Leadership class takes rewarding trip

Imagine sending your 16-year-old son on a 2,000-mile hike, almost equal to the length of the famed Appalachian Trail. (He might have avoided some of the walking if he was lucky enough to hop aboard a freight train.) And imagine you’re doing it knowing you may never see him again … even if he arrives to his destination safely, which is no guarantee given his possible exposure to drug or sex traffickers, the latter of whom may give him the choice of carrying drugs over the Arizona border or being killed. And you’ve paid almost 40,000 quetzals, $5,000, to a “coyote” to accompany your child.

This is not the stuff of fiction, this trek of up to four months is the story of many “unaccompanied minors” that make their way from Central America for a shot at a better life in America. Federal officials identify crime and violence and economic concerns as causes primarily responsible for the recent rapid increase in migration to the United States by unaccompanied minors. These causes are followed by educational concerns, the desire for family reunification, and the role of smuggling networks, among others.

And some, if they are lucky, find their way to Ms. Elva Morales’ classroom at Liberal High School, almost another 1,000-mile journey from the border crossing.

There they have an opportunity to learn English, begin to read and write, and start a new life far removed from the harsh realities many faced back in their homeland of Guatemala.

Last school year, six dozen (72) of these youths became students at Liberal USD 480, and the district has created a program to meet their needs … just like school districts in Kansas do every day, all over the state for all kinds of students, but perhaps none any more challenging than these.

The Morales Classroom

Ms. Morales is fluent in Spanish, which is not unusual in Seward County, located in the southwest corner of the state. In fact, it is a minority-majority county with a 2014 Hispanic population of almost 60 percent. But for many students in her class, she might as well be speaking English, which she does a majority of the time, as their native language is not Spanish, but a Mayan language, of which there are 21 different variations. As a result, the primary language strategy is to develop English skills and not use Spanish as an intermediary.

Ms. Morales’ other instructional skill is based on early learning strategies. Although these are high school students, she covers very basic skills as her students’ exposure to schooling has been limited or non-existent.

On the day KASB’s Leadership for Tomorrow participants visited, the class covered a very rudimentary geography lesson on New World discoveries and an English lesson on synonyms.

...continued on page 7
Do we trust Kansas voters?  
(Reading between the lines)

Last year there was legislation proposed that would have changed school board elections in three ways:

1. Elections would be partisan and subject to party election rules (limiting voter participation in primaries).
2. Elections would be held in the fall.
3. Elections would be in even years in conjunction with national elections.

200 out of 286 school boards passed resolutions against these positions and many others expressed dissent. No school board member testified in favor of all three of these provisions. In the end, a compromise position moving elections to the fall of odd numbered years passed.

Proponents of the changes argued turnout is too low in school board elections. Opponents pointed out the focus on local elections and asked if other solutions to the turnout question could be tried.

Looking back, I wonder if the message of proponents is really that the wrong people are voting in school board elections. Locally elected school board members are focused on improving student success. Legislators have to be concerned with that issue, and many other social and fiscal issues. This can cause conflicts between locally elected board members and legislators. These conflicts should be addressed through respectful discussions, not by trying to change who votes.

Now a survey has been sent to board members about conflicts of interest. When a bill came up on the subject last year, there was one proponent. What is the underlying message of this survey? We have the wrong people serving on school boards? Board members must think the way they do because they are influenced by having a relative in the profession or a business interest in schools?

KASB is encouraging board members to take the time to fill out and return this survey. As you answer the questions, please take the time to ask why these questions are being asked.

Does the fact that your brother drives a school bus in Leoti affect your ability to make decisions in the best interest of the students of Lawrence? The legislation introduced last year would have restricted anyone who has a relative who works for KSDE or ANY Kansas school district from serving on their local school board.

Perhaps I am paranoid, but I hear two messages in the attempts to change the rules:

1. The wrong people are voting in school board elections.
2. The wrong people are running in school board elections.

Instead of changing the rules, let’s change tack and have an honest conversation about why we seem to disagree on some key educational issues. The Kansas State Board of Education and Commissioner Watson have started this process by holding a statewide conversation about what we want for our children. Let’s all participate in this valuable discussion instead of trying to change the rules about who sits at the table.
Summits conclude, officials urge focus on future of education

KASB concluded its “Success Across Kansas” Fall Summits on Oct. 8, after having met with hundreds of educators and advocates across the state during a key period for public schools.

The purpose of the summits was to share information about school finance in Kansas and a number of other states, discuss the future of education in Kansas and how to energize the public in this conversation.

