



**KANSAS ASSOCIATION  
OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

Serving Educational Leaders, Inspiring Student Success

[www.kasb.org](http://www.kasb.org)

Testimony before the  
Special Committee on Education

On

**Understanding the Student Needs Assessment and its Impact on Student Achievement**

by

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the issue of the student needs assessment and its impact on student achievement.

**1 – Question from the committee**

We were asked to discuss what information KASB is providing to school boards following the passage of HB 2134, directing the use of needs assessments in the budgeting process. Did KASB provide training on what that means for the most recent budget process? Will trainings be provided in the future?

Page 3 of this testimony lists a number of ways KASB informed school leaders about the needs assessment provisions of HB 2134 which began when the original bills were introduced, through final passage of the Legislation. We also provided information to our members in virtual presentations about legislative action.

KASB does not regularly provide training on specific budgeting process issues because our members tend to prefer to receive that information through the Kansas State Department of Education, but we consistently provide information to members about the constitutional obligation for educational improvement, the Rose capacities and multiple measures of student success.

**2 – School District Budgeting for Educational Improvement**

School boards are responsible for setting school districts budgets under state law, consistent with the Kansas Constitutional provision that local elected boards “maintain, develop and operate public schools.” Given the vast diversity of Kansas school districts, the budget process is also diverse, from a district with a single building and a single administrator to much larger and more complex organizations.

However, in all cases, the elected local school board works with the superintendent and business officials, if any, with principals and building staff to determine school building needs, with teachers through the negotiations process and other input, and hearing from parents and patrons. School leaders constantly are assessing the needs of students, parents and the districts as a whole; through a public process with open hearings, public comments and public notice.

The result of each school board's needs assessment work in the budget process has been a steady increase in Kansas educational attainment, as shown at the top of page 4. Kansas has shown consistent educational improvement through a system of public education, as directed by the Kansas Constitution. Kansas has improved educational outcomes for all major groups and consistently exceeded the national average.

Over the past twenty years, school boards have had to develop budgets to meet their assessment of student needs through four periods:

- “Real” (higher than inflation) growth through 2009, especially following the *Montoy* case.
- Eight years of declining resources from 2009 through 2017, including actual cuts and frozen spending during block grants that did not keep up with either inflation or rising enrollment, especially by high need, higher cost students.
- A six-year phase-in of increases beginning in 2018 designed to restore operating budgets to 2009 levels, which has not yet been completed and may reach that point.
- The most significant public health emergency in a century, which interrupted and limited in-person learning, disrupted attendance and staffing, and created new stress and trauma for students and educators.

A review of “short-term” education measures (bottom of page 4 through page 6) shows that indicators of student success were rising during the period of sustained funding growth as districts allocated new resources. Because education is cumulative and indicators tend to lag, those improvements continued for several years after funding began to decline. Most educational measures began to decline several years after boards had to allocate reductions, and those declines continued into the first several years of increased funding. Recent indicators show further declines as expected due to the impact of COVID, and districts are working to use state funding and federal aid to address those new needs.

### **3 – How Districts have used additional funding to support the *Rose* standards**

As shown on page 7, with reasonably detailed records since 1999, we can trace how school boards use allocated funding based on student needs assessments to achieve the *Rose* standards. The largest increase has been to add new staff to meet student needs, followed by increased KPERS funding, which is set by the state, not local districts. Next were enhanced school facilities for programs like special education and career and technical education, student activities, technology, energy efficiency and security, which are approved by local voters or funded by the Legislature (safety grants); and then keeping salaries for school employees competitive.

Those new staff members have overwhelmingly been more teachers and other instructional staff for special education programs, regular education, kindergarten and preschool, and career technical education; and student support staff such as counselors, social workers to help in both social emotional and career planning needs – all of which support the *Rose* standards. These positions have added at a time when the numbers of low-income, special education and English Language Learners have grown significantly.

