

Greetings from Kansas State PTA President Denise Sultz

As a PTA or PTSA Officer, fall is an awesome time. The children are back in school... you have met the teacher and have seen the assignments...you are working on your membership campaign and are excited to see your members start to volunteer... your events are starting to happen. Please do not let this be a stressful time. If for some reason, your year is not off to the start you want it to be...reach out for help. Talk to someone who understands at your council, your region, or your state level of PTA. They are all volunteers just like you and can help you with any frustrations that might be affecting you. One of the main benefits of PTA is that we have each other. Please use us as your resource.

This issue of the bulletin has some exciting articles for you. We have great Words of Wisdom from our Past Presidents...Greetings from Commissioner of Education, Randy Watson...Information on our Premier Programs, Citizenship and Reflections... Updates from some of our collaborative partners....Recognition of our newest Schools of Excellence PTA Schools....Introduction of our Legislative Platform from our Legislative Co-Chairs....A message from our National PTA President, Laura Bay, on her experience with Fuel Up for Play 60....and much more. Enjoy!

Kansas PTA at work for you.

On August 28th, 2015, five members of Kansas PTA participated in a one-day conference in Topeka. Our members included Monica Crowe, Josh Halperin, Brian Brown, Devin Wilson, and Mary Sinclair. The conference was sponsored by The Kansas Association of School Boards and was titled School Funding: Achievement, Costs, and Resources.

There were over 120 people in the room including presenters, facilitators and media. Over 100 of us were seated at tables in groups that consisted of legislators, Superintendents, state and local school board members, community leaders, cooperative organizations as well as the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of Education. We were presented with data from KASB as well as some from the Town Hall meetings the Commissioner/Deputy Commissioner did last fall. We met in discussion groups and reported out our responses to the larger group. As we finished up, we filled out questionnaires as to the processes of the day. The data will be compiled and presented to the Committee that will be working on the new funding formula for schools.

I am very proud to have been involved in what I hope will lead to a more secure funding formula for our Kansas Public School System.

Monica Crowe
KS PTA President Elect

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**CHECK
US OUT!**

"Kansas PTA invites you to check out the NEW changes to our current website to better serve YOU! It's our goal to provide PTA leaders, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members with useful and relevant information, resources, and tools to be successful for the good of our Kansas children.

Thank you to all of the Kansas Board of Managers (and especially to the members of our committee) for all their help in updating and improving the site. We couldn't have done it without you!

Rachel Henderson, Website Committee Chair

www.kansas-pta.org

I recently asked our Past Kansas PTA Presidents this question: "What advice would you give a new officer?"

Their Words of Wisdom follow:

- * From Tammy Bartels, Tonganoxie, 2012-2015 "Stay flexible and be open to new ideas and ways of doing things!
- * From Jackie Waters, Wichita, 2011-2012 Take the person who complains the most and give them the biggest job. It will help change their perspective.
- * From Debbie Lawson, Lenexa, 2009-2011 "Do not be afraid to ask questions! Asking questions is how we learn and grow in our positions. I would also let them know that all officers are part of a valued team and to work together. Soak in the knowledge and understanding that each person brings to the table. Don't be the island but a part of all the great teamwork that happens on the board.
- * From Jan Bolin, Salina, 2007-2009 "Don't reinvent the wheel. If you already have a great idea or plan or event – stick with it. Use your energies building a 'new' event or program!"
- * From Peggy Davis, Overland Park, 2003-2005 "Ask for help; you don't need to do the job alone. Use volunteers within your PTA and community and train your replacement. When you need mentoring or advice seek out those that have done the job before and your council and state board members. With the help of other volunteers and the mentoring and advice of others, the job may be easier than you think. Enjoy the opportunities and the challenges.
- * From Gail Vertz, Kansas City, 2001-2003 "Ask the person who had the job before you what worked best for them and what did not work. Hopefully, they receive a procedure manual and I would advise them to read through it. Next, I would tell them to make a "to do" list of what they need to accomplish to be successful in the position. For example, if their position is Treasurer, they need to prepare written financial reports for every board meeting. They can have a calendar of when the reports are due to keep them on track to always be prepared.
- * From Debbie Taylor, Sabetha, 1995-1997 Who We Are: Each person who serves on a board, that board should be honored to have their picture on the front of their publications. The old adage "My Picture is Worth a Thousand Words" holds more meaning than just seeing their face. What talents, skills, resume and commitment will board members bring to the table? An organization will be given many first impression opportunities. "Here's My Card" from your board members will be the make it or break it occasion. The board will form a uniqueness of character dependent upon the leadership's vision and motivation. I believe strongly in knowing "What's in Your Wallet", and encouraging lots of great training.

And last but never least....

- * From Ernie Goerand, Salina, 1989-1991 If someone is having problems, give them the very best advice you can about how you have dealt with things. Always try to work together and you will always be alright.

