KASB is urging school leaders to help organize "Put Students First!" events during the week of Oct. 31-Nov. 4 to ensure school finance is prominently discussed during state election campaigns. The effort also includes a call to school districts to prepare videos showing their students urging state officials to “Put Students First!” and posting those videos to social media.

KASB hopes “Put Students First!” week will promote understanding of education issues, encourage voting in the Nov. 8 General Election and sustain interest in these issues after the election and moving into the 2017 legislative session.

KASB encourages community meetings to discuss school district activities and what specifically the state needs to do to “Put Students First!” The meetings could be used to develop responses to Gov. Sam Brownback’s request to send input on a new K-12 school funding formula to StudentsFirst@ks.gov.

KASB, the Kansas State Department of Education and United School Administrators of Kansas have developed a toolkit, which can be found on www.kasb.org, to assist local education leaders in preparing a submission to the governor.

KASB stands ready to provide support for “Put Students First!” community meetings by providing school finance information, staff and other assistance.

This is a picture from the "Put Students First!" video from Dodge City USD 443. KASB is urging school advocates to contact Gov. Sam Brownback on what the next school finance formula should include. For more information go to www.kasb.org and under the advocacy tab is the link to the Put Students First webpage.

Key Facts about Kansas Education

by Mark Tallman, mtallman@kasb.org

Because of concerns that have arisen over misconceptions about school funding and other issues surrounding public education in Kansas, KASB has issued this report on Key Facts about Kansas Education.

What are the current Kansas student achievement levels?

Overall education levels in Kansas are at an all-time high. This includes the percent of population that has completed high school, any level of postsecondary education, or completed a four-year or advanced degree.

More young Kansans (18-24 years old) are completing high school, beginning college and completing degrees than ever before.

However, as has been true in the past, students from low-income families, students with disabilities and students learning English as a second language continue to lag behind other students.

Follow-up: Some say a majority of Kansas students are “failing” or “not proficient” or “not college ready.” Is that true?

When test results show a majority of Kansas students are below a benchmark, they are referring to a high performance level generally aimed at college level-preparation. In the past, most students did not need to reach these levels because students did not need or expect to complete a four-year degree or more. It’s not that more students are failing; it’s that standards have been raised.

How do Kansas education results compare to other states?

When considering multiple measures (test scores, graduation rates, postsecondary participation), Kansas ranks among the top states - 10th on the most recent report from KASB. Kansas ranks higher than the U.S. average, neighboring states, and states most like Kansas demographically.

These results give Kansas students an advantage because higher education levels have higher average pay and employment rates, and more jobs in the future will require higher educational credentials.

However, on most of these measures, other states have been improving faster than Kansas in recent years, which means more states could begin to pass Kansas in achievement.

Follow-up: Some say Kansas performs only about average on national measures. Is that true?

It depends on the specific test or other measure. Like all states, Kansas does better on certain tests or with specific groups, and worse on others. That is why KASB uses an average of various tests, measures and groups of students, rather than any single indicator.

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KASB's annual conference in December to draw hundreds of education leaders

Hundreds of school board members and education leaders from across Kansas will gather for KASB's 99th Annual Conference Dec. 2-4 in Wichita.

Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in dozens of presentations, connect with education leaders, visit schools and hear from inspirational speakers.

Pre-conference sessions start Friday with the vendor show that evening. Saturday features round-the-clock breakout sessions and two general sessions. Sunday will feature regional elections and the Delegate Assembly, when KASB selects its next leader and approves changes to the legislative platform.

Presentations will focus on advocacy, aligning to the Kansans Can vision, finding efficiencies, building a district vision and policy and legal issues.

The convention will be held at the Hyatt Regency and Century II Convention Center and Bob Brown Expo Hall.

Saturday Keynote speakers include John-Michael Keyes, executive director of the “I Love U Guys Foundation” and Kansas Education Commissioner Randy Watson. An inspirational session Sunday morning will feature Jerry Kill, associate athletic director of Kansas State University.

