Class of 2020: A year to remember
Adjusting to a ‘new normal’ for KASB services

By Carol Pitts, cpitts@kasb.org

Over the past three months, the coronavirus pandemic has forced everyone to deal with “the new normal.”

As your member association, KASB is no exception.

When schools were shut down in March, KASB quickly pivoted to online sessions via Zoom to provide training on everything from student data privacy to open meetings to special education. Our legal staff retooled our Human Resources Academy into a blended learning opportunity entitled Human Resources Coaching and Consultation. This workshop is still available on demand for members who would like to access the six learning modules and two recorded Q and A sessions.

Hundreds of our members participated in board leadership online forums, online roundtable discussions and our popular “Leadership through a New Lens” for new and nearly-new board members.

By far our most popular sessions have been the weekly Clerk, Human Resources and Payroll Staff Support Sessions, with 200 plus members tuning in for each of the eight sessions (so far!) for information and guidance on employee payroll and employee benefits.

These are in addition to the Zoom meetings with specific groups, planning sessions with other state and national associations and the state department of education, and state and federal online briefings.

So, what does the future hold for KASB workshops and meetings?

We’re glad you asked! KASB staff continues to refine our 2020-2021 workshop and training schedule. We are adding an online component to most of our meetings. In addition, we are developing plans for members to access recorded information on demand through our member portal.

Speaking of the member portal, there are a number of great resources available by logging in!

Go to https://kasb.org/member-portal/. You can also access this link by going to kasb.org and clicking on the link “Member Portal” in the top menu.

Log in using your email and the password – if you have forgotten your password, use the “Forgotten Password” link on the login page. Once you are logged in you can access a wealth of information related to your district as well as resources posted by KASB for our members. The member portal is also where you register for upcoming events and trainings.

KASB values opportunities to meet in person. We plan to offer onsite, in person workshops starting in June, though we will adhere to all public health rules in the communities where the meetings take place. And some of our meetings, such as our School Law Summer Workshop July 21, will include an option to attend online. Take a look at the last page of this issue of School Board Review for our upcoming events through July.

It’s really all about you!

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey sent to all members on Tuesday, May 19. (Email tcarter@kasb.org if you have questions or did not receive the email.) We are asking for feedback on how we can best serve you in the “new normal” that is 2020 and beyond! 📈
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.
President’s Perspective
Shannon Kimball, Lawrence USD 497

Let grace, compassion, patience lead the way

The 2019-2020 school year has ended—whew! The last nine weeks of the school year seemed to last for an entire calendar year all by itself. We have navigated such extraordinary change and anxiety in such a short period of time, not to mention the loss of beloved experiences and traditions for our staff and students.

I especially missed honoring our graduating classes this year; my district plans a graduation celebration at each of our high schools in mid-July, conditions permitting, but it will look very different than such past ceremonies.

The burning question on my mind, though, is what’s next? How do I support my district in navigating our return to school this fall? What will that return look like for staff, students, and their families?

As I sat down to write this column, the CDC released enhanced interim guidance for what will be necessary to reopen schools to face-to-face learning. I can say with certainty, that the day-to-day experiences of our students and staff will look very different in our facilities next year, even if we continue to keep the numbers of new COVID-19 cases down through successful mitigation efforts across the state.

These are just a few areas within the CDC guidance that touch on the policymaking responsibilities of board members:

- What are your district’s policies for telework (especially for high-risk employees)?
- What are your district’s policies for virtual learning (especially for high-risk learners)?
- What are the policies around attendance and leave, to encourage and support ill students and staff to stay home?
- What will policies be around use of facilities by outside groups and visitors in your buildings?
- What are the policy impacts of the CDC’s social distancing guidelines on staffing, instruction, transportation, meals, and activities?
- What are the budget implications of the social distancing guidance for class size/staffing ratios?
- How might changes to the school calendar be advisable/necessary to implement a safe return to the classroom?
- What are the budget impacts of cleaning protocols and health checks (e.g., supplies, staff time, protective equipment)?
- How does the language of your negotiated agreement intersect with these issues?
- What waivers/flexibility will be needed from state requirements like seat time/calendar days?

This is just a sampling of the areas that will be impacted from a board policy perspective. KSDE is expected to finalize additional guidance in mid-July, but these are lengthy conversations that likely need to be happening now in all of our districts.

As we continue to navigate what comes next, your advocacy in your community around how parents, community leaders, and legislators can best support the planning and operational work of our education experts—the teachers and administrators who have been leading throughout this pandemic—will be extraordinarily important. I believe we must continue to emphasize with all of these stakeholders the absolute necessity of listening to and following sound public health advice and guidance, letting our educational experts lead, allowing teachers and administrators the time necessary to craft multiple versions of instructional and operational plans, and showing them patience, grace, and compassion if these plans have to be adjusted.

In closing, I want to share my profound thanks to all of you for entrusting me with the work of helping to guide our association. I am proud of KASB’s leadership and support during this tumultuous time, and I know our association will continue to work hard to support your needs. I know that our leadership team of incoming KASB President Lori Blake, incoming President-Elect Brad Bergsma, and myself as past president, will continue supporting this level of service. Finally, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to past Presidents Patrick Woods and Dayna Miller for their service to the association during the 2019-20 school year, and for their years of leadership, mentorship, and service to public education. I am grateful to have been a part of this leadership team this year and look forward to navigating the uncertain waters of our future together.
Schools must learn, adapt, evolve & grow

Back in January of this year, reports were trickling out of China about a new virus. News like this is hard on the office hypochondriac and immediately people began to tease me about exhibiting symptoms. In late January, we still only had one case in the U.S. Even in late February it had not affected most of our lives to any substantial degree. A problem like a novel virus is by definition adaptive. We must learn as new data presents itself. We must study the issue, watch the data, and change, evolve, and adapt. That is what we have done.

A couple of weeks later, between March 16 and March 18, when Kansas schools were closed, 38 governors closed schools in their states. Why? Because the data changed. The number of cases grew dramatically. We learned more about transmission. More information meant more adjustments, better decisions.

