Are you ready for student-led protest activities?

See checklist from KASB & NSBA, Pages 14-15

School security is on everyone’s mind

Review DOE & Secret Service Threat Assessment findings, Page 15
KASB Board treated to student show and tell

By Carol Pitts, cpiitts@kasb.org

Basehor-Linwood USD 458 rolled out the welcome mat for the KASB Board of Directors and executive staff March 9 and 10, 2018. The KASB Board holds one of its five yearly meetings in the current president’s school district.

This Northeast Kansas growing district is home to KASB President Dayna Miller and serves 2,400 students in six attendance centers in addition to operating a virtual school.

The visit began with lunch, held in the new CTE Center on the campus of Basehor-Linwood High School. Presentations by students and staff included the adult mentoring program and “Care Cats,” a program for juniors and seniors who mentor younger students. Students participating in “Care Cats” earn high school credit and community service volunteer hours.

Two “Care Cat” student mentors presented to the board, describing their experiences and activities. Both students recounted experiences while being mentored during earlier school years by upperclassman in the program and said now that they are the mentors themselves they believe the program brings just as much benefit to the mentors as the mentees.

The mentoring program for adults matches community members with special programs and needs throughout the district. Teacher and Program Director Tammy Potts said on any given day there are 125 adult mentors throughout all grade levels.

Other presentations throughout the afternoon centered on the school’s Life Skills program, Business Entrepreneurship & Management pathway and the school’s robotics program.

There is a great deal of collaboration throughout all programs in the school, said participants. For example, students in the Life Skills program, in addition to a wide variety of experience-driven projects, make the “power balls” that are then sold by the students in Applied Business Development, the capstone class in the business management pathway.

Basehor Linwood Senior Austin Crist (pictured above) shares some of the skills gained this year as part of the team managing The Den, the high school’s coffee shop.

Jordan Lee (pictured below) talks with the KASB Board of Directors about his senior year experiences with Care Cats, the district’s mentoring program.

Students in the business class, guided by teacher Cody Ziegler, developed the concept and now run The Den, the high school’s coffee shop. Ziegler oversees the program, but said the more he “backs off” and has students make the decisions, the more they learn and develop skills in collaboration and problem solving.

The KASB Board and Staff then took a bus tour of the district before heading to dinner.

On Saturday, the board met for its business meeting, hearing reports from staff and discussing the current status of bills before the Legislature, including progress on issues such as school finance and teacher due process.

KASB board policy requires yearly training for board of directors’ members on their fiduciary duties as members of the board. Donna Whiteman, assistant executive director for legal services, led the presentation, reviewing their responsibilities along with KASB fiscal management control procedures.

Other reports included a review of KASB’s partnerships, a review of the 2017 KASB Annual Conference and future plans, and a report by Frank Henderson, Jr., Seaman USD 345 board of education, and a member of the NSBA board of directors.

Henderson talked about the focus on equity issues by NSBA and briefly outlined the upcoming NSBA Annual Conference April 7-9 in San Antonio.
Celebrating Public Schools

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父母、教育者和执法部门正在关注可以做什么来减少学校暴力袭击。阅读你如何更新你的安全程序。

指南的作者
KASB欢迎任何有关教育的文章。文章应尽可能简短和直接。作者姓名、标题、地址、电话和电子邮件应包括。文章必须以电子方式提交，并将根据KASB的风格进行编辑。KASB保留拒绝任何文章的权利。通过电子邮件Scott Rothschild在srothschild@kasb.org获取更多信息或提交一篇文章。

关于KASB
堪萨斯州学区董事会协会是一个非营利组织，位于托皮卡，堪萨斯州，致力于为统一的学区、社区学院、职业-技术学校和合作组织提供服务，以及区域服务的成员。该协会为5000名学区成员和教育领导者提供了一个会员基础。
President’s Perspective
Dayna Miller, Basehor-Linwood USD 458

Student advocacy a ‘teachable moment’

The March 14 student walkouts around the nation and in Kansas to protest gun violence happened without any major problems.

Students across the country demonstrated peacefully with a message that the status quo is unacceptable. The First Amendment is alive and well for Kansans, both for those who demonstrated and for those who did not.

I’m proud of the way young people are focusing their energy on this issue after the mass shooting at a Florida high school that killed 17 people. I hope their activism doesn’t stop, because if there is one thing adults can advise to our youth it is change in any form in our society does not come easy and requires constant effort and vigilance.

In our nation’s recent history, landmark changes have been made in the treatment of women, minorities, gays, lesbians, transgender and others. But those battles did not come easy and the fights continue at the federal level, the state level, in our towns and cities and even around our dinner tables.

Public schools, which reflect and amplify what happens in our society, are and always will be at the center of the issues of human rights and dignity. That is why it is so important for our education leaders to stay apprised of what is going on in our communities, to be able to separate the fake news from the real news and to help our students do the same.

Often we hear that our students aren’t learning critical thinking skills. The recent activism of students, however, would seem to disprove that, as students around the country are speaking forcefully, clearly and extremely logically about many of the most important issues of our times. But as public school advocates, we can always do better in trying to reach every child.

We live in interesting times and as the adults in the room, we can provide our young students the perspective of our experiences, which may help them as they prepare for the future.
I’m From Kansas
Dr. John Heim, KASB Executive Director

Let’s arm teachers with . . .

The School Board Review editor asked me to write a column about school safety. I’ve spent time over the past two weeks reading research and opinion about school safety. I’ve read about schools being the safest place for kids and about the extreme number of shootings we have compared to other countries. I’ve read about too many guns and not enough guns. There is research about mental health problems causing and not causing school shootings. And of course, there is a great debate about whether we should provide firearms to school staff. The conclusion I have reached is that we should arm teachers and time is of the essence.

Let’s arm teachers with a salary commensurate with their skills and training. More importantly, let’s arm teachers with pay that aligns with their responsibilities. A recent Bureau of Labor statistics study, repeated in The Economist, shows Kansas has the largest teacher salary to private sector gap in America.

