

NEWS RELEASE
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Got homework? Free online tutoring for Kansas students launched today by the State Library of Kansas and Kansas public libraries.

Sept 6, the State Library of Kansas and Kansas public libraries launched HomeworkKansas, an interactive online tutoring service for Kansas children grades four through 12 and college intro students. The service can be accessed at www.homeworkkansas.org and is available for free to Kansas residents throughout the state.

"This is such a great addition to the educational resources in Kansas", said Christie Brandau, State Librarian. "For years kids have gone to libraries for homework help, and now they can access an online tutor from any internet-enabled computer at home or at a library."

Tutoring will be available seven days a week, from 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. and, in Spanish language Sunday through Thursday, from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The service is high tech and sophisticated, but very simple to use - students indicate their grade level and the subject they need help in and HomeworkKansas connects them to the best available tutor. Tutors don't provide answers, they provide help. The actual tutoring takes place in an online classroom, via chat and instant messaging; problems may be illustrated on an electronic whiteboard. A variety of drawing and other tools are available to enhance the tutoring session.

"We are fortunate that the State Legislature approved funding for the program, making Kansas only the second state to currently offer the tutoring service statewide," Brandau added. "Kansas has some 400,000 students in the grades four through 12, and we believe that many of those students will take advantage of the service".

The program, is made available via an agreement with Tutor.com. Tutor.com has been in existence since 2001, and is currently offered at over 1,000 public library sites and after-school organizations across the country. Conservative numbers from post-session surveys indicate that during the last school year, some 15,000 students across the country accessed the program per week, and an average of 4,000 per night. Nationwide the service projects over 1 million one-to-one sessions to date for the upcoming year.

Tutors are certified teachers, college professors, professional tutors, grad students. All tutors complete a third-party background and reference check. In addition, tutors complete a rigorous training program and participate in an ongoing in-depth evaluation process.

The State Library of Kansas provides information services to state and local governments and to libraries and their users. The library is located in the Capitol Building in Topeka.

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