**Janet Presentation 10/19/11**

(TITLE SLIDE 1)

* Good evening and thank you. It’s always a pleasure to speak with education students.
* I’d like to start by sharing with you a little bit about the role of the State Board of Education.

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* The State Board derives its authority directly from the State Constitution, as well as from state statute. The Board is charged with the general supervision of public elementary and secondary schools in the state, which includes some of these specific responsibilities:
  + Accrediting K-12 schools
  + Administering & distributing state & federal funds
  + Certifying teachers, administrators & school specialists
  + Developing, administering & monitoring state & federal plans
  + Developing curricular standards
  + Evaluating & approving teacher education programs
  + Public hearings: state plans, rules & regulations, transfers of territory, due process appeals
  + Supervising KSSB & KSSD
  + Do not determine funding for schools – is responsibility of the Legislature. State Board makes recommendations.

(SLIDE 3)

* In Kansas, we have a 10-member Board
  + Each Board district encompasses four state senate districts
  + Each member serves 4-year term
  + Half of members up for re-election every two years
  + (Go through Board member slides) (SLIDES 4-13)

(SLIDE14)

* Also at state level we have the State Dept. of Education. Many people think the State Board and the State Department are one in the same, when in fact they are separate and distinct entities. The State Board is the policy-making entity, while the State Department is charged with carrying out the policies of the State Board.
* The State Department is led by the Commissioner of Education, who is appointed by the State Board.
  + Carries out policies of State Board
  + Assists schools in state & federal compliance
  + Assists in implementing best practices based on research
  + Distributes state and federal monies to local school districts

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* Certain responsibilities rest with local boards of education:
  + Curriculum/text books
  + Schedules
  + Teacher hiring/evaluation
  + Salaries

(SLIDE 16)

* Third level is the federal government, more specifically the U.S. Department of Education.
  + The mission of the USDOE is to foster educational excellence and ensure equal access
  + About 10% of school funding nationwide comes from the Fed. Govt., primarily through the USDOE, but also through Health and Human Services (Head Start) and the Dept. of Ag. (School Lunch program)
  + Other areas of federal aid to schools include:
    - Title I - aid to disadvantaged children to address problems of poor urban and rural areas
    - Vocational education – originally focused on agricultural, industrial and Home Ec. Training for a relatively small number of high school students. That has now evolved Career and Technical Education with a focus on broad industry sectors and multiple career pathways within each sector. Another change is that the program is schoolwide, rather than focused on just a small group of students.

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* You’re probably familiar with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, or ESEA. This is the legislation that launched some of the programs already mentioned (Title I). Know it now as No Child Left Behind and focus is primarily on accountability.
  + - Due to be reauthorized, but that has not happened. In light of that, the administration and the U.S. Department of Education have announced their intention to grant NCLB accountability waivers to states that implement certain education reforms.

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* Those reforms are in line with the Blueprint for Reform, released in March 2010 by the USDOE as a framework for reauthorization of ESEA. The blue print focuses on five key priorities:
  + - * College and Career Ready Students
      * Great teachers and leaders in every school
      * Equity and opportunity for all students
      * Raise the bar and reward excellence
      * Promote innovation and continuous improvement

(SLIDE 19)

* + - * Those priorities are mirrored in the criteria for states to qualify for a waiver. To qualify or a waiver, states must meet four primary criteria:
        + Adoption and implementation of college and career ready standards and high quality assessments aligned to those standards;
        + Develop and implement a differentiated accountability, recognition and support system;
        + Design and implement an educator evaluation system based in part on student growth;
        + Reduce duplicative and unnecessary reporting requirements for school districts.
* Kansas is well positioned to apply for and be granted a waiver under these criteria, and earlier this month the State Board voted to seek a waiver.
* In developing our waiver application, we’ll have to spend little time on the first and the fourth criteria.
* The fourth criteria has to do with eliminating unnecessary reporting requirements. Over the past few years, we’ve eliminated the unnecessary reporting requirements we could identify at the state level. For the most part, the reporting requirements that remain are driven by federal regulations and only the federal government can eliminate them.

(SLIDE 20)

* With regard to the first criteria related to college and career ready standards and assessments, Kansas is among the 47 States and jurisdictions to have adopted the Common Core State Standards for English language arts and mathematics. Those standards meet the college- and career-ready standard outlined in the waiver criteria.
  + - Development of the Common Core Standards was a state-led effort. The standards for proficiency in English language arts and mathematics were developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators and education experts. They are evidence-based, internationally benchmarked and include both content and application of knowledge through higher-order skills.
    - We’re now in the process of transitioning to the new standards and developing new assessments tied to the standards.

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* In addition to the Common Core State Standards for English language arts and math, Kansas is now involved in a separate effort related to science standards.
* Last month, Kansas was named one of 20 lead states in the development of the Next Generation Science Standards. This is a state-led effort being coordinated by the National Research Council, which is the staffing arm of the National Academy of Sciences, and managed by Achieve, an education reform non-profit organization.
* The Next Generation Science Standards effort is focused on clearly defining and integrating the content and practices students will need to learn in science from kindergarten through high school graduation.
* As a lead state, Kansas will help guide the standards writing process and will be able to provide feedback and direction to the development of the standards.
* We are not obligated as a lead state to adopt the standards that are ultimately developed through this process, but we have committed to giving those standards serious consideration.
* I think this will be a good process for our state and one that will help us arrive at science standards that are both college and career ready and internationally benchmarked.

