

MINUTES

KANSAS TECHNICAL COLLEGE AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOL COMMISSION

October 10-11, 2006
Room 514-S—Statehouse

Members Present

Mr. George Fahnstock, Chairman
Senator Janis Lee
Dr. Robert Edleston
Dr. Jerry Farley
Mr. Joseph Glassman
Mr. James Grier III
Mr. Dick Veach
Mr. Reggie Robinson

Staff

Audrey Dunkel, Legislative Research Department
Sharon Wenger, Legislative Research Department
Michele Alishahi, Legislative Research Department
Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research Department
Daniel Nibarger, Legislative Research Department
Aaron Klaassen, Legislative Research Department
Art Griggs, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Gary Deeter, Committee Secretary

Conferees

Sheila Frahm, Executive Director, Kansas Association of Community College Trustees
Dr. Kori Gregg, Special Assistant to the President and Executive Director, Business Performance Group, Butler Community College
Judy Crymble, Dean of Technical Education, Garden City Community College
Dr. Dennis Kuhlman, Dean, Kansas State University—Salina
Dr. Greg Belcher, Associate Professor for Technology Studies, Pittsburg State University
Dr. John Iley, Professor-Chairman, Technology Studies/Automotive Technology, Pittsburg State University
Rich Hoffman, President, Kansas Association of Technical Schools and Colleges
Barbara Schilling, Director, Kansas City Area Technical School
Dr. Edward Berger, President, Hutchinson Community College/Area Vocational Technical School
Deborah Stern, Vice-President of Clinical Services and Legal Counsel, Kansas Hospital Association
Jeff Turner, Board Chairman, Kansas Technical Training Initiative (via video)
Peter Gustaf, Executive Director, Kansas Technical Training Initiative

Michael Germann, Vice-President, Communications and Public Affairs, Spirit Aerosystems
Marc Reith, Quality Assurance Manager, NanoScale Corporation
Dave Hinkley, Human Resources Manager, Neal Harris Service Experts
Alan Prieb, Field Operations Supervisor, Embarq/Sprint
Kevin Kelley, President, Kelley Construction, and Vice-President, Associated General Contractors
Pat Kelly, Owner, Beloit Auto and Truck Plaza
Wayne Gregory, Staff Specialist Technician V, HNTB Corporation
Ken Clouse, President, Northwest Kansas Technical College
Rob Loftin, Board Chairman, Northwest Kansas Technical College
Clark Coco, President, North Central Kansas Technical College
Don Miller, Board Vice-President, North Central Kansas Technical College
Dean Hollenbeck, President, Flint Hills Technical College
Kent Heermann, Board Chairman, Flint Hills Technical College
Dr. Rob Edleston, President, Manhattan Area Technical College

Others Attending

See attached list.

Tuesday, October 10 Morning Session

Chairman Fahnestock called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m., asked Commission members to introduce themselves, noted the mission statements for technical educational institutions (Attachment 1), and referenced the minutes for the September 12, 2006, meeting, which were approved. (Motion, Mr. Grier; second, Dr. Farley)

Sheila Frahm, Executive Director, Kansas Association of Community College Trustees, reviewed the development of community colleges in the state (began in 1917, and presently numbering 19); she noted the Higher Education Coordination Act (SB 345), which transferred supervision of community colleges, area vocational schools, and technical colleges from the State Board of Education to the Kansas Board of Regents; and noted the Act also changed the funding mechanism (Attachment 2). She referenced the service areas for community colleges, commented on the critical components for continued success as postsecondary institutions, noted enrollments and sources of revenue, and provided a brief snapshot of each community college. Ms. Frahm responded to various questions from Commission members:

- Mill levies range from 8.5 to 40 mills among the 19 community colleges.
- Out-district tuition has been phased out, being replaced by state support, but state support is not at the level anticipated, and is thus inadequate.
- Enrollment varies according to economic indicators. When the economy is up, enrollment is flat, but when the economy is tight, enrollment rises.
- Credit hours divided by 30 provide the number of full-time equivalent students per school year.

