



KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

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BOARD OF REGENTS DIRECTS ADDITIONAL STATE UNIVERSITY REVIEWS

Independent Audits To Be Conducted at ESU, FHSU, and WSU

(TOPEKA) – Today the Kansas Board of Regents, in a unanimous vote, directed that performance audits be conducted at Emporia State University (ESU), Fort Hays State University (FHSU), and Wichita State University (WSU). These three audits will follow a similar review that was recently conducted at Kansas State University (KSU) and similar reviews that are currently underway at the University of Kansas and Pittsburg State University.

In addition, the Board directed its Fiscal Affairs and Audit Committee to develop an official policy that would establish a regular and ongoing independent performance audit process for all six state universities. This new performance audit process would add an additional layer of accountability and transparency to what is already required by state law. Currently, Kansas law requires entities that are controlled by the state universities (alumni associations, athletics corporations, endowments/foundations, etc.) to annually submit an independent financial audit to the Legislative Division of Post Audit. However, these annual financial audits do not perform the same type of extensive analysis of transactions and review of the interplay between affiliated campus entities as the Board's recent review at KSU.

“Last fall, due to the presidential transition, the Board requested that an outside and independent accounting firm conduct a review at Kansas State University. Due to subsequent leadership transitions at Pittsburg State University and the University of Kansas, the Board requested that similar reviews be conducted on those campuses as well,” said Regent Donna Shank of Liberal, the Chair of the Board of Regents. “The Board proactively determined that it needed a deeper analysis than what is currently required by law. Thus, acting pursuant to its role as the governing body of the state universities, the Board made the requests to assist with the leadership transition process on each campus, and to ensure that everything was in order for the three new CEOs.”

Last week, upon receipt and review of the KSU analysis, the Board unanimously voted to open that report to the public and directed KSU President Kirk Schulz to address the issues raised in the report by October 1. Even though Kansas open records law provides governing bodies with the discretion to determine whether its personnel-related documents should be closed or disclosed, the Board exercised its discretion and voted to release the report.

“The Board believes in the importance of continued transparency and I fully expect to share the results of the five remaining audits with the public once they're concluded,” noted Shank.

Shank continued by saying that, “The Board values the lessons and information that can be gained from an independent analysis conducted by outside professionals. Quality organizations, whether they’re public or private, have similar review processes, which is why it’s so vitally important that audits continue to be conducted on our campuses on a routine basis in the future, irregardless of a transition of campus leadership. This isn’t about a change in leadership; this is about making sure things are being done efficiently and properly. I express my sincere thanks to Governor Parkinson and Attorney General Six for their support and encouragement as the Board moves forward with these important campus reviews.”

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About the Kansas Board of Regents:

The nine-member Kansas Board of Regents is the governing board of the state’s six universities and the statewide coordinating board for the state’s 32 public higher education institutions (seven public universities, nineteen community colleges, and six technical colleges). In addition, the Board administers the state’s student financial aid, adult education, GED, and career and technical education programs. The Board also authorizes private proprietary schools and out-of-state institutions to operate in Kansas, and administers the Kan-ed network, a statewide network that provides broadband Internet access and distance learning capabilities for schools, hospitals, and libraries.

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