



Kansas taking part in plane design contest

BY JOHN HANNA

Associated Press

TOPEKA - Kansas is participating in a contest for high school students to develop fuel-efficient designs for aircraft.

The contest is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy, which plans to pick a national winner in April 2009. So far, Oklahoma and Vermont also have agreed to participate.

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius and Education Commissioner Alexa Posny spoke to about 50 students at Seaman High School, north of Topeka, to kick off the state's participation.

Parametric Technology Corp., of Reston, Va., plans to donate more than \$900,000 worth of computer design software to each teacher who participates in the contest, and Cessna Aircraft Co. plans to pay for teachers' training.

"I can't wait to see what the students of Kansas come up with," said David Brant, Cessna's senior vice president for product engineering.

Sebelius said the contest is a chance to promote education in science, math, engineering and technology, which is necessary to keep the state competitive economically.

"What we need is a lot more of Kansas' students focusing on those areas," Sebelius said.