



Talking Points

for Educators, Staff and Parents

Vision:

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

- This won't happen overnight, but it will happen because Kansans never back down from a challenge, especially when it comes to our children.
- Kansas has great leadership throughout its schools, we have top educators, and we have a robust business community. The pieces are there, we just have to get them all working together.

Flexibility:

Kansas education must be flexible to meet the needs of today's students and the future workforce.

- Kansans have said that while academics are important, schools needs to place equal focus on helping students attain nonacademic skills in order to be successful in the workforce.
- By 2020, it is estimated that 71 percent of all jobs in Kansas will require some postsecondary education. Today, only 52 percent of Kansans have "some" postsecondary education. We need to close that gap.

Working Together:

While academics are and will remain important, students who lack nonacademic skills, such as conscientiousness, perseverance and the ability to collaborate and communicate, will struggle both in the pursuit of postsecondary education and in the workforce.

- Schools, parents, communities and businesses need to work together to make sure our kids are well prepared.

Perspective:

We can rethink how our schools are asked to operate. From a state perspective, we will look at every requirement to determine if and how we are supporting or impeding our schools' abilities to address the needs of each child.

To achieve this bold vision for Kansas education:

- Kansas children need quality preschool, including all-day kindergarten.
- Changes need to be made to address school culture. We have to value and support the student who chooses to pursue a technical education or a two-year college as much as we do the student pursuing a four-year college degree.
- New dynamic roles are needed for counselors and social workers. We have to provide opportunities for school counselors and social workers to focus on helping individual students explore career paths and develop individual plans of study.
- Collaboration between schools and businesses is critical. We must find a way to get businesses into the classroom and the classroom into the businesses through internships and job shadowing.
- Schools need to be reorganized around the student, not the systems. We must find a way for equity and common sense to co-exist.
- Community service should play a bigger role in education.

New Direction:

This new direction requires us to focus on new outcomes:

- Kindergarten readiness.
- Increasing graduation rates.
- Increasing the percent of students completing a credential or pursuing postsecondary education.
- Each student will have an individual plan of study focused on career interest.
- Social/emotional factors relative to student success are to be measured locally.

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