionally at 10:30, but it is not separated in these minutes.)

Dr. Laurie Curtis (KSDE)
Dr. Cindy Lane (KBOR)
Dr. Renee Nugent (KSDE)

Dr. Watson opened the presentation by explaining that he was using his Commissioner's Report time to highlight literacy, which is a primary focus for all Kansas educators, families, students and communities.

Dr. Laurie Curtis presented the *Comprehensive Literacy Plan* as a statewide effort to raise literacy outcomes by aligning policies, instructional practices, educator preparation, and system supports. The plan begins by reaffirming the state's vision that *every student should succeed* and frames literacy as essential to that goal. It emphasizes that improving reading outcomes requires coordinated work across agencies, schools, higher education, families, and communities because literacy, systems, and communities are all complex.

The plan is grounded in several guiding principles: the Science of Reading is a required foundation; early identification and strong core instruction prevent most reading difficulties; local control must operate within clear state guardrails; transparency should lead to meaningful action; and measurable outcomes matter more than effort alone. These principles shape a set of priority recommendations that include strengthening licensure requirements, ensuring access to high-quality instructional materials, expanding professional learning, implementing universal screening, building coaching networks, improving parent communication, and revising educator preparation standards.

Kansas has revised licensure assessments and, beginning in 2028, will require a Kansas Seal of Literacy for educators who teach reading or make assessment decisions. KSDE has developed tools and guidance for selecting and implementing high-quality instructional materials and continues to expand professional learning opportunities, including LETRS training and regional PLCs. Universal screening protocols now span kindergarten through ninth grade, with reporting requirements and an approved list of screeners. Future steps include stronger monitoring, better

data interpretation support, oral language screening guidance, and standardized Individual Literacy Plans for students at high risk.

Dr. Lane shared the higher education viewpoint, explaining the development of statewide support networks, such as the Kansas Literacy Leadership Cadre, LETRS-certified facilitators, literacy implementation coaches, and a growing coaching network aligned with student-focused coaching models. Sustainability is a recurring theme: KSDE aims to provide ongoing guidance, tools, and data analysis to help systems of all sizes maintain progress. Higher education plays a central role as well. KSDE and the Kansas Board of Regents are collaborating on a Structured Literacy Preparation Accountability Framework that includes clinical experiences, continuous improvement of coursework, cross-sector collaboration, and faculty professional learning. Grants will support programs pursuing IDA accreditation, and new advanced degree pathways in literacy are planned.

Dr. Nugent shared the literacy plan within Kansas's broader school improvement model, which includes structured literacy, standards alignment, balanced assessments, and quality instruction. She stressed the need for coherence across mechanisms such as accreditation, at-risk accountability, legislative needs assessments, and federal Title I requirements. By aligning these systems and focusing on a few high-leverage actions, Kansas aims to strengthen teaching and learning statewide and expand opportunities for students.

Cursive
4:42:01

PRESENTATION: Cursive WRITING
Mary Lonker, English Language Arts Consultant

Mrs. Lonker, who taught English Language Arts (ELA) for several decades and now is a consultant for the state in this area, shared her personal experiences of working with students. She explained the value of teaching cursive handwriting and outlined its academic, cognitive, and cultural benefits. Mrs. Lonker began by emphasizing that handwriting is an important component of early literacy. Writing letters by hand strengthens recognition, supports phonemic awareness, and activates the parts of the brain associated with reading and learning. Research has shown that students who practice handwriting develop stronger neural connections than those who simply trace or copy letters.

The presentation also highlighted the role of cursive in historical literacy. Because many primary documents and historical manuscripts were written in cursive, the ability to read it helped students access original sources and understand cultural and civic history. Cursive additionally supported practical life skills such as developing a personal signature. Mrs. Lonker shared a story from her own family. One Christmas

they found a letter tucked into the back of a photograph. It was "Dot's Christmas Story" and had been written by Mary Lonker's grandmother. It was written in cursive. Sadly, the Lonker children could not read it easily and were bewildered by many of the words.

