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Virtual Schools a Good Option

By John R. LaPlante

I'm glad to hear that students in southwest Kansas will have another option in schools, thanks to the planned opening of the Southwind Virtual School ("Virtual school available for some Kansas families," Aug. 2).

Students in southwest Kansas have already been able to participate in virtual school programs based in Lawrence and other cities in the state. But since local schools have a financial incentive to offer online classes to local students, residents of the area are now even more likely to hear about this option.

As the Flint Hills Center for Public Policy made clear in its recent policy paper ("Virtual schools: For some, the future of education," available at www.flinthills.org), online learning isn't for all students. But for some, it offers flexibility, the chance to take new classes, and individualized attention and pacing.

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