



## A LETTER FROM THE KANSAS PTA PRESIDENT



Hello to all PTA leaders and members,

I am sure that you are excited about spring, ready for this school year to be over, and working your way through sports, end-of-the-year awards dinners, teacher appreciation, carnival, field day, and all the other events that you plan to bring your school year to a close. It is fun, overwhelming, and exhausting.

At the same time, you are probably already planning for next year's events and getting ready to close this current chapter while preparing yourself for the opening of a new one. As the time can be stressful, please find little ways to take care of yourself. A short walk, a bubble bath with the bathroom door locked, one more chapter of a great book, or listening to music all of these can assist you in building in some stress-buster time in each day. It will help your state of mind. My term is coming to an end but many of you will continue on in your leadership roles. **My most sincere Thank you for your service to children.**

As a reminder, per the 2024 National PTA convention, the NPTA body voted for a dues increase, the first in more than 10 years. They delayed the start date for this new dollar amount a year but on July 1, 2025, **the new combined dues for state and national PTA for the 2025-2026 school year will become \$5.75 per year.** I know A dues increase may cause some concern but trust me when I say that I think that this is still one of the **best values for contributing to an association whose voices speak up for children and public education** at just \$0.48 per month.

One of the top reasons that people are hesitant to join any membership association is that they don't know the benefits of being a member or why they should join. **You can help.**

- First, make up a list of the things that you do at your school for the students and teachers. Create a poster listing them and have it at each of your events to remind them that together you all make a difference.
- Tell them about providing a parent voice at the State House and Congress.
- Let them know about the opportunity to receive grant money for STEM nights and for Digital Technology nights.
- Remind them of the great opportunities in the Arts thru the Reflections Program.
- Make sure they know about online training to assist them in handling their duties by visiting [pta.org](https://pta.org).
- And don't forget family engagement thru Schools of Excellence.

**These are just some of the benefits to being a part of PTA.**

[Please reach out with any questions.](#) Change always comes with challenges. We are here to help you.

As spokesperson for the 2023-2025 Kansas PTA Board of Managers,

Denise Sultz

Kansas PTA President



## 2024-25 KANSAS PTA CITIZENSHIP WRITING AWARD OF EXCELLENCE RECIPIENTS

Kansas PTA is proud to announce the following Citizenship awards for poetry and essays created to this year's theme "Small Things I Can Do To Impact My Community..." submitted by Fiona Francis of Sunflower Elementary.

Congratulations to our talented Kansas writers and their families!

Mia Watt, Mill Creek Elementary, 5th grade, essay  
Violet McCarthy, Mill Creek Elementary, 5th grade, poem  
Jiya Bhavsar, Briarwood Elementary, 6th grade, essay  
Celia Hook, Mill Creek Elementary, 6th grade, poem  
Dinesh Ezhil, Indian Woods Middle School, 7th grade, essay  
Mia Clark, Shawnee Mission South High School, 9th grade, poem  
Victoria Olberding, Shawnee Mission South High School, 10th grade, essay  
Lydia McColligan, Shawnee Mission South High School, 10th grade, poem  
Hannah Clark, Shawnee Mission South High School, 11th grade, poem  
Opal Walden, Shawnee Mission West High School, 12th grade, poem

## 2024-25 KANSAS PTA REFLECTIONS AWARD OF EXCELLENCE RECIPIENTS

Kansas PTA announces the following Reflections awards for work created to this year's theme "Accepting Imperfection."

