

# District expects budget cuts

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while spending on vocational students is high. The report said spending for transportation, a big cost to rural districts, and for bilingual classes could be cut.

At-risk students are those considered at risk of not finishing school because of limited English proficiency, poverty, location or race according to federal rules.

The audit study used two approaches, said Selby. The “input” approach emphasizes the cost of providing the curriculum and requirements set by the state Board of Education and the Board of Regents.

The “outcome” approach is includes the cost of meeting federal No Child Left Behind standards, which require a certain percentage of students to be proficient in math and reading each year until all students meet the standards. This emphasizes small classes and additional time for each student, Selby said.

Kansas spends less on each student than Nebraska, Iowa and Missouri but more than Colorado and Oklahoma, the report said. Enrollment in Kansas has been declining for several years. It peaked at 469,758 in 1998-99, but has declined to 466,037 this fall.

Since 1999, enrollment in regular classes has decreased by 2 percent, the report says, while enrollment in special education classes has increased by 16.4 percent. Vocational education enrollment has increased by 19.7 percent, while participation in free lunch programs has increased by 25.7 percent and English as a second language classes have increased by 26.5 percent.

As a whole, the report says, Kansas students have performed above the goals the state Board of Education has established for the National Assessment of Education Progress exams. Students in the fourth and eighth grade read better and are better in math than national averages, the test shows.

The audit showed that using the input approach, the state would need an additional \$316.2 million for schools, while using the outcome approach would cost at least \$399.3 million more a year.

The input approach was figured three ways, with 20 students in a class, with 18 in the primary grades and 23 later on, and with 25 students in a class.

At-risk students are defined by the state by economic status under federal rules.

The report added a regional adjustment for the cost of living. Each town in Kansas has a cost of living index. Teachers living in areas where it costs more to live would need to be paid more, the report says.

The budget to educate each student would go from the current base of \$4,735 up to \$4,943 per student, depending on the approach used, if the Legislature follows the recommendations of the study.

The Goodland schools will get \$6,167,655 under the state formula this year, Selby said. The budget under the input-based approach could vary from an increase of \$550,000 to a loss of \$141,435 using a class size of 25.

Using the outcome based approach, Goodland would get \$6,474,514, said Selby. The change would be for what the money could be used for. Low-enrollment funding would be halved while at-risk money would be almost tripled.

Schools are still trying to figure out what this shift in school funding could do, he said, especially to rural districts. Over half of the total students in the state of Kansas are in the big districts of Kansas City, Topeka and Wichita, said Selby.

At-risk money can't be used to pay regular teacher's salaries, Selby said, while low-enrollment money is.

A big concern is the reduction for transportation costs, especially in areas where students have longer distances to go, said Selby.

# State has faced challenges, is moving in right direction

I had the honor of delivering the State of the State address, outlining where our state has been in the past few years and a vision for where we can go.

Our state faced challenges in recent years, but because we chose to face these challenges, Kansas is smarter, safer, healthier and more prosperous. We're moving in a new direction, and Kansans now have more tools to make the most of their own lives.

We took action to encourage job creation, and because of the count-



kathleen sebelius

- governor

less achievements of individual employers, Kansas has experienced 21 straight months of job growth.

I want to continue to encourage the creation of good jobs by eliminating the property tax on new busi-

ness machinery and equipment.

We can also create a more prosperous state by building on the recent investment in our children's schools, and I've been consulting with legislative leaders on how to make this happen.

But in addition to a great school, every Kansas child deserves someone he or she can look up to. That's why I've launched Kansas Mentors. Former Kansas State Univer-

sity coach Bill Snyder will lead this effort to match caring adult role models with Kansas kids.

Our children cannot take advantage of life's opportunities if they're sick, however, which is why improving health care remains a priority.

Tens of thousands of Kansas kids have received health coverage in recent years, and I want to add to this number by providing health coverage to every Kansas child from birth to age five.

I also believe we can take steps to improve the safety of our children

and of all Kansans. We've seen fewer meth labs since the Legislature passed the Sheriff Matt Samuels Act, which puts cold pills behind the counter so meth makers can't get to them.

I now want to focus our attention on repeat sex offenders by requiring them to wear electronic tracking devices which will allow law enforcement officers to track their movements.

I encourage you to remain an active citizen by making your voice heard as the Legislature considers these and other important issues.

Our customers are some of the most diverse in the world. Our employees, too.

We've been recognized by DiversityInc., HISPANIC Magazine and ESSENCE. And for six years in a row, Fortune Magazine has ranked us among the Best Companies for Minorities. But a commitment to workforce diversity is nothing new here. It's part of our culture. And, considering the diversity of our customers, a big reason for our success.



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