

Kansas State Board of Education March 2015

Innovative District Coalition Recommendation on Process for Licensure

Tom Trig, Superintendent of Blue Valley USD 229, presented on behalf of The Coalition of Innovative School Districts (CISDs) their request for teacher licensure waiver. The waiver would allow CISDs to offer their own certificates by waiving licensure requirements. They would have the flexibility to hire non-licensed professional employees; or licensed professionals out of their areas of licensure. The special certificate would require a local district background check and approval by both the State Board of Education and the Coalition of Innovative School Districts Board. Upon completion of required KSDE forms for certification the applicant would be considered licensed with specific endorsement areas granted and exempt from current licensure requirements. The State Board will act on this recommendation at the April 16-17 board meeting.

Citizens' Open Forum

During the Citizens' open forum, National Board Certified Teacher Julie Doyen spoke representing KNEA regarding the CISD waiver proposal for Kansas teacher licensure, and implored the State Board not to bend on the tried and true high licensure standards. She emphasized that the high standards currently set forth ensure we have only the best qualified teacher in every classroom, and that students deserve to have the best.

John Morton, Associate Professor of School Leadership, Middle & Secondary Teacher Education at Emporia State University, expressed concerns being voiced among teacher educators and students of college education regarding the proposed waiver of teacher licensure requirements for CISDs. He cautioned the board to consider unintended consequences of watering down teacher preparation, stated this is not innovation but rather a means to circumvent rules, and warned that content knowledge does not equate to competence in teaching that content.

Commissioner's Report

Interim Commissioner Brad Neuenswander provided a brief review of the State Listening Tour. Incoming Commissioner Randy Watson and Brad completed listening tour visits at 18 cities as well as the KEEN Conference and Teacher of Promise recognition. Feedback and data gleaned from more than 1,700 attendees will guide the State Board's strategic planning for 2015-16, to take place at their summer retreat in June.

Brad's ESEA update was brief since the U. S. Congress has yet to take final action.

The window for State Assessments opened March 9. Brad reported CETE is visiting 3rd grade classrooms to observe students' use of IPADs during writing prompts to see how students are managing their use of technology. While this report came early in the assessment window, no notable problems had been reported.

Emergency Safety Interventions

Katherine Kersbrock-Ostmeyer, parent and Director of Special Education NKESC provided testimony on Seclusion and Restraint/Safety Regulation HB 2170. She assured State Board that 1) Regulations are already in place outlining procedures for schools to address Emergency Safety Interventions (ESI); 2) School staff are trained in de-escalation and positive behavior supports as first steps in dealing with volatile situations; and 3) ESI's are only used in crisis situations with reporting procedures in place to inform parents and school administrators. She urged the State Board to support current regulations since HB 2170 would serve to confuse schools, staff and parents in addressing ESI situations.

Emergency Safety Intervention Discussion led by KSDE Attorney Scott Gordon providing comparison of HB 2170 to existing ESI Regulations Definition and Application. If the version of HB 2170 were to become law as discussed on this date, the State Board would have to revise current ESI regulations. The board consensus is to support their current regulations.

In other agenda items, the State Board:

- Heard a presentation by Doug Boline and members of the Early Childhood, Special Education and Title Services (ECSETS) Team regarding the diverse student population served by the ECSETS team.
- Heard the Child Nutrition and Wellness Program Presentation and Report, specifically regarding their Team Up for Kansas Kids campaign and the Summer Meals Summit.
- Heard a review of Legislative Matters pertaining to education legislation and the Governor's budget recommendation for FY 2015 & 2016 by Dale Dennis, of KSDE's Division of Fiscal and Administrative Services.
- Took action to deny an appeal for reconsideration of the Bloom case from PSB. Vote: 9-0, Sally Cauble recused.

The next meeting of the Kansas State Board of Education is scheduled for April 16-17, in Room 102 of the Landon State Office Building.