

**KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS**  
**MINUTES**  
February 12, 2025

The meeting was called to order by Chair Carl Ice at 1:15 p.m. The meeting was held virtually on Zoom. Proper notice was given according to the law.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Carl Ice, Chair
Jon Rolph, Vice Chair
Alysia Johnston
Blake Benson
John Dicus
Neelima Parasker
Wint Winter
Diana Mendoza
Kathy Wolfe Moore

Chair Ice noted that the meeting is being conducted virtually due to inclement weather and the closure of the Curtis State Office Building. In addition, he noted that there has been an addition to the agenda: following the legislative update, the Board will recess into executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Regent Rolph moved to approve the minutes of the Board's January 15, 2025 meeting. Regent Benson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair Ice introduced and welcomed Regent Kathy Wolfe Moore, whose appointment to the Board was confirmed by the Kansas Senate on Thursday, February 6, 2025.

**GENERAL REPORTS**

**REPORT FROM CHAIR**

Chair Ice reflected on the meeting agenda, noting that the agenda itself could function as a Chair report. The report on the Board's strategic plan will highlight successes, the accomplishment of which included participation from the institutions, the Governor, and the Legislature. The universities' student success updates also fit within the strategic plan. The Board will hear an update on the ongoing legislative session.

**REPORT FROM PRESIDENT AND CEO**

President Blake Flanders reported that legislative activity at the statehouse and federal government activity are being monitored. President Flanders noted that the Complete College America launch was this week. The alliance is committed to increasing graduation rates and student success. It brings best practices, a number of which our system is already implementing. President Flanders thanked Washburn University for hosting the event.

Regent Winter asked about the status of the appropriation process. President Flanders replied that there is very good news for the community colleges, technical colleges, and Washburn University in the House of Representatives, as funding beyond the Board's request has been added for those entities. However, the state universities face some headwinds. Facility renewal payments enacted last year have been suspended for FY 2026 in the current budget, and the Board has not yet received any of its own budget requests. President Flanders stated that the focus has been narrowed to the system's request for salary enhancements. Fred Patton, the Board's governmental affairs consultant, will provide more information in the legislative update.

**REPORT FROM COUNCIL OF FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENTS**

Pittsburg State University Professor Norman Philipp, Chair of the Council of Faculty Senate Presidents, expressed appreciation for the opportunity to attend the House Judiciary Committee's hearing on House Bill 2348 regarding faculty tenure. He thanked those who provided testimony to the Committee.

Chair Philipp addressed the Council's work on faculty of the year award policy updates. Chair Ice noted the policy updates received a very positive reaction. He said the Governance Committee was informed that campuses were beginning to gather nominations. Chair Philipp said the universities are trying to be proactive. He noted that PSU has updated its criteria document and will be submitting it to President Flanders.

Chair Philipp said that the Council is working on a proposal outlining options for tuition assistance for employee professional development that could be utilized across all state institutions. The Council is working on data gathering, including a statewide survey of all benefits-eligible employees. The Council will present its proposal to the Council of Chief Academic Officers and Council of Business Officers in March and hopes to have the proposal to the Board by April or May.

**REPORT FROM STUDENTS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Pittsburg State University Student Government Association President Hannah Eckstein, Chair of the Students' Advisory Committee, reported that Higher Education Day at the statehouse will be rescheduled due to today's weather closure. She also recognized the president of Washburn University's student government association for his efforts to organize students regarding HB 2348.

**STANDING COMMITTEE AND OTHER REPORTS****ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

Regent Mendoza, Chair of the Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee, reported that on January 29, BAASC received a report on Academic Year 2025 performance report rubrics; received a summary of Board Goals on Systemwide Transfer degrees; approved university programs articulated to the systemwide transfer associate degrees; and received a presentation from the Higher Learning Commission on reduced credit bachelor's degrees.

At this morning's BAASC meeting, the Committee clarified how graduate students are counted in the AY 2025 performance metrics. In addition, the Committee received reports on the Apply Kansas initiative and Kansas Free Application Days. BAASC tabled formal approval of Free Application Days to allow the university provosts to gather data for the Committee. Lastly, BAASC received an update on the First 15 initiative.

