



*Kansas Technical Colleges (KTC):*  
**Delivering & Keeping a Skilled Workforce in Kansas!**  
Report for the Kansas State Legislature: Spring 2024

Overview: The Kansas Technical Colleges have been at the forefront of providing a skilled workforce for the state. With a focused mission and support from state and local investments, we are expanding our capacity and offering flexible learning options to meet the demands of both traditional "blue-collar" and emerging "new-collar" skills required for high-wage, high-demand, and critical-need occupations in Kansas.

*Enrollment: Over the past year, the Kansas Technical Colleges have experienced significant growth in enrollment. According to data from the Kansas Board of Regents, the fall 2023 headcount enrollment in the technical college sector increased by almost 9%, with a growth rate of nearly 19% over the previous 5 years and an impressive 70% increase over the past decade. This growth highlights the value and relevance of technical education in Kansas. **Notably, the technical college sector is the only component of public higher education that has achieved such significant growth.***

Performance (KBOR KHEStats Data): The performance of our technical colleges is measured by graduation rates, credentials earned, and the success of our graduates in the workforce. Our colleges consistently maintain graduation rates in the 50-60% range, which is the highest among two-year colleges in higher education. Additionally, our students have access to various certificate options, allowing them to enter the workforce more rapidly. Studies show that individuals with certificates and credentials often earn wages comparable to those with traditional degrees. Our graduates are finding success in the job market, with almost 80% choosing to remain in Kansas and earning competitive wages.

The Aspen Institute's Excellence in Two-Year Colleges national review, which evaluates colleges based on performance metrics, included in their top 150 list in 2023; Flint Hills, Manhattan, North Central, Northwest, and Salina technical colleges. This demonstrates the strong outcomes achieved by technical colleges with their focused mission.

## Kansas Technical Colleges: Rapid Return on Investment for Kansas!

Four of Kansas technical colleges were listed in the top 25 for high graduation rates in The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac 2023 (Flint Hills, North Central, Northwest, and Salina). It's important to note that our dedicated mission of workforce education often results in students being hired by employers before completing their programs. This reflects our commitment to providing a skilled workforce for our regions and the state.

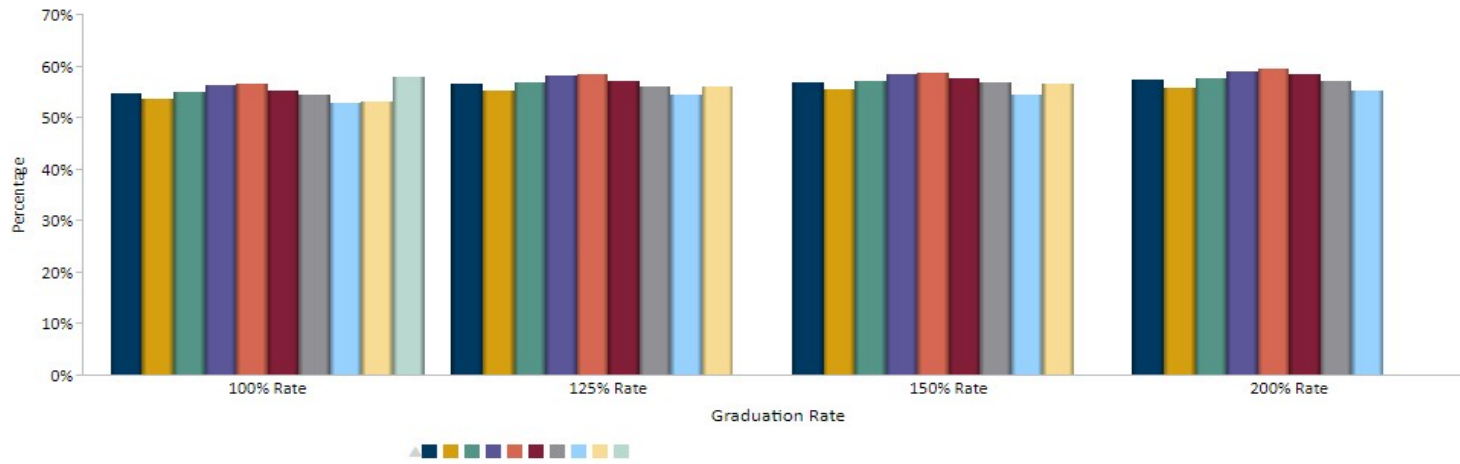
- Graduation
  - The technical colleges have consistently had graduation rates in the 50-60% range, the highest marks within the two-year college component of higher education. Indeed, 4 of the 7 Kansas technical colleges made the national top 25 list for high graduation rates as noted in The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac 2023 (Flint Hills, North Central, Northwest, and Salina).
  - Bear in mind that with our dedicated mission of workforce education we often “lose” students to area employers as the students interact with our employers early and often, and our students almost all have either an internship, clinical, or practicum requirement to reinforce that employer connection. It is not unusual for our students to get a good job offer prior to completing our program of study and graduating. But we have continued to fulfill our mission of skilled workforce for our regions and the state.
- Credentials:
  - The technical colleges align with the national trend of an increased focus on short- and intermediate-term certificates rather than associate degrees. Kansas, like the rest of the nation, requires skilled workers, and our technical colleges are designed to meet this demand. From phlebotomy certificates earned in a few weeks to welding programs ranging from a few weeks to 18 months, our students have access to certificate options that enable students to enter the workforce more rapidly. Research shows that individuals with certificates and credentials often earn wages comparable to those with traditional degrees. Additionally, certificate programs offer lower costs and reduce the need for financial aid.
  - State and national wage data studies demonstrate that persons earning these certificates and credentials often have wages on a par to what had been traditional levels for degrees, and depending on the skilled occupation area and demand in an area, students with certificates, credentials, and some work experience often out-earn other persons. The certificate options also benefit the students with lower costs and need to rely on financial aid.
- Wages and Working in Kansas
- Kansas Technical Colleges excel in keeping graduates in Kansas and helping them secure good jobs. Almost 80% of our tech college graduates choose to remain in Kansas, which further strengthens our economy. The average annual earnings of our

