

2019 - 2020 KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
ANNUAL REPORT



**KANSAS**  
STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**

*Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.*

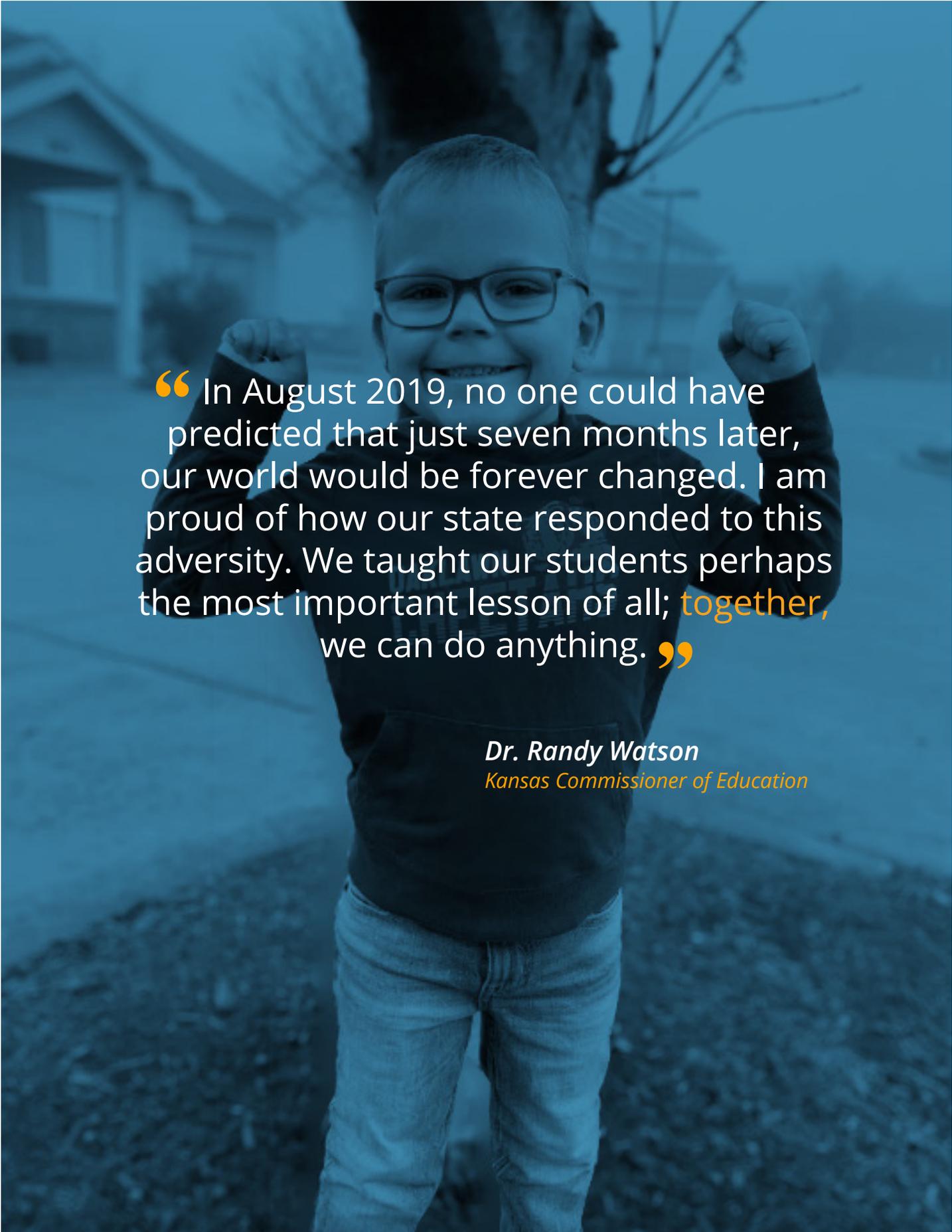
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# 2020 KEY DATES

- Oct. 7-13, 2019:** Anti-Bullying Awareness Week.
- Oct. 28-30, 2019:** KSDE Annual Conference.
- Nov. 23, 2019:** Tabatha Rosproy named 2020 Kansas Teacher of the Year.
- Dec. 10, 2019:** Kansas State Board of Education approves tobacco-free school policy developed by E-Cigarette/Vaping Task Force.
- Dec. 11, 2019:** Ruth Clark Elementary School, Haysville USD 261, and New Stanley Elementary School, Kansas City USD 500, named National Elementary and Secondary Education Act Distinguished Schools.
- Dec. 11, 2019:** Deputy Commissioner Dale Dennis named one of two Kansans of the Year.
- Jan. 15, 2020:** State Board of Education approves recommendations from the Kansas Blue Ribbon Task Force on Bullying to help combat the issue in Kansas.
- Jan. 16, 2020:** Tabatha Rosproy named as finalist for 2020 National Teacher of the Year.
- Jan. 9, 2020:** Carly Bowden, a math teacher at Andover Central Middle School, named 2019 Milken Educator.
- March 17, 2020:** Gov. Laura Kelly announced all Kansas school buildings must be closed for duration of school year because of COVID-19 pandemic.
- March 19, 2020:** Continuous Learning Task Force released guidance document on Continuous Learning.
- March 2020:** Announcement made that free meals available for children ages 1-18 at locations across state.
- March 30, 2020:** Teachers welcomed students to the first day of Continuous Learning.
- April 16, 2020:** Alliance between KSDE, Continuous Learning Task Force and the Kansas Public Broadcasting Service announced. This brought supplemental education content to students via television.
- April 27, 2020:** Senior Leaders Conversation group – a group of 64 Kansas seniors – shared their voices during the pandemic.
- May 15, 2020:** Complete High School Maize designated a 2020 National School of Character.
- May 21, 2020:** Tabatha Rosproy announced as 2020 National Teacher of the Year.
- June 5, 2020:** Announcement made that educators, parents and agencies joined forces to create “Navigating Change” guidance document.
- July 14, 2020:** Names of schools taking part in Apollo II project announced.
- July 15, 2020:** State Board of Education accepted the “Navigating Change” guidance document.
- Aug. 14, 2020:** School gating criteria guidance added to “Navigating Change” document.
- Aug. 28, 2020:** Kansas Commissioner of Education Dr. Randy Watson receives USA-Kansas Outstanding Service Award.
- Sept. 8, 2020:** Deputy Commissioner Dale Dennis announces retirement from KSDE after 53 years of service to agency.



