



kpata
KANSAS PARENTS AS TEACHERS

SEPTEMBER 2026



SEPTEMBER IS



**NATIONAL
SUICIDE
PREVENTION
MONTH**

If you need emotional support, reach out to the national mental health hotline: 988.

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A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ITEMS TO HIGHLIGHT

- MAKE SURE YOU ARE REGISTERED TO ATTEND THE STATE HOME VISITING CONFERENCE
- CHECK OUT THE UPCOMING TRAININGS!

Dear KPATA Members -

September always feels like a bit of a reset. The school year is underway, routines are beginning to settle in, and across Kansas, Parents as Teachers programs are once again doing what they do best—showing up for families, building relationships, and helping parents feel supported and confident during some of the most important years of their child's life.

September is a great time to think about how we continue to champion the value of PAT in our own communities. As early childhood systems continue to grow and evolve, it is important that we continue clearly sharing not only what Parents as Teachers does, but the meaningful difference it makes for children, families, schools, and communities. Every conversation with a principal, superintendent, school board member, community partner, policymaker, or family is an opportunity to help someone better understand the impact of high-quality home visiting. You do not need to have all of the data memorized or consider yourself an advocacy expert. Share what you know. Share the stories you see every day. Talk about the family who became more confident in supporting their child's development, the concern that was identified before kindergarten, the connection that helped a family through a difficult season, or the relationship with a school district that began years before a child ever walked into a classroom.

Those stories are the work of Parents as Teachers—and they are worth telling. 🍎

At KPATA, we are excited about the year ahead and the opportunities we have to continue supporting our members, strengthening programs, elevating the PAT model, and ensuring that families across Kansas continue to have access to this incredible resource.

Regards,

Hilary Koehn

Hilary Koehn
Executive Director



BRIGHT FUTURES SUCSESSES

SUCCESS STORY

Mom gave birth to a little girl this month. The hospital social worker connected the family with primary care and she has had a well check. Mom also scheduled annual well-check appointments for the other children and plans to start getting CDC recommended vaccinations.

Mom shared that [child] has successfully started Head Start and is enjoying the experience. Additionally, he has begun play therapy at the same facility. Mom noted significant progress in his emotional regulation, reporting that [child] has started counting when he feels upset as a constructive coping skill to help him calm down.

ITS continues to visit once a month to work on behavior managment.

- 13 NEW REFERRALS
- 81 ACTIVE REFERRALS
- 39 PARTICIPATING PROGRAMS



Bright Futures Program Meeting



Join us at the Bright Futures Program Meeting

September 24th, 2026

1:00pm - 2:30pm

Please note: Attendance is required for programs participating in Bright Futures. If you are unable to have a representative from your program attend, the meeting will be recorded for later viewing.

[Register Here](#)

2026-2027

KPATA Training Calendar

Remember!

A KPATA
Membership is
required in
order to attend
our trainings.

You can
purchase your
2026-2027
Membership
(Training Pass)
below!

[Register](#)

TRAINING SCHEDULE

PARENT EDUCATORS AND COORDINATORS
KPATA BRIGHT FUTURES 2026-2027

JULY
**Share & Show
Our Favorites**
Book, activity, resource,
song or finger play
Just 10 Minutes
7/16 1:00-2:30 PM

★ AUGUST
**BUILDING A COMMUNITY
SAFETY NET:**
CONNECTING PEOPLE, PROCESSES,
AND TOOLS TO COORDINATE
RESOURCES THAT MATTER
RANDI HARMS & LORETTA
SEVERIN/KU CPPR
8/13 10:00-11:30 AM

SEPTEMBER
Fostering Social-Emotional
Development in Young Children
with Autism Spectrum
Disorder:
Strategies and Best Practices
Sarah Behrens PhD, LMSW
Postdoctoral Fellow/KU Med
9/10 1:00-2:30 PM

★ OCTOBER
Professional Learning for
Parents as Teachers-Early
Literacy and
Developmental Language
Disorder
Dr. Laurie Curtis/KSDE
10/15 1:00-3:00 PM

NOVEMBER
**Sign
Language**
Hailey Brooks
11/19 1:00-2:00 PM

DECEMBER
**CATCH
UP**

★ JANUARY
**IPV-Recognizing
and Responding
Safety Planning
for Survivors**
Kayla Ross/Rose Brooks
1/21 1:00-2:30 PM

FEBRUARY
**TO BE
DETERMINED**
*more information
to follow
2/?