Thank you ladies for these gems. Good words to live by.

KANSAS EXTENSION COMMITTEE

BY DIANA FABAC, EXTENSION CHAIRMAN

My name is Diana Fabac and I am the incoming Extension Chairman for the next two years. My duties as the **Extension Chair are to start new PTA units** across the state and to assist in restarting units that may have lost their charter. As word spreads across the state about the benefits of being a PTA, the parent organization of choice, the state office receives a request to have someone come to their school to discuss PTA. The state office sends an information packet and after that is received either I or the local Field Service Representative call and set up an informational meeting. At this meeting, we have the opportunity to meet those at the school who are interested in a parent group, we let them know more about PTA, and we answer questions. We discuss the benefits of being a PTA, what PTA believes and works towards, and we discuss the step by step process of chartering a PTA. If they are interested, we help them with memberships, a nominating committee, voting, everything that they need to do to become an active PTA.

After a PTA unit is formed, I am there to help guide the new members through the process and available to answer any questions. You are never truly on your own, as long as you need my assistance or want me to continue to stay in contact, I will be there for you. I can assist in writing your Standing Rules, help you with the dues remittance process, and give you information on registering for convention. If you know of any school or district that is interested in hearing about PTA, please call the state office and let us know. We will arrange a "road trip" to inform you about how you can advocate for your community and be a voice for all children.



I love this time of year. The start of a new school year is always exciting to me. I still have memories, albeit bittersweet, of walking my daughter to her first day of kindergarten, and the pride I felt when my son started middle school.

The start of every school year holds so much promise for every student; a new set of teachers, a whole new world of knowledge to explore, and a new starting point for our students to challenge themselves to reach their full potential.

Kansas teachers are among the best in the nation and they are working hard to prepare every student for success in whatever path they choose to take after high school. Academics alone will not ensure our students are successful. It's about really knowing each student – their strengths, challenges and dreams – and working side by side with them and their parents to build the foundation they need to achieve their dreams. That is why organizations like the Kansas Parent Teacher Association are so important to education. You are a critical link that connects parents and schools, builds community and supports the great work of all Kansas teachers.

We believe that every student has the potential to achieve greatly – both academically and as good citizens. The Kansas State Board of Education is currently developing a new vision for Kansas education that encompasses what you and other Kansans have told us is important for the success of Kansas children. We will announce that vision in late October and hope we can count on your continued partnership as we move forward towards attaining this envisioned future for all children.

Kansas parents make Kansas education great. Thank you for everything you do to support the success of our schools, teachers and students.

Looking forward to a great year ahead!

Randy Watson
Kansas Education Commissioner

The Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC) officially became a KSDE Technical Assistance Systems Project (TASN) as of July 1, 2015. As a TASN project, KPIRC will continue to provide professional learning and technical assistance on family engagement to districts, schools and families across Kansas. KPIRC will provide training specifically to educators in districts/schools that are implementing a Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS) and to Priority and Focus Schools. (A priority school is a school that has been identified as among the 5% lowest-performing in the state. A focus school is a school that has room for improvement and in the next lowest performing 10% of schools in the state). In Kansas, there are 99 Priority and Focus schools. KPIRC will also continue to provide trainings to any school or family group that requests learning in the area of family engagement.



All KPIRC trainings include the introduction and promotion of the PTA National Family School Partnership Standards endorsed by the Kansas State Board of Education in 2008. KPIRC believes the PTA standards provide a solid foundation for engaging families in their children's learning. In the trainings, schools are asked to identify their current family engagement practices for each PTA standard and develop new strategies to better address each standard. It is the goal of KPIRC that each training attendee become familiar with the PTA standards and learn new strategies to implement them in their district/school. KPIRC staff are all PTA members that work in partnership with KS PTA to build family-school-community partnerships to support student learning. We hope this school year's PTA meetings, conferences and events are filled with meaningful opportunities to promote the success of all Kansas children.

Jane Groff, Ph.D.
Executive Director



Kansas Families and Schools Together, Inc. (KFAST) administers the KPIRC project



A Health & Wellness Update from National PTA President, Laura Bay

This summer, I participated in the [Fuel Up to Play 60](#) Student Ambassador Summit in Chicago. Fuel Up to Play 60 is an in-school nutrition and physical activity program launched by National Dairy Council and the National Football League, in collaboration with USDA, to help encourage today's youth to lead healthier lives.

The Student Ambassador Program gives youth a voice in the Fuel Up to Play 60 program by bringing together youth leaders so they can inspire healthy change for themselves, their schools and their communities – and I spent an entire day with 150 student ambassadors. The day began by listening to the students share their experiences from the earlier days of the summit while we all enjoyed a balanced breakfast from the build-your-own-breakfast bar. The students showed excitement, were energized and eager to share their leadership experiences.