Let’s arm teachers with time. The time they need to work together, to plan curriculum and lessons. The time they need to develop healthy relationships with all their students.

Let’s arm teachers with quality training. Arm them with the opportunity to learn about the latest research on trauma and mental health, instruction, and content.

Let’s arm teachers with quality leadership. The number one reason new teachers give for leaving the profession is lack of administrative support.

Let’s stop complaining about many overpaid administrators and start arming teachers with strong administrators who are also compensated in a manner equal to their responsibilities.

Let’s arm teachers with quality spaces in which to teach. Educators need classrooms and buildings that are up to date and have the latest safety enhancements.

Let’s arm teachers with reasonable class sizes. Smaller numbers of students per teacher means safer schools. When teachers have manageable class sizes they have the ability to get to know students and recognize when students are hurting and need help.

Let’s arm teachers with quality support staff. Arm them with counselors and social workers who are trained to recognize and support students and families who are under stress.

Let’s arm teachers with respect and consideration equal to their responsibility for the future success of our nation.

Finally, let’s arm teachers with visionary and supportive school boards. School board members like the ones we have in Kansas, focused on keeping our students safe while we prepare them for post-secondary success.

Contest asks students “Why are public schools important to the future of Kansas?”

The Kansas School Public Relations Association (KanSPRA) has created a new award program to give students a chance to share individual stories and their perceptions of their public school experiences, and earn some cash at the same time!

The Kansas Student Publication Showcase Awards invites submissions in three different formats: writing, video and still graphic. Students may submit, as individuals or as teams, publications that address the question “Why are public schools important to the future of Kansas?”

One student entry from each category will win $500. In addition, KanSPRA will present the Ad Astra Award to the overall showcase winner, along with a $500 prize. Submitted publications will also be shared with statewide education organizations via social media, websites and in printed materials. Students must have a parent, teacher or sponsor’s permission to submit an entry.

The deadline for submission is 10 p.m. Sat. March 31.

For more information, contact KanSPRA President Dane Baxa, Goddard USD 265 director of community relations, 316-794-4000 or kansprastudentshowcase@gmail.com.
Second in a series by G. Kent Stewart that will focus on best practices in advocating for schools and students and assisting community leaders. Stewart taught school administration at Kansas State University for 32 years, where he also consulted regularly and continues to consult with school boards on school facility issues.
Republicans in Congress may have kicked the can down the road—for now—on ditching the Affordable Care Act. But advocates for school superintendents, who mobilized against a potential reduction to Medicaid funding last year, are still warning of serious consequences for schools if lawmakers decide to make changes to the program.

Schools receive about $4 billion a year from Medicaid, a health-care program for the poor. That makes Medicaid the third-largest source of federal K-12 funding, behind special education grants and Title I grants for disadvantaged kids.

The money is used for a slew of purposes, among them: vision and hearing screenings, medical equipment and salaries for staffs who work with Medicaid-eligible students, such as speech therapists. It’s also used to connect students with community health services.

GOP lawmakers have pitched distributing Medicaid funds on what’s called a “per capita” basis, based on how many people a state has from particular groups, including children and the elderly. Fans of this approach argue it would spur states to think more innovatively about how they structure their Medicaid programs. But detractors, including a lot of education advocates, worry it would mean big cuts to the program over time.

That proposal was part of health care bill that failed to make it over the finish line last year. But it’s not going away just because a Republican health care bill faltered. In fact, it was part of President Donald Trump’s recent budget proposal for fiscal 2019.

So what could that mean for schools? AASA, the School Superintendents Association, surveyed its members last December, asking what would happen if Medicaid were cut. It found that 57 percent of school districts have concerns about meeting special education mandates, 36 percent of districts would have to reduce mental health services and more than a quarter would have to cut general education funding and positions.

Here’s a graphic from AASA that breaks this down.

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**New attorney joins legal department**

**KASB has a new attorney to help our members.**

Ashley Rohleder comes to KASB from a small private law firm where she worked primarily in children and family law.

Ashley earned her law degree from Washburn University School of Law after getting her Master’s of Liberal Arts degree from Baker University and Bachelor of Arts in political science from Pittsburg State University.

She is from Gorham, Kansas and graduated from Russell High School. Outside of work, Ashley likes to read, bake, cook and do arts and crafts.

Please join us in welcoming Ashley and contact her or anyone in our legal department if you have a legal or policy question.

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**Potential Medicaid changes could squeeze services**

From Education Week, Feb. 22, 2018

In December 2017, AASA asked school districts what would happen if they lost their Medicaid reimbursement due to a change in Medicaid’s structure at the federal level.

**These are their responses:**

- 57% will have difficulty meeting special education mandates in state and federal law without Medicaid funds and 24% will be unable.
- 36% will be forced to reduce mental health services and providers without Medicaid funds.
- 32% will be unable to intervene early in identifying and addressing health needs for students without Medicaid funds.
- 29% will have to cut general education positions and programs to compensate for Medicaid dollars.
- 26% will have to ask their community to raise local revenue to compensate for lost Medicaid dollars.
- 25% will have to eliminate staff positions that address student health needs.
- 25% will have to limit or end efforts to enroll children in Medicaid/CHIP programs.
- 16% will be unable to provide services and programs for atop impacted students.
Looking at the Data
Ted Carter, KASB Research Specialist

Kansas teachers get largest average salary, benefits increase since 2008-09

By Ted Carter & Mark Tallman tcarter@kasb.org, mtallman@kasb.org

KASB recently released the 2017-18 Annual Reports for the Employee Relations and Teacher Contract Surveys. The responses to the Teacher Contract Survey indicate that, boosted by the largest increase in school district operating budgets since 2008-09, Kansas teachers received the largest average pay and benefits increase during that same time period.

The average per district increase in the total package of salary and benefits in 2017-18 was 3.5 percent. The last year average compensation increase topped 3 percent was 2008-09, the last of four years of increased funding the Kansas Legislature approved after the Montoy school finance decision.

