

## TUESDAY MINUTES

Approved September 8, 2026



The time stamps are coordinated with the KSDE Livemedia YouTube channel

Kansas State Board of Education  
Tuesday, August 11, 2026

### Call to Order

Chair Cathy Hopkins called the meeting of the Kansas State Board of Education to order at 10:00 a.m. Tuesday, August 11, 2026, in the boardroom of the Landon State Office Building, 900 SW Jackson Street, Topeka, Kansas. Chair Hopkins recited the Board mission and vision statements and then asked for a moment of silent reflection or prayer, followed by everyone standing and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Roll Call

The following Board members were present:

Mrs. Betty Arnold

Mrs. Michelle Dombrosky

Mrs. Melanie Haas

Mr. Dennis Hershberger

Mrs. Cathy Hopkins, Chair

Dr. Beryl New

Mrs. Connie O'Brien

Mrs. Debby Potter

Mr. Jim Porter (Virtual)

Mr. Danny Zeck, Vice Chair

Mr. Mark Ferguson, Board Attorney and Commissioner Steel were seated at the Board table.

### APPROVAL OF THE JULY 2026 MINUTES

Mrs. Arnold moved to approve the minutes for the July 14 and 15, 2026, Kansas State Board of Education meeting. Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-0-1 with Mrs. Potter present not voting.

Minutes  
02:50

### APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST AGENDA

Mrs. Haas moved to approve the agenda for August 11, 2026. Mrs. Arnold seconded the motion.

Mrs. Potter made a Point of Order.

Agenda  
03:15

Mrs. Potter brought up the issue of changing the previously approved dates and locations for the August Board meeting. She noted her belief that the new agenda cannot supersede the June 2025 resolution of approved dates and locations for regular Board meetings. Mrs. Potter made an appeal to the Board regarding the Chair's determination that passing the agenda was sufficient to change the location and time of the Board meeting from what the previous resolution set forth as the dates and locations for regular Board meetings. Mrs. Potter asked that in future the Board will honor the dates and locations and not change the agenda without undoing the previous resolution. It was determined that a second was not required in this instance.

Board Attorney Ferguson clarified that a yes vote would support the position that an agenda is sufficient to change the time and location of the regular Board meeting. A no vote would support the position that an agenda cannot supersede a previous resolution that set forth the dates and locations for regular Board meetings. The vote was taken. There were 7 yes votes supporting the agenda as sufficient, and 3 no votes, so the motion carried 7-3 with Mrs. Potter, Mrs. O'Brien and Mrs. Dombrosky voting no.

(Back on the motion to approve the agenda) Motion carried 9-1 with Mrs. Potter voting no.

## CONSENT AGENDA

Mrs. O'Brien asked to pull consent item c for a separate vote.

Mrs. Dombrosky asked to pull consent items: d, f, g, and h for a separate vote.

Mrs. Potter asked to pull consent item l for a discussion and a separate vote.

Mrs. Dombrosky moved that the remaining consent agenda items be approved. Mrs. Potter seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

### Consent items that were approved:

- a. Receive monthly personnel report and appointments to unclassified positions
- b. Act on Visiting Scholar License recommendations
- e. Act on request from USD 436 Caney Valley, Montgomery County to hold a bond election
- i. Act to approve contracts to be paid by Kansas State School for the Blind
- j. Act to authorize out-of-state school district contracts for student placement at Kansas State School for the Blind
- k. Act to authorize out-of-state school district contracts for student placement at Kansas School for the Deaf
- m. Notification of three new members on the SEAC board: Beth Zillinger, Kylie Steward and Jerrie Brooks

Consent  
Agenda  
17:30

## ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA FOR A VOTE

Mrs. Arnold moved that consent item c be approved by the Kansas State Board of Education. Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-2 with Mrs. O'Brien and Mrs. Potter voting no.

### Consent item that was approved:

- c. Act on request from USD 251 North Lyon County to hold a bond election

Mrs. Arnold moved that consent items d, f, g, and h be approved by the Kansas State Board of Education. Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-1 with Mrs. Dombrosky voting no.

