



**KANSAS ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

Serving Educational Leaders, Inspiring Student Success

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Testimony before the
Senate Committee on Education
on
SB 33 - Kansas Education Study Committee
by

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Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on **SB 33**, which would established the Kansas Education Standards Study Commission. This is the second of two bills introduced by the K-12 Performance and Efficiency Commission. KASB appears as a proponent of the bill in its current form.

Following the Kansas Supreme Court decision in the *Gannon* case in March that set what are called the “Rose” Capacities as the benchmark of adequate school funding; and the adoption of these same standards by the Legislature and Governor as Kansas educational goals, KASB has worked to inform and involve educational leaders in developing a common definition of these capacities.

- In May and June, approximately 400 local school leaders participated in KASB area meetings to learn about the new capacities and how they compare to current requirements.
- In August, KASB hosted approximately 75 educational and political leaders for a one-day summit on the new standards.
- In September and October, KASB held six education “summits” for school leaders to develop recommendations about implementing these standards.
- In December, the KASB Delegate Assembly adopted the following goals for our legislative platform: “To meet the Kansas Constitution’s charge of providing for the intellectual, educational, scientific and vocational improvement of Kansas students through a system of public schools, we endorse the following to realize the Rose capacities through the implementation of the College and Career Ready standards and achievement of the goals outlined in the Foresight 2020 plan.”

- Finally, tomorrow evening, KASB is hosting the first listening tour stop for our new Commissioner of Education, Randy Watson, as part of our Governmental Relations Seminar. This will be an opportunity for the three entities responsible for public education - the Kansas State Board of Education, local boards and the Legislature - to discuss together our vision of successful students.

Specifically, our members adopted the following proposal for helping define successful students:

A. Students Ready for Success.

1. Career Interest Development Programs. We support a requirement that each student have an individual plan for postsecondary preparation, developed and implemented by local boards of education under standards adopted by the State Board.

2. Student Expectations. We support development and implementation over time of a system to ensure all students graduating high school meet a higher standard than currently required. This should include: (1) Demonstration of sufficient oral and written communications and other foundational skills by meeting a minimum statewide academic standard. (2) Demonstration of sufficient economic, social and political knowledge and understanding of governmental process, sufficient knowledge of mental and physical wellness and sufficient grounding in the arts as determined by local boards of education under guidelines determined by the State Board. (3) Demonstration of preparation for postsecondary employment or education (technical certification or industry credential, associate's degree, baccalaureate degree, etc.) based on the career interest of the student.

3. Financial Education. We support a requirement that each district adopt a policy for meeting the goal of providing each student with sufficient knowledge of economic systems to enable students to make informed choices, developed and implemented by local board of education.

I have underlined the elements of this plan that incorporate the Rose capacities.

Implementation of these goals will require agreement from the Legislature, the State Board, the Governor and Legislature, as well as parents, communities, business and employers and postsecondary education. We commend the K-12 Commission for including representation from school districts on the commission proposed in this bill. If anything, we would recommend the membership be broadened.

The good news is that Kansas educational attainment is at an all-time high, and ranks among the top states in the nation. However, we are still falling short of what many students will need to be successful as adults and what our economy will need to thrive. Local school boards are committed to working with the you, the Legislature, the Governor and the State Board, and people of each community our members are represent to meet those needs. We support **SB 33** as a step in that direction, and hope work with the proposed Commission if enacted.

Thank you for your consideration.

KASB Fall Summits - Rose Capacities Discussion

Executive Summary

#1 Assessments and Accountability:

We need additional ways to measure whether students have mastered the Rose Capacities (in addition to current subject area assessments), but these measures should be developed and implemented at the local level, with state oversight or approval.

Issue 1	Agree	Disagree	Both/Neither	Total
Clearwater	4	3	2	9
Garden City	3	3	1	7
Greenbush	4	1	2	7
Junction City	2	0	2	4
Oakley	2	0	3	5
Shawnee Mission	6	0	1	7
Total	21	7	11	39

Concerns or Modifications

- Many groups expressed concerns over having consistency of measurement across the state, while honoring individual districts unique wants/needs and availability of resources.
- A majority of groups indicated that it was important to integrate with current measures rather than add on or require additional measurement.
- Details of a state oversight system were commonly referenced in terms of needing more specifics on how such a system would work. Concerns with over-reach and with a poorly defined and implemented system were mentioned.