Chair Ice asked whether BAASC reviewed the University of Kansas' proposal to update its qualified admissions requirements. Regent Mendoza confirmed that BAASC reviewed the proposal and approved it for the full Board's consideration.

**FISCAL AFFAIRS AND AUDIT**

Regent Benson, Chair of the Board Fiscal Affairs and Audit Standing Committee, reported that the Committee conducted its agenda call on January 28 and met this morning via Zoom. Troy Bruun, Wichita State University Associate Vice President for Financial Reporting gave a brief overview on the composite financial index, a benchmarking tool used in higher education. The CFI is heavily influenced by the university's endowment or foundation returns. It should be reviewed over the longer term in the context of how the institution is implementing its strategic plan, making investments in the campus and in programs that will bring a return to the university.

Most of this morning's meeting comprised of mid-year budget updates from Pittsburg State University, the University of Kansas, and Kansas State University. All three campuses expressed how impactful the state investments in the student success playbooks, student financial aid, and in capital renewal have been for improving student recruitment and retention. All three campuses are on track with their Fiscal Year 2025 budget plans and remain competitive among their peer and athletic conference universities for tuition and fees.

All three universities have strong freshman classes, but they are seeing softening in international student enrollments. CFI data for the universities reflect their work to improve their operating margins. Debt levels for all three universities were reviewed as well. None of the universities have debt burdens that are concerning to the Committee. Regent Benson commended Doug Ball, Jeff DeWitt and Ethan Erickson and their teams for their work to improve the financial standing of their universities.

Regent Benson noted that challenges lie ahead with the need for more state investment in employee pay, the uncertainty of federal grant funding, cybersecurity threats, and the looming NCAA court case that will bring athletic department revenue sharing with students in the coming months with no identified funding stream. The universities are all mindful of these important risks and are striving to plan for potential scenarios.

In addition to receiving the budget updates, the Committee approved the items on today's Board consent agenda under Fiscal Affairs. Lastly, Director of Facilities Chad Bristow reminded the Committee that the universities are preparing their plans for the Board to review this fall for the multi-year Campus Restoration Act funding.

#### GOVERNANCE

This morning, the Governance Committee approved proposed student health insurance benefits for plan year 2025-26. Under the proposal, premiums will decrease by six percent with no change in benefits from the current plan year. Final action on the proposal is on the Board's agenda this afternoon.

Next, the Committee received a first reading of proposed changes to the Board's faculty of the year policy. The updated policy would add two new award categories—an award for non-tenure-track faculty, and an award for staff. Chair Ice stated that much feedback has been received already and he expects the policy revisions to move forward.

Finally, Committee received a campus safety and security report from the University of Kansas and the University of Kansas Medical Center.

#### APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Regent Rolph moved to approve the consent agenda. Regent Dicus seconded the motion. The motion carried and the following items were approved:

##### *Fiscal Affairs & Audit*

##### ACT ON REQUEST TO AMEND THE FY 2025 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PLAN AND APPROVE PROGRAM STATEMENT FOR LIED BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH CENTER HEATING HOT WATER SYSTEM REPLACEMENT – KUMC

The University of Kansas Medical Center received approval to amend the Fiscal Year 2025 capital improvement project plan, and the Board accepted the program statement for the Lied Biomedical Research Heating Hot Water System Replacement project. The project budget has increased to \$2,103,245 due to inflation and a more thorough understanding of the project complexity, up from the \$1,600,000 previously approved by the Board. The project will be funded with a combination of the university's FY 2025 allocation of State universities facilities capital renewal initiative funds and FY 2026 allocation of the Kansas campus restoration act funds. KUMC will procure professional design services utilizing the standard state selection process and intends to execute the project with the traditional state design-bid-build procurement method.

ACT ON REQUEST TO AMEND THE FY 2025 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PLAN AND APPROVE PROGRAM STATEMENT FOR SUDLER MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL, AND PLUMBING INFRASTRUCTURE RENOVATION – KUMC

The University of Kansas Medical Center received approval to amend the FY 2025 capital improvement project plan, and the Board accepted the program statement for the Sudler Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Infrastructure Renovation project. The project will be funded with a combination of the university's FY 2025 allocation of State universities facilities capital renewal initiative funds and FY 2026 allocation of the Kansas campus restoration act funds. KUMC will procure professional design services utilizing the standard state selection process and intends to execute the project with the traditional state design-bid-build procurement method.

