

# Kansas Parents As Teachers Association

## Strategic and Action Plan



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## **Introduction to Kansas Parents As Teachers Association (KPATA)**

The Kansas Parents as Teachers Association (KPATA) is a 501(c)3 statewide organization to support early childhood education programs in Kansas with a parent education component. The organization provides opportunities for networking, leadership, visibility, training, research and information to build quality programs throughout Kansas.

Membership is open to anyone who believes in the Mission and Purpose of the Kansas Parents as Teachers Association. Together, they are a powerful voice for children and families in Kansas.

### **Mission and Purpose**

To be a leading force in the support, education and expansion of programs in Kansas using the Parents as Teachers (PAT) curriculum so that all Kansas children will develop to their fullest potential.

- KPATA strives to heighten visibility of quality parent education in the state. The organization creates publications and distributes research and collaboration information on best practices in the field of parent education and early childhood education. KPATA also strives to educate the state policy leadership to ensure the positive growth and development of children, support for parents and build effective systems for equal access to quality early childhood and parent education programs statewide.
- KPATA supports Parents as Teachers programs and programs using the Parents as Teachers model within school districts and within other program delivery systems.
- KPATA supports programs by facilitating parent educator initial trainings and continuing education opportunities. Additionally, the organization supports the development of quality supervisors and coordinators throughout the state providing opportunities for networking and training.
- KPATA supports the drive towards quality excellence in all parent education programs in Kansas by supporting the National Parents as Teachers, "A Closer Look, the PAT Standards and Self-Assessment."

### **History**

Kansas Parents As Teachers Association (KPATA) has provided support, information, and resources to programs in Kansas using the Parents As Teachers (PAT) curriculum, and to families with children ages prenatal-five. The organization was founded by a group of interested coordinators in the Kansas City Area Parents As Teachers Consortium at the urging of their advisory board. KPATA was created to meet a profound challenge: to better the lives of children and families in Kansas by strengthening home visitation programming.

### **Value of Membership**

KPATA is an organization for individuals interested in supporting the work of the organization. Parents, grandparents, current and past participants, in home visitation and early childhood programs in Kansas, as well as parent educators, early childhood educators, and home visitors are all encouraged to join.

Numerous benefits are available to dues-paying members. All KPATA members have access to:

- KPATA Updates which are our flagship publications with articles on best practice in the field, research, information for stakeholders on programs using the PAT curriculum.
- State Convention registration information.
- Link to National conventions. Information about scholarship opportunities available only to members.
- Information about job postings available only to members.
- Information on legislation that would affect programs, families, and children in Kansas. Links to parent education resources.
- Opportunity to share information on program resources with others in the field

## **Organizational Overview**

### **Assets and Challenges/Opportunities**

#### Assets

KPATA has strong name recognition throughout the state through its support of the Parents As Teachers model. In addition to the board members participating under the KPATA umbrella of operation, members and outside partners providing feedback to this strategic planning initiative indicated that KPATA is a recognized partner which provides significant advocacy to the ongoing legislative conversation around early childhood education funding. This predominant response demonstrates the value KPATA has as a presence and point of contact on key legislative issues, and as a contributor to possible solutions to early childhood education needs statewide.

The second most recognized asset of KPATA stems from its past efforts to provide quality training opportunities to its members. While the emphasis on training offerings has subsided in past years due to the board's increased priority on legislative involvement, the types of training and its commitment to enhancing the work and credentialing of its members remains a steadfast organizational fixture.

In addition to the strength of KPATA's advocacy efforts and training, respondents provided input on additional assets of KPATA. Those items viewed as current assets or those that provide strong partnerships or agency connections are deemed to be values that the board and constituents want to maintain or sustain while embarking on endeavors to explore new opportunities or mitigate existing gaps in services.

- National level association and name recognition
- Positive political advocacy reputation and a recognized statehouse presence
- PAT Day at the Capitol
- Strong partnerships with other statewide early childhood education support organizations
- High standards of support for local programs
- Strength and experience in providing quality training opportunities for its members
- Utilization of regional representatives to ensure two-way dissemination of information

#### Challenges/Opportunities

Early childhood education is a seemingly broad topic by definition and the complexity of the various components poses significant challenges to those working in this particular field. By identifying the perceived and actual challenges facing KPATA and the administration of a statewide program, KPATA is equipped to better strategize and implement focused initiatives to address the needs of organizations and individuals.