- Fee schedules and tuition decisions are made by each local board.
- One merged community college (Hutchinson) includes two counties, Reno and Harvey.
- Among the community colleges, resident tuition ranges from \$25 to \$64 per credit hour, and for non-residents from \$40 to \$147 per credit hour.
- Transferring credit hours from one institution to another (articulation) was improved by SB 345.

Mr. Robinson, speaking for the Kansas Board of Regents, noted that articulation is a Regents priority and that concurrent enrollment (a high school student receiving both secondary and college credit) is a Regents concern, especially if a course is being taught by a secondary instructor on high school premises.

Dr. Kori Gregg, Special Assistant to the President and Executive Director, Business Performance Group, Butler Community College, briefed the Commission on the mission and purpose of the institution ([Attachment 3](#)). She said the college provides associate degrees and technical certificates, offering customized training for specific industries, adult basic education, and developmental education, as well as cultural and personal enrichment. She noted the outreach from the home campus in El Dorado to satellite locations in Andover, Rose Hill, Marion, McConnell Air Force Base, as well as a virtual campus; and she commented on student demographics, stating that many were first-generation college students.

Judy Crymble, Dean of Technical Education, Garden City Community College, outlined the service of the college to the students and the community ([Attachment 4](#)). She said the college has developed a system that is flexible and innovative and, through grants and partnerships, provides a relevant, high-quality education for students. She commented on key partnerships with John Deere, Ford, Western Kansas Allied Health Consortium, and other regional and virtual resources.

Dr. Dennis Kuhlman, Dean, Kansas State University–Salina, traced the service of KSU's College of Technology and Aviation at the Salina campus, noting the spectrum of course work from certificates and associate degrees to baccalaureate degrees in engineering technology, aviation, and technology management ([Attachment 5](#)). He referenced partnerships with business and industry and noted workforce development associated with the programs.

Dr. Greg Belcher, Associate Professor for Technology Studies, Pittsburg State University, reviewed the development of technical education ([Attachment 6](#)). Noting the need for technical education (only 20 percent of current jobs require a four-year degree) and the increasing demand for skilled workers, he commented on the funding shortfalls associated with independent technical colleges and offered several observations regarding mergers:

- When a technical school becomes a technical college, the mission must be adjusted;
- When technical programs are merged with community colleges, mission creep and higher costs for technical training result in the technical training; and
- When technical education programs are merged with a university, the technical courses are ranked of less stature because they did not fit the overall mission of the university.

Referencing several trends in the U.S. work force, he stated that the fastest growing occupations fall within the field of technical education and urged members to assure a strong technical education system for Kansas.

Dr. John Iley, Chairman, Technology Studies/Automotive Technology, Pittsburg State University, commented on the challenges of assimilating technical programs into a university curriculum, noting that at Pittsburg, of the nine original technical programs, five were discontinued, two were transferred to Fort Scott Community College, and two (Automotive Service and Electrical Technology) have successfully been incorporated into the university, both courses offering a two-year certificate or an Associate of Applied Science degree, or both (Attachment 7). He identified three key factors in making technical education successful in a university: funding, administrative support, and recruitment. He also noted the importance of accreditation, (e.g., under the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools) and articulation.

Members posed questions to the morning's conferees:

- Dr. Kuhlman said technical students do not pay the KSU tuition rate, but the technology credits were seamlessly transferable.
- Ms. Frahm said service areas related to community colleges were developed in the 1970s to approximate reasonable drive time.

A member expressed concern about duplication of courses in various institutions. Another member commented that millevy funding for a community college is permitted only in the home county.

Afternoon Session

Rich Hoffman, President, Kansas Association of Technical Schools and Colleges (KSKATS), heralded the values of technical education (Attachment 8). Regarding mergers with community colleges or universities, he noted the importance not only of compatible leaders between two institutions, but compatible policies, and he expressed concern about mission creep, which results in a loss of focus for technical education and the position that technical education is lesser education.

