KASB announces Leadership for Tomorrow class of 2016-17

The Kansas Association of School Boards is pleased to announce our Leadership for Tomorrow Class of 2016-17. The 33 participants were chosen through an application process on the basis of individual leadership in public education and participation in activities that promote effective governance and raise student achievement.

This year’s class includes board of education members and district and building-level administrators from all over Kansas. “They are already leaders in their local communities” said KASB Executive Director John Heim. “KASB’s Leadership for Tomorrow is about gaining perspective and learning from others by visiting districts and classrooms in small and large districts and in rural, suburban and urban areas.”

In the past 11 years 163 school leaders have completed the program. This year’s class also includes two KASB staff members. This will be the first time Association staff members have participated as fully fledged members of the program.

Five sessions will be held in various locations across the state. Through these onsite visits, presentations and class discussions, participants expand their knowledge of leadership skills and education key issues by learning about the unique challenges and opportunities in schools all across the state.

The 2016-17 KASB Leadership for Tomorrow class includes:

- Jeremy Boldra, superintendent of schools, Flint Hills USD 492;
- Katina Brenn, superintendent of schools, Colby USD 315;
- Barb Brittan, board of education, Abilene USD 435;
- Dale Brungardt, superintendent of schools, Ellsworth-Kanopolis-Genesee USD 327;
- Rick Burgess, board of education, Lyons USD 405;
- Lori Church, attorney, Kansas Association of School Boards;
- Cindy Couchman, director of learning and instruction, Buhler USD 313;
- Justin Coup, superintendent of schools, Solomon USD 393;
- Shannon Culver, board of education, Woodson Co. USD 366;
- Amy Garver, principal, Basehor-Linwood Middle School, Basehor-Linwood USD 458;
- Dr. Jackie Glasgow, board of education Wellington USD 353;
- Mike Gower, superintendent of schools, Phillipsburg USD 325;

School Board Member Spotlight: Marcel Harmon, Lawrence USD 497

As the son of public school teachers (and farmers), public education has been a part of Marcel Harmon’s life since early childhood. He explains how this early introduction, and a strong belief in public education, helped guide him in his duties as a board member with Lawrence USD 497.

A licensed engineer, Marcel received his B.S. in Architectural Engineering from Kansas State University, as well as a Ph.D and M.A. in Anthropology from the University of New Mexico. Though he’s worked in engineering and anthropology/archeology, he now works for M.E. GROUP, a “high performance building consulting firm.” He lives in Lawrence with his wife Michelle and their two children. Though they are native Kansans, they spent 13 years in New Mexico before moving back to Kansas in 2005.

Marcel joined the school board in September 2014, when he was appointed by the board to fill a slot left by a former member who resigned to take a job with the district. He was then formally elected in April 2015 to finish the remaining two years of the term. Marcel sees his familial background and professional expertise helped to prepare him for his service on the Lawrence board of education. His parents were teachers with Cheney USD 268 and he has spent time consulting with school districts and higher ed. He believes “firmly” a “strong public education system, from pre-K through 16+, is absolutely critical for a functioning democracy.” He states his service on the Lawrence board of education allows him the opportunity to “contribute to that idea, give back to the school district and Lawrence in general, and provide an example of the importance of community service to my children.”

Marcel believes the best thing about Lawrence Public Schools is the people. “We have talented, creative, really smart, caring and dedicated teachers and staff willing to do what’s necessary to meet the needs of our students,” he says. He credits the dedicated administrators for...
Former Texas school board member wrote book on being a good school board member

Anne Foster learned first-hand how important it is to have the community deeply involved with its school district.

When she was a member of the Richardson, Texas school board, Foster and the board worked hard to maintain partnerships as the district was transforming from a predominantly white, affluent Dallas suburb to a much more diverse population with lots of different immigrant groups moving in.

“We had a lot of work to do,” Foster said. “Everything seemed different. We took the challenges to the community and told them we needed their help,” she said.

She said the school board and community responded and the Richardson Independent School District remains a top tier district with all four of its high schools being named among the Best High Schools by Newsweek magazine.

After nine years on the board, Foster continued to work in education advocacy and co-authored “A School Board Guide to Leading Successful Schools.”

Now a full-time realtor, she still consults and offers advice to school districts on how to get the community to support their schools.

Her advice is relevant to Kansas schools, which are facing challenges over funding and many other issues.

“School boards and superintendents are the face of public schools in their community. The way they encourage and work with the community is among their most important roles they have,” she said.