ACT ON REQUEST TO AMEND THE FY 2025 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND APPROVE PROGRAM STATEMENT FOR BIOPROCESSING AND INDUSTRIAL VALUE ADDED PRODUCTS INNOVATION CENTER – KSU

Kansas State University received approval to amend the Fiscal Year 2025 capital improvement project plan, and the Board accepted the program statement for renovations and additions to the Bioprocessing and Industrial Value Added Products (BIVAP) Innovation Center. To meet workforce needs of biomanufacturing firms and other industry partners, the project will create space for biomanufacturing training and education and industry partnerships. Laboratory space will contain a comprehensive biomanufacturing line that supports all phases of modern biomanufacturing processes and prepares students for immediate transfer to industry. University researchers and corporate partners will also use the space to develop pilot-scale production of diagnostic, therapeutic and preventative countermeasures for a broad range of emerging zoonotic diseases.

The project will be completed in four phases. Phase 1 focuses on renovating a portion of the second floor to create a biomanufacturing core and training facility. Phase 2 will involve an addition to the BIVAP building and renovations within the existing structure to expand research space and provide more storage for pilot plant equipment. Phase 3 will be a two-story addition to the northwest corner of the existing BIVAP facility to create dedicated space for partnership research. Phase 4 will address existing deferred capital renewal and maintenance, including replacing the roof, HVAC, elevator maintenance, and other building system items that have reached end of life.

The total estimated project cost range is \$26.5-\$30 million. At this time, \$7 million from university funds, federal grants and philanthropic gifts has been identified to support Phase 1. The university will continue to seek additional funding to support the remaining phases. KSU will procure professional design services utilizing the standard state selection process and intends to request authorization from the State Building Advisory Commission to use the state alternative delivery process and execute the project with the construction management at-risk procurement method.

ACT ON REQUEST TO AMEND THE FY 2025 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PLAN AND APPROVE PROGRAM STATEMENT FOR KANSAS FOREST SERVICE/COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE JOINT FACILITY – KSU

Kansas State University received approval to amend the Fiscal Year 2025 capital improvement project plan, and the Board accepted the program statement for a new Kansas Forest Service/College of Agriculture joint facility. The proposed project would create a single joint-use facility to efficiently and economically address overlapping needs of the Kansas Forest Service (KFS) and the College of Agriculture. The facility would produce vehicles for community disaster response use, strengthen Kansas communities' fire preparedness and provide instructional space for academic and regional workforce development programs.

A new 13,268 square foot facility would include a multipurpose classroom/lab, a mechanical lab with flexible space and individual welding stations, drive-through vehicle bays and lifts appropriately sized to accommodate modern military vehicles, code compliant battery storage and exhaust ventilation systems, indoor storage for donated fire equipment and shared office space.

The total estimated project cost is \$5 million. The project will be funded by K-State Research and Extension reserve funds and an Economic Adjustment Assistance grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration. KSU will procure professional design services utilizing the standard state selection process and intends to construct the project with the traditional state design-bid-build procurement method.

#### ACT ON REQUEST TO RAZE BUILDINGS AT BEEF CATTLE RESEARCH CENTER – KSU

Kansas State University received approval to raze the remaining 11 obsolete buildings on the Beef Cattle Research Center site, located north of the Manhattan campus near the intersection of College Avenue and Purcell Road. The Board approved KSU's request to construct the new Doug Laue Beef Cattle Research Center at the January 2025 meeting. The obsolete buildings will be razed in advance of constructing the new Doug Laue Beef Cattle Research Center at the same location. No environmental issues are anticipated. Following demolition, the existing space will be incorporated into the site package for the Doug Laue Beef Cattle Research Center. The total estimated cost of demolition is \$800,000 and will be funded by the College of Agriculture. KSU will utilize on-call professional design services and bid the demolition project using the traditional state design-bid-build procurement method.