Barbara Schilling, Director, Kansas City Area Technical School, said the school's purpose is to provide customized quality technical training, and in the process, developing life-long learning habits, a positive self-image for each student, and leadership and citizenship skills (Attachment 9). She commented on the diverse student population and the need for small class size, developmental education, and individualized course work. Open enrollment, students beginning classes the first Monday of each month, is a unique feature of the school. She identified two concerns: the cost of education in the Kansas City area being higher than most other communities, requiring higher salaries to retain instructional staff; and the inadequacy and imbalance of current state funding, citing KCKATS' receiving \$7.35 per clock hour while another metropolitan school received \$8.88.

Dr. Edward Berger, President, Hutchinson Community College/Area Vocational Technical School, traced the history of the school from a junior college in 1928 to its present merged entity

(authorized by SB 485) in 1993 with a technical enrollment of 40 percent and an academic enrollment of 60 percent ([Attachment 10](#)). He commented on the collaborative and training partnerships and the effectiveness of Kansas Institute for Technology Excellence (KITE), and he identified the values of the merger accomplished through SB 485: programs eligible for clock-hour payment, the institution eligible for state capital outlay funds, the institution enabled to contract with unified school districts for delivery of courses, and re-accreditation as an area vocational school. Answering questions, Dr. Berger said that:

- The merger did not diminish, but expanded, technical programs;
- KITE brought additional resources to Sedgwick County;
- Starting a new course initially by offering it at night helped identify which courses were needed;
- Since the merger, the institution is able to tailor certifications to programs more readily;
- He will provide documentation to show savings through the merger; and
- The governing board for the institution is drawn from Reno County, but an advisory board from outside the county identifies issues and areas for possible expansion.

Deborah Stern, Vice-President of Clinical Services and Legal Counsel, Kansas Hospital Association, stated that, in the healthcare field, accreditation is vital, that technical education plays a significant role in preparing students for the field, and that, in light of aging healthcare workers and retiring baby boomers, impending shortages will soon reach a crisis ([Attachment 11](#)). She noted especially the need for more instructors. Answering questions, Ms. Stern said nursing classes are full with waiting lists, a problem exacerbated by lack of instructors and available clinical sites; she noted that when a nurse becomes an instructor, his/her salary drops. She replied that the current student-teacher ratio is 10:1. She stated that an associate degree provides a higher percentage of clinical experience and that the baccalaureate degree prepares a student for supervisory positions.

Members watched a video of Jeff Turner, Board Chairman, Kansas Technical Training Initiative, speaking to a Wichita Rotary Club. Michael Germann, Vice-President, Communications and Public Affairs, Spirit Aerosystems, gave background that led up to forming of the Initiative, saying that in Wichita the four aerospace companies had over 4,000 job openings for which they could not find skilled employees. Peter Gustaf, Executive Director, Kansas Technical Training Initiative, continued the testimony by noting cooperation with the newly formed Kansas Institute for Technical Excellence and collaboration with four regional educational institutions, a venture that led the Initiative to create the Aviation Tech Center, which later expanded the curriculum to include manufacturing, information technology, and health-care programs ([Attachment 12](#)). Mr. Gustaf said that under the authority of the Sedgwick County Commission a new technical campus Jabarra is being constructed. Answering questions, Mr. Gustaf said Sedgwick County issued \$40 million in bonds to build the new campus and that subsequent costs will be funded by the county and tuition under the auspices of the Sedgwick County Technical Education and Training Authority. He replied that local community colleges will provide programs, observing that the constituency is the business community. When he stated that funding will be driven by outcomes, not hours, members discussed the implications of the concept if applied to other lower-paying jobs.

Marc Reith, Quality Assurance Manager, NanoScale Corporation, said his company needs employees with people skills and competence in technical writing, research, laboratory techniques, and problem-solving ([Attachment 13](#)). Answering questions, he said the company, located in Manhattan, presently employs 35 individuals.

Dave Hinkley, Human Resources Manager, Neal Harris Service Experts, a heating/air conditioning corporation in Kansas City, said his company, which employs over 6,000 individuals, hires community college and technical school graduates. He praised the open enrollment of Kansas City Kansas Area Technical School, allowing his company to hire graduates all year long. He noted the value of second career individuals, whose background often makes them more valuable to the company. Answering a question, Mr. Hinkley said the technical graduates his company hires are well trained and meet the company's needs.