### KANSAS PTA AWARD RECIPIENTS

#### *DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY*

Maxwell Deane, intermediate division, Trailwood Elementary

#### *FILM PRODUCTION*

Grace Beecher, intermediate division, Santa Fe Trail Elementary  
Raegan Saysoff, middle school division, Briarwood Elementary  
Opal Walden, high school division, Shawnee Mission West High School

#### *LITERATURE*

Lucie White, primary division, Trailwood Elementary School  
Penelope Baikie, intermediate division, Tomahawk Elementary School  
Asher Berg, middle school division, Highlands Elementary School  
Lydia McColligan, high school division, Shawnee Mission South High School

#### *MUSIC COMPOSITION*

Jiya Bhavsar, middle school division, Briarwood Elementary  
Zachary Foss, high school division, Shawnee Mission South High School

#### *VISUAL ARTS*

Sterling Pond, accessible arts, Starside Elementary  
Rosie Hobart, primary division, Westwood View Elementary  
Molly Dolan, intermediate division, Mill Creek Elementary  
Grace Hibbs, middle school division, Prairie Elementary  
Carmen Carroll, high school division, Shawnee Mission East High School

#### *PHOTOGRAPHY*

Jonah Ogle, primary division, Mill Creek Elementary  
Adelynn Gorczyca, intermediate division, Merriam Park Elementary  
Nixon Katzenmeier, middle school division, Christa McAuliffe Elementary  
Mia Clark, high school division, Shawnee Mission South High School



### NATIONAL PTA REFLECTIONS AWARD RECIPIENTS

#### *FILM PRODUCTION*

Grace Beecher, Santa Fe Trail Elementary  
Award of Merit for "Snowball's Story"

#### *PHOTOGRAPHY*

Mia Clark, Shawnee Mission South High School  
Award of Excellence for "Refracted"

Nixon Katzenmeier, Christa McAuliffe Elementary  
Award of merit for "Sailor Makes It Work"

#### *VISUAL ARTS*

Grace Hibbs, Prairie Elementary  
Award of Merit for "Kintsugi"

**2025-2026 REFLECTIONS THEME: I BELONG → [LEARN MORE](#)**

## 'I HEART KANSAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS" LEGISLATIVE DAY

Kansas PTA joined other Kansas education advocacy organizations such as KASB, Kansas NEA, and Game On for Kansas Schools for "I Heart Kansas Public Schools Legislative Day" at the Kansas Capitol, on February 14.

We staffed a table on the first-floor rotunda and were able to catch up with various elected officials walking by. We spoke with freshman and veteran representatives and senators from both sides of the aisle about the great successes of Kansas public schools, such as record-high graduation rates, record number of students earning career credentials, and millions of dollars in scholarships earned.

We also shared our legislative policy positions <https://kansas-pta.org/advocacy/standing-policy-positions/> as well as our testimony on various bills in the Statehouse and issue briefs <https://kansas-pta.org/what-do-naep-scores-tell-us/>



"You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I hope someday you'll join us. And the world will live as one."

–John Lennon

**THANK YOU  
VOLUNTEERS!**



PTA members are the heart of PTA, providing strength through their numbers and amplifying the power of the PTA voice. PTA volunteers are the engines moving our mission forward by generously sharing their time, talents, resources and expertise. In honor of Volunteer Appreciation Month, National PTA profoundly thanks all PTA volunteers for their tireless work to advance PTA's mission to make every child's potential a reality.


You are making real differences in the lives of children each day, and your dedication and passion deserves recognition. Help highlight the impact of PTA volunteers by keeping track of the volunteer hours contributed this past year. Multiply those hours by the value of a volunteer hour in your state then share far and wide. You can use our membership tools to share accomplishments of your PTA on social media, in school or in your community to encourage people to join!


If you have never volunteered, or haven't in a while, consider reaching out to your PTA to see how you can help.





## CATCH UP WITH NATIONAL PTA



 **Coming Soon: Single Sign-On for PTA.org and Thrive.** To improve the member experience, National PTA is moving to a system where your username/password for PTA.org will be the same username/password you will use for Thrive.

 **Membership Tip:** Remind Your Community That Everyone Belongs in PTA. PTA supports and promotes the inclusion of all caregivers of all children. Caregivers include all caring adults involved in a child's life. Any community member who believes in PTA's mission can join PTA!