But we still know woefully little about the virus, prevention, treatment, vaccinations, actual rates of infection, deaths, and transmission. We have better information, but it is still evolving, still changing. Recently, the Kansas City Star reported that tests can be done in wastewater to detect presence of the virus in communities. They used Hiawatha, Kan., as an example of places where remnants of the virus are present in the wastewater, but no active cases have been identified in the community. New data that causes us to ask new questions. New questions that need more study, and so on.

The point of my meandering is not to cast blame, troll, or throw shade. The point is that in five months, this virus has gone from something that was a far-away problem, to something that was very personal when former superintendent and board member Dennis Wilson died on March 22, to something that has devastated our economy and killed an unimaginable number of people. January 1 to the first week of May, our lives have all changed.

For school folks in Kansas, the next big question is what happens next school year? Will we be open in August? Like so many issues in our state and country, some want to make this political. Some folks are already making predictions and accusations about what will happen three months from now, when schools are scheduled to open. Facebook and Twitter are alive with those wanting to posture and use this tragedy for political advantage.

For the doomsayers and prognosticators who want to make this a political issue instead of one based upon the safety and security of all families, I ask one question: How did our January predictions pan out? Five months ago, who predicted that schools would all be closed? That our economy would suffer its biggest setback in a century? That millions of people would be out of work?

I have another idea, one I learned from Rob Scheib, Assistant Superintendent in Emporia Public Schools. “Plan for the worst, hope for the best.” This strategy has long been used by great leaders. Set a lofty goal, but plan like heck for the contingencies. I just started reading “The Splendid and the Vile,” about Winston Churchill’s leadership before and during WWII. Upon becoming prime minister, he was adamant about winning the war, demanding that all “hope for the best.” He would allow no public talk about the possibility of a loss, even admonishing his pastor on the issue. But he spent night and day planning for every contingency, every detail, of “the worst.”

As we think about the 2020-21 school year, we should take this approach. Even more importantly, we must consider the body of knowledge that will exist on August 10 but doesn’t exist on May 10. Just like all the things we know on May 10 that we did not know on January 10. Anyone who claims certain knowledge of what August 10 will look like in terms of this virus and the opening of schools is a charlatan. Anyone who is not learning, adapting, and evolving as we gain new knowledge, and incorporating that into their plans for the safety and security of our students in August lacks competence.

Those of us who are trusted to make these decisions cannot listen to those who would seek to gain political advantage from one position or another. We must learn, adapt, evolve, and grow. The future depends on us.
2020 filing deadline approaches; federal, state, local candidates on ballot

By Leah Fliter, lfliter@kasb.org

Elections will proceed as scheduled this year despite the coronavirus pandemic. With the June 1 filing deadline approaching, school leaders should be looking at candidates who they believe can best represent their values, including possibly running themselves. Several legislators and State Board of Education members began their public service as school board members and educators. KASB does not endorse political candidates.

Every seat in the Kansas Legislature is on the ballot, so the August primary and November general elections will be particularly important for Kansas public education because the final years of the funding formula that settled the Gannon school finance case have not yet been appropriated.

Prior to March 2020, it appeared the state’s financial outlook might allow for a smooth phase-in of the Gannon funding. The near-catastrophic economic impact of the coronavirus, however, will almost certainly prompt legislators to closely examine state expenditures. The Kansas Supreme Court retained oversight of the Gannon case to ensure the Legislature fulfills its commitment; however, with the state’s ending balance now predicted to be deeply in the red in Fiscal Year 2021 there will no doubt be tough discussions about funding priorities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>2020 Election Dates</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>June 1</strong> (12:00 P.M.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>June 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>July 14</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>July 15</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>July 28</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>August 4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>October 13</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>October 14</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>October 27</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>November 3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have questions, call toll-free at 1-800-262-VOTE (8683)

Every seat in the Kansas Legislature is on the ballot, so the August primary and November general elections will be particularly important for Kansas public education.

Education advocates will need to be involved in those discussions.

The 125-member Kansas House of Representatives is elected every two years. Party leaders on both sides of the aisle are recruiting aggressively to fill potential open House seats, and several incumbents have not yet filed for re-election, raising the possibility of additional openings.

The 40-member Kansas Senate is elected every four years, including in 2020. While some party stalwarts have filed for re-election, other longtime Republican and Democratic senators have not yet made their intentions known.

While KASB does not endorse candidates, the organization provides data and briefing materials to all interested potential legislators.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OFFICES TO BE ELECTED OR RETAINED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. President/Vice President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 U.S. Senator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 U.S. Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 State Senators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125 State Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Board of Education (Districts 2, 4, 6, 8, 10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Mail-in voting encouraged

Voting in advance by mail could be an attractive and important option in the fall if the coronavirus resurges as anticipated and voters are reluctant to cast their ballots in person.

Since 1996, Kansas has offered advance voting by mail to all voters. Secretary of State Scott Schwab, whose office oversees state elections, has stated each of the state’s 105 counties are equipped and experienced to handle increased numbers of advance mail ballots and can adjust quantities on demand. Schwab’s office is distributing $2.6 million in CARES Act funding to assist the counties with additional election expenses associated with the virus.

Kansans can vote in person in advance, in person on election day and by advance mail ballot. Voters can go to [sos.kansas.gov/elections](http://sos.kansas.gov/elections) to find deadlines for filing for office, changing party affiliation, and advance voting.

The site also has links for online voter registration, to request an absentee ballot, to view the list of filed candidates, and more.

---

[Image of voting information]

**REGISTER TO VOTE**

**2020 ELECTION INFORMATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELECTION DATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRIMARY ELECTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL ELECTION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CANDIDATE FILING DEADLINES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRIMARY ELECTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL ELECTION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Kansas Courts**

- 2 Supreme Court Justices (Positions 4, 6) (as of 6/11)
- 7 Court of Appeals Judges (Positions 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 14) (as of 6/11)
- District Court Judges (41 retained, 46 elected) (as of 6/11)
- District Magistrate Judges (15 retained, 36 elected) (as of 6/11)

- 6 District Attorneys (DG, JQ, RN, SB, SN, WY counties)
Hiring a school superintendent is arguably the most important decision a local school board will make.