The average base salary for a Kansas teacher this year is $35,555, up from $34,800 last year. Average fringe benefits paid by the district is $6,508 this year, up from $6,183. This is base or minimum salary for teachers. Preliminary data from the Kansas State Department of Education indicates the average teacher salary this year, including fringe benefits, bonuses and “supplemental pay” for extra duties like coaching, will be more than $54,000.

Nearly 14 percent of districts this year reported paying incentive or retention bonuses, which ranged from $839 to $1,686. This is the highest percentage of districts reporting bonuses since payments began to be reported in 2010-11.

Other highlights of Teacher Contract Survey
- Districts reported the fewest number of negotiating sessions between boards and teachers (3.2), which has been steadily decreasing since 1995-96. The percent of districts declaring impasse because the school board and teacher association cannot reach agreement was 1.6 percent, also the lowest since 1995-96. (If impasse is declared, outside assistance to reach agreements may be employed.)
- The percentage of districts reporting they include some type of due process procedures in the teacher contract has increased to nearly 38 percent, up from 31 percent when the state due process or “tenure” law was repealed in 2014.
- Average daily pay for substitute teachers reached a high of $94.39 this year, up from $92.10 last year.
- Nearly two-thirds of districts offer medical leave and personal leave, but these percentages have been declining with more districts now offering “all purpose” leave (35.9 percent).
- The average number of leave days provided per year has been generally stable in recent years.
- The average number of leave days used by teachers has remained stable at around seven days.
- Just over 90 percent of districts have a “paid leave bank,” in which teachers can share paid leave days.

Employee Relations Survey

The responses to the Employee Relations Survey indicate Kansas teachers tend to have fewer advanced degrees but more years of service. The report also shows districts have fired fewer teachers than in most previous years, despite repeal of a state teacher due process or “tenure” law in 2014.

Other highlights of the report include:
- The percentage of teachers with more than a bachelor’s degree has dropped from over 55 percent in 2013-14 to just over 50 percent in 2017-18.
- The percentage of teachers with 1-3 years of teaching has dropped slightly, from 28 percent in 2014-15 to 26 percent in 2017-18, but is still above the low point of 22 percent in 2012-13. The percentage of teachers with more than 10 years of experience has risen slightly, from 40.5 percent in 2014-15 to 42.7 percent in 2017-18.
- Fewer districts eliminated teacher positions this year: 58 districts in 2017-18 compared to a 143 in 2015-16 and 171 in 2010-11. This trend likely
reflects the impact of the new school finance law, which provided increased funding for most districts, allowing them to keep more positions.

- However, some districts that had declining enrollment lost funding with expiration of the two-year block grant system, which generally froze funding regardless of enrollment changes. This could explain why, despite fewer districts reporting positions eliminated, the number of positions eliminated statewide – 662 – was the highest since 937 in 2010-11.

- The Kansas Legislature repealed a teacher due process law in 2014 which previously allowed teachers with more than three-years of experience to request a hearing before an independent hearing officer, who made a binding decision on whether the teacher could be fired. However, the number of teachers actually fired or resigning before being fired has been lower than most years when the due process law was in effect.

- From 2016-17 to 2017-18, 26 districts “non-renewed” an average of 1.9 teachers per district with less than four years’ experience in a district (considered “non-tenured” under the previous due process law). This average is higher than last year but shows a general downward trend from the peak of 3.5 per district reported in 2010-11. The number of districts reporting these non-renewals last year and this year are the lowest since data collection began in 1995-96.

- 10 districts reported an average of 1.1 teachers per district with more than three years teaching were “non-renewed” in 2016-17; the same as the previous year. The average number of “tenured” teachers non-renewed for the past four years have been the lowest seen since 200-01.

- Five districts reported they terminated teacher contracts last year, the same number as the year before. That is the lowest average and the fewest number of districts reporting terminations since reporting began in 1995-96.

- Seventy-two districts reported an average of 2.4 teachers per district resigned when informed the administrator or board plans to not offer them a contract for next year. That is the lowest average since 2005-06 and the fewest districts reporting resignations since the collection began in 1995-96.

Both reports can be found on the KASB Research Publications Page: kasb.org/research/publications/
Rural schools left ‘Out of the Loop’

Center for Public Education report finds significant student population overlooked

Nearly 20 percent of the country’s students are enrolled in rural schools, yet are not provided the same focus in national policy or research as students in urban and suburban school districts. “Out of the Loop,” a new report from the National School Boards Association’s (NSBA), Center for Public Education (CPE), finds that poverty, isolation and inequities are exacerbated for rural students by the lack of attention to the unique needs of this considerable student population.

While not equally distributed across the country, CPE’s analysis notes, approximately one-half of school districts, one-third of schools and one-fifth of all students in the United States are in rural areas. Inadequate funding, lower literacy rates and less access to advanced courses such as AP and STEM classes impact rural students’ achievement, creating significant barriers to their success.

“The unfortunate reality is that there are academic and digital disparities in rural districts and students’ access to robust opportunities therefore can vary widely,” said NSBA Executive Director and CEO Thomas J. Gentzel.

“Policymakers have a real opportunity to help level the playing field for rural students, however it’s going to require thoughtful solutions that are tailored to the unique conditions of specific communities.”

In its study of rural students CPE found that:

- Child poverty runs higher in rural counties. Approximately 64 percent of rural counties experience high child poverty rates, compared to 47 percent of urban counties. Further, rural children are more likely to experience extreme and generational poverty.
- Access to rigorous and advanced coursework is limited. Rural schools on average offer half as many advanced math courses as their urban counterparts.
- Although rural students are more likely to obtain a high school diploma than urban students, they are significantly less likely to attend college or earn a degree.

CPE also points out significant hurdles faced by rural districts and schools:

- Hiring and retaining qualified educators is particularly difficult, especially in STEM positions.
- Inadequate funding is a constant challenge. Funding is typically tied to the size of the student population, creating severe operational challenges for districts with smaller student pools. Also, transportation costs can be extensive in counties where students need to be bused long distances.
- Internet access and virtual learning are a challenge as both rural students and their schools contend with slow or no internet connectivity.