 **Talking Tech Shouldn't Be Difficult.** The Smart Talk helps parents have open and honest conversations with their kids about using technology. [Learn more.](#)

 **Supporting Healthy Minds.** At National PTA, we are committed to developing the whole child for success in school and life. Part of this holistic approach involves focusing on mental health. Visit [PTA.org/HealthyMinds](https://pta.org/HealthyMinds) for free resources and programming.




**HERE**  
For Healthy Schools

### Lysol Healthy Habits Tip of the Month

Getting enough sleep and good sleep quality are essential for our health and emotional well-being. For children, it's even more important. School aged kids (6-12 years) are recommended to get 9-12 hours of sleep per night. The CDC [provides sleep recommendations](#) for students of every age.



### 2025-2026 Reflections Theme: I Belong

 For over 50 years, Reflections has helped students explore their own thoughts, feelings and ideas, develop artistic literacy, increase confidence and find a love for learning. Each year, thousands of students in pre-K through grade 12 create original works of art in response to a student-created theme. We are excited to invite you to explore our 2025-2026 Reflections theme, "I Belong!" Get inspired for a new Reflections program and [learn how your PTA can participate](#).

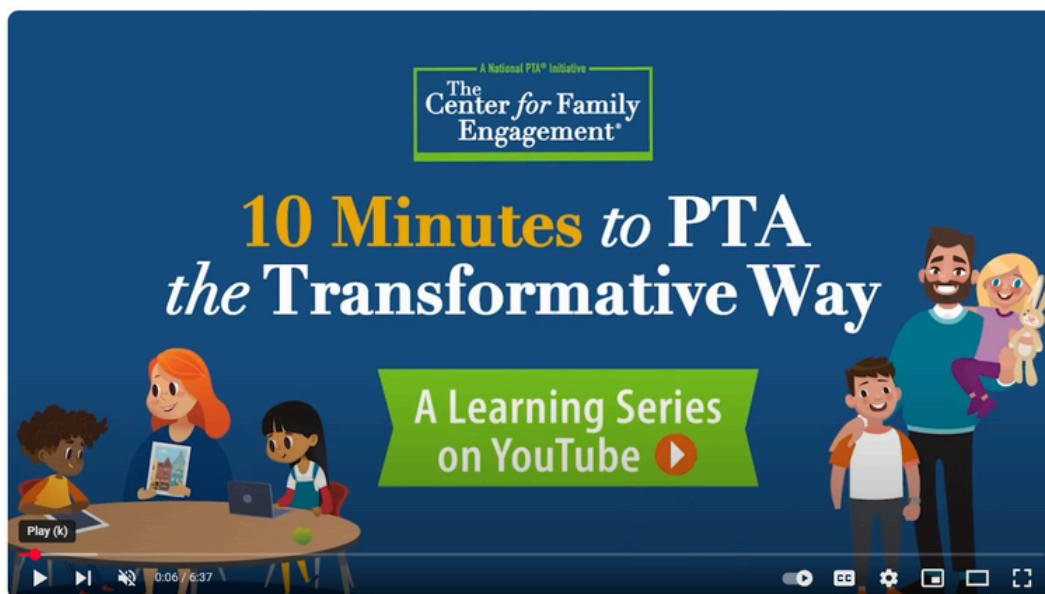


### Registration Open: Power in Unity PTA 2025

Join thousands of passionate parent leaders and educators from across the country for our [2025 Virtual Convention](#). Experience three transformative days designed to strengthen your leadership, expand your network, and amplify your impact—no travel required! Also, members of the voting body will have the opportunity to participate in elections and voting on annual meeting business. [Register now!](#)



## CATCH UP WITH NATIONAL PTA



## Learn How We PTA

Find inspiration from PTAs nationwide who have positively affected their communities with these stories of change that originated at the PTA with leaders just like you. [Visit this page to link](#) to stories in these categories.