The superintendent is the CEO of the district, implements the board’s policies and often serves as a leader in the community.

Now imagine filling that position without the benefit of having in-person interactions with the candidates for the job.

That’s what school boards have been experiencing during the coronavirus pandemic as boards and job candidates comply with social distancing and quarantine restrictions.

“I would much prefer to shake their hand and look them in the eye and talk with them,” said Dan Patterson, president of the Lakin USD 215 board.

“We were not happy about it over Zoom,” Tracy Meyerkorth said when the Onaga USD 322 board started its superintendent search. “It’s hard to get a feel for a person electronically,” she said.

But both Patterson and Meyerkorth said they and their fellow board members eventually warmed up to the online conferencing interview process.

Terry Deines, chairman of the Marion County Special Education Cooperative board, said after interviewing candidates for the position of director. “I was really surprised how well it worked.” Deines is president of the Centre USD 397 board, which is one of five districts served by the special education co-op. He added that he thought by allowing the candidates to interview via Zoom from their own homes, it gave the candidates an additional comfort level.

Meyerkorth agreed, saying even though the interviews were on Zoom, she was able to note their facial expressions and demeanor.

The Onaga board hired an interim superintendent, Dan Polk. “After his interview, I felt like I knew him,” she said. “Given the circumstances, this was the next best thing,” to an in-person interview, she said.

The superintendent interviews also included Zoom time between the candidates and key staff members. Oftentimes when a candidate is brought in for an interview, he or she shares a meal with the board, participates in a public reception and tours the district’s facilities. With social distancing, however, those parts of the process were out of the question.

In the three instances cited, KASB Leadership Services worked with the boards by gathering applications, researching candidates, winnowing down the number and helping set up the interviews. KASB assists in the majority of superintendent searches in the state.

The board members said the process went smoothly and while they had apprehensions at first about not meeting candidates in person, they said everything worked out.

“There are always some new ways to do things and it turned out pretty good. Sometimes change is good,” Deines said. 📝

Video conferencing technology is being used more for hiring during the current pandemic.
Tribute to the Class of 2020

Graduation this year has been like none other. Across the state, Kansans have found creative ways to honor the class of 2020 in a safe, socially distanced way because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Online, in parades, on the radio, turning on the high school stadium lights, at the drive-in theater and in numerous other ways, communities banded together to give graduating seniors the send off they deserved. Here are some comments from graduates and officials that speak to the unique challenges facing this year’s senior class.

“We will prevail. We will be victorious people. You just have to stay positive,” Nicole Robinson, a senior at Clearwater High School, which had a parade of decorated vehicles accompanied by Pomp and Circumstance blaring through loudspeakers courtesy of a local DJ.

“I’ve seen probably two of them (fellow students) since before spring break. I’m super excited to see them all.” Taygan Daisy, senior at Southeast of Saline High School, during parade of vehicles with seniors and their families that went through Assaria and Gypsum.

YARD SIGNS FOR SENIORS
We were so excited to celebrate our Hutch High seniors and hand out special yard signs to each of them for their graduation! Congratulations, class of 2020, on all that you have accomplished together in the last four years!

To quote Allen Fee: “We are all extremely empathetic to the effects that Covid-19 has had on the physical health and well-being of our country, we are very proud to be a part of this project honoring our HHS graduating senior class. We understand they are all missing on some important memories from their senior year, and hope this recognition gives them a very small reminder of all of their accomplishments at Hutchinson High School.”

Topeka West High School graduates

Sedan High School graduates
Will COVID-19 revenue woes hit schools?

By Scott Rothschild, srothschild@kasb.org

When the Legislature convened in January, it appeared the increased funding for public schools ordered by the Kansas Supreme Court after years of litigation in the Gannon lawsuit was somewhat secure.

Then the coronavirus pandemic hit and now fiscal security is as elusive as developing a vaccine for the deadly virus.

In April, state budget experts concluded the COVID-19 pandemic had ended the economic expansion that started after the Great Recession. They lowered Kansas’ general revenue fund estimate for the current and next fiscal years by $1.272 billion, but even this dramatic 8.3 percent decrease may turn out to be too optimistic given the current uncertainties.

With K-12 making up half of the state budget, alarm bells have once again sounded that the state will carve into school funding to help balance the budget.

Since most revenue for the state comes from income and sales taxes, it is important to note that the economic collapse has dramatically reduced Kansas personal income. In November, Kansas personal income for the fiscal year was estimated to increase by 3.6 percent. But in April, as the pandemic worsened, Kansas personal income was forecast to decrease 3.4 percent.

In the face of these budgetary and economic challenges, Gov. Laura Kelly has said she wants to protect K-12 funding and that she believes the state’s ability to build up a healthy ending balance for the current fiscal year will provide enough funding for state services and education for now.

But the problem arises in the next fiscal year, which is right around the corner, starting July 1, when the state faces a severe revenue shortfall.

Unlike the federal government, the state is constitutionally prohibited from running a deficit so expenditures and revenues must somehow match up.

There are many options available to Kelly and the Legislature, including budget cuts, tax increases, delaying payments, dipping into reserves or combinations of all the above.

Kelly has said she doesn’t want to make any budget decisions for the next fiscal year until she sees what the federal government does to help states. Congress and President Donald Trump have already provided some stimulus assistance, which has resulted in Kansas getting $86 million in school district aid. But states are counting on much more.

“We’re obviously looking at the budget very closely,” Kelly said recently. “With the ending balance that we have, I’m comfortable that we can get through the rest of this fiscal year without a lot of issues. We’re going to wait to make some decisions about (fiscal year) ’21 to see what if anything the federal government does to assist us.

