

Approved: 03-05-10

Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE EDUCATION BUDGET COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Joe McLeland at 3:30 p.m. on February 10, 2010, in Room 159-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Reagan Cussimano, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Audrey Dunkel, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Dee Heideman, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Reginald Robinson, President, Kansas Board of Regents
Dr Greg Goode, President, Salina Area Technical School

Others attending:

See attached list.

Audrey Dunkel, Kansas Legislative Research Department, explained the higher education budgets to the committee, followed by a question and answer session.

The President and CEO of the Kansas Board of Regents, Reginald Robinson, gave a presentation on higher education in Kansas. He stressed to the committee that higher education is more important than ever before because it is an engine for economic growth. He emphasized system funding should not drop below FY06 levels. (Attachment 1)

Representing the Kansas Association of Technical Colleges, Dr Greg Goode, President of Salina Area Technical College & KATC Board Member, stated the action the technical colleges have taken to help the budget crisis. He also, said that they want to continue their leadership role in providing technical education for Kansans as well as being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. (Attachment 2)

HB 2280 - School districts; capital improvement and capital outlay state aid.

Representative Siegfroid made a motion to offer an amendment that does not roll back any issues that have already passed the vote in any school district and had been passed before June 30, 2010. It was seconded by Representative Carlson. The vote passed with a quorum.

Representative Siegfroid introduced another amendment to sunset HB 2280 in three years and if no action is taken to stop it, the bill would be reinstated. Representative Aurand seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Representative Aurand made a motion to table the sunset amendment which was seconded by Representative Aurand. The vote passed to table with a simple majority.

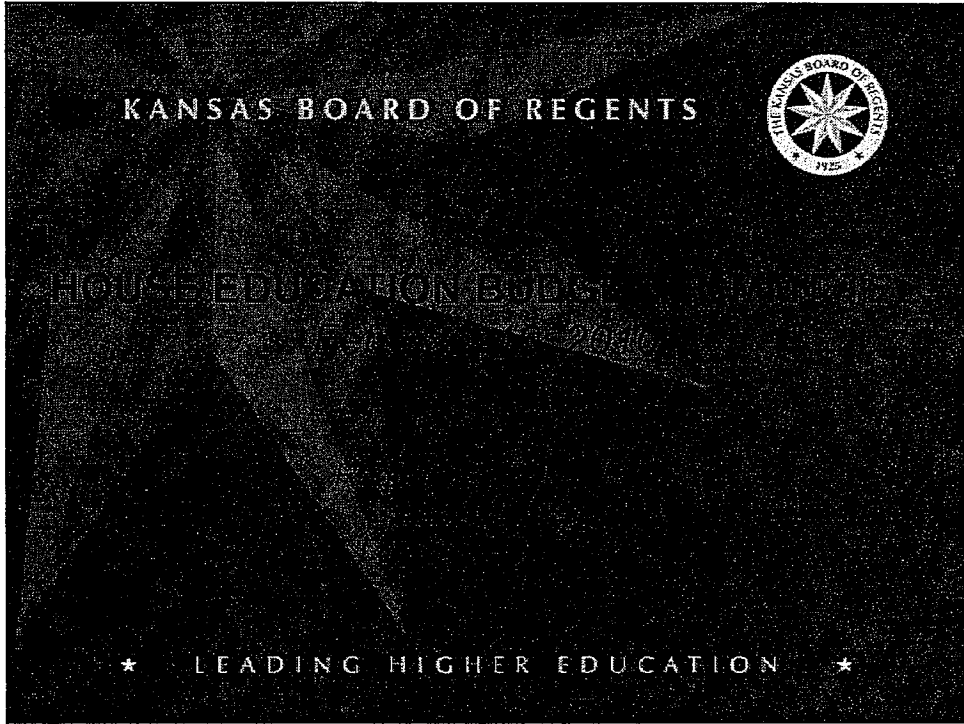
The next meeting is scheduled for February 11, 2010.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

02-16-10

EDUCATION BUDGET COMMITTEE GUEST LIST
 DATE: FEBRUARY 10, 2010

NAME	REPRESENTING
Greg Goode	Salina Area Tech. College
Richard S. ...	Kenney & Assoc.
TERRY FORD YTH	KWEA
Maureen Wiley	Emporia State Univ
Amy Hayes	Olathe School Dist
DK ...	FHSH
Peter Brodie	Emporia State Univ
Mark Talbot	KASS
LARRY BERE	KACCT
Linda Lund	KACCT



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Since the 2009 Legislative Session:

- * 3 new State University CEOs (KSU, KU, PSU).
- * 6 Independent State University Management Reviews.
- * State University Efficiencies Audit (Legislative Post Audit).
- * 6 State University Efficiency Task Forces.
- * State University Campus Security Consultant.
- * Technical Education Authority.
- * P-20 Council.
- * Kan-ed now serves over 830 hospitals, libraries, higher education institutions, and K-12 schools across the state.
- * Building A Public Agenda for Higher Education in Kansas ("The 5 Questions").
- * Statewide Business & Industry Roundtable Tour.

