

USD 303 Recognized for Excellence in Education Through Kansans Can Star Recognition Program

USD 303 Ness City is being celebrated for its outstanding achievements in the 2024 Kansans Can Star Recognition Program, an initiative led by the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) that recognizes districts excelling in key outcome areas tied to student success. This recognition places USD 303 among an elite group of approximately 70 school systems out of 376 in Kansas that have demonstrated exceptional progress.

Commissioner Randy Watson, in his congratulatory message, highlighted the district's remarkable efforts. "The 2024-25 school year is off to a great start, and that is because of USD 303 Ness City's efforts to educate students at a very high level. I am excited when I get the opportunity to celebrate in your success. USD 303 Ness City has been doing great work with students that deserves to be recognized. Through the Kansans Can Star Recognition Program, I'm able to do just that," said Commissioner Watson.

USD 303 earned recognition in four critical areas, each representing a cornerstone of student success:

- **Academically Prepared for Postsecondary (Copper)**: This award recognizes the district's success in preparing students academically for life after high school, whether they pursue higher education, technical training, or enter the workforce.
- **Graduation (Silver)**: The Graduation award acknowledges USD 303's strong performance in ensuring students complete their high school education on time, an essential factor in future success.
- **Postsecondary Effectiveness (Bronze)**: This measure reflects the district's effectiveness in supporting students as they transition to postsecondary education or the workforce, tracking how well graduates are prepared and succeed in their next steps.
- **2024 Commissioner's Award**: This prestigious award is given to districts demonstrating exceptional performance across multiple outcome measures, signifying an all-around commitment to excellence in education.

In a letter to Superintendent Reinhardt, Commissioner Watson and Kansas State Board of Education Chair Melanie Haas extended their congratulations. "We recognize the exceptional work your district is doing to reach the state's vision for education—Kansas leads the world in the success of each student. The Kansans Can Star Recognition Program recognizes district success in the outcome measures Kansans told us they value, and it is clear that Ness City is moving us closer to achieving the state's vision."

The awards reflect USD 303's dedication to fostering academic achievement and supporting students through all phases of their educational journey. Superintendent Reinhardt credited the recognition to the hard work and collaboration of teachers, staff, students, and the Ness City community. Superintendent Reinhardt further shared that the District has a goal of being

recognized in a 5th area for the 2024-2025 school year for their efforts in Early Childhood education through the Kindergarten Readiness STAR Award!

Out of 376 school districts across Kansas, only around 70 received recognition at the level USD 303 achieved. This accomplishment sets the district apart as a leader in education and highlights the ongoing commitment to helping students thrive.