

## Questions for Legislators

1. The state of Kansas is expected to face a budget deficit in the current year, and likely a much deeper deficit next year. Considering that funding for almost all state programs, including K-12 education, has already been reduced, what steps do you favor to balance the budget?
2. In the *Montoy* case, the Kansas Supreme Court held that the state was not funding K-12 education at the level required by the state's own cost studies for curriculum requirements and student outcomes. The state has already cut funding for commitments made to settle that case. Based on the Supreme Court's decisions and state requirements, do you believe the Legislature is providing constitutionally suitable funding for education?
3. One reason the cost of K-12 education has increased is additional state and federal requirements. Do you favor reducing any of these requirements? If so, which ones? Are you willing to oppose any new requirements until additional funding is available and provided?
4. Traditionally, public schools were expected to give students the opportunity to learn, but it was accepted that many students would not graduate or reach high standards. New state and federal standards stress boosting achievement for disadvantaged and disabled students who are more expensive to educate. Do you support efforts to educate all students to high standards, even if this costs more than previous expectations?
5. Part of the reason for the decline in state revenues has been the number of tax cuts, credits and exemptions, often for economic development reasons. Given the state's current economic condition, how would you evaluate the effectiveness of these policies, especially compared to the impact of cuts in state funding for education, social services and public safety?
6. Many Legislators are concerned about the impact of funding cuts on public safety. Prison populations are overwhelmingly filled with high school drop-outs. Pre-school, at-risk and drop-out prevention programs help students succeed in school and avoid crime and welfare dependency. Do you support maintaining these programs?
7. Experts such as the former Commissioner of Education and legislative studies say school district consolidation does not result in significant savings unless school buildings are closed and district staff is reduced. Kansas law currently provides incentives for districts to consolidate when approved by local communities. What is your position on mandatory consolidation or financial penalties for districts that fail to meet state guidelines for size and enrollment?
8. Do you believe that local school boards should be able to make decisions about how to use state and local funding for teaching and support positions, purchases and budgeting, or should they be required to follow state requirements?
9. There have been proposals to limit the voice of school boards in the Legislative process by prohibiting both individuals and groups like KASB from lobbying on behalf of school districts. There is no such prohibition on state agencies or the Legislature itself, or other groups or businesses that receive tax funds. What is your position on these proposals?