JO increases K-10 commuter service to meet demand

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Riders who use Johnson County Transit's K-10 connector will find it easier to use the service.

The route, which shuttles riders from Lawrence to and from Johnson County Community College and the University of Kansas Edwards campus - both in Overland Park - and vice versa, has added eight additional trips in each direction.

The trips were added to meet increased demands of the service, which has become popular among students, said Phil Dietrixhe, a JCT spokesman.

He said in November 2008 - the last month statistics were available - ridership increased to 10,289 from 8,330 in the same month the year before. Dietrixhe added that in September, it's busiest month thus far, 16,356 riders used the service.

"One day we had over 1,000 riders," he said. "We had 74 people on a 44-passenger bus."

When the K-10 connector was created in January 2007, JCT never imagined it would exceed 300 to 400 riders a day, Dietrixhe said.

The service now offers 20 trips in each direction.

Operational costs for the additional trips, $455,000, came from the $2.45 million in emergency funding approved by county commissioners in November for JCT.

That cost includes paying drivers and fuel, but not the capital costs, buses required for additional trips, Dietrixhe said.

He said the remainder of the emergency funding will be dedicated to increasing service for other popular routes to meet demand and purchasing additional buses.

The Kansas Department of Transportation announced Friday it awarded $500,000 in state funding for the K-10 connector.

In a statement, Lisa Koch, KDOT's public transit manager, said the K-10 connector was a "great test case for how popular this kind of transit service can be in Kansas."

Dietrixhe said how JCT would spend the funding would be decided later by Johnson County Transit's council and county commissioners.

The K-10 connector departs daily from JCCC every 30 minutes from 6 to 9 a.m.

Additional trips are available at 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Afternoon trips begin every 30 minutes from 3:30 to 6 p.m. Night trips run at 7:10 p.m., 9:10 p.m. and 10:10 p.m.

It departs daily from KU every 30 minutes from 6:05 to 10:05 a.m. with additional trips at 11:35 a.m., 1:35 p.m. and 2:35 p.m.

Afternoon trips every 30 minutes run from 3:35 to 6:05 p.m. Night trips depart Lawrence at 8:05 and 10:25 p.m.

One-way tickets can be purchased for $2.50 or passes for 10 trips can be purchased for $15 at the JCCC business office or a number of Lawrence locations.
Closure study to include PSHTC

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

TOPEKA — Sen. Dwayne Umbarger, R-Thayer, urged locals not to become overly concerned with the announcement Thursday of Gov. Kathleen Sebelius forming a commission to study possible closings of state hospitals, schools for the deaf and blind and other institutions.

Sebelius' executive order creating the Facilities Closure and Realignment Commission called for draft recommendations by Dec. 1. She said that if she approves of its proposals, she will enact them next year by new executive orders.

"In these unprecedented economic times, we must examine all state operations to determine if savings can be realized by suspending, merging or streamlining programs," Sebelius said in a statement.

The governor's order names the Parsons State Hospital and Training Center, the Kansas Neurological Institute in Topeka, the School for the Deaf in Olathe, the School for the Blind in Kansas City, Kan., the juvenile corrections center in Beloit and the Rainbow Mental Health Facility in Kansas City, Kan.

Umbarger said this is not the first time such committees have been formed and discussions have taken place regarding closure of state hospitals.

"I don't want people to be alarmed," Umbarger said.

"It is natural to put all of the facilities on the table to consider and see which facilities' closure would cause the least amount of harm.

"It has always been brought to light that the Parsons State Hospital and Training Center is unique in its operations, who it serves and that it serves them well," Umbarger said, also pointing out the hospital's comprehensive ties with the University of Kansas on its campus, which have a national impact.

The greatest concern for many is the fact the state

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must close a deficit of up to $300 million in the current budget by June 30 and prevent a projected $1 billion shortfall between anticipated revenues and spending commitments for the fiscal year beginning July 1.

"Ultimately, Kansans will benefit if quality services can continue with a more efficient delivery system, and if we have the resources needed for critical safety net programs," Sebelius said.

Senate Ways and Means Committee member Jay Emler, R-Lindsborg, said it's good for the executive branch to review programs to see whether savings can be realized.

But the commission can look at other institutions as well, said Sebelius spokeswoman Nicole Corcoran.

"This is just to start stimulating conversation," Corcoran said.

Rochelle Chronister, who has served as secretary of Social and Rehabilitation Services and in the Kansas House, was named by Sebelius to chair the commission.

Five of the panel's voting members will be appointed by Sebelius and the other six by legislative leaders. Serving as non-voting members will be the commissioners of education and juvenile justice and the secretaries of SRS, labor and administration.

Umbarger and Rep. Richard Proehl, R-Parsons, said they will monitor the commission closely, and Umbarger said he is going to try to secure a seat on the council.

Proehl said that in his opinion, the PSHTC has always done an outstanding job and given excellent service, and he is sure that is what the committee's findings will be.
Students earn KU scholarships

More than 6,500 students at the University of Kansas, including several from Louisburg, received $29.6 million in privately funded scholarship support during the 2008-09 academic year. So far, 8,555 scholarships have been awarded for the current academic year. Many students received more than one scholarship.