Cognitive benefits formed a major part of the presentation. Cursive writing engaged both hemispheres of the brain, improved memory, and enhanced learning. The flowing connected nature of cursive helped reduce common letter reversals and supported students who struggled with dyslexia or dysgraphia. The presentation contrasted handwriting with typing, noting that writing by hand encouraged deeper processing and rephrasing of information, which often led to better retention. The slides also emphasized the fluency and efficiency offered by cursive. The continuous movement required for cursive reduced pencil lifts, improved writing speed, and created a natural rhythm that supported information retention. Activities within the presentation demonstrated that cursive often felt smoother, faster, and less mentally demanding than printing, especially when paired with other cognitive tasks. Mrs. Lonker had the Board members do several exercises writing in cursive to see how quickly they could do it and if they felt the fluency that printing does not offer.

Another key point focused on automaticity. When students had to devote too much effort to basic writing mechanics, they had fewer cognitive resources available for higher-level tasks such as organization and audience awareness. Proficiency in cursive reduced this cognitive load and supported clearer, more efficient writing. Teacher testimonials reinforced these ideas with experiences from real classrooms. Teachers described students who struggled to sign their names or read historical documents because they had never been taught cursive, contrasted with students who learned it and encountered far fewer challenges.

The presentation concluded by summarizing that cursive strengthened historical literacy, supported reading and writing fluency, enhanced cognitive processing, and built stamina for higher-level thinking and communication.

STUDENTS
3:30:00

STUDENT STORIES: The Road to Graduation: Student Stories of Perseverance
Brekyn Gaither
Republic County Junior Senior High School
Republic County USD 109

Brekyn Gaither is a senior at Republic County Junior Senior High School whose story is one of resilience, growth, and quiet determination. After coming to live with his sister, a young single mother who became his guardian last year, Brekyn joined the school

community carrying the weight of an exceedingly difficult past. His mother has spent many years in a nursing home due to a brain tumor, and challenges in his relationship with his father and stepmother created significant stress and mental health concerns. Despite these hardships, Brekyn has grown tremendously during his time at Republic County. Over the past year and a half, he has blossomed both personally and academically. His kindness and character have been recognized by his peers, who selected him as Sweetheart King this year, an impressive honor for a student who has only been part of the school community for a short time.

College was not originally on Brekyn's radar, but he has recently taken the step of applying and is now looking forward to the opportunities ahead. Those who know him describe him as an exceptionally polite and respectful young man. While he still faces challenges, the support of trusted adults in the building, including his basketball coach, Mr. Sheets, has helped him stay on track. This May, Brekyn is set to walk across the stage at graduation, a milestone that reflects his perseverance and the progress he has made as he continues building a brighter future.

Dahlia Johnson
Neodesha High School
Neodesha USD 461

Dahlia Johnson is a senior at Neodesha High School who exemplifies leadership, resilience, and determination. Adopted by her aunt as a baby and the youngest of seven siblings, Dahlia has navigated and overcome a number of emotional and traumatic experiences throughout her life. Despite these challenges, she has grown into a confident and inspiring leader within her school community.

At Neodesha High School, Dahlia is recognized as a true senior leader, excelling both academically and in athletics. She takes pride in representing her school and setting a positive example for younger students. One moment that especially highlighted her confidence, and growth came during tours of the district's new Early Learning Center. Dahlia spoke with pride about the Career and Technical Education (CTE) early childhood classes she has taken and the certifications she has earned while still in high school.

Hearing Dahlia confidently share her experiences and accomplishments made it clear that she has a bright future ahead. Her dedication to learning, leadership, and helping others suggests she is well prepared for the opportunities that await her after graduation.

