Restorative practices in schools

Can we divert children from the ‘school to prison pipeline?’

Learn more, pages 10-13

The Circle process that many non-Native people are using is rooted in the tradition of talking Circles that Indigenous Peoples in North America use and have used for millennia. Source: Living Justice Press, nonprofit publisher for restorative justice
Deadline for president-elect designee applications coming up August 29

The KASB Nominating Committee is seeking applications for nominations to serve as KASB president-elect designee.

Applications must be emailed or postmarked by 5 p.m. Aug. 29. The position will be up for election Dec. 8 at the annual KASB Convention. Candidates will be scheduled for a one-hour interview by the Nominating Committee on Sept. 7. All interviews and deliberations are confidential.

The president-elect designee serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the board of directors until assuming the office of president-elect. The KASB board of directors meets five times a year with most meetings held at the KASB office in Topeka. The president-elect designee participates in the NSBA Federal Relations Network and NSBA Leadership Conference.

Information about the application process is available on the KASB website at kasb.org/nominating.

Please contact KASB Executive Assistant Melissa Holder, 800-432-2471, mholder@kasb.org for information.

A list of these and other meetings scheduled for August is included on the back page of this issue of the School Board Review. Additional information and registration details can be found at kasb.org/training.
STAFF
Associate Executive Director
Mark Tallman | mtallman@kasb.org
Assistant Executive Director
Carol Pitts | cpitts@kasb.org
Advocacy/Outreach Specialist
Leah Fliter | lfliter@kasb.org
Chief Data Officer
Ted Carter | tcarter@kasb.org
Communications Editor
Scott Rothschild | srothschild@kasb.org
Communications Specialist
Andrea Hartzell | ahartzell@kasb.org
Governmental Relations Specialist
Rob Gilligan | rgilligan@kasb.org
Assistant
Debbie Dyche | ddyche@kasb.org

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS
KASB welcomes any articles on education. The article should be as brief as possible and written in a direct manner. Author name, title, address, phone and email should be included. Articles must be submitted electronically and will be edited to conform to KASB style. KASB reserves the right to refuse publication of any article. Email Scott Rothschild at srothschild@kasb.org for more information or to submit an article.

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The oath school board members affirm as they take office is to “faithfully discharge the duties” of their district. KASB President Shannon Kimball writes about what those words mean to her.

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11 Restorative Practices
Many Kansas school districts are using restorative justice to hold students accountable for bad behavior. Instead of suspending the offending student, restorative justice focuses on having the student make amends and taking steps to correct his or her behavior. This issue takes a closer look at the method.
LEADERSHIP VOICES

President’s Perspective
Shannon Kimball, Lawrence USD 497

Many decisions await board members who ‘faithfully discharge’ their duties

By the time this article hits your mailboxes, local election season will be upon us, with primaries on August 6 and the general election on November 5.

Thinking back to my very first school board meeting in 2011, I remember feeling excited and nervous as our county clerk stood to administer the oath of office to me and three other new board members. When we are sworn in, we repeat those words after the clerk, sit down, and get right to business. We may or may not reflect closely upon the words of the oath we just gave – there are so many other things immediately competing for our attention as new board members.

But I want to take this opportunity to remind all of us of those words, at least the variation used by our Douglas County clerk:

I do solemnly swear (affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Kansas, and faithfully discharge the duties of USD [ ]. Board Member so help me God.

What do those words really mean? When we swear the oath of office, what are we promising to do for our children, our district, and our communities?

Upholding the law – the United States Constitution, the Kansas Constitution – that seems (maybe deceptively so) fairly straightforward. It’s that last part – “faithfully discharging” our duties – that carries the load for so many of the decisions we face as board members.

And make no mistake, there are a lot of tough decisions to be made right now. How do we uphold the promise of public education for every student that walks through our doors each school day? What responsibility do we have to those students who come to our schools in crisis, or undocumented, or facing bullying or harassment or microaggressions because of their race or their gender identity? How can we help students learn from their mistakes and heal the hurts their behavior may cause to their classmates or teachers?

Faithfully discharging our duties as board members means we have to engage with these questions, and choose actions that, at the end of the day, are actions that put students first.

That is the principle behind KASB’s recent statement on immigration. It is also the principle that guides NSBA’s recently adopted policy urging state associations and school districts to consider adopting equity policies for their organizations. And, it is the principle that animates efforts, described in this issue, to weave restorative practices into the fabric of our schools’ approaches to student behavior and discipline.

Put students first

If we are putting students first, and faithfully discharging our duties to educate every child that walks through our doors, then we will be having rich conversations about all these things.

Our beloved state has such a wide diversity of school districts, student needs, and community identities. Not every local policy will look alike, but if each of us maintains a focus on what is best for each student and on what we need to do to support the success of each student, we will get to where we need to be, meeting the needs of all students and realizing our sworn oaths to faithfully discharge our duties as school board members.

I wish you success on that journey and encourage you to support our fellow board members in fulfilling the promise of the words we all swear to as we begin our terms of office.
First day brings anxiety for some kids

In my 10 years as executive director of KASB, I have written many times about back to school. It is such an exciting time. Even those of us who had to buy our jeans in the Sears Husky Department looked forward to new school clothes, notebooks, and a full box of unbroken crayons. I wonder if those crayons still smell like they did 50 years ago?

The first day of school is exciting, but it can be scary too. Our family moved a lot when we were growing up. For a 10-year-old pudgy kid a new school is an intimidating thing. The fear of getting lost, not knowing anyone, new rules, bullies to navigate, and the general unknown were often unfounded but still very real in my anxious mind.

The demons I conjured in my active mind were real, scary, and seldom materialized. For many kids, the fears and demons are far beyond my limited experiences and are very real. Sure, I had to buy husky pants, but I knew I would have new back-to-school gear. So many of our kids don’t have basic school supplies, let alone the latest Toughskins fashions.

For many of our kids, back to school means they know there will be two meals that day, but it also means the unknown of a new school, new teachers, new classmates and wondering if they will be accepted for who they are. It means new struggles with academics and/or social and emotional issues. It means fear of being bullied or isolated, of dreading recess and lunch for fear of getting the wrong attention, or no attention.

The adults in our schools are so much more aware of the social, emotional, and academic needs of the students in their care. As usual, Kansas leads the way in working to serve all students. Our State Board of Education has recognized that academic achievement is important, but not exclusive to student success. Kansans Can forces educators to look at the whole child.

Our state policymakers have provided funding to support staff and students, as well as policy support. The Dyslexia Task Force is charged with providing appropriate support to children who are challenged by dyslexia. The Mental Health Advisory Committee has developed standards for working with students social and emotional needs. Our districts are working with the Blue Ribbon Bullying Task Force to address this complicated societal problem. Kansans do not sit idly by and wait to be told how to help our children.

This is a reminder that an anxious child is not a learner. We need to be sure we pay attention to what is going on with our kids and be prepared to support them so they can learn.