“ In August 2019, no one could have predicted that just seven months later, our world would be forever changed. I am proud of how our state responded to this adversity. We taught our students perhaps the most important lesson of all; **together,** we can do anything. ”

*Dr. Randy Watson*  
*Kansas Commissioner of Education*



# Together, We Can!

**Kansas schools continued to gain momentum in their efforts to reach the Kansas State Board of Education’s moonshot – Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.**

An increased number of districts joined the Kansans Can School Redesign program and already participating districts added more schools to the redesign work. A renewed focus on the social-emotional growth of students lead to innovative district partnerships with community health organizations and changes in school cultures and operations. A Kansas State Department of Education’s secured grant supported the collaboration of state agencies to develop a comprehensive strategic plan that will strengthen the early childhood system in Kansas.

As teachers and students were gearing up for state assessments in late March 2020, Kansas, along with the rest of the country, was dealt a blow with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic. Within one week, the difficult decision was made to close school buildings across the state, upending the lives of teachers, students and their families. Within 72 hours of this announcement, a hand-selected group of Kansas educators created the Continuous Learning Guidance document, which transitioned an entire state to a remote learning environment.

Never have I ever been prouder to be the Kansas Commissioner of Education. Our educators, students, families, community members, nutrition directors, health care providers, state officials all came together to ensure our students and

teachers remained safe and engaged in learning during this unprecedented time.

I credit our education system’s ability to pivot so quickly to the work they have been doing over the past four years to rethink the way they approach education. Their innovative mindset prepared our education professionals to be flexible and willing to try new approaches to educating students. I believe the experience of this pandemic will ultimately result in our entire system becoming stronger in how we serve the needs of each student moving forward.

In August 2019, no one could have predicted that just seven months later, our world would be forever changed. I am proud of how our state responded to this adversity. We taught our students perhaps the most important lesson of all; together, we can do anything.

**Dr. Randy Watson**  
Kansas Commissioner of Education



Ashland Elementary School, Ashland USD 220, kindergarten students examine insects as part of their STEM project-based learning unit. Ashland USD 220 is a Gemini I Kansans Can School Redesign Project district.

# A Year like no other

**As schools prepared to enter their fifth year working toward the Kansas State Board of Education’s vision that Kansas leads the world in the success of each student, no one could have predicted that by spring 2020, the United States would find itself in the middle of a pandemic.**

Like the Spanish influenza pandemic 100 years ago, school buildings were closed and gatherings were limited, leaving Kansas educators scrambling to create and implement an emergency, continuous learning plan for nearly 500,000 students to finish out the 2019-2020 school year.

Thousands of high school seniors across the state faced the reality that they would end their high school careers without proms, graduation ceremonies and final farewells. Kansas, along with the rest of the country, was navigating uncharted waters.

The pandemic has, undoubtedly, forever changed education as we knew it. It has shown us that learning can happen any-

where, anytime, but that nothing can replace in-person learning. It has heightened public awareness of the critical role educators and school systems play in supporting the social-emotional, mental and physical needs of students. It brought communities together and created strong partnerships with parents, healthcare providers, business owners and others who worked alongside education leaders to ensure the safety of students and teachers alike.

Kansas education will draw from these experiences and the knowledge gained to continue to strengthen learning opportunities for each student.



Carly Bowden, a math teacher at Andover Central Middle School, Andover USD 385, reacted after being named the 2019 Kansas Milken Educator.

## Four Pillars Of Redesign

<b>Student Success Skills</b>	<b>Family, Business, and Community Partnerships</b>
There is an integrated approach to develop student social-emotional learning.	Partnerships are based on mutually beneficial relationships and collaboration.
<b>Personalizing Learning</b>	<b>Real-World Application</b>
Personalized learning places the whole child at the center of instruction. It is informed by strong educator/student/family/community relationships to provide equity and choice in time, place, path, pace and demonstration of learning.	Project-based learning, internships, and civic engagement makes learning relevant.

## Starting Off Strong

As the 2019-2020 school year got underway, Kansas education was experiencing strong momentum in several areas. Work was taking place to develop a strategic plan to strengthen and align the early childhood system in Kansas.

A work-based learning regional pilot program was underway, more districts were helping students start their mornings off with proper nutrition through innovative breakfast models and more districts were being accredited through the Kansas Education Systems Accreditation (KESA) model.

More students are graduating high school with certificates and degrees, and graduation rates are at their highest, having increased by 7% since 2009.

Kansas districts continued to focus on their accountability and improvement processes, along with efforts to address the established board outcomes of social-emotional growth, kindergarten readiness, Individual Plan of Study (IPS), civic engagement, high school graduation rates and postsecondary success.

### School Redesign

The Kansans Can School Redesign Project, which was launched in 2017, was helping schools and districts focus on creating opportunities for personalized learning, student success skills, real-world activities and community partnerships.

The redesign team at the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) supported redesign districts with two conferences and six personalized learning trainings and workshops. The team had 120 individual

check-ins each month – about 600 total from October 2019 through February 2020.

Mercury 7 and some Gemini I schools checked in regularly via Zoom to stay accountable to their redesign goals and strategies. Gemini I and Gemini II schools checked in bi-weekly with a redesign coach. These coaches, comprised of 32 partners from KSDE and education service centers, helped schools stay focused on their redesign vision and goals and mentored schools through challenges in implementation.

Apollo schools participated in regional trainings and attended full-day workshops.

In early March, KSDE released a report on



*Students from Ottawa High School USD 290, assembled and pre-flight checked their custom-built remote-controlled airplane. Ottawa USD 290 is a Gemini I Kansans Can School Redesign Project district.*

the Kansans Can School Redesign Project called “Lift Off: How Kansas is Redesigning its Schools for Tomorrow,” describing the redesign process and highlighting participant outcomes. The report garnered national media attention for Kansas’ teacher-led efforts to redesign schools that meet the needs of today’s students.

Many redesign schools reported seeing dramatic improvements in attendance data, including fewer tardies and better engagement with families of students who have been chronically absent. Behavior data was improving, proved by fewer suspensions and expulsions, and fewer incidents of extreme behaviors. Some elementary schools saw an increase in state assessment data and most noticed increases in formative measures or screening data.

