

Task force debates use of graduation rate

Wire report

Disagreement exists on the Kansas Legislature's task force reworking the state's public school finance formula about the importance of high school graduation rate as a measure of student success.

A member of the task force pointed to alleged manipulation of student records at Wichita Southeast High School as evidence of why a district's annual graduation rate shouldn't be viewed as a significant metric, while others defended graduation rates as an evaluation tool when determining whether districts prepared students for the workplace or college.

Rep. Kristey Williams, an Augusta Republican, said the Wichita school district had touted a 5.1 percentage point surge in its graduation rate in 2024 to 84.3%. Wichita Southeast's graduation rate climbed 12.5 percentage points in 2024 to a record-high 86.3%.

Southeast's principal was replaced

last week amid reports of suspected grade fixing that may have been associated with helping students meet graduation requirements.

"I wouldn't use graduation rates," said Williams, who didn't see a meaningful correlation between graduation rate and student success. "If we want to baby sit, that's one thing. If we want to have a safe place for them, that's one thing. But that doesn't mean you're learning anything."

Frank Harwood, a deputy commissioner of the Kansas State Department of Education, said one potential incident of administrative misconduct shouldn't justify dismissal of graduation rates as a means of measuring school districts.

"When you look at any industry, including the Legislature, there are bad actors," he said. "It doesn't mean you should throw out that metric all together. I'm not saying graduation rate is the best indicator, but I think it is an indicator that we can't just ignore."

The Kansas State Board of Education made elevating the state's high school graduation rate a feature in its "Kansans Can" agenda and in terms of school district accreditation. The state board's graduation-rate goal was set at 95%.

Kansas' adjusted cohort graduation rate, which tracked student graduation within four years and took into account transfers, has ranged from 86% to 89% during the past decade.

In 2022-2023, more than 90 of the state's 287 school districts graduated 100% of students. Twenty school districts had graduation rates below 80% during that academic year. The Wichita district's graduation rate was at 79.2% during that period, while the Kansas City, Kansas, district came in at 73.4%.

Sen. Renee Erickson, a Wichita Republican serving as chairwoman of the Legislature's school-finance task force, said Kansas should continue to include graduation rate in a set of evaluation metrics. She said the state needed to develop a definition of what a high

school diploma revealed about students.

Erickson said employers had reported a high school diploma didn't guarantee a quality worker. University or college officials indicated high school graduates didn't necessarily have skills to succeed in higher education, she said.

"I have post-secondary folks in my office frequently and they're saying, 'They're not prepared for our level of work,'" the senator said. "I'm not blaming. I'm just telling you, if you can't acknowledge that, we've got a problem."

Task force member Pat Pettey, a Democratic senator from Kansas City, Kansas, said it would be folly to drop the graduation rate as an indicator of a school district's ability to prepare students for the future.

"I still am a strong supporter of graduation rates because having a high school diploma is a key to opening the first door to get a job. I don't believe it is the key, but if they don't have that they're not on a trajectory to be economically successful," Pettey said.

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Public Notices

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF LEAVENWORTH COUNTY, KANSAS PROBATE DIVISION IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: MELINDA L. MARCUM, DECEASED. CASE NO. LV-2025-PR-000080
NOTICE OF HEARING AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED: You are hereby notified that on the 23rd day of May, 2025, a Petition was filed in this Court by Jesse Jenkins, a devisee and legatee of Melinda L. Marcum, deceased, and Executor/Personal Representative named in the "Last Will and Testament of Melinda L. Marcum," deceased, dated March 18, 2021, requesting that the instrument attached thereto be admitted to probate and record as the Last will and Testament of the decedent and that Letters Testamentary under the Kansas Simplified Estates Act be issued to the Executor/Personal Representative to serve without bond. You are further advised that the Petitioner in this matter has requested administration pursuant to the Kansas Simplified Estates Act, and if such request is granted, the Court may not supervise administration of the estate and no further notice of any action of the Executor/Personal Representative or other proceedings in the administration will be given except for notice of final settlement of the decedent's estate. Should written objections to simplified administration be filed with the court, the court may order supervised administration to ensue. You are hereby required to file your written defenses thereto on or before the 27th day of June, 2025 at 8:30 o'clock a.m. of said day, in this Court, in the City of Leavenworth, Leavenworth County, Kansas, at which time and place said cause will be heard. To attend this hearing virtually, contact the Office of the District Court Clerk at (913) 684-0700 for instructions in the use of Zoom. Should you fail therein, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon said Petition. All creditors are notified to exhibit their demands against the estate within four months from the date of the first publication of this notice as provided by law, and if their demands are not thus exhibited, they shall be forever barred. Jesse Jenkins, Petitioner Michael Crow #07707 Crow & Associates

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302 Shawnee Street Leavenworth, Kansas 66048 Phone: (913) 682-0166 Fax: (913) 682-2130 E-Mail: mikecrow@crowlegal.com
ATTORNEY FOR ESTATE Published in the Leavenworth Times, May 31, Jun 7, 14, 2025 3526310