MARCH
**STRESSED
OUT?**
HOW CORTISOL LEVELS ARE LINKED TO
BEHAVIORS IN EC
Audra Kenneson, LMSW
Leslie Stevens, LCMFT
3/4 1:00-3:00 PM

★ APRIL
**Child Abuse and
Neglect**
Valeria Adame/KCSL
4/15 1:00-2:30 PM

★ MAY
*Conversations that
Count: Supporting
Families in Reducing
Tobacco Exposure*
Kaoutar Yartaoui/ KDHE
5/13 1:00-2:30 PM

OTHER NOTES:
*Please use Dec. to
catch up on a
recorded training
*No Training
in June

★ INDICATES A PATNC QUALITY
STANDARD TRAINING REQUIREMENT

 **kpata**
KANSAS PARTNERSHIP FOR TRAINING AND ADVANCEMENT

KPATA Trainings

ZOOM SAFE SLEEP TRAINING

Provided for free by Safe Sleep
Instructor: Brittany Denson

September
17th, 2026
2:00–3:00 pm

✓ Meets Bright Futures Safe
Sleep Requirements

REGISTER HERE



TRAINING FOR KPATA MEMBERS



KPATA Trainings



Sarah Behrens, PhD, LMSW

Fostering Social-Emotional Development in Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: Strategies and Best Practices

Objectives:

Describe social-emotional development and explain why it is foundational to young children's learning, relationships, behavior, and overall well-being.

Recognize key aspects of social-emotional development in young children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), including how developmental pathways may vary across children and the role of responsive caregiver-child relationships in supporting development.

Identify evidence-informed strategies that support social-emotional development, emotional regulation, communication, social engagement, and positive caregiver-child interactions for young children with ASD.

Apply coaching practices during home visits to help caregivers embed social-emotional development strategies into everyday routines, play, and family interactions.

Support families in creating nurturing, inclusive environments that build on children's strengths, respond to individual needs, and promote positive social-emotional growth and participation in home and community settings.

BIO

Sarah Behrens, PhD, MSW is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Kansas Medical Center whose research focuses on advancing early relational health during pediatric well-child visits. Her work centers on implementing equitable, family-centered interventions in primary care to support social-emotional development, strengthen caregiver-child relationships, and improve preventive health outcomes. She has a background as a school social worker and researcher in community-based early childhood programs.

Prior to her doctoral training, Sarah served as a project coordinator supporting Kansas Part C early intervention programs and school-based autism teams. In this role, she led the development and implementation of statewide initiatives designed to improve access to timely autism identification and diagnostic services, helping connect children and families to needed supports earlier in development.

Sarah has contributed to NIH- and IES-funded studies on language and social-emotional development, including PC TALK, PRISM, and MIECHV initiatives. She is currently involved in the Talk With Me Baby clinical trial, with a long-term goal of leading translational research that transforms pediatric preventive care by embedding developmental and relational health promotion into routine practice.

JOIN US!

September 10th
1:00-2:30 PM

REGISTER NOW

Training for KPATA Members



KPATA Trainings



Training for KPATA Members

Building a Strong Literacy Foundation: Time, Talk and Tools

Presented By: Dr. Laurie J. Curtis/KSDE



Objectives:

1. Understand what Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) is and the incidence of DLD - it is more common than autism and there is much less knowledge about it in our schools!
2. Identify common characteristics of children with DLD
3. Explore early language assessment opportunities during play at home or school
4. Share strategies that can help children with DLD and Intentionally build oral language and comprehension skills through time at home and/or in play

**October 15th
1:00-3:00 PM**



Managing Challenging Behaviors

Putting it All Together: Skillfully Managing Challenging Behaviors in the Moment

A training provided by: **The Discovery Source**
There is no fee associated with this event.