These trends in budget allocation and staffing have continued under *Gannon* funding, page 8. All of these decisions are based on assessments of student and community needs.

Thank you for your consideration.

## **How KASB informed its members about changes to the needs assessment in HB 2134**

KASB reported on the introduction of and hearings on both bills on the needs assessment process during the 2021 session in daily e-mail updates and social media posts, in our weekly e-mail legislative reports, and our weekly video updates.

You can find report these reports on our website, ([www.kasb.org](http://www.kasb.org)) clicking on the KASB News tab and searching by date. We reported on the inclusion of this provision in our reporting on the conference committee agreement on HB 2134 on May 7 (<https://www.kasb.org/45132?articleID=76211>), on the passage of that bill (May 10, <https://www.kasb.org/45132?articleID=76393>), and the Governor’s signing of that bill on May 24 (<https://www.kasb.org/45132?articleID=77360>).

We included this provision and what it means for districts in a blog post about Legislative expectations for student outcomes. (KASB News, May 13. <https://www.kasb.org/45132?articleID=76631>)

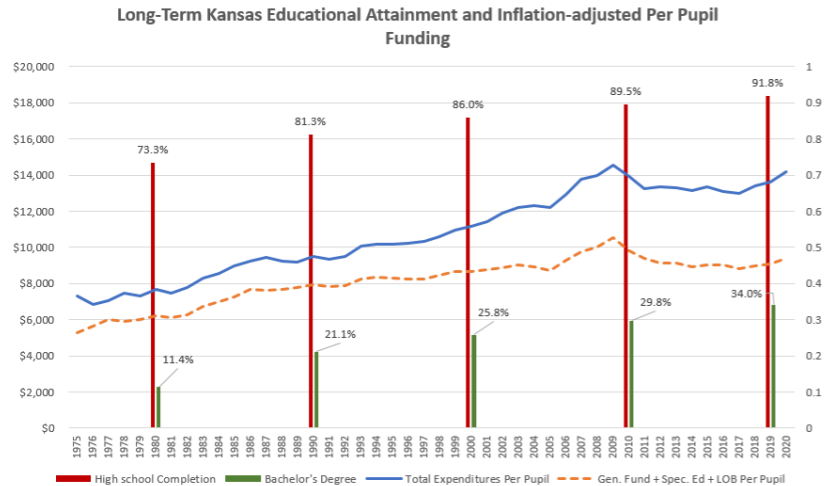
As far as training, we discussed the needs assessment provision in virtual regional meetings in April, and a virtual presentation to Kansas Association of School Business Officers in April.

We do not have additional training on this topic planned at this time. We have found our members prefer to receive training on school budget issues through the Kansas State Department of Education, because that is the agency that actually oversees the budget process. However, if we find there is demand for KASB training on this topic, we will certainly consider providing it.

Finally, KASB has continually reported on the “Rose capacities” and the statewide data that reflects how students are doing on these measures, so school leaders have information to guide their local needs assessment in the process of developing budgets. This includes multiple measures of student success (June 15, <https://www.kasb.org/45132?articleID=78370>), Kansas ACT scores and trends (Oct. 28, <https://www.kasb.org/45132?articleID=89447>) and new state assessments (Nov. 11, <https://www.kasb.org/45132?articleID=91634>).

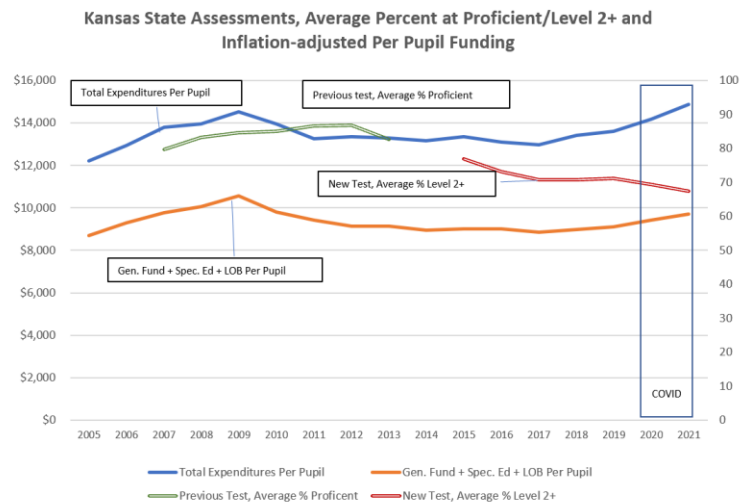
## Long-term Kansas education attainment has improved, supported by increased funding over time