“If you think back to the recession in 2007-8-9, at that point the federal government did provide a fair chunk of change … that we were able to use then to fill the gaps in our Medicaid program and our education program. We
were able to avoid very, very deep cuts to both of those programs. We want to wait and see. We don’t want to make any decisions about fiscal year ’21 until we know for sure what the federal government is going to do,” she said.

During the Great Recession, Kansas received hundreds of millions in stimulus aid. Still, Kansas cut school funding from the promises made in the Montoy lawsuit, which prompted the filing of the Gannon lawsuit. Gannon wasn’t resolved until last year with legislation that will phase-in increases through 2023. Going forward, the question is will those commitments stand.

### Economic Assumptions
**Impact of COVID pandemic; quick recovery**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020</th>
<th></th>
<th>2021</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nov. 19 Est</td>
<td>Apr. 20 Est</td>
<td>Nov. 19 Est</td>
<td>Apr. 20 Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflation</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US GDP</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>-4.5%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS GDP</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>-4.7%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Personal Income</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>-3.2%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS Personal Income</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>-3.4%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By Scott Rothschild, srothschild@kasb.org

Now that the school year is over, the question on the minds of parents, students, teachers and administrators is — will schools re-open in August?

Kansas Education Commissioner Randy Watson says at this point, that’s the plan.

“We are cautiously optimistic we will be in school in August 2020,” Watson said recently.

After schools were shut down in mid-March because of the coronavirus pandemic, Kansas teachers won praise for developing continuous learning programs through online instruction and sending lesson packets to students’ homes. But teachers across the state have also acknowledged that without daily contact in the classroom, many students have fallen behind academically, socially and emotionally.

Now that states, including Kansas, are relaxing restrictions on businesses and public places, some have vowed that schools must open on time, while others say safety must be the top priority.

Under Gov. Laura Kelly’s re-opening plan, as early as June 1, K-12 facilities could allow up to 90 students, instructors, or staff present for normal operations if they can maintain at least six feet of distance between individuals or groups and fundamental cleaning and public health practices are followed.

But re-opening plans during this deadly pandemic have been problematic. It’s difficult to plan for opening school three months from now when who would’ve guessed that three months ago, a worldwide pandemic would’ve shut down schools and the world’s economy.

“Even if Kansans do everything perfectly for the next couple of months, new outbreaks are almost inevitable until a COVID-19 vaccine is developed, manufactured and made widely available. It is essential that we make this transition slowly, gradually and cautiously.”

- Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly

The biggest question of the summer: Will schools re-open in August?

In August, schools hope to resume classes and assemblies such as this one in Lansing USD 469.
learning plan to ensure that students are growing socially, emotionally and academically.

On June 1, Watson said he wants to enlist the aid of hundreds of parents, educators, board members and legislators to work on how to implement the new learning plan and the logistics of opening schools and ensuring safety.

That guidance plan would then go to Kansas school superintendents on July 10 and then the State Board of Education on July 14-15 for possible approval.

In addition, some legislators have recommended an interim committee be set up to look into the continuous learning plans. House K-12 Education Budget Committee Chairwoman Kristey Williams, R-Augusta, has proposed that the plans include some “direct contact instruction.” Her proposal also sets specific amounts of time that teachers must provide reading, math and English instruction and calls for accountability measures to gauge student progress.

Meanwhile, Kelly, who was the first governor in the country to shut all schools for the remainder of the school year, has said she hopes schools re-open in August but added that if further closures are needed, Kansas has developed “the gold standard” for continuous learning.

“Fortunately, Kansas put in what has really become the gold standard for continuous learning guidelines,” Kelly said, crediting teachers and administrators. She also said schools have implemented meal programs, mental health services and child care for front line health and safety workers.

“So, we have the model. I hope that we don’t have to use it in August but if the wave comes back in October or November, we already know what to do,” Kelly said.

She added, “I want the schools open, I want Friday night football, I want all of that to happen. That is our goal but we are going to be prepared for either one.”

Watson said there is no substitute for the classroom experience to teach students. “We have too many kids who cannot learn if we are not back in session,” he said.
Federal COVID-19 response for schools

By Leah Fliter, lfliter@kasb.org

In late March Congress passed and President Trump signed into law the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act that funnels $13.5 billion to states for elementary and secondary education.

At least 90 percent of those funds must support local school district coronavirus-response activities, such as planning and coordinating long-term school closures; purchasing educational technology to support online learning for all students; and additional activities authorized by federal elementary and secondary education laws.

The law also includes a separate $25 million rural development line item that is pegged for distance learning.

Kansas will receive $84 million of the CARES Act funding for K-12 schools. Kansas State Department of Education officials say about $74 million will be distributed through the Title 1 formula and the final $10 million should go to special education.

To receive its share of the CARES funding, Kansas must provide K-12 education funding in Fiscal Years 2021 and 2022 of (at least) the average of the past three years’ levels. U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos is authorized to waive that requirement upon request from the state. School districts must also guarantee, to the extent practicable, that they will pay their employees and contractors during the period of disruption attributed to the coronavirus.
Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER)

In addition to the $13.5 billion grants to states, governors in each state will receive a share of $3 billion for emergency support for school districts that have been most significantly affected by the coronavirus pandemic to continue to provide educational services to their students and to support on-going operations. Gov. Laura Kelly is authorized to send $26 million to public and private K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, and other education-related organizations. Kelly’s office has not yet announced how those funds will be distributed.

Advocates request additional federal funds for IDEA, internet access

While the CARES Act was being developed in Congress, KASB, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) and others requested Congress include additional funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and for improved home internet access for students.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

The IDEA governs special education. When the law was enacted in the 1970s, Congress pledged to pay 40 percent of a school district’s excess costs of educating students with disabilities. (In Kansas, gifted students are also served by special education teachers.) The actual federal reimbursement level has historically hovered in the mid-teens and is currently at about 13 percent. KASB and NSBA continue to press Congress to fully fund IDEA or provide a minimum next school year of $13 billion, to compensate for additional current expenses associated with online learning and with anticipated new obligations and expenses when schools re-open.

