

# Student Success News

## September 2022

The Kansas Can vision for student success focuses on multiple areas that prepare students to be successful adults, including kindergarten readiness, fundamental academic skills, health and safety, civic education and community engagement, preparing for individualized postsecondary success, and meeting economic needs.

Here is a report on major developments this month, September 2022 in these areas, along with the Kansas Can outcomes and measures used for school district accreditation.



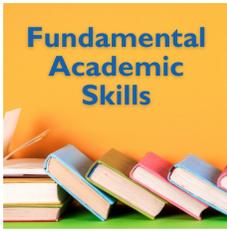
**Students and families receive support to help prepare for kindergarten and be successful in elementary, secondary and postsecondary education through a variety of public and private programs, including school-based programs.**

**Kansas Can Outcomes: Kindergarten Readiness, measured by Kansas Star recognition rubric.**

**SPOTLIGHT:** *Center supports early literacy education*

The [Teachers College Literacy Center](#) (TTCLC) at Emporia State University celebrated Kansas Literacy Week, Sept. 6-11, and International Literacy Day, September 9, to promote early literacy with parents, educators, early childhood providers, and library staff. Each year there has been a variety of themes and daily activities. Participants are entered in a daily drawing to receive new books to add to their libraries.

The TTCLC supports children birth to age 8 across Kansas by providing literacy opportunities, books in homes, professional development, and early literacy education to thousands upon thousands of young children, families, and early childhood professionals throughout the state. It has assisted eight counties in the start-up of Dolly Parton Imagination Library; offers grant opportunities for early literacy initiatives in these counties and partnered with Cedar Trail Exploration Center at USD 232 to provide consistent kindergarten readiness training to preschool teachers and center and home-based childcare providers. The Center also offers free online professional development for early childhood professionals and families. To enroll in the courses go to this [link](#). The Tale Time program connects Emporia State University students with classrooms and childcare centers across Kansas to provide virtual read-aloud with early literacy extension activities via 15-20 minutes lesson. Lessons include interactive activities and the use of green screen "magic" to help engage even the littlest of learners. To enroll in Tale Time please use this [link](#).



**Students acquire fundamental reading, writing, math and other academic and cognitive skills to function individually, in society and in the workforce. Students reach levels of competency that give them options for postsecondary choices.**

**Kansas Can Outcome: Academically prepared for postsecondary, measured by percentage of students scoring at levels 3 or 4 of state assessments, ACT Test Scores.**

**SPOTLIGHT:** *State Board celebrates 2021 Milken Award Winners*

Kansas' recent Milken Education Award recipients are Megan Morgan and Ryan Pfeifer. Morgan is a library/media specialist at Oliver Brown Elementary, Manhattan USD 383. Pfeifer teaches science at Washburn Rural High School, Auburn-Washburn USD 437. The national Milken Awards recognize significant contributions to educating children and winners receive \$25,000. Asked at the September State Board of Education meeting what they would change about schools, Pfeifer said he would recommend more emphasis on science in the early grades. Morgan agreed, saying science and literacy should be integrated together and then students could use what they've learned to work on projects.

*State Board hears proposals for substitute teacher options and support.*

Facing on-going challenges to find enough substitute teachers, the State Board received an update on several proposals that will come up for action later this year. These proposals include a "third option" to qualify as a substitute based on completing training programs (in addition to having a bachelor's degree or 60 college hours); developing guidelines or a model handbook for districts to use in supporting substitutes in frequent moves among classes, buildings and even districts; and making all emergency substitute licenses good for two years, rather than an initial one-year license. In October, the State Board will receive an updated report on teacher vacancies and formal recommendations.

*Districts using most COVID emergency aid on teaching and learning*

The State of Education approved school district plans for \$109 million worth of spending from federal COVID-19 funding in September. So far, the board has approved \$692 million under the ESSER II and ESSER III programs, with \$540 million, or 78 percent, allocated for teacher and learning purposes. The largest planned use of the funds is premium pay for educators (\$211 million from both ESSER II and III) and programs to address learning loss (\$146 million). Other major funding areas are summer school, education technology and mental health. For the most part, the federal government has determined how much funding each district receives, based on its student poverty levels. This results in significant differences in the amount of funding each school district receives. Districts are limited on how those funds can be spent, and the State Board approves all planned expenditures and changes. Almost \$420 million remains unallocated. Districts are required to document how they have received input from the communities they serve on the use of those funds. These are "one-time" emergency funds so districts cannot use them for on-going purposes without a plan to replace them.