- Obtaining long-term financial security for PAT
- Obtaining long-term financial security for KPATA
- Aligning goals and priorities with financial accountability
- Identifying realistic and beneficial fundraising opportunities/activities
- Maintaining an affordable membership fee that also adequately covers the cost of services
- Growing membership
- Identifying and offering value-added membership benefits
- Offering effective, relevant, and timely trainings for a reasonable cost
- Securing grant funds to under-write the cost of trainings or service support
- Identifying quality trainers available across the state
- Ensuring timely, transparent communication of the association's advocacy work
- Clarifying the roles of KPATA and KSDE

- Strengthening the relationship with PATNC and KSDE
- Diversifying the association's board to be reflective of statewide regions and demographic makeup
- Providing board training to new board members
- Creating organizational processes such as documented executive director and board members roles and responsibilities, board committee re-structuring and accountability, and ongoing evaluations of effectiveness
- Utilizing Regional Representatives to better engage members from each region with the association
- Offering board meetings and trainings throughout the state
- Seeking timely feedback from members on pertinent issues such as the association's legislative agenda, trainings, and needs
- Reflecting the needs of both urban and rural communities in an adequate and fair manner
- Recruiting the necessary workforce to staff early childhood education programs statewide
- Tracking and disseminating data
- Offering additional opportunities for members to stay informed about the legislative process, early childhood education models, and relevant emerging issues or information
- Creating a mobilization plan to engage the association's partners or network when the need for critical mass representation or testimony arises
- Creating a concise, consistent messaging for increased awareness of KPATA/PAT and its impact
- Enhancing the online resources available through the KPATA website
- Utilizing social media for advocacy and marketing

## **KPATA Board Retreat Outcomes**

Information obtained through one-on-one interviews and board engagement resulted in the identification of four primary themes: advocacy (non-legislative and legislative), training, board development, and communication. These themes are not all-inclusive but transcend to the broader, long-term approach to supporting early childhood education outcomes through potential growth and short-term action KPATA should assume over the next 1-5 years.

While whittled down to four over-arching themes, the following summarized feedback has been categorized as opportunities for future growth and emphasis and appear throughout the Action Plan Recommendations section that follows.

### **Advocacy (Non-Legislative)**

- Create a clear flow-chart of organizational roles
- Collect and disseminate information from all regions to members and organizations
- Create a template of branding messaging

### **Advocacy (Legislative)**

- Seek input for legislative priorities
- Communicate action in a timely manner to members
- Utilize existing, effective tools (i.e. KAC Newsletter)

### **Board Development**

- Conduct a regular review of organizational by-laws
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of board members
- Identify fundraising roles and provide training on making the fundraising “ask”
- Research additional grant opportunities for financial support of the association or its activities
- Determine who will become accountable for key board functions such as communication and marketing
- Research the practicality of establishing a KPATA Advisory Board or Committee make up of non-PAT affiliated members
- Set clear expectations for the recruitment of new board members and craft the necessary board training materials to ensure new members understand the expectations
- Utilize Regional Representatives on committees

### **Training**

- Establish the Training Committee with roles and responsibilities to ensure accountability
- Identify needed trainings (required and desired) through a survey mechanism and create a master list
- Identify trainers with both internal and external expertise
- Identify partners with which KPATA can collaborate to offer trainings
- Create opportunities for trainings to generate new members
- Hold training throughout the state and offer online attendance opportunities
- Market the trainings to members, partners, and outside entities

### **Technical Support**

- Identify if technical support should transition to KPATA
- Clarify roles of KPATA and KSDE, and the proper channels to disseminate information

- Distinguish between the perceptions and facts surround the conflict of interest of lobbying, grant administration, and lobbying
- Clarify the membership relationship between PATNC, KSDE grant funds, and KPATA's administration of support for PAT

#### Long-Term Sustainability

- Host a board budget visioning meeting to identify the cost of needed and desired board goals
- Align membership dues with yearly budgets or seek outside funding opportunities
- Determine membership levels and corresponding benefits
- Create "Year-in-Review" reflections including partners, committees, action, progress, value-added benefits, new collaborations, measurable outcomes, and engagement opportunities
- Review the role and cost of consultants and conduct a cost/benefit analysis
- Conduct annual board and director evaluations based on updated jobs descriptions

## **Action Plan Recommendations**

The following recommendations are based on the compiled data from which recommendations and goals can be set. Recommendations that follow should be evaluated and discussed on an ongoing basis.