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This is a reminder that an anxious child is not a learner. We need to be sure we pay attention to what is going on with our kids and be prepared to support them so they can learn. The first day of school is the second-best day of the year. Let’s make sure everyone has a great day this year, even if they have on old husky jeans and there are a few broken crayons in their box.
Keynote Presenters

Saturday, December 7, 2019: Tim Hodges, Gallup
The State of Our Schools: Public Opinion and Best Practices for Addressing the Challenges Facing Education

Preparing students for a successful future requires us to understand the opinions of key stakeholders, including students, educators, administrators, parents, employers and the broader community. Gallup has uncovered key areas of agreement as well as gaps in perceptions among these stakeholder groups. Leading with this information in mind will help our students be engaged in school today and hopeful about their role in a changing workplace for the future.

Sunday, December 8, 2019: Chad E. Foster
Blind Ambition: Circumstances Are Far Less Relevant Than the Stories We Tell Ourselves

Could anyone in your life benefit from creating a resilient mindset? Do you find it’s sometimes challenging adapting to change? In this entertaining and powerful keynote, Chad shares the critical insights that have enabled him to think differently after losing his eyesight in his late teens. As a finance leader for a multibillion-dollar company, Chad combines business success with real-world experiences to motivate audiences using humor and inspiration. His extraordinary story of overcoming adversity and achieving a high level of success is sure to leave you energized and eager to apply his tools to overcome your own obstacles.

Saturday, December 7, 2019 Dr. Randy Watson
Commissioner of Education

Throughout his career, Dr. Randy Watson has been sought out by schools, districts, education organizations and others for his educational insights as well as his clear thinking around the issues and challenges facing policy makers, educators and students. He and his team at the Kansas State Department of Education provide the leadership for Kansans Can, the state boards vision for public education in Kansas: Kansas leads the world in the success of each student. A native of Coffeyville, Kansas, Dr. Watson began his education career as a high school social studies teacher in Tescott, KS. Dr. Watson served the community of McPherson for 22 years as an assistant superintendent from 1993-2005 and as superintendent from 2005-2015.
WHY ATTEND?
KASB is proud to offer the highest quality educational leadership training to public school boards of education and leadership teams in Kansas. The KASB Annual Conference is the association’s flagship event, providing intensive learning and networking experiences that bring together hundreds of Kansas board of education members, school district leaders and content experts.

On Saturday the conference includes three rounds of breakout session - close to 40 different topics. These sessions focus on interactive presentations by KASB members, staff and content experts. This year’s topics will include Advocacy and Community Engagement, Efficient and Effective Practices, Equity and Access, Facility Planning, Foundations of Boardsmanship, Policy/Legal, School Redesign and School Safety and Security.

The KASB Annual Delegate Assembly is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019, in conjunction with the KASB Annual Conference. This important meeting includes the election of the KASB president-elect designee and the review and approval of KASB legislative positions for the upcoming Legislative Session.

HOUSING BUREAU opens September 4!
The KASB Conference is utilizing a Housing Bureau system. This is the exclusive way to make reservations for 2019. There is one website everyone will use to make reservations or be put on a waiting list (much like NSBA).

You will see exact room availability and rates at the Hyatt Regency Wichita as well as the overflow hotels: Drury Plaza Hotel Broadview and The Fairfield Inn and Suites Wichita Downtown. We chose these hotels based on their proximity to the Hyatt, Century II and Wichita’s free downtown shuttle the Q-Line as well as for their amenities and price.

The Housing Bureau will open on Wednesday, September 4 at 8:00 a.m. Clerks will receive an email from KASB with the access link.

REGISTRATION opens September 4!
- The pdf form will be available at kans.org/kasbcon or submit your conference registration online through the KASB Member Portal.
- Sign up for a Friday Pre-Conference Workshops on the pdf form or at the same time as submitting conference registration in the Member Portal.

SCHEDULE At-A-Glance
Be sure to visit our conference website kans.org/kasbcon for the latest information and updates!

Friday. December 6
7:30 a.m. REGISTRATION BEGINS for KSSA Day
8:00 a.m. Meeting All Kids Needs Briefing
8:15 a.m. Meeting All Kids Needs Buses Depart
9:00 a.m. Early Bird Onsite Meetings Begin
Noon Early Bird Lunches
4:00 p.m. Early Bird Onsite Meetings Adjourn
4:00 p.m. CONFERENCE/DELEGATE REGISTRATION & Networking Reception
6:00 p.m. Evening Adjourns

Saturday. December 7
7:30 a.m. CONFERENCE REGISTRATIONS OPENS and Continental Breakfast
8:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
  KASB President, KASB Executive Director
  KASB Nominating Committee Report
8:45 a.m. Keynote Tim Hodges, Gallup
10:00 a.m. Break and Vendor Trade Show Opens
10:45 a.m. Breakout Sessions A
11:30 a.m. Networking Lunch & Trade Show
1:30 p.m. Breakout Sessions B
2:30 p.m. Break and Vendor Trade Show
3:00 p.m. Breakout Sessions C
4:15 p.m. General Session
  Dr. Randy Watson
5:30 p.m. Networking Reception
7:45 p.m. Adjourn

Sunday. December 8
7:30 a.m. DELEGATE REGISTRATION OPENS Continental Breakfast
8:30 a.m. Regional Elections
9:00 a.m. Delegate Assembly Begins
  Roundtable Discussions Begin
10:00 a.m. Break and Background Music in Delegate Assembly
10:15 a.m. Closing Keynote: Chad E. Foster
11:45 a.m. Conference Adjourns
Looking at the Data
Ted Carter, KASB Chief Data Officer

‘Tis the season to send KASB your data

As we look toward the end of the summer and the beginning of a new school year, we find ourselves playing the reset game. Resetting classrooms, resetting our expectations for a new school cycle, and resetting our data.

Okay, so maybe not everyone worries about that last one. But KASB does. The Kansas Association of School Boards is one of the only school board associations in the nation that conducts annual data collections from its members and then shares that information with its members for comparison. This is a value-added service school districts in other states do not have access to.

But, as with everything, there is a catch. The catch is that if your district does not submit the data, you won’t be able to compare yourself with other districts around you, others of similar size and makeup across the state, or with the state as a whole.

So, this is my humble plea to make sure your district is getting your data to us. Each district has a data steward identified. These people are the ones ultimately responsible for ensuring that KASB has the latest information related to staff salaries, contract details, calendars, fees charged, supplemental contract amounts, retirement plans, and all kinds of other information.

If you are the data steward for your district, then I encourage you to make sure you know what should be submitted and ensure there is a plan for getting this data to us. If you are not the data steward for your district, but you are interested in making sure your district is current with its data, then find out who your data steward is and encourage them to submit, and maybe even offer to help if you can.

Here is a list of the annual surveys we collect and why they might be useful to your district:

- **Calendar**: The Calendar Survey includes information on school start and end dates, spring break, vacations, daily start, end, lunch, and break times, schedule considerations, parent-teacher conferences, and kindergarten formats. Districts use this data to see how their calendar and schedule lines up with other districts. For example, districts may want to see if their spring breaks fall on the same week as nearby districts. This data is also very useful during teacher contract negotiations.