**Advocacy**



**Building a Community**



**Access to Opportunities**



**Membership and Community Support**



**Social and Emotional Wellbeing**



**Addressing Food Insecurity**



**Distance Teaching and Learning**



**Bridging the Digital Divide**

# INTRODUCING YOUR KANSAS PTA EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

2025-2027



**VIKKI "SIS"  
MULLINS  
PRESIDENT**

Vikki has served on executive boards across multiple levels within the Turner School District, including elementary, middle, high school, and council levels. At the state level, she has held several leadership roles, including Arts & Awards Chair, Treasurer, VP of Member Services, President Elect, and adult mentor for Kansas PTA's Youth Advisory Committee. She also serves as Treasurer for the Turner Days Committee and holds the position of Executive Director at the Turner Foundation. In addition to her volunteer work, Vikki is employed at Wolcott Foods, a remarkable company in Kansas City, KS, that provides home-delivered meals to clients with traumatic brain injuries and other disabilities. Vikki's true passion is empowering abused children, as shown by her 20-year involvement with Bikers Against Child Abuse, where she serves as a child primary contact and a patched member with the Kaw River, Kansas Chapter. Outside of her volunteer commitments, Vikki cherishes every free moment spent with her beautiful grandsons, Brantley and Taylor.



**DEVIN  
WILSON  
VP OF MEMBER  
& EXTENSION  
SERVICES**

Devin Wilson is a current member of the Kansas PTA Board of Managers. Devin began volunteering at his kids' school, Mill Creek Elementary PTA in Lenexa, Kansas as legislative co-chair in order to learn more about how legislation affects students and schools, as well as joining the education advocacy organization Game On for Kansas Schools. He continued in similar roles at Trailridge Middle School, Shawnee Mission Northwest HS, and Shawnee Mission Area Council of PTAs (SMAC PTA), and Legislative Chair for Kansas PTA and is currently serving as the Kansas PTA Vice President of Advocacy and is this year's Convention Co-Chair. Outside of volunteering Devin is an Environmental Scientist working with natural resources, conversation and restoration and clean water.



**ANGELIQUE  
GUNION  
VP OF  
ADVOCACY**

Angie Gunion has served in many roles in PTA over the last 16 years, She is currently serving as the Secretary of Kansas PTA and has been on several committees for Kansas PTA including the NLDC, Meeting Assistant, and Exhibitors Chair. She has served as Treasurer at Shawnee Mission West HS and Comanche Elementary PTA and Vice President of Shawnee Mission Area Council PTA. She is the current President of Comanche PTA and the Ways & Means at SMWHS. Angelique has also served on the District Strategic Planning Committee, the West is Best board and the Shawnee Mission Education Foundation board. She is a business owner of TITAN Environmental Services, located in KCK. Angelique is very involved in the professional business community serving as Treasurer, Vice Chair, Chair and now Chair Emeritus of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City. For the last 10 years she has served as the Chair and chief organizer of the Annual Gala. Angie graduated from Rockhurst University with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration. She is the team mom for 4 youth football teams including the wrestling program at SMWHS and at the Kansas City Wrestling Club. Angelique and her husband Kyle have 7 children from 13 to 20 years of age.



**JULIE HOWARD  
SECRETARY /  
TREASURER**

Julie Howard has been involved with PTA for 38 years, having held every position on the local and council level. She has served as President at Turner Council PTA, Muncie Elementary, Oak Grove Elementary, Pierson Jr. High PTA, as well as serving on several community committees in the Turner School district. In addition to volunteering in PTA, Julie has coached youth baseball, basketball, and served as a campfire leader for six years. She has been a volunteer at the Shawnee Community Service Center for over 28 years. She and her husband David work with the BIB Christian program at Lansing Correctional Facility, where they have been serving the inmates and their families Spring and Christmas meals for the past 14 years. She also works in the children's ministry at Stony Point Baptist Church. Julie has been married to David for 45 years, raised four children, and loves being the Grandma to four rambunctious grandchildren. Julie has served on Kansas PTA for the past 18 years and is currently the Resource Chair. She has also served as a Secretary, Field Service Representative, been the chairman of the Arts & Awards, PTA Store, Meeting Assistant, Silent Auction and sat on the Audit Committee, Convention Committee, Scholarship committee and, NLDC.

