Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Overview

Introduction

On June 15, 2010 Governor Parkinson established the Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery to examine and make recommendations on issues related to graduation and dropping out. The Kansas Commission aims to bring a comprehensive solution to the issue through a collaboration of businesses, schools, community organizations, parents, state agencies and youth.

Purpose

The purpose of the Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery will be to examine and make recommendations on:

1. Setting a goal and timeline for reducing the statewide annual dropout rate;

2. Further developing early indicator systems to identify students who are at risk of dropping out, or who are not likely to graduate on time from high school without receiving additional support, and school policies that exacerbate dropping out;

3. Expanding the definition of "structured learning time" to include internships and work-study programs and exploring ways to encourage school districts to incorporate quality internships, work and learning programs into structured learning time to engage all students in relevant and rigorous curriculum;

4. Exploring state policies and practices relating to attendance, discipline, grading, retention, promotion, credit recovery, compulsory attendance age, the awarding of the General Equivalency Diploma ("GED") and the use of alternative schools;

5. Providing financial incentives for districts that are effective in graduating at-risk students and recovering high school dropouts;

6. Establishing a threshold annual dropout rate for each school district such that rates in excess of threshold levels would establish a mandatory requirement on districts to adopt and implement a district-wide action plan to reduce dropout rates and effectively track students;

7. Identifying additional areas for improvement and multi-sector collaboration;

8. Exploring funding sources (public, private and non-profit) and identify resources that may be available to sustain the work and recommendation of the Commission.

Commission Membership

Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fun	Melissa Ness
Kansas Association of School Boards	Dr. John Heim
Kansas National Education Association	Blake West
Faith-Based Representative	Donnovan Karber, Youth Horizons
Armed Forces Representative	Lt. Col. Mike Erwin, Kansas Adjutant General's Department
Non-Profit Agency Representative	Miriam Krehbiel, United Way of Greater Topeka
Community Representative	Malissa Martin-Wilke, Communities In Schools of Kansas
High School Principal Representative	James Mireles, Garden City High School
Youth representative	Keil Eggers, Kansas Consortium for Youth Voice
Parent Organization Representative	Nancy Keel, Kansas Parents as Teachers Association
Superintendent Representative	Denise Wren, USD 259
District Judge Representative	Honorable Tom Webb, Haskell County District Court
Legislator Representative	Representative Jo Ann Pottorff
Legislator Representative	Representative Barbara Ballard
Legislator Representative	Senator Steve Morris
Legislator Representative	Senator Anthony Hensley
Kansas Department of Commerce	Secretary Bill Thornton
Kansas Department of Corrections	Secretary Roger Werholtz
Kansas Department of Health and Environment	Secretary Roderick Bremby
Kansas Department of Labor	Deputy Secretary Dorothy Stites
Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services	Tanya Keys
Kansas Juvenile Justice Authority	Commissioner Russ Jennings
Kansas State Department of Education	Interim Commissioner Dr. Diane DeBacker
Kansas Board of Regents	Christine Downey-Schmidt
Kansas State Board of Education	Jana Shaver
Kansas Hispanic and Latino American Affairs Commission	Linda Kotich
Governor's Office	Jennifer Knorr
Kansas DropINs	Jessica Noble
Kansas Mentors	Nicolette Geisler
Kansas African American Affairs Commission	Harriet Johnson
Business/Industry Representative	Brian Black, Spirit AeroSystems, Inc.
Foundation Representative	Awaiting appointment

Commission Structure

At each meeting, specific topics will be presented and members will be invited to self-select the topic that they would like to work on in a small group setting. In each small group there will be a presentation on the topic, opportunity for discussion and the development of a recommendation. These recommendations will be shared with and adopted by the large group. This process will allow multiple issues to be researched at each meeting, thus increasing the number of recommendations the committee can develop in six months.

Timeline

Creation of the Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery	June 15, 2010
First meeting	July 26, 2010
Second meeting	August 12, 2010
Third meeting	September 23, 2010
Fourth meeting	October 22, 2010
Fifth meeting	November 15, 2010
Sixth meeting	December 10, 2010
Final meeting-presentation of final report	January 4, 2010

Outcome

The main outcome of the Commission is the final report which must be presented to the Governor by January 2011.

Draft Outline for Final Report

1. Executive Summary (Letter from Governor)

2. Kansas Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission Report
    a. Introduction
    b. The Scope of the Dropout Problem in Kansas
        i. Why Students Drop Out of School
        ii. Statistics
        iii. Graduation and Dropout Rates and Calculations in Kansas
    c. The Legislative Charge of Commission

3. Findings and Recommendations on:
    a. Statewide and District Annual Dropout Rate (Goal and Timeline for Reducing)
        i. Charge
        ii. Background
        iii. Recommendation of Commission
    b. Early Identification System
        i. Charge
        ii. Background
        iii. Recommendation of Commission
    c. Effective Prevention, Intervention and Recovery Strategies
        i. Charge
        ii. Background
        iii. Recommendation of Commission
    d. Policies and Practices
        i. Charge
        ii. Background
        iii. Recommendation of Commission
    e. Budget Priorities and Financial Issues (Coherence)
        i. Charge
        ii. Background
        iii. Recommendation of Commission

4. Next Steps
    a. Legislative Action
    b. Coherence of State Initiative
    c. Awareness Campaign

5. Conclusion

6. Appendices