“We are going for the moonshot,” said Dr. Brian Jordan, KASB’s assistant executive director of leadership services, who cited President Kennedy’s call in 1961 for the United States to put a man on the moon before the end of the decade.

“We need to frame the discussion around what’s best for kids, then how to generate the political will to accomplish it,” Jordan said.

Both Kansas’ system of funding schools and how schools prepare students for success are at a crossroads.

On the education side, Education Commissioner Randy Watson and the Kansas State Board of Education are discussing how to reform schools to address public desires for students to have a better grasp on so-called soft skills, such as conscientiousness, collaboration and communication.

Watson conducted a listening tour earlier this year in which nearly 2,000 Kansans and business groups said by an overwhelming majority schools should emphasize the skills students need for post-secondary education, the workplace or both.

In conjunction with KASB’s Fall Summits, Watson made presentations about the listening tour results.

On the finance side, Kansas’ current block grant system has been declared unconstitutional by a three-judge panel. That ruling has been appealed to the Kansas Supreme Court.

KASB has gathered research on finance systems and student outcomes in adjacent, peer and aspirational states.

KASB’s Mark Tallman, associate executive director for advocacy and communication, said Kansans need to decide what kind of education system they want and then determine how to finance it.

“What is the formula to fund the system we want to have, not the system we used to have,” Tallman said.

Tallman said policymakers, as they look to form a new school finance plan, should look at what has worked well in Kansas and states that outperform Kansas.

Jordan noted that, historically, efforts are made periodically to change funding plans.

“Every 20 to 25 years there is a major adjustment in the funding process. We are probably at that point now,” he said.

The summits were held over two weeks in Sublette, Oakley, Salina, Olathe, Greenbush and Clearwater. They also included meetings by USA/Kansas (United School Administrators of Kansas) and KSSA (Kansas School Superintendents Association). ~Scott Rothschild, srothschild@kasb.org

KASB Staff Spotlight: Lori Church provides legal services to school board members

The KASB legal department is an integral part of the association that helps ensure our members are kept up-to-date and compliant on all education-related legal issues.

Staff attorney Lori Church provides a service that covers a vast and diverse array of legal matters.

Lori was born and raised in Lyons, Kan., a small town of roughly 4,000 people in southern Kansas. She attended Lyons High, where another member of the KASB staff, Gary Sechrist, served as her principal.

Following high school, Lori attended the University of Kansas, where she earned her Bachelor’s degree in Secondary Education. “My parents wanted me to have a ‘fall-back’ plan, in case I didn’t go to Law School.” Alas, Lori did make it to Law School, attending Washburn University and earning her Law degree and passing the Bar in 2004.

After seven years at a small law firm in Topeka, Lori joined KASB as a staff attorney in January 2011. Lori is pretty much a jack-of-all-trades when it comes to legal issues. In addition to being the point person on the ‘Gannon’ school finance case, Lori also handles issues related to negotiations, Office of Civil Rights compliance, and due process. She is also a staff liaison for the KASB Legislative Committee.

Lori is also often present at many KASB workshops and seminars, helping to provide tools and guidance to board members and superintendents.

“A lot of people see law as very scary and intimidating,” Lori says. And breaking down the issues for KASB members is just one of the many things she enjoys about her job. “Being a lawyer is like being a teacher, except you’re explaining things to adults rather than kids.” ~Shaneice McNabney, smcnabney@kasb.org

Board members, superintendents recognized

More than 300 school board members and superintendents from over 160 districts are being honored by KASB for their participation in training programs.

Every year, the KASB Leadership Academy offers seminars and workshops designed for and offered to board members and superintendents as a means of increasing their leadership skills and becoming better leaders within their districts.

Each attendee receives points based on the length and content of each workshop/seminar. At the end of the year, points are tallied and certificates are awarded to those whose points total 25 or higher.

This year, 307 school leaders who earned between 25-74 points were awarded “silver” certificates; 20 school leaders who earned 75 points or higher were awarded “gold” certificates.