The following structures will be razed:

State building #36700-464	State building #36700-464F
State building #36700-464A	State building #36700-464G
State building #36700-464B	State building #36700-464H
State building #36700-464C*	State building #36700-464I
State building #36700-464D	State building #36700-464J
State building #36700-464E	State building #36700-464K

*\*The Board approved demolition of this mission critical building at the March 2022. The foundation still exists and will be removed in its entirety with this project.*

#### ACT ON REQUEST TO AMEND ACCEPTANCE OF REAL PROPERTY – PSU

The Board amended Pittsburg State University's approval to accept real property. At the September 2024 Board Meeting, the Board authorized PSU to accept a gift of two parcels of land from the PSU Foundation. Those parcels totaled approximately 7 acres. The City of Pittsburg will now retain ownership of one of the parcels. PSU retains approval to accept the remaining 4.4-acre parcel from the Foundation.

#### Technical Education Authority

#### ACT ON REQUEST FOR DEGREE AND/OR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM: TECHNICAL CERTIFICATE B, C AND AAS IN ELECTRICAL TECHNOLOGY – COWLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Cowley Community College received approval to offer the following program:

- Electrical Technology (46.0302) – Technical Certificate B/33 credit hours, Technical Certificate C/49 credit hours, and Associate of Applied Science degree/60-68 credit hours.

ACT ON EXCEL IN CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) FEES – COWLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The Board Approved the following Excel in CTE tuition and fees:

- Cowley Community College: Electrical Technology. Total \$1,286.90. Fees include \$651.90 in textbooks, \$160 for industry certifications, \$125 for work boots and \$350 in tools.

ACT ON PROMISE ACT PROGRAMS – COWLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The Board designated the following as an eligible program under Kansas Promise Scholarship Act:

- Cowley Community College: Electrical Technology (46.0302).

ACT ON SUBMITTED ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026 EXCEL IN CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) FEES

The Academic Year 2026 Excel in CTE Fees were approved.

[Fees filed with official minutes.]

**CONSIDERATION OF DISCUSSION AGENDA**

Academic Affairs

ACT ON REQUEST TO APPROVE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MEDICAL DOSIMETRY – WASHBURN UNIVERSITY

Washburn University Provost John Fritch presented the university's request to offer a Master of Science in Medical Dosimetry. Regent Mendoza reported that BAASC has reviewed and approved the proposal.

Regent Dicus moved to approve the request. Regent Johnston seconded the motion. The motion carried.

ACT ON REQUEST TO CHANGE QUALIFIED ADMISSIONS – KU

Rusty Monhollon, Vice President of Academic Affairs, presented the University of Kansas' proposal to modify its qualified admission requirements for freshmen students under age 21. KU proposes to offer guaranteed admission to students with either: (1) an ACT score of 24 or more and a cumulative high school GPA of 2.5 or more; or (2) a cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 or more. The latter is a reduction from the current qualified admissions standards, under which a 3.25 cumulative GPA is sufficient for guaranteed admission to KU. In addition to new qualified admissions standards, KU seeks to establish a February 1 deadline for freshmen applications for the fall semester. To effectuate these changes, amendments to the Board's qualified admissions regulations will be required.

University of Kansas Provost Barbara Bichelmeyer explained the reduction from 3.25 to 3.0 for the GPA-only option. Other universities in KU's peer group have a 3.0 GPA minimum for qualified admissions. A small number of students who apply therefore do not receive an automatic acceptance letter from KU like they do from other universities.

Regent Dicus inquired about the 21-and-under qualifier. Provost Bichelmeyer stated that this age generally delineates first-time freshmen. In addition, the distinction is drawn in the state qualified admissions statute.

Regent Benson moved to approve the request. Regent Mendoza seconded the motion. The motion carried.

RECEIVE ANNUAL REPORT ON APPLY KANSAS APPLICATION CAMPAIGN, RECEIVE REPORT ON KANSAS FREE APPLICATIONS DAYS, AND ACT ON KANSAS FREE APPLICATION DAYS FOR 2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR

Mistie Knox, Associate Director of Academic Affairs, reported on the Apply Kansas campaign and Kansas Free Application Days. The Apply Kansas initiative is a Board goal under the “family” pillar. 253 of the 286 Kansas public school districts participate in the program. Associate Director Knox reviewed data including 3-year trends in the number of schools registered and reporting data; students served; and applications received. Associate Director Knox remarked that 2023 saw the first increase in the state’s college-going rate in the last decade.