Throughout elementary and secondary schools, the focus on social-emotional growth is resulting in healthier, happier children and teachers.

The Fall 2019 Redesign Building Culture Survey Results indicated promising outcomes. More than 90% of the nearly 2,400 respondents agreed that their schools encouraged and supported risk-taking with new instructional strategies and that their school and district leadership empowered teachers to share ownership in their redesign process.

### Social-Emotional Growth

KSDE continued to strengthen partnerships with stakeholders in order to provide educators with quality resources, professional development and guidance.

To support social-emotional growth and mental health development of students, KSDE developed key partnerships with the Collaborative for Academic and Social-Emotional Learning (CASEL), the Kansans Can Competency Framework, the Kansas Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Alignment and the School Mental Health Professional Development Initiative.

CASEL provided Kansas with resources that have informed the work of KSDE, such as the “CASEL Guide to Schoolwide Social-Emotional Learning,” a comprehensive document that helped guide KSDE’s work. KSDE is an active participant in the CASEL Collaborating States Initiative, a collaborative network of 37 states that



*Ella Roberts, who was a senior at Dighton USD 482 during the 2019-2020 school year, shared information about her district at the Statehouse during Public Schools Week at the Statehouse in February 2020.*

meet regularly to discuss state-level issues, share ideas and collaborate.

Through the Kansans Can Competency Framework, which supports educators in systematically embedding intrapersonal, interpersonal and cognitive competencies into course content, educators across the state received high-quality, face-to-face and virtual professional development. Training and coaching, available across Kansas through a cadre of eight recognized trainers, supported the systemic implementation of social-emotional development in 65 districts.

Kansas MTSS and Alignment provided support to 148 Kansas school districts, and the School Mental Health Professional Development Initiative team provided ongoing training and coaching to an increasing number of school districts and community health centers. Teams from Abilene, Twin Valley, Futures Unlimited, Wellington, Caldwell, Great Bend, Fort Larned, Manhattan, Wamego and South Lyon County school districts and the Sumner County, Central Kansas, Pawnee, Crosswinds and Center for Counseling and Guidance mental health centers received intensive systems coaching.

KSDE and the Kansas State Board of Education continued to focus on addressing the prevention of bullying and suicide. In January 2020, the State Board adopted the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Bullying's recommendations and enlisted the Kansas School Mental Health Advisory Council (SMHAC) to draft a comprehensive

guidance document on the recommendations. The work is in progress, with a goal of completion by the end of the 2020 calendar year.

KSDE also continued to support the use of the Kansas Suicide Prevention, Response and Postvention Toolkit that was produced in 2019.

Smoky Hill Education Service center and KSDE partnered in sponsoring the Kansas Schools of Character program, which recognizes schools that have enhanced social, emotional and character development. Complete High School Maize was one of 81 schools and seven school districts across the country to be certified by Character.org as a 2020 State School of Character. Additionally, Beloit Elementary School and Stockton Grade School received Honorable Mention Schools of Character recognition.

### **Kindergarten Readiness**

Work to support statewide kindergarten readiness ramped up thanks to a major grant secured by KSDE. Leaders from the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund, KSDE, Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the Kansas Department of Children and Families collaborated in January 2019 to develop the state's first comprehensive, strategic plan to strengthen and align early childhood services.

In February 2020, the group administered an "All in For Kansas Kids" needs assessment. More than 6,100 Kansans contributed to the collection process. The needs

assessment reflected what was learned from thousands of data points and what Kansans said were the most important aspects of early childhood education.

In April 2020, Kansas was awarded \$8.9 million to implement the "All in For Kansas Kids" strategic plan, which will help support the work.

Increased funding allocated in the state's new school finance formula created an important change to the Preschool-Aged At-Risk (previously State Pre-K 4-Year-Old At-Risk) program. In previous years, districts were awarded slots based on available funding. Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, in districts operating approved programs, 4-year-old students who meet the existing at-risk criteria for preschool-aged at-risk students and who are enrolled and attending will automatically count as 0.5 full-time equivalent. This meant enough funding that KSDE was able to commit to funding all of the state's students who are 4 years old on or before Aug. 31, 2020, and who met the preschool-aged, at-risk criteria. This allows local programs to grow their programs and know that the qualifying students they have enrolled will be funded.

### **Individual Plan of Study (IPS)**

Districts continued their efforts to ensure every student starting in sixth grade has an Individual Plan of Study (IPS) created. An IPS is intended to help students, beginning in middle school, develop a flexible career focus. It also is the process the school implements to guide students in developing their individual postsecondary plans.

In support of student career exploration, Kansas is currently conducting a cross-agency regional pilot that will serve as a model to scale high-quality, work-based learning opportunities for students and will help develop a statewide system alignment.

There are five workforce regions across the state, with each one having a regional work-based learning (WBL) intermediary, community and/or technical college partners, a school district or cohort of districts and a WBL coordinator. Each region's workforce center or workforce board serves as the regional WBL intermediary and connects education, business and industry, and economic development in the region. These intermediaries coordinate WBL experiences for students in partnership with districts' WBL coordinators.

The districts taking part in the Work-Based Learning Pilots include:

Region 1: Hugoton USD 210

Region 2: Manhattan-Ogden USD 383

Region 3: De Soto USD 232

Region 4: Circle USD 375

Region 5: Iola USD 257 and Chanute USD 413

The groups first met in January 2020 during a Zoom meeting to begin the pilot process. These pilot districts inventoried their IPS processes, along with WBL experiences offered across the Kansas WBL continuum.

WBL pilots were only in the district buildings about 10 weeks before the COVID-19 pandemic hit. However, they managed to participate in several projects. Hugoton USD 210 created a Career Development Center website as a resource for WBL experiences and developed internships for 18 high school seniors.

Manhattan-Ogden USD 383, Iola USD 257, Chanute USD 413 and Circle USD 375 purchased essential equipment and supplies so that students could have improved WBL experiences.

De Soto USD 232 created a partnership program to provide mentors in each school and started a tech program where students provide support for MacBook IT issues.

### Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is another critical component of the state board's vision for Kansas education. For schools to cultivate a culture of civic engagement, students need regular opportunities to engage in civic learning, participate in their communities, and see similar behavior modeled by adults.

KSDE's Civic Advocacy Network (CAN), launched in the fall of 2017 and recognizes schools that are actively offering civic engagement opportunities for their students. The districts and those honored provide exemplary practices to share with other schools across Kansas.

