

Governor makes proposal for all day kindergarten

By Amanda Miller
amiller@nwkansan.com

Governor Sam Brownback has recently proposed an all day kindergarten spending plan that would span over five years and cost about \$80 million. The state now pays for half-day kindergarten. Districts, like St. Francis, that want all-day programs must find other funding sources to cover the full-day cost.

Brownback said he will propose that next year state funding be increased to cover six-tenths of a day, the next year cover seven-tenths and so on until the fifth year, when the state will reach 100-percent funding for a full day of kindergarten.

Each tenth is expected to add \$16 million in spending, according to Governor Brownback. The first \$16 million would come in the 2014-15 school year.

"This is a strategic investment in helping our children be better prepared for success in school," said Governor Brownback. "Numerous studies show that all-day kindergarten results in students who are more involved, productive and ready to read at appropriate grade levels."

According to Dale Dennis, deputy commissioner for fiscal

and administrative services for the Kansas Department of Education, all but about 15 of the state's 286 districts provide all-day kindergarten. Most use the money they receive from the state for at risk students to pay the additional staffing costs, while other districts charge parents per semester for all day instruction, he said.

St. Francis does not charge a fee for all-day kindergarten.

Rob Schiltz, superintendent of St. Francis schools, said that the school district currently pays for all day kindergarten with the regular funding sources that they receive.

"Our school does not charge a kindergarten tuition fee as some schools do, so we are essentially absorbing the costs," said Mr. Schiltz.

He went on to say, that funding all day kindergarten would have generated an extra \$34,542 in general state aid for the school this current year. Of course, the amount depends on how many kindergarten students enroll each fall, so this number would fluctuate from year to year if funding of all day kindergarten is implemented.

With this proposal, a response was quickly heard over cuts to

education and a pending court ruling that schools have been underfunded by hundreds of millions of dollars.

The Kansas Supreme Court is currently weighing arguments in a lawsuit that could force the Legislature to increase school funding by close to \$500 million a year. A lower court panel ruled the state unconstitutionally cut the funding while approving massive tax cuts.

While the state board of education has backed this plan, not all members of the Kansas House and Senate are behind him just yet.

"I don't know if I'm sold on all-day kindergarten," said Rep. Kasha Kelley, R-Arkansas City, chair of the House Education Committee. "Personally, I would like to take a look at it a bit more."

As for how the plan would affect the St. Francis schools, it is obvious the funding would be beneficial.

"The extra funding would be wonderful as long as they don't cut us in other areas. Our legislature is well known for making it look like they have added extra funding without really doing so," Mr. Schiltz said.



TWO YOUNG SHOPPERS make their purchases during the Kids Shopping day at the Thrift Store.

Student News

North Central Kansas Technical College (NCK Tech), with campuses in Beloit and Hays, is pleased to announce Tyler Lee, St. Francis, KS, has been accepted into the Automotive Collision Technology Program, on the Beloit campus, for the 2014-2015 year. Tyler, a senior at St. Francis High School, qualified for early acceptance into the program. Students become eligible for early selection by submitting their ACT or Compass Test

scores and visiting the campus. Those with qualifying test scores submitted by December 1st are immediately accepted into their selected program until the program capacity is met. The Automotive Collision Technology program at NCK Tech provides students with the basic knowledge and skills for all phases of the auto body industry, using the latest equipment and training materials, and is a two-year Associate of Applied Science degree program. Further



Lee

information on the program offerings at NCK Tech may be found at www.ncktc.edu.

By Amanda Miller
amiller@nwkansan.com

Colorado began allowing the sale of recreational marijuana on Jan. 1 to anyone age 21 or older. With the drug being sold legally right next door, here are a few things residents of Cheyenne County may want to know.

Residents can now buy marijuana like alcohol, except they are limited to an ounce per purchase. People from outside Colorado can buy a quarter ounce.

Communities and counties can still choose not to allow recreational marijuana stores in their local jurisdictions, and a good many towns have, such as Colorado Springs and Greeley, according to CNN.

Colorado had 24 shops open Wednesday, most of them in Denver.

Driving under the influence of marijuana, as with any drug that impairs your motor skills, is still illegal and dangerous. A motorist in Colorado can be ticketed for impaired driving if his or her blood shows more than five nanograms of active tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, the active constituent of marijuana. Some users will fall below that level three hours after consuming pot, but others will stay well above it depending on their metabolism.

Retail marijuana will have a 25 percent state tax, plus the usual state sales tax of 2.9 percent, making recreational marijuana one of the most heavily taxed

consumer products in Colorado. Some communities are adding even more taxes to the product.

Cheyenne County Sheriff Cody Beeson said that he has been asked his opinion and questioned about the new recreational marijuana law in Colorado several times. Being a border county, many are curious what his thoughts are on the new law.

He prepared the following statement:

I have spent some time recently researching this topic, he said. I have gone to Colorado and I have spoken with members of the Denver Police Department specializing in the issue.

Until distribution points are set up closer to the border, I do not see a larger problem than what we currently have. Legal medical marijuana has already created an environment increasing the transportation of marijuana into Kansas.

