With end of school comes start of meal program

Thousands of Kansas children from low-income areas will receive meals over the next few months through the Summer Food Service Program but Kansas ranks near the bottom in participation in the program when compared with other states.

That's why school food coordinators are trying new ways to serve nutritious meals.

In Iola, officials have launched the "Chow Bus." An old school bus, which was refurbished by Iola high school students, the "Chow Bus" will serve as a small diner for students to eat a daily meal.

"We have a lot kids left home during the day because their parents are working. This is a better way for these kids to get a healthy meal," said Kathy Koehn, food service coordinator at Iola USD 257 in southeast Kansas.

The "Chow Bus" will travel to several areas in Iola and in the small towns of Gas and La Harpe.

...continued on page 4

Key deadlines in upcoming elections

The 2016 Primary Election is just two months away and the November General Election is five months away and, not surprisingly, a great deal of current political attention is focused on the presidential primaries.

In Kansas, one U.S. Senate seat, all four U.S. House seats, all 40 seats in the Kansas Senate and all 125 seats in the Kansas House will be up for grabs.

Here are important dates you should mark on your calendar so you can fully participate in this year’s election.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>Candidate filing deadline; Last day to change party affiliation before primary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 12</td>
<td>Last day to register to vote for primary election.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 13</td>
<td>First day advance ballots are mailed. In person advance voting may begin. Contact your county election officer to find out when and where.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1</td>
<td>Noon deadline to cast advance voting ballots in person in office of County Election Officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2</td>
<td>Primary Election; Advance voting ballots must be received in office of County Election Officer by close of polls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 18</td>
<td>Last day to register to vote in general election.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 19</td>
<td>First day advance ballots are mailed. In person advance voting may begin. Contact your county election office to find out when and where.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 4</td>
<td>Deadline for voters to apply for advance voting ballots to be mailed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 7</td>
<td>Noon deadline to cast advance voting ballots in person in office of county election office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 8</td>
<td>General Election; Advance voting ballots must be received in office of County Election Officer by close of polls.</td>
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Readers may be tiring of my life on the farm stories, especially since I was only a gentleman farmer as a youth. My parents concocted this scam on my sister, brother, and I that going to live on our grandparents’ farm from the last day of school to the first day of school would be great fun. As an adult I realize just how great it was for THEM! (OK, I admit, it was great for us kids too.)

One of the best memories of those summers is lunch (or dinner, as it is referred to west of 81.) In the late 1960’s and early 70’s dinner at the farm in Bunker Hill was a major production. While my grandparents’ farm was small, especially by today’s standards, the dinner table was full at noon Monday-Saturday.

Bernadine helped my grandmother with the household duties, sometimes assisted by her daughter LauraDawn. Jerry and Bobby were two high school kids who helped with farm and home duties. There was always a collection of ne’er-do-well farmhands who drank too much and taught us kid’s life-lessons that were not necessarily positive. Bernadine’s son Bradley was there on a regular basis along with the three of us Heim kids, and rounding out the table was the occasional hanger-on. There were at least a dozen folks and usually more around the table, all pitching in to get the work done.

Fast forward 45 years to the same home place in Bunker Hill. A couple of octogenarians run that same farm operation. Anyone who has ever worked with or for Max Heim knows that this isn’t exactly a fair comparison, because he can work any two twenty-year-olds into the ground, but still, what happened?

Obviously, a lot of the farm work is contracted out now, and automation has created efficiencies we couldn’t have dreamed of in 1970. No-till means that my job of cleaning the bindweed out of the one-way disks is over. Round bales are God’s gift to sore backs. I could go on.

Technology and science have created vast efficiencies in the modern world and eliminated many jobs at the same time. Jobs that any knuckleheaded 15-year-old with a strong back could do no longer pay a living wage, if they exist at all. Schools, too, have changed and we have to keep changing to keep up. It is impossible to know what jobs and industry a 15-year-old knucklehead will be reflecting nostalgically upon because they don’t exist in 2062. It is possible to know that things will be different.

Our jobs as school leaders require we prepare our students for a world that doesn’t exist. It’s a tough job because it requires us to have a foot in the present and one in the future. But we cannot shy from the task. We have to be prepared to be different. We have to look beyond getting by for another year and look to a better future for our kids and Kansas. It’s tough, but believe me it’s better than cleaning bindweed out of a one-way.

On the road again: KASB tour starts May 31

The KASB Advocacy Tour and Candidate Meetings hit the road May 31 through June 23 to present information on Kansas schools and receive input to help form policies and positions.

School board members, administrators, teachers, parents, community members, media, candidates and incumbents are urged to attend.

A portion of the meetings will be devoted to seeking feedback on concerns and priorities that will be used to establish KASB legislative positions.