- **Fees**: The Fees Survey includes information on activity participation fees, admissions to events, activity budget finances, items furnished for categories of activities and whether there is a charge for them, fees for seniors, kindergarteners, library, books, transportation, shops and labs, publications, and driver’s ed, non-student and facilities fees. Districts use this data to see if what they are charging for and how much they charge is consistent with similar districts. For example, districts frequently wish to ensure the price for attending athletic events is consistent with what other districts in the area charge.

- **Superintendent**: The Superintendent Survey asks for demographics, years of experience, other duties inside and outside the district, and information on salary and benefits for all superintendents. Kansas districts use this data primarily for annual superintendent contract negotiations.

**KASB DID YOU KNOW?**

The average admission amount for a high school event in 2018-19 was $3.25. - KASB Fees Survey

The average amount charged for a high school yearbook in 2018-19 was $42.84. - KASB Fees Survey
determinations and as part of the superintendent search process.

- **Principal**: The Principal Survey asks for demographics, years of experience, other duties inside and outside the district, grade levels and number of staff and students at their schools, and information on salary and benefits for all principals and assistant principals. Kansas districts rely on this information to ensure competitive salaries and consistent workloads for school administrators.

- **Central Office Staff**: The Central Office Staff Survey collects information on all central office staff serving as managers or supervisors of district staff, including job type, areas of responsibility, demographics, years experience, and salary and benefits information. Along with ensuring comparable compensation, districts use this data to see how other districts have distributed responsibilities at the district level.

- **Supplemental Pay**: The Supplemental Pay Survey collects information on part-time and supplemental contract pay, including the number of staff for each position type and activity, for annual and hourly pay, and also info on driver’s ed. Districts compare amounts paid and also the type of supplemental contracts offered by other districts.

- **Employee Relations**: The Employee Relations Survey collects information about non-renewals, terminations, releases from contracts, and other information pertaining to teacher relations. Districts work to ensure their employee relations process is consistent with other districts, and also to see how their teacher relations trends compare.

- **Teacher Contracts**: The Teacher Contracts Survey collects information on the teacher contracts and the contracts negotiation process, including number, length, and cost of negotiations sessions, salary and package amount and percent changes, agreement provisions, impasse data, contract years and reopeners, and teacher leave. This information is used heavily by districts during the contract negotiations process.

- **Retirement**: The Retirement Survey collects information on district sponsored retirement plans, including eligibility requirements, contributions, payment methods, benefits determinations, cost, and 403(b) plans. Increasing benefits costs have made this data more important to districts as they work to ensure adequate and affordable benefits for all staff.

- **Other Staff**: The Other Staff Survey collects information on district staff members who are not instructional nor administrative staff. This includes classified staff, nurses, and bus drivers, among others. This data is useful for districts because it is often hard to find any information on non-instructional and non-administrative school district staff.

- **Teacher Salary Schedules**: Though not an actual survey, KASB asks districts to submit a copy of their teacher salary schedules each year, and we compile this data into a format that can be compared across districts.

Find the data KASB collects and reports out on the member portal (https://kasb.org/member-portal/) by selecting “District-Level Data” from the “Member Resources” menu.

If you have questions about the data KASB collects and/or how to submit this information, please contact Ted Carter, chief data officer, at tcarter@kasb.org.
KASB BOLD (Business Operations Leadership Development), a leadership development opportunity for new superintendents (within the first two years in their position) and aspiring superintendents, is seeking applications for the 2019-2020 class.

The application deadline is Sept. 13, 2019. The 2019-2020 class will be announced by Sept. 23, 2019, and the first class session is scheduled for Oct. 17 and 18, 2019.

Participants will be selected based on their current role in their district. Aspiring superintendents or new superintendents (within first couple of years) will be given first consideration. Gender, ethnicity, district size, and region of the state will also be considered to achieve a balance across these criteria.

Additional information and the application form is available online at kasb.org/BOLD.

The program focuses on the facilities and planning side of leading a school district. Those selected for the program are asked to commit to six two-day sessions throughout the 2019-2020 school year. Onsite visits and presentations center around seven key areas:

- Building and facilities master planning;
- Technology planning;
- Finance strategies and planning;
- Procurement processes;
- School security;
- Risk management; and
- Human resource management.

KASB staff, experts from across the state and KASB partners lead training. Time is also devoted to class discussions and networking.
By Leah Fliter, lfliter@kasb.org

Continuing concerns about how Kansas students’ social and emotional health, bullying and other behavioral challenges affect learning have prompted educational leaders to explore new ways to influence school climate. “Restorative practice” is one such strategy.

Restorative practice, also known as restorative justice, works to keep students in school while addressing problem behavior and its impact on the school community. Students are held accountable for their behavior, but educators are trained to look for the root causes of the behavior and respond accordingly.

For example, a student witnesses a fight between her parents just before she leaves for school. Upset by the conflict, the student worries all morning. Her stress overflows at lunchtime and she gets into a minor altercation in the cafeteria. In a zero-tolerance setting, the students might be detained by police, and one or both could be arrested and expelled from school. In a restorative school, support staff intervene in the argument, have the students sit down together, and defuse the situation by talking through what prompted the incident. The students may agree to make restitution by helping clean the cafeteria. A counselor meets with the student and works with the family to resolve the conflict at home.

Advocates say restorative practice reduces discipline referrals and suspensions, improves school climate and diverts children from the so-called “school to prison pipeline.”

Advocates say restorative practice reduces discipline referrals and suspensions, improves school climate and diverts children from the so-called “school to prison pipeline.” It rejects zero-tolerance disciplinary policies while emphasizing school-wide healthy relationships between administrators and students and the development of social-emotional skills and understanding. Students, teachers and administrators learn to manage difficult situations through a variety of methods that include heavy emphasis on recognizing the impact of poor behavior on perpetrators, victims and the school community. Restorative practice works in tandem with the Kansas Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) and supports the Kansas State Board of Education’s social-emotional wellness outcome in its vision for the success of each Kansas student.

Continued on next page
Critics of restorative practice characterize it as an abdication of school districts’ responsibility for the safety of students and staff, and say it provides cover for disruptive or illegal activity that wouldn’t be allowed if not for political concerns about reducing school suspension rates for some groups of students. Two recent national studies report mixed results for restorative practices in schools, and educators say it can be challenging to find the time and money to properly implement.

**Kansas discussions**

At a May 2019 meeting of the Kansas State Department’s Blue Ribbon Task Force on Bullying, Sharon Kniss of the Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (KIPCOR) briefed the task force on the institute’s Restorative Schools Initiative. Kniss said restorative practice is a “holistic, common sense” way of looking at the spiritual, physical, mental and emotional factors that contribute to school behavior issues. It focuses on building teacher/staff-student relationships and a strong school culture that will allow for appropriate and effective responses to issues such as bullying.

“We’re looking at addressing the underlying issues and disrupting the cycles of bullying by showing the impact of bad behavior and giving victims of bullying a voice and safety,” Kniss said. “Transforming school culture is preventive in itself.”