Scholarship funds are managed by KU Endowment, the independent, nonprofit organization serving as the official fundraising and fund-management organization for KU. Founded in 1891, KU Endowment is the first foundation of its kind at a U.S. public university.

Area scholarship recipients include:

- Louisburg: Brittany Barney, theater and film scholarships; Dustin DeLand, Allen Memorial Scholarship; Jenna Kawase, nontraditional undergraduate student scholarship; Megan O'Connor, Targeted Scholarships, nontraditional undergraduate student scholarship.
- Bucyrus: Derek Palmer, Lawrence Intercampus Scholarship; Elizabeth Matile, Elmer E. and Helen H. Shurtleff Scholarship; Colin Davidson, Robert M. Carey Scholarship; Ross H. Forney Scholarship; Madison A. and Lila Self Engineering Leadership scholarship, nontraditional undergraduate student scholarship; Dustin Fish, 2+2 Program Scholarship.
- Stilwell: Bradley Cook, Anschutz Scholarship; Matthew Crooks, Richard Kelton Memorial Fund; Brook Gorthy, nontraditional undergraduate student scholarship; Molly Hartz, Frank G. Crowell Scholarship; Kevin Kelley, Joel Orin Gunnels Sr. Scholarship Fund, nontraditional undergraduate student scholarship; Paul and Virginia Bassett Miller Engineering Scholarship; Brian Kim, Targeted Scholarships, nontraditional undergraduate student scholarship; Michelle Kim, Emily V. Berger Scholarship; Stephen Martinat, Adrian W. Wallace Fund; Matthew Mulligan, Solon E. Sumerfield Scholarship, nontraditional undergraduate student scholarship; Andrew Naglich, nontraditional undergraduate student scholarship.
- Alexander Nichols, KUAA Rock Chalk Scholarship, nontraditional undergraduate student scholarship; Torre Norton, Burdsall-Barrett Scholarship in Education; Erin O'Brien, McGill Educational Fund; Courtney Parcell, Anschutz Scholarship; Heidi Pastor, Roy Scholarship; Anton Reinke, Robert L. and Lucille J. Smith Scholarship, Charles U. Heuser Scholarship; Megan Ritter, Zelma Edna McIlvail Scholarship; Hilary Schloemer, nontraditional undergraduate student scholarship; Chancellor's Club Scholarships; Scott Shorten, Dr. Philip Galloway Fund;
- Ellen Thomas, nontraditional undergraduate student scholarship; Jennifer Vacca, Leota Teats Teats Westrup and Marjie Westrup Holcomb Scholarship.
KU laying off 11, not filling 110 jobs

LAWRENCE, Kan. (AP) — The University of Kansas is cutting 11 jobs and not filling 110 others to satisfy a legislative mandate to cut 7 percent of its budget for the 2010 fiscal year.

Of the 11 people being laid off, one already has found a different job on campus and another is moving from full time to half time, the university said.

Seven of the layoffs are in the Department of Student Success, which oversees such programs as the Department of Student Housing and the KU Memorial Unions, said university spokeswoman Lynn Bretz. Nine of the cuts won't happen until June 30, the end of the school's fiscal year, and one will be in January 2010.

"It is painful for employers to have to sit down and tell employees they're losing their jobs," Bretz said.

Of the open positions that aren't being filled, 55 are faculty positions and 55 are nonfaculty, she said. While the cuts should be enough to meet the required 7 percent reduction — about $10.8 million — Bretz said more job losses are possible if there are more funding cuts. Other moves to meet budget requirements include trimming travel and technology costs, cutting or delaying equipment purchases, and sending out the campus faculty newsletter online only, Bretz said.

After the Kansas Board of Regents asked the universities in August to prepare 7 percent budget cuts, Kansas Chancellor Robert Hemenway wrote a memo arguing that the university would be negatively affected by faculty cuts.
The KU Unity Dance Troupe held a Hip Hop Dance Clinic on Saturday, January 31 for children ages 3 years and up. The dance troupe performed at Friday night’s varsity boys game vs. Garden City.
Sebelius Announces University Collaboration, Hopes To Advance Cancer Center Initiative

FOR THE CLARION

Governor Kathleen Sebelius today announced that the University of Kansas and Kansas State University are joining forces in pursuit of a shared statewide goal: National Cancer Institute (NCI) designation for the University of Kansas Cancer Center as a Comprehensive Cancer Center.

“The NB AF initiative proved that Kansans can achieve great things when they unite behind a common goal — NCI designation is such a goal,” Sebelius said. “This opportunity can provide our state with new financial resources for research that can save, extend and enhance the lives of Kansans diagnosed with cancer,” Sebelius said.

Joining the Governor in making the announcement were Chancellor Robert Hemenway of the University of Kansas and President John Wefald of Kansas State University. Under the terms of a new agreement, cancer researchers at both institutions will combine their strengths, share their resources and collaborate in every way possible in the push toward NCI designation.