In addition, KASB staff will make presentations on Kansas school achievement in comparison with other states, the current funding dispute and long-term changes by school districts to get more dollars into the classroom.

Meetings are scheduled for Sublette on May 31; Oakley and Hays, June 1; Great Bend, June 2; Emporia and Clearwater, June 6; Wichita, June 7; Lawrence and Kansas City, June 13; Topeka and Olathe, June 16; Manhattan and Hiawatha, June 20; Paola and Girard, June 21; Independence, June 22; and Hutchinson and Salina, June 23.

Those wishing to register can do so online at www.kasb.org by clicking on the “Event Registration” tab and then clicking on the location of the meeting. ~Scott Rothschild, srothschild@kasb.org

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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, inter locals and regional service centers. The association serves a membership base of close to 5,000 school board members and educational leaders.
Blue Valley’s CAPS helps students gain professional experience

A tour of Blue Valley’s CAPS program concluded the meeting of the Coalition of Innovative School Districts on April 21.

The Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS) was started in Blue Valley in 2009 as a program to help students gain professional, hands-on experience in a variety of career interests. While CAPS is not a vocational school, students are allowed the ability to work in real-world settings through innovation teaching techniques to prepare them for their post-secondary and professional careers. “The quicker kids can get to college, the more successful they’ll be,” said Chad Ralston, Director at CAPS.

CAPS is not a replacement for high school. Rather, it is a supplement. Students attend classes five days a week for 2-3 periods. In addition to high school credit, every course offered is eligible for at least one college credit. Classes that are 3 periods in length are worth 1.5 credits; 2 period classes are worth one college credit. Students can also receive elective credits through their CAPS courses. Weighted credit is also available to students upon completion of their first semester in the program. This is earned through a capstone project, where students work with industry partners, or participate in an internship. The capstone project encourages students to build on their critical thinking and problem solving skills and culminates with a presentation of their experience upon completion of the project. “The more authentic the project, the more engaged they are with their work.”

And, although CAPS is offered through the Blue Valley school district, it is not limited to Blue Valley students. While students must live in the district, CAPS students include public, private and homeschooled junior or senior students.

Courses in the CAPS program are broken down into six “strands”: accelerator; bioscience; business, technology and media; engineering; human services; and medicine and health.

In addition to the courses offered in the CAPS program, students also have the opportunity to be mentored by industry professionals. Through the mentoring program, individuals from companies with which the program is partnered can obtain visiting scholar certification and work with students to not only provide them with first-hand expertise, but to also help them network and gain real-world knowledge in their field of interest.

Students in CAPS do more than just sit in a classroom and receive textbook instruction; they actively participate in various projects and hands-on and inquiry-based instruction that allows them to be fully engaged in their courses and sharpen their problem-solving skills.

One of the projects the engineering students are currently working on is a real, working flight simulator. The original console was found in a dumpster five years ago still in fairly good condition and the students have been working to rebuild it, with tech through a partnership with Garmin. They are currently going through the process to have the simulator FAA certified. In addition to the flight simulator, engineering students are also working on and designing a series of drones.

In Tammy Fry’s Teacher Education course, students have been coordinating a curriculum and working with 5th graders via Skype in various districts- such as Spring Hill and Manhattan- on lessons in aerodynamics and designing parachutes.

Students who participate in the CAPS program leave high school prepared for a future in various high demand professions that require high skilled individuals who are also able to adapt to an ever-changing world. ~Shaneice McNabney, smcnabney@kasb.org
KASB Staff Spotlight: Doug Moeckel

As we’ve mentioned before, KASB’s Leadership Services department provides many opportunities for members to grow as leaders of their schools and districts. And who better to learn from than someone who has served in multiple leadership positions? Doug Moeckel brings years of experience to help KASB members grow in their capacity as leaders.

A Kansas native, Doug grew up in Buhler and Hays before heading to Kansas State University for his undergraduate studies. There he majored in Physical Education and Social Sciences. He then earned his Master’s in Health and Human Performance from Fort Hays State and, finally, he headed back to KSU to earn his Doctorate in Educational Administration.

In addition to being a long-time teacher and coach, Doug has also served in many different administrative positions. He served as the principal at Ellsworth High School as well as Superintendent of Ellsworth USD 327 for five years. During three of those five years, Doug was also the principal at Ellsworth Elementary.

At KASB, Doug serves as the Deputy Executive Director, although most of his work is with Leadership Services — an area developed 10 years ago and in which he has served in some capacity since arriving at KASB nine years ago. His duties with Leadership Services include conducting superintendent searches, working with school boards, superintendents and building-level principals to provide professional level development, and enhancing leadership skills amongst KASB members. As an extra-added bonus, Doug gets to travel all over the great state of Kansas to bring his expertise and invaluable knowledge to the members of KASB.

