



RENEW YOUR COMMITMENT & NURTURE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

FEBRUARY 19 - 21, 2009 | SAN FRANCISCO, CA | WWW.AASA.ORG/NCE

This is a great opportunity to engage in professional development and networking! Currently, there are more than 35 Kansas administrators registered to attend!

General Session Speakers include:
Clayton Christensen - Harvard Business School
Sir Ken Robinson - Innovator, author, consultant
Patrick Lencioni - Founder and president, The Table Group, Inc.

The program content of the National Conference on Education supports AASA's mission to support and develop effective public school system leaders who are dedicated to the highest quality education for all children. The sessions offered at the 2009 National Conference on Education will help attendees increase their leadership skills and professional competence, provide an exchange of ideas and solutions, address controversial issues, provide wisdom and insights from industry experts, and provide a forum to develop a network of colleagues.

The KASA housing block is at the Intercontinental, adjacent to the Convention Center. Currently, the Intercontinental is sold out; however, there are other nearby hotels with vacancies.



Kansas Association of School Administrators
515 South Kansas Avenue, Suite 201
Topeka, Kansas 66603

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December 2008

Emporia's John Heim Named Kansas "Superintendent of the Year"



Topeka – Emporia Superintendent John Heim has been selected as the 2008 Kansas Superintendent of the Year by the Kansas Association of School Administrators. He has been a superintendent for the Emporia Public Schools since 1997. "We are proud to have Superintendent Heim representing Kansas at the national level. It is significant when a group of your peers believe you represent the state well among other administrators across the nation," explained KASA executive director Cheryl Semmel.

Candidates are assessed according to their professionalism, communication, community involvement and leadership in meeting the needs of students. Dr. Heim said it is an honor to be selected from a pool of outstanding educational leaders in Kansas. It is especially meaningful that his father, Max Heim, was the second recipient of the award in 1990 while he was superintendent at Geary County.

Dr. Heim said he is particularly proud of the success students, teachers, administrators and support staff students have experienced in Emporia during the past decade. During a period of dramatic change in community and student demographics, achievement is at an all-time high. "Our community has more students living in poverty, more students whose first language is not English and more than half who represent other cultures. Research has shown that the academic odds are against these groups of students. Yet the teachers, administrators and support staff have held high expectations for all students and they have excelled," he said. State assessment scores have improved every year in reading and math, and all student subgroups have improved on their assessments between 60 and 183 percent. At the same time, more students are meeting or exceeding state standards and the number of students in the exemplary performance level is growing.

Dr. Heim has been a superintendent in Kansas since 1988, when he took the position for the Wichita County Schools at Leoti. He was the superintendent at Eldorado for four years and the executive director of the Educational Services and Staff Development of Central Kansas before coming to Emporia. He began his education career as a history and government teacher in 1981.

He has a bachelor's degree from the University of Kansas, a master's degree in educational administration from Fort Hays State University, and a doctorate in educational administration from Kansas State University. He currently is an adjunct faculty member in The Teachers College at Emporia State University. He also has been a guest lecturer at Wichita State University and the University of Kansas.

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515 S. Kansas Avenue, Suite. 201, Topeka, Kansas 66603

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Blue Valley USD 229

Keeping Our Schools Strong During Uncertain Economic Times

Submitted by Tom Trigg, Supt., Blue Valley

It seems that each generation is faced with challenges of different magnitudes that test their resolve and faith, not only in themselves but also in those around them. The current state of the local, state and national economy is certainly one example of such a challenge. The sharp decline in the current economy is something no one could have predicted. And, if projections are correct, Kansas will have a negative balance of \$137 million for FY 09 and an almost incomprehensible shortfall of \$959 million for FY 10, according to recent state estimates.

In an effort to balance the state's budget, many state agencies and services, including K-12 public education will likely be impacted. Still, even with projected shortfalls and looming budget reductions, we must continue to provide the best possible education for all Kansas students.