House Education Budget Committee
 Date: 02-10-2010
 Attachment #: 1

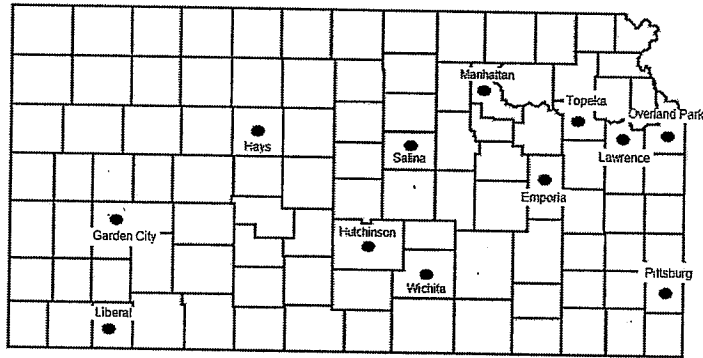
Reginald Robinson

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Business & Industry Roundtables:

- ★ 12-city tour took place in October and November.
- ★ Over 400 business and community leaders attended the events.



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Hosts:



SUNFLOWER ELECTRIC POWER CORPORATION
A Teachers Energy Cooperative

... energy done right



ROBERT J. DOLE INSTITUTE OF POLITICS
The University of Kansas



Seward County Community College
• Area Technical School



Pittsburg State University

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- ★ **Purpose:** To enhance and strengthen the critical link between the state's higher education system and the workforce and economic goals of the state.
- ★ **Message:**
 - Higher education institutions and local businesses are in this together.
 - The Kansas economy won't grow without successful businesses.
 - Businesses won't reach their full potential without highly-skilled workers, and the Kansas public higher education system produces those workers.

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***Recurring Statewide Themes:***

- ★ Generally, workforce shortages exist in every community.
- ★ More specifically, a profound shortage of health care professionals exists statewide. Some recognized the capacity issue. Some were frustrated that qualified applicants are being turned away from high demand programs.
- ★ In western KS, communities are having trouble attracting & retaining qualified workers.
- ★ In central & eastern KS, communities need more engineers.
- ★ General recognition of the need for life-long learning opportunities. As the world changes, employees will have to continually adapt and re-tool.

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- ★ Educational institutions need to be more nimble/agile when it comes to meeting local business needs.
- ★ Don't ignore the liberal arts. All students, whether they're pursuing a 2-year technical degree or an advanced professional degree, need to be able to communicate, work collaboratively, etc.
- ★ Employers had general concerns about relating to "millennials" – their work ethic, what motivates them, etc.
- ★ K-12's graduation expectations need to better-align with higher education's admissions expectations.
- ★ Statewide perception that KS is experiencing "brain drain."
- ★ Concerns about students taking on too much debt to finance their higher education.

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Results (21 Question Survey):

- ★ 75% say the quality of higher education available in KS today is "above average" or "excellent."
- ★ 78% say the quality of higher education in KS today is better than it was 20 years ago.
- ★ 100% say their impression of the state's 32 public higher education institutions is favorable.
- ★ 60% say the state's 32 public higher education institutions are doing a "good" or "excellent" job when it comes to providing highly trained and skilled workers and professionals to meet the state's workforce needs.

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- ★ 100% agree that higher education is critical for economic development in KS.
- ★ 100% agree that higher education will help supply the future workforce needed for KS to succeed.
- ★ 100% agree that higher education improves the general quality of life in the state.
- ★ 95% agree that higher education should be made as accessible in the 21st century as high school was in the 20th century.
- ★ 90% believe that achieving a higher level of education is more important today than it was 20 years ago.

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- ★ 72% say state funding for higher education should be increased, 28% say funding should be maintained at its current level, and 0% say funding should be decreased.
- ★ 75% say the percentage of state support for the state universities (27% SGF) is "somewhat" or "far too" low. 0% say the percentage is too much.
- ★ 88% say elected officials in Topeka should make higher education a higher priority. 0% say it should be a lower priority.
- ★ 83% believe that further reductions in state funding will put the quality of higher education in KS at risk.

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- ★ The best reason not to cut state higher education funding? 40% say because it will increase tuition costs making higher education less affordable. 35% say because it will lower the quality of education.
- ★ If state budget challenges continue, 45% say a combination of budget cuts and revenue enhancements should be used to balance the state's budget.
- ★ If revenue enhancements are necessary, 47% prefer sales taxes.
- ★ 93% say improving state university graduation and retention rates is "very" or "somewhat" important.
- ★ 89% say their community has a shortage of qualified workers.

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What could higher education institutions do to better serve your local community/region?

- ★ Increase accessibility by providing more online classes.
- ★ HS students should be allowed to pursue technical education beginning their junior year. The last 2 years of HS are often wasted.
- ★ Local businesses are able to work with 2-year colleges but 4-year universities have little to no interest.
- ★ Recruiting students from KS should be a higher priority. Too many are leaving the state.
- ★ Coordinate better with K-12.
- ★ Encourage more private sector involvement through advisory councils.
- ★ More "after hours" or evening classes need to be offered to accommodate those who work full-time.

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If you could suggest one improvement for higher education in KS, what would it be and why?

- * High school graduates need to be better prepared for college.
- * Improve university outreach programs in rural areas.
- * Students need to complete a mandatory "finance 101" class – how to budget their finances, avoid credit card debt, etc.
- * Address capacity issues (adequate lab space, high demand programs, buildings, teachers, etc.).
- * Place more emphasis on outcomes.
- * Increase funding, don't reduce it.
- * Better align workforce needs with educational programs.
- * Encourage investment in higher education by companies such as Boeing, Koch, & Sprint through tax incentives.
- * Legislature needs to find a dedicated funding source for higher education and provide annual inflationary funding increases.
- * Encourage students to graduate in 4 years.