Following breakfast, the students rotated through three different stations:

- Inspirational storytelling workshop using Adobe Voice

- Create-your-own-smoothie team competition

- Create-your-own-“viral video” about fueling up for back-to-school with a professional camera crew from MTV.

After completing those sessions, I joined a student team for a Fuel Up to Play 60 Challenge from the [2015-2016 Playbook](#). The teams had a great time constructing visual displays to demonstrate ways they could make changes in their school around the “plays” featured in the Playbook. Creativity and leadership development were key to the great visual displays each of the teams constructed.

During the afternoon session, the students shared their “youth talks” which helped them practice their communication skills and also explain why health and wellness really matters to them. Each of the “talks” filled each student, advisor, guest, and mentor with hope, inspiration and laughter! The “talks” are the key to the success of Fuel Up to Play 60. The idea of a healthy future really comes together when students use their own voice to share the importance of health, wellness and physical activity with their peers.

My time ended with an activity that included a group of inspiring students and three adult leaders. In this group activity, we each shared our perspective of why health and wellness matters to everyone. Each of the panelists built off of the experiences of the day and echoed that the key to increased health and wellness of our society was the importance of students reaching other students.

The Fuel Up to Play 60 Student Ambassador Program puts students at the center of our future success in changing the tide of health and wellness for all children, families and adults – there's no better way to change the world than with these inspired and motivated students. Encourage your child to take part in Fuel Up to Play 60 to make changes in their school!

Parents and teachers play a crucial role. Parents, your child can work with a teacher to create a Fuel Up to Play 60 team to implement “plays” that successfully help to not only make changes in the school environment but also develop important leadership skills that can last a lifetime. Teachers, what's a team without a coach? Be your school's Fuel Up to Play 60 Program Advisor. As a “PA,” you'll empower your students to be masters of their own wellness through Fuel Up to Play 60.

I encourage you to read more around the benefits that come from [empowering students in the service of social change](#).

JOIN THE TEAM
BECOME A PROGRAM ADVISOR!

Healthy students are better learners. Kids who eat breakfast and participate in regular physical activity are more likely to excel in school and lead healthier lives. Sign up to be a Program Advisor today! Fuel Up to Play 60, the in-school nutrition and physical activity program from National Dairy Council and the National Football League, in collaboration with USDA, is helping to make wellness part of the game plan in more than 73,000 schools across the country.

As Program Advisor, you're the program champion. You engage and empower students as they help implement Fuel Up to Play 60, and you encourage other adults to get involved, too. Becoming a Program Advisor for your school is easy and free.

Go to FuelUpToPlay60.com, select "Log in", and then click on "Don't have a login? Join."

Create an account and link to your school(s).

Make sure to click on "Become a Program Advisor"

Only schools with Program Advisors can:

Apply for funds for Fuel Up to Play 60 (up to \$4,000 per building per school year)

Become a Touchdown School (and become eligible for rewards and prizes)

Be eligible for contests with NFL-themed prizes



Fuel Up to Play 60 is making a difference and transforming lives. For five years, Fuel Up to Play 60 has proven to be an effective vehicle for helping 12,000 schools and 5.9 million students across the Midwest set and meet wellness goals.

Here in Kansas, schools are using Fuel Up to Play 60 resources to positively impact student concentration, behavior and academic performance.

Studies show students who eat breakfast are more attentive, better behaved and achieve higher academic performance. More students are reaping these benefits at Washington Elementary School in Olathe. Following the launch of the Breakfast in the Classroom program, the Fuel Up to Play 60 team produced videos to encourage more of their peers to participate. The new program and the team's persuasion paid off, because now daily breakfast participants average 400 students, compared to the previous 122.

Not only are Kansas students fueling up to achieve positive wellness outcomes, but they're also getting active. Students at Frank Rushton Elementary School in Kansas City are participating in daily "Brain Breaks." Teachers are breaking up the school day with frequent breaks that get students up from their desks and actively moving around the classroom. Thanks to these breaks, school leaders reported an increase in students' focus and on-task behavior.

Since Fuel Up to Play 60 launched in 2010, approximately 7,700 more students in Kansas now eat school breakfast each day. If you're interested in implementing Fuel Up to Play 60 in your school this fall, you may be eligible for funding assistance. For more information, visit FuelUpToPlay60.com and apply **before the November 4th deadline.**

Fuel Up to Play 60 is the nation's largest, FREE in-school health and wellness program.

Fuel Up to Play 60 schools with a Program Advisor can:

- Apply for up to \$4,000 in Funds
- Participate in contests to win exciting prizes
- Achieve national recognition

UP TO \$4,000 IN FUNDS **CONTESTS AND PRIZES** **NATIONAL RECOGNITION**

You make the difference—Fuel Up to Play 60 needs your leadership!