- Among adults 24+, high school completion increased from 73% to 92% since 1980 (20%).
- Bachelor's degree completion tripled, from 11% to 34%.
- Total inflation-adjusted funding per pupil has approximately doubled, from under \$8,000 to \$15,000.
- General fund, local option budgets and special education aid has increased about 70%.



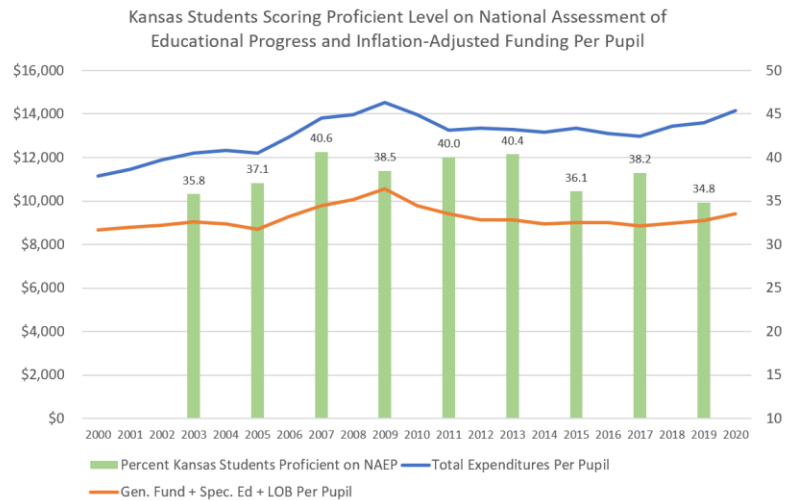
## Kansas State Assessments

- Following funding after the *Montoy* decision in 2005, the percent at “proficient” on the previous state assessments rose from 2007 to 2012.
- Three years after school funding cuts, assessment results fell in 2013; no valid test given in 2014.
- On the new, higher standard tests beginning in 2015, students at Level 2 were lower in 2015 through 2017.
- As funding increased after *Gannon* in 2018-19, tests results stabilized, then dropped in 2021 after COVID struck.



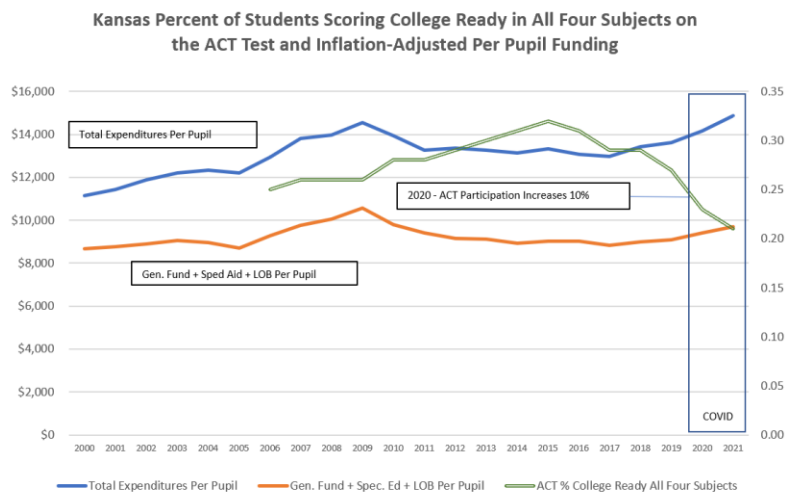
## Kansas – National Assessment of Educational Progress

- Kansas results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress rose from 2003 to 2007, remained basically flat through 2013, then declined to about 2003 levels in 2019.
- Unlike like state assessments, NAEP tests only a sample of students at just two grades (4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>) every two years.
- NAEP does not have “standards” for subjects like state standards for state tests.
- NEAP “proficient” is equal to Kansas Level 3, a measure of preparation for college.
- A study found the KS state level 3+ is higher than NAEP proficient and highest in the nation.



