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## Andover schools local option budget hike passes

BY SARAH TUCKER  
The Wichita Eagle

The Andover school district's local option budget increase passed — by two votes.

Sedgwick County completed its canvassing of provisional ballots Thursday afternoon and officially counted 847

votes for the issue and 733 against. When added to Butler County's final results, the local option budget increase passed, 1,591 to 1,589.

Mark Evans, superintendent for Andover schools, said he was pleased with the results.

"It's a win-win situation," Evans said. "Not only are we restoring

positions, but we are lowering taxes for our residents."

Evans said the district will hold a special board meeting Monday to present the list of positions the local option budget increase will restore. After the positions are approved, all will start this year. Some of the coaching posi-

tions will start immediately, Evans said.

The local option budget increase will generate more than \$430,000 for the school district and will fund faculty, coaching and support staff, among other things. The mill levy will also decrease 2.5 mills. It would have decreased

3 mills if the issue had failed.

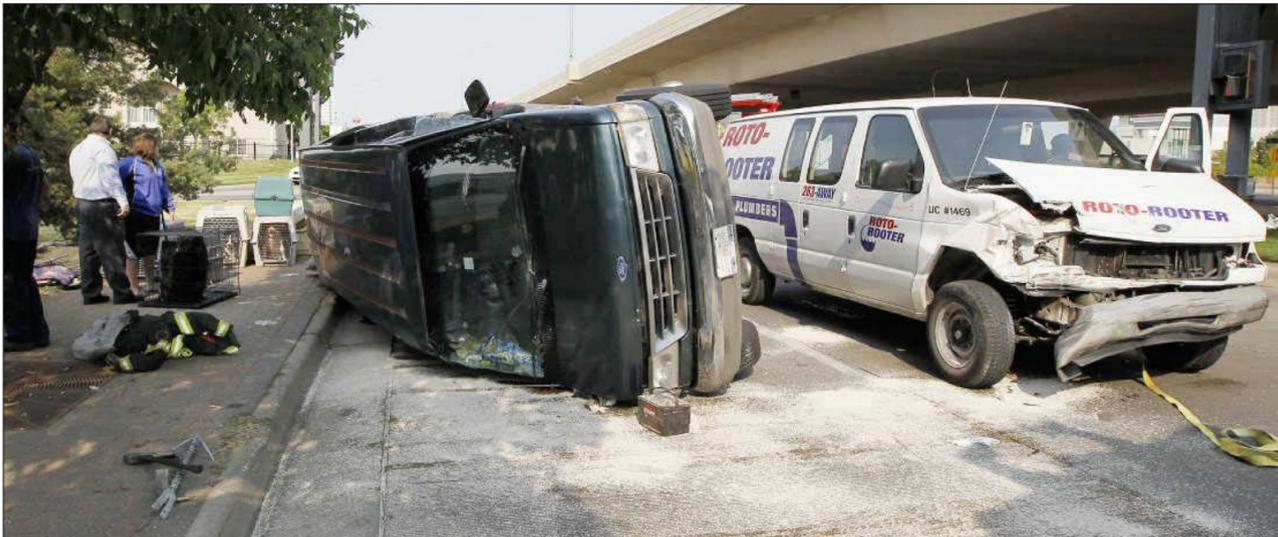
On election night, the local option budget increase had failed in Butler County, 851 to 732, but passed, 831 to 719, in Sedgwick County.

On Monday, after Butler County's canvass, the vote was tied. The final numbers in Butler County were 856 votes

against the increase and 744 for it.

After Sedgwick County's canvassing, an additional 16 yes votes and 14 no votes broke the tie.

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A Ford van rests on its side after colliding with another van at Kellogg and Main on Thursday morning.

Bo Rader/The Wichita Eagle

## Dogs unhurt when vans collide

### Human, canine passengers escape serious injury

BY AMY RENEE LEIKER  
The Wichita Eagle

A dog trainer and her passengers — including at least five crated show dogs — escaped serious injury Thursday morning when their van rolled on its side following a two-car crash near downtown Wichita.