LEARN MORE AND JOIN TODAY AT
FuelUpToPlay60.com

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 NATIONAL DAIRY COUNCIL

FUEL UP

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A PROGRAM OF
Play 60
THE NFL PRESENTER FOR AN ACTIVE SCHEDULE

Legislative Update with Kansas State PTA Legislative Co-Chairs Brian Brown & Devin Wilson

Another school year is kicking off across the state. Summer break is over, teachers have prepared their classrooms, and parents have purchased school supplies. Now more than ever, it is important that parents, teachers, and other staff and patrons stay engaged in the political process and weigh in on the policies that affect our Kansas Schools.

Kansas State PTA Legislative Co-Chairs Brian Brown & Devin Wilson have volunteered to help keep parents, educators and patrons informed about education policy and legislation affecting Kansas Public Schools. Our bios are included in the [State PTA newsletter](#).

School districts are adjusting to the interim Block Grant school funding placeholder, after legislators voted to repeal the school finance formula established in 1992. This new law freezes District budgets at the reduced 2015 funding levels through 2017, with no guaranteed funding for new students.

The Gannon school finance court decision has been remanded to the Kansas Supreme Court, which will hear the equity portion this November, with the adequacy portion scheduled for the spring [read more about [KS school finance case](#)].

[Many schools](#) have applied for extraordinary needs funding, or made other sacrifices as shortening the school year to save money.

Kansas PTA advocacy efforts are guided by a non-partisan policy platform, approved annually. Please feel free to contact us with questions about the legislative priorities, and note that Legislative Updates will refer to them.

2015 Kansas PTA Legislative Priorities for Education

In alignment with the 2015 Kansas PTA Legislative Platform, adopted by the 2015 convention delegates, the Kansas PTA Legislative Priorities for the 2015-2016 Kansas legislative session are the following:

EDUCATION:

PLATFORM – CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION. *The Kansas PTA will recommend, initiate and support legislation and appropriation for public schools that will ensure all children and youth in Kansas a high quality, adequately funded education.*

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

1. Kansas PTA will support efforts to strengthen and improve the Kansas public school finance system, which includes legislation and policies that:
 - a. uphold Kansas Constitutional obligations to make suitable provision for the finance of the Kansas public schools that is equitable for every child.
 - b. restore state cuts to base state aid per pupil, back to levels comparable to those deemed suitable by the legislature - actual costs identified in research studies requested and authorized by the Kansas legislature (e.g., Legislative Post Audit 2006 Cost Study).
 - c. pursue solutions to fully fund state and federal educational mandates, including the new uniform financial accounting and reporting act, without disproportionately shifting the burden to local communities.
2. Kansas PTA will support efforts to restore an equitable and balanced tax policy to maintain a reliable revenue stream for public education. A policy which draws upon a combination of income, property and sales taxes has been proven by history to be a secure and sustainable approach. Kansas PTA opposes provisions limiting the growth of government before public education is fully funded to the statutory levels.
3. Kansas PTA will support efforts to preserve the Kansas Constitutional infrastructure for education, including nonpartisan elections of Kansas school board members and their appointment of our Education Commissioner, as well as, retaining the primary responsibility of defining the phrase intellectual, educational, vocational and scientific improvement with the education governance structure (Kansas School Board, Kansas Department of Education, education scholars and practitioners).
4. Kansas PTA supports the State Board of Education's adoption of new education standards including the College and Career Ready Standards (derived from the Common Core States Standards Initiative) and the Next Generation Science Standards. Kansas PTA opposes legislation that would defund efforts to implement curriculum related to Common Core and/or the Next Generation Science Standards.
5. Kansas PTA opposes the use of vouchers, scholarships or tax credits toward the tuition of non-public schools that can discriminate in admissions, provide sectarian religious instruction or "compete" under different rules than public schools; we affirm Governor Brownback's position that vouchers would not be effective in the state of Kansas.
6. Kansas PTA will advocate for evidence-based prevention and early intervention programs, including early childhood programs (e.g., Parent as Teachers and Pre-K Pilot), allocating state funds for all-day kindergarten, Head Start, and student engagement programs that reduce drop-out rates and increase school completion.
7. While Kansas PTA supports the current state charter legislation, passed in 1994, that allows for the creation of charter schools under the supervision of local boards of education, Kansas PTA opposes any charter related legislation that: allows for non-licensed teachers or allows for authorizing entities that are for-profit, private or non-education.