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graduates entering the workforce are approaching \$40,000. While the range varies based on the occupation and level of certification, our graduates, including those with short-term certificates, can earn competitive wages. This is evident in national rankings, such as WalletHub's report on the best two-year colleges in the United States, which ranked Manhattan Tech as the top college in Kansas and second in the nation.

### Kansas Board of Regents

Graduation Institution Rate Summary  
Fall Calendar Entry Years  
Technical Colleges Summary



Sources: KBOR KHEDS Academic Year Collection, KHEDS Fall Census Collection

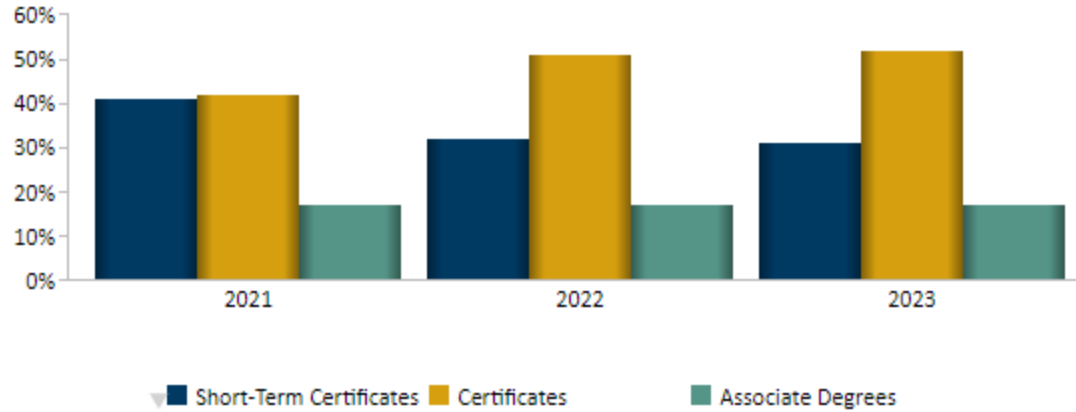
# Kansas Technical Colleges: Rapid Return on Investment for Kansas!