~Shaneice McNabney, smcnabney@kasb.org

SERVING EDUCATIONAL LEADERS, INSPIRING STUDENT SUCCESS
Session Topics

• A Strategic Plan in Action
• Aligning For Success: Andover USD 385 Data Dashboard
• Becoming an Innovative School District
• Building a Leadership Team: Board and New Superintendent
• Bullying Prevention
• Connecting Students with Community
• Developing “Techxpertise” in Your School: Students as Digital Leaders
• Early Childhood Education: Foundations for College and Career Ready Family Engagement: A Parent Perspective
• Fort Hays, Kaw Valley and Google: Sustaining Innovative Partnerships
• Happy Bear: Empowering Children
• How Kansas Compares: School Funding and Student Outcomes
• Inter-district Agreements: What it takes for success
• Legislative Committee Report Review
• Marriage and Gender Identity Issues: Legal Rights, District Responsibilities
• Meeting the Needs of High Ability Learners FOR FREE!!
• Mentoring for New Building and District Leaders
• Mobilizing Community to Make Effective Facility Decision
• Motivating Students in the 21st Century Classroom
• Negotiations: 2015 Legislative Changes, What to Expect in 2016
• Opening Doors to Opportunity: Pioneer Career Center
• Overview of 2016 Legislative Session
• Oxford USD 357 Elementary Full STEAM Ahead
• Preparing for the New Accreditation System
• Reflecting on Your District’s Social Media Presence
• School Activity Programs: Return On Our Investment
• School Board Policies: Complying with the Law and Preventing Lawsuits
• Securities Law and School Bonds: After MCDC
• Student Special Education Requirements, Section 504 Accommodations
• Power of Movement: Kinesthetic Learning and Action-Focused Environments
• Tips for Planning Your Next Board Retreat
• Twitter For Board Members
• What is Citizens United and Why is it Important for Kansas Education?
• What is Tableau? A Vision for KASB Research
• What's New for the Board Clerks
• Why Do You Do What You Do?

Keynote Address - Dr. Cile Chavez

The Power and Promise of Modeling Transformational Leadership

Those who answer the call to the challenges and complexities of leadership are constantly given the opportunity through circumstances to elevate their thinking and behaviors. It is indeed a call to model the highest levels of leadership for greater effectiveness. However, this takes a certain degree of curiosity, deep reflection, and clarity as to one’s intentions.

Service as a school board member is very unique and critical to the success of school districts. Roles and responsibilities provide a road map as to the “what” of the position. It is however, the “how” that can offer the power and promise of modeling transformational leadership. It is an unfolding journey, constantly influenced by external and internal influences.

Given all the challenges and opportunities of serving as a board member, how can one model quality leadership in order to leave a legacy of intelligence and merit?

The journey of a transformational leader is to truly be of service to others. What does that look like both personally and professionally? Of all the things board members could model, what must they model?

You’ll learn the answers at the 2015 KASB Annual Conference!

Special breakout sessions will feature this year’s Westar Energy STEM Innovative Curriculum Grants

“Women in Engineering, Science and Technology (WEST),” Washington and Cedar Creek elementary schools, Olathe USD 233, Olathe, Kansas

“Wind Energy: EmPOWERing Girls into STEM Careers,” Amelia Earhart Elementary School, Goddard USD 265, Goddard, Kansas

“Biofuels: Finding Real World Solutions,” Topeka USD 501, Topeka, Kansas
## 2015 Conference Schedule

**Hyatt Regency & Century II Convention Center | Wichita, Kansas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRIDAY, DEC. 4, 2015</th>
<th>SATURDAY, DEC. 5, 2015</th>
<th>SUNDAY, DEC. 6, 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:45 a.m. Pre-Conference Registration</td>
<td>7:30 a.m. General &amp; Delegate Assembly Registration Opens</td>
<td>7:15 a.m. Breakfast Buffet</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 a.m. Meeting All Kids Needs Overview and Buses Depart</td>
<td>8 a.m. Welcome &amp; Opening Remarks Westar STEM Recognition</td>
<td>7:30 a.m. Delegate Assembly Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 a.m. Winter School Law Conference KSSA @ KASB Conference</td>
<td>9 a.m. Winter School Law Conference KSSA @ KASB Conference</td>
<td>8 a.m. Inspirational Session</td>
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<td>Noon Lunch -Winter School Law -Kansas School Atty Assoc. -KSSA</td>
<td>Noon Lunch -Winter School Law -Kansas School Atty Assoc. -KSSA</td>
<td>8 a.m. Regional Elections</td>
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<td>4 p.m. Sessions Adjoun</td>
<td>4 p.m. KASB Legislative Committee Noon Vendor Workshop Begin Past President’s Luncheon</td>
<td>8:30 a.m. Delegate Assembly Entertainment Begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30 p.m. Exhibits Open Early Bird and Delegate Assembly Registration Opens</td>
<td>4:30 p.m. Exhibits Open Early Bird and Delegate Assembly Registration Opens</td>
<td>8:30 a.m. Delegate Assembly Call to Order</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:30 p.m. Adjourn</td>
<td>3:45 p.m. General Session - Dr. Cile Chavez</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. Learning Clusters Session 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 p.m. Adjourn</td>
<td>10:30 a.m. Breakout Sessions A</td>
<td>10:30 a.m. Learning Clusters Session 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 a.m. Walking Lunch Begins</td>
<td>11:30 a.m. Walking Lunch Begins</td>
<td>11:30 a.m. Conference Adjourn</td>
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**Grand Opening Exhibits & Early Bird Registration**

