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Jobs for our graduates

Governor Sam Brownback recently introduced a new education program designed to help Kansas students achieve success in high school and prepare for skilled careers.

"This program will help students create an environment for success," Gov. Brownback said. "By providing these students with the right tools and a strong support system, we can help them graduate from high school with the job training and skills they need to find meaningful employment."

The Governor and Education Commissioner Diane DeBacker met with students at four of the 25 Kansas schools participating in the "Jobs for America's Graduates" (JAG) program. The JAG program is a national educational and employment system designed to improve graduation rates and academic achievement to help students succeed in school and in the workplace.

"We really see JAG-Kansas as a way to decrease our dropout rate. While we have one of the highest graduation rates in the U.S., we need to identify ways to keep students engaged, to give them purpose," Commissioner DeBacker said. "JAG-Kansas will help us serve our students and help even more Kansas students graduate from high school and prepare for careers."

The nationwide JAG program has existed for 32 years and served more than 800,000

students in 33 states. The goal of the program is to help at-risk students graduate from high school, obtain a GED, encourage them to pursue post-secondary education and find entry-level jobs with growth potential.

"When these students earn a diploma or a GED, combined with job training, they will find career and life opportunities they may never have considered before," said Gov. Brownback.

The JAG-Kansas program will be administered by Communities in Schools of Kansas in partnership with the Kansas Department for Children and Families and the Kansas State Department of Education. Funding for the program primarily will come from a Temporary Aid for Needy Families grant through DCF.

The first 25 high schools to participate in the JAG-Kansas program are: Arkansas City, Basehor-Linwood, Concordia, Garden City, Topeka-Highland Park, Holcomb, Hutchinson, Junction City, Kingman, Liberal, Newton, Parsons, Pittsburg, Royal Valley, Salina Central, Salina South, Stafford, Topeka, Topeka West, Turner, Wichita East, Wichita North, Wichita South, Wichita Southeast and Wichita West.

For more information on the national "Jobs for America's Graduates" program, visit the website at www.jag.org.

Update on Kansas drought emergency

Extreme drought conditions continue for western Kansas while central and eastern counties see improvement. This has led Governor Sam Brownback to update the Drought Declaration for Kansas counties with an Executive Order 13-02 recently. For the first time since July 2012 conditions have improved enough to remove or decrease the emergency drought status for some Kansas counties.

"We are thankful recent rains have helped remove 23 counties from a drought designation," said Governor Sam Brownback. "Unfortunately, our state continues to battle drought as most of the state remains in some level of drought status."

The updated drought declaration has moved 20 counties into a warning status and 25 into a watch status while 37 counties continue to be in emergency. This action was recommended by Tracy Streeter, Director of the Kansas Water Office and Chair of the Governor's Drought Response Team.

"Our focus is to ensure communities, livestock producers and farmers have the available resources they need," said Streeter. "With most federal reservoirs refilling and streamflow restored by rains over the past few weeks, the concerns have lessened, however we remain very cautious as we compare where we are today to last year based on total soil moisture and precipitation amounts. Some areas of western Kansas are behind more than 10 inches in soil moisture."

Counties who are still in emergency stage remain eligible for emergency use of water from certain state fishing lakes due to the Kansas Water Office (KWO) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Kansas Department of Wildlife (KDWP). Emergency haying and grazing is also still available for those counties on a case-by-case request to the USDA -Farm Service Agency.

Individuals and communities need to contact KWO for a water supply request prior to any withdrawals from lakes. They will in turn be referred to the

appropriate KDWP office to obtain the necessary permit to withdraw the water. For emergency haying and grazing, requests need to be directed to: www.kwo.org.

This Executive Order shall remain in effect for those counties so identified until rescinded by Executive Order or superseded by a subsequent Executive Order revising the drought stage status of the affected counties. Effective immediately:

Declare a Drought Emergency, Warning or Drought Watch for the counties identified below;

Authorize and direct all agencies under the jurisdiction of the Governor to implement the appropriate watch or warning level-drought response actions assigned in the Operations Plan of the Governor's Drought Response Team.

The Governor's Drought Response Team will continue to watch the situation closely and work to minimize the effects the drought has on Kansans.

For more detailed information about current conditions, see the Kansas Climate Summary and Drought Report on the Kansas Water Office website at:www.kwo.org

County Drought Stage Declarations:

Drought Emergency: Cheyenne, Clark, Decatur, Ellis, Finney, Ford, Gove, Graham, Grant, Gray, Greeley, Hamilton, Haskell, Hodgeman, Kearny, Lane, Logan, Meade, Morton, Ness, Norton, Osborne, Phillips, Rawlins, Rooks, Russell, Scott, Seward, Sheridan, Sherman, Smith, Stanton, Stevens, Thomas, Trego, Wallace, Wichita

Drought Warning: Atchison, Barber, Comanche, Doniphan, Douglas, Edwards, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Jewell, Johnson, Kiowa, Leavenworth, Miami, Osage, Pawnee, Pratt, Rush, Shawnee, Wyandotte

Drought Watch: Allen, Anderson, Bourbon, Brown, Chase, Clay, Cloud, Coffey, Geary, Harper, Kingman, Lyon, Linn, Marshall, Mitchell, Morris, Nemaha, Neosho, Pottawatomie, Republic, Riley, Sumner, Wabunsee, Washington, Woodson.

Table listing real estate parcels with columns for owner name, address, and value. Includes entries for LATIERRA INC, NORTON CITY, and various individuals across multiple addresses.