Keyes' organization, which is dedicated to school safety, was founded after his 16-year-old daughter Emily was killed at the hands of a gunman at Platte Canyon High School in Colorado. Watson, who was named education commissioner in 2014, has led the formation of the Kansans Can vision of ensuring the success of each student. Kill is a cancer survivor and also battles epilepsy.

Register, study, vote

An important deadline and key dates are approaching for the upcoming election.

For those who aren’t registered yet to vote, Tuesday, Oct. 18 is the last day to register in order to vote in the Nov. 8 general election.

Wednesday, Oct 19 is the first day advance ballots are mailed out and early, in-person advance voting may begin.

While the presidential race has grabbed much of the attention this campaign season, voters will select state legislators, who probably more than any elected official will have an affect on school funding and other education issues.

Another important part of the 2016 ballot is whether to retain five justices on the Kansas Supreme Court. Kansas State Board of Education races are also on the ballot.

KASB urges Kansans to become familiar with the candidates and issues and then make sure to vote. KASB has provided an interactive tool on its website at www.kasb.org that shows who is running to represent you in the Legislature and how major groups involved in the education debate view those candidates.
As student protests increase, KASB provides legal guidance

LEGAL & POLICY

Recently, a number of sports figures have chosen to kneel or sit during the National Anthem as a sign of protest against police brutality and racism. Districts may find some of their athletes choosing to do the same thing and question whether this may become a disciplinary issue.

In *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District*, 393 U.S. 503 (1969), the Supreme Court acknowledged that students, in this case students wearing black armbands to protest action in southeast Asia, retain their constitutional rights, including the right of freedom of speech, in the public school setting. At the same time, the Court recognized the need to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning in the schools, and suggested that student speech could be restricted or regulated in instances where school officials could show the speech resulted in substantial disruption of school activities or material interference with the rights of others in the school.

Under *Tinker*, in order for school suppression of expressive student conduct to be upheld, the action must be motivated by “something more than a mere desire to avoid the discomfort and unpleasantness that always accompany an unpopular viewpoint.” School officials need not wait for disruption to occur before acting, but they must be able to show a well-founded basis for their concerns. Mere apprehension of disruption is insufficient to support disciplinary action.

Therefore, unless the district can show that a student or students kneeling during the National Anthem has created a substantial disruption of school activity, students have the right to do so. The actions by the students in *Tinker* are very similar to what we are seeing today and districts should be careful about banning such actions.

If you have any questions regarding this issue, please contact a KASB attorney at 1-800-432-2471.

KASB Regional Nominating Committees appointed

by Melissa Holder, mholder@kasb.org

KASB Regional Nominating Committee members have been appointed in five KASB Regions. Regional Vice President elections are held in December, just prior to the Delegate Assembly, at the KASB Annual Convention in Wichita.

Any interested school board member should contact a member of their Regional Nominating Committee to submit their name as a candidate for that Regional Vice President’s position. These nominations are due by November 11.

Regional Vice Presidents serve a 3-year term as a member of the KASB Board of Directors. Members are eligible to serve two consecutive terms on the board. The board meets five times a year at the KASB office in Topeka.


- Shelley Stevens – Basehor Linwood USD 458, shelley@eliteelectric.com, 913.238.2652
- Nels Anderson – Spring Hill USD 230, andersonn@usd230.org, 913.592.2217
- Doug Updike – Spring Hill, USD 230, dupdike@usd230.org, 913.592.4257


- David Colburn – Manhattan-Odgen USD 383, nelsonocolburn@yahoo.com, 785.539.5639
- Pat Hudgins – Manhattan-Odgen USD 383, usd383.hudgins@gmail.com, 785.587.9242
- Ferrell Miller – Geary County, USD 475, fmiller3@cox.net, 785.238.1935

Region 3 counties: Chase, Harvey, Marion, McPherson, Morris, Reno, Rice and Saline:

- Chris Wiens – McPherson USD 418, chris.wiens@mcperson.com, 620.242.0436
- Christina Kidd – Canton-Galva USD 419, kiddchristine1999@gmail.com, 620.654.3017
- Marty White – Morris County USD 417, mwhite@tctelco.net, 620.767.6696
- Felicia Miller – Hodgeman USD 413, feliciamiller@ketcom.net, 785.452.6226
- Norma Bedell – Hodgeman USD 413, normabedell@cox.net, 785.452.6226

Region 4 counties: Butler, Cowley, Sedgwick and Sumner.

