

Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce
350 W Douglas Ave
Wichita, KS 67202

September 15, 2026

Subject: Chamber Board Support of USD259 School Bond Issue

Dear Board Members;

We are disappointed to see your support of this bond issue. Passage of this bond is rewarding failure.

There are two significant points to consider here.

- 1) USD259 is not focused on educating the students who attend USD259 schools. USD259's poor performance proves this point.
- 2) While USD259's Future Ready program is a laudable objective. It is a distraction from student performance. Future Ready is not a core mission of K-12 education.
- 3) People intentionally avoid moving into USD259 school district. They want better for their kids. Talk with any experienced realtor.

Poor Performance

USD259 has proven, year over year, they are not serious about educating students. Attached to this letter is the KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION K.S.A. 72-5178 ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT 2024-2025 for Wichita USD 259 – generated January 14, 2026.

This report shows that USD 259 underperforms for

	USD 259	State
Science	23.91	41.44
Math	18.62	38.73
English	28.89	44.47

These numbers are the percentage of students who score the 3 or 4 level on overall state assessments. It says that over half of the students statewide are underperforming, over 70% of USD259 students are underperforming.

While this data is dismal, the State level underperforms nationally, ranking 35th out of 50 States. This compounds the poor state of education in USD259.

Additionally, The Kansas Policy Institute reports the follow performance for USD259

10 th Grade Percentage Proficiency Assessment			
Year	2025	2024	2023
Math	30	19.4	23.6
English	46	26.9	29.1
ACT Composite Score	16.6	16.7	15.9

There has been some improvement in Math and English proficiency in 2025. However, ACT scores remain almost flat, below average to poor. Improvement in proficiency should result in improved ACT scores, not remain at the bottom.

The following data is extracted from USD259's website for each year's Budget at a Glance

	Students	Budget
2025-2026	44,507	\$1,005,820,395
2026-2027	43,175	\$1,036,901,889
Percentage Change	-3%	+3%

This shows USD259 declining student population but increasing budget. They are spending more money on fewer students but fail to adequately educate these children.

USD259 has had years of promised programs to address this poor performance. The results show those programs simply do not work. There needs to be a serious reckoning within USD259 as to what serious changes they will make to fix this problem. The teachers have college degrees in education. They know how to teach. Let them do their jobs. They don't need another program for that.

In an opinion article by Marissa Streit, a former teacher (not from USD259) says "Educators like me increasingly discouraged from giving failing grades, from delivering honest criticism or from enforcing meaningful consequences. Participation trophies replaced accomplishment. Inflated grades replaced excellence. Protecting self-esteem became more important than preparing students for adulthood.

Its time to get back to the core mission of preparing students for adulthood.

Future Ready

We understand and agree that, as a community, we need to do more to assure students are ready to enter the workforce once they graduate from high school. However, the Future Ready program is an attempt to replace what used to be on the job training (OJT). When an aircraft manufacturing plant hired a new, inexperienced, person to work sheet metal, that person was

hired as a trainee and would learn the trade from experienced mechanics. Future Ready attempts to replace this OJT with a public-school program. This shifts the training cost from the business to government. This simply is poor public policy. This is better done as a post-secondary program like is done with WSU-Tech.

USD 259 needs to get serious about education in the K-12 arena. Students cannot be “future ready” if they have not mastered these basic K-12 academic skills. The Future Ready, and similar programs, are a distraction, the shiny object, from USD259’s basic mission to academically prepare students for adult life.

Throwing more money at this is clearly the wrong answer.

As members of the Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce, we request you resend your endorsement of this bond issue.