She urges school board members to reach out to business, church and civic leaders and get them involved in the budget process and other board functions, in addition to helping students succeed through mentorship and tutoring. “I call it building a community for public education,” she said.

While serving on the board, she had heard some realtors were bad-mouthing Richardson public schools, so she invited realtors to visit the schools. The realtors liked what they saw and now put “riders” on their For Sale signs that say, “I support Richardson ISD.”

She said support can come from unexpected places. After she spoke with a small group about the needs of the district, a retired engineer who had no connection to the school system, was moved to become deeply involved and helped students by providing musical instruments, music lessons and tickets to shows until his death.

“He became a legend to the students because someone engaged him,” she said.

She said the community and school district should work and progress hand-in-hand. “I’ve always believed that if you have quality public schools, you have the support of every part of the community,” she said. –Scott Rothschild, srothschild@kasb.org

The number of KASB member organizations currently gaining benefit from KASB’s Kansas Joint Utility Management Program (KJUMP) natural gas purchasing cooperative.

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The Kansas Association of School Boards is a not-for-profit organization located in Topeka, Kansas dedicated to serving members of governing boards for unified school districts, community colleges, area vocational-technical schools and cooperatives, interlocals and regional service centers. The association serves a membership base of close to 5,000 school board members and educational leaders.

Kansas Association of School Boards
1420 SW Arrowhead Road
Topeka, Kansas 66604
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School finance group gathers input on proposed principles and framework of plan

More than 100 education officials from across the state met Wed. April 13 at the headquarters of KASB to discuss what elements are needed in a permanent school finance plan to drive student success.

Members of United School Administrators of Kansas, the Kansas School Superintendents Association and the Kansas Association of School Business Officials have been working for months on developing a school finance proposal for consideration as a replacement to the current, temporary block grant system.

The major principles underlying the group’s school finance plan are:

- Every student in Kansas’ public schools will have an equal opportunity to be college and career ready, as defined by the Rose Standards;
- Some students will require greater support to meet standards;
- Funding to districts must be directly related to what it costs to educate each individual student;
- Any formula must meet constitutional requirements for equity and adequacy;
- The formula should recognize local control and provide funding of educational services;
- The Legislature and school districts need budget predictability.

The group also composed a preliminary framework, which included:

1. Foundation aid based on enrollment
2. All day Kindergarten
3. Pre-Kindergarten
4. High academic needs
5. Career technical education
6. Virtual School
7. Special education
8. Transportation
9. Teacher quality
10. Local option budget
11. Capital outlay
12. New facilities weighting
13. Low enrollment aid
14. Bond equalization

The framework of the plan generated productive discussions while several concerns were raised.

Those concerns included ensuring that funding would be available for the individual needs of districts, such as large enrollment increases or sudden changes in local economies that could increase poverty rates. Many said they wanted to make sure equalization funding was maintained in several areas.

The Legislature returns for the wrap up session April 27. Before adjourning the regular session, the Legislature passed and Gov. Sam Brownback signed into law a bill that supporters say will address a Kansas Supreme Court order to equitably distribute school funding. The court has set an expedited hearing schedule to review the new law.

In the meantime, the block grant funding system approved last year will expire after the next school year.

Jim Freeman, chief financial officer for Wichita USD 259, who has been a leader in the group’s deliberations, acknowledged the relationship between the Legislature and school officials is tense but he urged those at the meeting to engage legislators as much as possible. “If you’re not sitting at the table, you’re on the menu,” Freeman said.

He said the meeting was productive and the group’s school finance plan is a work in progress. “The conversation will continue. There’s not an easy answer. We do want to build consensus in our community,” he said.

The meeting also included a detailed look from Mark Tallman, KASB’s associate director for advocacy, about House Bill 2741, which calls for major changes to school funding and was introduced shortly before the end of the regular Legislative Session.

The bill would include the elimination of state spending for extracurricular activities and provide tax funds to parents who want to send their children to private schools or home schools.~Scott Rothschild, srothschild@kasb.org

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Kansas City USD 500 wins honorable mention in Magna Awards

Kansas City USD 500 received an honorable mention in a national recognition program for its Diploma Plus program.

The Magna Awards honors school boards best practices and innovative programs that advance student learning. It is sponsored by the National Association of School Boards.

Kansas City USD 500’s Diploma Plus program says that when students graduate from high school they have either one year of college credit, an industry-recognized credential or certificate or a 21 on the ACT.