- Melinda Fritz – Andover USD 385, fritzem@usd385.org, 316.253.8494
- Norman Wilks – El Dorado USD 490, nwilks@cox.net, 316.323.2999
- Paige Crum – Haysville USD 261, pcrum@usd261.com, 316.259.5067

Region 5 counties: Clark, Finney, Ford, Grant, Gray, Hamilton, Haskell, Hodgeman, Kearny, Meade, Morton, Seward, Stanton and Stevens.

- Natalie Boone – Bucklin USD 459, nboone@usd459.org, 620.750.0218
- Sheila Walker – Stanton County USD 452, swalker@skylandgrain.com, 620.492.6226
- Dave Otis – Ulysses USD 214, otis@pld.com, 620.424.2819

KASB, KanSPRA seeking contest entries

The contest, open to KASB member school districts, provides recognition in numerous categories for publications and other communication projects produced between Aug. 1, 2015 and July 31, 2016.

Entries must be postmarked by Fri. Oct. 14. Find entry forms on kasb.org under the Publications tab on the front page.

Mail entries to KASB/KanSPRA Publications Contest, 1420 SW Arrowhead Rd., Topeka, KS 66604-4024.

For more information, contact Shaneice McNabney, smcnabney@kasb.org, or Andrea Hartzell, ahartzell@kasb.org, or call KASB at 1-800-432-2471.
Frank Henderson's belief in the importance of public education has brought him all the way from president of his children's elementary school PTO to his current position on the board of directors for the National School Board Association.

First elected to the Seaman USD 345 board of education in 2007, Henderson served as president of the board in 2010, 2011 and 2012. He soon became involved with KASB by attending seminars and training, eventually serving on the Legislative Committee and as KASB Region 2 vice-president. Henderson graduated with the KASB Leadership for Tomorrow Class of 2009.

Henderson was elected president of KASB and served in that capacity from July 2013 to July 2014. After completing that commitment, he was elected in April 2015 as NSBA Western Region representative and now sits on the national association’s board of directors. He also serves on the board of directors of the National Black Council of NSBA.

In 2012 Henderson was appointed to serve on the Education Commission of the States, a national advisory group that tracks policy state by state, interprets research and reports and creates opportunities for state education policymakers to share knowledge and expertise.

“I have always held a strong belief of the importance of education,” Henderson said. “I am thankful for every opportunity that has come my way to support our public schools and expand the dream of an excellent education for every child.”

Henderson calls upon his fellow education advocates to engage in whatever way and whatever level they can.

“We need to be actively involved to provide a true and accurate picture of our public school system and be able to take a stand for all Kansas students, present and future,” he said.

Evelyn Hill is committed to creating opportunities for the future success of all students. She knew one of the best ways to do that would be to serve with others in the community who were passionate for education and who were willing to take risks to improve and maintain student success, so she ran for the school board.

First elected in 2009 to the Kansas City Kansas USD 500 board, then reelected in 2013, Dr. Hill’s interests continue to center on helping the school system develop policies and practices that shift attitudes and change perceptions. The Kansas City Kansas school district has over 60 languages spoken in the school district and an enrollment of 22,000 plus students.

“Part of my reason for continuing on the board was the desire to explore ways to adjust to the cultural shifts in our city and schools,” she said, “and finding ways to help our staff serve this diverse population of students well.”

At the same time, Dr. Hill knew the community needed to reconnect with the school district.