The additional IDEA funding request was not included in the CARES Act. Advocates are pushing for it to be included in a future federal stimulus bill.

Broadband internet access for students

Kansas school buildings have been closed since March 17 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but learning continues in the state’s 286 public school districts. Districts’ Continuous Learning Plans commonly involve a hybrid of take-home packets and online learning that depends on internet access.

The National Center for Education Statistics estimates 14 percent of school-aged children didn’t have home internet access in 2017 and Kansas was slightly below that national rate; based on those statistics, 70,000 Kansas K-12 students lack access. The gap between internet “haves” and “have-nots” (“the homework gap”) is particularly acute in rural areas without coverage or in high-poverty areas where families can’t afford service.

With schools, public libraries, universities, churches, and other internet-equipped public buildings also closed, the homework gap is even wider for students who do not have internet access at home.

Education advocacy organizations leaders nationwide, including KASB President Shannon Kimball, repeatedly asked Congress for $2 billion in federal funding and to authorize the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to

Continued on page 16
use its authority to help schools purchase Wi-Fi hotspots, modems, routers and connected devices for their students without internet access at home. Advocates said the money could be funneled through the existing ERate program that provides broadband internet access to schools and libraries. That request was not fulfilled in the CARES Act.

In late April, the Federal Communications Commission and Department of Education they were encouraging states to utilize the CARES Act funding to support online learning during the pandemic.

Congress responded, however, with the bipartisan introduction of the Emergency Educational Connections Act in both chambers.

The Senate version of the bill provides $4 billion for home internet access; double the amount repeatedly requested by KASB, NSBA and other school leaders. The House version provides $2 billion. NSBA and the broad coalition of educational advocates working to close the homework gap now support the $4 billion figure because of anticipated increased costs associated with summer learning and the possibility of a return to online learning if the virus resurfaces in the fall.

The Emergency Educational Connections Act also gives the FCC the authority to administer the funds through the ERate program.

**HEROES Act**

On May 15, the U.S. House of Representatives approved H.R 6800, the $3 trillion Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act that would provide about $60 billion for K-12 education. The funding would be distributed according to the Title I formula.

The bill would also establish a $1.5 billion Emergency Connectivity Fund at the Federal Communications Commission.

Senate Republicans immediately expressed opposition to H.R. 6800, stating Congress should assess the impact of the CARES Act before passing an additional stimulus bill. Should the HEROES Act pass Congress it’s likely the final version of the legislation will differ substantially from the House version.

KASB is monitoring the legislation and will report additional information when it becomes available.

**Kansans should contact a Kansan at the FCC**

FCC Chairman and Parsons, Kansas, native Ajit Pai said in April the FCC has made “substantial progress” over the past several years to expand broadband internet access and has worked “aggressively” recently to relax rules against providers donating and schools accepting the donation of connectivity technology.

He declined to support using FCC-administered ERate funds to help schools and students purchase WiFi hotspots, modems, routers, and connected devices to enable students to learn at home during the pandemic, saying federal law restricts those purchases to classroom use.

Pai on April 23 stated he was working with the U.S. Department of Education and Congress on a “Remote Learning Initiative” that would be announced “soon.” He said the initiative should be administered separately from the ERate program because he does not want the initiative to face “administrative burden and delay.”

Pai asked educators to tweet or email him with their ideas on closing the homework gap. His Twitter handle is @AjitPaiFCC; his email address is Ajit.Pai@fcc.gov.
Contact information for Kansas Congressional Delegation (Washington, D.C)

EMAILS/PHONE CALLS ARE PREFERABLE TO HARD COPY LETTERS

Senator Pat Roberts
109 Hart
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-4774
Send emails to: www.roberts.senate.gov/public/?=EmailPat
Copy Tashayla Person: Tashayla_Person@roberts.senate.gov

Senator Jerry Moran
521 Dirksen
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-6521
Send emails to: www.moran.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/e-mail-jerry
Copy Kyle Christian: Kyle_Christian@moran.senate.gov

U.S. House District 1:
Congressman Roger Marshall
312 Cannon
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-2715
Send emails to: https://marshall.house.gov/zip-code-lookup?form=/contact/email-me
Copy Zach Lowry: Zach.Lowry@mail.house.gov

U.S. House Dist. 2:
Congressman Steve Watkins
1205 Longworth
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-6601
Send emails to: https://watkins.house.gov/contact/email
Copy Dean Johnson: Dean.Johnson@mail.house.gov

U.S. House Dist. 3:
Congresswoman Sharice Davids
1541 Longworth
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-2865
Send emails to: https://davids.house.gov/contact/email-me
Copy Brandon Naylor: Brandon.Naylor@mail.house.gov

U.S. House Dist. 4:
Congressman Ron Estes
2452 Rayburn
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-6216
Send emails to: https://estes.house.gov/contact
Copy Elizabeth Diohep: Elizabeth.Diohep@mail.house.gov
KASB new annual surveys now open

Earlier this month, KASB made available a new method for submitting the annual survey data we ask our member districts to provide. Previously this information had been collected via an external website requiring a separate login access code. Now these surveys have been added to the KASB Member Portal so that anyone with Account Administrator rights can update the information for his or her district.