(the text above was supplied by Denise Kahler, Director, KSDE Communications)

ACT TO APPROVE KANSAS PURPLE STAR SCHOOL DESIGNATION AS MILITARY FRIENDLY SCHOOLS
USD 266 Maize
St. Francis Xavier in Junction City

PURPLE STAR
4:06:00

Dale Brungardt, Director of School Finance, outlined the Kansas State Board of Education's recognition of the 2026 Purple Star Schools during its March 10, 2026, meeting. He explained that Kansas had been the first state to adopt the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children in 2008, and that the effort has since expanded nationwide. The Board learned that Kansas served nearly 10,000 active-duty military-connected students across all service branches in 2025. The Kansas Military Child Educational Council was described as a collaborative group that included Department of Defense representatives, legislative appointees, district leaders, School Liaison Officers, and KSDE officials.

An application had been submitted to Governor Kelly requesting that April be proclaimed the Month of the Military Child. Kansas was supporting approximately 9,500 students with an active-duty parent, and more than 12,200 students when including Reserve and National Guard families, distributed across 165 school districts and several private accredited schools.

The Purple Star designation was described as an honor for schools that demonstrated substantial commitment to military-connected students and supported their successful transitions into new schools. The 2026 designated Kansas school districts include Derby, Emporia, Fort Leavenworth, Geary County, Leavenworth, Mulvane, Piper, Rose Hill, Spring Hill, Maize, and St. Francis Xavier.

One featured district, USD 266 Maize, highlighted the contributions of its leadership and staff. The district emphasized its support for military families through staff training, welcome programs, student friends, school tours, and personalized transition assistance. Students participated in activities honoring service members, including creating cards and artwork, hosting assemblies, inviting guest speakers, holding spirit days, and engaging in community service. The district also showcased opportunities for military-connected students such as JROTC, collaboration with McConnell Air Force Base for CTE programs, and an increase in the percentage of students earning college credit—from 66% in 2019 to 100% in 2025. Maize further highlighted its long-standing involvement with Kansas Honor Flight, supporting veterans financially and participating in homecoming events.

Another featured school, St. Francis Xavier in Junction City, presented its leadership team and shared its long history as a PreK–12 campus with a heavily military-connected student population. The school explained that it participated in the Purple Star program to increase visibility, improve transitions for families experiencing permanent change of station (PCS) moves, and expand student support. The school described its improved website resources for military families and its current activities, such as Veterans Day events, public displays, and recognition programs. It also outlined future plans, including a student-led transition team, expanded military engagement, a buddy system, and monthly morale meetings.

Mrs. Arnold moved to suspend the rules and vote immediately on the approval of two new schools to the Kansas Purple Star program. Mr. Porter seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-0-1, with Mrs. Potter present but not voting.

Mrs. Arnold moved that the Kansas State Board of Education approve USD 266 Maize and St. Francis Xavier School in Junction City as Kansas Purple Star Schools, recognizing schools that have met specific criteria and demonstrated a major commitment to serving the needs of military-connected students and families. Mr. Porter seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

ESEA SCHOOLS 5:17:00

RECOGNITION OF 2025 NATIONAL ESEA DISTINGUISHED SCHOOLS
LAKESIDE ELEMENTARY, WACONDA USD 272
Kayla Corpstein, Principal
Jesse Janssen, Superintendent
Presented by Roxanne Zillinger, KSDE Consultant
(Note: NORWICH ELEMENTARY, KINGMAN-NORWICH, USD 331 WAS NOT ABLE TO ATTEND)

Roxanne Zillinger, KSDE coordinator, introduced the staff of the Lakeside Elementary school. The principal, superintendent and several of the teachers gave moving testimonials about the strength and support of the Lakeside community in both the school and beyond in all of Waconda. They spoke about their experience at the ESEA conference. The Board had discussion with the staff and greatly appreciated the excellence of the school.

MILKEN AWARD 5:50:00

RECOGNITION OF THE MILKEN TEACHER OF THE YEAR
Lexcee Oddo, Turner Elementary, USD 202
Denise Kahler, Director, Communications

The Milken foundation highlights excellent teachers, across the country, and presents them with a $25,000 check in a surprise ceremony held during an all-school gathering.

A video of that surprising ceremony was shown. Lexcee Oddo was chosen. She is a teacher of English Language Learners. She shared her thoughts about teaching. The Board congratulated her and there were many photos taken.