### Consent items that were approved:

- d. Act on request from USD 251 North Lyon County to receive Capital Improvement State Aid
- f. Act on request from 436 Caney Valley Montgomery County to receive Capital improvement State Aid
- g. Act to approve the McKinney-Vento grants for homeless students
- h. Act to approve General Math 6-12 content test

Chair Hopkins moved consent item l. to later in the meeting for discussion and separate vote.

## COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

The Commissioner highlighted key July activities, including the 2026 Great Ideas in Education Conference, which drew nearly 800 attendees from 170 school districts, completion of approximately 200 district budget reviews, and that he with many State Board Members took a tour of Wichita Public Schools that showcased innovative district operations, magnet programs, and career-focused learning opportunities.

The report also refocused attention on the Kansas State Board of Education's goals of quality school improvement, quality leadership development, and policy, regulation, and alignment. Updates included continued implementation of KESA 2.0 accreditation, revisions to the Kansas School Improvement Model, progress in structured literacy initiatives, development of a statewide literacy screening system, expansion of leadership development efforts through the Kansas Superintendent Leadership Network, and advancement of licensure policy changes designed to improve alignment, efficiency, and support for Kansas educators.

The Commissioner also introduced Ashley Stites-Hubbard, KSDE's new General Counsel,

Consent  
Items that  
were  
removed  
20:03

Dr. Steel  
22:00

who will lead efforts to strengthen policy, regulatory, and process alignment.

There were no participants in the Citizen's Open Forum

#### STUDENT PRESENTATION

This item featured Tanya Ramesh, 2025 Kansas Civics Bee winner and a Wichita Collegiate School student. She shared her passion for civic engagement and public service, highlighted her work to improve rural healthcare access in Kansas, and reflected on the importance of civics, leadership, America's 250th anniversary, and the role young people can play in making meaningful contributions to their communities.

Tanya  
Ramesh  
58:00

Her entire speech will be preserved in the permanent hardcopy minutes book at KSDE.

#### PRESENTATION: Overview of through-year Innovative Assessment process (IADA)

Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Zach Conrad

Division of Accountability and Technology

Dr. Conrad explained the design and purpose of the through-year innovative assessment and how it differs from the present system of a year-end assessment. The through-year model tests students while they are immersed in the subject matter and provides quick feedback to students, teachers and parents. A pilot program has been approved by the federal government and is moving forward with six Kansas school districts.

IADA  
1:20:15

#### ACT ON CONSENT ITEM L

Act to approve change of vendor to serve as state advisor for DECA through June 30, 2029

Mrs. Potter requested a discussion with the entire board on the decision to approve a change of vendor. Natalie Clark, Assistant Director, Career Technical Education, was present to answer questions. Mrs. Clark explained the situation that facilitated the vendor change and that the financial aspect of the original contract would not change.

DECA  
consent item  
motion  
2:05:00

Mrs. Haas moved that the Kansas State Board of Education approve the request to change the vendor to serve as the state advisor for DECA through June 30, 2029, from Kansas State University to the University of Kansas. Mr. Hershberger seconded the motion. Motion carried 9-0-1 with Mrs. Potter present not voting.

#### QUALITY INSTRUCTION: Wichita State University/USD 259 Wichita/Kansas State

Department of Education Collaborative Summer Intervention Project

Dr. Sherrie Frazey, USD 259, Exec Dir of School Support and Improvement

Quality  
Instruction  
3:29:40

**Dr. Kim Moody, Wichita State University**

**Dr. Reagan Murnan, Wichita State University**

Dr. Laurie Curtis introduced the participating professors from Wichita State University and the coordinator from Wichita USD 259 who collaborated with Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) staff on this pilot program designed to support young students over the summer to improve their reading skills.

#### **PRESENTATION ON FEDERAL FUNDS: a review of federal financial assistance**

**Deputy Commissioner Dr. Frank Harwood**

**Gabrielle Hull, Legislative Coordinator**

Gabrielle Hull and Frank Harwood presented a review of the federal financial assistance report that is required to be submitted to the Kansas Legislature under 2026 HB 2513 and 2026 HB 2618. The report provided an overview of federal funds received and administered by KSDE in compliance with state legislative reporting requirements.

