

December 2015, Kansas State Board News

Creating a Vision, *Kansas Can*

Kansas State Board key topics highlighted the Kansas Can initiative, a brief summary of reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Act, the recognition of successful students, and a presentation from Attorney General, Derek Schmidt.

Commissioner Watson's report covered the basic provisions of the Every Students Succeeds Act expected to be signed by President Obama after the 85-12 Senate vote on December 9. Current ESEA state waiver will be in place for the remainder of 2015-16 school term, 2016-2017 will be a transition year, and new state plans go into effect for the 2017-2018 school year.

Under the new ESSA, states will determine how to use the results of the assessments for accountability, and how to provide support to schools. Testing will continue under the current schedule, with exception of science assessments which will be administered in three windows over a student's matriculation.

Commissioner Watson also presented proposed indicators of success under the Kansas Can state level outcomes. These Recommended Outcomes include:

- ✓ High School Graduation Rates
- ✓ Post-Secondary Completion/Attendance
- ✓ Remedial Rate of Students Attending Post-Secondary**
- ✓ Kindergarten Readiness
- ✓ Individual Plans of Study Focused on Career Interest
- ✓ Social/ Emotional Growth measured locally

**The Board may want to consider requiring districts to monitor their remedial rates of students attending postsecondary schools, but not require it to be done at the state level. A Board vote is anticipated in January.

Commissioner Watson requested consideration of modifying the December 2013 Board-adopted definition of Kansas College and Career Ready, in light of ongoing work toward a vision that Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

The current definition is:

College and Career Ready means an individual has the academic preparation, cognitive preparation, technical skills and employability skills to be successful in postsecondary education, in the attainment of an industry recognized certification or in the workforce, without the need for remediation.

Proposed definition:

A successful Kansas graduate means an individual has the academic preparation, cognitive preparation, technical skills, civic skills, and employability skills to be successful in postsecondary education, in the attainment of an industry recognized certification or in the workforce, without the need for remediation.

Awards Recognition

Three schools were recognized for their character education programs. Each of the three schools have been recognized as National Schools of Character by Character.org, a national organization committed to developing civic virtue and moral character in our youth. The three National Schools of Character, Pittsburg High School, Towanda Circle High School and Complete High School in Maize presented the Board short highlights about their programs.

The Lowell Milken Center's Discovery Award winners Andrea Sodergren and Hailey Reed, students from Seaman High School, shared their documentary video for the 2015 Discovery, *Unsung Heroes* competition in which they were awarded the grand prize of \$10,000.

Civic Knowledge Initiative Proposed

Attorney General Derek Schmidt asked the Board to consider an initiative to help increase civic knowledge among Kansas middle students. The program stems from a national effort by Joe Foss Institute to promote active and engaged citizenship, and to enhance civic literacy of students. Schmidt proposed a voluntary system where middle school students could take the naturalization exam as the basic standard for civic knowledge.

New Licensure Program Standards

The Board voted 7-3 (opposed, John Bacon-Olathe, Ken Willard-Hutchinson, Steve Roberts-Overland Park) to approve new Licensure Program Standards for English 5-8, English 6-12, Reading Specialist PreK-12.

Ken Willard cited he could not support the new standards due to inclusions made in Standard 6: The teachers of English Language Arts 5-8 use knowledge of theories and research about social justice, diversity, equity, and student identities to enhance students' opportunities to learn in English Language Arts.

Legislative Report

In his Legislative Report, Dale Denise stated the legislative efficiency A & M Law Firm had requested districts to complete as many as 10 surveys with data entries requiring a million data points about purchasing practices, health insurance, and property and casualty insurance.

The next convening of the Kansas State Board of Education will be January 12-13, 2016, in the first floor Board Room (Suite 102) of the Landon State Office Building, 900 SW Jackson Street, in Topeka.