In 2019, 10 schools received recognition. That number grew in 2020, with 12 schools being recognized.

The 2020 awardees were recognized

with CAN awards or Promising Practices awards.

Recipients of the CAN award must engage their students in the "Six Proven Practices for Effective Civic Learning" and provide evidence of these practices.

Recipients of this award become advocates for civic engagement among schools in their district, region and state. Winners of the award remain in the CAN network for three years. At the end of the three-year period, schools can reapply.

CAN awards this year went to:

- Bernadine Sitts Intermediate School, Garden City USD 457.
- Derby North Middle School, Derby USD 260.
- Fredonia Junior-Senior High School, Fredonia USD 484.
- Halstead High School, Halstead USD 440.
- Lakeside Elementary School, Pittsburg USD 250.
- Maize High School, Maize USD 266.
- North Fairview Elementary School, Seaman USD 345.
- Prairie Ridge Elementary School, DeSoto USD 232.
- Winfield High School, Winfield USD 465.

Schools of Promising Practice awards are given to schools that have a particularly innovative, effective or otherwise unique program that clearly shows potential for impacting student civic engagement.

Promising Practice recognition went to:

- Atchison County Junior-Senior High School, Atchison County Community Schools USD 377.
- Derby High School, Derby USD 260.
- Winfield Middle School, Winfield USD 465.

### School Nutrition

Much like addressing a student's social-emotional needs, schools must also address the physical needs of students before learning can occur.

Students who eat breakfast reach higher levels of achievement in reading and math, score higher on standardized tests, have better concentration and memory and are more alert, according to the School Nutri-

tion Association.

Innovative breakfast models, such as grab-and-go and second-chance breakfasts, have helped school breakfast participation in Kansas soar. More schools are offering breakfast via these innovative models, and as a result, during the 2018-2019 school year, 864,799 more breakfasts were served as compared to the 2017-2018 school year. And in the 2019-2020 school year (through January 2020), Kansas schools served an additional 620,359 breakfasts as compared to the 2018-2019 school year (through the same time period).

Kansas was named one of the top 10



Derby USD 260 was one of many districts who served meals to students in innovative ways during the COVID-19 pandemic.

states based on percentage of growth in the number of free and reduced-price breakfast participants (2017-2018 school year to 2018-2019 school year), according to the School Breakfast Scorecard. Kansas ranked sixth with a 2.3% increase in participation.

It also was announced that KSDE's Child Nutrition and Wellness team was awarded a \$96,648 Farm to School grant by the United States Department of Agriculture to help connect students with fresh foods and local farmers while supporting American agriculture. KSDE will work with Kansas Farm Bureau and Kansas State Research and Extension to improve access to local foods in Child Nutrition Programs.



*7th Grade ELA Teacher Hanna Smith welcomes students back to (virtual) school in the Kansas City Kansas school district.*

## Adapting To Change

On March 17, 2020, Gov. Laura Kelly issued an executive order closing all Kansas K-12 school buildings for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

KSDE staff members, educators, health professionals, community members and other organizations came together quickly.

Within hours of the governor’s announcement, a 25-member task force comprised of many of the state’s top educators got to work developing the Continuous Learning Guidance document. By March 19, 2020, the guidance document was released to districts across Kansas.

The guidance document provided a roadmap for Kansas schools to continue providing student learning despite school buildings being closed. Instructional models included blending of nontechnology (face-to-face, small-group learning sessions) and online platforms. Plans varied from school to school and district to district. Boards and districts had to make local decisions that were unique to their student population, staff members and resources.

Collaboration was key and partnerships were formed during this difficult time. KSDE Commissioner of Education Dr. Randy Watson remained in regular contact with the governor’s office and KDHE Secre-

tary Dr. Lee Norman. Additionally, Watson conducted daily Zoom briefings for superintendents during which he relayed the most current state information and data and answered questions.

Among the first issues districts had to address was how they would ensure all children remained fed while school buildings were closed. For some students, meals provided by the school were the only meals they were guaranteed to receive during the day. KSDE’s Child Nutrition and Wellness (CNW) team worked closely with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to gain approval to provide meals to students in non-congregate - outside of the school - settings. School nutrition staff, bus drivers and more came together to develop meal pick-up and delivery services for students.

From mid-March through July, there were 18,388,871 meals reimbursed through the Summer Meals Programs. In 2019, there were 1,454,059 summer meals reimbursed.

In August, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced it would extend several flexibilities through as late as Dec. 31, 2020, which allows summer meal program operators to continue serving free meals to all children.

In addition to administering school nutrition programs, the CNW team developed and presented 446 professional development trainings, workshops and classes

for child nutrition professionals with more than 17,182 attendees during the pandemic.

The closing of school buildings created emotional stress for students and their families. Addressing those emotional needs remained the number one priority for educators. Kansas’ teachers welcomed students to the first day of Continuous Learning on Monday, March 30, through a variety of ways. Angie Stroup, an Olathe School District 233 second-grade teacher, remained connected with her students by making signs containing messages of encouragement and placing them in each of her students’ yards.

On May 6, Matt Berthot, a Winfield High School vocal music teacher, and several of his students shared hope and joy with Kansans through a two-hour virtual voices choir performance.

Sensitive to the shutdown’s impact of high school seniors, KSDE brought together 64 seniors - from across the state-to share their own stories and give guidance to their peers on how to transition from high school to postsecondary plans during the pandemic. The group also developed an idea to celebrate Kansas high school seniors by hosting a Senior Appreciation Day on May 20, 2020. Seniors were invited to share pictures of themselves on social media - using the hashtag #KSClassof2020 - in their prom attire, in graduation robes,



*Bethany and Stephany Rother, students who attended Weskan USD 242 in the spring of 2020, sewed 78 face masks for the community and gave them away during the COVID-19 pandemic.*



A yard sign in Spring Hill celebrated the spirit of togetherness.

donating blood, donating food or taking part in community service.

Kansas students received supplemental education content via television thanks to an alliance between KSDE, the Continuous Learning Task Force and the Kansas Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). Teachers worked with PBS to develop 30-minute television segments called “Learning Across Kansas.” Kansas PBS stations aired these specials throughout the months of April and May.

KSDE also partnered with the Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC) and Parent Camp to offer Parent Education Camps to help Kansas parents navigate their child’s education at home. These free camps took place virtually in April.

