

Kansas Education Commission Recommendations Help Ring in the New Year



Kansas Education Commission Final Report - December 2010

The start of a new year is always an exciting time. More than any other time of year, the new year is a time when everything seems possible. It's the perfect time to have received the recommendations from the Kansas Education Commission.

The Commission was created by the State Board of Education to examine the framework for reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as set out in the Blueprint for Reform. The Commission is charged with making recommendations for actions that will ensure Kansas students are prepared for the world of work and/or post-secondary education and that there is a smooth transition from the No Child Left Behind accountability system to the new system as outlined in the U.S. Department of Education's Blueprint for Reform.

After countless meetings and hours of dedicated thought and work, the Commission in December presented the State Board with 56 recommendations related to the five priority areas identified in the Blueprint for Reform. Among the recommendations are adopting the Common Core Standards in math and English language arts, something the State Board has already done. The commission also recommends the use of integrated assessments and providing multiple testing opportunities throughout the year instead of relying on a single-point-in-time assessment for accountability. Use of a student growth model that will rely upon development of an integrated database that interfaces with local school, district and other state agency systems to provide comprehensive, historical student data, is also among the KEC recommendations.

Other recommendations focus on establishing statewide definitions of effective and highly effective teaching and leading, and the frameworks to evaluate those competencies. With that come recommendations related to developing models of compensation for teachers and school leaders that will support improved student achievement and encourage professional growth, as well as recommendations for recruiting highly effective teachers and leaders. In other areas, the Commission addresses equity and opportunity for all students with recommendations related to support of a well-prepared education workforce as well as positive school reform systems and access for all students to high quality early childhood education. Improved coordination among K-12 education and post-secondary education is also included among the KEC recommendations, as well as improved coordination among post-secondary institutions to ensure opportunities for students to pursue programs of study regardless of their geographic location. All of the KEC recommendations can be found in the Commission's final report on the [KEC website](#).

I am grateful to the members of the commission for their dedicated service and thoughtful consideration of the issues facing education in our state, and I look forward to working with members of the State Board of Education to begin setting education priorities for the coming years.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane".

Dr. Diane DeBacker
Kansas Commissioner of
Education