SEPTEMBER 15

1:00–3:00 PM

VIRTUAL

Many hours of training and workshops focused on challenging behavior can seem to “disappear” when educators are facing a difficult situation in the moment! This training brings it all together by validating educators’ concerns and integrating effective social emotional practices into everyday schedules and routines. Participants will explore how to make the most of available resources and prior knowledge to skillfully de-escalate challenging behavior while keeping teaching and learning moving forward. This KCCTO-supported course is offered in partnership with The Discovery Source and facilitated by one of their Professional Development Specialists. The course is designed especially for directors, trainers, coaches, and consultants who support direct care providers with implementing effective practices, while remaining open to anyone who works directly with children.



**Reserve a
spot now!**



KCCTO
Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

College of Health and
Human Sciences



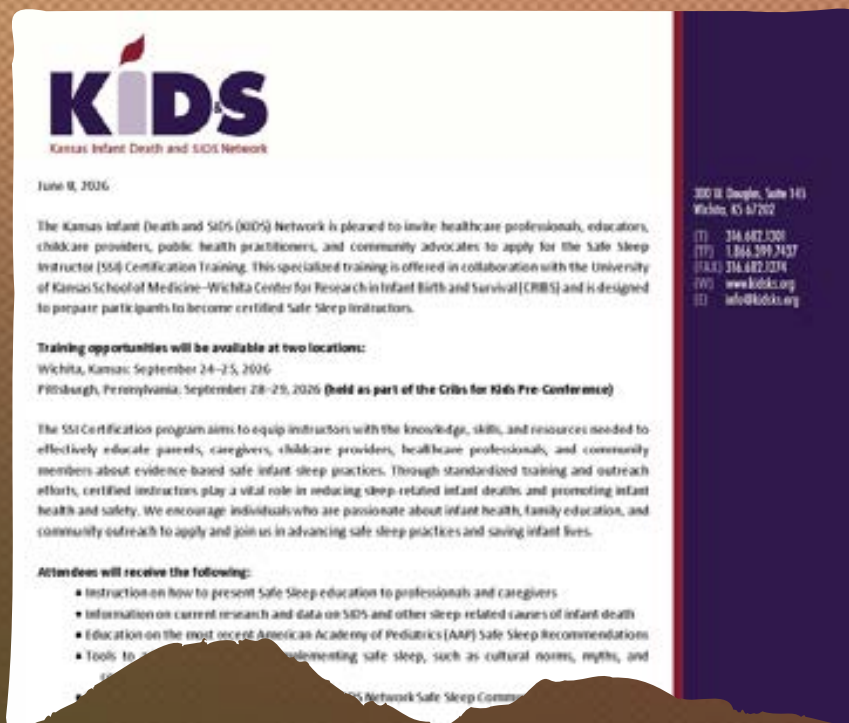
SSI Training

SAFE SLEEP INSTRUCTOR (SSI) CERTIFICATION TRAINING

THE KANSAS INFANT DEATH AND SIDS (KIDS) NETWORK IS PLEASED TO INVITE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS, EDUCATORS, CHILDCARE PROVIDERS, PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTITIONERS, AND COMMUNITY ADVOCATES TO APPLY FOR THE SAFE SLEEP INSTRUCTOR (SSI) CERTIFICATION TRAINING.

**TRAINING OPPORTUNITY IN WICHITA, KS:
SEPTEMBER 24–25, 2026**

[DOWNLOAD LETTER](#)



[REGISTER HERE](#)



CONNECT WITH OUR TEAM

Have questions about our program, eligibility, or how to get involved? Whether you are a family, an FFN provider, or a community partner, we would love to hear from you. Together, we are building a stronger Kansas for our children.

Reach out to us at:

Becky Stewart/Program Director
rstewart@kpata.org
913-340-4574

Maria Rios/Outreach-Recruitment
Specialist
mrios@kpata.org
913-731-4834



FACEBOOK
CLICK OR SCAN



OUR WEBSITE
CLICK OR SCAN



INSTAGRAM
CLICK OR SCAN



Bucks for Buckles



1000 SW Jackson St.
Suite 230
Topeka, Kansas 66612

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 20, 2026

Contacts: Cherie Sage, 785-640-8614

Bucks Rewarded to Drivers Who Buckle Up

Safe Kids Kansas, State Farm, KDOT and KDHE Partner up for Safety Message

Thousands of vehicles will travel the Kansas roadways during the Labor Day weekend. Many families will head out for the long weekend as summer ends and the school year begins. Safe Kids Kansas, in partnership with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), State Farm Insurance and the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), want to encourage families to buckle up and drive safely to protect their most important cargo, their families.