Alan Prieb, Field Operations Supervisor, Embarq, testified about the importance of technical training for telecommunication companies. He praised the technical college at Goodland and noted that Embarq has more openings than can be supplied by the college (Attachment 14). He commented that instructor salaries often deter recruiting of competent teachers.

The Chairman considered next month's agenda and invited comments about the Commission's assignment to make recommendations about governance, mission, and funding. Comments were made about clock hours and credit hours; about mission creep crowding out technical education in favor of general education; about inadequate funding limiting growth of technical colleges, thus reducing Kansas' capacity to meet employer needs; and about the need for promoting excellence in technical education.

The meeting was recessed at 4:45 p.m.

Wednesday, October 11 Morning Session

Kevin Kelley, President, Kelley Construction, and Vice-President, Associated General Contractors (AGC), commented on the barriers he has encountered in seeking skilled employees for construction work:

- Lack of funds, especially for hiring instructors skilled in construction trades;
- The negative job stigma of construction as a career; and
- The lack of available communication with prospective students (Attachment 15).

He noted AGC's collaboration with Hutchinson Community College in helping to close the gap between the needs of the industry and graduating students. Answering questions, Mr. Kelley said there is a desperate need in nearly all construction trades for skilled workers, especially in the commercial field. He noted AGC's supplementing instructor salaries to raise the stature of the building trades.

Pat Kelly, Owner, Beloit Auto and Truck Plaza, noting that his Ford and Chrysler dealership provides \$700,000 in payroll and pays \$670,000 in sales tax each year, testified that one of the company's greatest needs is certified auto technicians to provide manufacturers' warranty work. Answering a question, Mr. Kelly said the North Central Kansas Technical College provides general automotive certification, but not manufacturer-specific certification.

Wayne Gregory, Staff Specialist Technician V, HNTB (Howard, Needles, Tammen, and Bergendoff) Corporation, related the value of students trained by the Northwest Kansas Technical

College in Goodland, stating that of the 13 technicians at HNTB, 10 were trained in Goodland (Attachment 16). Answering a question, he said NWKTC rarely graduates enough students to meet industry demands.

Ken Clouse, President, Northwest Kansas Technical College, outlined the distinctive contributions of the college (Attachment 17). He noted that the college has been independent for 43 years, has a 50-acre campus with 24 buildings, maintains a single focus on technical education, and continues to expand its programs. He urged Commission members, when they make recommendations, to avoid requiring an independent college to merge with another institution, stating that such a move would dilute NWKTC's effectiveness.

Rob Loftin, Board Chairman, Northwest Kansas Technical College, noting that only 20 percent of jobs require a four-year degree, related his personal story how the college had given him the background to create a profitable business in his home town. Answering questions, Mr. Loftin said about 30 students are presently in the electrician's program and the majority of them take the journeyman license exam. He replied that general education and developmental classes are offered on campus by instructors from Colby Community College, commenting that there was no duplication of courses between Colby and Goodland. He stated that the 15-member board of the college comes from 24 Unified School Districts, and this 15-member board then selects a nine-member executive board. He replied that, through the 15 technical areas offered by the college, industry needs are met. He said funding comes from high school students, tuition, and a block grant from the Board of Regents, noting the school received a \$1.0 million equalizer grant last year. He related the process of creating new courses, such as respiratory therapy, and observed that follow-up on graduates is limited. He acknowledged some industries provide scholarships for students.

Clark Coco, President, North Central Kansas Technical College, reviewed the effectiveness of the college, noting accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, a process which resulted in moving many of the college's one-year certificate programs to two-year programs with the option of an Associate of Applied Science degree. He said most waiting lists had been eliminated (Attachment 18). Mr. Coco introduced Don Miller, Trustee Board Vice-President, who commented on the importance of technical education. Answering a question, Mr. Heermann said the trustee board is composed of six appointed members.

