

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA)

Update Summary

SARA allows accredited degree-granting institutions to offer distance education in other member states without having to seek individual authorization from those states. This report provides an update on the status of SARA in Kansas and nationwide.

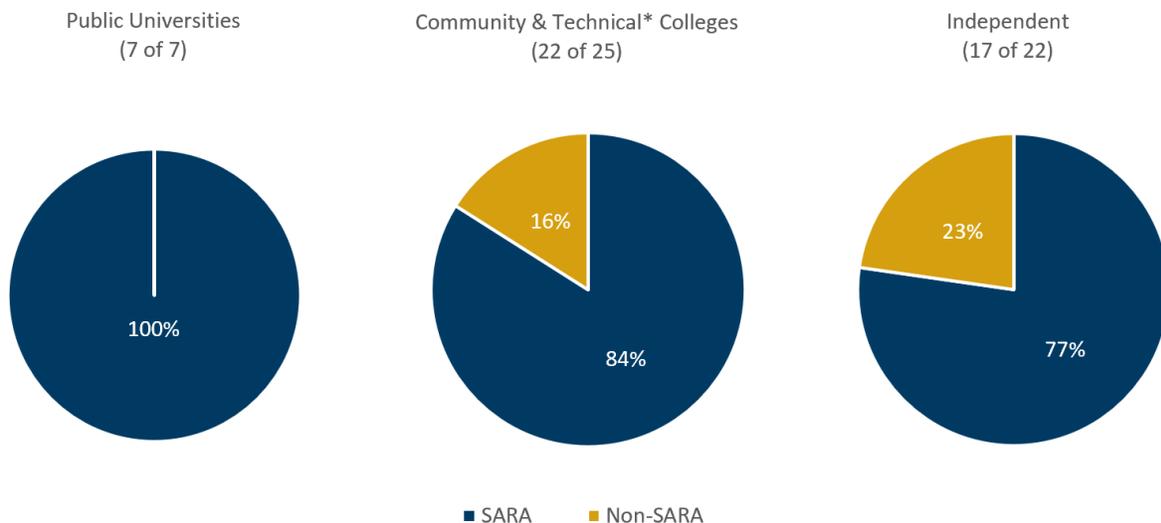
Background

The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) is a voluntary agreement among its member states and U.S. territories that establishes comparable national standards for the interstate offering of postsecondary distance education courses and programs. It is intended to make it easier for students to take online courses offered by postsecondary institutions based in another state. Since 2014, Kansas has been approved as a member of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) through the Midwest Higher Education Compact (MHEC), one of the four regional education compacts in the United States that partner with NC-SARA. The Kansas Board of Regents serves as the State Portal Entity (SPE) for all institutions domiciled in Kansas. As the portal entity, KBOR serves as the interstate point of contact for SARA questions, complaints, and other communications for institutions domiciled in Kansas and students taking online courses from those institutions.

Membership and Participation

SARA includes more than 2,400 participating institutions across 52 member states and territories. In the Fall of 2024, over 4.4 million students were enrolled exclusively in distance education, with 1.6 million administered through SARA. These enrollments reflect a minimal increase from the previous year.

As of March 1, 2026, 47 Kansas institutions participate in SARA. The charts below illustrate participation by sector.