Throughout most of the spring and summer months, many Head Start programs and licensed child care programs continued providing in-person services.

To support matriculation of students toward postsecondary success, KSDE partnered with the Kansas Board of Regents to develop the “College Admissions Among COVID-19” resource document. The document was designed to help 2020 graduates make postsecondary decisions while navigating the pandemic.

Kansans Can School Redesign Project schools reported leaning heavily on what they learned through the redesign process to help them navigate continuous learning for their students. Strategies in design thinking, such as knowing how to prototype, test and pivot and modeling a growth mindset, helped redesign schools respond

rapidly to the crisis.

“I feel we understand the process of design thinking, and although change is always challenging, we now understand that the process of change is necessary for continued school and student growth,” one educator wrote in response to a survey in July 2020 sent to redesign schools about the COVID-19 pandemic. “I also felt like redesign taught us as teachers how to think through major changes and make sure that we are meeting the needs of students. I believe that the teacher ownership over redesign prepared us to be adaptable and to be leaders.”

Another teacher responded: “We were very ready to work as a team and to try new things. If we hadn’t been a redesign school, I think everything would’ve crashed and burned.”

## Returning To School

While Kansas remained optimistic school buildings would open in the fall of 2020, there was still concern about how COVID-19 would impact the start of school. In May, Commissioner Watson asked the task force that developed the Continuous Learning guidance document to work with nearly 1,000 teachers, administrators, parents, school board members, health professionals, transportation directors, food service directors, KSDE staff members, service center employees and others to collaborate on an even more comprehensive resource to help guide schools to safely reopen.

From this work, the guidance document, “Navigating Change: Kansas’ Guide to

Learning and School Safety Operations,” was created. The 1,100-page document was developed to help schools reopen safely and prepare to deliver education through multiple learning environments, based on the needs of each community.

The guidance document addressed four main areas: competencies/standards, assessment, implementation and operations.

Districts spent the summer months working with their local school boards and county health officials to develop their reopening plans. KSDE worked with KDHE epidemiologists and Kansas doctors and county health professionals to create “gating criteria” to help guide district decisions on when and how to safely reopen their school buildings.

Some Kansas districts chose to start classes as early as mid-August, while other, larger districts opted to open after Labor Day. Some, in lesser affected areas, were able to return to in-person classes. Most districts elected to begin the school year in either a remote learning environment or hybrid (a combination of the two) learning environment.

## Creating A New Normal

KSDE and the Kansas State Board of Education believe that long-term solutions versus short-term fixes is key for Kansas schools to achieve success. Schools must approach the pandemic with a long-term plan to safely return all teachers and students to the classroom. This means smaller class sizes, wearing masks and social distancing – all of which can create their own set of challenges.

Schools facing a lack of space to be able to ensure students are socially distanced, may need to create partnerships with churches, community buildings or businesses to rent space for additional classrooms. Schools facing teacher shortages may have to take an “all-hands-on-deck” approach by looking internally for non-teaching staff to step into classrooms.

Educating Kansas kids can’t stop while the world waits for a COVID-19 vaccine to become widely available. KSDE will continue to push for providing schools the supports needed to create a sustainable model that ensures education remains uninterrupted.

“ All of us know how important it is for our kids to be in school, and it is literally up to us as communities to make sure they are guaranteed that opportunity. Our behavior outside of school directly impacts the ability of schools to stay open. Wash your hands, wear your masks and social distance with vigilance. **Together**, we will see this through. ”

*Tabatha Rosproy*  
*2020 National Teacher of the Year*



# Tabatha Rosproy Named 2020 National Teacher of the Year

**In May 2020, Tabatha Rosproy became the first early childhood educator to be named National Teacher of the Year (NTOY) by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). She also became the first Kansans to be named NTOY since 1962.**



*Tabatha Rosproy, a preschool teacher at Winfield USD 465, was named the 2020 National Teacher of the Year.*

Rosproy is a preschool teacher at Winfield Unified School District 465. Her classroom is housed in Cumbernauld Village, a retirement community and nursing home in Winfield. Cumbernauld Little Vikes intergenerational program serves special education and typically developing preschoolers, and offers students daily interactions with residents, who serve as “grandparent” volunteers.

The Winfield resident was selected as the 2020 Kansas Teacher of the Year in November 2019 and was named one of four finalists for the 2020 National Teacher of the Year designation in January 2020. Other finalists were Chris Dier, of Louisiana, Leila Kubesch, of Ohio, and Linda Rost, of Montana.

“Being named National Teacher of the Year is the biggest honor of my life,” Rosproy said. “In addition to this great honor, I am on sabbatical from teaching this year and will have an estimated 150 speaking engagements for various organizations across the United States. I’ve been given the opportunity to advocate for my coworkers and students in ways I never could before.”

Being out of the classroom is a different experience for Rosproy, she said.

“I’m still finding ways to stay involved at my school and even helped in a classroom the first day when they were short staffed,” Rosproy said. “I’ve spent the last decade of my life with students, so it’s definitely odd to be doing a different kind of work. I just keep reminding myself

that I am helping in a different way and that this year will be powerful for me as an educator, but will also help my students.”

COVID-19 has turned Rosproy’s year into “something completely different” than she ever expected. Most of her keynote presentations and interviews are taking place virtually.

“I have been able to do some in-person events, but I work closely with CCSSO to make sure rigorous safety protocols are in place before accepting those invitations,” she said. “One benefit to virtual events is that I’m actually reaching more people because the platforms are more widely accessible.”

Rosproy received her bachelor’s degree in early childhood unified, with a minor in English, in 2009 from Southwestern College. She is currently working on obtaining her master’s degree in education, English as a secondary or other language, from Fort Hays State University. 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.

The National Teacher of the Year program, run by CCSSO, identifies exceptional teachers in the country; recognizes their effective work in the classroom; engages them in a year of professional learning; amplifies their voices; and empowers them to participate in policy discussions at the state and national levels.

Rosproy was one of three co-chairs of the Con-

tinuous Learning Task Force, which developed guidance for Kansas educators to meet the immediate need of supporting learning outside of normal practices. Rosproy served on the task force while continuing to teach her own students at Cumbernauld Little Vikes.

She began her duties as the 2020 National Teacher of the Year in June.