Federal  
Funds  
4:10:33

#### **RECEIVE EVALUATION REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIGHER ED PROGRAM APPROVALS**

**Dr. Catherine Chmidling, Teacher Licensure**

Catherine Chmidling presented recommendations from the Evaluation Review Committee (ERC) regarding educator preparation program approvals for Bethany College, Newman University, and Ottawa University. The recommendations resulted from a comprehensive peer-review process conducted under Kansas regulations and State Board policies. After reviewing program alignment with approved preparation standards and completing the appeals process, the ERC submitted its final recommendations to the State Board for consideration and approval. She indicated the recommendations would return to the Board as an action item in September.

ERC  
4:17:50

#### **PRESENTATION ON STUDENT SAFE AT SCHOOL ACT GUIDANCE**

**Deputy Commissioner Dr. Frank Harwood**

**John Calvert, Student Safety Coordinator**

Dr. Harwood and Mr. Calvert presented guidance developed by KSDE under the Students Safe at School Act, established through 2026 HB 2534. The presentation reviewed active shooter guidance that KSDE is required to prepare and provide to Kansas schools to support school safety planning and compliance with the new law.

Guidance  
4:34:11

#### **ACT ON STUDENT WALK OUT COMPLAINT ADJUDICATION**

**Gabrielle Hull, Legislative Coordinator**

Mrs. Hull brought the action item on the student walk out complaint adjudication process to the Board. HB 2513 requires the State Board to adjudicate complaints

Student Walk  
out  
4:51:50

pertaining to student walkouts in public schools. The legislature initiated this process through a budget proviso. The State Board's role in this law is adjudication. KSDE is proposing that the KSDE Office of the General Counsel be designated as the hearing officer.

Proposed procedure for the student walkouts was presented to the Board at the June meeting. Due to a lack of time at the July meeting, it was decided that this item be moved to the August meeting.

*Budget HB2513 sec. 88 page 155 (m) Notwithstanding the provisions of article 31 of chapter 72 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated, and amendments thereto, or any other statute, in addition to the other purposes for which expenditures may be made by the above agency from moneys appropriated from the state general fund or from any special revenue fund or funds for fiscal year 2027, as authorized by section 97 of chapter 117 of the 2025 Session Laws of Kansas, this or any other appropriation act of the 2026 regular session of the legislature, expenditures shall be made by the above agency from such moneys for fiscal year 2027 to establish a complaint process and penalty for any public school district that: (1) Experiences a student walkout and fails to obtain written parental consent for each absent student to leave the school building; (2) fails to enforce school attendance laws and policies with associated disciplinary actions for such absent students; and (3) has staff encourage, facilitate or enable such student walkout: Provided, That the state board of education shall adjudicate any complaints and determine whether a school district shall be assessed such penalty: Provided further, That the amount of such penalty shall be equal to the contract base salary of the superintendent of such school district for each school day that such school district experiences such student walkout: And provided further, That such penalty shall be remitted by the school district to the above agency and the above agency shall remit all penalty amounts to the state treasurer in accordance with the provisions of K.S.A. 75-4215, and amendments thereto: And provided further, That upon receipt of each such remittance, the state treasurer shall deposit the entire amount in the state treasury to the credit of the state general fund: And provided further, That each school day in which such school district experiences such student walkout shall not be counted as an instructional school day for purposes of the school term: And provided further, That for purposes of this subsection, "student walkout" means an organized effort for students to willfully violate school attendance requirements.*

Mrs. Potter spoke of work she had done on the complaint procedure and shared her ideas with the Board. She made a motion:

Mrs. Potter moved that the State Board of Education adopt the following procedure for responding to complaints involving student walkouts pursuant to House Bill 2513 and

related reporting requirements of House Bill 2618. The Commissioner of Education shall designate a Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) staff member to receive complaints, conduct factual investigations while protecting the identity of the complainant, prepare written findings of fact, and present those findings to the State Board of Education for adjudication at a regular board meeting within 45 days. (There was no further action.)

