

Hello again and greetings from USD 467!

As a reminder, USD 467 begins our Winter Break this week lasting through January 3rd. Happy Holidays! One quick shout-out to Jesse Gardner for winning his second wrestling tournament championship of the year at 152 pounds, last Saturday at Goodland. Great job! Also, this will be the last newsletter until after the break.

This week I begin with a review of the Academic part of Kansans Can. The Kansas State Board of Education has determined necessary Outcomes for Measuring Progress: Kindergarten readiness; Individual Plan of Study focused on career interest; High school graduation rates; Postsecondary completion/attendance; and, Social/emotional growth measured locally (which I have discussed earlier).

Successful High School Graduate

As defined by the Kansas State Board of Education, a successful high school graduate has the Academic preparation, Cognitive preparation, Technical skills, Employability skills and, Civic engagement to be successful in postsecondary education, in the attainment of an industry recognized certification or in the workforce, without the need for remediation

Increasing Graduation Rates: Kansas uses the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, which is the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who entered high school four years earlier (adjusting for transfers in and out). Over the past four years, Kansas graduation rates have increased in every subgroup. The highest percentage increases from 11-12 to 14-15 have been in the Free/Reduced Lunch (1.6% increase), Hispanic (1.9% increase), Limited English Proficient (3% increase) and African American (3.3% increase) subgroups.

2014 Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates Nationally

The 2013-2014 high school graduation rates are the most recent data published by the National Center for Educational Statistics for all states. In every subgroup, Kansas exceeds the United States average and maintains position among the top 22 states in the nation. Kansas is 6th in the nation among Limited English Proficient students and 4th in the nation among Students with Disabilities.

Predictors of Post-Secondary Success

Kansas State Board of Education Mission: To prepare Kansas Students for lifelong success through rigorous, quality academic instruction, career training and character development according to each student's gifts and talents. Predictors of post-secondary success support the KSDE Board of Education Mission and Vision for the Kansans Can Initiative.

KSDE Vision-Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

Post-secondary is defined as work-force, military, certification programs and institutes of higher education. Current Predictors of Post-Secondary Success: Industry Recognized Certification; Career and Technical Education Pathway Completion, Number of student "completers" as per Pathways Report; Advanced Placement (AP), Number of exams taken and passing rate; Post-Secondary Enrollment, % of students who enroll within 16 months of graduation; Post-Secondary Retention, % of students who complete 24 non-remedial credit hours within 24 months of post-secondary enrollment; and, ACT/SAT College Readiness Assessment, District and building averages.

Career exploration must occur throughout a student's education. Students must be exposed to a wide variety of career options beginning at an early age and regardless of geographic boundaries. Students only know what's possible if they are exposed to that possibility. Starting in junior high/middle school, every student must have an Individual Plan of Study developed in collaboration with the student, the student's parents and the school. This plan will include career interest inventories, coursework aligned to career interests, job shadowing opportunities and a plan for postsecondary pursuits. Not every career requires a four-year degree. We must change the culture to value a student entering a two-year program or a vocation as we do a student entering a four-year program. According to the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, by 2020 (two years away!) Kansas needs 71 percent of workers to have a postsecondary certificate or degree (About 36 percent need to be bachelor degrees or higher and approx. 35 percent need to have a certificate or associate degree.)

Thank you for taking the time to read this. If you have specific questions or want more information about what's happening in the buildings or district, don't hesitate to contact Lori Maxwell, WCES Principal, at 375-2314, Delbert Schmidt, WCJSHS Principal, at 375-2213, or me at 375-4677. Thanks!

Keith Higgins