“We continue to work to increase a positive image of the school board both with staff and the community,” she said. “The task to improve student academic success is extremely challenging and requires commitment far beyond the board of education level.”

Once elected to the board, Dr. Hill looked to KASB as a way to gain information and perspective.

“I personally wanted to learn more from KASB so I could be a benefit to our board with more accurate information about what is happening on a state level in education,” she said.

Dr. Hill participated in KASB’s Leadership for Tomorrow program, graduating with the Class of 2014. She joined the KASB Board of Directors in 2015 as the Region 13 (Kansas City Kansas USD 500) vice-president. KASB’s governance structure provides for individual representation on the Board of Directors, Nominating Committee and Legislative Committee from the five largest school district members by enrollment. These districts are assigned a region number and the local boards appoint their representative to serve on the board of directors.

“Since I have been on the KASB board, I have come to especially appreciate the information we receive from staff regarding the political arena and information about other school districts statewide with a variety of challenges and successes,” she said.

She praises the KASB staff for maintaining a focus on serving and supporting local board members with any questions or requests while at the same time advocating for all students at both the state and national levels.

“As a member of the KASB board, we are able to hear about successes and challenges from other school districts, including educational trends, political...continued on page 5
Henderson said. “Once on the board, I sought reelection because I wanted to continue to work for an improved system to meet the diverse needs of our students. The best aspect of being a local school board member is knowing you make a difference and are helping to shape the future,” Henderson said.

For all his service at the state and national levels, Henderson is most proud of the progress made at the local district level. “My desire is for every child to rise to their God-given potential.”

“We have been able to expand the opportunities for our students with increased use of technology at all levels, including a 1:1 initiative with our secondary students,” he said. “We have added foreign language at the elementary level and created a more individualized support system to address multiple needs of our students.”

Another initiative close to Henderson’s heart is preparing students for success after high school.

“This has included the hiring of college and career advocates to begin working with our students in eighth grade and extending through high school to assist them in course selection with areas of interest and basic career planning,” he said. “Additionally, we added a college and career internship program for our seniors that has provided immeasurable opportunities in career selection as well as college, career and workforce readiness.”

Henderson has served in several leadership roles in the Seaman district, including terms as president and vice president of the board and the board’s governmental relations representative for KASB. He has also been a member of the school site council, technology committee, PTO president and community district advisory council. He is a member and past president of the Sunrise Optimist Club, chair of the Optimist Essay Contest and chair of Kansas District Optimist Oratorical Contest.

“The future of our state and country is dependent on how well we prepare today’s students for the work ahead,” Henderson said.

Hill continued from page 4

information and other important work that the KASB staff perform both locally in Topeka and throughout the State of Kansas,” she said.

Her greatest satisfaction, however, comes from her role as a local board member.

“Watching our students graduate with the look of accomplishment and pride on the faces as they walk across the stage is a true joy,” she said.

Other highlights of her board service include the student of the month award recognition and celebrating the employee of the month. The district’s “highly energetic” convocation begins each new school year and is on her “mustn’t miss” list.

“I have met some wonderful people in the district who are staff members who sacrifice and share so much to make sure our students have academic success,” she said.

The district’s students and staff continue to garner impressive state and national awards. Since 2013 students have been the recipients of the Bill Gates Foundation Four-Year Millennial Scholarship Award with only 1,000 distributed nationally each year. The district received the National School Board Association Magna Award in 2016 and was named one of the “America’s Promise Alliance 100 Best Communities for Young People” in 2012. Sumner Academy was recently named the #1 High School in the State of Kansas.

“Sixty-five percent of our 2016 graduates received college credit hours,” Dr. Hill said. “Every year we celebrate hundreds of students who make the Superintendent’s Honor Roll, and have – among many other programs – top scoring robotics teams, art, athletic, band and orchestra programs and debate teams.”