There was discussion with the Board Attorney about the motion. Mrs. Potter decided to proceed with the following motion:

Mrs. Potter moved that the State Board table this item until next month. Mrs. O'Brien seconded the motion. Motion failed 3-7 with Chair Hopkins, Vice Chair Zeck, Mrs. Haas, Mr. Hershberger, Dr. New, Mrs. Arnold and Mr. Porter voting no.

Mrs. Arnold moved that the Kansas State Board of Education appoint the KSDE Office of General Counsel as the hearing officer. Dr. New seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-1-1 with Mrs. Potter voting no and Mrs. O'Brien present not voting.

Mrs. Potter requested that her document, outlining a complaint procedure, be placed in the minutes. They have been attached to the end of the minutes.

#### ACT ON THE SPECIAL PURPOSE SCHOOLS ALTERNATIVE METRIC

Dr. Jay Scott, Director, Implementation and Supports

Mrs. Arnold moved that the Kansas State Board of Education approve the Life and Employability Skills Assessment as an alternative metric to high school graduation rate for accreditation determination in Special Purpose schools. Mrs. Haas seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

Alternative  
Metric  
5:06:58

#### ACT ON SCIENCE STATE ASSESSMENT CUT SCORES

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Zack Conrad, Division of Accountability and Technology

Mrs. Arnold moved that the Kansas State Board of Education approve the science state assessment cut scores as presented. Dr. New seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

Science Cut  
Scores  
5:20:00

#### ACT ON ACCREDITATION REVIEW COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Dr. Jay Scott, Director, Implementation and Supports

Mrs. Arnold moved that the Kansas State Board of Education approve the Accreditation Review Council's recommendations of accreditation status for school systems. The recommendations were as follows:

- a. All systems except USD 412 Hoxie and Lutheran Schools – accredited,
- b. USD 412 Hoxie and Lutheran Schools – accredited with conditions.

ARC  
5:19:38

Mr. Hershberger seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

Michelle Dombrosky reported on the Kansas School for the Deaf (KSD) meetings that are coming up.

Mrs. O'Brien reported on the Juvenile Justice meeting, the data committee.

Mr. Hershberger reported on the Opioid Drug committee which will meet in future and reported on the Agriculture Teacher of the Year and the Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom (KFAC) quarterly board meeting.

## TRAVEL REQUESTS

Mrs. Haas moved that the travel requests be approved. Mrs. Arnold seconded the motion. Motion carried 10-0.

## BOARD COMMENTS

Mrs. O'Brien would like to see more choices in Professional Practices Commission (PPC) cases beyond censure.

Mrs. Arnold commented that as a member of the Policy Committee she understands the need to update, shore up and amend policy. So, in preparation of five new members and to consider how to best aid freshmen members to hit the ground running, she requests the Policy Committee bring back to the full Board an acceptable platform from which voices can be heard.

## FUTURE AGENDA REQUESTS

Mrs. O'Brien would like information on the student count (The Commissioner noted that the information would be available in November).

Mrs. Dombrosky and Mr. Zeck want more information on the coalition of innovative districts board.

Dr. New requests a presentation on bonds, the process and the Board's role.

Chair Hopkins reminded everyone that there will be a work session the next morning beginning at 9am, at the Docking State Office Building, in the Cherokee room. It will be livestreamed and the topic is technology in the classroom. There will be a Policy Committee meeting at 4:30pm in Room 117. Chair Hopkins then adjourned the meeting until the next regular Board meeting on Sept. 8 - 9, 2026.

The next meeting will take place on September 8 and 9, 2026, first floor boardroom of the Landon State Office Building, 900 S.W. Jackson, in Topeka.

BOARD  
items  
5:41

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Cathy Hopkins, Chair

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Deborah Bremer, Board Secretary

Mrs. Potter passed this paperwork out to the Board at the August 11, 2026 meeting. She asked that it be attached to the August minutes. There was no action taken on this item. It is for information only.