“Rural schools face many of the same challenges as their urban counterparts – high poverty and inadequate resources among them,” said Patte Barth, Director of the Center for Public Education. “Yet as our report shows, the proposed solutions for metropolitan settings, such as school choice and extended time in school, don’t necessarily serve the unique circumstances of less-populated communities. Clearly, the nation needs a specific focus on policies and practices that will improve outcomes for the one-fifth of its children who attend rural schools.”

“Every student deserves the opportunity to receive an education that prepares them for future success, whether they live in an urban, suburban, or rural community,” said Gentzel. “This means recognizing the unique challenges facing rural districts and confronting them head on with actions aligned with the research.”

Read “Out of the Loop” report by the Center for Public Education at www.centerforpubliceducation.com
KASB leaders explore school equity

By Leah Fliter, lfliter@kasb.org

Four Kansas school board members recently attended the National School Boards Association’s third annual Equity Symposium in Washington, D.C.

The board members represent rural and suburban school districts with student enrollments of 350 to 30,000; some have served on their boards for more than 10 years, while one took office in January.

Though their board tenure and school district demographics differ, Dayna Miller, Frank Henderson, Rod Stewart and Brian Geary said the Equity Symposium is an important opportunity for school leaders to learn more about how to support the success of all Kansas public school students.

The one-day meeting, held just before the kickoff of NSBA’s Annual Advocacy Institute, offered a forum for school board members, public school advocates and community leaders to examine and discuss the strategies, current trends, research and best practices to support academically and economically disadvantaged students in traditional K-12 public settings.

Topics covered included mental healthcare for students of color, including trauma sensitivity; parental and community engagement; supporting immigrant students; and the impact of pre-K gaps on high school graduation.

Miller, Henderson, Stewart and Geary sat down with KASB to talk more about the Symposium. Read about their experience on the next pages.

Interested in learning more about this and other opportunities to become involved? Go to kasb.org/connect
Equity in education
Identifying & eradicating discriminatory practices, prejudice, and inequality

Here are excerpts from our interview with Dayna Miller, Frank Henderson, Rod Stewart and Brian Geary about the Symposium.

KASB: What are the equity issues you think Kansas schools face? Which are most urgent?

Miller: I don’t think Kansas has a particularly different equity experience from other states. I believe the most urgent issue we face as a state is financial. Without funds to create equal experiences for all students, it will not happen.

Henderson: I believe Kansas faces most of the same equity issues in many other states: wealthy districts versus non-wealthy districts and the distribution of aid; disparity of the availability of resources from one building to another even in the same district; and quality of teaching staff in areas with higher social economic need. The most urgent need is the lack of resources to meet the whole needs of every student.

Stewart: Providing equal educational opportunities to all students regardless of zip code and meeting the educational needs of all students are the most important at this time.

Geary: I think there are several, with some of the most glaring being the financial differences (socio-economic) of our students, special education needs, racial & ethnic discrimination (of both students & staff) and access to technology (somewhat related to financial differences).

I think all of these are urgent, but being able to understand the racial, cultural and/or ethnic differences that exist and being able to make the school experience as positive as possible is the most urgent in our state today. For example, we have a quickly growing Hispanic/Latino population, so finding ways to better communicate, teach the student and incorporate “school life” without constantly pulling them out of the classroom would be something we should be focused on. Physical differences are easy to spot and ignorance and bias linger in today’s schools, whether we want to believe it or not.

KASB: Did the Equity Symposium address the issues you identified? If so, in what way(s)?

Henderson: The Equity Symposium created an awareness of some of the disparities that exist in education. It also highlighted some best practices taking place in districts across the country that are addressing those issues.

Geary: One of the sessions I attended was “Diversity in Leadership: How and Why Leadership Impacts Latino/Hispanic Student Opportunities and Success,” which offered some best practices on engaging the students and staff from the Hispanic culture in the “life of the school” as leaders.

Stewart: Yes, they were addressed. We need to be aware of what our students’ interests are and work to provide the resources they need to pursue them. Not all students learn in the same manner and we need to be willing to adjust the curriculum to enable the students to be successful.

KASB: What strategies did you bring back to your district?

Miller: I am bringing back a sense of change with regard to the way we might address equity in our district. I think we have to see “equity for all” differently than we have in the past.

Geary: Many of the strategies being used involve a real deep dive into the data of how our Hispanic/Latino kids are performing compared to others. I am anxious to get some of this data from our district, related to the different scores and assessments and continue to find ways to improve upon them individually. I also would like to visit with some of our Latino and/or Hispanic staff to explore what some of the issues they see are and how we can help provide as much equity for these students as others from their viewpoint.

KASB: How do you think the issues you identified, and those covered at the Equity Symposium, mesh with what Kansas schools are attempting to accomplish through the Kansans Can vision and the Mercury and Gemini redesign efforts?

Geary: I think all five of the goals of the Kansans Cans vision address all of the issues at some level. Initially identifying, through individual plans of study, the areas of greatest needs that exist for EACH child will help significantly. It may seem oversimplified, but we can look at financial differences, technology access, special education and racial/ethnic discrimination in each of these areas simply through communication with the students, parents/guardians and staff to start:

- Kindergarten Readiness
- Individual Plans of Study
- Social Emotional
- Graduation Rates
- Postsecondary Success

Stewart: They align perfectly with the vision of Kansans Can and the redesign of the Mercury and Gemini Schools.

Henderson: Establishing equity for all students is embedded into the Kansas Can vision. Individual plans of study consider and act to meet the needs of every student. Accomplishing this requires the equitable distribution of resources to every district, every building and every student.

Miller: I believe strongly that by empowering our students to find their passion, reach for their own goals and become contributing members of our society on every level, we are doing exactly what we need to be doing to bring equity to Kansas. I certainly believe equity speaks to gender equality, financial resources and race. I believe we are on the right track.
KASB: What obstacles do you see to addressing education equity issues in Kansas?

Stewart: The two obstacles that I see are funding and the locations of our rural schools. It can be very challenging to provide all the educational opportunities that the students need without proper funding and the distance that many rural schools are from higher education institutions.

