



Historic Event at the Kansas State Board of Education

By Linda Holloway

For the first time since the creation of the Kansas State Board of Education conservatives won all the leadership positions. This was made possible because in November conservatives won the majority of the seats for the first time – 6-4.

On January 11, 2005 the board elected the following: Chairman – Steve Abrams, Arkansas City; Vice-Chairman – John Bacon, Olathe; Legislative Coordinator – Ken Willard, Hutchinson. These were the only nominees, and they were all elected 10-0. Sue Gamble, Shawnee, raised a flurry of activity when she offered to stay on as the Assistant Legislative Coordinator. She is clearly does not hold conservative ideas, and she lost the secret ballot vote to newcomer, Kathy Martin, Clay Center.

The members of the State Board of Education hold some of the most powerful positions in the state, yet few people are aware of this fact. Ten people determine policy for education in public schools across Kansas, and it takes only six votes to pass any policy. The conservatives are elated with their win, but each one expressed concern. With a solid majority they can do almost anything they want with public education, and being in control carries awesome responsibility. They earnestly desire to govern with wisdom and prudence.

We need to pray for all members of the Board as they work for the next two years.

Pray for them by name:

- District 1: Janet Waugh, Kansas City
- District 2: Sue Gamble, Shawnee
- District 3: John Bacon, Olathe
- District 4: Bill Wagon, Topeka
- District 5: Connie Morris, St. Francis
- District 6: Kathy Martin, Clay Center
- District 7: Ken Willard, Hutchinson
- District 8: Carol Rupe, Wichita
- District 9: Iris Van Meter, Thayer
- District 10: Steve Abrams, Arkansas City

Update on Science Standards Public Hearings

An opportunity to speak out on what you think should be taught in science to children in Kansas is scheduled for February.

Eight members of the twenty-three member science writing committee issued a minority report, but it is not included in this Draft 1 of Science Standards. You can view that report at www.kansasscience2005.com where you will also find a link to Draft 1.

The suggested revisions highlight two areas: a critical analysis of evolution and the elimination of naturalism (looking only for natural explanations for scientific phenomena) from the standards.

If you decide to speak at a hearing, you need to sign in when you arrive. Keep your comments brief, and it's best to build your message around one point.

All hearings are scheduled for 7-8:30 pm.
The hearings dates and locations are:

Feb. 1

Kansas City, KS
Schlagle High School
2214 N. 59th St.

Feb. 8

Topeka, KS
Kansas Department of Education
120 SE 10th St.

Feb. 10

Derby, KS
Derby Middle School
801 E. Madison

Feb. 15

Hayes, KS
Hayes High School
2300 E. 13th St.