PRESENTATION: REGISTERED TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE
Shane Carter, Director, Teacher Licensure
Department of Commerce, Office of Registered Apprenticeships
Wichita State University, Teacher Apprenticeship Program
Tonganoxie School District Administrators
Kim Harris, Mentor Teacher
Megan Alexander

RTAP
6:10:30

Director Carter and his many special guests provided an overview and update on the Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP) in Kansas. He began by explaining that apprenticeship programs were industry-driven, high-quality career pathways designed to help employers develop their future workforce. Through these programs, individuals gained paid work experience, received progressive wage increases, participated in classroom instruction, and ultimately earned a portable, nationally recognized credential approved by either the U.S. Department of Labor or a state apprenticeship agency.

The presentation then outlined the specific requirements for RTAP in Kansas. The program had been approved by the Kansas Apprenticeship Council and operated on a competency-based model aligned with the KEEP rubric. Apprentices earned a minimum of $14 per hour and completed semesterly evaluations while working toward a bachelor's degree through an approved two- or four-year institution providing Related Technical Instruction. Completion of the program led to a Kansas teaching license as a nationally recognized credential.

Updates were shared on the program's development and growth. A stakeholder work group had begun the effort, followed by the enactment of the Kansas Apprenticeship and Tax Grant in March 2023. Standards were approved by the State Board and the Kansas Apprenticeship Council in May 2023, and the Department of Commerce received an SAEF grant. A pilot launched in August 2023 with 14 apprentices across six districts. The first statewide cohort in fall 2024 included 95 apprentices in 42 districts, and the spring 2025 cohort included 81 apprentices in 52 districts. By fall 2025, the program saw 144 new apprentices across 73 districts.

Additional updates highlighted specialized pilots, including a Youth Apprenticeship Pilot with 24 apprentices in three districts and a Nontraditional Pilot with 29 new apprentices in six districts during late 2025. The application window for the fall 2026

RTAP and Nontraditional RTAP opened during this period, with a spring 2026 cohort of 42 apprentices across 21 districts. Youth apprenticeship applications followed, leading into the fall 2026 cohort launches.

The program also offered several pathway options. Candidates without a bachelor's degree could be employed as apprentices earning at least $14 per hour while completing RTI through a community college or university, with access to pre-service license options and multiple funding opportunities. Candidates already holding a bachelor's degree needed to be enrolled in an approved licensure program such as Limited Residency License, TAP, Elementary Residency, or Restricted License and were likewise eligible for financial support. The youth apprenticeship route allowed high-school students in approved teacher-training pathways to be hired as apprentices at a minimum of $7.25 per hour while completing RTI, with the opportunity to transition into the adult apprenticeship program after graduation. The presentation concluded by acknowledging special guests from the Department of Commerce, Wichita State University, Tonganoxie USD, and Megan Alexander, and ended with an invitation for questions.

It was a special moment when the Commissioner and the Chair of the Board presented Megan Alexander with her teacher's licensure. She is the first graduate of the Teacher Apprenticeship program. Her story was very inspiring, and everyone involved in the process of encouraging her, mentoring her and being part of the team that has put together this exciting new path to being licensed as a teacher in Kansas, everyone was grateful and hopeful.

The Chair recessed the meeting until the following morning.

Kansas State Board of Education
Wednesday, March 11, 2026

ACT ON REGULATIONS AND RULES REVIEW
Shane Carter, Director, Teacher Licensure

REGS AND RULES At the beginning

Director Carter briefly outlined proposed updates to Kansas educator licensure regulations. The changes had been introduced in February and now the State Board was asked to approve the recommended changes.

The purpose of the revisions was explained as an effort to align licensure policies with State Board Goal #3: Policy, Regulation, and Alignment. The proposed changes were intended to better align licensure with the Kansas School Improvement Model, improve the quality and relevance of professional learning opportunities, eliminate outdated or duplicative requirements, and help school districts meet licensure and staffing needs more efficiently.

The presentation then introduced new items for consideration. One proposal added a new renewal pathway that aligned with the School Improvement Model, allowing educators to renew their licenses by completing designated State Board–approved training programs during the term of the license.