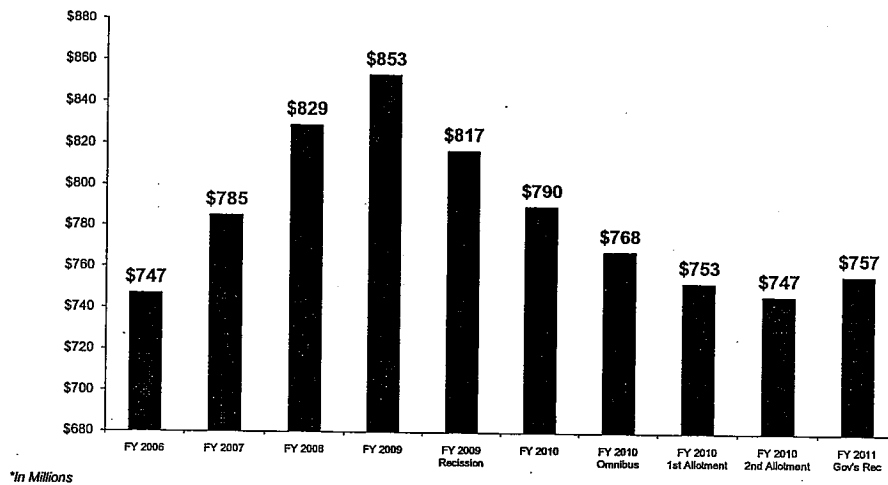
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Additional thoughts, suggestions, or comments for the Regents?

- * Roundtables are important tools for escaping the "beltway mentality" of Topeka. It's important to visit with "real" Kansans.
- * Today's workers lack "real life" skills – how to communicate, collaborate, make decisions, basic office skills, etc.
- * Thank you for coming out to western KS.
- * Grant in-state tuition to non-resident National Merit Scholars.
- * Not all businesses are anti-tax and anti-education.
- * This dialogue is important. Please continue to get out and listen to folks across the state.
- * Kansas is lucky to have a single unified higher education system.
- * Is there really any correlation between cost and quality? Today's graduates have way too much debt.
- * In regards to state funding issues, look at eliminating tax exemptions. "I don't mind paying tax on Girl Scout cookies."

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**The State's Higher Education Budget:**

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**Impact of Budget Cuts (Systemwide):**

- ★ Employee Layoffs, Positions Held Vacant, & Positions Eliminated: **Over 1,000.**
- ★ Programs/Classes Eliminated: **Over 450.**
- ★ Increased class sizes & reduced course offerings.
- ★ Reduced library resources (books, databases, & publications) & hours of operation.
- ★ Students less likely to graduate in 4 years.
- ★ Reduced operating support for equipment & technology upgrades.
- ★ Student counseling services reduced.
- ★ Eliminated purchases of research & educational equipment.
- ★ Reduced or eliminated overtime and student labor budgets.
- ★ Increased faculty teaching loads.
- ★ Increased tuition costs.

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**Federal Stimulus Funding:**

	<u>FY 2009</u>	<u>FY 2010</u>	<u>2-Year Total</u>
State Universities (6):	\$7,715,773	\$32,151,982	\$39,867,755
Washburn University (1):	\$181,507	\$756,280	\$937,787
Community Colleges (19):	\$1,447,198	\$6,029,986	\$7,477,184
Technical Colleges (6):	\$254,821	\$1,061,752	\$1,316,573
Total (32 institutions):	\$9,599,299	\$40,000,000	\$49,599,299

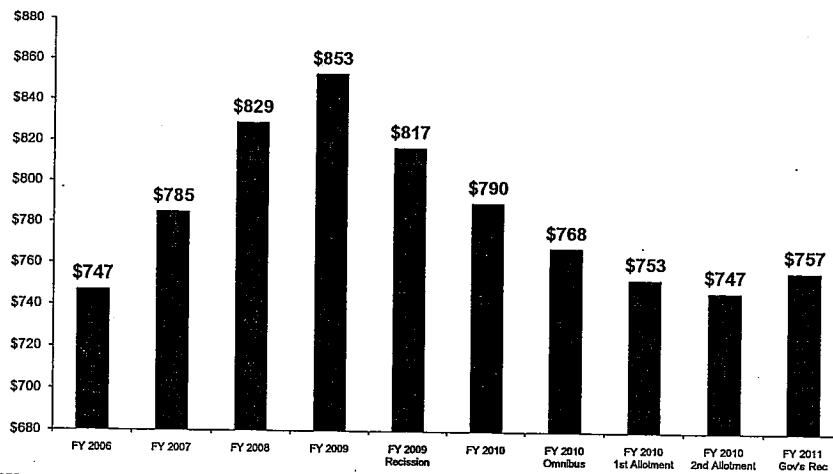
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**State University Federal Stimulus Allocation:**

	<u>FY 2009 & FY 2010</u>
Deferred Maintenance (2/3):	\$26,578,503
Tuition Mitigation (1/3):	\$13,289,252
Total:	\$39,867,755

Note: Most states have used the vast majority of their stimulus funding to back-fill operating budgets.

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**The State's Higher Education Budget:**

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**Governor's Budget Recommendations:**

- ★ FY10 recommendation from the SGF is \$747 million.
 - Equal to the FY 2006 SGF level.
 - 13% (\$106 million) below FY 2009 original appropriation.
- ★ FY 11 recommendation from the SGF is \$757 million. The \$10 million increase from FY10 to FY11 is comprised of:
 - \$2 million base increase to the block grant.
 - \$3 million increase to make required SGF debt service payments on state bonds. Last session, these state bonds were refinanced resulting in one-time reduced payments (interest only) in FY10. The \$3 million simply reflects the increase in the debt service payments from FY10 to FY11.
 - \$5 million increase related to the Governor's November allotment that eliminated the \$5 million unneeded SGF for the Postsecondary Education Infrastructure (PEI) loan program in FY10.