Public Notices

said day, in this Court, in the City of Leavenworth, Leavenworth County, Kansas, at which time and place said cause will be heard. To attend this hearing virtually, contact the Office of the District Court Clerk at (913) 684-0700 for instructions in the use of Zoom. Should you fail therein, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon said Petition. Jason R. Bradley and Krista Bradley Spooner, Petitioners Michael Crow #07707 Crow & Associates 302 Shawnee Street Leavenworth, Kansas 66048 Phone: (913) 682-0166 Fax: (913) 682-2130 E-Mail: mikecrow@crowlegal.com
ATTORNEY FOR ESTATE Published in the Leavenworth Times, Jun 7, 14, 21, 2025 3556180

NEA Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS
1 Tank filler
4 Statistical
8 Ring
12 PC key
13 "Holy cow!"
14 Eye part
15 Wedding words
16 Toy blocks name
17 Darn
18 Mother-of-pearl
20 Says impulsively
22 Parts in a box
23 Blue-green
24 Piquant
27 Baffle
31 A Great Lake
32 Sherbets
34 "The Matrix" hero
35 "— in the Family"
36 Implement
37 Baseball's — Musial
38 Smells strongly

40 Brusque
42 Merit
44 Sprint
45 Smart-phone info feature
48 Gold bar
51 Soon
52 Decorative container
55 Roman household god
56 Dwell
57 Divisible by two
58 Greek letter
59 Ran away
60 Require
61 Like a wallflower

DOWN
1 Acquire
2 Actor Alan —
3 Large supply
4 Remove
5 — of
6 Aquarius
6 Label
7 Sun-dried brick
8 Ruckus

Answer to Previous Puzzle
9 "Some-where — the Rainbow"
10 Pre-Easter time
11 Fellows
19 Mature
21 Girl
23 Business giant
24 Pome fruit
25 Writer — Stanley Gardner
26 — de Janeiro
28 Straightens out
29 Intend
30 Body of still water
33 Brownie
36 Old Russian ruler (Var.)
37 Eschew
39 Wailed
41 Chum
43 "Never-more" bird
45 Farm denizen
46 Blue dye
47 Relocate
49 Solemn pledge
50 Salver
53 "— Maria"
54 "I Can — Clearly Now"

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IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF LEAVENWORTH COUNTY, KANSAS PROBATE DIVISION IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: JOSEPH ROBERT BRADLEY, DECEASED. CASE NO. LV-2025-PR-000006
NOTICE OF HEARING AND THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED: You are hereby notified that on the 30th day of May, 2025, a Petition was filed in this Court by Jason R. Bradley and Krista Bradley Spooner, devisees and legatees of Joseph Robert Bradley, deceased, and Co-Personal Representatives named in the "Last Will and Testament of Joseph Robert Bradley," deceased, dated August 19, 2022, requesting that the instrument attached thereto be admitted to probate and record as the Last will and Testament of the decedent and that Letters Testamentary under the Kansas Simplified Estates Act be issued to the Co-Personal Representatives to serve without bond. You are further advised that the Petitioner in this matter has requested administration pursuant to the Kansas Simplified Estates Act, and if such request is granted, the Court may not supervise administration of the estate and no further notice of any action of the Personal Representative or other proceedings in the administration will be given except for notice of final settlement of the decedent's estate. Should written objections to simplified administration be filed with the court, the court may order supervised administration to ensue. You are hereby required to file your written defenses thereto on or before the 11th day of July, 2025 at 8:30 o'clock a.m. of

Public Notices

The following vehicle and his contents will be offered for sale June 20, 2025, at 1816 S. 4th St. 1999 Nissan Vin 1N4DL01D7XC033038 Published in the Leavenworth Times, Jun 4, 7, 2025 3538150

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF LEAVENWORTH COUNTY, KANSAS PROBATE DIVISION IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: JOSEPH ROBERT BRADLEY, DECEASED. CASE NO. LV-2025-PR-000006
NOTICE OF HEARING AND THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED: You are hereby notified that on the 30th day of May, 2025, a Petition was filed in this Court by Jason R. Bradley and Krista Bradley Spooner, devisees and legatees of Joseph Robert Bradley, deceased, and Co-Personal Representatives named in the "Last Will and Testament of Joseph Robert Bradley," deceased, dated August 19, 2022, requesting that the instrument attached thereto be admitted to probate and record as the Last will and Testament of the decedent and that Letters Testamentary under the Kansas Simplified Estates Act be issued to the Co-Personal Representatives to serve without bond. You are further advised that the Petitioner in this matter has requested administration pursuant to the Kansas Simplified Estates Act, and if such request is granted, the Court may not supervise administration of the estate and no further notice of any action of the Personal Representative or other proceedings in the administration will be given except for notice of final settlement of the decedent's estate. Should written objections to simplified administration be filed with the court, the court may order supervised administration to ensue. You are hereby required to file your written defenses thereto on or before the 11th day of July, 2025 at 8:30 o'clock a.m. of

The following vehicle and its contents will be offered for sale June 20,2025 at 10:00 am at 1816 S 4TH St Leavenworth KS Auction June 20,2025 1991 Harley-Davidson VIN 1HD1ELL1XMY136010 Published in the Leavenworth Times, Jun 7, 14, 2025 3556220

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