The program includes numerous methods of keeping students on track and monitoring their progress. It also includes getting students more familiar with colleges, businesses and careers. Many colleges and tech schools are now competing for Kansas City USD 500 students, offering scholarships and awards. ~Scott Rothschild, srothschild@kasb.org

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Kansas School Expenditures by Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community and Adult Services</td>
<td>0.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Administration</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Support Services</td>
<td>2.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Support</td>
<td>3.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>4.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
<td>4.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services</td>
<td>5.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administration</td>
<td>5.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations &amp; Maintenance</td>
<td>9.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Instruction</td>
<td>61.09%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of Current School Expenditures by Category 2014-2015

Data Source: KSDE

Kansas Association of School Boards April 2016
School boards across Kansas are putting a larger percentage of funds into the classroom and away from administration, according to a new analysis by KASB.

The analysis shows recent statements in the media alleging dramatic increases in administrative costs are inaccurate. KASB went to KSDE’s current operating expenditure summary data to confirm or deny the following statement: “Administrative costs are increasing dramatically in Kansas schools.”

The data shows that from 2005 to 2015, the portion of school funding spent on administration has decreased from 9.2 percent of funding to 8.2 percent of funding. In fact, if administrative expenses had stayed at the 2005 percentage of funding, that would have cost the state an additional $50 million.

Administrative spending also fell behind other measurements of spending over the 10-year period.

Overall spending on instruction increased 40 percent, while administrative costs increased 24 percent. Per pupil spending on instruction increased 34 percent, while per pupil spending on administration increased 18 percent. Again, even though total dollars spent on education has increased over the past 10 years, the percentage share that goes to administration has decreased.

The KASB analysis is consistent with an earlier KASB report that shows since 1998, school districts have increased positions that are involved in the direct instruction of students by more than 16 percent while decreasing general administrative positions by nearly 17 percent.

The two charts to the left show expenditures by year and category. The top chart shows the total dollar amounts, and the bottom shows the amounts on a per-pupil basis.

The bottom blue area represents instruction spending, following by support services for staff and pupils in red and green, then general and school administration in purple and blue. Note that the lines for general and school administration have remained largely consistent over this time period.

The per-pupil graph looks very similar to the total cost graph; the amounts spent for general and school administration have been very consistent since 2005.

Based on this information, it seems safe to say the statement “Administrative costs are increasing dramatically in Kansas schools” is false.

During challenging budget times, school boards are working hard to ensure tax dollars are spent as much as possible on the direct instruction of students.
• Art Gutierrez, board of education, Emporia USD 253;  
• Sandra Halling, board of education, Bucklin USD 459;  
• Pat Happer, superintendent of schools, Jefferson West USD 340;  
• Adam Hatfield, principal, Wellington High School, Wellington USD 353;  
• Nicole Hawkins, board of education, Goddard USD 265;  
• Jerry Hodson, superintendent of schools, Rawlins County USD 105;  
• Lori Johnson, board of education, Girard USD 248;  
• Doug Lockwood, board of education, Turner-Kansas City USD 202  
• Liz Maisberger-Clark, KASB Workers Compensation Ins., Inc. Fund Administrator, Kansas Association of School Boards;  
• Angie McDonald, director of instruction, McPherson USD 418;  
• Jo McFadden, principal, Inman Elementary School, Inman USD 448;  
• Gina McGowan, board of education, Ellsworth-Kanopolis-Geneseeo USD 327;  
• Mischel Miller, superintendent of schools, Vermillion USD 380;  
• John Montford, principal, Sunnyside Elementary School, Dodge City USD 443;  
• Barb Sewing, board of education, Stafford USD 349;  
• Daryl Stegman, superintendent of schools, Spearville USD 381;  
• Mike Stegman, superintendent of schools, Cimarron Ensign USD 102;  
• Brad Stratton, board of education, Shawnee Mission USD 512;  
• Khris Thexton, assistant superintendent, Great Bend USD 428;  
• Greg Tice, board of education, Renwick USD 267;  
• Brett White, assistant superintendent, Andover USD 385.  
~Carol Pitts, cpitts@kasb.org

Staff Spotlight: Sarah Loquist

KASB attorneys are equipped to handle a multitude of school law issues, as the legal needs of our members are varied and sometimes unique.

Staff attorney Sarah Loquist brings nearly two decades of school law experience to provide our members with advice on special education, section 504 and many other legal areas.