~continued on page 7

Legislative Update with Kansas State PTA Legislative Co-Chairs Brian Brown & Devin Wilson (cont'd)

EDUCATION

PLATFORM – TEACHER SUPPORT. *Recognizing that quality education for children is directly related to the effectiveness and efficiency of school personnel, the Kansas PTA will recommend, initiate and support legislation and appropriations to encourage, recognize and provide incentives for school personnel that will improve and benefit the education of children and youth in Kansas.*

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

8. Kansas PTA supports restoration and allocation of state funding for teacher mentoring, staff development and other evidenced-based programs that promote a professional teaching community, teacher retention and recruitment of quality teachers.

EDUCATION

PLATFORM – PARENT ENGAGEMENT. *The Kansas PTA recognizes no educational system can be of the highest quality without the support, involvement and cooperation of parents, legislators, and the community.*

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

9. Kansas PTA will encourage the adoption of PTA parent engagement standards into relevant legislation and policy.

EDUCATION

PLATFORM – CHILD SAFETY AND PROTECTION. *The Kansas PTA advocates for the safety of children and youth, advocating on issues related to personal safety, violence prevention, and a fair juvenile justice system.*

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

10. Kansas PTA supports programming and policies related to safe routes to school, bully prevention, and the protection of children from gun violence.

www.kansas-pta-legislative.org

Adopted by the 2015 Kansas PTA Convention delegates 4/25/15

Please have your local PTA chairs add an introductory paragraph about themselves in this email, and share this information with PTA members in your newsletter, on your website, Facebook, Twitter, and other means of engagement you may be using.

This will lay the groundwork for more effective and timely communication regarding education issues, policy and legislation affecting Kansas schools.

If you have specific questions for us, please feel free to contact us directly:

Brian Brown brianbrown@sharonlane.com

Devin Wilson ksucats96@yahoo.com

or the **Kansas PTA President, Denise Sultz** Ksptapres@gmail.com

It is an honor and a privilege for us to serve you as Legislative Co-Chairs this school year!

Sincerely,

Brian Brown

Devin Wilson



In April of 2014, Kansas Families and Schools Together, Inc. (KFAST) was awarded a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Kansas was very fortunate to be selected for this opportunity. 30 applicants were selected from over 1100 applications.

The project titled, *The Kansas Coalition for Effective Family Engagement (KCEFE)* supports families and strengthens early learning outcomes of vulnerable children by developing leadership and building capacity of families, community early childhood programs, schools and communities to work together to promote success. The grant has focused on two goals: 1) To develop and disseminate state standards and guidance materials for family engagement in early childhood that are aligned and utilized across organizations, and programs, and 2) To engage 10 Kansas counties for development of family engagement capacity at the local level.

The PTA National Family School Partnership Standards provided a framework for the development of the Kansas Family Engagement and Partnerships Standards for Early Childhood. The standards have been written

and are available online at the KCEFE website www.kcefe.net

The 10 partner counties: Bourbon, Finney, Ford, Labette, Montgomery, Neosho, Seward, Shawnee, Woodson and Wyandotte have provided meaningful family engagement opportunities to promote the success for the children in their counties. Photos of the events have been posted at www.facebook.com/www.kcefe.net

Both The Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC) and the Kansas Coalition for Effective Family Engagement, projects of KFAST, have appreciated the support and resources from the Kansas PTA.

Barbara Gannaway, MSED
Project Coordinator



Congratulations to the most recent Kansas PTAs and PTSAs who completed their road map and became a National PTA School of Excellence and embraced the concept of true family engagement. Those schools receiving that designation following the 2014-2015 school year are: **Stony Point North, Kansas City; Stony Point South, Kansas City; Rising Star, Lenexa; Merriam Park, Merriam; Blue Valley Early Childhood, Overland Park, Belinder Elementary, Prairie Village; and Indian Hills Middle School, Prairie Village.** They join the designees from the 2013-2014 school year: Comanche Elementary, Overland Park; Francis Willard Elementary, Kansas City; Oak Grove Elementary, Kansas City; Shawnee Mission East HS, Leawood; Shawnee Mission North HS, Merriam; and Shawnee Mission South HS, Overland Park. The 2014-2015 PTA schools will receive recognition at the November Kansas School Board meeting.

It is not too late for you to enroll your school for the 2015-2016 year in the School of Excellence Program. The enrollment deadline has been extended until October 15th. Enrollment information can be found on the Kansas PTA and National PTA websites'.

Congratulations to Francis Willard PTSA in Kansas City, Kansas on being awarded 20 Kindles and an Amazon Gift Card from National PTA for submitting their Family Literacy Night for consideration. You Rock Team FWE PTSA!



Let's Talk **STEM**

Kids are so excited about our STEM and accelerated programs that you'd think it was the first day of summer break!



MATH EDGE

Math Edge has a five-step approach that ensures kids successfully master math concepts. The range of activities - learning, practicing, problem solving, engaging and reinforcing - help sharpen skills to increase fluency.

Become a math whiz and master problem solver through fun and challenging activities.