### **Advocacy (Non-Legislative)**

<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	<b><u>Action Steps</u></b>	<b><u>Term</u></b>	<b><u>Assigned</u></b>
1. Revisit Mission and Vision for KPATA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine if changes need to be made based on the current structure of the Association</li> <li>• Evaluate what portion of the current mission has been achieved and determine the direction for the next 1-5 years</li> <li>• Include input from all KPATA members and stakeholders</li> <li>• Ensure concise and consistent “brand” messaging</li> </ul>		
2. Create a flow chart of roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a visual listing of roles of the KPATA organization and the current position holders</li> <li>• Identify the roles of key partners such as KSDE and PATNC</li> <li>• Identify the current “chain of communication”</li> <li>• Seek input from KPATA board members and partners to determine “roadblocks” or any ambiguous roles that may serve as points of confusion</li> <li>• Create a training template or toolkit to support regional representatives in their role</li> </ul>		
3. Build Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance current relationships with KSDE and PATNC through “team approach” communication including board members or diverse state representation</li> <li>• Outreach from KPATA to all PAT programs across the state to seek feedback, build comradery, and determine value-added benefit opportunities for membership</li> <li>• Provide KPATA representation at all regional meetings</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a KPATA campaign to educate school districts, superintendents, and school boards about PAT programs, membership, and impact</li> </ul>		
4. Collect and disseminate data, patterns, and trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect information from each region, such as affiliate requirements, curriculum, APR, data tracking systems, quality endorsement programs, etc., to be shared within the KPATA network and with PANTC</li> <li>• Ensure transparency in information collected, how it is used, and outcomes</li> </ul>		

**Advocacy (Legislative)**

<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	<b><u>Action Steps</u></b>	<b><u>Term</u></b>	<b><u>Assigned</u></b>
1. Seek annual strategic input for the creation of the KPATA legislative agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct an annual survey of KPATA members to ensure input from all regions is considered</li> <li>• Dedicate a specific KPATA board meeting to discussing and prioritizing the feedback obtained through the survey</li> <li>• Disseminate legislative priorities back to all KPATA members</li> </ul>	Summer/Fall	President & Executive Director
2. Position KPATA's legislative agenda as a cohesive and urgent tool and provide transparent communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate KPATA members on the traditional legislative process</li> <li>• Strategize legislative talking points to share with all KPATA members to ensure consistent and streamlined messaging with legislators and constituents</li> <li>• Submit timely and relevant updates to the KPATA board and members as statehouse work transpires</li> <li>• Determine a process for re-evaluation of legislative priorities should KPATA</li> </ul>		

	<p>need to be responsive to an emerging issue not identified on KPATA’s approved legislative priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicate a board agenda item for legislative discussion, Q&amp;A, or updates</li> <li>• Provide access to KAC’s newsletter and Children’s Cabinet updates for all KPATA members</li> <li>• Provide an end-of-session wrap up</li> </ul>		
3. Plan for long-term advocacy impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure a long-term funding source for PAT program</li> <li>• Align long-term goals and early childhood education messaging with KPATA partners for a “strength in numbers” approach to support</li> <li>• Identify related but non-direct initiatives (such as work force support) that KPATA should support</li> <li>• Clarify the lobbying role of the KPATA Executive Director; evaluate the job description and responsibilities on an annual basis</li> </ul>		

**Board Development**

<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	<b><u>Action Steps</u></b>	<b><u>Term</u></b>	<b><u>Assigned</u></b>
1. Create a KPATA business and funding plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct an inventory of existing business operations and expenditures</li> <li>• Strategize an “ideal budget” funded by membership fees that encompasses the KPATA’s needs and goals</li> <li>• Determine discrepancies between the current budget and ideal budget to seek areas</li> </ul>		

	<p>of fundraising or spending mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify “accountability standards” by which budgeting/fundraising/spending maintains checks and balances by the board</li> <li>• Document historical association data for archive</li> </ul>		
2. Define board and committee responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update by-laws</li> <li>• Establish a written description of expectations and responsibilities for board members</li> <li>• Require a signed letter of commitment by board members to ensure their understanding and pledge to uphold their position</li> <li>• Evaluate existing committees to determine relevance; identify any new committees that need to be created to align with the updated goals and objectives of the board (i.e. training)</li> <li>• Activate board members to serve on committees and dedicate board meeting time for committee reports</li> </ul>		
3. Diversify board representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit board members that represent all regions of the state</li> <li>• Seek board members that are not currently employed by PAT or establish a KPATA advisory board that includes individuals from the business, education, health and human services, and government sectors.</li> <li>• Conduct an intensive board training for new and existing board members</li> <li>• Intentionally plan for meeting locations throughout the state</li> </ul>		