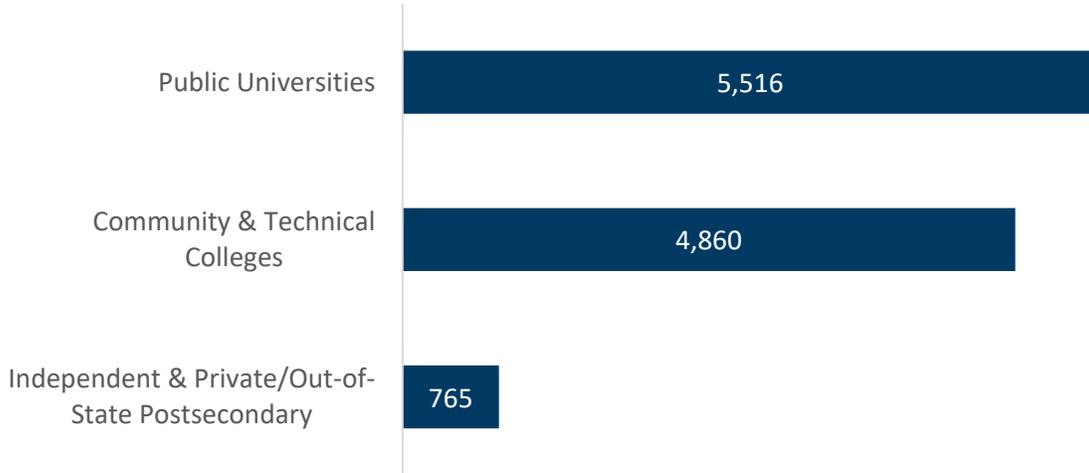


*Washburn University Institute of Technology participates under the approval of Washburn University and is not included in this count
One participating institution is private/out-of-state postsecondary and not reflected in the charts by sector

Enrollments and Out-of-State Learning Placements

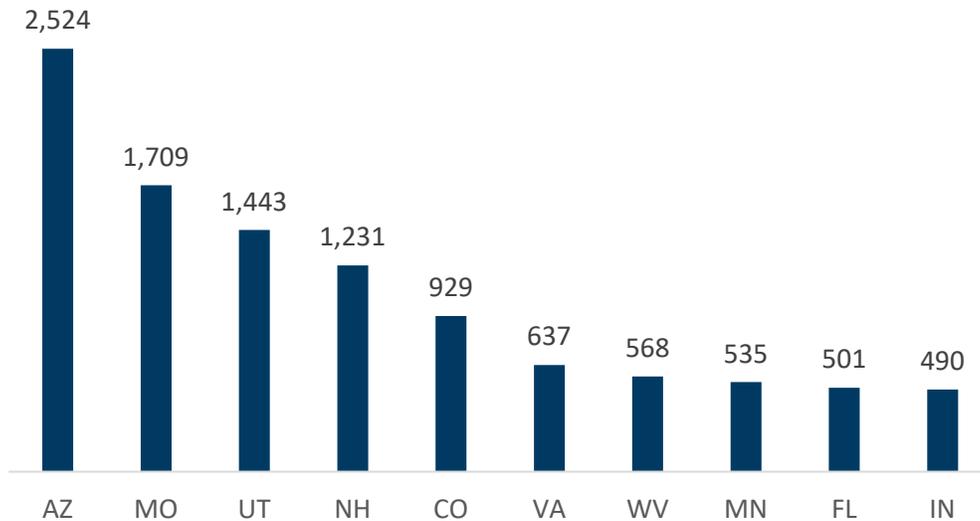
The Fall 2024 exclusively distance education enrollments and 2024 calendar year out-of-state learning placements for participating Kansas institutions are provided below.

In Fall 2024, over 11,000 out-of-state students were enrolled in participating Kansas SARA institutions.



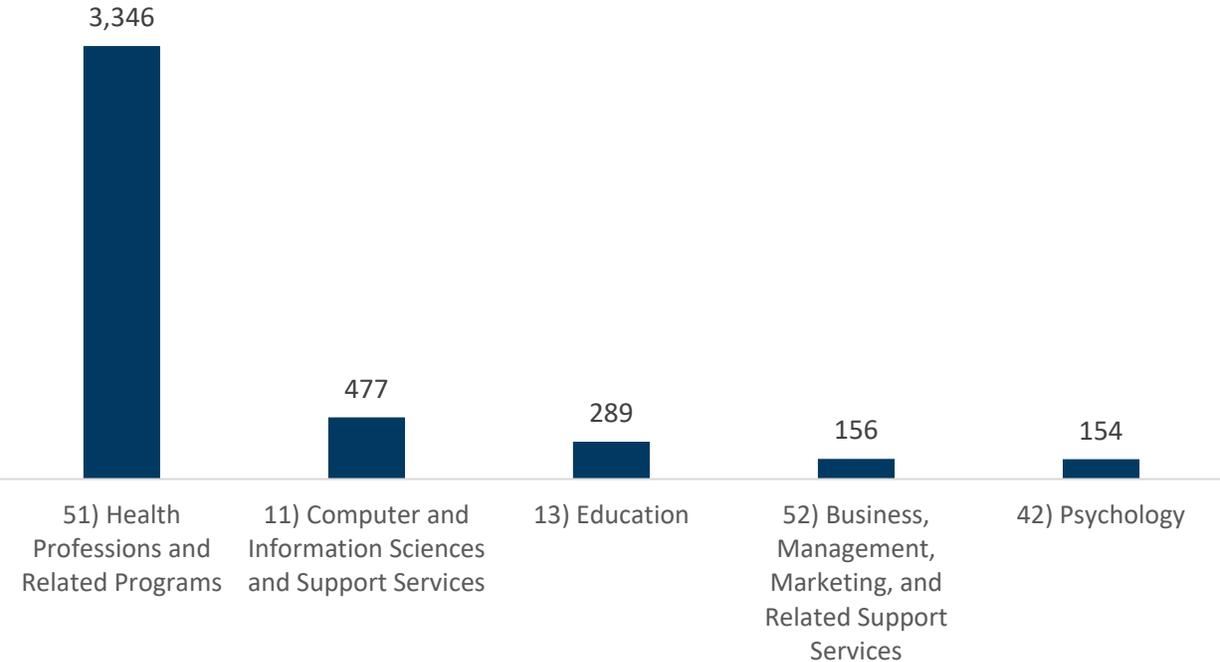
The top three locations from which Kansas institutions enroll students are Missouri, Texas, and Oklahoma.