Dr. Hill’s community service extends beyond the regularly scheduled board meetings. She is a frequent speaker about the Nov. 8 election for the district’s “No Tax Increase Bond Issue.” She is also an active speaker in Kansas and Missouri churches and serves on the Kansas City Kansas Mayor’s Clergy Council and is a member of the homeless coalition. Her past volunteer work has included serving on the Kansas City Kansas Chamber of Commerce, the Keeler Women’s Center Advisory Board, the Avenue of Life Advisory Board, the Mayor’s Diversity Task Force and as a volunteer for Wyandotte County United Way.

As a member of the KASB board, we are able to hear about successes and challenges from other school districts, including educational trends

"We need to be actively involved to provide a true and accurate picture of our public school system and be able to take a stand for all Kansas students, present and future,"

"As a member of the KASB board, we are able to hear about successes and challenges from other school districts, including educational trends"
Key Facts
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How much does Kansas provide per pupil for K-12 education?

According to the Kansas State Department of Education website, in school year 2014-15, Kansas school districts spent $13,124 per “full-time equivalent” pupil. This number includes all state and federal funds, all local revenues, all retirement costs and all student fee revenue, including student meals, books and other costs. This is the state average; individual districts may be higher or lower.

However, that number counts all kindergartners as half-time students, even though most kindergarteners attend full-time. It also does not count more than 5,000 students in preschool programs funded by school districts. Using headcount enrollment, which counts all of these students, per pupil spending drops to $12,138.

**Follow-up: Some report lower numbers for Kansas spending per pupil. Why the difference?**

Some comparisons use only state funding, or state and federal funding but not local revenues. Some may only use funding for operational costs and exclude spending on buildings and debt service. Some may exclude state contributions for the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System because these dollars cannot be used for school operations.

How does Kansas school funding compare to other states?

According to national reports which use headcount enrollment, Kansas funding per pupil in 2013-14 (the most recent year available) was 29th among the 50 states, a drop from 24th in 2008. Because most Kansas school aid was frozen under the block grant system for 2016 and 2017, and most states have been increasing funding, this ranking is expected to continue to decline.

Kansas also spends less of the total income of the population on K-12 education. According to national reports, Kansas spent $42.74 per $1,000 of personal income, ranking 33rd in the nation.

**Follow-up: Some say Kansas actually ranks as high as third or fourth in state funding for education. What is the conflict?**

Kansas does rank high in the share of the state budget going to education. However, this doesn’t mean Kansas ranks high in total funding for education per pupil. Instead, it means Kansas has chosen to rely more on state aid and less on local revenues, which mostly come from property taxes. Most other states choose to have a different mix of funding for schools, but they also provide more total revenue. Another difference could be simple changes in accounting. The 20 mill statewide levy for school districts was previously considered a local revenue; now it is sent to the state and redistributed back to districts. That makes the “state” contribution higher, but provides no additional aid for districts.

**Follow-up: Some say only about half of student spending actually “gets to the classroom.”**

That’s only true if you accept the idea that “instruction” is the only thing that matters “in the classroom.” However, student learning in the classroom would not be possible without the other areas of the budget - including buildings and operating the classroom, supervisors and supporting teachers, and transporting, feeding and providing support services for students.

How has school funding changed compared to inflation and other cost indicators?

From 2000 to 2005, total expenditures per pupil (using the full-time equivalent amount that does not count full-time kindergarteners and district-funded preschoolers) increased an average of 2.0 percent more than inflation per year.

From 2005 to 2009, following the Supreme Court order to increase funding after the Montoy decision, funding increased an average of 4.5 percent per year more than inflation.

From 2009 to 2016, total per pupil funding decreased an average of 1.1 percent per year after adjusting for inflation. As a result, when adjusted for inflation to 2015 dollars, school funding is below 2009 levels, although unadjusted dollars are higher.