Regent Benson inquired whether addressing federal financial aid, scholarships, and other assistance as part of the local Apply Kansas events had been considered. Associate Director Knox said that the events are commonly coupled with information sessions on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, and that there are FAFSA completion nights for parents.

Kansas Free Application Days also aligns with the “family” pillar of the Board’s strategic plan. The program serves this pillar by removing barriers and expanding access. Associate Director Knox reviewed data on applications received in 2023 and 2024, and on yields from the 2023 event. For the 2023 event, 30% of the students who were admitted based on their free applications enrolled in the institution to which they applied. Associate Director Knox also presented demographic data regarding the event’s yields. Data on the event’s impact on the college going rate is inconclusive due to the federal government’s rollout of the simplified FAFSA last year.

Regent Mendoza noted that BAASC discussed proposed Free Application Days for 2025. During that discussion, the state university provosts said the events are not cost-neutral, and that they would collect data to help streamline processing the free applications. The consensus, however, was that the initiative is positive. BAASC will revisit the issue next month with data to help give the Committee a bigger-picture view.

In response to an inquiry from Regent Benson about the yield rate and goals over the next three to five years, Associate Director Knox stated that baseline data is now available, and she hopes that by October there will be enough information to determine the program’s impact. She noted that the data shows students are applying to multiple institutions, giving them choices. And in response to a question from Regent Winter about the extent to which FAFSA roll-out impacted application numbers, Associate Director Knox stated that it is difficult to determine the impact. However, she noted that the U.S. Department of Education appears to have increased services for students this year.

[Presentations filed with official minutes.]

Governance

ACT ON STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS AND PREMIUM RATES FOR PLAN YEAR 2025-2026

Jeff DeWitt, Chair of the Student Insurance Advisory Committee, presented UnitedHealthcare – Student Resources’ student health insurance renewal proposal for Plan Year 2025-2026. There are four plan options available to students at the state universities. Option 1 is open to all students. Option 2 is for students whose academic disciplines require them to have health insurance, such as students in pharmacy or veterinary medicine. Option 3 is for graduate students, such as graduate teaching assistants, who receive a 75% premium contribution from their employing universities. And Option 4 is for international students, who are required to maintain health insurance. Option 1, as a purely voluntary catch-all category, is in a separate risk pool than the remaining options for which enrollment is required or incentivized.

For Plan Year 2025-2026, a six percent across-the-board premium reduction is proposed, with no reduction in existing benefits. The proposed premiums for the Plan Year are as follows:

<b>Duplicate Existing Benefits</b>	<b>PY 24-25</b>	<b>PY 25-26</b>	<b>\$ and % Change</b>
Plan Option 1	\$5,431	\$5,105	-\$326 / -6.0%
Plan Options 2, 3 and 4	\$2,831	\$2,661	-\$170 / -6.0%

Based on continued improvement in plan experience after the Board held premiums level last year, and a robust discussion whether to increase coverage or lower premiums, the Advisory Committee determined a prudent reduction in premiums would be appropriate. Chair Ice noted the Governance Committee reviewed and concurred with that recommendation.

Regent Rolph moved to approve the proposal. Regent Benson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

#### BREAK

Chair Ice called for a break at 2:26 p.m. The meeting resumed at 2:37 p.m.

#### Strategic Plan

##### RECEIVE ANNUAL REPORT ON THE BOARD'S STRATEGIC PLAN, *BUILDING A FUTURE*

President and CEO Blake Flanders presented the annual report on *Building a Future*, the Board's strategic plan. The Board adopted *Building a Future* in 2018. The Plan is comprised of three pillars: Pillar 1, helping Kansas families; Pillar 2, supporting Kansas businesses; and Pillar 3, advancing economic prosperity.

President Flanders began by discussing the Board's efforts surrounding Pillar 1. He focused on efforts aimed at affordability, access, and student success, such as advocating for increased need-based aid and implementing student success playbooks. President Flanders reported that these efforts have contributed to improvement in all three areas. On affordability, President Flanders noted that over the last five years state-funded need-based aid has nearly quadrupled, the increase in tuition during that time is less than half of the increase in the consumer price index over the same period, and the loan debt of Pell Grant recipients is down six percent. On access, after discussing demographic data regarding the college-going rate, enrollment gaps, and the upcoming enrollment cliff, President Flanders noted that the number of Pell recipients in the system grew by 4.9 percent, and the system is providing college courses to 8.9 percent more students than it did in 2020. And with respect to student success, after reviewing data and noting persistence rates are stagnant at 66%, President Flanders said there have been improvements since 2020 in on-time graduation rates, retention rates, and starting wages.