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If No Revenue Package Is Enacted:

- ★ Governor's Budget Report (Vol. 1, Page 6) Includes:
 - Additional Cut to Regents Block Grant (\$25 million). This would take the SGF appropriation well below the required maintenance of effort level required for ARRA/SFSF.
 - Eliminate SGF transfer for the Faculty of Distinction Program (\$3 million).
 - Eliminate SGF transfer for debt service payments for the University Research and Development Enhancement Program (\$6.2 million).
 - Reduce EDIF spending on National Institute for Aviation Research (\$5 million).
 - Eliminate EDIF spending on technical education equipment for technical colleges and eligible community colleges (\$2.7 million).

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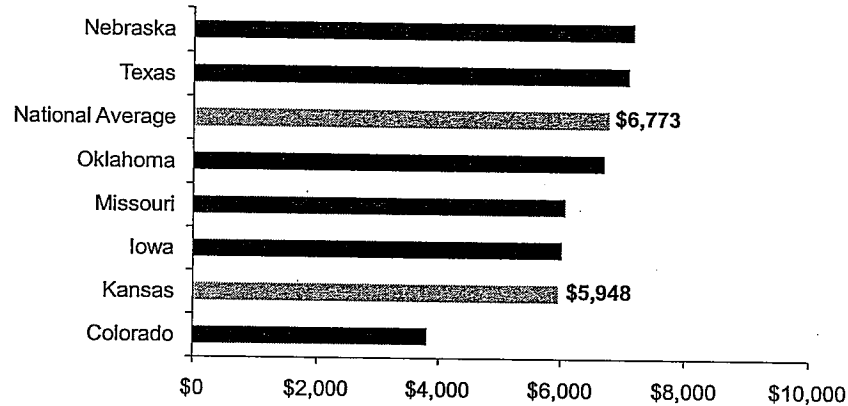
FUNDING TRENDS

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How We Compare To The Region...

State & Local Public Higher Education Support per FTE Student (FY07):



