



2021 USA-Kansas Legislative Priorities

Kansas administrators are committed to providing excellent and equitable education for each and every student throughout the state. To achieve this outcome we support:

School Funding

- the school finance formula, currently in law, which is based on individual student needs, provides adequate and equitable funding for public schools, and funded through balanced tax policy at both the state and local levels, provided it is corrected to continue to include high density at-risk funding.
- fully funding the school finance formula to address the needs of all students and ensure each student and school has the capacity to meet the college and career standards, vision, and accreditation criteria established by the State Board of Education.
- increased funding for Early Childhood Education, to include universal pre-school, as supported by the Kansans Can initiative.
- fully funding the excess costs of special education.
- establishing statewide financial incentives to encourage teachers to both enter and stay in the profession.
- equitable state aid for school bonds that is not arbitrarily capped or dependent on other districts.
- the further study of funding for out-of-state students.
- fully funding legislative mandates.

Student and School Safety

- efforts to create and maintain safe schools including reliable funding of the Safe and Secure Schools Grant Opportunity.
- expanding resources for schools to address social/emotional/mental health needs of students.
- legislation to make it easier to enforce school bus stop arm violations.

KPERS

- long-term, sustained commitment toward the funding of KPERS.
- equitable working after retirement provisions for all public employees.
- temporarily reduction of the KPERS mandatory waiting periods for working after retirement to 30 days.
- changes to KPERS (Tier 3) to improve the quality of benefits in order to support recruitment and retention of new and out-of-state educators.

Educational Governance

- a system that abides by the Kansas Constitutional requirement that public schools must be operated by locally elected boards of education.
- the self-executing powers of the State Board of Education.
- use of public dollars and tax credits to fund public schools and oppose any public funding for private schools.
- incentives for local boards to consider consolidation, if in the best interest of the communities involved, and oppose any mandated consolidation.
- teacher due process procedures established at the local level.
- the Federal IDEA granted function of IEP teams to determine the content, methodologies, and delivery of instruction based upon unique needs of the child.

Bridging the Gap – The Pandemic and Transition to a New Educational Model

- increase in affordable access to broadband services for all students and families across the state.
- temporarily eliminating the additional KPERS fees placed on school districts and/or employees returning to work after retirement.
- additional resources to provide after-school and summer literacy and math programs for students affected by the pandemic.
- additional short-term flexibility for school districts regarding:
 - funding to apply to acute needs related to the pandemic;
 - maintaining equity with special education; and
 - external support & resources.