Rosproy had some advice for other teachers who may be struggling to teach during these unprecedented times: “This is an incredibly trying time to be an educator. It is now more important than ever that we use our voices to represent the needs of our students, our coworkers and our profession. Our schools are in the spotlight right now, for better or for worse, and we have the opportunity to shout from the rooftops the things we’ve known all along because people are listening. You know the nuances of your profession better than anyone, and you dedicate your life to serving the families in your care.”

However, she also had some words of wisdom for Kansans: “Kansans, as a rule, know how to ride the waves of uncertainty. But this time is unlike any other that we have ever faced together. All of us know how important it is for our kids to be in school, and it is literally up to us as communities to make sure they are guaranteed that opportunity. Our behavior outside of school directly impacts the ability of schools to stay open. Wash your hands, wear your masks and social distance with vigilance. Together, we will see this through.”



*Tabatha Rosproy was first named Kansas Teacher of the Year in November 2019. She received the use of a rental car from Enterprise Rent-a-Car in January 2020.*

# Kansans Can Star Recognition

## New award recognizes districts and provides accountability.

KSDE introduced the Star Recognition program to help districts identify where they want to focus their efforts and provide a level of recognition for the work being done.

The program recognizes district achievement in seven areas, which are broken into two different measures – quantitative and qualitative.

The Kansans Can Star Recognition and Commissioner's Award Program kicked off during the 2019-2020 school year with recognition of quantitative measures – academically prepared for postsecondary, high school graduation and postsecondary success. Awards for these areas are automatically calculated by the Kansas State Department of Education, so districts don't have to apply.

In September 2020, districts were invited to apply for recognition of the qualitative measures – social-emotional growth, kindergarten readiness, Individual Plans of Study (IPS) and civic engagement. The first applications are due Dec. 31.

The Commissioner's Award recognizes districts that outperform their predicted postsecondary effectiveness rate above a .40 standard deviation. A district's predicted postsecondary effectiveness rate factors in the degree to which identified risk factors known to depress effectiveness rates, such as poverty, chronic absenteeism and student mobility, are present in a district's student population.

Districts that outperform their predictive rate by .4-.99 standard deviation receive the Commissioner's Award. Districts that outperform their predictive rate by 1-1.99 standard deviations receive the Commissioner's Award with Honors. And districts that outperform their predictive rate by 2 or more standard deviations receive the Commissioner's Award with Highest Distinction.

In the fall of 2019, Kansas Commissioner of Education Dr. Randy Watson visited 10 districts that received the Commissioner's Award with Highest Distinction.

## Commissioner's Award with Highest Distinction.

- *Wichita Catholic Diocese*
- *Barnes Hanover Linn USD 223*
- *Weskan Unified School District 242*
- *Frontenac USD 249*
- *Palco USD 269*
- *Graham County USD 281*
- *Fairfield USD 310*
- *Ellinwood USD 355*
- *Osborne County USD 392*
- *Dighton USD 482*



Kansas Commissioner of Education Dr. Randy Watson, center, left, and Kathy Busch, chair of the Kansas State Board of Education, posed for a photograph with students at Kapaun Mt. Carmel High School in Wichita. The Wichita Catholic Diocese received the Commissioner's Award with Highest Distinction.

**Districts that received recognition in each of the four qualitative Star Recognition categories.**

- *Cheylin USD 103*
- *Rawlins County USD 105*
- *Rock Hills USD 107*
- *Thunder Ridge USD 110*
- *Prairie Hills USD 113*
- *Nemaha Central USD 115*
- *Piper-Kansas City USD 203*
- *Barnes Hanover Linn USD 223*
- *Blue Valley USD 229*
- *De Soto USD 232*
- *Smith Center USD 237*
- *Wallace County USD 241*
- *Weskan USD 242*
- *Lebo-Waverly USD 243*
- *Frontenac USD 249*
- *North Lyon County USD 251*
- *Renwick USD 267*
- *Beloit USD 273*
- *Buhler USD 313*
- *Phillipsburg USD 325*
- *Ellsworth USD 327*
- *Cunningham USD 332*
- *Conway Springs USD 356*
- *Garnett USD 365*
- *Sterling USD 376*
- *Vermillion USD 380*
- *Madison-Virgil USD 386*
- *Osborne County USD 392*
- *LaCrosse USD 395*
- *Marion-Florence USD 408*
- *Hillsboro USD 410*
- *Hoisington USD 431*
- *Victoria USD 432*
- *Hesston USD 460*
- *Leoti USD 467*
- *Hays USD 489*
- *Labette County USD 506*
- *Shawnee Mission USD 512*
- *Kansas City Catholic Diocese*
- *Wichita Catholic Diocese*



Kansas Commissioner of Education Dr. Randy Watson posed for photographs with districts that received the Commissioner's Award with Highest Distinction. Pictured are, top left, Eillinwood USD 355; top right, Frontenac USD 249; and bottom, Barnes Hanover Linn USD 223.

**DALE DENNIS**

# 53 Years of Service to Kansans

**After 53 years of serving the state of Kansas and its students, Deputy Commissioner Dale Dennis retired Sept. 30, 2020.**

Dennis joined the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) as a state school finance administrator in 1967. He was named deputy commissioner in 1976 and has served as interim commissioner of education four times since July 1995.

In his role as deputy commissioner of fiscal and administrative services, Dennis supervised the administration of about \$5 billion in state and federal funds that flow through KSDE to unified school districts and nonpublic schools. He also for many years served as liaison for KSDE and the Kansas State Board of Education to the Kansas Legislature and the governor.

Kansas Commissioner of Education Dr. Randy Watson is the 11th commissioner Dennis has served under.

Dennis learned the importance of hard work and dedication as a young boy growing up in Mapleton, where his father operated a gas station. His father instilled a strong work ethic in Dennis.

"I've tried to be as helpful as possible," Dennis said of his career. "If you can make a difference and help a school district – which will help students – it's all about that. It's about making a difference."

Dennis graduated from Blue Mound High School and received three degrees from Pittsburg State University – a bachelor's degree in business education in 1959, a master's in business education and school administration in 1966, and an education specialist degree in school administration in 1983.

Prior to joining KSDE, Dennis was a teacher at the same high school where

he graduated, Blue Mound, from 1959-1960 and 1961-1965, taking a step out of the classroom for one year to serve in the Army National Guard. He worked as a principal at LaCygne High School from 1965-1967.