Also present were Lt. Governor Mark Parkinson and Tom Thornton, president and CEO of the Kansas Bioscience Authority.

“NCI designation will benefit the entire state and region,” Parkinson said. “Close collaboration between our two largest research universities is key to the success of the whole initiative. Today’s announcement marks an extraordinary commitment on their part toward a common objective.”

In her State of the State Address, the Governor strongly endorsed the Comprehensive Cancer Center initiative. She noted that “Cancer has affected many Kansas families,” and “The personal toll in lost lives and unrealized potential cannot be calculated.”
KU Faculty, Students Join In Obama's Inauguration

Several faculty, staff and students from the University of Kansas participated in the presidential inauguration either by attending events in Washington, D.C., or working in Kansas for this year's Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service.

KU faculty who attended events in Washington included:

- Barbara Ballard, associate director of the Dole Institute of Politics and a Democratic state representative from Lawrence's 44th district;
- Frances Gorman, communications coordinator for the School of Business and KU alumna;
- Maryemma Graham, professor of English;
- Jonathan Earle, associate director of the Dole Institute of Politics and an associate professor of history;
- Teresa Leslie-Cantu, lecturer in African and African-American studies;
- Bud Stallworth, business manager for Design and Construction Management and KU alumnus;
- Andrew Torrance, associate professor of law; and
- Leslie Tuttle, assistant professor of history.

Briana Saunders, of Andover, a junior in African and African-American studies, attended the inauguration ceremonies in Washington and represented Kansas as a campaign volunteer at the "We the People" Gala.

The daughter of Floyd and Jane Saunders and a graduate of Maxwell International Baha'i School in Canada, Saunders had been an intern for Obama for America.

Not all the action will be in Washington, D.C.

President Barack Obama had called on Americans nationwide to join in the inaugural events by serving in their communities on Jan. 19, the Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service.

Sara Shannon, a senior from Ottawa, was Kansas director for the Presidential Inaugural Committee. She was coordinating hosts for service events in Kansas. Cities with projects included Andover, Burlington, Emporia, Fort Scott, Greensburg, Hutchinson, Lawrence, Manhattan, Minneapolis, Ottawa, Paola, Salina, Strong City and Wichita, as well as in the greater Kansas City area. Many cities will host more than one project.
Four County is awarded planning grant

Four County Mental Health Center was awarded funding by the University of Kansas Children's Research Team for continuation of a planning grant to strengthen cross collaboration between mental health and the juvenile justice system in the 14th Judicial District. This is one of two planning grants for mental health and juvenile justice funded in the State of Kansas by KU.

The second funded program is in Wichita through ComCare of Sedgwick County. Michelle VanWinkle, Community Based Services Coordinator at Four County, Duane Powell, Director, of Family and Children's Services and Bill Knight, Intake Coordinator with Family and Children's Services, are facilitating the project. A planning team, which includes representation from several community agencies, is exploring ways to ensure that children and their families who come into the juvenile justice system receive mental health and substance abuse treatment services that will prevent further involvement in the judicial system.
KU, K-State team up on National Cancer Institute designation

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TOPEKA

Kansas University and Kansas State University on Tuesday signed an agreement to work together to try to get National Cancer Institute designation for the KU Cancer Center.

Getting that designation as a comprehensive center “is one of our highest health care priorities,” said Gov. Kathleen Sebelius during a signing ceremony attended by numerous state leaders.

KU Chancellor Robert Hemenway and KSU President Jon Wefald signed a memorandum of understanding that commits both schools to collaborate on cancer research.

“This is clearly an important day,” Hemenway said. Wefald joked, “When Wildcats and Jayhawks get together, good things happen.”

Lt. Gov. Mark Parkinson said obtaining NCI designation, which has been granted to

some 60 centers nationally, will ensure that Kansans can remain in Kansas to get the best care possible for cancer.

With KSU on board, Parkin-son said that sends a message that the cancer institute designation is for all Kansans — not just one school.

“It’s about the entire state, it’s about the entire region,” he said.

The KU Cancer Center is on schedule to apply for NCI designation in 2011.

Dr. Roy Jensen, director of the KU Cancer Center, said the agreement “helps build our strengths and it synergizes the two programs. The more research activity that is reflected in the center, the better.”

Jensen added, “One of the strengths that this collaboration brings is the fact that they (K-State) will have an outlet and a mechanism to help translate their research findings into new therapeutic approaches.”

Under the agreement, researchers at K-State’s Terry Johnson Center for Basic Cancer Research and the KU Cancer Center can more easily work together on projects.

Several speakers at the news conference said the state would get behind the effort as it did in winning the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility on the K-State campus.
University President Jon Wefald (left) and Kansas University Chancellor Robert Hemenway listen as Gov. Kathleen Sebelius addresses a news conference Tuesday in Topeka. KU and K-State on Tuesday signed an agreement to work together to try to get National Cancer Institute designation for the KU Cancer Center.