ROBOTICS

Your child will learn how to build and program robots - all while making friends and developing new skills

Create and animate robots using LEGO® and compete in friendly competitions.



CODING

Computer Engineering for Kids

Your child will learn computer programming and game design skills while building video games and animations.

Learn computer programming by designing digital games that can be shared and played with friends!



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Over 7,000 At-risk Infants and Toddlers Served!

“All children and families will have an equal opportunity to positively experience childhood and family life.”

THE VISION OF KANSAS INFANT TODDLER SERVICES

Kansas Infant Toddler Services is a program of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment that works to enhance the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities by helping families meet the special needs of their children.

The organization provides grants to agencies and programs statewide who provide comprehensive, multidisciplinary early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities from birth through age two, and their families.

Intervention services available include family training, counseling and home visits, speech-language pathology and audiology services, physical therapy, psychological services, services coordination, screening and assessment, social work services, assistive health services, transportation and related costs to facilitate participation and many more.

A full listing of Kansas Infant-Toddler agencies and programs available throughout the state can be found in the [online brochure](#)

Improving learning ... out-of-school

by *Marcia Dvorak, Director, Kansas Enrichment Network*

As Kansas students started school, we look to increase the learning opportunities of every youngster. But did not know that **75-80% of a young person's waking hours are out-of-school**? Learning does not stop when the last bell rings. Out-of-school programming (afterschool, evening, weekend and summer) inspires and motivates children to learn, support children's social and emotional growth, and help raise their academic achievement. Consider these key points:

- ◇ Regular participation in afterschool programs during the elementary school years showed a variety of gains, including improving work habits and self-efficacy; narrowing the math achievement gap at grade five between high-income and low-income students; and reducing the number of school absences (Auger, A., Pierce, K.M. and Vandell, D.L., 2013)
- ◇ **Attendance, Behavior, and Coursework** are three key indicators of whether a middle school student will likely graduate from high school. An analysis of 68 afterschool studies found that participants in high-quality afterschool programs go to school more, behave better, receive better grades and perform better on tests compared to students who don't participate in afterschool programs.
- ◇ Juvenile crime peaks after school. More than 91,000 kids in Kansas are alone and unsupervised from 3 to 6pm. Afterschool is the peak time for kids to commit crimes, become victims of crimes, and experiment with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and sex. **Sixty-seven percent** of Kansas parents say programs can help reduce the likelihood that kids will commit a crime, use drugs or become a teen parent.
- ◇ Afterschool programs play a critical role in keeping kids healthy and active. Kansas parents say their child's afterschool program supports healthy behaviors and among those parents, satisfaction is high.
- ◇ It is estimated that every **\$1** invested in afterschool programs saves **\$9** by reducing crime and welfare costs; improving kids' performance at school; and increasing kids' earning potential.

Last year, approximately 70,407 students* participated in afterschool programs. For every child enrolled in a program **2** are waiting to get in – approximately 132,731 more students. Join us in promoting awareness on importance of #backtoafterschool!

Out-of-school programs: Keeps kids safe, strengthen academics, support working families and builds workforce skills.

To stay informed on out-of-school time, sign up for the Kansas Enrichment Network newsletters: www.kansasenrichment.net. The Kansas Enrichment Network is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs.

For more information, contact Marcia Dvorak, mjdvorak@ku.edu.

Did you know it is never too early to start reading to your baby? Reading to your newborn, even for just a few minutes a day, can be a great bonding time plus it helps with vocabulary skills and improves communication skills. You can read any type of material to your baby. Picture books and board books are a great starter at this age.

In each edition of the bulletin, I will post a new tip for you to try for positive behavior. This issue's **tip** is: Avoid Negative words. Instead of saying "Don't run." you could instead use positive talk like "walk, use your walking feet, stay with me, or hold my hand." For further positive acknowledgement, try saying, "You're holding my hand. That is so respectful." You could also state, "You are walking beside me and keeping me company." Another sentence that could be used is, "This is so friendly walking together like this. You are making a safe choice."

Julie Howard

Early Childhood Education Chair

Back-to-School Tips for Parents of Children with Special Needs

Dawn Kindred, Special Needs Chairman, Kansas PTA

A new school year means a new grade, new teachers, new goals, and maybe even a new school! In order to help you and your child with special needs be as successful as you can be, we've put together a list of eight helpful back-to-school tips that we hope will make the transition into a new school year a little easier for you and your child.

- ◆ Organize all that paperwork

In the world of special education, there are lots of meetings, paperwork, and documentation to keep track of. Try to keep a family calendar of school events, special education meetings, conferences, etc. Setting up a binder or folder to keep your child's special education documentation, meeting notices, and IEPs in sequential order can also help you stay organized.