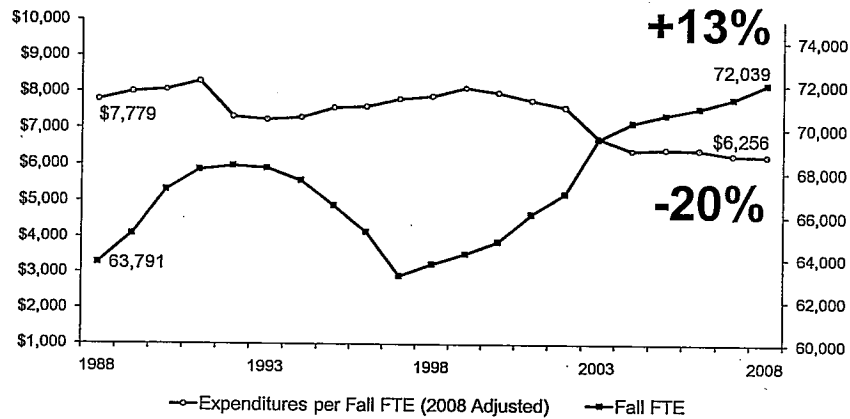
**All 32 Institutions*

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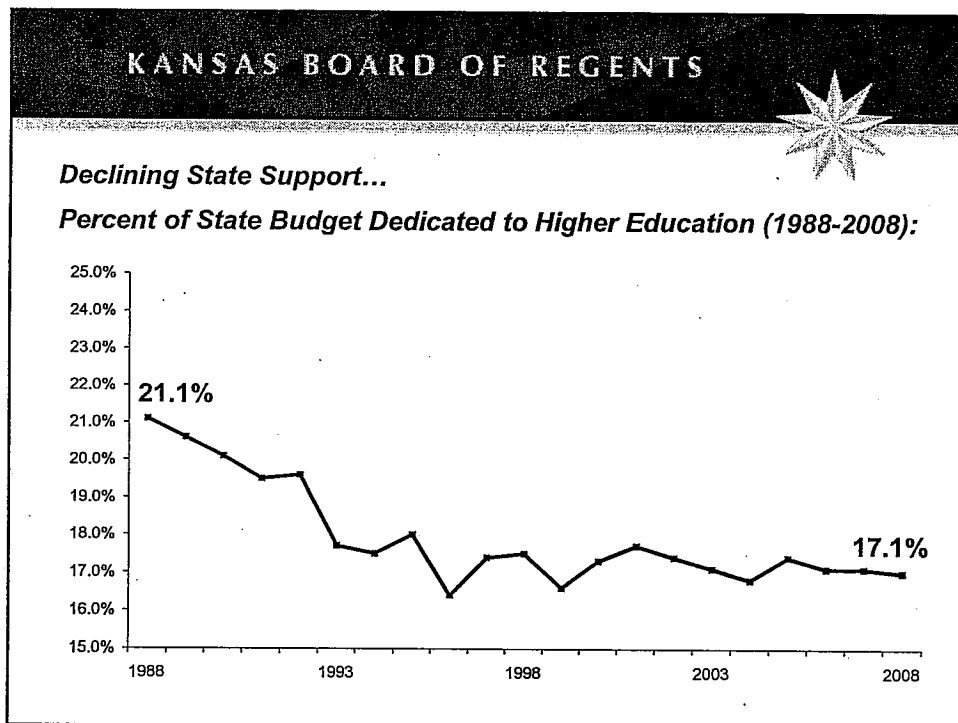
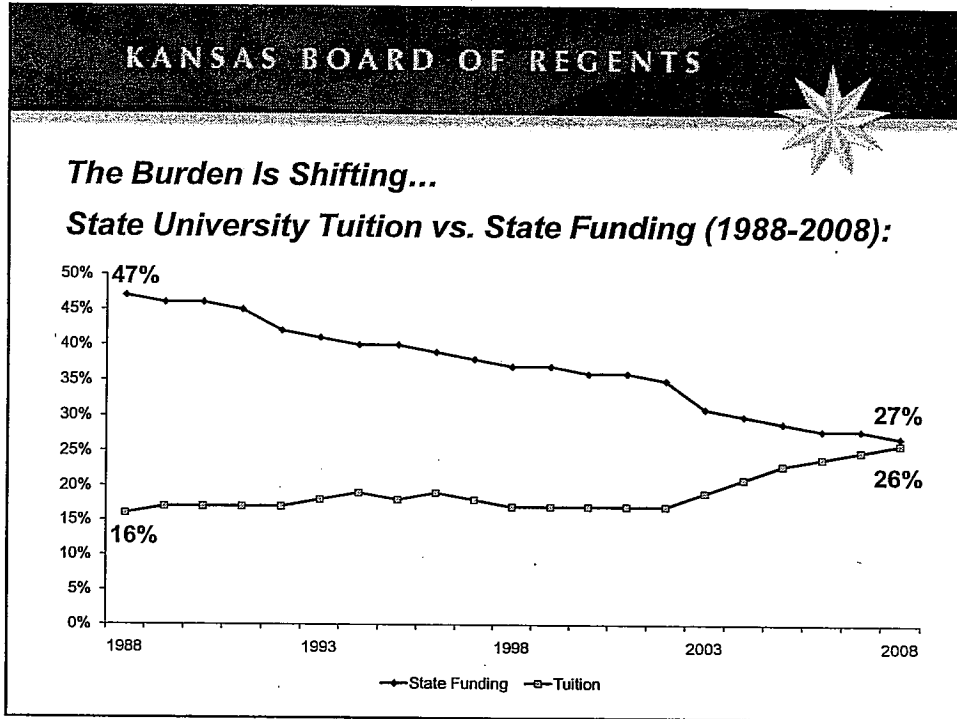


We're Doing More With Less...

State Universities, Funding vs. Enrollment (1988-2008):



**HEPI-Adjusted*



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**DEFERRED
MAINTENANCE**

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**History:**

- ★ **2006:** \$663 million deferred maintenance backlog on the campuses of the state's six universities. \$172 million backlog at Washburn University and the community and technical colleges.
- ★ **2007:** Legislature approved a 5-year (FY08-FY12) maintenance funding plan which was to provide:
 - \$90 million in state funds (new funds) and \$44 million in interest earnings (existing funding) to the state universities.
 - Tax credits that could generate up to \$158 million in private contributions for the system's public higher education institutions.
 - \$100 million in interest-free bonding authority for Washburn and the community and technical colleges.
- ★ **2008:** State university maintenance backlog increases to \$825 million due to construction inflation, increased age of buildings, and continued chronic under-funding.

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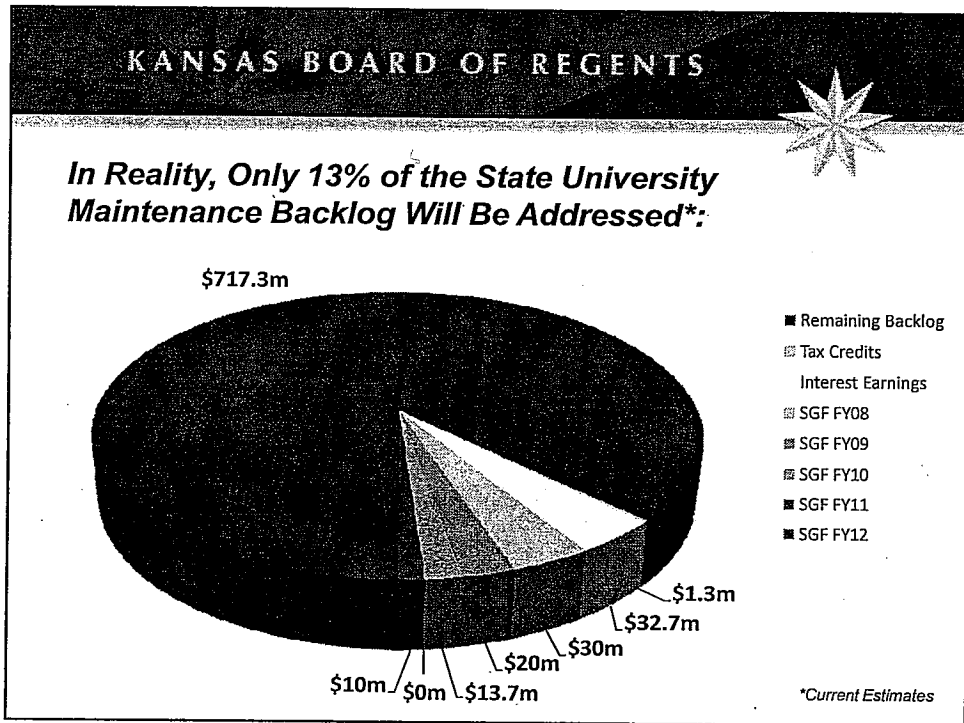
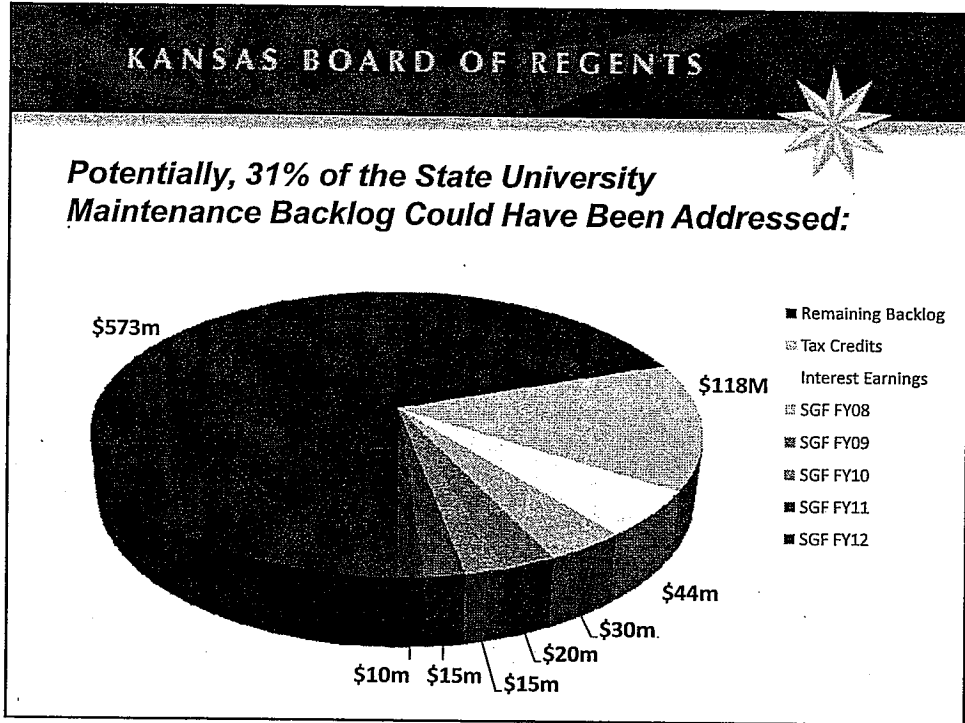
***Maintenance Funding Plan Progress:***