Sarah grew up in Council Grove, where she attended school before going on to attend college at Pittsburg State. While at Pittsburg State, Sarah obtained her undergraduate degree in Social Science in Secondary Education. Following Pittsburg State, Sarah attended Washburn University School of Law.

Prior to coming to KASB, Sarah held a number of legal positions. Of her 19 years practicing law, 17 of them have been in school law.

She served as a judicial clerk for one of the federal district court judges (now deceased) in Topeka. In 1999, she started work for a private firm in Wichita, Hinkle Law Firm, which served as general counsel for USD 259 at that time. In 2007, she moved in-house with USD 259 and served as the assistant general counsel.

In 2011, she started her own law practice, which she ran for a year before getting married and moving to Topeka. She began working with KASB on June 25, 2012.

As an attorney here at KASB, Sarah handles a little bit of everything. And although she doesn’t have a “specialization” in a particular area of law, she spends much of her time on special education law, Section 504 - a Federal law that protects the rights of individuals with disabilities - and employment law.

In her time practicing school law, Sarah has found that working with districts is “refreshing.” “Having been in private practice, I find that boards and administrators honestly want to do the right thing,” she says. She also enjoys the challenging, unpredictable nature of school law: “Every day is something different. There’s always a different twist, always something new.” ~Shaneice McNabney, smcnabney@kasb.org
“working tirelessly to support our teachers and staff, and implement our board goals.” In addition to the administrators, teachers, staff, Marcel says the Lawrence community is highly involved with and great supporters of public education.

He describes his fellow board members as “intelligent, insightful, inquisitive” individuals who “bring a variety of views, experience and backgrounds to the table” and he states that, although they don’t always agree on everything, everyone has the interests of the community and district at heart. He finds this dedication to the community helps to make “collaboration and compromise that much easier and more effective in terms of the solutions generated.”

One of these times where collaboration and compromise was important came when the school board was tasked with searching for and selecting a new superintendent - a responsibility Marcel lists as being one of the most important as a board member (the other being the annual review of the superintendent’s performance). Marcel was honored to have the chance to participate in the hiring process. “The thoroughness of the process, along with the amount of community involvement, professionalism of our HR staff, degree of commitment from my fellow board members and the quality of our final selection made this a very rewarding process.”

Marcel finds many rewarding aspects that come with being a school board member, the most rewarding being having the opportunity to see examples of student success and “hearing their stories,” whether he’s congratulating students on their achievements, listening to LGBTQ students discuss the challenges they face, seeing students engage in social justice issues or watching graduates receive their diplomas.

Of course, with the rewarding aspects of being a board member come challenges as well. Marcel doesn’t find challenges within the district or Lawrence community, however. He finds it in the lack of support for public schools from the legislative leadership and the governor. “Their actions represent the largest threat to Kansas public education right now in my opinion. It jeopardizes many of the initiatives our district currently has in place and makes it difficult to plan for the future.”

For Marcel, the key to understanding the needs of the local district is to stay engaged by “listening, observing and participating. Students, teachers/staff, administrators, facility personnel, board members, parents and many community members know best what our local districts need in terms of support from the state.” He states there are a number of ways legislators can be involved and engaged with their districts. “With the majority of the state’s budget devoted to education, it makes sense that legislators would spend time in their school districts, observing and listening in classrooms, following a custodian, taking in a performance or sporting event, serving lunch to students or riding a bus route. Maybe even attend a school board meeting.”

~Shaneice McNabney, smcnabney@kasb.org

KASB seeking qualified applicants for Advocacy/Outreach Specialist

The major responsibilities for the position include interacting with KASB members (including local school board members, district administration, school staff), parents, business and community groups, legislators and other policy makers, news media and other organizations to explain and promote educational issues and KASB positions, including legislative testimony.

For more details on the position, qualifications and how to apply go to www.kasb.org/wcm/_NB/16/NB0408a.aspx. ~Scott Rothschild, srothschild@kasb.org

~Shaneice McNabney, smcnabney@kasb.org

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Rod Spangler  rspangler@kasb.org

Workers Compensation Fund, Inc. Fund Administrator
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KJUMP
Kansas Joint Utility Management Program
April/May 2016

April
23  KASB Insurance Trustees Meeting - Topeka
26  Hoxie USD 412 Supt Search Application Deadline
27  Kansas Legislative Session Resumes

May
17-18  Kansas State Board of Education Meeting

School Law Summer Roundup
June 8 & 9, 2016
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Held in Conjunction with the USA Kansas Annual Convention
June 8, 9 & 10, 2016