## Training

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Action Steps</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Assigned</u>
1. Finalize the establishment of a training committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt committee roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Identify number and type of members</li> <li>• Identify role of Technical Support within the current KPATA/KSDE partnership and how that integrates with training</li> </ul>		
2. Hold a minimum of one training per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a strategic survey twice yearly to seek feedback on needed or desired trainings</li> <li>• Maintain a master list of training requests and master schedule (i.e. new coordinator training, screening trainings, home visiting model, foundational)</li> <li>• Tie trainings to membership</li> <li>• Hold trainings throughout the state</li> </ul>		
3. Identify trainers and funding support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit new trainers for the PATNC KS training team</li> <li>• Seek qualified trainers throughout the state</li> <li>• Partner with KSDE and/or partners to host and market value-added training opportunities</li> <li>• Seek grant funding to underwrite trainings</li> </ul>		

## Communication (TRANSPARENCY)

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Action Steps</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Assigned</u>
1. Produce a monthly newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a one-two page newsletter monthly including brief board updates, legislative updates, National Center information, information from KSDE, updates from programs around the state, and ideas or highlights from the field</li> </ul>		

<p>2. Share annual goals and reflections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share annual goals, updates to the strategic plan, introduction of new board members, etc. with members at the beginning of every year</li> <li>• Provide a year-end summary of achievements and data sets</li> </ul>		
<p>3. Provide access to partner updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add KPATA board member and members to the KAC newsletter</li> <li>• Ensure all members have access to the Children’s Cabinet updates</li> </ul>		
<p>4. Improve KPATA online presence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update the current website</li> <li>• Establish a social media policy</li> <li>• Establish a social media marketing plan to promote PAT in Kansas</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for members/interested parties to provide feedback in a timely manner</li> </ul>		

## Appendix A:

# PROJECT BACKGROUND & WORK PHILOSOPHY

The proposed strategic planning process will be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

1. Naming and building on existing assets.
2. Linking contributors from all sectors to mobilize through engagement in productive and civil dialogue with no pre-determined outcome.
3. Building trust and relationships that foster ongoing development.
4. Delivering findings for further action.

The purpose of the visioning process and subsequent strategic plan is to focus on an entity's process of defining its current position and assets to serve as a catalyst for future growth and development, identifying its preferred future, and taking action towards achieving a determined strategy. This process mobilizes internal and external stakeholders from a bottom up (informal networks) and top down (formal institutions) approach and engages diverse voices of all constituents to ensure inclusive contributions to a long-term strategic vision and possible action recommendations.

While not intended to be a wish list of ideal outcomes, the plan should serve as a comprehensive foundation on which goals are established and outcomes measured.

This proposed process includes six primary components, all utilizing a combination of quantitative and qualitative standards to achieve a balanced approach to the long-term, high-level view of the community's preferred growth.

- Assessment of stakeholders' common values and visions
- Asset mapping used for a depiction of the organization's current assets
- Demographic and economic research is applied to the findings to provide logistical support
- Interviews and/or surveys conducted with a cross-sector of stakeholders, constituents, service providers, and service recipients.
- Broader organizational conversations engaging unusual voices in the planning process
- Development of a Strategic Plan including a vision statement, goals and objectives, and action plans for short-term and long-term achievement

## THE FACILITATOR

The facilitator brings extensive experience working with communities and organizations demonstrating the need for bigger systemic and cultural change associated with current trends in the social service sector. A significant record of accomplishments in community and organizational development and civic leadership development is due to the team's abilities to blend mission-oriented initiatives and participatory research with engagement at internal and external levels. We have a proven track record building active advisory teams, engaging and mobilizing a diverse base of constituents through a participatory approach to visioning, and creating sustainable, solutions to adaptive challenges by collaborating with institutions, networks, and regional and state partners.

Project Facilitated by:

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Appendix B:

## KPATA Leadership & Members

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Callie Peace, cpeace@kpata.org

### BOARD MEMBERS

Suzy Green – President, sgreen@kpata.org

Jacki Himpel - President Elect, jacki.himpel@kckps.org

Joan Dunn – Past President, jdunn@usd489.com

Cammie Braden - Vice President, cbraden@keystonelearning.org

Rita Kancel – Treasurer, rita.kancel@gmail.com

Leslie Sissel - Secretary, lsissel@usd394.com

Brandy Kirk - NC Regional Director, brandyk@usd383.org

Tabitha Morris – NC Regional Director, tabitha.morris@usd305.com

Michelle Kelly- NE Regional Director, mkelly@bluevalleyk12.org

Nichole Fairley – NE Regional Director, nfairley@tps501.org

Pam May – NW Regional Director, pmay@nkesc.org

Joelle Good – SC Regional Director, jgood@usd261.com

Misty Piester – SW Regional Director, misty.piester@usd382.com

Kristen Newton – SE Regional Director, kristen\_newton@usd368.org

Nis Wilbur - State Leader and Member at Large, nwilbur@ksde.org

Christina Jackowski – Executive Director Secretary, cjackowski@kpata.org