**Friday, Dec. 4, 2015**

Visit the arena floor *Friday, Dec. 4,* while enjoying complimentary food and beverages. Door prize drawings held throughout the evening. You won’t want to miss the **2015 KASB CONVENTION EXHIBITS** featuring the return of popular vendors such as KASB prestigious partner vendors, architects, school bus companies, technology firms, school suppliers and more. Visit the exhibit hall and meet with over 80 companies offering products and services that can improve your schools and save your organization money today!

**Additional Information and Registration**

[www.kasb.org/kasbcon](http://www.kasb.org/kasbcon)
A recent report released by KASB compares data related to teacher salaries from a variety of national sources for Kansas with states similar to Kansas in terms of population and student characteristics, states that perform better than Kansas on a majority of student outcome measures, and states adjacent to Kansas. The following are the major trends found.

Teacher pay is falling behind the cost of living and other non-teaching income.

Adjusted for inflation, average salaries for teachers nationwide, including Kansas, have decreased since 2010. In fact, the average pay for a Kansas teacher in 2014 was less than 2000 when adjusted for inflation.

The longer a person remains in the teaching profession, the further that person’s salary will fall behind that of non-teachers.

Kansas pays teachers less than most states, especially states with the best student achievement.

Kansas teacher salaries consistently fall below the national average and the average of teachers in peer states (states with similar population and student demographics to Kansas) and aspiration states (states with better student performance outcomes). Kansas pays about the same as teachers in neighboring states.

In aspiration states, teachers made 31 percent more than the average Kansas teacher in 2014 when adjusted for inflation and nearly 12 percent more when adjusted for state cost of living.

While teacher pay has suffered erosion, teacher education levels are rising.

The percentage of Kansas teachers who have attained either a master’s or doctorate degree has increased from 46 percent in 1994 to 52 percent in 2012. That compares with 47 percent to 57 percent for the nation; 46 percent to 64 percent for peer states; 46 percent to 60 percent for aspiration states; and 45 percent to 51 percent for adjacent states.

Kansas could face a worsening teacher shortage due to an aging workforce.

In Kansas the percentage of new teachers is higher than other states, and the percentage of teachers with at least three but not more than 20 years is significantly lower, which could indicate Kansas has somewhat more difficulty in retaining teachers. That could mean more positions will need to be filled in the future because of retirements.

For more details on this and other KASB research, visit www.kasb.org/research.
The students were obviously somewhat shy with the visitors, but when asked to go to the board to demonstrate reading and speaking skills, they did so with determination even though these skills were in their infancy. Their classmates were asked to help when necessary and did so enthusiastically but also in a supportive manner.

The LFT class left impressed by Ms. Morales’ enthusiasm and tenacity and the students’ obvious determination to master basic skills they knew were going to be necessary to succeed. A number of post-visitiation comments focused on that determination and the respect they had for the students.

For more information on the unaccompanied minors issue, visit www.gao.gov/assets/670/668749.pdf.

Large bond passage leads to significant facilities improvement

Prior to making classroom visits, the LFT class was given an extensive report on building projects undertaken by USD 480 since a $127.8 million bond was passed last April. Five new schools will be built offering more than 150,000 square feet of additional educational space. Also, West Middle School will be remodeled and repurposed to be part of the high school.

The LFT class ended the afternoon gaining skills in crisis communication led by Carol Pitts, KASB staff, then honed their new skills in mock interviews and critiquing each other’s video interviews.

Next stop: Districts working together to find maximum efficiencies

North and east of Liberal, in Gray and Haskell Counties, lay the contiguous districts of Copeland USD 476 and Montezuma USD 371. Since the early 1990s, the two districts have relied on an inter-district agreement that keeps each district as a distinct entity, but allows for a degree of cooperation between districts unmatched in Kansas. That cooperation has allowed two small districts to stay viable and work to meet the needs of their students. Jay Zehr, who serves as superintendent of both districts, told LFT, “This could be the future for a lot of other Kansas districts.”