“That’s always a good question,” Doug remarked when asked about what he likes most about working at KASB. “Serving here allows us to serve the greater good.” He likes that KASB focuses on the lives of those who are working to enhance public education. And working with the people who are working to create a better public education experience makes a difference for Doug. “Nine years of getting to work with so many great people who work with education makes what I do very enjoyable.” ~Shaneice McNabney, smcnabney@kasb.org

Meal Programs

Koehn said the bus is just another way to reach children during the summer and provide them nutritional meals.

The Summer Food Service Program is paid for by the federal government. The program kicks into gear as the school year ends.

In most areas, schools are the sites for children to get the free meals, but there are also many sites sponsored by community organizations, churches, libraries, non-governmental entities and private non-profits. The program varies from area to area with some offering one meal per day, while others offer two or three meals or a snack. And some provide meals on the weekends.

In 2015, there were 138 program sponsors with 484 sites that served 1.3 million meals. All those numbers represented significant increases since 2011 when there were 91 sponsors, 278 sites and 846,000 meals.

But even with the increases, Kansas ranked near the bottom of states in the percentage of students participating, according to children’s advocacy groups, Kansas Action for Children and Kansas Appleseed. Last year, 35 counties had no program, including all of northwest Kansas.

Kelly Chanay, assistant director of child nutrition and wellness at the Kansas State Department of Education, said part of the reason for Kansas’ low ranking is that in rural areas it is difficult to reach children during the summer months.

But Chanay added advocates are working hard to improve the results in Kansas, adding more sponsors were expected this summer.

And, she said, in addition to the meals, the program provides children with opportunities for socializing and being mentored. Many of the sites combine the meals with reading initiatives and craft-making.

Iola officials are hoping the Chow Bus is a hit. “It’s one of those kinds of innovative ways that we can use to meet the needs of some of our under-served kids,” said Iola Superintendent Jack Koehn. ~Scott Rothschild, srothschild@kasb.org

Legal Assistance Fund

KASB is proud to be a leader in providing legal services to our members. Few state school board associations offer this cost-effective and vital service!

KASB employs five attorneys and additional support staff who devote all their time and effort to school legal issues. Their combined knowledge and experience give members of the KASB Legal Assistance Fund a distinct advantage!

The Legal Assistance Fund is a separate KASB service that allows legal representation to be provided to members. A separate annual fee is required to comply with court rules concerning the attorney/client privilege. This guarantees confidential legal representation for our members.

The KASB Legal Team is here to help!

Donna Whiteman
KASB Assistant Executive Director/Legal Services

KASB
Serving Educational Leaders, Inspiring Student Success

smcnabney@kasb.org

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Donna Whiteman
KASB Assistant Executive Director/Legal Services

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School staffing in Kansas

KASB just released a report entitled “School Staffing in Kansas: An Analysis of KSDE Data on Staff Counts and Salaries,” which examines the change in staff and students from 1998 to 2016 based on data from KSDE. Student FTEs were taken from KSDE’s Comparative Performance and Fiscal System (CPFS), and the Staff FTEs were taken from KSDE’s Certified and Noncertified Personnel Reports. Student FTEs in CPFS are only available back to the 1997-98 school year, which is why this starting point was selected.

Based on this data, KASB found the following:

- The total number of certified and noncertified staff has increased 15 percent since 1998; from 58,200 employees to 67,000 employees. Annually since 1998 the total number of staff has increased an average of 0.8 percent.
- The ratio of students to staff has decreased over 10 percent since 1998; from eight students per staff member to seven.
- Since 1999, the number of noncertified staff has increased at a higher rate (24 percent) than that for classified staff (10 percent).
- Core Support employees have increased at a much higher rate (42 percent) than Non-Core Support (8 percent) and Direct Instruction employees (17 percent). However, the number of Direct Instruction employees has increased much more significantly than the other two groups (from 41,941 to 49,207 for Direct Educators, compared to from 806 to 1,147 for Core Support and from 15,451 to 16,622 for Non-Core Support).
- The ratio of Direct Educators to Students decreased from 11 students per employee to 9 students per between 1998 and 2016. The ratio for Core Support employees went from 557 students per employee to 404 students per employee. The ratio for Non-Core Support employees went from 29 students per employee to 28 per.

For more information, visit http://kasbresearch.org or email research@kasb.org.
From BB guns to KPERS, Brownback signs bills affecting schools

With the regular legislative session over, Gov. Sam Brownback recently has signed into law several bills that will affect schools.

They include:

Senate Bill 323
This bill includes three measures previously contained in several bills. One is the Jason Flatt Act, which requires all school personnel to have one hour annually of suicide prevention training (including self-directed on-line training) and requires schools to have crisis prevention plans. Another measure requires an annual assessment of deaf or hard of hearing children through age nine to determine progress on language acquisition, and the third makes permanent the current capitol improvement aid formula adopted for two years in the block grant program (a lower equalization rate than used prior to 2016). The bill also sets a cap on the amount of state aid provided annually for bond issues.