In a June Task Force meeting, Liberal USD 480 middle school teacher Daniel Minde said restorative practice helps teachers bring the bully and victim together to work on moving forward. He said social/emotional teaching should be part of every school and every grade level.

**Wichita USD 259**

**Wichita West High School**

When Joel Hudson began his tenure as principal at Wichita West High School in 2011, about 70 of the school’s roughly 1,300 students were being expelled each school year. Dropout rates were unacceptably high, and the graduation rate was disappointing. “We had a number of what we called ‘explosive events,’ as well, on an almost-weekly basis,” Hudson recalled. A culture change was clearly needed.

Through grant funding and the school district’s work with the Safe and Civil Schools organization, the West High leadership began training teachers and staff on restorative practice and other initiatives to end the “school to prison pipeline.” The restorative concepts were embedded in the student handbook and in incident reporting forms and other disciplinary materials.

Hudson said some teachers were skeptical at first. They assumed restorative practice would require teachers to be “too soft” on the students and were concerned about their personal safety. Hudson stressed that drug and weapons offenses along with assault and battery were non-negotiable offenses that would lead to disciplinary hearings and ultimately to expulsion if warranted.
Existing school district disciplinary policies would also be enforced. The goal, Hudson told his staff, was to address student habits and behaviors before they escalated into fights or other offenses. “We wanted to reduce time out of school, so kids could stay on track academically and succeed in the community,” Hudson said. “In addition, disciplinary hearings are time-consuming for administrators, and stressful for principals and families. If we can address the behavior so it doesn’t repeat, we’re all winners.”

Hudson advises school leaders not to force teachers and staff to participate in restorative practice work. Focus on a “coalition of the willing,” he said. “At some point you’ll get a critical mass of adults who are willing to work with the kids.”

The West High staff found that many of the issues causing conflict at school were occurring off-campus in families or in the community. By using restorative practice to ask students what happened during an in-school incident, what prompted it, interviewing witnesses, reviewing the impact on the overall school community and how to move forward, school leaders could help students regulate their behavior at school. “It’s time-consuming, but by digging a little deeper, you can prevent second, third and fourth incidents and major events,” Hudson said.

West High student expulsions were at roughly 35 by the end of the 2018-19 school year through hard, intentional work with restorative practices, the Safe and Civil Schools program, and the school district’s recent embrace of trauma-informed training. The drop-out rate has fallen, there are fewer major negative events, and the graduation rate is up. Hudson credits West High School Psychologist Jan Petersen for driving the use of restorative practice at the school, and applauds Assistant Superintendent Gil Alvarez for rolling out restorative practice at all USD 259 secondary schools in 2018-19.

“Restorative practice in combination with Safe and Civil Schools and trauma-informed training helped us reduce inappropriate behavior but increase good data points for West,” Hudson said.

Hudson, who retired at the end of the 2018-19 school year, said embracing restorative practice was “very rewarding” and changed his leadership style.

“I was old-school, but I soon realized we weren’t going to be able to expel our way to a successful school,” he said. “It was a good experience for me professionally.”

Truesdell Middle School

In the 2011-12 school year, USD 259’s Truesdell Middle School saw more than 4,500 disciplinary referrals among its 800 students. Former Truesdell Principal and current Executive Director, Public Affairs and Special Projects Terrell Davis said because of that atmosphere, Truesdell had the highest rate of transfer-out requests in the entire school district. Davis was hired as Truesdell’s principal and with the support of then-Superintendent John Allison used restorative practices and other resources to dramatically improve the school’s climate.

In addition to adding paraprofessionals to reduce teacher/student ratios, a third school counselor, and hiring an additional assistant principal who served as dean of students, Davis and his team worked to establish a restorative practice-based culture that emphasized predictability, expectations and consequences that worked in tandem with existing school district disciplinary policies prohibiting weapons possession and other dangerous behavior.

“We established the culture up front, on the first day of school, and reinforced it throughout the school year,” Davis said. “Kids need to understand the expectations and the consequences. We also explained why the lessons we were teaching work for life outside school, too. If you’re consistent, they have predictability and you get good behavior.”

Disciplinary referrals at Truesdell decreased by 1,500 in the 2012-13 school year. By 2016, despite an enrollment increase of 300 students, total disciplinary referrals had fallen to 1,100 and Truesdell was USD 259’s most-requested transfer-in school, Davis said.

A commonly-used restorative practice is discussion of negative behavior, its affect on the perpetrator, the victim and the school community and how the offender can repair that damaged relationship. The conversations can take place between students and administrators or teachers, as well as in “circles” of classmates and teachers. It’s not uncommon for teachers who use restorative practices to stop a lesson when an issue arises and immediately deal with it in a restorative circle. Teachers nationwide acknowledge the practice takes time away from the lesson plan but say the improvement in class culture is worth it.

“You have to walk through the situation with the kids,”

Continued on next page
said former Truesdell assistant principal Darron Alford. “You ask, what were you thinking when the incident happened? What should you have done differently, or should you do differently in the future? Give the kids some grace to repair the relationship, make restitution, and not be labeled by their behavior on one bad day,” Alford said.

Former Truesdell dean of students Claudio Flores said teachers need constant reinforcement in the methods and implementation of restorative practices. “If you invest in teachers [with training and added supports], they’re willing to be part of the team and restorative practice works,” Flores said. Flores is currently principal of USD 259’s new Bryant Opportunity Academy, which is designed for K-6 students with the most severe behavioral problems.

Alford and former Truesdell assistant principal Kim O’Reilly said changing from a purely punitive model of school discipline is difficult for some educators, and administrators must work through that change with their staff.

“I show them the data [on how restorative practices work in the classroom] and I ask them, ‘How do you want your class to be?’” Alford said. “Giving kids ownership and responsibility for their behavior increases their engagement with other students, teachers, and their own education.”

“Hire teachers who don’t want to just sit behind a desk,” advises O’Reilly. “Lower their class sizes, give them technology; teachers will step up or step out.”

**Topeka USD 501**

In March 2018 testimony before the Kansas Legislature’s Education Committee, Topeka High School Principal Rebecca Morrisey told committee members that “zero-tolerance” school discipline policies of the 1980s led to increased suspension and dropout rates along with more delinquent behaviors in communities. The criminalization of school behavior, Morrisey testified, created a school to prison pipeline characterized by oppressive physical surroundings in which children of color, LGBTQ students and students with disabilities are punished more often and more harshly than their peers for the same misbehavior. Morrisey told the committee that fights and out of school suspensions have declined following the implementation of restorative justice on campus. While weapon or drug offenses involve out-of-school suspension and other consequences, many conflicts can be handled in school through restorative practice, she said.

Morrisey formerly was principal of Eisenhower Middle School in Topeka. She testified that in the 2011-12 school year, there were 61 fights and 160 suspensions in the 450-student school. EMS implemented restorative practice in 2015-16 and saw a 72 percent decrease in fights and a 69 percent decrease in suspensions, while enrollment grew by 27 percent. Restorative justice properly implemented with high expectations and careful delivery, Morrisey said, improves school climate, which is increasingly proven as crucial for student success.