Barriers or Obstacles

- Resources of time, funding and expertise were concerns mentioned frequently.
- The shift towards a focus on Rose capacities by staff will require communication with public and training for staff.
- Clarity on what and how to measure is a concern.

#2 Preparation for Postsecondary Education:

About 30 percent of jobs will not require postsecondary training and many students in high school are simply not interested in preparing for college. Requiring all students to take college prep courses will simply cause many students to lose interest, become frustrated and dropout of high school (physically or mentally). Instead, each student should be required to have a college and career plan, and complete a course of preparation based on that plan in order to graduate from high school.

Issue 2	Agree	Disagree	Both/Neither	Total
Clearwater	4	3	2	9
Garden City	5	1	1	7
Greenbush	4	2	1	7
Junction City	0	1	3	4
Oakley	3	1	1	5
Shawnee Mission	3	0	4	7
Total	19	8	12	39

Concerns or Modifications

- Challenges of creating a flexible plan focused on career versus just college, without limiting options.
- Exposure to careers seemed to be a theme versus a pathway towards one career.
- Should perhaps be focusing on a definition of “Career Readiness” that includes planned postsecondary course of study which would prepare you for your intended career.
- Lots of groups noted concerns with students assigned to a course of study (via their individual plan of study) early and the difficulty in switching to a different course of study later in their K-12 career.

Barriers or Obstacles

- Lacking in counseling staff, and or proper training of current staff to develop quality plans.
- Lack of room in the current K-12 curriculum to accommodate additional courses/Carnegie units/graduation requirements.
- Lack of opportunities to explore and experience in different parts of the state.
- Many noted concerns with how these changes at the secondary level might impact articulation with postsecondary institutions.

#3 Scope of School Responsibility:

Both of the Rose Capacities and the Kansas State Board of Education's college and career-ready definition emphasize preparing students for social interaction and citizenship, physical and mental health and workplace requirements, in addition to subject area knowledge. However, schools are almost completely organized around teaching and testing academic subjects. Schools should be allowed or encouraged to replace or add to current requirements these new skills or areas.

Issue 3	Agree	Disagree	Both/Neither	Total
Clearwater	7	1	1	9
Garden City	6	1	0	7
Greenbush	6	0	1	7
Junction City	2	0	2	4
Oakley	2	0	3	5
Shawnee Mission	4	0	3	7
Total	27	2	10	39

Concerns or Modifications

- Many indicated the last sentence should read, "Schools should be required to integrate these new skills or areas to the current requirements." They argued that if these are not required to be incorporated, they will not be consistently taught.
- Many indicated their districts were already working on these identified "new skills."

Barriers or Obstacles

- Current and future educators will need professional development to assist with incorporating the teaching of these other areas.
- Extracurricular opportunities often develop these skills but these have been cut, and not all kids engage in extracurricular opportunities.
- Families have changed, and in the past these were often developed through family unit. Some indicated that the family should still be responsible for things like civic-mindedness and ethics, while others believe the school has to take these issues on.

#4 How Instruction is Delivered:

To meet the Rose Capacities, students should be able to develop these capacities through a much wider range of experiences using the entire community, with teachers and schools primarily helping students learn to acquire and apply knowledge, rather than being the nearly exclusive provider of knowledge.

Issue 4	Agree	Disagree	Both/Neither	Total
Clearwater	7	0	2	9
Garden City	7	0	0	7
Greenbush	6	0	1	7
Junction City	1	0	3	4
Oakley	4	0	1	5
Shawnee Mission	3	0	4	7
Total	28	0	11	39

Concerns or Modifications

- Each child learns differently, how do we strike the balanced between community supporting/providing opportunities and the school facilitating those opportunities so that there is still accountability?

Barriers or Obstacles

- Several groups noted lack of variation in community resources to provide opportunities; particularly in smaller communities versus larger communities.
- Engaging the community to be a partner in the education of their students is a challenge; both in terms of attracting interest and determining ultimate responsibility for the educational experiences.
- Several groups indicated teachers, who have traditionally been trained to be responsible for delivery of education, will need training in the facilitation of education delivered outside the school and in the community.
- Current system is based on time in a seat, therefore it does not benefit a school to reduce the number of minutes a student in not in a “seat.” Need more flexibility in state law and regulations that would allow for credits related to outside experiences that would not negatively impact per student funding.