*National reading and math scores fall during COVID pandemic; state results due this fall*

A [report](#) from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, which has been testing U.S. students since the 1970s, showed the largest drop in reading skills since 1990 and the first drop in math scores ever between 2020 and 2022, which it blamed on educational disruptions caused by COVID-19. NAEP results for a small sample of students in individual states, including Kansas, comparing 2019 with 2022, will be released later this fall. Other educational measures, such as Kansas state assessments, performance on the ACT and SAT test, graduation rates and postsecondary enrollment and completion, are also expected out in the next few months, and should show whether Kansas is beginning to recover from previous declines during COVID.

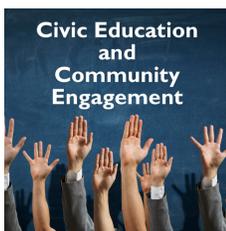


**Students learn in a safe and healthy environment and understand physical and mental health. Schools work with families, communities and other partners to address issues that interfere with students' ability to learn.**

**Kansans Can outcome: Social-emotional skills, measured locally, using Kansas Star recognition rubric.**

**SPOTLIGHT:** *Kansas Purple Star School designation would recognize military-friendly schools.*

Kansas public schools take pride in their relationships with military families. In 2008, Kansas was the first state to enact the Military Interstate Children's Compact. With 10,000 students in Kansas from active military families, schools are now proposing a new designation as Kansas Purple Star Schools. Such a designation would show that the school recognizes and supports military connected families. The program is meant to ensure that children in military families can easily transition into new schools and stay on track for graduation. The average military family will move about nine times during the military members' career.



**Students learn about political and economic systems and cultural heritage with an opportunity to engage with their community.**

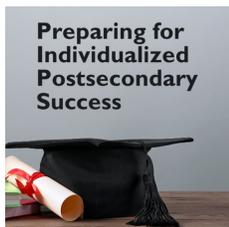
**Kansans Can outcome: Civic Engagement, measured by Kansas Star recognition rubric.**

**SPOTLIGHT:** *Sunflower Summer Community Learning Program draws over 200,000.*

The second year of Sunflower Summer was a big hit with Kansans. The program gives students and their families free admission to 90 attractions, including museums, zoos, parks and more. Sunflower Summer is funded with federal COVID dollars and is aimed at reducing learning loss and encouraging family engagement. The number of people who visited Kansas attractions for free nearly tripled from 71,228 to 203,834. The State Board of Education recently heard from administrators of the program and a Wichita woman and her seven-year-old grandson who enjoyed a number of the attractions.

**SPOTLIGHT:** *Lincoln launches automotive, welding in community building, meeting local needs.*

Lincoln USD 298 is starting a new program this year that will provide certification/licensure for Automotive Technicians and Welding technicians, with the help of a \$275,000 grant to buy an abandoned commercial building and renovation to make it education ready. This building will also have two apartments on one end for staff housing. The school district will own the building and Salina Technical College is providing the instructors and equipment. Neighboring school districts are sending students as enrolled students in these programs. The program will help this small, 1A district to provide a much-needed workforce for their community. It already has commitments from existing businesses in their community to hire the completers of this program.



**Students are supported in developing skills for education and employment after high school based on their individual interests, including broader skills than academics alone. This includes more flexibility in when, how and where students can learn, and more hands-on learning experiences.**

**Kansas Can Outcome: Individual Plans of Study with Career Focus, measured by Kansas Star recognition rubric.**

**SPOTLIGHT:** *State Board September Recognition of Wellsville High School's 2022 FBLA National Champions.*

The State Board of Education recognized Wellsville High School's 2022 Future Business Leaders of America National Champions. The school's national champions were the team of Scott Hoehn (2022 graduate), Kendra Kemp (senior) and Lola Kline (junior) in the Local Chapter Annual Business Report, and the team of Lola Kline (junior), Mason Lytle (sophomore) and Jake Richards (senior) in E-Business. Dawn Rottinghaus, who has been the FBLA instructor at Wellsville High for the past 30 years, said she was extremely proud of all the students who participated in the program. They do community service and develop networking, social and leadership skills.

**SPOTLIGHT:** *St. John opens student-run bank*

St. John-Hudson USD 350 held a ribbon-cutting ceremony September 15 to open a new student-run bank, with special guest State Treasurer Lynn Rogers. The bank, which will provide banking services to all students in the district, will be managed by students in the high school Banking and Finance Class. Superintendent Josh Meyer says the project is designed to encourage students to save and provide first-hand, real-world experience for students in the business and finance pathway. The St. John student bank received startup assistance from Silver Lake State Bank, which supports student-run banks in the Topeka area. The local banking partner is SJN Bank of Kansas, which donated funding to build a bank facility in the high school and will provide incentives to student customers.