Copeland has an elementary building and the building that houses both districts’ junior high students. Montezuma has an elementary building and is home to South Gray High School.

The two districts total about 330 students, down from 350 two years ago, with over two-thirds officially enrolled at Montezuma. The districts are treated as separate districts as such by the state, so their budgets are free-standing and not co-mingled. The power in the inter-district agreement is how costs are assessed and apportioned between the districts. Shared teachers are under contract to one district or the other. Their pay is based on the pay scale from their home district. Each district reimburses the other for any time that teacher works in the non-contract district.

Zehr also serves as the principal of Copeland Elementary and South Gray Junior High. He spends his mornings in the Copeland district and his afternoons in the Montezuma district. His pay is split between the two districts.

Montezuma’s One-to-One computer initiative

LFT participants saw that first hand during a presentation by Tom Watkins. KSDE’s directory lists him as the district’s Technology Plan Contact, but he also teaches chemistry and physics.

Mr. Watkins explained the role of the One to One computer initiative in the Montezuma district. “Why One to One,” he asked. His answer? “The goals driving computer initiatives fall into three categories:

- Improving student achievement;
- Enhancing teaching and learning; and
- Improving teacher/school communications with patrons.”

For well over an hour, Mr. Watkins and the LFT class engaged in a spirited discussion about computer use in USD 371 and how that compared with their district.

The grand finale: A lunch discussion and amazing pie

The LFT program concluded with a 30-minute debriefing over a boxed lunch with sandwiches made to order, including, at our host’s recommendation, being grilled.

The consensus of the 20 school leaders from districts large and small from all corners of the state was the admiration for the school leaders in Liberal, Copeland and Montezuma for their pursuit of programs that met the needs of the wide swath of students who showed up at their schools’ doors.

Although the districts are located in three contiguous counties, there are striking differences between their resources and students. Liberal is the largest of the three, 14 times larger than the combined enrollment of the other two. However, the valuation per student of Copeland is well over five and one-half times greater than Liberal’s and twice as much as Montezuma’s. Copeland’s free and reduced lunch rate is at 58 percent, well over the state’s average but only two-thirds of Liberal’s 79 percent; Montezuma’s is 15 percent less than the state average at 42 percent.

Racial composition shows similar disparities. Over three out of four Liberal students are Hispanic, but only one in twenty in Copeland. It’s one in four in Montezuma.

Yet, with all these different student characteristics, local leaders devised programs to address the needs created by them. Whether it is applied technology, student groupings, appropriate curriculum or necessary facilities, the three communities are striving to ensure all their students get the education they need.

Another observation shared by the class is how often patrons don’t know all of the needs being addressed in their schools, but even more disturbing to the class was how little state leaders know about the amazing student success being supported in districts all across the state. Efforts to mandate “one-size-fits-all” solutions and too often criticism of local spending decisions as inefficient are counter-productive, according to the class.

When you visit, you learn... ~Tom Krebs, tkrebs@kasb.org
### October/November At-A-Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCTOBER</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Accreditation Advisory Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>ESI Task Force Meeting, Topeka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Aspiring Superintendents Workshop, KASB Topeka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>School Finance Workshop, KASB Topeka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOVEMBER</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>KanSPRA Fall Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>KASB Board of Directors and Legislative Committee Meetings, Topeka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>KASB Attorney on Call, 6-9 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Basic Negotiations Workshop, KASB Topeka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-14</td>
<td>Kansas State Board of Education, Topeka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>McREL Balanced Leadership, KASB Topeka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>ESI Task Force Meeting, Topeka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>KASB Supt Search: Seaman USD 345 Applications Due</td>
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**KASB Nominating Committee endorses Miller for KASB President-Elect Designee**

The KASB Nominating Committee has endorsed Dayna Miller as a candidate for the office of KASB President-Elect Designee. The position will be filled by a vote at the KASB Delegate Assembly on Dec. 6, in Wichita at the Annual Conference. (See pages four and five for more information.)

Miller, a member of the Basehor-Linwood USD 458 school board, said she believes maintaining high education standards is most important during these financially challenging times.

Miller said she wants KASB to continue to be the voice for education in Kansas and to help bring different factions together to work toward common goals.

Miller has a degree from Washburn University in elementary education. She works part-time in her parents’ steel warehousing business. Miller and her husband have a daughter who will graduate from the University of Oklahoma and a son who will graduate this spring from Basehor-Linwood High School. —Scott Rothschild, srothschild@kasb.org

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Additional Information and Registration

[www.kasb.org/kasbcon](http://www.kasb.org/kasbcon)