- ★ Joint Committee on State Building Construction has approved 92 state university maintenance projects.
 - Committee receives very detailed maintenance reports each quarter.
- ★ 53 state university projects have been initiated, 29 projects have been completed, and 24 projects are still in progress.
- ★ \$51.2 million has been expended (\$42.2 million in state funds and \$9 million in interest earnings) on the state university campuses.
- ★ 17 of 25 eligible (state universities were excluded) colleges and universities utilized the interest-free loan program (110 projects initiated).
- ★ 26 of 31 eligible colleges and universities utilized tax credits.

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***Maintenance Plan Shortfalls:***

- ★ State Universities:
 - FY 2010 promise of \$15 million in state funding was cut by \$1.3 million.
 - FY 2011 promise of \$15 million in state funding was not included in the Governor's FY 2011 budget recommendation.
- ★ Washburn, Community & Technical Colleges:
 - Governor's FY 2011 budget recommendation did not include interest payments for an additional series of bonds which effectively ends the loan program.



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***In Conclusion:***

- ★ Higher Education is more important than ever before.
 - The state's fastest-growing jobs require some level of postsecondary education.
- ★ Higher Education is an engine for economic growth.
 - NBAF, NIAR, NCI Cancer Designation, Biosciences, etc.
 - The Kansas economy won't grow without successful businesses, and the state's higher education system produces the highly qualified and skilled employees those businesses need to reach their full potential.
 - Kansas receives \$3 for every \$1 it invests in higher education.
- ★ Stop the cuts. Reverse the trend.
 - We support the Governor's FY11 budget recommendations. Additional revenue is needed.
 - System funding must not drop below FY06 levels.
 - The declining funding trends of the past two to three decades must be reversed if Kansas is to succeed.



House Education Budget Committee
Wednesday, February 10, 2010

Testimony by the Kansas Association of Technical Colleges
Submitted by Greg Goode, President of Salina Area Technical College & KATC Board Member

Chairman McLeland and Honorable Members of the Committee:

Educators across Kansas have been responsible participants in helping you resolve the state budget crisis. Here is a brief summary of actions we have taken thus far for your review:

Personnel. Colleges have prioritized non-instructional areas for budget cuts. For example, of the 35+ positions cut to date, only two of these cuts were from instructional programs. The rest were in services that support students (student services and academic support services). We also have frozen salaries and absorbed health insurance premium increases.

Operating budgets. Again, colleges have prioritized non-instructional areas for budget cuts. For example, due to funding reductions, Wichita Area Technical College reduced its budget by two million in maintenance services which has impacted repair needs, climate control, and cleanliness of classrooms and labs; IT services which impact student's usage of technology in the classroom and the ability to provide helpdesk support for online students; and security coverage which impacts student safety. Most of the other technical colleges have cut travel, professional development, and maintenance/infrastructure/ repairs.

We want to continue our leadership role in providing technical education for Kansas as well as being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. We ask you to carefully consider the following legislative actions to assist us in meeting the needs of Kansas businesses:

1. Legislation that will allow the six technical colleges taxing authority in their communities.
2. Separate Post Secondary Aid allocation from the state into two allocations, one for the technical colleges and one for the community colleges that are currently part of the Post Secondary Aid allocation.
3. Allow technical colleges borrowing authority.
4. Legislative initiatives for "revenue enhancement."
5. Retain capital outlay funding for technical colleges.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Working together, we will overcome financial challenges while meeting the needs of Kansas.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Greg Goode".