*Proposed graduation requirements include options and requirements beyond traditional course credits.*

The State Board of Education’s Graduation Task Force has recommended alternative ways to gauge student mastery, requiring “post-secondary” assets, such as community service, and changes in course classifications. The task force left alone the 21-credit minimum to graduate high school, but slightly shuffled the course classifications. It also emphasized the need for every student to have an individual plan of study to graduate. The State Board of Education began discussion of these proposals in September and is expected to consider the recommendations for several months before possible action later in the year. Any changes approved this year would affect students who are now in eighth grade. The board could either adopt any or all the recommendations, ignore the report or appoint a new group to further examine the proposals. Here is a [link](#) to further details.



**Students acquire the skills needed for individual economic security and meeting workforce needs in an economy where most jobs require both high school graduation and additional education.**

**Kansas Can Outcomes: High school graduation, measured by Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates (Four-Year); Postsecondary Success, measured by Postsecondary Effective Rate – percentage of district’s “graduating class” that has completed or remains in postsecondary program (technical certificate, two- or four-year college) two years after graduation, and how the district compares to districts with similar rates of student poverty and other risk factors.**

**SPOTLIGHT:** *Biliteracy in Olathe*

Olathe Public Schools announced that 87 students received the Kansas Seal of Biliteracy in the 2021-2022 year. The seal recognizes any student who has attained proficiency in English and one other world language. For more information on the recognition from the Kansas State Department of Education, go to this [link](#).

*High schools recognized for college student aid applications.*

The Kansas Board of Regents announced winners for the second year of its “FAFSA Challenge,” which recognizes high schools for the highest percentage of students filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and the highest annual increase in the six Kansas State High School Activities Association enrollment classifications, plus a group for virtual schools and academies. Winners and other high performers can be found at this [link](#), which also provides access to the Kansas FAFSA tracker, allowing schools to see weekly updates of their FAFSA completion percentages and creates a leaderboard for Kansas high schools and each KSHSAA division. Research indicates increasing the percentage of students filling out the FAFSA in high school increases postsecondary participation.

*State education boards want free college hours for low-income high school students.*

At a joint meeting in September, members of the Kansas State Board of Education and Board of Regents informally agreed to support a plan to pay for low-income students to take college courses while still in high school. The details of what is called “Kansas First/Diploma Plus” have not been finalized, but the concept is to allow such students to take several general education courses and a course related to the student’s individual plan of study. Unduplicated full-time equivalent enrollment by high school students in Kansas postsecondary institutions has increased rapidly, from about 6,000 in 2013 to nearly 10,000 in 2020, before dropping to about 9,500 in 2021 amid COVID issues. However, education leaders say the tuition cost of academic courses is a barrier to low-income students and federal student aid is available to students who have not graduated high school. (The state already allows high school students to take postsecondary technical courses at no cost.) Advocates of the plan say it will widen opportunities for low-income students and accelerate preparation skilled workers to meet state economic needs.

*New Office of Registered Apprenticeships could support K-12 education goals*

Gov. Laura Kelly in September signed an executive order creating the office of Registered Apprenticeship within the Kansas Department of Commerce, a move designed to increase programs that allow employees to “learn while earning,” and could have an impact on several issues in K-12 education.

All Registered Apprenticeships are for W2 employees of an organization, and all programs must have five core components to be recognized for certification, including structured on-the-job training, job-related education through an educational institution or other provider, mentorship, wage progression, and lead to industry-recognized credentials. In Kansas, such programs must be approved by a State Apprenticeship Council. Youth apprenticeships can begin for high school students at age 16 but should lead to adult apprenticeships.

Youth apprenticeships allow students to gain “real-world” job experience in areas of interest – a key design principle of the State Board of Education’s Kansans Can vision – as well as earning both academic credit and income. Adult apprenticeships could increase the percentage of Kansans completing postsecondary credentials; a major Kansans Can outcome that reflects the value of higher skills to individuals and meets workforce needs. Finally, apprenticeships can be created by school districts to address staff shortages by helping employees gain needed credentials. State officials are reviewing a program in Tennessee, which could be a model for Kansas' efforts to increase teacher supply.

Kansas currently has 212 recognized Apprenticeships programs with 3,396 Kansas residents participating, but lags behind many other states, including Iowa and Missouri. The program’s strategic plan is to move Kansas to 25th in the nation by 2025. To learn more visit

[https://ksapprenticeship.org/.](https://ksapprenticeship.org/)