Geary: I think the school funding issue will continue to be the biggest obstacle. It’s hard to throw money at things that need to be addressed, when the money doesn’t exist for us to use. We will need to do a very good job of prioritizing education equity issues and sharing best practices happening around the state to combat this.

Miller: History, apathy unless things affect us personally, remote populations and financial constraints.

KASB: What strengths do Kansas schools possess that can be leveraged to address equity concerns?

Geary: One of the strengths of Kansas schools is that we typically have strong, proudful communities that we operate within, and this will help in addressing some of these equity concerns. Nobody wants to be “last” when we have pride in something. We care about each other in our communities especially, so it should be easy for people to understand, let’s help EACH child be at their best. This is a community-wide issue, not just the school district by itself.

Stewart: Kansans take a lot of pride in their schools. Boards, administration and staff are all dedicated to providing the best education possible for our students. Federal and state governments need to provide proper funding so local boards can provide the resources needed to ensure every student succeeds.

KASB: What can Kansas school boards and KASB do to better address the issues covered at the Equity Symposium?

Miller: I’m a firm believer that communication, discussions and honest information help in all situations. I think we can always do a better job of beginning conversations about how equity is not just about race…it is about socioeconomic constraints, gender issues, gay/straight/LGBT issues and general acceptance. I think keeping the conversation relevant and current and topical is a way we could help districts. Resources that help to explain/clarify what equity issues are and how to address are great resources.

Geary: The best thing that we can do is support our students and staff and listen to what is working in the schools and what isn’t as we try to address these issues. Also, continuing to share best practices and gathering data on students is important to continue to do.

KASB: Do you think Kansas schools do any kind of teaching about equity issues?

Geary: I don’t think we “teach” equity issues directly in most classrooms, but we perhaps “discuss” issues, such as recognizing and appreciating differences of others in certain classes.

We need to discuss the equity issues early in our elementary schools and continue to do so throughout the students time with us, so students understand the purpose of doing certain activities related towards eliminating some of the equity issues that exist today and so they aren’t so far behind that it makes it difficult to get them back on track.

Miller: I honestly believe we try to “teach equity”. I don’t think that is the answer. I believe we need to “do” equity.

KASB: Would you recommend other Kansas school board members attend a future Equity Symposium?

Henderson: I would highly recommend for anyone to attend the Equity Symposium. We can at times live in our world and fail to see what we are not exposed to or are aware of regarding the situation of others.

Stewart: I have found the Equity Symposia to be very beneficial and I recommend it to anyone who is concerned about equitable education opportunities for all students.

Geary: I think that the more people that attend, the better it becomes. The speakers and breakout sessions were good, but I found the most benefit in just visiting with other school board members, teachers, administrators, etc from around the country that were experiencing similar issues in their communities and what they were doing to attempt to remedy them.

Miller: Most definitely. I learned that my experience with what “equity” is, is wrong. I have a deeper understanding of what true equity is. I think this is important for every board member…we need to understand what we are working toward and for. I was definitely moved by the things I heard and will be processing for some time.
Guidance from KASB Legal

Be prepared for student protests

In response to the school shooting incident in Florida, students across the country are organizing walkout protests to demand political action to make schools safer. The National School Boards Association has shared the following with its members and has granted permission to republish.

The media has widely reported what appears to be a growing student protest movement centered around the tragic February 14 school shooting in Florida.

This checklist aims to help school boards and district leaders prepare for these activities in their schools and communities. Because student protests may vary in intensity and form, we have identified below a variety of possible scenarios, as well as operational questions to consider. Chief among our recommendations is that to the extent possible, school districts should plan ahead and engage your students, parents and stakeholders.

This brief outline will help school districts identify issues and potential responses to meet the challenges arising in this area. We encourage you to share this checklist with your school community and stakeholders. Because this list is not legal advice, we urge you to confer with your school attorney member of the NSBA Council of School Attorneys, as well as your state school boards association, before implementing any policies.

Access NSBA’s legal guide for public schools on the regulation of student and employee speech at www.nsba.org. Contact KASB Legal Services for specific questions.

Checklist to Prepare for Student Protest Activities

Meet with your community and stakeholders to identify the time, place, duration and logistics accompanying the protest, whether on campus or by means of a “walk-out.” Consider including:

- Student groups/leaders,
- Staff and union representative,
- Parent-teacher organization leaders,
- Community groups,
- Parents,
- Law enforcement, and
- Local officials (mayor, county board, etc.).

Consider identifying the teachable moment in civics education, and explore the possibility of conducting an educational, curriculum-related assembly, debate, or other activity that provides a forum for students to express their views. Some schools are adopting creative solutions in coordination with staff and student leaders, such as a special bell schedule allowing additional unstructured time at school for students to gather for peaceful protest.

- Be careful not to regulate political content based on viewpoint.
- Be inclusive in terms of opposing political views.
- Be aware that you may be establishing a precedent for future educational events.

Develop a plan or protocol for each potential protest scenario, and clearly communicate it to stakeholders.

Be clear with students about what is acceptable in the school setting.

- Describe what, if any, consequences will result from “walking-out,” “walking in” to an administrative office, or otherwise missing instructional time, including opportunity for make-up work. For example, perhaps a student’s first “walk-out” is excused; future ones are unexcused.
- Make sure any consequences are consistent with district policy, the student code of conduct and past practice.
- Be careful not to apply consequences based on viewpoint.
- Distinguish between conduct (leaving class unauthorized) and expression (participating in a protest).

Be clear with instructional staff about district policy on student expressive activity like walk-outs, as well as their role in a student walk-out or other protest.