Senate Bill 168
This makes changes to KPERS Working After Retirement law as well as other technical changes. The new law requires certification of no prearranged employment after retirement and provides penalties for violations; extends “grandfathering” of certain individuals who retired prior to May 1, 2015; makes changes to the hiring process and cumulative limits for special education, hard-to-fill, and hardship exemptions; adjusts employer surcharge rates and provides a July 1, 2020 sunset on most working after retirement provisions.

Senate Bill 193
Changes the Freedom from Unsafe Restraint and Seclusion Act to add and clarify definitions and revise the standards for the use of emergency safety intervention (ESI). The law requires each local board to develop and implement policies governing the use of ESI; exempts campus police and school resource officers from the Act’s requirements; clarifies parent notification requirements after the use of ESI; expands the data to be compiled by the Kansas Department of Education (KSDE); clarifies the process for a parent to request a meeting with the school to discuss each incident involving the use of ESI; and change the sunset for provisions of the Act from June 30, 2018 to June 30, 2020.

Senate Bill 22
Changes the Kansas Open Records Act to provide that a public record is an open record if it meets KORA criteria even if created or maintained on a private computer, server or e-mail. The bill continues an exemption for records created, maintained or kept by members of the Legislative and members of the governing body of political or taxing subdivisions of the state, including school board members.

House Bill 2502
This prohibits school districts from preventing organizations from conducting activities on school property solely because the activities involve the possession and use of air guns. The law also prohibits public employers from banning their employees from carrying concealed weapons when they are working. School buildings are exempt from that portion of the bill. The air gun provision was prompted by a controversy at the Derby USD 260 where a BB gun club was denied access to meet in one of its buildings.

KASB Prestigious Partner P1 Group awards scholarships

Three high school seniors received $500 scholarships from KASB Prestigious Partner P1 Group recently and are headed to the future.

P1 Group hosted a drawing to award three $500 scholarships at the KASB Annual Conference in December. Two Basehor-Linwood USD 458 board members won the drawing: Jeanette KlaMM and Lori Van Fleet. A third scholarship was won by Stacy Carswell, board member from Osborne County USD 392. The board members in turn passed the scholarship along to their districts to award.

The Basehor-Linwood seniors who received the scholarships are Christopher Lopez, who plans to attend Kansas State and major in chemical engineering and Megan Van Fleet who will attend K-State to study business with a minor in math.
Getting involved in political activities requires caution

With so much focus on the primary elections in August and the general election in November, a cautionary word is in order for school district employees.

"Contentious election activities can quickly become emotional, and common sense can suffer," said Lori Church, KASB attorney. "Public school employees must adhere to statutory regulations regarding political activity. Employees cannot use school time, school property or school equipment to furthering the interests of any political party, the campaign of any political candidate or the advocacy of any political issue."

Most boards have adopted policies prohibiting the use of school time, school property or school equipment, Church said. (See KASB Policies GBRK and GCRK).

"If your board has adopted such a policy, it should be brought to the attention of staff and the expectations of the use of school time, property and equipment should be explained," Church said. "We also recommend administrators and supervisors address any violations of such policies immediately and disciplinary measures applied consistently regardless of the type of political speech."

The relevant state statute is KSA 25-4169a (a), which states:

a)(1) No officer or employee of the state of Kansas, or any municipality, shall use or authorize the use of public funds or public vehicles, machinery, equipment or supplies of any such governmental agency or the time of any officer or employee of any such governmental agency, for which the officer or employee is compensated by such governmental agency, to expressly advocate the nomination, election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate for state or local office unless each candidate for such state or local office is permitted or allowed to do so in the same manner.

Any further questions regarding these policies or the handling of violations of these policies can be directed to the KASB legal staff. ~Carol Pitts, cpitts@kasb.org

(2) The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to the use of internet connectivity provided by the state of Kansas or any municipality to any candidate or elected official.

(3) Except as otherwise provided in this section, no municipality shall permit or allow any person to distribute, or cause to be distributed, within any building or other structure owned, leased or rented by such municipality any brochure, flyer, political fact sheet or other document which expressly advocates the nomination, election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate for state or local office unless each candidate for such state or local office is permitted or allowed to do so in the same manner.

The actions announced came as Brownback signed into law the state budget and made cuts, most notably to Medicaid and universities, to shore up the budget’s bottom line.

KASB said it appreciated the Legislature and Brownback not cutting K-12 funding, but noted that the budget basically puts in place a freeze on the level of funding for the third straight year under the block grant finance system and that increased costs are causing school districts across the state to cutback on important services and programs.
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