Dennis has won numerous awards during his lifetime, including the Kansas Association of School Business Officials' Distinguished Service Award, which the agency later named the Dale Dennis Distinguished Service Award. He also was named a 2019 Kansans of the Year by the Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas.

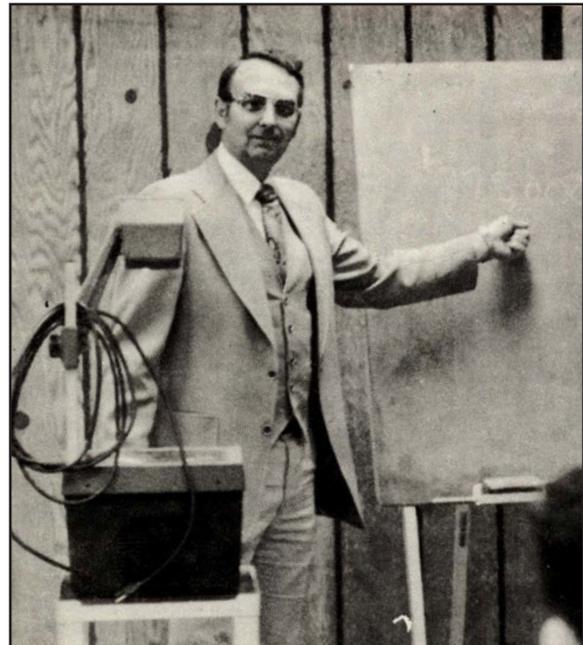
Dennis and his wife, Laurie, have two sons, Darren and Damon, and three grandsons.

Dr. Craig Neuenswander, who previously served as the director of School Finance, took over as deputy commissioner of fiscal and administrative services on Oct. 1, 2020.

Neuenswander joined KSDE in July 2011. He began his educational career in 1982 as a junior high school math teacher in Dewey, Oklahoma. He moved to serve as principal at Riley County High School in 1988, and served in that capacity until 1994, when he was named superintendent of Riley County USD 378. He also was superintendent at Lola Unified School District 257 and worked as an adjunct instructor at Pittsburg State University.

Neuenswander received his bachelor's degree in secondary education from the University of Kansas, his master's in school administration from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, and his doctorate in school administration from Kansas State University.





DALE DENNIS

### Dale M. Dennis Chosen As Statistics Director

Dale M. Dennis, La Cygne, became director of statistical services for the State Department on October 1.



Dale M. Dennis

A 1955 graduate of Blue Mound High School, Dennis earned a B. S. in business education in 1959 and an M. S. in business education and school administration in 1967, both from Pittsburg Kansas State College.

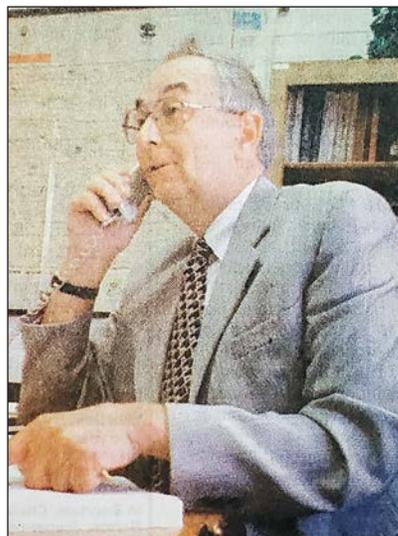
He served as La Cygne Junior-Senior High School principal since January, 1966. Dennis taught business courses at Blue Mound High School from 1959 to 1966 except for six months active service in the Kansas National Guard.

Dennis will take over duties formerly handled by Bill Goodwin, who resigned to become assistant superintendent of the Shawnee Mission district.



“ Dale has been a relentless advocate for Kansas schools, teachers and students for more than five decades. Generations of Kansas children are better off – and will be better off – because of his work. ”

*Laura Kelly*  
Kansas Governor





# Education Summary

## Public School Characteristics

Number enrolled\* . . . . . 492,102  
 Number of Title 1 Schools . . . . . 642

\* Headcount enrollment

## School District Characteristics

Number of school districts . . . . . 286  
 Number of schools . . . . . 1,300

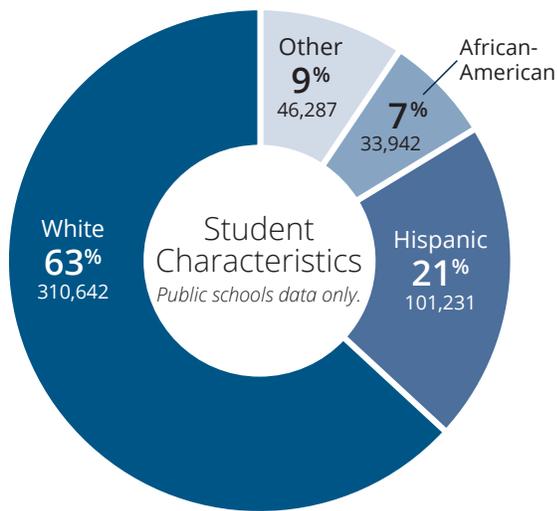
## Teachers

Average age . . . . . 42.9  
 Average years of experience . . . . . 14  
 Number of FTE teachers\* . . . . . 36,081  
 Average teacher salary\*\* . . . . . \$58,878  
 Teacher/pupil ratio . . . . . 13.6

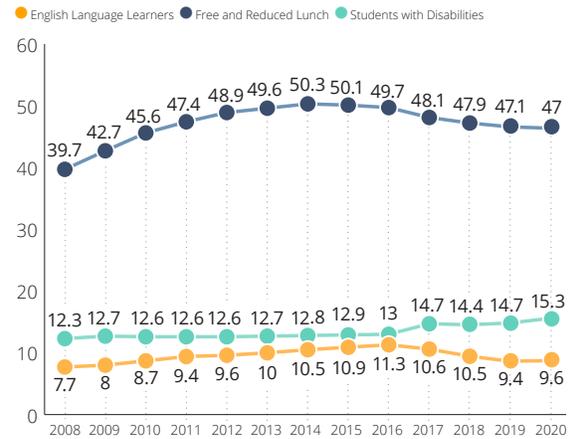
\* Includes special education teachers.

\*\* Includes supplemental and summer school salaries and fringe benefits.