Next, President Flanders discussed the Board's efforts surrounding Pillar 2. He highlighted the Legislature's engineering initiative, which began in 2012 with a goal of producing 1,365 engineering graduates per year within 10 years. This goal was surpassed; the system produces 1,440 graduates per year. However, Dr. Flanders noted that wages outside Kansas are robust, and communicating with Kansas employers about the level of competition for the graduates is important. President Flanders also discussed the Excel in Career Technical Education program. And he highlighted the five-year growth in research and development funding to over \$1,000,000,000, comprising a 65% increase in total research funding and a 201% increase in industry sponsored research.

Lastly, regarding Pillar 3, President Flanders reviewed actions that create economic growth and benefit the state, such as the state universities' plans to facilitate intentional economic development and the Blueprint for Literacy.

President Flanders recommended that Pillar 3 be expanded beyond economic prosperity to include advancing citizenry. He also recommended that the Board continue its activities related to the National Institute for Student Success playbooks developed for each of the universities. He further recommended continued work on the First 15 initiative, to serve more high school students who otherwise might not attend college.



President Flanders remarked that the “payoffs” often comes later than the initiatives from which they flow. He is excited to see returns from many of the Board’s initiatives come relatively early. He has observed a real change in how the system is serving students over the last decade.

Regent Benson encouraged the Board to explore ways to socialize the link between research and development and economic development and to make the core relationship between the two easy to understand as it expands Pillar 3. President Flanders added that, due to competition, research and development faculty are the hardest to recruit and retain. He noted there is a direct correlation between industry-sponsored research in the state and keeping the industry in the state.

Regent Winter asked what letter grade the Board would receive for its work to advance the strategic plan over the last year. President Flanders believed the Board is in the “A” range given the significant returns he has observed.

[Presentation filed with official minutes.]

#### RECEIVE UPDATE ON LEGISLATIVE INVESTMENT IN STUDENT SUCCESS

Kansas State University, Pittsburg State University, and the University of Kansas provided updates on their work to implement legislative investments in student success.

For KSU, Dr. Thomas Lane reviewed the university’s goals, which include increasing retention and four- and six-year graduation rates and closing equity gaps. He outlined KSU’s targets for 2030 and how the University is doing so far. He highlighted, for example, a 0.6 percent increase in FTF persistence. Dr. Lane also discussed KSU’s strategy for investing NISS funding, which includes aligning KSU’s strategic enrollment management plan with its NISS efforts, leveraging pre-professional advising, and completing the university’s transition to professional advising.

For PSU, Dr. Susan Bon discussed each of the university’s NISS-prioritized actions. She discussed the university’s efforts to strengthen financial aid, such as PSU’s Great Gorilla Scholarship Program, launched in fall 2024. Dr. Bon noted that PSU achieved a complete overhaul of its academic advising structure, highlighting that the university has one advisor for every 155 students, nearly double the national average of one for every 300 students. The university also has degree maps for all programs. Dr. Bon reviewed the university’s steps to develop ways for students to learn about, select, and transition between majors, which include career pathways and advisors collaborating with faculty. Dr. Bon then discussed the university’s efforts to enable the use of actionable data in support of improved outcomes. Finally, Dr. Bon reviewed the university’s in-progress and future programs, such as a retention review group and a syllabus template requirement.

Regent Benson asked if PSU’s early alert system in the university’s Navigate360 program would trigger an alert if a student shares a concern about another student. Dr. Bon said she would note this suggestion.

For KU, Dr. Jennifer Roberts stated that the university’s NISS recommendations were to strengthen financial wellness through collaboration with other units and strategically aligned, proactive outreach to students; to strategically align academic advising to ensure consistent proactive student support across units and clear guidance within majors; to align student-facing communications to direct information to students in a coordinated, prioritized, and personalized manner; and to develop intentional pathways for students to learn about, select, and transition between majors. Dr. Roberts said that the university looks at success in five different areas of momentum: connection, entry, progression, completion and transition.

