

Kansas State Board of Education, December 2014

The Kansas State Board of Education voted to move forward with an amendment to the Emergency Safety Intervention regulation which will provide an appeals process for parents and eligible students who have filed a complaint regarding the use of emergency safety interventions and wish to seek an administrative review of a local school board's resolution of the complaint filed. The regulation amendment will be submitted to the Department of Administration and the Office of the Attorney General for its review.

Interim Commissioner of Education, Brad Neuenswander shared information from the 2013-2014 Accountability Report, including demographic information on Kansas students. He pointed out that 50.3 percent of Kansas students qualify for free and reduced lunch and that the state continues to see a rise in the percentage of students who are English Language Learners. The report provides a snap shot of the new state assessments and the types of questions educators and students will see, along with the 2014-2015 assessment schedule showing which grades and content areas will be assessed.

Neuenswander also shared that Kansas has until March 15, 2015 to extend its Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waiver. KSDE staff are working on the waiver extension, which will move Kansas's education forward over the next three years.

Kansas's recipients of the National Blue Ribbon Schools award were recognized. Six elementary schools were recently honored with this award by U.S. Office of Education. The schools receiving the year's recognition are: Marais Des Cygnes Valley Elementary School, USD 456 Marais Des Cygnes Valley; Oatville Elementary School, USD 261 Haysville; Ogden Elementary School, USD 383 Manhattan-Ogden; St. Patrick Catholic School, Catholic Diocese of Wichita; Valley Falls Elementary School, USD 338 Valley Falls; and West Bourbon Elementary School, USD 235 Uniontown. Principals from each of these schools shared with the board how they raised student achievement in their schools, the basis for the award.

KSDE Teacher Licensure and Accreditation Director, Dr. Scott Myers informed the board revision work groups are currently completing the task of revising all program standards to ensure they reflect new knowledge and skills educators need to be effective. Educator Preparation Program Standards establish program approval requirements to ensure that preparation programs in Kansas provide educator candidates the opportunity to learn the knowledge and skill educators need for today's learning context. To date, work groups have completed revisions for the following standards: Professional Education, School Counselor and Agriculture. The standards will be brought back to the Board in January for approval.

KSDE Deputy Commissioner, Dale Dennis, shared information on the Microsoft Academy Program. KSDE is working with the Kansas Board of Regents on this initiative, which was passed by the 2014 Kansas Legislature. House Bill 2231 provides information technology education opportunities to high school students, which includes opportunities for Kansas high school students to earn Microsoft certification free-of-charge in 2015. Microsoft Academy testing high school sites will be identified throughout the state where the certification exams will be administered. Program training for Kansas educators will begin in January 2015 and continue throughout the winter and spring months. Student will begin testing in the spring of 2015.

The next meeting of the Kansas State Board of Education is scheduled for January 12-14, 2015 room 102 of the Landon State Office Building in Topeka.