



To: House Higher Education Committee
Representative Steven Howe, Chair

From: Jim Genandt, President
Kansas Technical Colleges

Date: February 12, 2025

Good afternoon! Thank you for hearing House Bill 2195. This measure simply creates in the state treasury, the Kansas technical college operating grant Fund, administered by the state board of regents. Base operating grant appropriations for the technical colleges would be deposited in this Fund and utilized for instruction and operations to meet target objectives for each technical college's region, established by the postsecondary technical education authority.

The legislature, beginning with this Committee, has for three years provided an appropriation referred to as a base operating grant for technical colleges. This technical college base operating grant was established to provide an additional source of funding for technical colleges, recognizing in part that none of the technical colleges have local taxing authority, unlike school districts and community colleges. The base operating grant has been instrumental in Kansas technical colleges continuing to deliver high performance and return on investment for Kansas workforce and economic development.

Our recent testimony before this committee recapped the transformative changes the base operating grant appropriations have enabled at Kansas technical colleges. Technical college graduation rates, job placement rates, retention of students in the state, and the earning power of our students with Kansas employers translate into enhancing and increasing not just skilled workers in essential and high-demand/high-wage occupations, but also our students as consumers, residents and taxpayers in the state of Kansas.

We urge that you pass House Bill 2195 out of Committee favorably, establishing the Kansas Technical College Operating Grant Fund.

ADDENDUM:

Here are specific examples of the impact state funding from the base operating grant appropriation are having:

2023-2024 Transformative Changes

Flint Hills Tech is targeting the resources to strengthen and increase capabilities in advanced manufacturing, facility maintenance and operations, and new efforts with precision agriculture and CDL.

Fort Hays Tech | North Central will expand its capacity for construction, respiratory care, CDL, and telecommunications (anticipated 2026).

Fort Hays Tech | Northwest is using resources to increase capacity for CDL, diagnostic equipment and labs for several programs in addition to more capability for customized business and industry education.

Manhattan Area Tech's Advanced Technology Center will increase enrollment capacity by 200% in construction, HVAC, industrial engineering tech, critical environment tech, plumbing, and biomanufacturing technology with an annual increased economic impact of \$6-10 million by 2026.

Salina Area Tech is moving forward to provide facility improvements impacting industrial maintenance, automation engineering technology, welding, automotive tech, and programs in public safety and health care.

Washburn Tech will enhance capacity for welding, HVAC, aviation tech, and apprenticeships in advanced systems, machine and tool technologies, and early childhood education.

WSU Tech is increasing capability for automotive service and alternative fuel programs with programmatic enhancements, lab improvements, and connections to secondary students for early college access to increase enrollment by 100 headcounts starting in FY26.

2024-2025 Transformative Updates

Flint Hills Tech:

Maintenance facility and Academic Programs. The maintenance crew do not have space for the tractor, the gator, the mower, the snow-removal equipment, etc. Their office is a classroom. Their operations are integrated among students and employees. We are building a maintenance facility to allow us to centralize all academic programs into a quad area of the main campus; we are also relocating the Downtown Campus programs

to the main campus. This vacated space allows us to capitalize on academic labs and classrooms, creating an actual lab space to support our Power Plant Technology program. They are in a 1940s 3rd floor high school classroom.

Main campus programming. We are ending a lease of another location in town to bring all programs to the main campus to support shared resources, lab spaces, integrating programs, etc. (As one example, Multimedia Design and Graphic Arts will share space and faculty; CNA is moving closer to LPN and EMS).

New programs. Started a new Precision Agriculture program based on industry partner feedback. This program starts in August 2025.

Base pay review. We could not hire or retain highly qualified technical program faculty. This fund has helped us support these critical positions.

Fort Hays Tech | North Central: Resources are helping the institution to complete facility and program expansion at both the Beloit and Hays campuses and providing upgraded equipment capability for student learning and skills achievement.

Fort Hays Tech | Northwest:

Commercial Driver's License: We have been able to successfully launch a CDL program with supplemental licensure to provide instruction for industry, farmers, and school districts. In Spring 2025, we will be expanding our fleet to include additional semis and trailers to accommodate demand.

Graphic Design Equipment: We were able to secure new equipment for the Graphic Design program, and specifically a piece of equipment called a Wall Printer. This tool allows students to design artwork and, using the CNC functions of the Wall Printer, to print graphic designs on walls, floors, etc across campus.

Power Sports Technology: The Power Sports program develops technicians who will service, repair, and enhance UTV's, ATV's, motorcycles, industrial grade mowers, and small tractors. The funds are being used to secure training equipment, tooling, equipment lifts, and more to get the program ready for launch in Fall 2025.

Crime Scene Investigation: We are using funds to secure crime scene analysis equipment and software. The new equipment allows students to use professional grade equipment to create 3D renderings of crime scenes. This equipment is starting to be integrated into law enforcement agencies, and this allows our students to be trained before entering the workforce.

Plumbing Equipment: We were able to purchase industrial drain cleaning equipment that allows our plumbing students to experience real-world quality equipment for clearing clogged lines.

Retention Incentive: We utilized a portion of the base operating grant to provide a small retention incentive for employees based on years of service to the college.

Affiliation Rebranding: We were able to utilize some of the funds to rebrand the campus following the affiliation with Fort Hays State University.

Training Center Enhancements: We will be able to complete the final renovations to the Price Convention Center on our campus. The PCC is the only conference center in the county and is used for industry training, conferences, and a host of community events.

Manhattan Tech: Resources helped the College complete construction of the Advanced Technology Center facility in the fall semester, with the College preparing to add new programs in plumbing, electrician tech, expanded capability with Industrial Maintenance technology, critical environment technology (for containment facilities operations related to biotech/sciences and semiconductor manufacturing organizations), and childcare education. Continued funding provided resources for the start-up costs to allow the institution to optimize enrollment and tuition/fee and customized training revenues for ongoing operations and maintenance.

Salina Tech invested \$750,000 for the Industrial Maintenance and Automation Building, \$250,000 for equipment and supplies in the building, \$150,000 for startup costs in Pharmacy Tech program, \$100,000 for increased wages for instructors, and \$250,000 for starting up Industrial Maintenance and Automation program and expanding Welding and Truck driving programs.

Washburn Tech completed the buildout of the second floor of the East campus providing the ability to offer additional classes and potentially new programs in the future, acquired equipment for our new nursing program, upgraded other healthcare related equipment and Machine Tool equipment, and enhanced facilities on the main campus.

WSU Tech invested the FY 25 \$1.5M operating grant to finish off the automotive center renovation started in FY24 (see notes from last year) and the balance of the FY25 funds are going to the National Center for Aviation Training's new building for automation/robotics and aviation expansion.