- ◆ Start a communication log

Keeping track of all phone calls, e-mails, notes home, meetings, and conferences is important. Create a "communication log" for yourself in a notebook that is easily accessible. Be sure to note the dates, times, and nature of the communications you have.

- ◆ Review your child's current IEP

The IEP is the cornerstone of your child's educational program, so it's important that you have a clear understanding of it. Note when the IEP expires and if your child is up for reevaluation this year. Most importantly, be sure that this IEP still "fits" your child's needs! If you're unsure, contact the school about holding an IEP review meeting.

- ◆ Relieve back-to-school jitters

Just talking about the upcoming year and changes can help reduce some of that back-to-school anxiety! Talk to your child about exciting new classes, activities, and events that they can participate in during the new school year. If attending a new school, try to schedule a visit before the first day. With older students, it is sometimes helpful to explain the services and accommodations in their IEP so that they know what to expect when school begins.

- ◆ Keep everyone informed

It's important that you and the school communicate early and often! If there is anything (concerns, changes, questions about the IEP) that you feel is important to share with the staff working with your child before school starts, or during the year, don't hesitate to contact them! The more proactive and honest you are, the better the school staff will be able to meet your child's needs.

Reading Rockets (2010)

Special Education PTA

Kansas PTA is dedicated to making sure that we are welcoming ALL individuals into our PTAs. One way that we can ensure we are reaching out to our Special Education families is by developing a Special Education Committee in our PTAs. The Special Education Committee can keep the PTA abreast of any issues that come up at the school that might have an effect on the Special Education Community while also giving advice to other committees regarding how to make PTA events more inclusive and welcoming for their families.



We are proud to say that Kansas has two Special Education PTAs in our state: Turner SEPTA and Shawnee Mission SEPTA. These PTAs work specifically for the Special Education populations within their school districts. They would both love to give you ideas on how to get the Special Education communities more involved in your PTAs. Please reach out to the Kansas PTA office if you would like to contact one of these groups.



How do your members, school families, staff and community know what's going on in your PTA?

By communicating with them, of course! Being a successful PTA means you're talking about what you do for the children in your school—not just asking for help running the book fair or counting Box Tops. You may have a designated person who prepares your communications for you (with input of the Board, or course) or it may be the responsibility of the President or Secretary. Whatever the case, sharing your messages effectively is important. That's why National PTA has put together an outstanding **Communications guide** that is part of the online [Back-to-School kit](#).

The guide offers sound advice on PTA branding (there are very specific ways the PTA logo and name should be used), how to organize a newsletter, creating a website, being on social media, working with the media, photography and more.

I encourage you to take some time to read through the guide, focusing on the areas that make the most sense for your PTA. If you need help getting started with an effective communications strategy please give me a call or email me: Mia@everestkc.net or 913.636.0191



The role of a Kansas PTA Field Service Representative

This can be a big job. This position used to be called a Regional Vice President, however, it was changed a couple of years ago to reflect what the position truly entails.

I am Region 4 and part of Region 7's Field Service Representative. My responsibilities are to assist school PTA units in those areas with their needs. A Field Service Representative can field questions a unit might have, help with concerns within the units, do audits, schedule training, and help with conflict resolution. It is my responsibility to be in contact with the school PTA units in my regions to assist with their needs.

Many times we do not hear from units that might need a little expertise to navigate the workings of a PTA. Often we don't hear from them until it is too late to keep the PTA running. Many times I hear that the PTA didn't want to bother anyone or they felt that no one cared. We do care, very much, and it is our job to be there to partner with you and assist you with what you need.

I urge you to invite your Region Field Service Representative to come to a meeting (yes we are willing to drive and take a road trip), or call us if you have any questions, concerns or just want to know where to find information that will help your PTA be successful. Combined, the Region Field Service Representatives have years of experience. We have tried and true experience on how to make family engagement work, or how to advocate for students in your district, or how to solve issues with your board. I know that during my term as Field Service Representative I will be contacting my units on a monthly or bi-monthly basis and I will be asking if there is anything I can do for them. I hope that they will allow me to assist them with whatever they might need. So next time your unit needs some advice, pick up the phone or send an email to your Region Field Service Representative, I am sure that they will be happy to assist you in your PTA needs.

ATTENTION TREASURERS

The beginning of the school year is a very busy time for ALL PTA leaders....but especially the Treasurers!

- 1) **Now is the time** to make sure you are working off of an approved budget for this school year, your insurance has been paid and you have met all of your obligations to Kansas PTA.
- 2) Please remember to **send Kansas PTA a copy of your yearly audit** (financial review) and a copy of your filed 990 (or email confirmation). The audit should have been completed after the end of the last fiscal year (June 30) and before the Treasurer took possession of the books. **The 990 is due to the IRS by November 15th** but can be filed any time after the end of your last fiscal year.