Regina Platt of the Lawrence Gardner High School in Topeka’s Kansas Juvenile Justice Correctional Complex testified at the same 2018 hearing that implementing restorative practice at the school allows students to connect with adults and more readily accept guidance from them. Platt said the school has fewer discipline referrals, students spend less time out of class, develop better social skills and have more respect for the learning environment. “This program changes one perspective, relationship and behavior at a time,” Platt testified.

**National studies on restorative practice in schools show mixed results**

The Chalkbeat education reporting service reported in January 2019 that a major study by the RAND corporation found that while restorative practices made Pittsburgh public schools safer, other indicators dropped. And while suspensions generally decreased district-wide, middle-school student suspensions did not.

Pittsburgh teachers, especially at the middle-school level, said it was often difficult to fit restorative practice into an already-full curriculum.

In May 2019, the Hechinger Report in an article entitled “The Promise of Restorative Justice Starts to Falter Under Rigorous Research,” summarized the Pittsburgh study and a second RAND study on the use of restorative practices in Maine public schools. In Maine, RAND said, school climate didn’t improve in buildings using restorative practices. According to the think tank, the biggest insight from the Maine study was that despite years of training and daily work, students didn’t report experiencing restorative practices in the classroom and didn’t seem to be buying in to the concept of talking problems out with perceived enemies. The Maine study did note that students who experienced restorative practices such as “circle” discussions felt more connected to their peers and experienced less cyber bullying.

Researchers caution that it’s too early to draw solid conclusions based on two studies of restorative practice and note it’s difficult to control for out-of-school decisions and behavior.

**Challenges**

Costs: as an example, restorative practice training costs $4,000 per person through the Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflicted Resolution (KIPCOR) at Bethel College in Newton. Other costs include hiring additional support staff, administrators, counselors and teachers; and professional development materials and time.
KASB Learning Series

August workshops focus on IDEA renewal

KASB will offer three August workshops to prepare board members for a crucial national push to reauthorize and modernize the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The identical workshops on August 27-29 in Topeka, Dodge City and Salina, will feature advocacy tips from a top D.C. lobbyist, guidance from KASB’s expert staff and leadership, and a briefing on the critical impact of the 2020 U.S. Census on special education funding. KASB General Counsel Donna Whiteman will offer an afternoon of important legal programming.

Each workshop will kick off with a brief overview of perhaps the best opportunity in recent memory to fully fund IDEA, which was enacted in the 1970s. Congress promised to pay for 40 percent of the cost to educate a student with disabilities but has historically provided about 10-15 percent of that cost. Kansas’ senior Sen. Pat Roberts and colleagues have introduced bipartisan legislation in the U.S. Senate that would phase in full funding of the law over the next decade, and a similar law is pending in the U.S. House of Representatives. D.C insiders believe Roberts’ involvement may represent the best chance in years to fulfill the original promise of the law.

A panel of legislative experts including the National School Boards Association’s chief lobbyist Chip Slaven, NSBA Western Region Vice President, former KASB President and veteran federal advocate Frank Henderson of the USD 345 Seaman school district, and KASB’s Advocacy and Outreach Specialist Leah Fliter will be joined by special education professionals from around the state to offer their insights on how Kansans can support NSBA’s “It’s Time for a Great IDEA!” campaign, which will urge Congress to take a new look at the law. Attendees will receive talking points and other materials to help them talk with lawmakers, parents, and other advocates about how to support children with disabilities.

Senator Roberts has repeatedly said his goal is to fully fund the IDEA before he retires in 2020.

KASB Governmental Relations Specialist Rob Gilligan will moderate a discussion with Slaven, Henderson and League of Kansas Municipalities’ Wendi Stark on the U.S. Census’ “Count Each Person Once, Only Once, In the Right Place” campaign. The April 1, 2020 decennial count will determine Kansas’ share of federal funding for IDEA and other critical programs. Attendees will learn about Complete Count Committees and other ways in which they can ensure accurate participation in the Census.

After lunch, Whiteman, a veteran KASB attorney, former legislator and former head of children and family services in Kansas, will present programming ranging from Special Education Basics to scenario-based discussions of common questions, missteps and complaints.

For more information, visit KASB.org, Upcoming Events.

Safety workshops rescheduled for September

Earlier planned KASB School Safety workshops have been rescheduled to September.

“What Every Board Member Should Know About Safe and Secure Schools” will take place in McPherson on September 10; on September 11 in Colby; and in Olathe on September 12.

For more information, go to KASB.org and click on Upcoming Events.

BOARD MATTERS
Part I: Equity in student success:

Closing the gaps

By Mark Tallman mtallman@kasb.org

Lower income students are more likely to struggle on educational measures like test scores and graduation rates than higher income students.

The graph below shows Kansas state assessment results by income. Over 70 percent of all students score at what the State Board of Education has defined as “basic” ability to understand and use the mathematics and English Language Arts skills and knowledge needed for college and career readiness. However, less than 60 percent of free/reduced lunch eligible students are at that level, compared to over 80 percent of higher income students.

Likewise, about one-third of all students scored at the “effective” level, which is considered “on track” for postsecondary success, in mathematics and 37 percent in English. But only 19 percent of free and reduced lunch eligible students scored at that level in math and 23 percent in English, compared to 45 and 50 percent for non-low-income students.

For the next several months, KASB will look at the major issues in the “achievement gap” between lower-income and upper-income students, how current programs to address this issue are working and policies under study.

The three-part series begins this month with an analysis on the impact of student and family income on student success. In September, KASB will report on at-risk aid, funding and eligibility. The series will conclude in October, focusing on a state study under way on the $415 million at-risk funding program.

On the 2017 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), which tests a sample of students at fourth and eighth grade on reading and math skills in all states, Kansas had a 22.6 percent gap between free and reduced meal eligible students and not eligible students at the Basic level, compared to 23.6 percent for all states and 24.7 percent for Kansas overall peer states (most similar to Kansas in student and population characteristics). Kansas had a 28.4 percent gap at the Proficient level, compared to 27.7 in all states and 27.9 percent for states.

The five non-public school systems that participate in Kansas State Assessments (Lutheran schools and the Catholic dioceses of Dodge City, Kansas City, Salina and Wichita) have gaps between free and reduced meal eligible and non-eligible students of 10 to 20 percent at the Basic level and 20 to 30 or higher at the Effective level.
**Reasons for the income-achievement gap**

A number of reasons have been advanced for these differences (here is a chapter from a report presented by the ASCD, formerly the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Design). The conclusions are that students from low income or impoverished families experience more stress that negatively affects their development, begin school with fewer resources and therefore start behind their more advantaged peers, and have less home support and more disruption throughout their years in school.

Specifically, lower income students are more likely to lack adequate food and health care. They are more likely to live in single parent (or grandparent) households, with one or more parents absent or incarcerated. They are more likely to be homeless. They are more likely to experience “trauma” or “Adverse Childhood Experiences” that affect their development. While there are many exceptions, they are more likely to start school with smaller vocabularies, less socialization and basic skills.

