

News Release

Kansas Families for Education

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Kansas Kids and Families Pay the Price

Governor cuts \$39 million from schools

Kansas children – and the state’s long-term future -- received another blow this morning as Governor Parkinson announced \$39.1 million in additional cuts to K-12 education. Prior to this morning’s announcement schools had already cut \$167 million from their budgets and eliminated 3,700 positions within their districts.

“I don’t think parents who are enjoying the summer with their children have any idea of the impact these cuts will have,” said Kathy Cook, Executive Director of Kansas Families for Education. “School are eliminating teaching positions at all levels, meaning class sizes will be larger. Foreign language programs, librarians, extracurricular activities, early childhood education programs, are all on the chopping block. How are our kids, and the businesses that will someday hire them, supposed to compete in a global economy when we are tearing down the school system that is supposed to be preparing them?”

Cook said the recession, while difficult for families and businesses across the state, does not justify sacrificing our future for relief in the here and now.

“Eating your seed corn fills your belly today but guarantees you will starve tomorrow,” she said. “We have been on a tax-cutting binge in this state for the past 20 years or more. In just the past five years alone, tax cuts have amounted to almost \$1 billion, and all we have to show for it are deteriorating schools and state services. If tax cuts are what creates prosperity, where is it?”

Cook pointed out that a recent short-term surge in state investment in K-12 education, the result of a successful lawsuit by individual districts against the state, resulted in immediate and significant increases in student achievement.

“The evidence is clear and undeniable. Investment in our schools and kids succeeds at boosting achievement, while tax cuts fail at boosting the economy. But what does the Kansas legislature give us? More tax cuts and less money for schools. They act in complete denial of the facts.”

Cook urged parents and taxpayers to demand more common sense from their elected representatives.

“Parents need to sound the alarm. Our children’s futures are in danger. We are all going to suffer the consequences of a public school system prevented from preparing students for 21st century jobs. “

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