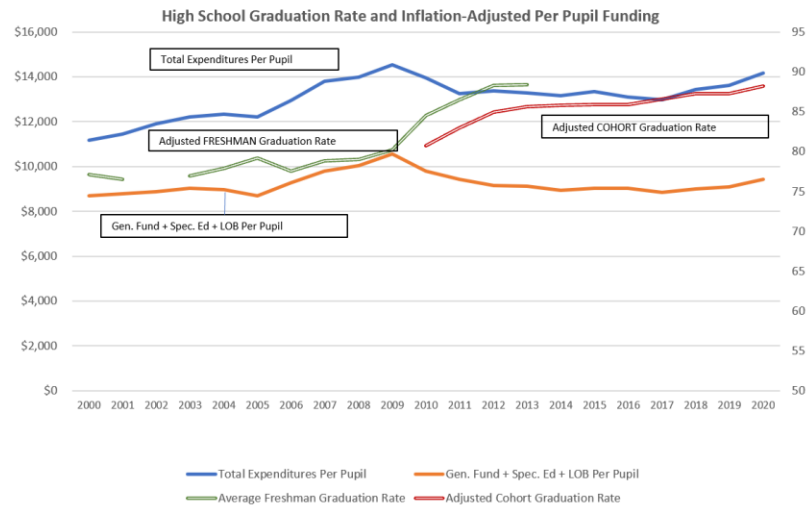
## Kansas ACT Testing

- The percent of students scoring “college-ready” in all four subjects on the ACT test rose from 2006 to 2015.
- That percentage then declined through 2020.
- Kansas results were likely lower in part because of large increase in students taking the test after the state began paying the cost.
- 2021 results fell further following COVID. Kansas participation stayed steady while other states declined.



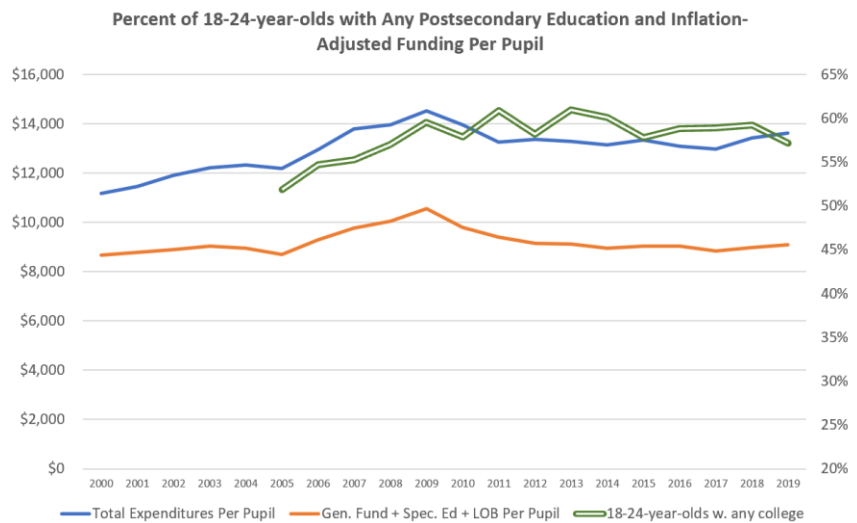
## Kansas High School Graduation Rate

- A previous calculation of the graduate rate increased from under 80 to nearly 90% as school funding increased.
- A new calculation based on students who graduate in four years began in 2003 and replaced the prior method.
- It increased more slowly, from 83% to over 88% from 2011 to 2020.
- 2021 data are not yet available.