This year, Aug. 31 - Sept. 13, a safety belt awareness campaign called "Bucks for Buckles" will be held in 44 cities across Kansas. Local volunteers will distribute dollar bills to drivers who have all occupants buckled up securely in their vehicles. Those riding unrestrained will receive educational materials about the effectiveness of seat belts and child safety seats when it comes to saving lives and reducing injuries.

"Every trip you take in a vehicle has some risk of being involved in a crash," Safe Kids Kansas State Director Cherie Sage said. "That's why it's so important to be prepared by wearing your seat belt and using appropriate child safety seats and booster seats for every person, on every ride."

According to the KDOT 2025 Occupant Protection Observation Survey, 84.7% of Kansans were wearing their seat belts, compared to the national average of 91% in 2024. Kansas saw a 1.5% decrease from 2024 to 2025. Seat belts save more than 15,000 lives yearly and are the best defense against drunk, aggressive and distracted drivers.

"Wearing a seat belt can cut your risk of a serious injury in a vehicle crash by up to 50%," Sage said. "It takes just a few seconds to buckle up, and that simple step can help save your life. Make it a habit every time you get in the vehicle."

For more information about safety belts or child safety seat use, call 785-296-1223 or visit SafeKidsKansas.org, SafeKids.org or find us on Facebook and Instagram: @safekidskansas.

###

VISIT SAFE KIDS



KS Home Visiting Conference

Registration Open!



A promotional poster for the Kansas Home Visiting Conference. The poster features a blue and yellow color scheme with geometric shapes and dotted patterns. At the top left is the Kansas Home Visiting logo, which includes a stylized house and a person. To the right, a dark blue oval contains the text 'REGISTRATION OPEN!' in white. Below this, a large yellow oval contains the text 'KANSAS HOME VISITING' in blue, with 'Conference' written in a blue script font underneath. The date 'SEPTEMBER 22, 2026' is displayed in a blue oval, flanked by yellow chevron arrows. Below the date, a dark blue oval contains the text '9AM TILL 3:30PM'. In the bottom left, a yellow oval contains the text 'IN PERSON!'. Below this, there are six white rounded rectangles arranged in a 3x2 grid, each containing a city name: CHANUTE, HAYS, GARDEN CITY, KANSAS CITY, TOPEKA, and WICHITA. To the right of the city names is a QR code. The bottom of the poster has a row of small blue dots.

KANSAS HOME VISITING
Conference

REGISTRATION OPEN!

SEPTEMBER 22, 2026

9AM TILL 3:30PM

IN PERSON!

CHANUTE HAYS
GARDEN CITY KANSAS CITY
TOPEKA WICHITA



Save the Date

KAIMH Conference 2027

IF YOU PROVIDE MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION, HOME VISITATION, EARLY EDUCATION, COACHING, INTERVENTION, RESEARCH OR CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, THIS CONFERENCE IS FOR YOU!



KAIMH
CONFERENCE
2027



April 22-23



Salina. KS

Save the Date!

Parent Leadership Conference Registration Open!

Parent Leadership **CONFERENCE** 2026

Resilient Families, Healthy Futures



**A FREE day of learning,
connection and fun for
parents like you!**

**Saturday, Sept. 19
9:30 AM – 4:30 PM**

**First United Methodist
Church**

122 N 8th St | Salina, KS 67401

*Free childcare is available on-site for children
birth to age 5 with age-appropriate activities.
One-on-one care is not provided.*

REGISTER NOW



RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!

Register now: 2026PLC.eventbrite.com

For questions, contact Rachal Harper at rharper@kcsf.org or 316.942.4261 x1343.

