

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 31, 2005

Contact: John R. LaPlante
(312) 953-3866

Funds for Topeka Schools Up; Enrollment Down

Enrollment down 4 percent since 1993, Funding up 57 percent

(WICHITA) – School funding has been the topic of political conversation around Kansas this legislative session. But before they make any drastic changes in spending formulas or amounts, lawmakers should step back and appreciate how much financial support the public has already given to schools.

A new policy brief from the Flint Hills Center for Public Policy examines taxpayer support for Topeka Public Schools (USD 501) since 1993, and finds that while enrollment in the district is down, funding is up.

“Student enrollment has declined 4 percent since 1993,” said John R. LaPlante, education policy fellow of the Wichita-based think tank. “Even as USD 501 has had fewer students to teach, total support for the schools has actually increased 57 percent.”

For the 2003-2004 school year, per-pupil spending was \$9,934.

We all want the best possible education for Kansas children; however, the current system is not taking us there. Let’s not blame the legislators, then, if they are reluctant to escalate spending levels even more. It’s time that the public, and students themselves, receive the benefits of fostering increased competition through family choice.

#

The Flint Hills Center for Public Policy is a Kansas think tank created as an independent voice to help political decision makers make informed choices. The Flint Hills Center for Public Policy is a non-profit, nonpartisan policy think tank. While not involved in the implementation or administration of government policy, our goal is to inform and raise public awareness of policy issues. For more information, visit our web site at www.flinthills.org.