**The NLDC Committee Nominees and Current Class B NLDC members:**

Class A Nominees: 3 members and 1 alternate - to be elected in odd numbered years,

**Sommer Saunders** Region 8

**Crystal Mysliwski** Region 7

**Cindy Rocha** Region 4

**Lynette Droge** Region 7 alternate

Current NLDC Committee Members:

Class B: 2 members and 1 alternate – to be elected in even numbered years,

**Amanda Winch** Region 6 Will stay on thru 2026

**Jessica Howard** Region 7 Will stay on thru 2026

**Sara Lero** Region 8 Will stay on thru 2026 alternate

This slate of nominees includes representatives from 3 regions from the state.

# CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



**APRIL 26, 2025  
TURNER MIDDLE SCHOOL**



# CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



## VIRGINIA PEAK OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AWARD

As a graduate of Wyandotte High School who has returned to support students in achieving their post-secondary goals, Jones exemplifies dedication, innovation, and selfless service. His ability to think outside the box and provide unwavering support to students makes him an invaluable asset to our school community.

Jones consistently demonstrates exceptional character through his volunteer service with the WHS PTSA. Whether mentoring students, organizing career workshops, or collaborating with local businesses to create opportunities, he goes above and beyond to ensure that every student receives the guidance and resources necessary to succeed. His enthusiasm for service is contagious, inspiring both students and fellow staff members to strive for excellence.



**MARCUS JONES**

## OUTSTANDING STUDENT OF THE YEAR

### ARLYN ESCOBAR

As a senior at Wyandotte High School, Escobar has consistently demonstrated an exceptional commitment to her peers, school, and community through leadership, advocacy, and service. Her ability to inspire others, overcome challenges, and create meaningful change sets her apart as a true role model.

## OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

### KALEIGH CLARK

As an educator, Mrs. Clark continually goes above and beyond to ensure every student, regardless of their abilities, is given the tools they need to succeed. She adapts her teaching methods to meet the unique needs of each student, providing individualized support while maintaining a high standard for all. Her ability to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment has made her an invaluable asset to Edwardsville Elementary.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

It was our privilege to have **Tyrone Weaver from Heartland 180** join us.. He explained the mission and programs they operate to help at-risk (or as they say "at hope") youth. Learn more about the remarkable work they do for youth at [Heartland180.org](https://Heartland180.org)



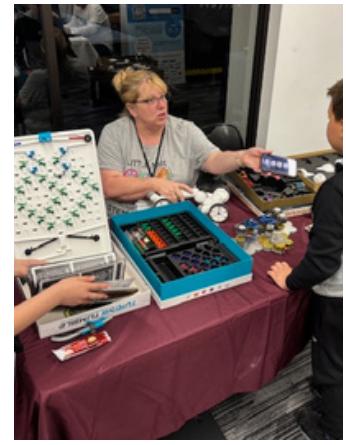
**Mikesha Bradner, KS PTA Diversity & Inclusion Chair** speaks during Opening Session on the transformative power of embracing diversity and finding common connections in our communities.



# CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



## THANK YOU TO OUR EXHIBITING VENDORS





# CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



## THANK YOU TO OUR CONVENTION SPONSORS

**PLATINUM**



**SILVER**



## WORKSHOPS

**ADVOCACY :: MEMBERSHIP  
FINANCIAL LEADERSHIP :: SELF-CARE**





# CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



**THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SPENT THE  
DAY WITH US AT PTA-CON 2025.  
SEE YOU IN 2026!**