Dr. Roberts discussed the three pillars of KU’s approach to financial wellness, reviewing efforts such as changing scholarships and packaging, and holding a student finance summit. The University uses EAB to remind students of payment deadlines.

Regarding academic advising, this is the third year of KU's academic advising alignment efforts. The University maintains a 300:1 ratio of students to advisors. A student survey reflects increased satisfaction with advising services. Dr. Roberts reviewed statistics on student use of advising services and retention rates.

As to student communication, Dr. Roberts discussed the student digital experience and highlighted the JayBot AI chatbot that will go online this fall.

Dr. Roberts then discussed the university's efforts surrounding intentional pathways for students. KU has completed degree maps for all undergraduate programs and will complete maps for graduate programs this year. The degree maps are integrated with career outcomes. The university is using DFW data in conjunction with gateway courses in subjects such as math and English, and for interventions, tutoring, and consultations about learning supports. Dr. Roberts also highlighted KU's student pathways program, which help students explore careers and interests while maintaining academic momentum; and the university's hopes and dreams survey, which connects students to updates such as classes of interest and networking opportunities.

Regent Rolph inquired about KU's experimentation with AI around these initiatives. Dr. Roberts said that KU is currently using only the AI chatbot, which is geared toward connecting students to services. She said getting information from faculty into the university's systems is a rate-limiting step for other uses. However, the university is getting closer to using AI to personalize a lot of services. Provost Bichelmeyer added that a benefit of KU's degree map work is that it is a starting point to use AI with the university's systems.

[Presentations filed with official minutes.]

#### RECEIVE REPORT ON KANSAS COMPREHENSIVE GRANT PROGRAM

Elaine Frisbie, Vice President for Finance and Administration, delivered the report. Vice President Frisbie said that the program's funding has grown from \$21 million to \$72 million since 2018. The comprehensive grant is the Board's largest program.

Vice President Frisbie discussed sector distributions for the grant funding. In Fiscal Year, 2024, the private independent colleges received nearly 37% of the funding, and the public universities received the balance. However, the private institutions only had 18% of the student enrollment for resident undergraduates.

Vice President Frisbie noted that, since 2016, the program size has nearly quintupled when including the institutions' \$1:\$1 matches. The number of students served has grown by 3.5 times. The amounts awarded to students by the institutions are still well below the maximum levels (the maximum award is \$10,000 for the private institutions and \$4,000 for the public institutions). The private institutions provided awards to students with much higher estimated family contributions than the students who received awards at public institutions. Although the cost of attendance at the private institutions is higher, the gap is quite large.

Chair Ice said that report contained things to be very proud of, but that one can also see the impact of the awards not following the students.

[Presentation filed with official minutes.]

#### LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Fred Patton, the Board's government affairs consultant reported that it is the middle of week 5 of the legislative session. Turnaround day is approaching quickly: Monday is the final day for non-exempt committees to meet, and turnaround day is next Thursday. The committees have been busy, but there are not a lot of bills on floor yet.

The House Committee on Appropriations plans to complete its budget work before the end of the day tomorrow. It would like the budget to be debated by the full House next week. The bill will then go to the Senate, but it is not yet clear what the process will look like. Patton said that he was confident there will be some opportunity to continue working on Board priorities. He believed the Legislature would complete the budget as soon as it can.

Patton said there continues to be advocacy for Board requests—in particular pay plan increases, Campus Restoration Act funding, and getting funding for the Blueprint for Literacy back in the budget. The Board's proposal on scholarship repayment terms is moving forward, with a hearing upcoming in the Senate Education Committee. A number of individuals testified in opposition to HB 2348, concerning the removal of tenure property rights. President Flanders provided testimony focusing on the bill's impact on recruitment and retention.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 4:06 p.m., Regent Rolph moved that the Board recess into executive session to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel. The subject is a university CEO personnel matter, and the purpose is to protect the privacy of the employee involved. After a short break, the session will begin at 4:15 p.m. and will last 30 minutes.

The Board returned to open session at 4:47 p.m.

#### ADJOURN

Chair Ice adjourned the meeting at 4:48 p.m.

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Blake Flanders, President and CEO

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Carl Ice, Chair