

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For more information:
Sherriene Jones-Sontag
Office of Gov. Brownback
785.368.7138 (office)
media@ks.gov

Brownback Administration Announces School Finance Reform Plan

Topeka – Kansas Governor Sam Brownback announced today his administration’s proposal to reform the state’s K-12 education funding formula. The governor said the proposal was crafted after months of discussions with hundreds of Kansans who are interested in improving education.

“Our current K-12 funding formula is broken,” Governor Brownback said. “In the Roadmap for Kansas, I vowed to introduce a new school finance formula that increases local control, transparency, breaks the cycle of litigation, and focuses more resources on the classroom. Our proposal is a modern formula that will provide districts the flexibility that is necessary to meet today’s challenges, prepare tomorrow’s opportunities, and excel in education.”

The proposed plan is designed to provide stable, predictable, and fair funding to all of Kansas’ 286 school districts. This is achieved through:

- Providing the statutory \$4,492 **base state aid per pupil**,
- Offsetting local property tax inequity through the **Property Tax Equalization Fund** that pays out in increasingly greater amounts to districts with low property tax valuation per pupil,
- Further equalizing district budgets through **Supplemental Equalization** to ensure that each district has a stable funding amount year after year, and
- Allowing for unlimited local control of **property taxes** for educational purposes.

Other components of the governor’s proposed consist of **Base Line Amount** that will determine how much funding each school district will receive and from what source they get the funding as well as a 106% cap on the amount of equalization fund payment.

Under the proposal, the new finance formula would take effect in FY2014. Assuming the current base state aid of \$3,780 is held in FY2012 and FY2013 and property values hold stable, the proposed formula would cost the State General Fund an additional \$45.1 million in FY2014. No district would

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receive less money under the proposal, and approximately half would receive additional amounts.

Governor Brownback called education the most important function of state government.

“Education is to the state government what defense is to the federal government: its primary function and the lion’s share of its budget,” Governor Brownback said. “It’s time for the state to fix its broken funding formula.”

Brownback’s Policy Director Landon Fulmer presented the proposal to the Kansas Board of Education this morning.

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