However, the location isn’t the only thing that has changed. Here are some other features that members might be excited about:

Number of surveys reduced from 10 to 6

Previously KASB asks districts to submit 10 surveys annually, plus submit their Election results every other year, and provide a copy of their teacher salary schedule each year. Starting with the 2020-21 school year, there are six annual surveys and the Election survey every other year, along with the annual submission of the teacher salary schedules. The list of surveys is as follows:

1. Calendar: This survey contains most of the information from the previous calendar survey minus some that have been moved to the Teacher and Policies surveys.
2. Elections: This survey asks for counts of individuals falling into certain categories related to the school board elections every two years to supplement the information provided on each individual board member.
3. Fees: his survey asks for information on the individual fees charged by each district in a variety of categories.
4. Policies: All the data previously collected on other surveys that speaks to district policies have been gathered into one survey. This includes questions previously asked on the Other Staff, Calendar, Fees, Supplemental, and Retirement surveys.
5. Staff: The data previously collected via the Superintendent, Principal, Central Office Staff, and Other Staff Surveys have been consolidated into one survey. The format for the kinds of data provided will be more flexible depending on the data available and in what format it is kept by each district.
6. Supplemental: This survey asks for information on the individual supplemental pay categories for each district.
7. Teacher: This survey asks for all information related to teachers previously collected on the Calendar, Employee Relations, and Teacher Contracts surveys.

More flexibility for submitting data

For each new school year, KASB now creates a new record for each district showing the responses from the previous year that have likely not changed and will ask districts to go in and update whatever has changed for the current year. This should reduce the amount of time it takes to complete each survey.

For the Fees, Staff, and Supplemental surveys, which ask districts to provide multiple responses per year, KASB copies previous responses over for the current school year and allows districts to update them using the portal, but we also give districts the option of using...
an Excel template to submit this information. On the portal, district staff can update records pulled over from the previous year, create new records, and mark existing records for deletion. Via Excel, districts have the option of using a blank template or can request a template pre-populated with last year’s responses to submit. Data submitted via Excel will replace the records copied over from the previous years for districts using this option.

Formal submission signoff process

A few years back, KASB changed the nature of the submission process to allow districts to return to previously submitted data and updated it as more, better, or revised information became available. This was done to make the submission process more flexible and to reflect the fact that this data is considered living and evolving rather than static. However, this presents challenges when it comes to determining what has been submitted and what still needs to be submitted.

In terms of timing, KASB did away with actual set deadlines for surveys and has no plans to reinstate specific cutoff dates for any data collection. We ask the districts try to submit the data to us as early as possible based on the availability of time to complete and of the data elements themselves. We will continue to work on finding a good balance between providing timely and effective reminders about sending this data to us and not causing undue stress or frustration with too many communications about this process.

To make it easier to track what districts have submitted and what still needs to be reviewed and revised, KASB is reintroducing a sign-off feature for all surveys. KASB now includes a “Verified by District” checkbox on each survey, and this field will be used to determine what surveys are marked incomplete on each district’s list. When the survey data is copied over for a new school year, all the surveys have the “Verified by District” box unchecked. Once a district staff person opens the survey, makes any necessary changes, and then clicks the “Verified by District” box, the survey will no longer appear on their list to complete.

This gives districts several options for submitting data, including opening, updating, and saving a survey’s data multiple times before checking the “Verified by District” box or opening, updating, checking “Verified by District,” and saving, then returning to the survey at a later time if a value needs to be revised. Districts can also choose to have certain staff members add and update data, then escalate to another staff member to review and verify.

Improved accessibility of data

Based on member feedback, we have made several enhancements designed to make it easier to use the data provided by member districts. Some examples are:

- All users can view read-only versions of all survey forms from any member district.
- Forms can be printed for review and archiving.
- Non-USD members can now submit data.
- Data is provided onscreen in grids (tables), in an Excel file that provides comparisons based on several factors, and in online interactive tools created in Microsoft’s Power BI.
- Survey data is now tied to all other district data in our system for an improved ability to analyze and create reports that span multiple sources and types of data.

More training resources

We worked to simplify the existing KASB Data Steward Handbook and make it applicable to both administrative and non-administrative users, so it has been replaced by the KASB Data Handbook. In addition, several videos

Continued on page 20
Surveys

Continued from page 19

have been created to show both how to work with the surveys and also how to work with the portal in general.

The following lists the resources available on the Tutorials page of the Member Portal:

User Manuals (PDF)
- User’s Guide for Individual (non-admin) users
- User’s Guide for Account Administrators
- KASB Data Handbook
- KASB Data Quick Start Guide

General Video Tutorials

Working with the Portal
- Logging In / Changing Password
- Home Screen / Sorting and Grouping Grids
- Contact Menu / Contact Information / Website Profile
- Account Menu / Contacts / Memberships and Services / Points and Awards
- Events Menu / Register for An Event / Account Event Registrations

Evolution

It has been a long process to get to where we are today with the new surveys within the Member Portal, but there is still work to be done. Members who are accessing the surveys already are helping us find any kinks in the system, and we are addressing these as rapidly as possible. Luckily there have not been very many such issues, and KASB expects nothing but continued improvement and enhancement as we move forward.

I encourage you to spend some time checking out the new surveys and hope that you will provide us any feedback you might have. If you have any questions about the new surveys and/or the data from them, contact me at tcarter@kasb.org.

RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

have been created to show both how to work with the surveys and also how to work with the portal in general.

The following lists the resources available on the Tutorials page of the Member Portal:

User Manuals (PDF)
- User’s Guide for Individual (non-admin) users
- User’s Guide for Account Administrators
- KASB Data Handbook
- KASB Data Quick Start Guide

General Video Tutorials

Working with the Portal
- Logging In / Changing Password
- Home Screen / Sorting and Grouping Grids
- Contact Menu / Contact Information / Website Profile
- Account Menu / Contacts / Memberships and Services / Points and Awards
- Events Menu / Register for An Event / Account Event Registrations

Evolution

It has been a long process to get to where we are today with the new surveys within the Member Portal, but there is still work to be done. Members who are accessing the surveys already are helping us find any kinks in the system, and we are addressing these as rapidly as possible. Luckily there have not been very many such issues, and KASB expects nothing but continued improvement and enhancement as we move forward.

I encourage you to spend some time checking out the new surveys and hope that you will provide us any feedback you might have. If you have any questions about the new surveys and/or the data from them, contact me at tcarter@kasb.org.

RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

have been created to show both how to work with the surveys and also how to work with the portal in general.