In Fall 2024, over 14,000 Kansans were enrolled in distance education offered in another SARA member state. The top ten enrollments by state are listed below.

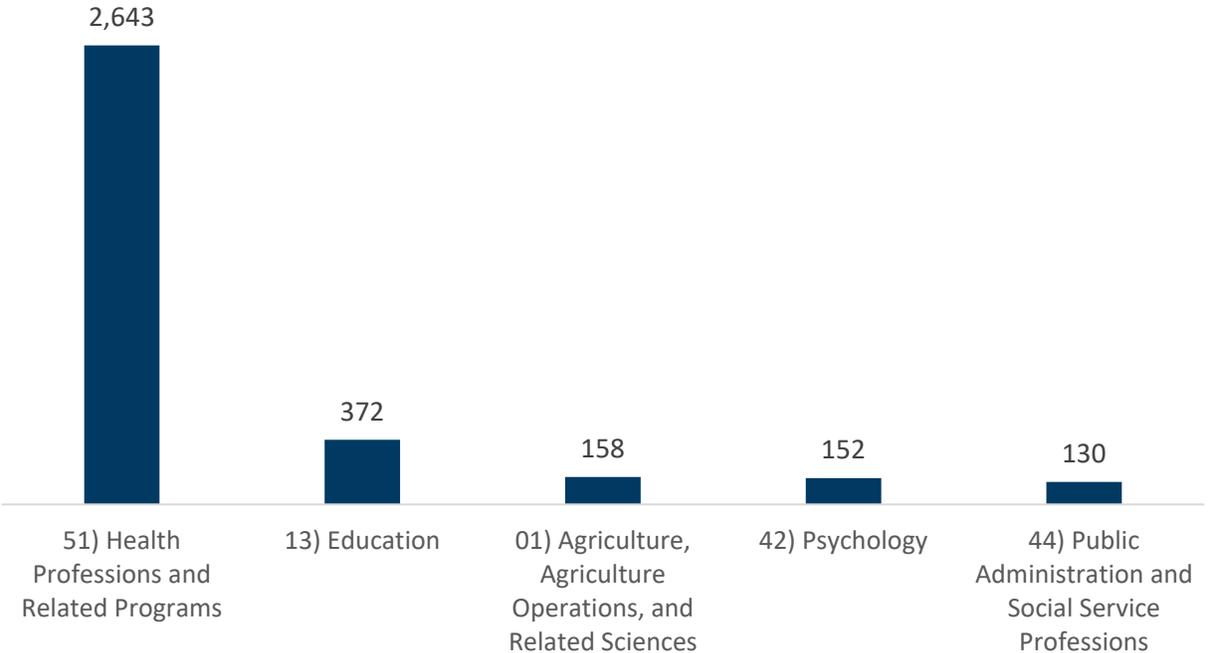


Western Governors University (Utah), Southern New Hampshire University (New Hampshire), and the University of Phoenix (Arizona) are the top three institutions enrolling Kansans.

In the 2024 calendar year, over 5,100 out-of-state students were placed (clinical rotations, student teaching, and internships, for example) in Kansas. The following represents placements in the top five CIP codes.

