

# KANSAS LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

545N-Statehouse, 300 SW 10<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1504  
(785) 296-3181 ♦ FAX (785) 296-3824

kslegres@klrd.state.ks.us

<http://www.kslegislature.org/klrd>

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## KAN-ED in Brief

**Summary:** KAN-ED was created by enactment of the 2001 KAN-ED Act which required the Board of Regents to create a “broadband technology-based network to which schools, libraries, and hospitals may connect for broadband internet access and intranet access for distance learning.” Public and private schools (including postsecondary institutions), libraries and hospitals are eligible for services provided under the Act. Today KAN-ED:

- Operates a physical network over which constituents (or their Internet Service Providers) conduct video collaboration and share data.
- Provides monetary support to members for Interactive Distance Learning (IDL) and to subsidize use of the network.
- Provides content to members such as the Empowered Desktop and through access to "Internet2."

Graphs and statistics in this memorandum are from KAN-ED publications.

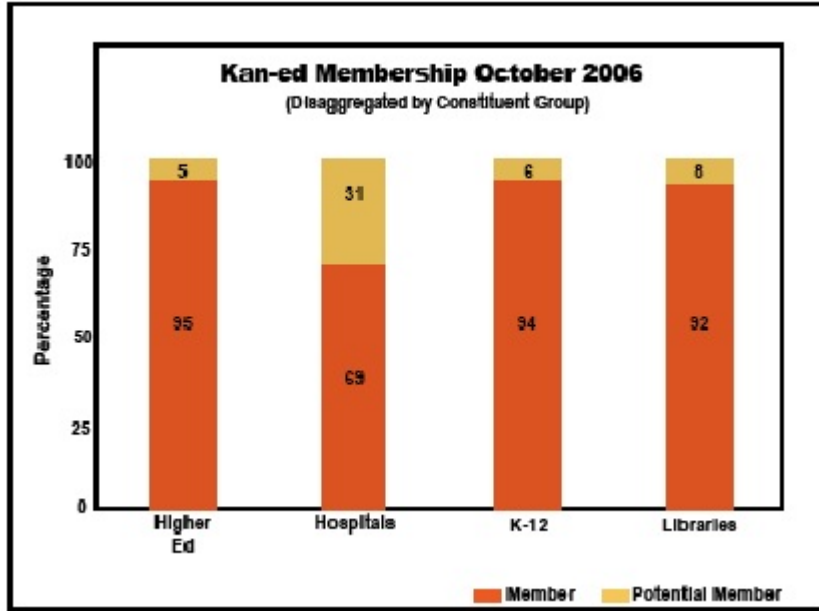
## Membership

KAN-ED membership is composed of four groups defined in the Act:

- Elementary and secondary schools and postsecondary education institutions (schools);
- Hospitals; and
- Libraries.

Both the 2006 and 2007 Legislatures have considered bills that would expand KAN-ED membership, but those proposals have not been acted upon favorably.

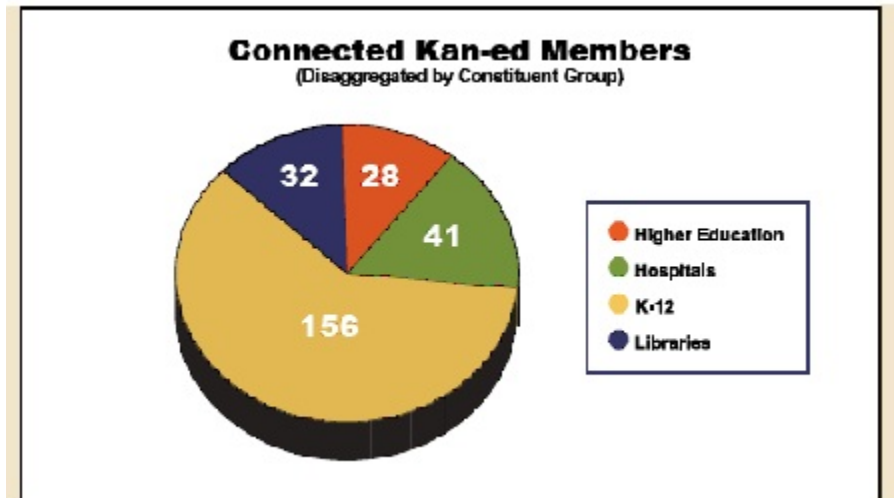
As of October 15, 2006, 89 percent of eligible entities were members of KAN-ED (797 members from a total of 898 eligible entities).



## KAN-ED Services

The Act imposes certain restrictions on how KAN-ED is to fulfill its responsibilities. The Act prohibits KAN-ED from:

- Impairing existing contracts for telecommunication or internet services;
- Constructing or owning new facilities;
- Providing new switched voice access; and
- Providing voice over internet protocol (VoIP) service except for interactive video.



The Kansas Board of Regents was charged in the Act with providing a “broadband technology-based network to which schools, libraries, and hospitals may connect for broadband internet access and intranet access for distance learning.” To fulfill that requirement, KAN-ED constructed and operates a private network consisting of a “backbone,” that connects 19 Network Access Points (NAP) via high-speed communications lines. The KAN-ED network began operation in August 2004. On that network, approximately 295 KAN-ED member sites are connected (“connected members”) to the network via the NAPs.<sup>1</sup> The chart above displays the 257 connected members by type of member.

In accordance with the Act, network components are leased, and member sites contract with commercial communications providers, such as telephone and cable companies, to be connected to a NAP. Thus, traffic between connected KAN-ED members traverses the KAN-ED network rather than the commercial Internet. Connected members utilize the network in a number of ways, for instance, for IDL courses, telemedicine, and videoconferencing.

KAN-ED implements three annual funding programs designed to help members take advantage of the KAN-ED services. These programs are designed to improve member connectivity to the statewide backbone, develop infrastructure at member sites, and support innovation. In addition to these annual funding programs, in 2006 KAN-ED instituted two new programs, the Hospital Initiative and Higher Education “Connect” program in order to increase the number of connected members in those two categories.

The Higher Education “Connect” program was designed to provide funding to higher education institutions to enable them to connect to the KAN-ED network. Forty-three members participated in this program. As of October 2006, 28 Higher Education members were connected to the KAN-ED backbone.

The Hospital Initiative was designed to integrate in a single connection the commercial Internet and access to the KAN-ED backbone. Participating hospitals received equipment and a connection to KAN-ED for one year. Thirty-nine hospitals statewide received funding under this initiative. As of October 2006, 41 hospitals were connected members of KAN-ED.

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<sup>1</sup> **“Connected Members”** There are currently 295 connections to the KAN-ED network. Some members have more than one site connected to the network. Therefore, these 295 connections represent 257 “connected” KAN-ED members.

A grant program for libraries was initiated in August 2006 when KAN-ED allocated \$225,000 to the State Library to provide grants to 15 libraries to equip meeting rooms with interactive video capabilities. Libraries will use the rooms to connect to events and meetings across the state. Libraries have identified potential uses of those video conference rooms for town meetings with legislators, educational programs, and training events. Grants are expected to be awarded to all 15 libraries by May 2007.

Examples of content provided by KAN-ED include video conferencing management, education and research databases, the Empowered Desktop, and the Emergency Management System (EMSystem).

I hope this information is useful to you. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact me.