Lower income parents are more likely to have unstable employment and housing, which leads to more frequent moving from home to home, school to school. They have less reliable transportation and parents may be working multiple jobs at hours that make it more difficult to monitor student attendance and progress, and be involved in school activities.

Finally, these families are less able to afford enrichments such as home computer and internet access, travel and vacations, sports, clubs and other activities. In other words, more of these families simply lack the resources to support their students at the same level as higher income families.

Because income is now so closely linked to education level, lower income families are likely to have parents who did less well in school and have less postsecondary education themselves. Therefore, their students may receive less guidance, understanding or even support for educational attainment as a priority. In fact, school leaders say some parents may actually discourage students from further education, concerned they may “lose” their children if they pursue education that leads to employment away from home.

The result is a difficult cycle to break. Students from lower income families are less likely to complete high school and college; as a result, they are more likely to have lower income as adults and their children with face the same challenges.

Of course, this does not mean all lower income students are failing; nearly 60 percent of these students score at least at basic on state tests and 80 percent graduate on time; and nearly one in five higher income students are below basic and 5 percent do not graduate from high school, at least within four years.

The data is clear, however, that lower income students are much more likely to be behind on academic standards, fail to complete high school and be unprepared for postsecondary education. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kansas Student Achievement Indicators by Income Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name All Students Free/Reduced Meal Eligible Not Eligible Difference</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Math Tests (All Grades)</td>
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<td>State English Lang. Arts Tests (All Grades)</td>
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<td>Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate</td>
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Data is clear, however, that lower income students are much more likely to be behind on academic standards, fail to complete high school and be unprepared for postsecondary education.
KASB's Legislative Committee will meet Aug. 24 in Topeka to begin deliberations on the association's legislative policy positions for 2020. Local boards of education will have several opportunities to offer input before the positions are approved by the Delegate Assembly at KASB's Annual Convention in December.

The Legislative Committee is comprised of representatives from each of KASB's 10 geographic regions. The state's five largest districts, Blue Valley USD 229, Shawnee Mission USD 512, Kansas City Kansas USD 500, Wichita USD 259, and Olathe USD 233, each also have a seat on the Committee. It's chaired by KASB's immediate past president. This year's chair is C. Patrick Woods of Topeka USD 501.

Members meet in August, November, and just prior to the Delegate Assembly in December to review the association's adopted policies. The committee discusses feedback from member districts and considers the possible impact of legislative and court decisions as it develops proposed amendments or additions to the policies ultimately debated and adopted by roughly 300 voting delegates each December. The policy positions guide the KASB Advocacy team's work in Topeka and Washington, D.C.

KASB's Fall Regional Meetings will offer board members a chance to connect with their Regional Vice Presidents, Legislative Committee member, and KASB's Advocacy staff to offer local perspectives on the association's positions. Those meetings will be in late September and early October in Stafford, Hiawatha, Sublette, Colby, Olathe, McPherson, Girard, Greenbush, Beloit, and Haysville. Consult your KASB Learning Series guide for dates and locations near you.

How KASB reaches policy positions

KASB is seeking input from members on advocacy issues and position.

It's a process that begins with recommendations from school leaders and member school boards. The KASB Legislative Committee considers new ideas and changes in current positions and takes feedback from KASB members before developing recommendations to the KASB Delegate Assembly. The Assembly has the final vote on KASB positions.

KASB welcomes members to share their ideas, concerns and proposals with their representative on the Legislative Committee or KASB, and the KASB Regional Roundtables beginning in late September. Current KASB policies adopted by the Delegate Assembly last December are on kasb.org.

How are KASB's advocacy or lobbying positions determined?

KASB's policy positions – which determine what positions we take on issues in the Legislature, State Board, and state and federal agencies – are set by the Delegate Assembly (DA). The assembly meets once a year, this year in Wichita.

Each member of KASB (school boards, boards of other education agencies) has one vote in the assembly. A majority of those voting are required to take
action. The DA annually votes on (1) one-year resolutions, which set priority positions for the next year; (2) permanent policies, which remain in effect unless changes by a subsequent vote of the DA and (3) election of the KASB President-elect Designee.

When the Delegate Assembly takes final action, KASB staff and officers must follow those positions in advocating through testimony or other communications.

**How are proposals brought before the Delegate Assembly?**

Proposals for consideration by the DA are developed each year by the KASB Legislative Committee. The committee meets two to three times a year, and just before the Delegate Assembly at the KASB Convention.

Committee recommendations are finalized approximately and e-mailed to members one month before the DA so boards can discuss how they want their delegate to vote.

Recommendations by the Legislative Committee to the DA may be amended, but under current DA rules, amendments must be submitted 48 hours in advance or receive a two-thirds vote to suspend the rules. The purpose of this rule is to give delegates advance notice to study proposed amendments.

Individual member boards may also submit proposals to the DA by a deadline set by the KASB Board, approximately three weeks before the DA meets. Any proposal submitted after the deadline also requires a two-thirds vote to suspend the rules.

**Who serves on the Legislative Committee?**

There are 15 members on the KASB Legislative Committee. Ten members are appointed by the KASB president to represent each of KASB’s 10 geographic regions. The five largest member school districts each select a board member to serve on the committee.

The chair of the committee is the immediate past president of KASB. A majority vote of the committee members is required to approve an action or recommendation. In most cases, positions are adopted by consensus. The committee’s usual process is to try to find compromise positions that have broad support among committee members and all KASB members.

**How does the Legislative Committee develop its positions?**

First, KASB members are invited to share proposals for or concerns about legislative and other policy positions during the summer with committee members or staff.

Second, issues are discussed at KASB meetings during the summer (in previous years the “advocacy tour,” this year the summer Regional Roundtables). KASB staff and Legislative Committee members attend these meetings and bring feedback back.

Third, KASB staff may present new issues that KASB has not previously considered, or possible items for reconsideration, based on legislative action during the previous session, interim studies, and other issues brought to staff attention based on KASB’s positions and mission.

Fourth, any committee member may put items on the agenda or make proposals.

**What happens if the Delegate Assembly has not taken a position on a proposal in the Legislature or other governmental body?**

In many cases, bills may be introduced, or issues arise where the DA has not taken a position. In that case, KASB staff first attempts to determine if a position can be reasonably inferred from other, similar positions or from core principles such as local control by boards. If there is likely to be any controversy about staff interpretation, the KASB Executive Committee may be consulted.

If there is no clear position on an issue adopted by the DA, the KASB Board of Directors can take a position as long it does not conflict with a position already approved by the DA. The KASB Constitution states: “The board of directors shall take such action as may be necessary to implement the policy positions of the delegate assembly, and between meetings of the delegate assembly such additional action, not inconsistent with the policy positions of the delegate assembly, as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the association.”