The woman was driving a van eastbound on Kellogg Drive near downtown when she was struck in the intersection by another van — identified as a Roto-Rooter service vehicle by a

Sedgwick County dispatcher — that turned left off of southbound Main Street, Wichita police traffic Officer Rick Sears said. The impact forced the woman's van on its side.

The accident occurred around 9:30 a.m. Authorities said they think everyone was properly restrained. Both drivers told police they had the right of way, but authorities think at least one person ran a red light, Sears said.

A 31-year-old man who arrived on the scene after the crash said his

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A Wichita firefighter checks on one of several dogs that were riding in a van that overturned Thursday morning.

Bo Rader/The Wichita Eagle

A Ford van rests on its side after colliding with another van at Kellogg and Main on Thursday morning. Several dogs in crates were in the van.



Bo Rader/The Wichita Eagle

## People testify against Kansas Gas rate hike

BY DION LEFLER  
The Wichita Eagle

Margaret Miller, who has been battling on behalf of Kansas utility consumers since the 1980s, used a walker to get to the podium Thursday evening to protest a Kansas Gas Service plan to raise rates for home customers while cutting rates for medium and large businesses.

"Elderly people on fixed incomes should not be faced with these ever-increasing costs," said Miller, 93. "Poor people should not be made to beg for charity to get their

heating bills paid, or even have to go without.

"Many businesses have developed cost-cutting measures during the recession, but utilities seem to think that small customers should accept their requests without question. Well, we're not doing so tonight."

Miller was one of about three dozen Wichita-area residents who came to a Kansas Corporation Commission public hearing to protest or find out more about the gas company's request for a \$32.7 million rate increase, almost all of which will be paid by residential customers.

The commission is scheduled to decide whether to grant the company's request by January.

If approved, the rate hike would add about \$5.68 a month — about 9.1 percent overall — to the average residential customer bill.

Middle-sized business would get an average 3.9 percent reduction, while large commercial customers would see their average rates cut 8.2 percent.

The rate request only bears on the income that Kansas Gas gets to build and operate the gas system. The actual cost of natural gas varies

according to the market and is passed straight through to consumers.

Key issues in the rate case include a proposal by the company for "revenue normalization," in essence a guarantee that would lead to higher rates if Kansas Gas doesn't make as much money as the commission decides to allow.

Another major issue is the company's request for a 10.75 percent rate of return for its stockholders. It says that is needed to attract investment

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— Associated Press

### Report due next week on governor's meetings

TOPEKA — Shawnee County District Attorney Chad Taylor is taking a few more days to wrap up his investigation of private meetings between Gov. Sam Brownback and state legislators at the governor's official residence.

An assistant said Taylor expects to report his findings next week. Initially, the report was expected by Friday night.

Brownback held seven dinner meetings in January at Cedar Crest with members of 13 legislative committees, most of them fellow Republicans. More than 90 lawmakers were invited.

Taylor, a Democrat, has been investigating whether the gatherings violated the state's open meeting laws.

— Associated Press

### Gunman pleads guilty to firearms charge in killing

TOPEKA — A 45-year-old man accused of killing a Topeka liquor store clerk during a Christmas Eve holdup has pleaded guilty to a federal firearms charge.

Federal prosecutors agreed to dismiss charges of murder and robbery against Matthew Daniel Myers following his plea Thursday. Both sides will request a sentence of 33 years.

Authorities said Myers was wearing a stocking cap and pajama pants and carrying a crowbar when he entered Hudson Liquor last Dec. 24. He demanded money from 41-year-old clerk Matthew Hill, who tried to retrieve a .38-caliber pistol from a drawer.

Myers hit Hill with the crowbar, seized the pistol and shot him three times. Myers pleaded guilty to one count of firing a gun during a violent crime.

— Associated Press

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