## Proposed State Board of Education Procedure for Student Walkout Complaints

Pursuant to House Bill 2513 and Related Reporting Requirements of House Bill 2618

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### Proposed Motion

**I move that the State Board of Education adopt the following procedure for responding to complaints involving student walkouts pursuant to House Bill 2513 and related reporting requirements of House Bill 2618. The Commissioner of Education shall designate a Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) staff member to receive complaints, conduct factual investigations while protecting the identity of the complainant, prepare written findings of fact, and present those findings to the State Board of Education for adjudication at a regular board meeting within 45 days.**

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### Statement of Purpose

The Kansas Legislature has enacted statutes governing compulsory attendance, truancy, student walkouts, and the responsibilities of school districts. House Bill 2513 further assigns the State Board of Education responsibility to adjudicate qualifying complaints concerning student walkouts and determine whether statutory consequences apply.

This procedure is intended to:

1. Establish a uniform statewide process for receiving and investigating complaints.
  2. Clearly distinguish between policymaking, administration, investigation, and adjudication.
  3. Ensure consistent statewide application of Kansas law.
  4. Protect the due process rights of students, parents, school districts, and school employees.
  5. Ensure that the Kansas State Department of Education administers and executes policies adopted by the State Board of Education rather than establishing State Board policy independently.
-

## Separation of Governance and Administration

The Legislature has assigned distinct responsibilities to each level of government and administration.

- **The Kansas Legislature** enacts the law.
- **The State Board of Education** establishes policy, adopts regulations authorized by law, and adjudicates matters assigned to it by statute.
- **The Commissioner of Education** administers and implements policies adopted by the State Board.
- **The Kansas State Department of Education** conducts investigations and executes State Board policy under the direction of the Commissioner.
- **Local school districts** implement state law, State Board policy, and local board policy.

This separation preserves accountability and ensures that policymaking, administration, investigation, and adjudication remain distinct functions.

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## Roles and Responsibilities

### Kansas Legislature

The Legislature enacts statutes governing public education and assigns powers and duties to the State Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education, and local school districts.

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### State Board of Education

The State Board shall:

- Adopt policies and procedures authorized by law.
  - Adopt administrative regulations authorized by statute.
  - Adjudicate complaints assigned to the Board by law.
  - Determine whether statutory penalties apply.
  - Direct the Commissioner regarding implementation of Board policy and lawful Board actions.
-

## Commissioner of Education

The Commissioner shall:

- Serve as the chief administrative officer of the Kansas State Department of Education.
- Administer and implement policies adopted by the State Board.
- Assign KSDE personnel necessary to carry out Board directives.
- Supervise investigations conducted pursuant to Board policy.
- Ensure the faithful execution of Board policies.

**The Commissioner shall not establish State Board policy or exercise adjudicatory authority reserved by statute or Board policy to the State Board of Education.**

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## Kansas State Department of Education

KSDE staff shall:

- Receive complaints.
- Conduct factual investigations.
- Gather evidence.
- Prepare written findings of fact.
- Prepare reports for the State Board.
- Make referrals required by law or Board policy.
- Carry out directives issued by the State Board or the Commissioner that are consistent with State Board policy and applicable law.

**KSDE staff shall administer and execute policies adopted by the State Board and shall not establish State Board policy or exercise adjudicatory authority reserved to the State Board.**

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## State Board Adjudication

The State Board shall determine:

- Whether statutory elements have been satisfied.
- Whether Board policy has been violated.
- Whether statutory penalties apply.
- Whether additional Board action is warranted.
- Whether the complaint should be closed.

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## Guiding Principle

**The Kansas State Department of Education, under the direction of the Commissioner of Education, serves as the administrative agency of the State Board of Education. The Commissioner and KSDE staff investigate, administer, and execute policies adopted by the State Board. The State Board establishes policy, adopts regulations, and adjudicates matters assigned to it by law. Neither the Commissioner nor KSDE staff shall establish State Board policy or exercise adjudicatory authority reserved to the State Board.**

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## Complaint Investigation Procedure

### STEP 1 - Complaint Received

**Was a valid complaint received regarding a student walkout?**

#### No

- Document the complaint.
- Close the file.