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* + - As I said earlier, we have adopted the Common Core State Standards for English language arts and math, and that gives us several advantages:
      * Great diversity of input and expertise in development of standards means they are more focused and more rigorous than our existing standards. They are aligned with college and work expectations and build upon the strengths and lessons of our previous state standards. In addition, they are internationally benchmarked, so all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society.
      * The ability to add content, up to 15 percent of total standards, to reflect areas of emphasis and focus for the state.
      * Can capitalize on successful programs and strategies used in other states because there will be alignment with standards and assessments
      * Can pool resources with other states to develop assessments that are adaptive and more performance based than existing assessments.

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* Already, Kansas is working as part of the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium – a group of 29 states working together to develop the next generation of assessments, based on the Common Core Standards.
  + - * Consortium received federal grant of $160 million to develop an assessment designed to align with the common core standards.

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* + - * Will be different from current assessments in a couple of ways:
        + Current assessments all multiple choice questions
        + New assessments will be more performance based – require the student to complete a process to show necessary skills
        + Will have capabilities for technology enhanced items (ex: graphic organizers that can be filled in, drag and drop capabilities, etc.)
        + Will be computer adaptive – not every student will be asked the same questions in the same sequence. Which question you’ll be asked next will depend on how you responded to the previous question.
        + The new assessments will also allow for growth measures.
      * Expect that new assessments be fully implemented in the 2014-15 school year.

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* One of the areas we’ll need to work on over the next couple of months as we develop our state’s waiver application will be related to the second criteria – the development of a differentiated accountability system.
* Guidance provided by the U.S. Department of Education establishes three options for setting annual goals for schools:
* reducing by half the percentage of students in the “all student” group and in each subgroup who perform below standards within six years;
* increase in annual performance targets toward a goal of having 100 percent of students at “meets standards” or above by the end of the 2019-2020 school year;
* another method that is educationally sound and results in ambitious but achievable annual, measurable goals for all schools and subgroups.
* We’ll need to decide what type of accountability plan we want to adopt as a state.

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* The third option set out by the U.S. Department of Education would allow us to pursue the growth model that the State Board has been discussing for some time now. Under a growth model, schools and districts would receive credit for demonstrating growth in student performance over time, rather than looking solely at whether prescribed targets had been met.
* This is a very popular option among our State Board members, and among the school community, as well. However, as we work to develop our waiver application, we’ll be exploring all of the options available to us and sharing information with educators and administrators around the state to determine which options will work best in Kansas.
* It’s possible we may end up with an accountability plan that encompasses elements of several, or all of the options outlined in the guidance document.

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* Whatever accountability system we do adopt will be included in the new accreditation model that is currently being developed
* The 21st Century model for accreditation would replace the current Quality Performance Accreditation System.
  + - The new accreditation system is in the very early stages of development, which means there are not a lot of details to share at this time, but the State Department of Education will be working with educators in the field to more fully develop the system and an implementation plan.
    - Once a plan is complete, it will come to the State Board, and we’ll vote on whether to adopt the new system.

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* Kansas is also well positioned to meet the waiver criteria in the area of teacher/leader evaluation. A new educator evaluation system – the Kansas Educator Evaluation Protocol, or KEEP, is begin piloted in about 18 school districts this year. While KEEP includes many of the ideas enumerated in the federal criteria related to waiver requests, it does not yet include a key component required in order to qualify for a waiver. That is a requirement that the evaluation system include a tie to student growth.
* That is a piece that will be worked on to determine how it can be added to KEEP in a way that makes sense for our state.
* Fortunately, in order to meet the waiver criteria, we don’t have to have all of these elements implemented, but we do have to have a plan in place that leads to implementation within a specified time period, and I’m confident we can meet those requirements and be successful in our waiver request.

(SLIDE 29)

* If we are granted a waiver, we’ll have much greater flexibility in the way that schools are held accountable for performance. The ESEA requirements that could be waived include:
  + The 2014 timeline for achieving 100 percent proficiency. Schools would still be held accountable for raising the bar for academic performance based on the accountability plan adopted by the state, however we will have greater flexibility in setting annual targets for meeting goals and objectives.
  + School improvement requirements. States would no longer have to identify schools on improvement, corrective action or those in restructuring. Also, state’s would not be required to implement the improvement actions currently required for schools that don’t meet AYP for two consecutive years or more. However, states can choose to continue those improvement actions, or develop new actions that were not part of the NCLB legislation.
  + Additional flexibility in the use of federal funds for school improvement purposes. As an example, current restrictions on the percentage of federal funds that can be transferred from one federal program to another will be waived, allowing 100 percent of certain federal program funds to be transferred to another federal program. This allows districts to decide which programs are having the greatest impact in their schools and to direct funds to those programs accordingly. Funds will not be allowed to be transferred out of Title I, but funds can be transferred into Title I.
  + Also waived will be the requirement for school districts to notify the state 30 days prior to transferring funds.
  + There are also provisions in the waiver that will give rural school districts greater flexibility in the use of federal funds.

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* The earliest states can submit a request for a waiver is in November, but our Board wanted to be certain we took the time to address the criteria, especially the accountability system, appropriately. For that reason, we’ll be submitting our waiver request in February, which is the second opportunity for states to submit a waiver request.
* It’s expected that we would know whether our waiver was granted or not by the end of May.

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* As you can see, it’s a time of great opportunity in the area of education, but also a time of great challenges. We’re going to need our best people, our best minds, to help us overcome our challenges and capitalize on our opportunities. We’re going to need you.

(SLIDE 32)

* Thank you for giving me this opportunity to talk with you. Questions?

(END SLIDE)