**Follow-up: Some say because school funding is higher than inflation if you count increases in the 2000s, school districts should have enough money to operate.**

School district costs are rising faster than inflation. From 2000 through 2015, the U.S. Employment Cost Index (a measure of changes of salaries and benefits for all public and private sector employees) increased an average of 0.5 percent more than inflation. From 2005 through 2015, the U.S. School Building Cost Index increased more than 2 percent more than inflation (this measure has only been available since 2005).

In addition, the needs of students have changed. There are far more low income students, who have less family support; bilingual students, who need special assistance in other languages; and students with severe physical and emotional needs, who need high cost specialized services.

Why do school districts keep funds in reserve?

School districts, like most business enterprises and families, keep reserves or save for one-time purchases, for cash-flow when income does not match expenditures, and for emergencies.

The state Legislature’s 2016 efficiency study cites the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommendation that school districts maintain a balance of at least 10 percent of their general operating fund for “minimal risk.” For “low to moderate risk” reserves should be between 10 percent and 15 percent; for “moderate to high risk” between 15 percent and 25 percent; and for “high risk” greater than 25 percent.

Many funds cannot be used for general operations: bond and interest, capital outlay, federal funds, gifts and grants, funds with restricted local mill levies (special liability, special assessments, no fund warrant and adult basic education), plus school retirement, special reserve funds for insurance programs and textbooks (because many districts build up balances for major book purchases).

Excluding these funds, statewide school district balances were in what GFOA calls the “low to moderate” range prior to the Great Recession (10 to 15 percent), then jumped into the “moderate to high” range during the most turbulent period of state fiscal history in decades (mid-year funding cuts, delays in aid payments, credit downgrades and continuing threats of future budget cuts), reaching a high of nearly 18 percent. Balances as a percent of operating funds have gradually been declining back to 15 percent.

In addition, the state regularly delays school aid payments at the end of the fiscal year.
KASB recently released its 2016-17 Principal Survey Report.

One of the key findings in the report is the fact that over the last twenty years, the average number of students, teachers, aides and paraprofessionals per principal has increased. Between 1995-96 and 2015-16, the average number of students per principal increased from 358.8 to 400.2, the average number of teachers per principal increased from 28.4 to 31.0, and the average number of aides and paraprofessionals per principal increased from 5.9 to 12.8, as shown in the graphs on the right.

Other key findings indicate that from 1995-96 to 2015-16:

- The average number of principals per district decreased from 4.1 to 4.0, and the average number of assistant principals per district increased from 1.1 to 1.8.

- The percent of principals who are female increased from 31.4 percent to 43.0 percent, and the percent of assistant principals who are female increased from 26.9 percent to 38.3 percent.

- The average number of contract days for principals increased from 166.0 to 207.4, and the average number of contract days for assistant principals increased from 173.8 to 209.2 (2006-07).

- Principals' salaries increased 57.8 percent with an average annual increase of 2.3 percent, going from $52,071 to $82,173.

- Assistant principals' salaries increased 52.9 percent with an average annual increase of 2.2 percent, going from $49,388 to $75,503.

- Benefits for principals increased from $2,497 to $8,751, which is an increase of 250.5 percent total and 6.7 percent annually.

- Benefits for assistant principals increased from $2,684 to $7,394, which is an increase of 175.4 percent total and 5.7 percent annually.

- The percent of principal and assistant principal degrees coming from Kansas private colleges and universities increased from 0.7 percent to 20.2 percent.

You can find the report, data, and an interactive tool to explore local data at kasbresearch.org. If you have questions or require assistance, you can contact research@kasb.org.
Choosing a new leader is a momentous decision for a governing board. KASB Leadership Services has a long history of providing superintendent and other executive-level leadership search and placement services to our members. We conduct the majority of searches each year in the state.

Supportive Partnership

Our process is an on-going supportive partnership, and we are dedicated to creating successful and long-term professional relationships. By using KASB’s search service, members can also draw upon KASB legal, research and communications to support the process. And once the new leader is hired, KASB provides follow-up support to both the new leader and the board.

Contact KASB Leadership Services to learn more about our process. 800-432-2471 or edservices@kasb.org.