

## **State Board News May 13-14, 2014**

In commemoration of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education decision, which legally ended segregation in public schools, the board held the Wednesday portion of its monthly meeting at the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site in Topeka.

### **Innovation Districts per HB 2319**

During the April meeting, the board had asked KSDE staff to review the Innovative District applications submitted by the McPherson and Concordia school districts to determine if they followed the technical requirements of the law and whether the exemptions being requested can be approved by law. KSDE presented that both applications met the technical requirements, however there are areas where either the exemption is too vague to know what is being requested or the board does not have the authority to waive the requested exemption. McPherson requested exemption from using the state assessment and proposed use of an alternate assessment. With state assessment being a requirement by the US Department of Education, the State Board does not have the authority to grant this exception. The board is supportive of innovation in schools, but is proceeding with caution to ensure they preserve the board's current and future constitutional authority and their responsibility to oversee the Kansas education system. The board voted to form a committee to meet with the two Innovative Districts prior to the June board meeting to develop a proposal for how best to work together in order to help these districts achieve their goals. Innovative Committee includes board members Jim McNiece and Deena Horst, superintendents Randy Watson (McPherson) and Beverly Mortimer (Concordia), and KSDE's Interim Commissioner Brad Neuenswander.

### **HB 2506 Amendments to Teacher Licensure Regulations**

The Board voted to move forward with the required adoption process for the proposed licensure regulation changes that impact the areas of special education, career and technical education and out-of-state applicants. The proposed changes also formalize into regulation the Board policy on mentoring. HB 2506 does not require an individual applying for a Kansas teaching license as a secondary level teacher who has a commitment for hire from a district to complete a teacher preparation program if they fit into one of the following situations:

1. The individual has an out-of-state license and a passing score on the tests required by the State Board, or
2. The individual has at least a bachelor's degree in the subject matter area of science, technology, engineering, math, finance or accounting and at least five years of work experience in the subject matter, or
3. The individual holds an industry recognized certificate in a technical profession and has at least five years of work experience in the technical profession.

In any of these situations, the person is limited to teaching the specific subject matter and/or the technical education course listed on the license that is issued. KSDE staff and KSBE members are currently reviewing the impact of this new statute on the state's current licensure regulations to ensure compliance.

### **Increase to Licensure Fee**

The Board received a recommendation to increase licensure fees by either \$12 or \$15. Kansas currently has one of the lowest licensure fees in the country averaging 50% to 60% below other states. Currently, Kansas teachers' pay \$45 for an initial license and \$54 for a professional license, license renewal (every five years) or out-of-state license. The board will be asked to act on this recommendation at its June meeting.

**The next Kansas State Board of Education meeting** is scheduled for June 10-11, 2014, Room 102 of the Landon State Office Building.