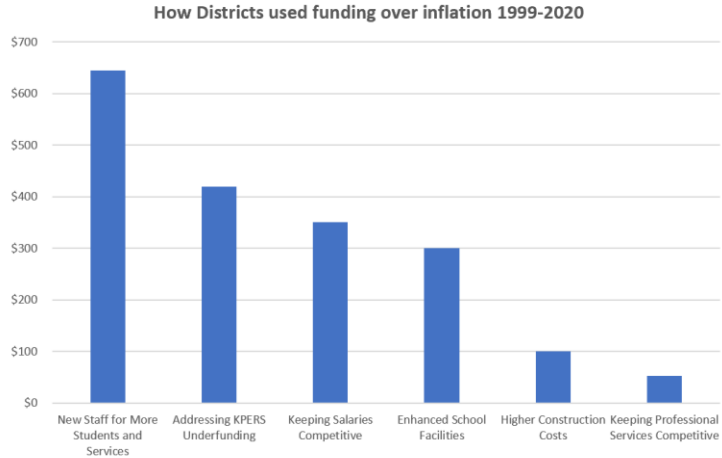


## Kansas Postsecondary Attainment by Young Adults

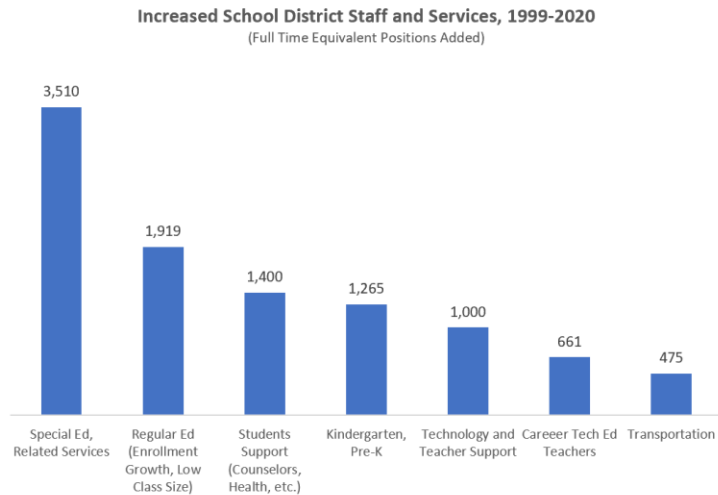
- The percentage of 18-24-year-old Kansans with any college or postsecondary education rose from 52% in 2005 to 61% in 2013.
- The rate has since declined slightly to around 60%.
- Because this figure is based on survey data from the U.S. Census Bureau, some fluctuation is expected.
- It is too soon to tell if the decline to 57% in 2019 is part of a long-term trend. Because of COVID, no data will be issued for 2020.



- Higher “real” funding allowed districts to keep up with employment and building costs, which rise faster than inflation.
- Most the additional funding was used to hire more staff for additional programs and services to keep class sizes small.
- Districts have enhanced facilities for new programs, safety, efficiency and student and community activities.
- A large share of funding went to the underfunded KPERS system.



- The largest share of new staff was for mandatory special education programs.
- Districts also added regular teachers as enrollment grew.
- Student support through counselors, health staff, social workers and other were added to physical and mental health and career planning
- All day kindergarten became almost universal and many districts added preschool.
- Districts also added support for technology, career tech ed and transportation for safety.



- Over the past 20 years, total student enrollment increased by about 30,000.
- However, low-income students, who lag on educational measures in both public and private schools, increased almost 84,000.
- Special education students increased by almost 24,000 and English Language Learners by 34,000.
- Also, White student enrollment declined by nearly 59,000, while Hispanic enrollment increased by 64,000 and multi-ethnic and “other” races by 41,000.