- If students walk-out in the middle of the school day, where do they go?
- If students remain on campus, who supervises them?
- Do teachers/staff report immediate absence/departure of students? To whom? What does an administrator do with that information? Are there different expectations for children of different grade levels?
The Valentine’s Day shooting in Parkland, Florida has led parents, administrators and school officials across the country to question what can be done to prevent such an event. In July 2004, the U.S. Department of Education and the United States Secret Service issued a joint report: “The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States.” The authors listed the following key findings that may aid in addressing school violence:

1. Incidents of targeted violence at school rarely are sudden, impulsive acts.
2. Prior to most incidents, other people knew about the attacker’s idea and/or plan to attack.
3. Most attackers did not threaten their targets directly prior to advancing the attack.
4. There is no accurate or useful profile of students who engage in targeted school violence.
5. Most attackers engaged in some behavior prior to the incident that caused others concern or indicated a need for help.
6. Most attackers had difficulty coping with significant losses or personal failures. Moreover, many had considered or attempted suicide.
7. Many attackers felt bullied, persecuted, or injured by others prior to the attack.
8. Most attackers had access to and had used weapons prior to the attack.
9. In many cases, other students were involved in some capacity.

**BOARD MATTERS**

**Guidance from KASB Legal**

**Review, update school security procedures**

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- Be clear that teacher and staff roles do not extend to supporting the message being expressed by the students. Though staff have rights when they engage in speech on matters of public concern, those rights are significantly less when staff are on duty as district employees.
- **Be clear with all staff** about their own obligations during a walk-out or protest.
  - Some staff may wish to participate in walk outs and other protest activities. As a result, staff should be alerted to any potential consequences for their participation.
  - Communicate state law and local policies that may restrict public employee political expression while on duty, as well as any specific district directives that have been issued regarding the present controversy.
  - Consider whether scheduling a separate event for staff to express themselves outside of school time would be helpful, in consultation with staff representatives.
- **Be clear with central office and building staff about the public message**, and how it will be communicated through spokespersons and online communications.
  - If district leadership decides to “speak” favorably of a movement, public policy, or event, consult with your state school boards association and legal counsel first to weigh potential risks and precedent-setting.
  - Review applicable district policy regarding communications with the school community and follow it consistently.
  - Address how the district will be dealing with participation in the protest by members of the community, including parents. Will community members or parents be permitted on campus, or will they be considered trespassers? If the parents or community members are disruptive while on campus, how will school officials or law enforcement respond?
  - **Confer with local law enforcement** about potential safety implications, and define the role of law enforcement as necessary. Should law enforcement assist with the safety of students who walk out?
  - **Incorporate discussion of student protests** and other expression, and district protocols, into staff training.
  - **Review state laws and relevant local policies** regarding attendance. How will absences be categorized? What if parents are involved in signing the student out of school? If the walk-out happens at a time of day when attendance is recorded, how will the reduced attendance affect the district financially?
  - **Be prepared to debrief** and respond quickly after a protest event. If a walk-out occurs, have a team designated in advance to review the circumstances and communicate future expectations. For example, after a walk-out, have a plan for moving safely and swiftly back to regular operations. Communicate clearly what the attendance and disciplinary consequences will be, as well as expectations for future conduct.
Winbolt a supporter of school redesign

Jason Winbolt, a member of the Spring Hill USD 230 school board, is an enthusiastic supporter of the Kansans Can school redesign project and says perhaps the effort to make dramatic changes in the delivery of education is not going fast enough.

“I think that it’s time for a paradigm shift in education,” said Winbolt. “Maybe we don’t teach the same subjects we did 10 years ago. The world has changed so much for those future jobs,” he said.

Winbolt was recently elected to the KASB Board of Directors. He is the Region 1 Vice President.

Winbolt was first elected to the Spring Hill school board in 2013 and re-elected last year. He and his wife have two daughters in Spring Hill schools.

Spring Hill is a fast-growing school district in Johnson and Miami counties that experienced a 10 percent increase in enrollment from last year.

The main focus of the district is to accommodate all that growth. In 2016, voters approved an $85 million bond issue, which included building a new elementary school and new middle school. The district is starting to consider another bond issue in a couple of years for another elementary school.

People are moving to the district because of its small-town feel and the excellent teachers, Winbolt said.

But for two years the block grant funding system hurt the district by essentially freezing its state revenue levels for two years.

“We’re going to continue to grow and we need support from our Legislature to make sure they understand this area is growing,” he said.

Spring Hill joined the “Gemini” project to redesign two of its schools to match the Kansas State Board of Education’s outcomes of improving early learning, career and college planning and post-secondary success.

As a data analyst, Winbolt says it may sound strange for him to say, but he believes the state should look at changing some of the course requirements, such as algebra and geometry, to graduate. He said maybe a more general math class could be used.

“I think we need to start questioning. It’s time to push the envelope even more,” he said.

Outsourcing school technology

1. Expertise: When you contract with a K-12 technology management company like k12itc, you are positioning yourself to work with experts in the school technology space. When you hire a technology director yourself, it can be difficult to grasp their knowledge and expertise during the (continued on next page)
Bergsma advocates for western Kansas

To Brad Bergsma, western Kansas is the best place in the country to raise a family.

But like many school officials in the area, Bergsma knows not everyone appreciates the western Kansas lifestyle and it takes effort to recruit teachers and administrators.

Bergsma is in his third year on the Goodland USD 352 school board and was recently elected to the KASB Board of Directors as the Region 9 Vice President.

“We are pretty active in recruitment fairs,” Bergsma said. He noted the school district keeps tabs on students from the area who are attending universities and studying to become teachers. “It has been our experience that just from an acclimation standpoint, we get a kid from this area back here to teach, they are more familiar with the area,” he said.

Bergsma is vice president of the Northwest Kansas Technical College and he and his wife Christa, who is in charge of the cosmetology department at the college, have four children in Goodland public schools.

He says in western Kansas, the various school districts, businesses and other entities work together to help the area. “If we’re not going to stand up for ourselves, no one else is,” he said. “What is good for Colby will be good for Goodland and what is good for Goodland will be good for Colby,” he said.

Outsourcing school technology continued from page 16

hiring process. Guarantee expertise by outsourcing to a company like k12itc—there isn’t a problem we haven’t seen before and our engineers specialize in working with teachers, administrators and school staff.

2. Maintain tech talent: Qualified engineers are in high demand—which means that K-12 schools face high turnover and struggle to maintain tech talent. Outsourcing technology service puts you at a lesser risk of being left high and dry by an outgoing technology director.

