

Commissioner's Monthly Message



Welcome Back!

I've always loved this time of year. As a kid, it was all about new school supplies and being reunited with my friends. As a teacher and an administrator, it was about the opportunity to start fresh with a new group of students, a new set of curious minds to engage, a new collection of lesson plans to deliver and maybe a new teaching technique to implement. And now, as the interim Education Commissioner, this is still an exciting time of year for me. It's a time when I get to see all of the hard work of our teachers, administrators, education consultants and parents put into action in the classroom.

The classrooms of today's Kansas students probably look very different from the classrooms in which many of us were taught. Students are engaged and actively participating in their learning. Because every student processes information differently, teachers are challenging students to not simply recite a correct answer, but to dig into the issue and develop critical thinking skills that help them discover the answer. Technology in the classroom is linking students to researchers in Antarctica and beyond; expanding their understanding of the world around them. And, today's Kansas high school students have the opportunity to personalize their learning based on their interests through the use of Career Clusters, which organize academic and occupational knowledge and skills into a cohesive course sequence that provides the student a path to two- and four-year colleges, graduate schools, and the workplace.

But for all of the great things happening in the classroom, parent involvement remains a critical component of student success. Parents, take a moment to read the grade-specific expectations of your child's learning. In Kansas, we call these the Kansas College and Career Ready Standards. Discuss any questions you may have with your child's teacher and ask for ways to support at home what your child is learning in the classroom.

Kansas College and Career Ready Standards

- [English Language Arts](#)
- [History, Government and Social Studies](#)
- [Mathematics](#)
- [Science](#)

Volunteer to spend some time in your child's classroom to see how learning is taking place. Get to know your child's teacher and his or her style of teaching. Most importantly, make it a habit to ask your child every day to share with you what they are learning in class. Every connection you make with your child's learning strengthens his or her opportunity to succeed.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brad Neuenswander'.

Brad Neuenswander
Kansas Commissioner of Education