Greg Goode, President
Salina Area Technical College

House Education Budget Committee

Date: 02-10-2010

Attachment #: 2



The TECHNICAL COLLEGE
MANHATTAN AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TO: House Education Budget Committee
FROM: Robert Edleston; President, Manhattan Area Technical College
RE: Budget Cuts
DATE: February 10, 2010

Manhattan Area Technical College has been impacted by the budget cuts in a number of critical areas.

- Reduced two staff positions, one position in the Learning Resource Center and one support position in a program of study.
- MATC faculty and staff received NO pay increases for the 2009-2010 academic year.
- The College absorbed a 10% increase in health insurance premiums.
- Eliminated all travel and professional development funding that was not grant funded.

As a community partner, it is our responsibility to respond to community needs. As Manhattan sits squarely in the middle of the bio science corridor, MATC has taken the initiative to develop new training opportunities for technician level jobs in the bio sciences. Program and curriculum development is a costly endeavor. While some funding has been secured to support these initiatives, matching funds are generally required, causing additional stress on an already razor thin budget. Additional budget cuts will force higher than normal tuition increases for students and may require the College to utilize reserves for operating expenses further hindering growth and our ability to meet the needs of our students and our community.



NORTH CENTRAL KANSAS TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Clark Coco, President

TO: Rep. Joe McLeland, Chair
House Education Budget Committee
FROM: Clark Coco, President, North Central Kansas Technical College
RE: Impact of Reductions in Post Secondary Aid Funding
DATE: February 10, 2010

Chairman McLeland and committee members,

North Central Kansas Technical College has endured a significant and challenging reduction in the level of funding received from the State for Post Secondary Aid the last two fiscal years. The reduced funding levels during this timeframe are unfortunately compounding in that they occur at a time just following the introduction of a funding mechanism whereby we would be reimbursed on a three-year average of credit hours delivered for expanding available technical education programs within the State. As NCKTC has responded to this initiative, and the reported needs of Business and Industry for job(s) and economic growth in Kansas, the generation of programs and additional technical education has increased our operating costs each year while the expected reciprocation from State reimbursement has declined. This trend/dilemma is clearer in terms of dollar amounts represented below:

FY09 Proposed funding based on 3-Yr. enrollment average	\$ 4,225,373
FY09 Final funding level – following adjustment for Wichita	4,027,354
FY09 Required payback to State of \$17,163	3,856,191
FY10 Funding reduced – Statewide for Higher Educ Institutions	3,559,194
Summary – 2-Year reduction, with ongoing programs and costs	666,179 (15.8%)

The impact of these reductions to NCKTC operating budget and strategies were:

1. Decrease in academic calendar from 190 to 175 days. Faculty salaries were frozen for two years.
2. Federal Stimulus funds were received in the amount of \$248,677. This funding was used to subsidize operations, minimize tuition increases and maintain all full-time positions for FY2010.
3. No General Fund capital improvement projects were proposed or approved for FY2010.
4. Two part-time positions were non-renewed. Duties were absorbed by full-time positions.
5. Student tuition was increased from \$70 per credit hour to \$77 for FY10. Given the proposed enrollment figures at the time of budget development, this figure would have increased to \$95 without the receipt of the Stimulus funding.

February 5, 2010

The Honorable Representative Joe McLeland
House Education Budget Committee
Kansas State Capitol
300 SW 10th Street
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Representative McLeland:

Greetings from Northwest Kansas Technical College (Northwest Tech). We appreciate the opportunity to be heard regarding issues relative to the state budget for higher education that are under consideration during this most important legislative session.

Northwest Tech supports initiatives to enhance revenue for higher education, and particularly for technical colleges in Kansas. Our campus, like all other public colleges in the state, has absorbed its share of budget cuts this past year. The rural nature of our location, coupled with the lower income levels of our residents, do not allow for many alternatives in finding additional revenue. As we do not have taxing authority like our community college friends, we find ourselves much more heavily dependent on state revenues to provide access to higher education for our students. To encourage enrollments in Kansas workforce preparation programs, we have historically kept our tuition rates as low as possible, and we would note that most of our students are receiving financial aid.

We have a modest budget at Northwest Tech, with annual expenditures a bit over three million dollars. To meet the 12% budget cuts this past year we have taken a number of critical steps, all of which have had a negative impact on our people and our operations. These actions include the following: frozen salaries; unfilled open staff and faculty positions; cutbacks on annual and ongoing maintenance; frozen scheduled computer equipment upgrades; frozen technical program equipment upgrades; halted scheduled shop/program vehicle replacement; and most concerning of all, we have increased tuition for our students.

Our campus has always worked to provide affordable access to higher education for our rural students. To increase the cost of access for them, especially during one of the most serious recessions in recent history, will have long-term financial implications for them and their families. More so, these budget cuts are making it more challenging for technical colleges to well-prepare the highly skilled workers so badly needed in Kansas to help renew and advance the state's workforce.

Clearly, we cannot endure more budget cuts without cutting staff. We could be forced to drop faculty from larger programs, which would result in increased class sizes. Large class sizes in technical programs will diminish our faculty's ability to glean the best from each individual student, and could result in safety issues in programs with equipment. Without a strong level of state support, we may also have to consider dismantling entire programs. These actions would be a travesty at a time when the state badly needs the high quality skilled technicians we are known for producing. In fact, it is precisely our technical college graduates who are desperately needed to help lead the way out of the crippling recession the state is currently enduring.