Another recommendation focused on adjusting license durations to improve alignment, processing efficiency, and cost savings. These adjustments included converting Emergency Substitute Licenses to a two-calendar-year duration, extending the Initial Teaching License to four years, and converting both the Temporary Nonrenewable License and the Transitional License to one-calendar-year durations.

The presentation also recommended removing the "Recency" requirement for licensure. Previously, educators needed either one year of accredited experience or eight semester credit hours of coursework within the past six years. The proposal argued that many applicants already reinstated based on experience, while others took miscellaneous coursework that was not always relevant. Removing this requirement was intended to simplify and better focus the licensure process.

Mr. Hershberger moved that the Kansas State Board of Education approve the recommended changes to the licensure regulations. Dr. New seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

ACT ON INNOVATIVE ASSESSMENT PILOT PROJECT
Dr. Renee Nugent, Deputy Commissioner

INNOVATIVE ASSESSMEN PILOT 5:00

Dr. Nugent built on her February presentation and now brought the action item to the Board. She explained how Kansas education leaders had continued working to improve statewide assessment by making it more supportive of classroom instruction. It noted that in March 2024, the Board had reviewed major assessment challenges and dedicated resources to explore possible improvements. By February 2025, the Board had been updated on the results of that initial work and had taken steps consistent with state policy to move the effort forward.

Six districts had already begun trying out the new assessment model, and KSDE had partnered with Olathe and other selected districts to continue piloting the approach. The work was framed around creating a balanced assessment system—one that supported high-quality instruction, reduced unnecessary testing, maintained rigor and accountability, and aligned assessments with high-quality instructional materials rather than competing with them.

The presentation introduced the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA), explaining that it allowed states to design, test, evaluate, and scale new forms of assessment while still meeting federal and state accountability requirements. Because of IADA, districts using the innovative assessment did not need to double-test students. The innovative assessment could be used for accountability and reporting, but State Board approval was still required for it to count toward Kansas's state accountability system.

A timeline outlined that the intent to apply had been due March 17, with the full application due May 1. Federal officials would have up to 90 days to respond, and if approved, the pilot could continue for as long as five years.

The vision for the work connected directly to Kansas's priorities, emphasizing assessments that were woven into instruction. The innovative model aimed to provide timely, instructionally relevant information and actionable data that teachers could use while learning was still happening.

Dr. Nugent stressed that this initiative represented a pilot rather than a statewide change.

Mrs. Arnold moved that the Kansas State Board of Education request the Kansas State Department of Education submit an Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA) application to the U.S. Department of Education for the purpose of piloting a

through-year, curriculum-directed assessment system, and to allow participating districts determined by KSDE to use this assessment to fulfill Kansas state assessment requirements for accountability. Mr. Porter seconded the motion. **Motion carried 8-1-1, with Mrs. Potter voting no and Mrs. Dombrosky present not voting.**

ACT ON LOGICALIS TRAINING SERVICES — LOGICALIS
Ryan Kurtenbach, Director, IT — 49:00

Mrs. Arnold moved that the Kansas State Board of Education authorize the Commissioner of Education to negotiate and enter a contract for $129,000 to purchase training services from Logicalis to implement Microsoft Power BI. Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0-3, with Mrs. Potter, Mrs. O'Brien, and Mrs. Dombrosky voting no.**

RECEIVE EVALUATION REVIEW COMMITTEE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDER RECOMMENDATIONS — ERC
Dr. Catherine Chmidling, Teacher Licensure — 53:30

Dr. Chmidling outlined the processes and outcomes related to higher education accreditation and program review for educator preparation providers in Kansas. She explained that educator preparation providers submitted self-study reports and supporting evidence, which were reviewed by a visiting team. The team produced formative feedback, received the provider's response and addendum, conducted interviews, and then issued a final report. Providers submitted responses to these findings before the Evaluation Review Committee made initial recommendations. Providers had the opportunity to accept the recommendations or request a hearing. Final recommendations were sent to the State Board, which determined accreditation status, ranging from full accreditation to non-accreditation.