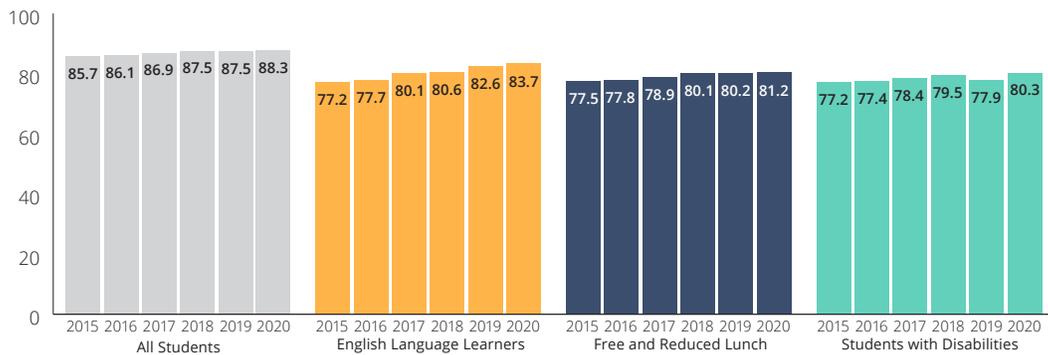
## Student Characteristics



## Student Population Subgroups

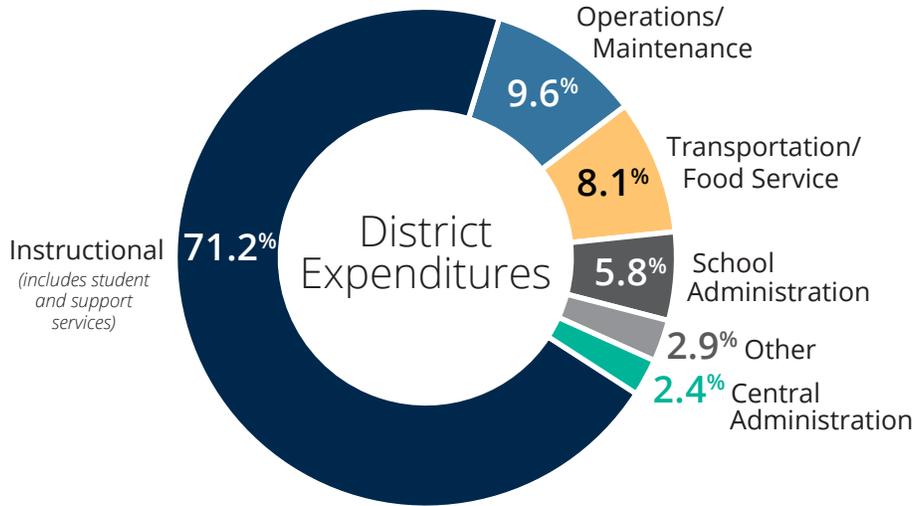


## Graduation Subgroups



# District Fiscal Summary

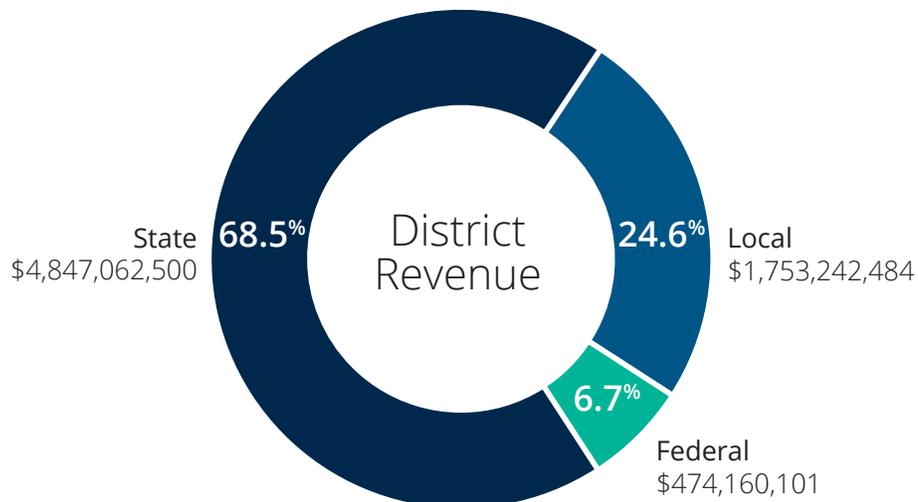
## Expenditures



Current operating expenditures . . . . .	\$6,045,247,581
Current operating expenditures per pupil* . . . . .	\$12,688
Total nonoperating expenditures** . . . . .	\$1,087,567,368
Total expenditures . . . . .	\$7,074,465,085
Total expenditures per pupil . . . . .	\$14,848

\* Based on FTE of 476,454.3  
 \*\* Bond, interest, capital outlay

## Revenue





# KANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**CHAIRMAN**  
DISTRICT 8

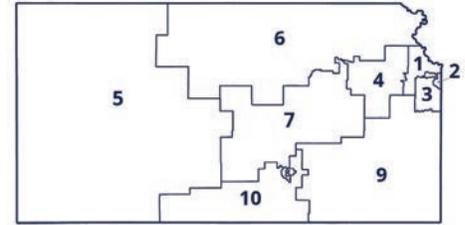


Kathy Busch  
[kbusch@ksde.org](mailto:kbusch@ksde.org)

**VICE CHAIR**  
DISTRICT 1



Janet Waugh  
[jwaugh@ksde.org](mailto:jwaugh@ksde.org)



## MISSION

To prepare Kansas students for lifelong success through rigorous, quality academic instruction, career training and character development according to each student's gifts and talents.

## VISION

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

## MOTTO

Kansans Can

## SUCCESS DEFINED

A successful Kansas high school graduate has the

- Academic preparation,
- Cognitive preparation,
- Technical skills,
- Employability skills and
- Civic engagement

to be successful in postsecondary education, in the attainment of an industry recognized certification or in the workforce, without the need for remediation.

## OUTCOMES

- Social-emotional growth measured locally
- Kindergarten readiness
- Individual Plan of Study focused on career interest
- High school graduation
- Postsecondary success

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DISTRICT 10



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# KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION**



Dr. Randy Watson

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER**  
Division of Fiscal and Administrative Services



Dale M. Dennis

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER**  
Division of Learning Services



Dr. Brad Neuenswander

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