Kansas get high achievement marks on new U.S. Chamber Education Report Card

A new report from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce called “Leaders & Laggards: A State-by-State Report Card on K-12 Educational Effectiveness” gives Kansas average grades overall, but Kansas ranks much higher on actual educational outcomes. A closer look at the data finds that higher grades on the “policy” areas has no impact on performance, but states with higher funding per pupil tend to have better results. In addition, Kansas outcomes are better than expected based on both spending and its percentage of low income students.

The report grades states on the following eleven areas, categorizes by KASB as either a performance measure or a policy measure, with Kansas’ grade. (Note: in most cases, all states are “graded a curve” so the top 10 received an A, the next 10 a B, etc.)

**Academic Achievement:** Student performance on NAEP, including gains from 2005 to 2013; disaggregated for African-American, Hispanic, and low-income students. *Performance. Kansas grade: B.*

**Return on Investment:** NAEP scores divided by state education expenditures, adjusted for cost of living. *Performance. Kansas grade: B.*

**Truth in Advertising:** Student Proficiency: State-reported proficiency rates compared with NAEP proficiency rates. *Policy. Kansas grade: D.*

**Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness:** Advanced Placement (AP) exams passed by the class of 2013, high school graduation rates, and a chance for college at age 19. *Performance. Kansas grade: B.*

**21st Century Teacher Force:** Preparing, recruiting, and evaluating the teacher workforce. *Policy. Kansas grade: D.*

**Parental Options:** The market share of students in schools of choice, and two rankings of how hospitable state policy is greater choice options. *Policy. Kansas grade: F.*

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Olathe’s Amy Martin nominated for KASB President-Elect Designee

KASB’s Nominating Committee approved the nomination of Amy Martin, Olathe USD 233, as the KASB President-Elect Designee during its yearly meeting on Sept. 13, 2014. Martin was the only candidate interviewed for the position.

As per the KASB Constitution, the Nominating Committee reports the nominee(s) to the KASB Board of Directors at least 60 days prior to the Delegate Assembly, which will take place during the KASB Annual Convention. The Board of Directors then reports the nominee(s) to members at least 30 days prior to the Annual Convention. The election is held during the Delegate Assembly.

The KASB president-elect designee serves as a member of the board of directors and as a part of the executive committee. At the passing of the gavel in June 2015, the designee becomes president-elect of the association.
Preliminary KASB Legislative Priorities released

The preliminary recommendations of the 2014 KASB Legislative Committee have been released.

The committee’s draft resolution for KASB priorities and members of the committee is available at www.kasb.org/assets/Advocacy/LegComReport092214.pdf.

The preliminary draft report was approved by the Legislative Committee in August. It contains the text of the Resolution: “First in Education, the Kansas Way – 2013-14” approved by the 2013 Delegate Assembly, with proposed changes. Proposed additions to last year’s resolution are shown in italics and proposed deletions with strike-through. A column with comments on the proposed changes is also provided.

After KASB released the preliminary report of the KASB Legislative Committee we have received a number of questions from both committee members and other KASB leaders regarding the section on school finance. It appears there may have been some problems with the formatting of documents we used to share this statement, or confusion as to the intent of the committee. Therefore, as school leaders review this document, we want to stress there are many options available.

As staff, we want to make clear this preliminary committee report is just that: a preliminary document designed to provide options and receive feedback. Both the committee and the entire KASB membership through the Delegate Assembly could decide to replace the current language with the new working regarding a cost study; to keep the current language AND support a study; keep the current language and not support a study; or draft a completely new position.

KASB members are encouraged to review these proposals and provide any feedback to the committee before Nov. 1, when the committee will adopt its final report to the 2014 KASB Delegate Assembly. These recommendations will also be discussed at the KASB Education Summits.

Comments and questions may be directed to the KASB Advocacy Staff or to members of the committee.

A Focus on Efficiency – How Trane Can Help

High performing schools are defined as safe, healthy and efficient. There is no shortage of studies that link optimal test scores with classrooms environments at peak performance levels for indoor air quality, humidity levels, comfortable temperatures, quiet acoustics and energy efficiency.

At every level – from the state’s focus on efficiency to the local community’s need for accountability – student performance and school efficiency are common concerns. Achieving high performing schools can be realized during any upgrade of the physical environment and can be accomplished through fiscally responsible budgeting and stewardship.

Another significant area of concern, not only in Kansas, but all across the nation, is addressing deferred maintenance for public school buildings. This has a direct impact on ensuring schools continue to operate at their original design criteria. In most cases, retrofitting existing buildings with new energy efficient technologies can significantly extend the life of the physical plant. However, this can be challenging to accomplish as school budgets have fallen significantly behind the constant repair and renovation burden on our schools’ aging infrastructure.

Trane is part of KASB’s Prestigious Partner Program, and the Association’s preferred provider for energy performance contracting (EPC). Several districts across Kansas have already taken advantage of this approach to improving the learning environment in their schools. A Trane representative will be at each of KASB’s 2014 Fall Education Summits to share more information about how EPC works and the opportunities it can offer to a local school district.