3. Save money: When outsourcing with a solution like albert, schools see up to 15% cost savings in their technology budget. When you hire internally, you have to maintain increasing salaries and benefits over time, while outsourcing eliminates these costs.

4. Efficiency & bundling options: Speaking of saving money, outsourcing technology can also create tech efficiencies. k12itc, for example, bundles hardware needs with service, which allows for schools to pay for technology over time, rather than upfront.

5. Extended support: A managed technology solution like albert functions with extended remote support. A remote, cloud-based support solution allows technology problems in the school district to be solved quickly and efficiently. When you outsource technology from k12itc, you receive 24/7 technical support and do not have to pay overtime fees. No more waiting on one technology director to solve the problem—it can be done quickly via phone, chat or ticket by a number of different engineers.

(continued on back page)
Countdown continues for Mercury 7

By Scott Rothschild srothschild@kasb.org

For teachers and administrators, “the journey to the moon” in the Kansans Can school redesign program has been nerve-wracking, inspiring, sometimes frustrating, but so far, well worth the effort.

“We are far better educators now than we were in August,” said Andrea Graham, a kindergarten teacher for Stockton USD 271.

Fourteen schools in seven school districts will lift-off six months from now as part of the initial wave of schools to be reorganized around the Kansans Can goals of improving student success, both from an academic standpoint and child well-being standpoint.

Those seven districts have been dubbed the Mercury 7, after the United States’ first group of astronauts. But there are dozens more schools — Gemini I and upcoming Gemini II — that will follow their lead.

In Stockton, a north-central Kansas district of about 300 students, both of its schools — K-8 and high school — are undergoing the redesign.

Officials from the Mercury 7 schools gave presentations recently at the Kansans Can and Do Symposium sponsored by the Kansas Association of Education Service Agencies and Kansas State Department of Education in Manhattan.

All the districts are researching ways to better engage students, help them pursue their interests and prepare them for a world that seems to be changing every moment.

Those guiding the redesign efforts in the schools say students, parents and teachers will have to change and that requires lots of conversations, staff support, research, studying and reaching out.

In USD 480 at Liberal High School there are 25 research teams focusing on various changes throughout the school. School officials are going to start using a flex-mod schedule that gives students more flexibility in their day but also more responsibility in managing their time. After visiting some other schools, officials at Liberal said they looked at their cafeteria operation and it seemed like a prison. Changes are under way.

Educators at Community Elementary School in Coffeyville USD 445 are focusing on improving the social and emotional growth of students and building responsibility. All third-graders have responsibilities in the school, such as helping clean or delivering mail. The sixth-grade class recently applied for and received a grant to have “buddy benches” built and they will be involved in the installation of the benches.

Other districts in the Mercury 7 group include McPherson USD 418, Olathe USD 233 and Wellington USD 353.

“This has been a phenomenal journey,” said Graham, the Stockton kindergarten teacher.
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Left: Stockton educators visit a North Dakota school in January to learn about alternative scheduling options for small schools. Above: Stockton educators and community members talk in February about school redesign as it relates to school purpose and community values.
KASB’s Leadership for Tomorrow 2018 class kicked off its session year with visits to the McPherson and Twin Valley school districts earlier this month.

Through five two-day sessions held around the state, the Leadership for Tomorrow program creates a greater understanding of the Kansas public education system and provides opportunities to develop leadership skills for effective governance and raising student achievement. The program began in 2005 and has graduated 221 school leaders.

McPherson USD 418 and Twin Valley USD 240 are participating in the Kansans Can Mercury 7 school redesign initiative. The LFT class met with local teams of administrators, teachers, board of education members and community leaders to learn more about the successes and challenges of building pilot programs that will launch in the 2018-19 school year.

KASB Leadership Services staff Brian Jordan and Gary Sechrist led the class through discussions of leading change, the school redesign project and leadership and competing values.

LFT will visit Liberal and Hugoton schools May 3-4; the Manhattan school district in July; Wellington and Wichita schools in September; and Kansas City-area schools in late November. The final session is held during the KASB annual conference.
LEADERSHIP SERVICES

Opposite page, top: LFT class members discuss their own district data and characteristics; bottom: Gary Sechrist, KASB staff, leads a discussion on a school board’s role in a democracy.

This page, top left: Brian Jordan, KASB staff, reviews the Kansans Can redesign timeline; top right: Twin Valley elementary staff and students talk about their cross-grade school families; left: Class members discuss competing values and leading change; bottom left: Twin Valley USD 240 Superintendent Fred Van Ranken outlines his district’s redesign plan; and bottom right: Gary Sechrist, KASB leads the class through a session on leadership development.
Federal funding to Kansas schools slashed under Trump’s budget proposal

By Leah Fliter, lfliter@kasb.org

Kansas public schools could lose $48 million -- about 15 percent -- of their federal funding compared to Fiscal Year 2018 estimates if President Donald Trump’s Fiscal Year 2019 Department of Education budget is adopted. Meanwhile, the budget blueprint adds $1 billion nationwide to promote public and private school “choice.”

While it is unlikely all the president’s proposed cuts of $3.8 billion in federal education funding will be enacted, Kansas school leaders should work with their members of Congress to explain the importance of federal funding to student success.

Trump’s Fiscal Year 2019 budget proposal calls for $271 million in federal education funds to be directed to Kansas schools. FY18 education funding for Kansas has not been finalized but is estimated at $319 million. In FY17, Kansas schools received $332 million from the Department of Education.

The President’s FY19 spending plan proposes cuts that include eliminating funding for the Every Student Succeeds Act’s (ESSA) professional development program (Title II-A), the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Block Grant (Title IV-A) and the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program (Title IV-B).

Title I and IDEA State Grants

ESSA Title I-A and the IDEA State Grants programs would be roughly level-funded, with a 3.6 percent cut to Title I in Kansas and a marginal increase of $151,868 over FY18 proposed for Kansas IDEA state grants. The Title I appropriation for FY19, however, is $15 million lower than the FY17 actual Kansas levels.