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact your Kansas PTA Treasurer, Dawn Lalumondier at (913)660-4763 or kansasptatreasurer@gmail.com

2015-2016 Awards and Contest Information

ARTS IN EDUCATION



Citizenship is in full swing! As you begin preparing for the qualification and judging process, it's a good time to review some items from your Arts in Education packet.

- All entries require a parent signed participation form. Poetry and essay entries submitted without a form will be sent back to the unit and will not continue to the next level of the competition.
- One of the most common items missed is word count. Poetry entries must be at least 50 words, but may not exceed 500 words. Essay entries must be at least 200 words, but may not exceed 1000 words.
- To submit entries your unit must be in good standing with KS State PTA. This includes the initial submission of membership with dues and filing of your annual unit tax return.
- Entries are due to Council by Oct 30th, FSRs by Nov 13th, and State by Dec 4th.

All local, council, and regional PTA/PTSAs are responsible for notifying students if their entry has received an award at their level of judging. The Kansas PTA Arts in Education chairman will notify in writing the state level award recipients.

Don't forget as Citizenship is winding down that Reflections is winding UP! There is a wealth of information, training, & ideas available to you at pta.org/programs/ArtsinEducation.cfm. Be sure to register your PTA/PTSA today and download your toolkit. There is a fantastic video you can watch and a Reflections Leader e-learning course to walk through a step-by-step process for engaging students, parents and educators in Reflections while learning about resources and tools provided by your State PTA and National PTA.

Good luck to all of you in this year's competitions. Now, go forth, and CREATE!

Citizenship Program - "I Can Be a Hero in my Community by..."

Friday, October 16, 2015	Local Unit Chairman
Friday, October 30, 2015	**Council President
Friday, November 13, 2015	***Field Services Representative
Friday, December 4, 2015	Kansas PTA Arts in Education Chair

Greetings, Reflections Team!
It's time to kick off our 2015-2016 Reflections Contest! Whether you're new to Reflections or an experienced pro, let's take a minute to review how we get started.



National PTA Reflections welcomes all grades and abilities to explore and be involved in the arts. Annually, thousands of students will reflect on a common theme and create original works of art in the categories of dance choreography, film production, literature, music composition, photography and visual arts. Kicking off a program in your school will not only be fun, but you will be inspired by the amazing things your students can do.

Step 1: Start the Arts

Visit the National PTA page and review the Reflections Toolkit. There is video you can watch and an eLearning course to help you navigate the process.

Step 2: Organize & Plan Your Program

Recruit a committee/team of volunteers to assist with program tasks. Also recruit community arts professionals to judge your student submissions. Utilize the check list in the Reflections Toolkit to help organize tasks and schedule deadlines.

Step 3: Promote Reflections

Announce your call for entries using PTA, school, and community communication channels. Use social media, announcements, community newsletters, & school newspapers to announce the contest and invite students to participate. Send invitations to your principal, teachers, & staff to have their students submit entries.

If you follow these steps I have no doubt you will have a successful Reflections season! Next bulletin we'll take a deeper dive into the collection and judging process. If you have questions you'd like to see us tackle next go round, please send them in to ksptamom@aol.com. I'd also like to hear about your best practices. What tactics work for you that we could share with new chairs? Together I'm convinced we can have our most successful Reflections year to date!

Reflections Program - "Let Your Imagination Fly"

Wednesday, January 6, 2016	Local Unit Chairman
Wednesday, January 20, 2016	**Council President
Monday, February 1, 2016	***Field Services Representative
Friday, February 12, 2016	Kansas PTA Arts in Education Chair



Kansas PTA is currently accepting RFP's for their 2016 convention workshops

All workshops will be held on Saturday, April 23rd, 2016, at the Topeka Capitol Plaza Hotel in Topeka, KS. If you are interested in presenting, you may contact the Kansas PTA office for a RFP form or download it from Kansaspta.org

Josie Gutierrez
2016 Convention Workshop Chair

Become a KS PTA Convention Sponsor

If you are interested in being a sponsor or vendor for the 2016 Kansas PTA Convention, please notify the Kansas PTA office at kansaspta@gmail.com. Sponsorship information will be coming out later this fall and you do not want to miss the opportunity to be a part of this fun yearly event.

Kansas PTA Board Roster

Kansas PTA Board Roster

Kansas PTA Bulletin

This issue of the Bulletin is available on the Kansas PTA website at www.kansas-pta.org

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State Chairman

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YAC (Youth Advisory Committee)	Robert DeNooy	913-271-6892	Robert.denooy@gmail.com

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Region 2 & 5	Patty Jurich	913-334-6051	pasi36@aol.com
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Region 7	Diana Fabac	913-475-7789	fabacd@turnerusd202.org
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If you are no longer a PTA president, please notify the Kansas PTA State Office.
Forward this and all mailings immediately to your successor.