SUPPORT FOR THE 2026 CONFERENCE PROVIDED BY:



**DOWNLOAD
SPANISH FLYER**



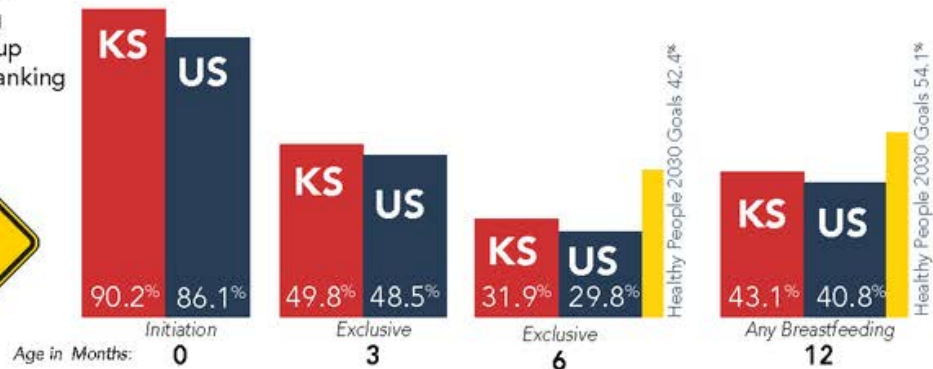
State of Breastfeeding in KS



STATE OF BREASTFEEDING IN KANSAS 2026

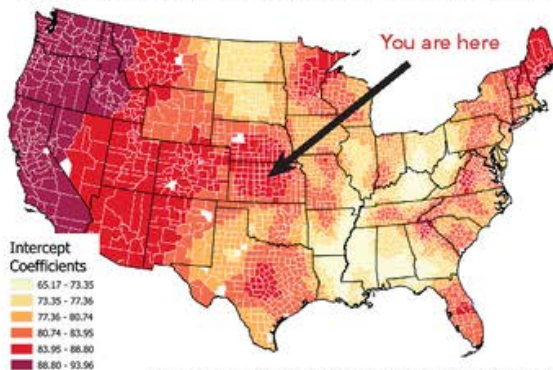


Kansas now ranks **13th** in the nation for breastfeeding initiation. This is up from last year's ranking of 26th!



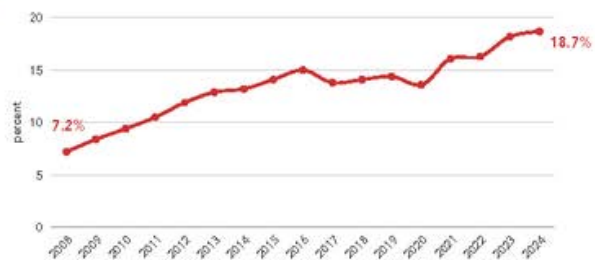
Source: CDC's National Immunization Survey, babies born 2023

COUNTY-LEVEL BASELINE BREASTFEEDING INITIATION RATES



Source: Spatial inequalities in breastfeeding initiation in the United States: A multiscale analysis of county-level determinants PLOS, July 15, 2026

PERCENTAGE OF KANSAS BABIES ON WIC BREASTFEEDING EXCLUSIVELY AT AGE 6 MONTHS



Source: Kansas Department of Health and Environment 2024

BREASTFEEDING INITIATION BY COUNTY

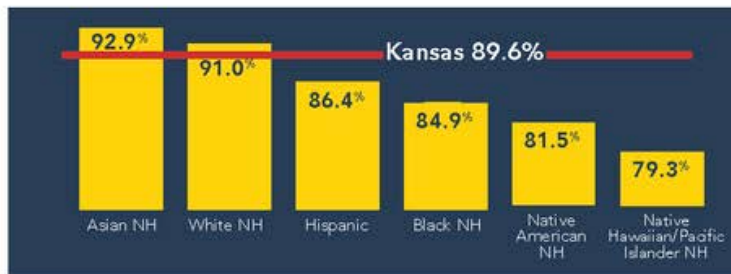


Source: Birth Certificate Data, 2022-2024
Bureau of Epidemiology and Public Health Informatics, KDHE



State of Breastfeeding in KS

THERE'S WORK TO BE DONE



Note: NH=non-Hispanic. Source: Birth Certificate Data, 2022-2024, Bureau of Epidemiology and Public Health Informatics, Kansas Department of Health and Environment