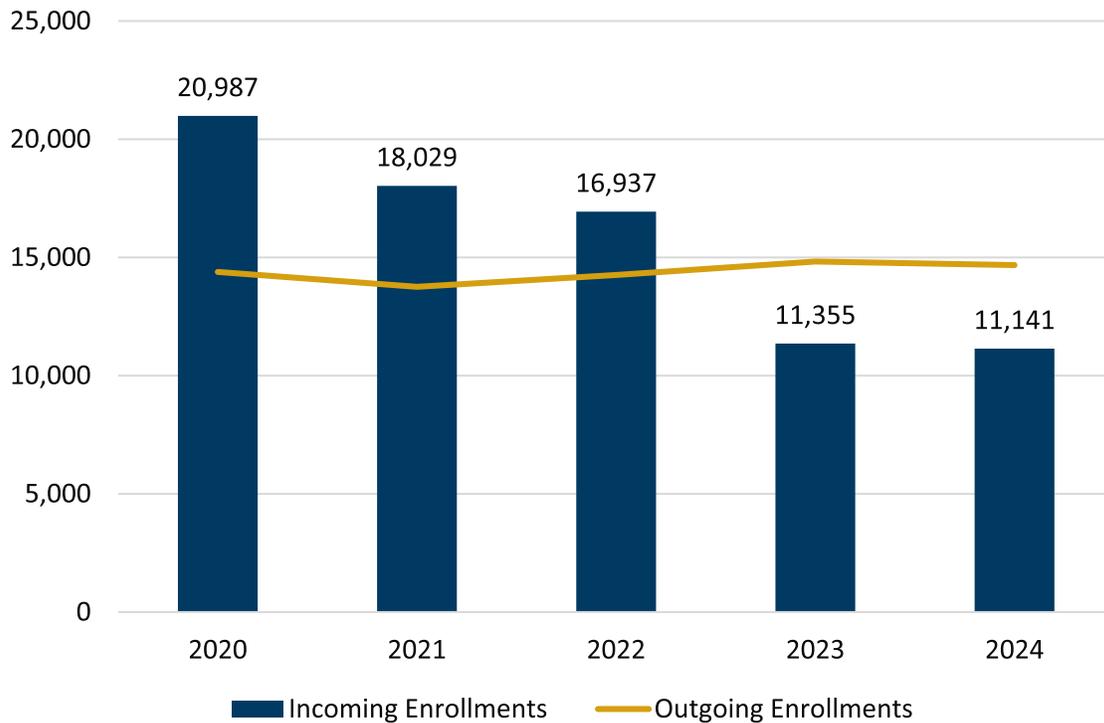


In the 2024 calendar year, Kansas institutions placed over 4,600 students out-of-state. The chart below illustrates placements in the top five CIP codes.



Enrollment Trend Data

The chart below shows the exclusively distance education enrollments in participating Kansas SARA institutions (incoming) as well as the enrollments of Kansans in other SARA states (outgoing) over the last five years.



Policy Modifications

The 2025 SARA Policy Modification Process concluded in October with the NC-SARA Board approving nine proposals. Prior to the Board’s vote, these proposals were reviewed and approved by all four regional compacts through their respective steering committees. These modifications clarify policy language, enhance state oversight, increase transparency and accountability of participating institutions, and improve student complaint processes.

The 2026 policy modification process is currently underway, with more than 30 proposals submitted for consideration. The first public comment period is open through April 9 with the public forum scheduled for April 24.

Information concerning this process and the proposals being considered is available at <https://nc-sara.org/sara-policy-modification-process>.

Cost Savings Study

In 2021, NC-SARA partnered with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) to assess the value of SARA to institutions and member states. An updated study using similar methodology was completed in 2025 to estimate the cost savings associated with SARA participation, including initial authorization and renewal costs. The study estimates that Kansas institutions participating in SARA annually save more than \$8.1 million in initial authorization costs and over \$4.6 million in renewal costs. These estimates reflect continued savings increases from the previous study and underscore the continued value of SARA. The complete study is available to view online at <https://nc-sara.org/sara-cost-savings>.

Staff Recommendation

This item is presented for information. No action is requested.

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The data provided in this report is available in interactive dashboards at <https://nc-sara.org/data-dashboards>. Previous SARA reports are available at http://kansasregents.gov/academic_affairs/sara.