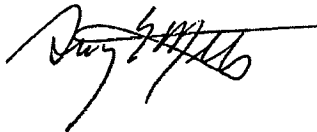
In short, we have already done what we can to cut expenses. Our campus, like all technical colleges in the state, has been running lean since our humble beginnings. We have been funded at a very basic level over the years and have never had 'fat.' In spite of ongoing funding challenges, technical colleges have always produced outstanding graduates. We have consistently maintained very high graduation rates, and we've tracked a near 100% placement rate.

Finally, it is essential to the health of our campus that capital outlay funds from the state be continued. Technical colleges must have the most current equipment to train our students for real world expectations in the workforce. Graduates must be prepared to enter the workforce with training and experience using the kind of quality and up-to-date equipment industry is using.

We would ask that there be no further cuts to higher education, especially to technical colleges. We would also ask that you work to find long-term solutions to keep these financial challenges from happening again. Educators must use their intellectual and emotional energies to teach our students rather than diminish their strengths and talents to endure a struggle for simple financial and career survival.

It is essential for technical colleges in Kansas, particularly those serving lower-income people in rural parts of the state, to be able to continue to provide access to a high quality education, particularly if we are to do our part to build Kansas' skilled workforce. Simply stated, we need adequate state funding to help us accomplish this charge. We appreciate the opportunity to be heard, and we thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Guy E. Mills, Ed.D.
President



TO: House Education Budget Committee

FROM: Greg Goode, President, Salina Area Technical College

RE: Budget Cuts

DATE: February 10, 2010

Educators have been an active participant helping legislators resolve the budget crisis. Salina Tech has met this challenge in FY10 by:

- Reducing two staff, operating budgets, eliminating salary increases and increasing employee contributions for insurance.
- Reducing access to services for students (cafeteria, instructional options, student services support).
- Using reserve funds to meet workforce training needs by purchasing necessary infrastructure and equipment.
- Absorbing "school to college" transition costs. Previous institutions on a similar journey had transitional funding. SATC did not receive any funding.

Due to a 6% enrollment increase in FY10 and with the previously mentioned strategies, we will operate in the black this year. However, further reductions would consume reserves earmarked for student access, infrastructure, and new building construction. Additionally, more cuts will cause dramatic tuition increases for students and/ or require us to use reserves for normal operating expenditures. This will be a burden and will make reaccreditation through the Higher Learning Commission a greater challenge.

Salina Area Technical College supports enabling legislation that will allow technical institutions taxing authority in their communities. Allowing taxing authority to some institutions and not others creates a disparity in the ability to fund and deliver education and training across the state.

We are also asking that the Post Secondary Aid allocation from the state be separated out into two allocations, one for the technical colleges and one for the community colleges that are currently part of the Post Secondary Aid allocation. This will allow the Board of Regents to manage the disbursements easier and in an equitable way to all the institutions.

Eighty percent of technical jobs in Kansas require technical education or certification. Our ability to absorb further funding declines will be counterproductive to building jobs that will help Kansas and the nation out of this recession.

THE SKILLS YOU NEED FOR THE CAREER YOU WANT!



FLINT HILLS
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

3301 West 18th Avenue • Emporia, Kansas 66801
620-343-4600 • 800-711-6947 • Fax 620-343-4610

February 10, 2010

Rep. Joe McLeland, Chair
House Education Budget Committee

Dear Chairman McClelland and Committee Members,

Flint Hills Technical College (FHTC) is facing some tremendous challenges to be able to provide a quality workforce in the Emporia Region. The rescissions we have experienced over the last 18- 24 months have caused us to put on hold programs that would put well trained employees to work in our communities. They have caused us to re-look at the development of training for our manufacturers and above all we have cut back on many services to our students at the college which in the end affects the health of the college and the community. The good news is that up to this point, we have been able to maintain our anchor programs and continue the quality training and education the technical colleges are known for. We have seen our enrollment increase, which is a result of the sagging economy and people looking for ways to increase their knowledge base and to acquire the skills to be gainfully employed. This is great for our local economy and for the State of Kansas. However, we have been stretched to the point that we will not be able to continue at the same level of quality education and services we are currently offering to our students. Our anchor programs that provide the base of training to the Emporia manufacturing community are at risk if we are asked to continue to reduce our budgets. We continually look for efficiencies in our operations, but because of the size of our institution we are now in a position that we have to look at reducing programs and staff that are the backbone of the college and the well being of the community.



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The technical colleges in Kansas have only two funding streams. We rely on the Post Secondary Aid provided by the state and the tuition received from students. We are asking that the legislature consider some requests from the technical colleges.

1. We are asking for some enabling legislation that will allow the institutions taxing authority in their communities. The community colleges presently have this authority but the technical colleges do not.
2. We are also asking that the Post Secondary Aid allocation from the state be separated out into two allocations, one for the technical colleges and one for the community colleges that are currently part of the Post Secondary Aid allocation. This will allow the technical colleges and the Board of Regents to manage the disbursements easier and in an equitable way to all the institutions.
3. We are also asking that the legislature give the technical colleges borrowing authority.

These measures will help the technical colleges to continue to provide quality training to Kansans across the state, but they are in no way the answer to all of our challenges.

I hope this is helpful to the committee. We must keep our institutions strong in order to make our economy strong in the State of Kansas. I urge you to consider these issues and look for ways to develop additional revenue. Technical Education is extremely important to the workforce and economy in our state. The funding decline must stop for Kansas to succeed.

Respectfully,

Dr. Dean Hollenbeck, President

Flint Hills Technical College