The following lists the resources available on the Tutorials page of the Member Portal:

User Manuals (PDF)
- User’s Guide for Individual (non-admin) users
- User’s Guide for Account Administrators
- KASB Data Handbook
- KASB Data Quick Start Guide

General Video Tutorials

Working with the Portal
- Logging In / Changing Password
- Home Screen / Sorting and Grouping Grids
- Contact Menu / Contact Information / Website Profile
- Account Menu / Contacts / Memberships and Services / Points and Awards
- Events Menu / Register for An Event / Account Event Registrations

Evolution

It has been a long process to get to where we are today with the new surveys within the Member Portal, but there is still work to be done. Members who are accessing the surveys already are helping us find any kinks in the system, and we are addressing these as rapidly as possible. Luckily there have not been very many such issues, and KASB expects nothing but continued improvement and enhancement as we move forward.

I encourage you to spend some time checking out the new surveys and hope that you will provide us any feedback you might have. If you have any questions about the new surveys and/or the data from them, contact me at tcarter@kasb.org.
KASB realm of services includes lobbying

The Kansas Legislative Division of Post Audit (LPA) recently sent all local units of government, including school districts, a survey requesting information about the amount of money spent on membership dues to associations that lobby, or for paying lobbyists.

KASB does engage in lobbying, so members should report the amount they paid to KASB in annual membership dues. We have received questions about how much of KASB dues goes to lobbying activities.

First, lobbying is defined in Kansas state law as promoting or opposing in any manner action or nonaction by (1) the legislature on any legislative matter, (2) any executive agency on any executive administrative matter and (3) any judicial agency on any judicial administrative matter; and certain entertainment and gifts to state officers and employees. In some cases, individuals are required to register with the state as lobbyists.

KASB takes positions promoting or opposing specific legislative and executive actions based on policies adopted by KASB members at our Delegate Assembly, or if the DA has not taken a position, the Board of Directors. We communicate those positions through testimony, communication with individual policy makers and encouraging members to express their positions.

KASB lobbyists file expenditure reports as required by state law, including expenditures for entertainment and communications. Except for KASB’s annual reception for legislators, those expenditures are usually under the $100 reporting threshold or “zero.” KASB lobbyists also report an estimated percentage of salary received for lobbying activities. Those reports are available to the public.

However, a majority of KASB’s advocacy or governmental relations activities do not fit this definition of lobbying. KASB staff spend more time observing, analyzing and reporting on activities of the Legislature, State Board of Education, the Governor’s office and other executive branch agencies. This helps our members know and understand how these activities will affect their districts so they can carry out their duties to lead local public schools. It also helps them advocate for or discuss these issues with their locally elected state and federal representatives and senators themselves if they choose to do so.

In addition, the advocacy department conducts research on educational issues, responds to requests for information by the Legislature or other parts of government, and often testifies as neutral to provide general information.

Staff members regularly attended legislative sessions and committee meetings and work at “promoting or opposing” legislative action, such as testifying as proponents or opponents of bills, preparing communications urging legislative action, and assisting in the development of the association’s policy positions. Most of their time is not spent on direct lobbying, but on daily review of legislative bills and communication about legislative “news,” general research on issues, producing reports, articles or videos about education issues, and other projects.

What else do KASB members receive for their membership dues or for charges for specific services or programs?

Pandemic response

Like all organizations, school districts have faced unprecedented challenges due to the Coronavirus pandemic. KASB has responded with these steps to support our members.

KASB worked closely with the Kansas State Department of Education, United School Administrators, Kansas School Superintendents Association and Kansas National Education Association to promote a common understanding of issues facing school districts and transitioning to continuous learning plans for students while schools are mostly closed for in-person classes.

KASB legal, leadership services and risk management staff have provided weekly online meetings for school board clerks, business officials and human resource staff on conducting board meetings that comply with open meeting requirements, dealing with new federal and state laws on leave, payment and other benefits, and other legal and management issues.

Continued on page 22
KASB services

Continued from page 21

KASB legal staff are providing a weekly online meeting for the Kansas School Attorneys Association.

KASB staff have published new documents and online video resources on emergency paid sick leave and family leave under the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act, student data privacy requirements in federal and state law for continuous learning plans; special education requirements under continuous learning plans; guidance for districts under the Professional Negotiations Act and using Memoranda of Understanding to address changes in teacher contract expectations under the continuous plans; new regulations for the Kansas Open Meetings Act; and sample resolutions concerning graduation requirements and paying staff.

KASB conducted special online sessions for school board presidents, vice presidents and superintendents during the first weeks of the pandemic to address new requirements and questions; and transitioned Spring regional meetings to online forums on continuous learning plans and local response to pandemic. KASB has launched a new weekly “lunch and learn” series of online interactive meetings for board members to share information.

KASB has transitioned its annual day long Human Resources Academy to a series of video presentations, interactive sessions and one-on-one consultations.

KASB has provided daily email updates promoting and summarizing these events and resources; published an online only issue of its monthly School Board Review magazine on the COVID-19 pandemic and continues to provide ongoing coverage of state and federal news.

KASB worked with other education organizations to develop a list of priorities for federal action to support K-12 education as Congress continues additional steps in response to the pandemic.

Ongoing Services

While responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, KASB has maintained ongoing functions as required while closing the KASB office in response to state and local stay at home orders. These are services KASB provides year-round.

Educational Leadership

KASB Leadership Services provides training for new school board members and boards, strategic planning and goal setting, and leadership development. KASB assists with a large majority of superintendent searches in the state each year.

KASB conducted over 70 onsite services for boards, superintendents and staff last year. Topics included basics of school board service, threat assessment and school safety, facility studies and bond elections, human resources, transportation, staffing levels studies, and site council development.

KASB also provides a variety of training programs for district leaders and business operations throughout the year.

Legal Services

KASB members may join the KASB Legal Assistance Fund to receive the on call services of five attorneys and additional support staff. The legal team received over 15,000 phone or email questions on legal matters over the past year. KASB lawyers conducted 39 onsite staff development trainings in member districts in 2019, provided state mandated negotiations training to 113 member organizations and represented 13 members in teacher negotiations.

