



KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BOARD OF REGENTS NURSING INITIATIVE APPROVED

10-Year Plan to Address Nursing Shortage in Kansas

(TOPEKA) – Last week funding was approved for the first year of a ten-year Board of Regents’ initiative to address the critical nursing shortage in the state of Kansas. The Legislature had previously appropriated \$3.4 million of the Board’s \$4 million first-year funding request as part of its omnibus appropriations bill which the Governor signed into law May 24.

All 22 public nursing programs in Kansas are eligible to participate and will be required to submit applications to the Board to receive the funding associated with the program. Applications were sent to the eligible institutions today.

“I would like to thank members of the Kansas Legislature for their strong support of this serious effort to address the state’s nursing shortage,” said Reginald L. Robinson, President and CEO of the Board of Regents. “This program powerfully demonstrates how the state’s higher education institutions play a vital workforce development role in Kansas. The Board looks forward to addressing this critical issue – an issue that only increases in importance as the state’s population continues to age.”

The Board’s ten-year nursing plan is a three-part \$30 million initiative that ultimately aims to increase nursing capacity in Kansas by 25 percent. Of the \$30 million total cost, \$22 million would come from state appropriations while \$8 million would be committed through matching funds by the participating educational institutions.

“It was important that the Legislature address this critical issue during the 2006 session,” said Senator Jim Barone (D-Frontenac), the key sponsor of the nursing initiative during the Legislature’s consideration of the omnibus appropriations bill. “This funding moves us closer to ultimately solving an issue that, if unaddressed, will negatively impact every Kansan.”

The initiative’s three components target the following areas: Nurse Educator Scholarships, Nursing Faculty and Supplies, and Equipment and Facility Upgrades. First year funding, totaling \$3.4 million, is broken down into three parts. \$200,000 for the Nurse Educator Scholarship Program – requiring a \$1.00 match from the institution for each \$2.00 of state funding received. \$1.2 million for a Nursing Faculty and Supplies Program – to be a need-based or competitive grant program requiring a \$1.00 match from the institution for each \$1.00 of state funding received (the Board requested \$1.8 million). And, \$2 million for a Nursing Equipment

and Facilities Upgrade Program – to be a need-based or competitive grant program requiring a \$1.00 match from the institution for each \$2.00 of state funding received.

The 2005 Legislature, concerned about the shortage of nurses in Kansas, recommended that the Board report to the Governor and the 2006 Legislature regarding the resources required to increase the capacity of the state's higher education system to educate registered nurses by 25 percent. The Legislature also requested that the report include a timeline for building the infrastructure necessary to accommodate up to 250 more nursing student admissions annually.

Among the causes for the nursing shortage in Kansas is an increased utilization of the health care system by an aging population at the same time many existing nurses will be retiring. The Kansas Department of Labor has predicted that 6,890 new Registered Nurse (RN) positions will be needed by 2010 to meet the workforce demand. An additional 4,460 RN replacement positions will be needed due to retirements, for a total projected need of 11,350.

Implementing nationwide strategies and initiatives within the state, Kansas has been successful in attracting individuals to careers in health care. The pressing issue now does not revolve around filling the pipeline with students interested in nursing careers, but rather expanding postsecondary program capacity for those who want to become trained nurses. Virtually every nursing program has an extensive waiting list of qualified applicants. Increasing capacity in nursing programs is a complex process that consists of acquiring additional qualified nursing faculty, securing additional clinical instruction sites, and increasing classroom space and equipment.

The nine-member Kansas Board of Regents is the governing board of the state's six public universities and a supervising and coordinating board for nineteen community colleges, ten technical institutions, and a municipal university.

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Eligible Public Nursing Programs (22):

Program Type: Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) (RN)

Barton County Community College
Butler Community College
Cloud County Community College
Colby Community College
Dodge City Community College
Fort Scott Community College
Garden City Community College
Hutchinson Community College
Johnson County Community College
Kansas City Kansas Community College
Labette Community College
Manhattan Technical College (with Cloud County CC)
Neosho County Community College
North Central Kansas Technical College (Beloit and Hays Campuses)
Pratt Community College
Seward County Community College

Program Type: Baccalaureate Degree Nursing (BSN) (RN)

Emporia State University
Fort Hays State University
Pittsburg State University
University of Kansas Medical Center
Washburn University
Wichita State University

Program Type: Graduate Degree (MSN)

Fort Hays State University
Pittsburg State University
University of Kansas Medical Center
Washburn University
Wichita State University