The presentation summarized the five accreditation standards: content and pedagogical knowledge; clinical partnerships and practice; candidate quality, recruitment, and selectivity; program impact; and provider quality and continuous improvement. It also defined key terms, explaining that areas for improvement indicated weaknesses in evidence that did not rise to the level of unmet standards, while Stipulations signaled more serious deficiencies requiring correction within two years.

- Bethel College was recommended for full accreditation through 2033, with all standards met and no areas for improvement or stipulations.

- MidAmerica Nazarene University also received a recommendation for full

accreditation for both its initial and advanced programs, again with no areas for improvement or stipulations.

- Washburn University was likewise recommended for full accreditation; however, multiple Areas for Improvement were identified across standards related to clinical experience design, recruitment goals, quality assurance systems, and continuous improvement processes, both at the initial and advanced levels. These findings noted limited evidence of systematic data use, comprehensive recruitment strategies, and functioning quality assurance processes. Each institution's next accreditation review was scheduled for spring 2032.

She then shifted to the higher education program review process, which paralleled the accreditation workflow but focused on individual endorsement programs. Content experts reviewed program materials, programs responded to initial reports, and the Evaluation Review Committee made recommendations for program approval. Programs could receive full approval, approval with stipulation, or non-approval.

Program approval decisions were summarized for several universities.

- MidAmerica Nazarene University had the stipulation removed from its new Innovative Elementary Education Unified program, which was granted approval through 2030 with no areas for improvement.

- Pittsburg State University received approval for its Reading Specialist program through 2030 without any areas for improvement.

- Wichita State University had a stipulation removed from its Innovative Low Incidence program, extending its approval through 2029. Two new Wichita State programs—Innovative Mathematics and Innovative Science—were approved with stipulation through 2028. The presentation explained that new programs could be approved with stipulation for up to two years, extendable to a third year if needed, and that a progress report was required after the second semester of operation.

The presentation concluded with a reminder that all educator preparation programs were reviewed on a seven-year cycle under Kansas regulations and that program reviews involved multiple layers of evaluation, from content experts to the State Board of Education. It also provided contextual information about the number and types of educator preparation providers in the state, emphasizing the scale and importance of the review system. The process relied on collaboration among provider institutions,

review committees, and the Kansas State Board of Education to ensure high-quality educator preparation across the state.

ACT ON BUSINESS EDUCATION CONTENT STANDARDS RECOMMENDATIONS
Dr. Catherine Chmidling, Teacher Licensure

The business education content standards were presented in February.
(from the February presentation)
The presentation in February to the Board provided an overview of the revised Business Education 6–12 preparation standards. It first explained that institutions of higher education used educator preparation program standards to design and gain approval for their programs and to ensure that teacher candidates were prepared for the expectations of modern learners. The presentation outlined that program standards existed in two forms: professional education standards, which described the foundational skills all teachers needed, and content program standards, which specified expectations for each subject area.

The presenters, Kim Dhority and Sarah Sweet, introduced updated Business Education standards and described how the revisions incorporated updated language and reorganized elements to better reflect current educational and business needs. Across several slides, the presentation compared the previous 2001 standards with the newly proposed 2026 versions. Each comparison highlighted expanded expectations, modernized terminology, and an increased focus on pedagogy.

- The new Standard 1 shifted from basic computer skills to proficiency in digital literacy, data analytics, and emerging technologies.
- Standard 2 broadened instructional expectations, connecting curriculum development to state competencies and pathways.
- Standard 3 moved away from listing curricular issues and instead emphasized professional learning, reflection, and collaboration.
- Standard 4 expanded from general awareness of career opportunities to the design of real-world, competency-based instruction and diverse assessments.
- Standard 5 consolidated many former standards into a comprehensive list of required content knowledge areas, including accounting, business law, economics, entrepreneurship, management, marketing, and others.
- Standards 6 and 7 were reorganized, with their former content folded into other standards and given a new focus on communication and collaboration.