Because legislative issues often move more quickly than the KASB Board of Directors meets, the KASB constitution allows the KASB Executive Committee to make decisions in their stead. These decisions are then reported to the whole board for discussion at the next regularly scheduled board of directors meeting.
Applications now open for KASB’s new Advanced Advocacy Training Institute

Applications are now available online to become part of a select group of 18 education advocates from across Kansas who will be invited to take part in the inaugural KASB Advanced Advocacy Training Institute or AATI.

The KASB Advanced Advocacy Training Institute is a deep-dive, limited-group program focused on public education advocacy. Advocacy for education doesn’t just happen at the Statehouse in Topeka. It is a local issue, and each community needs champions – both within the public education system and outside of the system – who can effectively communicate the positive work that is being done and the need to continue efforts to develop new programs and approaches to improving student outcomes.

Advocacy for education doesn’t just happen at the Statehouse in Topeka. It is a local issue.

Applications for the AATI program are open until Aug. 9. Participants selected for the program will be notified the week of Aug. 12.

Over the course of six in-person meetings as well as some advocacy work next spring, participants will accomplish the following objectives:

- Establish a network of education advocates throughout Kansas who have a full understanding of issues on the local, state and federal levels.
- Connect education advocates to establish networking and support opportunities and to share ideas and approaches to advocacy.
- Explore education advocacy initiatives and analyze successes and failures in achieving goals and objectives to improve education in Kansas.
- Improve effectiveness of individual and organization advocacy activities.
- Expand diversity of education advocates and support efforts to participate in the legislative and community outreach process.

The Advanced Advocacy Training Institute will start with a deep dive into federal issues as the attendees meet with Chip Slaven, NSBA Chief Advocacy Officer.

With more than two decades of experience advocating for public education, implementing national grassroots campaigns, and building bipartisan support, Slaven joined the NSBA team this past June to strengthen NSBA’s ability to generate policies that enhance public education and provide all school children with an opportunity to receive a quality and equitable education.

In conjunction with KASB’s IDEA Reauthorization and Special Education Workshop, AATI participants will discuss other federal advocacy issues including ESSA and the Higher Education Act, issues of equity and access, and discussions on support of public education in response to a greater push towards voucher and charter programs.

This session will help AATI attendees better plan for advocacy of federal issues on a local level and provide guidance for advocacy efforts in Washington when the opportunity arises.

Slaven leads the Federal Advocacy & Public Policy group, which represents state school board associations and their members before the U.S. Congress and the Administration. The team of government relations professionals works on a range of financial, social and technical issues important to K-12 education. He will also head the efforts of the National School Boards Action Center, NSBA’s national grassroots organization, and the Center for Public Education, NSBA’s research think tank, which examines issues impacting public education.

To learn more about the AATI, go to kasb.org and click on Advocacy and then click on KASB AATI.
TinaRae Scott was interested in politics and governance from a young age and remembers as a sixth-grader traveling to Manhattan to a political event featuring President Ronald Reagan. The crowds prevented her from seeing the president, but Scott saw U.S. Sen. Nancy Kassebaum and State Treasurer Joan Finney. Watching those two women in high levels of government made a big impression on Scott.

Now Scott, a member of the Morris County USD 417 board, takes over as the Region 5 representative on the KASB Board of Directors. She fills the unexpired term of Lori Blake, who is now KASB President-Elect.

Scott plans to run for a full term as the Region 5 representative at KASB’s Annual Conference in December. KASB’s Region 5 covers much of central Kansas, including Chase, Harvey, Marion, McPherson, Morris, Reno, Rice and Saline counties.

In her new position on the KASB board, Scott said, “I would really just like to be available and accessible to all the districts in the region. I’m really excited to be an ear and open door and voice for those districts and most importantly our kids.”

As an advocate for schools, Scott wants to work to ensure rural areas have access to high speed broadband, saying that is crucial to economic development.

From a childhood interest in politics, Scott developed a sense of wanting to work locally to help her community.

That led to a long stint as president of the Parent Teacher Organization at her oldest daughter’s school in Morris County USD 417. Scott was then recruited to lead a volunteer effort to pass a school bond election. The issue was approved in 2008 — the first successful bond election for USD 417 after several earlier attempts had gone down in defeat.

On the heels of that victory, Scott ran for school board, but lost by a mere nine votes. She waited patiently, while also getting appointed to spearhead a drive to pass a city sales tax for an aquatic center, and then ran again for school board. This time she won and is now in her sixth year on the board, fourth as vice president.

As an advocate for schools, Scott said she wants to work to ensure rural areas have access to high speed broadband, saying that is crucial to economic development. With high speed broadband, she said, “People can live and work here regardless of whether their jobs are in Wichita or Kansas City. If you’re running the family farm or local pharmacy, you have to have access to technology that can connect you to the rest of the world.”

She also wants adequate funding of special education and making sure schools have enough mental health providers. “Your mind and your mental health are just as important as your physical health,” she said.

Scott and her husband Lancer have three daughters; the oldest is starting college this fall on a powerlifting scholarship; the middle daughter is in eighth-grade and the youngest will start first-grade. Scott works as assistant director of SOS Crisis Services, a not-for-profit that helps victims of domestic violence, child abuse and neglect. Her family also works a farm and ranch and owns a livestock trucking company.

Scott said she is optimistic about the future of public education in Kansas. The recent decision by the Kansas Supreme Court to approve the Legislature’s school finance fix in the long running Gannon lawsuit was welcome, she said. “I hope we have this funding issue behind us and we can focus on the kids and make our education system in Kansas the leader in the nation, so people will want to educate their kids here.”

By Scott Rothschild, srrothschild@kbas.org
Insurance changes subject to negotiation

The Professional Negotiations Act (PNA) sets out many topics that are mandatorily negotiable. This means that the board must negotiate with the professional employees for any changes to those issues in the terms and conditions of employment as set out in the district’s negotiated agreement. The entire list of mandatorily negotiable topics appears and K.S.A. 72-2218(l)(1).

Among the listed topics is “insurance benefits.” Read in the broadest sense, this provision requires the board to seek the professional association’s consent to any changes in premiums charged to the employees, services covered under the insurance policy, increases in deductibles or any other change that could reduce coverage or make employees bear a greater cost for medical services. This can be problematic for several reasons.

 Renewal dates for health insurance policies may not coincide with scheduled meetings for negotiations, and the insurance company may propose changes in covered services and medications at the time of renewal. If a change in benefits will occur outside of the period of negotiations, the board must notify staff and seek assent to the changes. This may require a special round of negotiating, since staff must accept and ratify any proposed changes to the benefits they currently receive.

Since the PNA limits both the board and the professional association to compensation, hours and amounts of work, and three additional topics, boards may want to consider proposing language for the negotiated agreement that permits the topic of health insurance benefits to be raised at any time, without counting toward the three-topic limit.

If you have questions about this or any other negotiations topic, please feel free to contact Luke Sobba at lsobba@kasb.org.

Navigating conflicting employment law

On June 13, 2019, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt issued an official opinion regarding the interpretation of K.S.A. 74-120(b) in its relation to the Kansas State Board of Education.

