

Historical Perspective Timeline

- 1886:** Courses in industrial/manual training, commerce, and domestic arts were conducted for high school students during the day and for adults from the community at night.
- 1920:** Aviation classes were first taught; half of the students were employed by Laird Airplane Company.
- 1939:** A cooperative effort among the Wichita Public Schools USD 259 (USD 259) Board of Education (BOE), State Board of Vocational Education, Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce and four local airplane companies — Beech, Cessna, Stearman, and Culver — was organized. As a result, an advisory committee of aircraft leaders and selected vocational instructors formed classes in aircraft sheetmetal, welding, and blueprint reading. More than 10,000 aircraft plant workers were trained for WWII production.
- 1946:** General Educational Development (GED) tests were approved and given to returning veterans. These tests were approved for civilian population in 1948.
- 1963:** Vocational Education Act was passed. The Kansas legislature enacted legislation to form area vocational schools to provide job training for youth and adults.
- 1964:** A cooperative proposal was formulated to establish the Wichita Area Vocational-Technical School (WAVTS). Other districts participating in the proposal included Mulvane, Valley Center, Viola, Clearwater, Derby, Maize, Cheney, Mt. Hope, Norwich, and Kingman.
- 1965:** The Kansas State Board of Education (KSBE) approved WAVTS, which initially adopted the program already offered at East High School.
- 1967:** The BOE approved a new organizational structure for the entire school system and established the Division of Vocational and Continuing Education to operate as an institution free to train both youth and adults for the local labor force and to coordinate federal manpower programs with other local vocational programs and agencies. The division was charged with program operation for each of the division's five sections: (1) Industrial Arts Education, (2) Home Economics Education, (3) Manpower Development Training, (4) WAVTS, and the (5) School of Continuing Education.
- 1968:** The new Vocational-Technical Center (now known as the Main Campus) at 301 S. Grove was opened. Contract training was offered to agencies, firms, and organizations.
- 1978** Aviation Education Center (Airport Center) was built.
- 1980:** Truck Driving Center (Seneca Center) was built.



- 1988:** General Advisory Board (GAB) for WAVTS was established to provide general counsel and assist administrators and staff concerning vocational offerings. Individual craft committees (program advisory committees) had always been a part of each program offering. 1991 Associate of applied science degrees were awarded by Wichita State University (WSU) in conjunction with WATVS for Electronic Engineering Technology students. 1993 Wichita/Sedgwick County Task Force on Training Wichita's Workforce conducted a survey addressing the need for WAVTS to become a two-year technical college.
- 1995:** Senate bill 257 was passed and signed by the governor authorizing the transition of WAVTS to Wichita Area Technical College (WATC) giving the college the authority to grant college credit and to award the associate of applied science degree.
- 1997:** WATC collaborated with WSU and Cowley County Community College to establish the Southside Education Center.
- General education agreement between WSU and WATC was signed.
- 1999:** State supervisory jurisdiction over WATC was changed from the KSBE to KBOR with the passage of Senate bill 345 (SB 345).
- 2000:** An ad hoc task force appointed by Superintendent Winston Brooks developed and presented Keys to Success, a list of the desired characteristics of a world-class technical college.
- WATC received Candidacy status with the Council on Occupational Education (COE).
- 2001:** WATC received full accreditation from the COE.
- Northwest Education Research Center (NORED) recommendations were submitted to KBOR.
- 2002:** KBOR established policy enabling all degree-granting institutions in Kansas to achieve accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association (HLCN CA). WATC began the research and planning necessary to accomplish this new requirement.
- 2003:** The Kansas legislature passed Senate bill 7 (SB 7), which enabled all degree-granting institutions to be governed by a board independent from a K-12 school board and to develop a plan for transition.
- 2004:** The WATC transition plan was approved by the local BOE and KBOR. WATC transitioned from USD 259 to an independent entity governed by a new Board of Trustees (BOT) on July 1, 2004.



2005: The HLC-NCA Preliminary Information Form (PIF) was submitted in February. After receiving positive feedback, steering committee members went to the HLC-NCA Annual Meeting in Chicago in April, and self-study activities commenced in May.

WATC's BOT expanded to 11 members.

2006: WATC received candidacy status with HLC-NCA.

Camille Kluge resigned. Jim Means was appointed interim president.

Plans for a new campus were announced by the Sedgwick County Board of County Commissioners.

WATC was named the managing partner for the new facility.

2007: The Sedgwick County Technical Education and Training Authority became the governing board for WATC.

Pete Gustaf was appointed president.

Twenty-nine full-time equivalents were eliminated to redirect funds for instructional priorities.

2008: WATC received HLC Initial Accreditation for five years.

Central Campus sold and closed, programs moved to Southside Campus.

\$1 million dollar remodel completed at Southside Campus. The building of the National Center for Aviation Campus (NCAT) began.

2009: Implementation of Banner ERP system.

Commercial Driver and the Diesel Mechanic programs were closed.

Seneca Campus sold and closed.

Schweiter campus sold and closed, Adult Literacy moved to Grove campus.

Gateway building at NCAT open, administration and student services staff relocated.

All technical programs were approved by KBOR with an Associate of Applied Science Degree option in addition to the Technical Certificate.

Thirteen full-time equivalents from staff were eliminated to redirect funds for instructional priorities.

President Pete Gustaf resigned; Ray Frederick was appointed interim president.



2010: The National Center for Aviation Training (NCAT) opened.

Comotara campus closed and programs moved to Southside and NCAT campuses.

Airport and Pawnee aviation campuses closed and programs moved to NCAT.

Four weeks of furlough were built into the budget and completed for all full time employees.

2011: Dr. Anthony “Tony” Kinkel was appointed president.

Partnership for with Goodwill Industries for Adult Literacy was formed.

Two weeks of furlough built into budget for all full time employees, cancelled due to improved financials.

2012: HLC re-accreditation work began.

Implementation of the Pratt Community College partnership for nursing; creating the South Central Kansas School of Nursing.

College awarded a \$14.9 million TAACT National Aviation Consortium grant as the lead institution with the states of Oklahoma, Indiana, North Carolina and Washington.

The Kansas legislature passed Senate bill 155 (SB155), which allows high school students to enroll in career technical pathway courses and the state pays for their tuition, in addition provides reimbursements to school districts for industry credential achievement and transportation costs.

2013: WATC is the fastest growing college in Kansas.

Moved from an advising to a coaching model in student services

Expansion of high school students in concurrent and dual credit due to Senate bill 155.

College received approval from HLC to teach nursing at Pratt Community College campus, with site visit.