#### Yes

- Assign the complaint to the designated KSDE investigator.
  - Proceed to Step 2.
- 

### STEP 2 - Preliminary Review

The investigator shall determine whether sufficient information exists to begin an investigation.

#### Insufficient Information

- Request additional information from the complainant.

#### Sufficient Information

- Open an investigation.
  - Proceed to Step 3.
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## STEP 3- District Compliance Review

The investigator shall determine whether the district complied with:

- Written parental consent requirements;
- Compulsory attendance and truancy laws;
- Local board attendance policies;
- Student supervision and safety requirements;
- Applicable Kansas statutes; and
- Applicable State Board regulations.

### If Compliant

- Document findings.
- Submit report to the State Board recommending closure.

### If Not Compliant

Proceed to Step 4.

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## STEP 4 - Employee Involvement

Did any district employee encourage, facilitate, enable, organize, direct, require, or otherwise participate in the student walkout?

### Yes

The investigator shall:

- Document the evidence.
- Notify affected parents.
- Notify all members of the State Board.
- Refer the appropriate employee information to the applicable professional licensing authority.
- Refer the matter to KSDE Licensure for review of superintendent and principal responsibilities.

Proceed to Step 5.

### No

Proceed to Step 5.

## STEP 5 - Organization of the Walkout

Was the walkout organized?

### No

- Document findings.
- Verify enforcement of attendance policies.
- Proceed to Step 7.

### Yes

Proceed to Step 6.

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## STEP 6 - Outside Organization

Was an outside individual or organization involved in organizing, directing, encouraging, or facilitating the walkout?

### Yes

The investigator shall:

- Notify affected parents.
- Notify all members of the State Board.
- Refer the matter to the appropriate law enforcement agency for review of any potential violations of Kansas law, including **K.S.A. 21-5603**, when supported by the facts.

Proceed to Step 7.

### No

Proceed to Step 7.

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## STEP 7 - Findings Under House Bill 2513

The investigator shall determine whether the evidence supports the statutory elements of House Bill 2513.

The investigation shall address whether:

- An organized student walkout occurred;
- Students left school without written parental consent, where required;

- The district failed to enforce compulsory attendance laws;
  - The district failed to enforce local attendance policies;
  - Appropriate disciplinary consequences were imposed;
  - District employees encouraged, facilitated, enabled, organized, or directed the walkout.
- 

## STEP 8 -Written Findings of Fact

The investigator shall prepare a written report including:

- Findings of fact;
- Applicable statutes;
- Applicable regulations;
- Applicable district policies;
- Evidence reviewed;
- Referrals made;
- Recommended disposition; and
- Whether the statutory requirements for assessment of the HB 2513 penalty appear to have been met.

The report shall be provided to each State Board member before the meeting at which the complaint will be considered.

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## STEP 9- State Board Adjudication

At a public meeting, the State Board shall:

- Review the investigative report;
  - Receive any presentations authorized by law;
  - Deliberate;
  - Adjudicate the complaint; and
  - Determine whether the statutory requirements have been satisfied.
- 

## STEP 10- Board Action

If the State Board determines the statutory requirements have **not** been met:

- Close the complaint.
- Notify the complainant and the district.

### **If the State Board determines the statutory requirements have been met:**

The State Board shall:

- Assess the statutory penalty authorized by House Bill 2513, if all statutory prerequisites are satisfied.
  - Notify the affected school district.
  - Direct the Commissioner to implement the Board's decision.
  - Ensure any financial consequences required by statute are carried out.
  - Direct implementation of any statutory instructional-day consequences required by law.
  - Complete all notifications required by statute.
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## **General Principle**

Nothing in this procedure shall be interpreted to expand or diminish the statutory authority of the Kansas Legislature, the State Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education, the Kansas State Department of Education, or local school districts. This procedure is intended solely to provide an orderly process for carrying out duties assigned by law.