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BOARD OF REGENTS SELECTS SITE FOR KANSAS ACADEMY OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

New Academy Will Be Located at Fort Hays State University

(TOPEKA) – Today the Kansas Board of Regents announced that Fort Hays State University (FHSU) has been selected as the home of the new Kansas Academy of Mathematics and Science (KAMS), a residential academy for high school juniors and seniors who are academically talented in science and mathematics.

“It is an honor to be selected as the site for the new Kansas Academy of Mathematics and Science. It reaffirms our decision to create a trans-disciplinary institution in math and science,” said Dr. Edward H. Hammond, President of Fort Hays State University. “We are very proud of Dean Debbie Mercer, Dr. Paul Adams, and the committee for all their hard work in preparing the proposal, and we will immediately begin to pursue the legislative initiatives necessary to move the academy to a reality.”

KAMS, which was established by legislation approved and signed into law in 2006, will ultimately enroll approximately 80 high school juniors and seniors who are academically talented in science and mathematics. Once a student completes the two-year program of study, they will have earned both a high school diploma and college credits equivalent to an associate of arts or associate of science degree.

“This academy represents an important tool for our state to use in retaining our most talented students. It is vitally important to our state’s future that our best and brightest students be nurtured in an environment that will encourage them to either stay in Kansas or return to Kansas upon completion of their studies,” said Regent Christine Downey-Schmidt, Chair of the Board of Regents. “KAMS will challenge talented individuals and encourage them to enter mathematics and science fields, which in turn will help address one of our state’s most critical workforce needs. However, it certainly goes without saying that state funding is imperative for the establishment, operation, and ultimate success of KAMS.”

In the fall of 2006, the Board established a steering committee in part to assist in the design of a Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify a location for the Academy. The steering committee included representatives from public universities, community colleges, high schools, the Board of Regents, and the Kansas Department of Education. As it developed the RFP, the steering committee studied existing academies in other states. Similar academies currently exist

in 15 other states, including the neighboring states of Missouri and Oklahoma. The RFP was issued to Kansas public higher education institutions in June, and responses to the RFP were due in October. The steering committee reviewed the submitted proposals and ultimately submitted its decision to the Board.

The 2007 Legislature allocated \$100,000 for development of KAMS and FHSU will receive those funds to finalize its plans for the Academy. In addition, the Board has requested that the Governor consider a multi-year appropriation (approximately \$4.3 million over the next six fiscal years) to fund the ongoing operational costs of KAMS. If funding is made available by the state, FHSU has indicated that KAMS should be open and operational by the Fall 2009 academic semester.

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