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To: Special Committee on Education

From: Craig Neuenswander, Deputy Commissioner
KSDE Division of Fiscal and Administrative Services

Subj: Brief History of Virtual Schools

Chair Williams and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information about the history of virtual schools for the committee.

The attached spreadsheets, SF22-005 and SF22-006, provide a history of the FTE enrollment and funding for Kansas virtual schools since FY 2011-12. The figures for FY 2021-22 are estimates based on school district budgets. The spreadsheets show a slow growth in enrollment and funding, until FY2020-21 when the COVID-19 pandemic led to a significant increase.

The funding formula for virtual students has varied over the years as outlined on the Column Explanation for the printouts. Currently, funding is provided in three different methods.

- Full-time students are funded at \$5,000 each.
- Part-time students are funded at \$1,700 per FTE. (Funding for a 0.5 student would \$850.)
- Students age 20 and over are funded at \$709 per credit earned, with a maximum of six credits for any one student.

The formula provides “flat” funding, meaning there are no weightings attached to virtual school students.

In prior years, school districts operated both virtual schools and virtual programs. Beginning in FY2021-22, school districts are required to operate virtual schools only. While this may seem like a simple change in semantics, this allows KSDE to more readily track virtual school student data separately from traditional student data.

For more information, contact:

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T:Legislative Session/2022/Interims/Spec Comm/Testimony/ KSDE Testimony-Virtual Schools

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