## Kansas Board of Regents

Percentage of Credentials by Award Type

Academic Years 2021 - 2023

Technical Colleges Summary



Source: KHEDS Academic Year Collection

## Kansas Board of Regents

Average Wages of Graduates Employed in Kansas by Award Type

Time from Completion Year: Entry Year

Technical Colleges Summary



Sources: KHEDS Academic Year Collection, KDOL Wage Records

## Kansas Board of Regents

Percentage of Graduates Employed in Kansas by Award Type

Time from Completion Year: Entry Year

Technical Colleges Summary



Sources: KHEDS Academic Year Collection, KDOL Wage Records

## Kansas Technical Colleges: Rapid Return on Investment for Kansas!

Resources = RESULTS!

The Kansas Technical Colleges are committed to the effective and efficient use of resources. We have received support from the Kansas legislature, which has significantly contributed to our success in expanding the skilled workforce in high-demand occupations. We have also received support from the communities we serve, with monetary donations and pledges totaling over \$11 million. These resources have enabled us to enhance our facilities, equipment, and other capabilities:

- ARPA Funds: Each technical college received ARPA funds with a 1:1 match requirement. The total ARPA allocation to the technical colleges was \$10.7 million.
- Base Operating Grant Appropriation: Each technical college received a base operating grant appropriation of \$1.5 million last year. This unrestricted funding supported facilities, equipment, and other enhancements to sustain and enhance our capabilities. The total base operating grant appropriation was \$10.5 million.
- Community Support: The communities served by the technical colleges stepped up by contributing monetary donations and pledges totaling \$11,135,000. Additionally, in-kind contributions for ARPA and base operating grant projects were estimated at \$1,200,000. Other cash donations for scholarships, equipment, and healthcare support amounted to \$2,154,867.

(see attached spreadsheet for specific institutional information)

**Bottom line: The Kansas Technical Colleges have consistently increased enrollment, graduation, earned credentials, and job placement in Kansas with our students over the past 12 months, the past 5 years, and the past decade! The state of Kansas gets no more direct and rapid return on investment as it does with the outcomes produced by the Kansas Technical Colleges!**

To continue to deliver growth in capacity, capability and state skilled workforce we request that the legislature support the same funding levels we received for the current fiscal year (FY24). The governor's budget request did not maintain the base operating grant appropriation for the technical colleges (\$10.5 million), and funding for apprenticeships/business engagement for all two-year colleges (\$14.6 million was appropriated for FY 24, the Governor proposed only \$8 million for FY 25 and moved the funds to Commerce).

We urge you to appropriate \$10.5 million, as we received last year as a base grant, to become a **High Impact Investment Fund** for the skilled workforce we produce. Those funds, provided annually, are a GAME-CHANGER for the technical colleges that will produce

## Kansas Technical Colleges: Rapid Return on Investment for Kansas!

even more rapid and direct outcomes. Because of the investment made in FY 24 we are already seeing progress toward these increases in our capacity and capability for more skilled workers for the state:

- ✓ *Manhattan 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!*
- ✓ *North Central Tech will expand capacity for construction, respiratory care, CDL, and telecommunications (anticipated 2026)!*
- ✓ *Washburn Tech will enhance capacity for welding, HVAC, aviation tech, and apprenticeships in advanced systems tech, machine tool tech, and early childhood education.*
- ✓ *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.*
- ✓ *Salina 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.*
- ✓ *Northwest Tech is using the resources to increase capacity for CDL, and diagnostic equipment and labs for several programs in addition to more capability for customized business and industry education.*
- ✓ *WSU-Tech is increasing capability for transportation maintenance across several programs of study, lab improvements, and connections to secondary students for early college access.*

*Moving Forward:* To continue delivering a skilled workforce for Kansas, we request continued support from the legislature. We urge you to maintain the current funding levels for the technical colleges and establish a High Impact Investment Fund to further enhance our capacity and capabilities. The investments made in the past year have already shown progress in expanding our programs and producing more skilled workers for the state.

In addition, we would like to collaborate with the legislature to explore funding based on outcomes rather than enrollment. This approach will strengthen the state's commitment to skilled workforce education and ensure that our resources are effectively utilized.

**Conclusion:** The Kansas Technical Colleges have consistently increased enrollment, graduation rates, earned credentials, and job placements in Kansas. The outcomes we have achieved provide the state with a skilled workforce and a rapid return on investment. We appreciate the support we have received thus far and look forward to continuing our partnership with the legislature to further strengthen the technical education system in Kansas. Together, we can empower Kansas with a skilled workforce that drives economic growth and prosperity for all.