More opportunities could be on the horizon. The K-12 Student Performance and Efficiency Commission is currently meeting in Topeka and is in the process of developing formal recommendations for cost effective practices for Kansas public schools. Discussions have included a study to re-evaluate the state’s open ended obligation to equalize school construction bonds, and restructuring the operating parameters of the Capital Outlay Fund.

KASB and Trane will continue to monitor discussions and recommendations in all of these areas. Our shared goal is support local school boards in their mission to provide safe, healthy environments for students and staff.
Tentative K-12 Commission recommendations
The K-12 Student Performance and Efficiency Commission made a series of recommendations on September 18-19. The commission worked from a memo of suggestions proposed by Chairman Sam Williams. Most of those items had been previously recommended by Governor Brownback’s School Efficiency Task Force or in testimony before the commission.

Read more at www.kasb.org/wcm/_NB/14/NB092014.aspx

Innovative Districts board seeks to clarify waiver process
The Board of the Coalition of Innovative Districts hopes to have the process for dealing with districts seeking waivers from state laws and regulations and a look at the first actual waivers proposals when it meets next month. The board also hopes to have a revised application process for the next round of districts seeking innovative status, which must be completed by Dec. 1 for the 2015-16 school year.

Read more at www.kasb.org/wcm/_NB/14/NB0924b.aspx

Henderson candidate for NSBA Board of Directors
KASB Past President Frank Henderson, Seaman USD 345, was nominated for a position on the National School Boards Association’s Board of Directors during NSBA’s annual Western Region meeting, in Omaha Sept. 11-14. He was interviewed by the Western Region Nominating Committee and his candidacy was approved. The NSBA Delegate Assembly will hold elections on March 20, 2015.

Read more at www.kasb.org/wcm/_NB/14/NB0925a.aspx

U.S. Chamber continued from page 1

Data Quality: Collection and use of high-quality and actionable student and teacher performance data. Policy. Kansas grade: B.

Technology: Student access to high-quality computer-based instruction. Policy. Kansas grade: C-

International Competitiveness: State scores on NAEP compared with international benchmarks, and AP exams passed by the class of 2013 on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and foreign language exams. Performance. Kansas grade: B.


KASB converted the grades for every state into a number (A=4, B=3, etc.) to provide a traditional grade point average. Across all eleven measures, Kansas was just below a C (1.97) and ranked 26th of the 50 states. However, when considering just the five performance measures - in other words, looking only at actual student outcomes - Kansas’ G.P.A. jumped to 3.0, tied with two other states at 11th in the nation. The Kansas “policy” G.P.A. was just 1.12, or 46th in the nation.

That raised a question: why does Kansas do so well on student performance and so poorly on policy if those policy areas are important to educational effectiveness? It turns out those six policy indicators really have no relationship to performance. The “correlation coefficient” between state “performance” grade point average and “policy” grade point average is -0.027, meaning there is no statistically significant relationship between the two. (Remember, a 1.0 correlation is perfect one-to-one positive relationship; and a -1.0 is a perfect opposition relationship.)

In other words, states that received high marks in things like “truth in advertising student proficiency,” teacher evaluation systems, parental choice options, and well funded pensions were no more likely to have high student performance than low graded states.

On the other hand, funding DID make a difference. The correlation coefficient between a state’s performance grade point average and the total revenue per pupil (adjusted for regional cost differences) was a modest but positive 0.313. States that spend more per pupil are more likely to have high achievement than lower spending states. Moreover, higher spending per pupil has a significantly greater correlation with higher achievement than the policies graded by the Chamber report. (0.313 for funding vs -0.027 for policies.)

As is true in other reports, an even more significant impact on state achievement is the percentage of low income students. There is a -0.779 correlation coefficient between performance and the percentage of students on free and reduced price meals. That means it is highly likely that the more low income students a state educates, the lower its performance grade will be.

As the K-12 Performance and Efficiency Commission continues its work, it is noteworthy to compare Kansas performance on this particular scorecard with the money it spends per pupil and the characteristics of students in Kansas. Tied at 11th in performance, Kansas’ adjusted spending ranks 27th (meaning 26 states spend more) and percentage of free and reduced lunch students ranks 23rd (meaning 22 states have more low income students and 27 states have fewer).

In fact, as the table below shows, only two states (Colorado and Washington) have the same or better performance G.P.A. and no state with more low income students has the same or better performance.

Learn more from the Tallman Education Report at http://tallmankasb.blogspot.com/
Housing opens Oct. 1, Sheraton Overland Park is headquarters hotel, corrected number for reservations available

The room block at the Sheraton Overland Park for the 2014 Conference opens on October 1 at 8 a.m. To reserve your room, please call 866.837.4214. The number previously published was incorrect. We are sorry for any inconvenience or confusion this may cause.

Other area hotels include the Hilton Garden Inn, Courtyard Marriott and Chase Suites.

Find detailed conference information online at: www.kasb.org/2014conference.