Education is not merely a service we must provide, it is an obligation we must fulfill. The quality of education in America's public schools has a direct impact on every person in this country, regardless of whether or not that person has a child attending public schools. Our public schools educate the next generation of tax payers, voters, employees, business owners, parents and politicians.

Therefore, a key question as we prepare for these likely budget impacts is what can we do to continue to provide a high quality education, and at the same time meet the fiscal challenges presented to us. If, as the financial estimates suggest, school finances are going to be impacted by the current economic climate, what community relationships and synergies exist that schools can tap in order to continue to provide students with tools they need to succeed?

Now more than ever, community involvement and engagement in our public schools will continue to play a vital role in student success, especially during these bleak economic times. For example, there are many opportunities available for those in our business communities to become actively engaged with their public school systems. One important link businesses can provide is to allow students the opportunity for internships, mentorships and job shadowing.

This experience allows students the ability to gain insight into the working world and helps to inspire students as they journey down the road of career exploration. Business leaders could also share their knowledge with students through class presentations and interactive online discussions.

Mentoring a child is one of the greatest callings a person can answer. YouthFriends (www.youthfriends.org) is a good example of another important school-community outreach tool that continues to match caring adults with students who need extra support. Some children need a little extra academic support; some need emotional support; and still others just need a caring adult in their life they can count on. Through YouthFriends, mentoring through the use of e-mail provides yet another valuable mentoring tool for our students and a new way for those in the business community to become involved with public education.

Some have described our current economic forecast as patches of light amidst scattered gloom. Certainly, if the gloom is the economy, then the patches of light must be the promise of our young people. It is clear that the interdependency between the economy, the national political climate, business communities and public schools will require each of us to remain vigilant in our efforts to ensure student success.

Kansans have proven time and time again that they are a caring community who support education and value its young people. Although financial resources may be dwindling, community resources are abundant. Communities can help students create and achieve goals. They can help students build self-esteem. Today's young people need positive role models who are willing to invest in their future. We owe it to our students to look beyond our financial constraints and reach out to our respective communities for support and encouragement during these uncertain economic times.

Online Learning – Friend or Foe?

Submitted by Destry Brown, Supt., Frontenac

I have always believed, during my 25-year career, that students learn best in the classroom. However, being the parent of a 15-year old sophomore in high school has caused me to see things differently. I am amazed at what our students are able to do when given an opportunity to use technology as a tool for learning.

Recently, I was reading about the enrollment at all of our State universities and noticed that more than a third of the students enrolled are taking at least part of their classes online. I was intrigued by this and decided to give it a try and enroll in an online course myself. As I worked my way through the course, I found that I actually liked the flexibility that it gave me to work according to my own schedule.

I also enjoyed the class discussions that took place online with the rest of the over 100 students enrolled in the class from all over the world. The teacher and

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Opening Session Keynote Speaker: Tom Bloch

Former CEO, H&R Block and inner city teacher

In 1976, Tom Bloch joined H&R Block and eventually succeeded his father Henry Bloch as its CEO. Nearly 20 years later, he stunned his father, his company, and the business community by stepping down to become an inner city teacher. His second career began in 1995 as a middle school math teacher at St. Francis Xavier, an inner city parochial school. Five years later, he co-founded the University Academy, a public charter school in Kansas City. Bloch continues to teach 7th and 8th grade math...**Read more online...**

Closing Session Keynote Speaker: Bernie Saggau

Ret. Exec. Dir., Iowa High School Athletic Association; former NCAA and Big VIII collegiate official
A special thank you to the KSHSAA for sponsoring our closing session.

Saggau's background consists of being a teacher, coach, principal, and business man. Mr. Saggau was a recipient of the National High School Coaches Distinguished Award. Mr. Saggau was awarded the Award of Merit from the National High School Athletic Directors Association the highest honor that organization presents to one individual a year.
Read more online...