Mrs. Arnold moved that the Kansas State Board of Education approve the new educator preparation program standards for Business Education 6–12. Dr. New seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

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

The Board received a legislative update regarding education-related activity during the 2026 Kansas legislative session. It was reported that the Legislature was on day fifty-nine of the session, with significant activity continuing. Members were advised of approaching deadlines, including the final meeting date for non-exempt committees, first adjournment, and the scheduled sine die adjournment.

An overview of budget actions affecting the Kansas School for the Blind and the Kansas School for the Deaf was presented. The House K-12 budget included pay parity increases, salary increases across multiple fiscal years, funding for capital improvement projects including roof replacements, authorization to purchase an accessible vehicle, and restoration of a prior lapse. Language was added allowing both schools to utilize local school district procurement processes. The Senate Education Committee budget further added contract days with corresponding salary increases for staff at both schools and approved additional capital projects, including remodeling and demolition work.

The Board was informed of major budget bills that had passed one legislative chamber. These bills included: cost-of-living adjustments tied to the consumer price index, increased funding for special education, allocations for school safety initiatives, and funding adjustments related to mental health services. Reporting requirements related to special education funding, federal funds, and assessment cut scores were also included. Certain provisions established enforcement measures related to student walkouts and participation in school activities. Additional funds within existing resources were designated for professional development, mentoring, certification programs, technology access, assessment tools, and career readiness initiatives.

A summary of House bills of interest was provided. These measures addressed student enrollment continuity for children in state custody, restrictions on student electronic device use, scholarship tax credits, flexibility in assessment providers, fentanyl education and naloxone availability, career readiness credentialing, federal funding transparency, at-risk accountability measures, property tax limitations, and licensure requirements for speech-language pathology assistants.

The presentation also included a review of Senate bills of interest. These bills covered standards for active shooter drills, communication device restrictions, daily recess and physical activity requirements, safety standards for school-issued devices, enrollment provisions for foreign exchange students, civics instruction and graduation requirements, administration of assessments for virtual students, timelines for

innovative district approvals, mandatory child abuse prevention training, eligibility verification for free and reduced-price meals, restrictions on food additives in school meals, election procedures, student speech and expression rights, community eligibility participation for meals, authorization of behavioral health services in schools, assessment cut-score requirements, student athletic eligibility following transfers, literacy reporting requirements, and accountability measures for virtual schools.

Board items 2:11:15

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Porter

Reported attending the Migrant Conference and clarified that "migrant" is often misunderstood as synonymous with "immigrant," but it actually refers to someone who travels, often seasonally, such as agricultural workers. He shared a PLUR document on the importance of offering K–12 education to children of migrant workers.

Mrs. O'Brien

Shared that KACIE (Kansas Advisory Council on Indigenous Education) is undergoing changes, as Dr. Alex Red Corn has been appointed President of Haskell University.

Mrs. Haas

Reported on the Board Policy Committee meeting in Wichita. The committee must review all policies every two years and has made significant progress, which will be presented to the Board in the coming months.

Board Travel Requests

Mr. Porter moved that the Kansas State Board of Education accept the travel requests made by the Board members. Mrs. Arnold seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

Board Comments

Mr. Porter

Reflected on comments from teachers during the Distinguished School Award presentation. He questioned whether teachers, administrators, and students across the state feel the Board supports them, stating this should be a priority.

Mr. Hershberger

Suggested inviting the Patterson Family Foundation or other private funders who support public education initiatives to present.

Mrs. Potter

Mrs. Potter moved that the Kansas State Board of Education provide a sharable format of financial transactions and the Friday Notes to constituents in all districts. The motion did not receive a second.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board went into executive session, motion made by Vice Chair Zeck, seconded by Mr. Porter, passed 10-0, for the remainder of the day and all of Thursday, March 12, to interview candidates for Commissioner.

**There are no minutes for the afternoon of March 11 or the entire day of March 12 as the Board stayed in executive session for the purpose of interviewing candidates.*

_____ _____

Chair Cathy Hopkins Board Secretary Deborah Bremer

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