BREASTFEEDING INITIATION RACE AND ETHNICITY

INDIVIDUALS CAN:

- Join or form a local breastfeeding coalition. Directory of Kansas Breastfeeding Coalitions ksbreastfeeding.org/breastfeeding-coalitions-in-kansas/.
- Find breastfeeding help near them by entering a zip code in the KBC's Local Breastfeeding Resource Directory: ksbreastfeeding.org/local-resource-directory/.
- Ask about "High 5 for Mom & Baby" recognition or Baby-Friendly designation when choosing a hospital.
- Smile at a parent breastfeeding in public.
- Choose designated "Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Providers." For listings visit: ks.childcareaware.org/breastfeeding-friendly-child-care/.
- Support businesses displaying the "Breastfeeding Welcome Here" decals. ksbreastfeeding.org/public-breastfeeding-in-kansas/.
- Learn about breastfeeding inequities: ksbreastfeeding.org/breastfeeding-initiatives-in-kansas/.

HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS CAN:

- Apply to become a "Breastfeeding Friendly Physician Practice:" <https://ksbreastfeeding.org/breastfeeding-friendly-physician-practice-designation>.
- Attend breastfeeding education opportunities listed at: ksbreastfeeding.org/breastfeeding-classes-in-kansas/.
- Counsel parents prenatally and encourage them to participate in prenatal breastfeeding education. sph.unc.edu/cgbi/ready-set-baby-live-online-classes/.
- Encourage physician practices to adopt breastfeeding supportive practices. Find these at ksbreastfeeding.org/lactation-resources-in-kansas/.
- Learn about breastfeeding inequities: ksbreastfeeding.org/breastfeeding-initiatives-in-kansas/.

BUSINESSES CAN:

- Enroll in the "Breastfeeding Welcome Here" window cling available at ksbreastfeeding.org/public-breastfeeding-in-kansas/.
- Support breastfeeding employees in the workplace: For more information about how, visit kansasbusinesscase.com.
- Participate in local and state breastfeeding coalitions.
- Confirm employee insurance covers double electric breast pump.
- Provide 12 weeks of paid family leave.
- Learn about breastfeeding inequities: ksbreastfeeding.org/breastfeeding-initiatives-in-kansas/.

HOSPITALS CAN:

- Become recognized as a "High 5 for Mom & Baby Premier" hospital by implementing the five evidence-based maternity care practices: high5kansas.org.
- Become designated a "Baby-Friendly Hospital" by implementing the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding. babyfriendlyusa.org.
- Support staff to learn more about breastfeeding. Breastfeeding courses available through the KBC at: ksbreastfeeding.org/breastfeeding-classes-in-kansas/.
- Learn about breastfeeding inequities: ksbreastfeeding.org/breastfeeding-initiatives-in-kansas/.

STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENTS CAN:

- Support paid family leave to significantly increase breastfeeding duration rates. paidleaveKS.org
- Help hospitals connect parents to community breastfeeding resources after having a baby.
- Support and participate in local breastfeeding coalitions.
- Learn about breastfeeding inequities: ksbreastfeeding.org/breastfeeding-initiatives-in-kansas/.



Your donation helps support our work to create a landscape of breastfeeding support. Scan the QR code or click [HERE](#).



Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition, Inc.

Publication date: 09/2026



ksbreastfeeding.org

what have we been up to?

Did
YOU KNOW?



The upcoming **Kansas Home Visiting Conference** is built from the ground up to reflect your daily reality in the field! **KPATA** has been collaborating closely with state coordinators to design an agenda that directly targets the unique

challenges and professional milestones of parent educators. When you gather at your regional site on **September 22**, every piece of content—from skill-building workshops to networking blocks—will bear the stamp of KPATA's commitment to high-quality professional development.



September

UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

- 10TH - ASD TRAINING
- 17TH - SAFE SLEEP TRAINING
- 18TH - KPATA BOARD MEETING
- 24TH - BRIGHT FUTURES PROGRAM MEETING

OCTOBER

- 15TH - EARL LITERACY TRAINING
- 16TH - KPATA BOARD MEETING