KASB staff also conducted 22 student discipline hearings and 15 legal investigations, represented members in 11 personnel matters and 11 regulator agency disputes. They have also represented districts on issues such as interlocal agreements, special education, open meetings and property transfers.

The legal department also publishes handbooks on school law topics, and provides policy advice, model policies and updates for members to manage their districts and comply with state and federal laws.

Risk Management

KASB risk management programs provide members with opportunities for savings and higher quality risk management services. These include 110 members in the association’s worker compensation pool; 63 members purchasing property casualty coverage; 20 members receiving employee benefits and section 125 services; 118 members in student accident insurance; 36 receiving health insurance consulting and 179 in KASB’s natural gas purchasing consortium.

Research

The KASB Research Department conducts annual surveys for reports on staffing, salaries, negotiated agreements, school calendars,
fees and more, and provides data and reports on a wide variety of education-related issues from state and national sources.

KASB makes this information available for all members. The department also provides research to members upon request on specific local topics to assist strategic planning and other local initiatives.

Communications, workshops and training

KASB members receive a daily news email that includes original content on a wide range of state and federal education issues. KASB Advocacy staff broadcast live updates using Facebook Live when the legislature is in session and produce weekly (and as needed) video updates during the session and throughout the year. The website provides members quick access to information on key issues and research that can be used for planning.

In 2019, KASB provided a total of 73 workshops and seminars on educational topics attended by 1,725 total participants, plus 385 attended preconference sessions and 584 attended the annual conference.

Topic areas included: Exceptional Boards and Leadership Teams, Improving Postsecondary Success, Developing Quality Educators and Staff, Equity for All Students, Safe, Healthy Students, and Effective, Efficient Organizations.

Please contact Mark Tallman if you have any additional questions about how to respond to the survey or if you have any questions about KASB services.

A copy of KASB’s Annual Report of Services is available on the KASB website. ↪️

Winfield educator named 2020 Teacher of the Year

As a child, Tabatha Rosproy often accompanied her mother, a nurse, to the nursing home where her mother worked.

Tabatha said as a child she connected well with the elderly residents. It’s no wonder then that Tabatha would grow up to become a preschool teacher and develop a program where her classroom was housed in a retirement community.

It was that kind of initiative that led to Winfield USD 465’s Rosproy being named the 2020 Kansas Teacher of the Year. Recently, Rosproy was named 2020 National Teacher of the Year by the Council of Chief State School Officers.

“I am so honored to have been chosen to represent the incredible educators in our nation as National Teacher of the Year, and I’m especially proud to represent Kansas,” Rosproy said. “Kansas is a model for rethinking education, and teachers across the nation are being charged to do just that during these trying times. There is no place that could have better prepared me for this honor.”

Rosproy became the first early childhood educator to be named National Teacher of the Year, and the first one from Kansas since 1962.

Winfield USD 465 Superintendent Nathan Reed said of Rosproy, “She goes above and beyond for all of her students and inspires others to be their very best.”

Rosproy has developed a preschool class that enlists the aid of “grandparent volunteers” at the Cumbernauld Village retirement community and nursing home in Winfield. Her students experience “grandparents love” and in turn the grandparent volunteers are filled with joy. “It’s a win-win for everyone,” she said.

Rosproy says she builds social and emotional development into every fabric of the classroom. Empathy and problem solving are the most important lessons in life, she said.

Rosproy says Kansas really is leading the way in innovation. “I already know how to teach differently because I’m from Kansas,” she said.

As the 2020 National Teacher of the Year, Rosproy will spend a year representing educators and will serve as an ambassador for students and teachers across the nation. She said she hopes to highlight the importance of social-emotional learning and early childhood education for all.

Rosproy began her career as an early childhood teacher in 2010 at the Heartland Programs Head Start in Salina, Salina USD 305. She became an early childhood special education teacher at the Winfield Early Learning Center (WELC) in 2014. She received a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education, with a minor in English, in 2009 from Southwestern College. She is currently working on a master’s degree in education, English as a secondary or other language, from Fort Hays State University. ↪️
Dr. Marcia Weseman, KASB leadership Services, emphasizes the importance of supporting the emotional well-being of school leaders, including board members and superintendents.

“Our emotions and energy levels are absorbed by those around us, we project what we are feeling to others. When we are calm, people around us feel safe,” she said.

Weseman, who has extensive experience providing trauma response training and leading resiliency initiatives, was a guest on the Wed., May 20 Board Leadership Forum.

“Before we can help others, we have to manage ourselves,” she said.

She suggested thinking about it like the advice given before taking off in an airplane – you need to put on your own oxygen mask before helping others. The concept is the same with self-care during a crisis.

“You have to make sure you take care of yourself if you are going to make differences in the lives of your students, your staff and your parents.”

This series of “lunch and learns” concludes next week. If you would like to register for the Wednesday, May 27 online forum, go to this kasb.org/training.

Weseman also briefly reviewed brain research behind our emotional responses during a crisis, noting one significant challenge is to move from reacting to the crisis to a more responsive mode where better decisions can be made.

There are multiple strategies that we can use to train ourselves to manage our responses, Weseman said. During a prolonged crisis such as the current pandemic, it is vitally important to focus on self-care by giving yourself a chance to step away from work and recharge.

The research is clear, Weseman said. “When people disassociate from work, when they return they are more productive and more creative.”

Weseman closed by asking the group to brainstorm a few ways they can support their administrators and staff.

Suggestions included honoring days off and family time, turning off social media, meditation and hobbies.

It was also suggested that as leaders we can wait to send emails during office hours unless it is an emergency. Weseman said, for example, if a board president sends an email at 9 p.m. there could be an expectation that the email should be read and responded to.

Weseman said the emphasis on “giving grace” in our educational community has caught national attention. She suggested we go one step further.

“Show compassion, for our families, our students, our staff and ourselves,” Weseman said.