When medical marijuana is purchased and the sales tax associated with recreational use marijuana is not paid, and the marijuana is brought into Kansas to be resold, the person has committed a tax evasion crime as well as distribution crimes.

I do not believe the new law concerning recreational marijuana will not have a large scale effect on Cheyenne

County. As of now, a non-resident can only purchase a small amount of marijuana at each transaction. This makes the process of completing enough transactions to justify the trip to Colorado difficult. Add in the fact, recreational marijuana carries a high tax, and it becomes hard for someone to go to Denver, purchase marijuana and return to Kansas to resell. As with any business, if the profit margin does not exist, the business cannot succeed.

What I do see happening is an increase in people going to Colorado to purchase marijuana for their own use, and bringing it back to Kansas, lowering the amount of illegal transactions happening in the county, and making the crime a case of possession instead of distributing.

I see an increase in driving while impaired on marijuana cases. Cheyenne County has one of the few drug recognition experts in our area on staff. This will help with identifying these cases and prosecuting those cases.

I am also prepared to continue working with Colorado authorities and monitoring the locations of distribution points.

While marijuana is legal in Colorado, it remains illegal to grow, possess, distribute or drive under the influence of marijuana in Cheyenne County, he concluded.

Kansas reports fewer traffic fatalities over previous year

In the past year there were fewer deaths on Kansas roads than in any other year since the Kansas Department of Transportation began keeping records. In 2013, according to preliminary, unofficial reports there were 344 fatalities, compared to 405 in 2012.

"One fatality is one too many and we are going to work hard to have this number decrease in 2014," said Kansas Secretary of Transportation Mike King. "In Kansas, we strongly emphasize safety in the engineering of our highways and that's an important component to keeping travelers

safe."

The previous low was 385 fatalities in 2008- the high was in 1969 when 780 people died. The department started keeping records in 1947.

"Strategic investment in infrastructure, improvement in our seat belt rate, committed law enforcement and emergency responders, good laws and safer vehicles have all played into this dramatic reduction in fatalities," said Steven Buckley, Transportation Safety Engineer. "While the department is committed to improving our roadway system, we still must

rely on drivers to do their part by eliminating distractions, never driving drunk and wearing a seat belt, every trip, every time."

"We are encouraged by this record-setting year, but that is no consolation for the family and friends of the 344 persons lost in traffic crashes," Buckley said. "The challenge to engineers, law enforcement, emergency responders, advocates, and especially drivers for 2014 is to continue the downward trend."

In Cheyenne County, there were no traffic fatalities in 2013.

BUSINESS CARD DIRECTORY

To list your business drop us a card!
Call 785-332-3162 today.

YOST FARM SUPPLY

Lannie Robbins
Service Manager

Bus. - 785-332-3351
Bus. - (800) 421-3914
Mobile - 785-332-7078



NEW HOLLAND

1545 East Highway 36 • P.O. Box 1080
St. Francis, KS 67756

Homesteader Motel & RV Park

410 W. Business US Highway 36
P.O. Box 238
St. Francis, KS 67756



Cable T.V. & Wireless Internet
Clean Rooms
Individual Climate Control

Kathy & Johnie Woodcox
Office - (785) 332-2168
Cell - (785) 332-8607

The Saint Francis Herald Bird City Times

Advertising Manager

Tim Burr

tburr@nwkansan.com

Phone 785-332-3162 • 785-332-3001 (fax)

PO Box 1050

St. Francis, KS 67756

sf.herald@nwkansan.com

Jensen's

Kay Jensen - Owner

785-332-2317

Pete Jensen - Salesperson

785-332-8215

Box 281 - St. Francis, KS

Call us for monuments to honor your loved one

Rules & Regulations

at the

Cheyenne County Landfill

Operating Hours - 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday Thru Saturday
Phone 785-332-8842

You are responsible for any and all items in your load

NO LOOSE TRASH DUMPED IF WIND IS OVER 20 MPH

Examples of loose trash are-

Sheets of Paper - Cardboard - Plastic bags - Sheet Insulation

All Cement - Concrete - Plaster will be sorted to Cement Pile

All metal will be sorted and unloaded at Metal Pile

All tires to be placed at Tire Pile

Wood Pallets and Ag Plastic Waste are to be separated

No liquids to be disposed of in pit

No dead animals allowed

All Household Hazardous Waste must be separated and reported to landfill operator

TREES ONLY TO BE DUMPED IN TREE PILE

No charge for limbs under 4 inches in diameter

REA Poles - Posts - RR Ties - Any Creosote - Lumber or Boards of any kind - Garbage bags - Plastic bags **are prohibited** in Tree Pile.

E-WASTE TO BE PLACED IN E-WASTE TRAILER

Any item with an electric cord including TVs - Microwaves - Blenders - Vacuum cleaners - VCRs - Computers - Printers - Copiers - Satellite Receivers - etc.

ALL OF THE ABOVE ARE CLASSIFIED AS PROHIBITED ITEMS AND ARE NOT TO BE DUMPED IN THE PIT.

AN ADDITIONAL FEE CAN BE ASSESSED FOR THE RETRIEVAL OF PROHIBITED ITEMS FROM THE PIT BY LANDFILL OPERATOR.