Title II (Professional Development)

In Kansas, the proposed 2019 cuts would cost the state’s school districts $16 million in Title II-A professional development funds. Districts use Title II funding not only to pay for teacher training but also to hire additional staff to reduce class sizes. They can also use it to fund teacher and principal mentorship programs and for certification or advanced education programs, improve classroom technology integration, promote STEM initiatives and many other programs. If the federal funding is eliminated or sharply reduced, school districts may have to use revenue from state or local sources or cut professional development opportunities to compensate.

Some research studies have questioned whether Title II improves student achievement. Practitioners say, however, professional development bestows benefits that can’t be measured by student test scores.

Title II was also targeted for elimination in the FY18 budget proposal, which has not been finalized. The House of Representatives agreed to zero-out Title II, but the Senate Appropriations Committee set aside $2 billion for it. The full Senate has not yet voted on the FY18 Education Department budget.

Staffers for the Kansas Congressional delegation say it’s unlikely Title II will be abolished but Kansas will probably not see any funding increases over the $16 million received in FY17.

21st Century Community Learning Centers

The Trump DOE FY 19 budget blueprint mirrors the Administration’s FY18 call for the elimination of the $1.2 billion 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, which supports before-and after-school programs and summer school. The proposed elimination would cost Kansas roughly $8 million that local boards have used to provide additional learning opportunities in the wake of state funding cuts.

The Administration says 21st Century CLCs don’t show strong evidence of improving student achievement. The department’s 2014-15 annual report on CLCs (the latest data available), however, says that for Kansas CLC participants:

• 86.7 percent showed an increase in math grades.
• 77.6 percent showed an increase in English grades.
• 66.7 percent showed improvement on elementary reading assessments.
• 50 percent showed improvement on middle school or high school math assessments.

Impact Aid
Impact aid payments, which compensate school districts for foregone property tax revenue they don’t receive from federal lands in their district boundaries, would be cut by more than 40 percent from 2018 proposed spending for Kansas. Impact aid in Kansas is primarily associated with federal military installations.

Kansas school districts received $43 million in actual impact aid payments in 2017 and are estimated to receive slightly less in final FY18 payments. The 2019 budget request, however, cuts more than $18 million from Kansas impact aid.

School Choice
Trump’s budget proposal earmarks $1 billion for “Opportunity Grants” to expand public and private school choice initiatives, often referred to as “vouchers.” Kansas public schools do not charge tuition, so vouchers would only benefit private and religious schools in the state. KASB opposes the use of vouchers to aid private elementary and secondary schools which are not subject to the same legal requirements as public school districts.

The $1 billion will also help fund the department’s weighted-funding pilot project, which would allow federal, state and local funds to follow a student to his or her school of choice.

The blueprint also adds $500 million to federal charter school funding, a roughly 50 percent increase from current levels. Kansas has a handful of charter schools which are overseen by local boards of education.

The table below highlights proposed funding levels for selected U.S. Department of Education programs in Kansas. Because the fiscal year 2018 appropriations process is not yet complete, the table compares the president’s FY19 request to estimated FY18 funding levels. It also notes actual FY17 funding received.

You can view the full list of federal funds to Kansas schools here: kasb.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Kansas-Federal-Funds.pdf

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</table>

* FY 18 DOE budget not yet approved by Congress

Congressional Contact Information
If you have concerns about President Donald Trump’s education budget, please express them to your congressional representatives.

U.S. Senators
Pat Roberts, R-Dodge City
202-224-4774
620-227-2244
785-295-2745
913-451-9343
316-263-0416
email, roberts.senate.gov

Jerry Moran, R-Hays
202-224-6521
785-628-6401
316-269-9257
785-539-8973
620-232-2286
913-393-0711
email, moran.senate.gov

U.S. Representatives
Ron Estes, R-Wichita
202-225-6216
316-262-8992
email, go to estes.house.gov

Lynn Jenkins, R-Topeka
202-225-6601
785-234-5966
620-231-5966
email, lynnjenkins.house.gov

Roger Marshall, R-Great Bend
202-225-2715
620-765-7800
785-829-9000
email, marshall.house.gov

Kevin Yoder, R-Overland Park
202-225-2865
913-621-1533
email, go to yoder.house.gov
6. Secured network: Security is always a concern for school district administrators. How can you be 100% certain that your district’s network is completely safe? The only way to be sure is by having a team of experts handle it. When you work with a tech company that specializes in the K-12 landscape like k12itc, you ensure that your school’s network is secure from external threats.

7. Service level agreements: Our albert solution operates on a Service Level Agreement (SLA), which guarantees the highest level of support. When an SLA is in place, school districts receive a high level of technology service, which cannot always be guaranteed by a small technology team.

8. Less hassle, less headache: It is our job to fix technology solutions before they become a bigger problem. Having a team behind your technology that can proactively troubleshoot possible problems allows administrators and teachers to focus on teaching, not on fixing tech issues.

9. Power in numbers: Most small school districts hire one technology director to run the show. Other medium-sized districts may be able to hire a small team. Large districts may have teams of 25-50 managing their technology. But when you outsource your technology, you automatically have multiple experts managing your hardware. This gives your school district—no matter how big or small—the highest level of technology support with various engineers troubleshooting problems and providing input on best practices, trends and proactive projects.

10. It’s widely accepted & adopted: Many school districts throughout the nation—both large and small—are outsourcing their technology. Managed technology solutions can be built for large or small budgets and are completely customized. Just like many schools outsource their food, custodial or transportation services, they’re starting to outsource their technology, too.

If you’re ready to outsource your K-12 technology, k12itc’s albert solution can help. To find out more about albert, visit our managed services page or contact k12itc today.

School Law Roundup
May 30 & 31, 2018| Wichita
USA Kansas Conference
May 30 - June 1, 2018

*New workshop! Job Descriptions
April 25, 2018  1-4 p.m.
Smoky Hill Ed Service Center
605 E Crawford, Salina, KS 67401
Topics Include:Job Descriptions 101 – Components of Job Descriptions, Meeting ADA Requirements, Useful in Work Comp and More!

See kasb.org/training for updates and registration details.