Subsection (b) of K.S.A. 74-120 states that any board that determines an individual’s qualification for licensure may consider any felony conviction but not bar such an individual from receiving such a license. The Kansas State Board of Education, as a board that grants individuals their teaching license, would typically be subject to the restrictions of K.S.A. 74-120(b). More importantly, terms such as moral turpitude, good character, or any arrests that do not result in a conviction shall not be used to disqualify an individual from licensure. This is in stark contrast to K.S.A. 72-2155 and K.S.A. 72-2165, which specifically grant the State Board the ability to consider those things and even preclude licensure for individuals with specific crimes.

The Attorney General reconciles this discrepancy with a canon of statutory interpretation that indicates when such conflict exists between two statutes, the most recently enacted or amended is held to supersede the other. In the present case, K.S.A. 72-2155 and K.S.A. 72-2156 were last amended in 2005, and K.S.A. 74-120 was amended in 2018. This means that baring amended or additional legislation, the Kansas State Board of Education may not use felony convictions to bar licensure.

For local school districts, the change in this interpretation of law does not cause a huge difference in your day-to-day business. It is just important to know for local boards to make sure all applicants for licensed positions may not have a clean criminal record. If you find yourself in a position where an applicant is properly licensed as a teacher and has convictions for either a felony or any of the charges outlined in K.S.A. 72-2155 and K.S.A. 72-2156, the criminal history should not be a bar to employment with the district (unless they involve children). KASB advises that districts should consider the charges and convictions but should not automatically bar the applicant from employment.

These situations are perilous and often very difficult to navigate. If you find yourself in one of these situations, please contact a KASB attorney, and we will work with you to navigate the situation.
Staff codes of conduct and handbooks

Employee codes of conduct are essential. Whether they are encapsulated as a singular code of conduct or housed in a compilation of board policies and handbook language, the method is of little importance. Employees must have an idea of what behaviors are unacceptable and the repercussions for engaging in those behaviors.

The essential aspects of such policies are that they document the board’s expectations for employee behavior and performance and provide coverage of the consequences for failing to follow such expectations. These policies, if drafted properly, provide employees needed guidance on what is expected of them and will aid your administrative staff and board in handling employee disciplinary matters as they arise.

Be sure to consult your negotiated agreement before making any policy shifts in areas that would otherwise be topics for bargaining. It is important to note that state law provides that disciplinary procedure is a mandatory topic of bargaining under the K.S.A. 72-2218 et seq., so modifications of disciplinary procedures for your licensed staff require the involvement of your local bargaining unit.

KASB suggests the following disciplinary policy tips for the next time you revise your classified staff handbook or reopen negotiations on disciplinary procedures for your licensed staff:

- Always include a disclaimer stating that the specific penalty in each case will depend on the rule violated, the severity of the situation, the frequency of policy violations for the particular employee, and the employee’s overall conduct.
- If the policy provides lists of specified acts of misconduct, it should also clarify that any act on the list could subject an employee to discipline up to and including termination, depending on the circumstances.
- Any such list of prohibited acts should also be prefaced with language stating that the list is not meant to be exclusive or exhaustive, so that employees know they can be disciplined or terminated for misconduct that might not have made the list.
- In general, progressive disciplinary policies should refrain from including specific deadlines, as deadlines are often difficult to meet for administrative staff and can result in inconsistencies in application of the policies.

For districts that utilize KASB’s recommended policies, personnel guidelines are housed in the G Section. For anyone having trouble decoding how these policies are categorized, please note that KASB policies beginning with GA concern all employees (classified and licensed), GB policies address your licensed staff only, and GC policies pertain to classified staff only. There are also policies in your C section covering only administrators.

Navigating and drafting these policies can be very difficult. KASB provides recommended policies for adoption or guidance. Should you have any questions or want KASB to review your policies, please contact one of the KASB attorneys.
Deadline August 23, 2019 for Annual Publications Contest

KASB and the Kansas School Public Relations Association are accepting entries for the co-sponsored annual contest recognizing top publications produced by Kansas school districts, cooperatives and vocational-technical schools.

Entries must be from KASB members and received by midnight Friday, Aug. 23, 2019. Publications produced between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019 are eligible. Awards will presented during the KanSPRA Annual Conference Oct. 24-25, 2019 in Topeka, Kansas. For more information on the contest and submission details see kasb.org/awards.

KASB Learning Series
August & September 2019

McREL Evaluation Systems Training: Principal and Teachers
8:30 a.m. Registration
9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Workshop
08.06.19 Hays, The Venue, 2704 Vine

IDEA Reauthorization/Special Education Basics
8:30 a.m. Registration
9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Workshop
08.27.19 Topeka, KASB
08.28.19 Dodge City, Boot Hill Museum
08.29.19 Salina, Hilton Garden Inn

Student Rights Legal Training
8:30 a.m. Registration 9 a.m.-Noon Workshop
09.18.19 Sublette, Service Center
09.19.19 Colby, City Limits Convention Center
09.24.19 Girard, Greenbush ESC
09.26.19 Topeka KASB

Section 504 Legal Training
12:30 p.m. Registration 1-4 p.m. Workshop
09.18.19 Sublette, Service Center
09.19.19 Colby, City Limits Convention Center
09.24.19 Girard, Greenbush ESC
09.26.19 Topeka KASB

What Every Board Member Should Know About Safe and Secure Schools
5 p.m. Registration
5:30-8:30 p.m. Workshop
09.10.19 McPherson, The Cedars
09.11.19 Colby, City Limits Convention Center
09.12.19 Olathe, Education Center

Student Discipline Workshop
8:30 a.m. Registration 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Workshop
09.05.19 Salina, Hageman Education Center

Board Presidents and Leadership Teams
8:30 a.m. Registration
9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Workshop
Focus Topics - Navigating Challenges and Setting Priorities, Legal Issues, Creating Strong Board Teams, Developing Successful Board Agendas
08.08.19 Topeka, KASB

Summer Regional Roundtables for Boards and District Leaders
5 p.m. Registration 5:30-8:30 p.m. Workshop
Focus Topics - Superintendent Evaluation, Legal Reminders, Census Discussions, Safe and Secure Schools, Legislative
08.01.19 Colby, City Limits Conference Center
08.06.19 McPherson, The Cedars
08.06.19 Girard, Greenbush Service Center
08.07.19 Haysville, The Learning Center
08.07.19 Topeka, KASB
08.08.19 Olathe, USD 233 Education Center Board Room

Fall Regional Roundtables for Boards and District Leaders
5 p.m. Registration 5:30-8:30 p.m. Workshop
Focus Topics - School Finance, Aligning District Goals, Legal Issues
09.24.19 Stafford, High School Commons
09.24.19 Hiawatha, The Fisher Center
09.25.19 Sublette, Service Center
09.25.19 Topeka, KASB
09.26.19 Colby, City Limits Convention Center
09.26.19 Olathe, Education Center
10.01.19 McPherson, The Cedars
10.01.19 Girard, Greenbush ESC
10.02.19 Beloit, NCKTC
10.02.19 Haysville, The Learning Center