2009 convention overview

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2009

**Member association meetings are held throughout the day*

- 7:30 a.m. Pre-convention registration
- 8:00 a.m. USA|Kansas Pre-convention seminar
- 8:00 a.m. KASCD Just in Time: Using MTSS for School Improvement
- 1:00 p.m. Podcasting for school communications professionals
- 2:00 p.m. Convention registration opens
- 5:00 p.m. Convention grand opening

THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 2009

**Please visit our vendors throughout the day*

- 7:00 a.m. Registration opens
- 7:30 a.m. Exhibits open
(Continental breakfast available)
- 9:30 a.m. Opening general session:
Tom Bloch, Keynote Speaker
- 11:30 a.m. Vendor presentations
- 1:15 p.m. Learning clusters
- 4:00 p.m. USA|Kansas social hour

FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 2009

- 7:00 a.m. Registration opens
- 8:00 a.m. Breakfast buffet
- 8:30 a.m. Closing general session:
Bernie Saggau, Keynote Speaker
- 10:15 a.m. Member association meetings
- 10:30 a.m. Podcasting for administrators

For more information about specifics sessions, please visit the USA|Kansas website at www.usakansas.org.

Mark your calendar!

**Wednesday, January 28, 2008 at 3:00 p.m.
KASA Solutions Summit II
at the USA|Kansas annual convention**

**Thursday, January 29, 2008 at 8:00 a.m.
KASA awards and recognition breakfast at the
USA|Kansas annual convention**

*(Please note: RSVP for the breakfast is required.
Please reserve your tickets via the
conference registration form online or
mail in the registration card in the
convention brochure.)*

Superintendent of the Year (con't)

Dr. Heim received the Outstanding Service Award from the United School Administrators of Kansas in 2006 and the Communicator of the Year Award from the Kansas School Public Relations Association in 2001. He is currently president of the Partnership in Collaboration of Kansas, past president of KASA and past president of the Kansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. In the larger education community through his work with professional associations, colleagues and policy makers to positively impact education and to build support in local communities." He is a member of the Kansas State Department of Education Professional Standards Board and the KSDE Regulations Committee.

Dr. Heim is the 21st recipient of the award given to a Kansas school leader by a committee of his peers and is now eligible for the National Superintendent of the Year Program. The National Superintendent of the Year is announced at the 2009 American Association of School Administrators Conference on Education in March.

Each year, new obstacles and challenges face our students and our schools. "Now, perhaps more than any time in history, strong leaders and advocates are a vital component to our education system.

Superintendents must be the epitome of professionalism, catalysts of innovation and so much more," says Semmel, "John has demonstrated leadership within his district and within the larger education community through his work with professional associations, colleagues and policy makers to positively impact education and to build support in local communities."

Online Learning (con't)

his assistants were available to answer questions and also participated in many of the discussions.

However, we, the students, were encouraged to work together and to answer our questions among ourselves. When we got off track, the teacher or the assistants would guide us back to where we needed to be. They gave encouraging comments when we were correct and this all occurred in the comfort of my own home.

Online learning appears to work very well at the college level and is being successful in many places at the high school level as well. I have also noticed that it has become a divisive force among our colleagues around the state. My question is: Does it have to be that way? Why can't we work together and figure out how this might best work for the benefit all kids?

Currently, online classes are offered as an alternative for students who have difficulty in the school setting, or for students in smaller schools that cannot offer advanced classes. I can't help but wonder if we should not be offering some of our high school credits through online courses as part of our students' preparation for college. In the future, I believe that online courses will become the norm rather than the exception in our colleges. What should we do to prepare our students to be independent learners in these settings? This does not deemphasize the importance of having highly qualified teachers. I certainly am not advocating all courses to be online. Even online courses need outstanding teachers to be successful. Imagine the impact of having some of our best teachers working with an almost limitless number of students around the state.

Online learning has come a long way since its inception. The increase in numbers of students who are participating in these learning experiences is growing exponentially across our state and our country. Although I have been slow to come around, I believe that it is time for us to take a long, hard look at how this might serve to enhance the educational experience that the students in our district receive.