Dean Hollenbeck, President, Flint Hills Technical College, related the distinctive features of the college, saying that the college is meeting the needs of business and industry in the region, has a 98 percent placement rate, and has met or exceeded Regents' performance goals. He urged members to recommend that technical colleges remain independent, allowing them to partner with other institutions as needed. He noted that the college had completed accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission. Responding to a question, he said the college offers 15 associate degrees and 14 certificate diplomas (Attachments 19 and 20).

Kent Heermann, Board Chairman, Flint Hills Technical College, commented on local community support for technical education (Attachment 21). He said the board is composed of six appointed members. Mr. Coco, answering questions, noted the difficulty of getting high school counselors to recognize the importance of community and technical colleges.

Dr. Rob Edleston, President, Manhattan Area Technical College (MATC), emphasized the importance of technical education, its future bright with possibilities, and outlined the vision he has for MATC (Attachments 22 and 23). He commented on assessment techniques, workforce development, accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, a student body of 460 drawn from 100 Kansas counties, and his dreams for expansion. He noted the college's transition from clock hours to credit hours (15:1 for lecture, 30:1 for laboratory work, 60:1 for clinical work). He explained that the college was small not because of limited capabilities, but because of limited capacity, with

waiting lists of students backed up for years. Addressing the proposal of technical colleges being required to merge with community colleges, he said such a move may dilute the mission of technical education. He stated that the three-tier postsecondary system works well in maintaining each institution's mission, and he urged Commission members to weigh consequences carefully in making recommendations.

Afternoon Session

Members discussed dates for future meetings, agreeing on November 21-22, 2006 (Tuesday beginning at 10:30 a.m., Wednesday, 8:30 a.m.) and November 30-December 1, 2006 (Thursday, 10:00 a.m.; Friday, 9:00 a.m.).

Members considered the content of the recommendations to be submitted to the Legislature on January 1, 2007, arriving at a consensus that the report should state what is presently being done in technical education in Kansas and what needs to be done. Members expressed a desire to know more about:

- Waiting lists for certain courses;
- Requests from businesses for specific types of jobs;
- The percentage of funds allocated to specific areas of technical education;
- Certifications and standards required by business and industry;
- Administrative costs in the various technical schools;
- Establishing a baseline curriculum for certain outcomes; and
- Geographic variables related to instructional costs.

Staff suggested that the Kansas Department of Labor has statistics related to members' questions.

Mr. Robinson commented that the Board of Regents began a study of technical education a year ago and developed a working paper. Dr. Blake Flanders, Director, Workforce Training and Education Services, Kansas Board of Regents, added that, from the working paper and a year's study, the Board is developing a report on technical education and will offer recommendations at the Regents' meeting later in the month. Members requested that Dr. Flanders brief the Commission on the recommendations at the Commission's next meeting.

In considering recommendations to the Legislature regarding technical education, the Chairman referenced Attachment 24, which offers several options:

- Merge technical colleges (and technical schools) with community colleges;
- Create a statewide technical college with satellite campuses;
- Support 2003 SB 7, which requires the development of independent boards and grants local taxing authority; and
- Leave the structure as it is and address the need for increased capacity and funding.

Two members in the audience offered comments. Dr. Bob McMasters, Board of Regents, said the Regents' working paper and recommendations were a response to a request to create a better technical educational system. Duane Custer, Salina Technical School (under a USD board), expressed dismay about problems a merger would cause.

Members expressed a desire to hear from other states recognized as models in the field of technical education; Ken Breeden (Georgia model), Terrence Sullivan (South Dakota model), and Oklahoma technical education were mentioned. *A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to draft a letter to the Legislative Coordinating Council requesting funds to bring an expert in the area of technical education to address the Commission at the next meeting. Motion was made by Mr. Glassman and seconded by Dr. Farley.*

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for November 22-23, and a subsequent meeting is scheduled for November 30-December 1, 2006.

Prepared by Gary Deeter
Edited by Audrey Dunkel

Approved by Commission on:

November 21, 2006

(date)