Council of Superintendents 2008-2009 Council Leadership

Deb Perbeck, Supt., Parsons, Chair
Tom Trigg, Supt., Blue Valley, Chair-elect
Randy Watson, Supt., McPherson, Secretary

Prior to each meeting, the agenda and background materials can be found online at www.kasa-ks.org --> Council of Superintendents --> Meeting dates

Following each meeting, minutes and handouts are posted online at www.kasa-ks.org --> Council of Superintendents --> Minutes

Goal of the Council
Serve as liaison between KSDE and Public Schools of Kansas to foster communication and exchange information regarding current and emerging issues in education as well as provide advice and counsel to KSDE to guide the department in the development of initiatives and strategies to improve student learning.

**Reminder:
There is NO council meeting
in December**



Mobilizing to Create 21st Century Schools

Ensuring quality teachers in every classroom

Meeting diverse learner needs

Organizing and partnering for change

Assessing learning beyond NCLB

Positioning our professional association to influence change

Visit KASA online at www.kasa-ks.org

Kansas Senate and House Leadership appointments; committee assignments

On December 1, the House and Senate held elections for key leadership positions. Following those elections, leaders immediately moved to name 2009 committee leaders.

Kansas Senate

Majority Senate Leadership

- President Senate—Steve Morris (R-Hugoton)
- Vice President—John Vratil (R-Leawood)
- Majority Leader—Derek Schmidt (R-Independence)
- Asst. Majority Leader—Vicki Schmidt (R-Topeka)
- Majority Whip—Jean Schodorf (R-Wichita)

Minority Senate Leadership

- Minority Leader—Anthony Hensley (D-Topeka)
- Asst. Minority Leader—Janis Lee (D-Kensington)
- Cauc/Agenda chair—Tom Holland (D-Baldwin City)
- Minority Whip—Laura Kelly (D-Topeka)

Committee Leaders (abbreviated)

- **Assessment and Taxation**—Chair, Les Donovan (R-Wichita); Vice chairs, Derek Schmidt (R-Independent) and Julia Lynn (R-Olathe); Ranking Democrat, Rom Holland (D-Baldwin City)
- **Education**—Chair, Jean Schodorf (R-Wichita); Vice-Chair, John Vratil (R-Leawood); Ranking Democrat, Anthony Hensley (D-Topeka)
- **Ways and Means**—Chair, Jay Emler (R-Lindsborg); Vice chairs, John Vratil (R-Leawood) and Carolyn McGinn (R-Sedwick); Ranking Democrat, Laura Kelly (D-Topeka)

Kansas House of Representatives

Majority House Leadership

- Speaker of the House—Mike O'Neal (R-Hutch)
- Majority Leader—Ray Merrick (R-Stilwell)
- Speaker Pro Tem—Arlen Siegfried (R-Olathe)
- Asst. Majority Leader—Peggy Mast (R-Emporia)
- Caucus Chair—Virgil Peck (R-Tyro)
- Majority Whip—Rob Olson (R-Olathe)

Minority House Leadership

- Minority Leader—Paul Davis (D-Lawrence)
- Asst. Minority Leader—Jim Ward (D-Wichita)
- Caucus Chair—Barbara Ballard (D-Lawrence)
- Minority Whip—Eber Phelps (D-Hays)
- Policy Chair—Cindy Neighbor (D-Shawnee)

Committee Leaders (abbreviated)

- **Appropriations**—Chair, Kevin Yoder (R-Overland Park); Vice chair, Jason Watkins (R-Wichita)
- **Education Budget Committee**—Chair, Joe McLeland (R-Wichita); Vice chair, Clay Aurand (R-Courtland)
- **Education**—Chair, Clay Aurand (R-Courtland); Vice Chair, Deena Horst (R-Salina)
- **Tax**—Chair, Richard Carlson (R-St. Marys); Vice chair, Jeff King (R-Independence)
- **Select Committee on KPERS**—Chair, Sharon Schwartz; Vice chair, Clark Schultz

Democrats are expected to release their ranking minority committee members within the next week.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the either Cheryl Semmel or Dodie Wellshear.