

KAIRS Executive Committee 2004-2005

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The Independent School, Wichita

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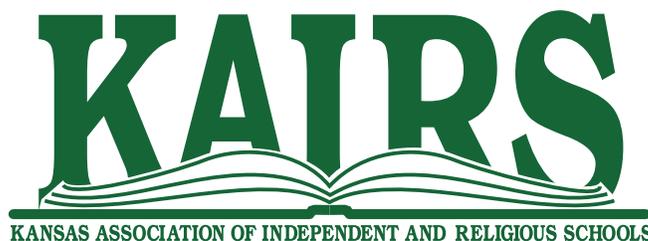
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KAIRS Celebrates 35th Year

In 1970, non-public schools in Kansas joined together to form KANS (Kansas Association of Non-Public Schools). By 1989, KANS had incorporated and ten years later, the name was changed to KAIRS (Kansas Association of Religious and Independent Schools). KAIRS was founded to ensure that children attending religious and independent schools would be treated equitably in educational law, policy and programs.

KAIRS is comprised of Christian, Catholic, Independent, Lutheran and Seventh-day Adventist schools.

2004 was filled with legislative issues that will directly affect many of our member schools. We saw breakthroughs in how first-year teachers might be accredited in our schools. A long-planned Hall of Fame, which will honor outstanding career educators, came to fruition. Our website was launched.

Accreditation of First-Year Teachers

This year KAIRS President Karen Norton worked closely



At the Annual Meeting in February, KAIRS members elect the Executive Committee for the following academic year. From left, sitting: Bill Dieckhoff, Secretary; Nick Compagnone, Vice President; standing: David Swank, Treasurer; Karen Norton, President; Judy Pitts, Annual Meeting Secretary.

with Dr. Andy Tompkins, Commissioner of Education for the State of Kansas, to allow first-year teachers to work in schools that are accredited by alternate accrediting agencies in order to qualify for their five-year license.

The Professional Standards Board has now introduced a proposal that will allow this to happen and the proposal is cur-

rently waiting for approval by the State Board of Education.

Hall of Fame

It has long been the desire of KAIRS to recognize the outstanding life-long teachers and administrators who have devoted their lives to education in the non-public setting. This February, KAIRS will welcome

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From the KAIRS President —

Greetings from the heart of Kansas. We are pleased to present our 2005 KAIRS Annual Report.

2004 was a worthwhile and encouraging year for KAIRS. We saw Federal legislation passed that should provide continued assistance to our schools. Our annual and quarterly meetings featured such speakers as Joe McTighe, the Executive Director of CAPE, (Council of American Private Education) and Nancy Bolz, State Director for the Kansas North Central Association.

Perhaps the most beneficial experience of the year involved an on-going dialogue, in regard to new teachers, with Andy Tompkins, Kansas

Commissioner of Education. Thanks to that dialogue, the Professional Standards Board has now introduced a proposal that will allow first-year teachers to teach in schools that are accredited by specific agencies and thus qualify for their five-year license. The proposal is currently waiting for approval by the State Board of Education.

KAIRS continues to strive toward building collaboration between private schools and the State Department of Education, all for the improvement of education for children. Our next year promises to be even more exciting.

— Karen Norton

First Hall of Fame Members Inducted

KAIRS Founders

In 1970, Robert Eggold, James Thiessen and Vince DeCoursey joined together to form the Kansas Association of Non-Public Schools (KANS). The organization was formed to promote the passage of legislation that would provide acceptable governmental aid to non-public schools and a spirit of cooperation among non-public schools, the State Legislature and Kansas State Department of Education.

Together, these three men would sit on the KANS executive board for the next two decades and work for the betterment of non-public schools in Kansas.



Robert (Bob) Eggold was a vital Lutheran educational administrator and teacher for more than 40 years. He served the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod in Kansas for the final 20 of those years as executive director for education and youth ministry. During the first part of his career, he worked as teacher and principal and was responsible for organizing five Lutheran elementary schools in Missouri, Wisconsin and Michigan. He was the KANS chairman for 20 years, 1969-89.

Mr. Eggold received his B.S. in education (1951) from Concordia University in River Forest, Illinois and a master's degree in educational administration (1958) from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. His wife, Elaine, and he have three sons.



James Thiessen has been a faithful and outstanding Christian educator for more than 40 years. He began his career in 1960 as a Bible academy principal and teacher, but Mr. Thiessen spent the majority of his career, from 1966 to 1994, as superintendent of Berean Academy in Elbing. As a founder of KANS, he served as secretary on the KANS executive board for 20 years, 1970-1990.

Mr. Thiessen graduated with a B.S. from Grace University in Omaha, NE in 1953. He earned a second B.A. (1956) and his M.A. (1958) from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. He is married to Gladys and they have five children.

Vincent DeCoursey, *not-pictured*, (1917-1991) was a businessman in the dairy industry for most of his career. When he retired in the late 1960s, he became a founder and Executive Director of Kansas Catholic Conference and dedicated much of the remainder of his life

to a highly important personal issue: education. He was a past president of the National Association of State Catholic Conference Directors and a former member of the U.S. Catholic Conference Committee.

Mr. DeCoursey received his B.S. (1939) in finance from the University of Notre Dame. He and his wife, Helen, were married for 50 years and had six boys, all of whom graduated from Notre Dame. In a testimony to the emphasis Mr. DeCoursey placed on education, all his children obtained advanced degrees.



Bunny Hill has a natural gift for teaching, which has manifested itself during her outstanding 33 years at Wichita Collegiate. Currently the Head of Middle School, Mrs. Hill has also served as Dean of Students, Head of Upper School and acting Head of School. Her teaching awards include the 1991 University of Kansas College of Liberal Arts and Science High School Teacher Recognition Award.

An educational innovator, Mrs. Hill created a series of Brown Bag Discussions for parents in the Wichita community, which dealt with developmental issues of young adolescents. This became the Young Adolescent Development Series of workshops for parents and educators and is still operating today.

Mrs. Hill received her B.A. from McPherson College (1969) and her M.A. from Wichita State University (1980). Bunny is married to Patrick and they have three children. ■

KAIRS 2005 Statistics

Enrollment of all KAIRS Schools	21,700
Number of Member Schools.....	108
Families Represented	14,654
Internet Access in Classrooms....	90% of 1,413 classrooms
High School Graduates.....	938
Average ACT Score	23.3
Full-time Teachers	1,303
Teachers with a Master's Degree.....	414 (32%)
Savings to Kansas Taxpayers.....	\$98.1 million*
(Foregone State Aid estimated at \$5,300 in general state aid per pupil.)	

*If all KAIRS children were enrolled in public schools.

Federal Education Legislation Impacts KAIRS

This past year, the United States Congress took center stage when it came to public policy that affected KAIRS member schools. Three areas in particular were positively resolved from KAIRS perspective.

IDEA

The reauthorization of special education legislation (IDEA) received a large amount of attention from all educators, especially when it took three years instead of one to rewrite the legislation.

Because IDEA was reauthorized, KAIRS member schools realized a significant victory when the legislation directed that students be served in the district where they attend school rather than in the district where they reside. This legislation should make it possible for each KAIRS school to work with just one public school system for special education purposes.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT

The ramifications of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) continue to be felt by KAIRS member schools. NCLB requires that every child be proficient in reading and mathematics, and sets targets for the percentage of students who must test as proficient or above, or lose state accreditation.

This year, the effect of NCLB was felt in the funding for the Title programs. Title I (compensatory reading and math tutoring) programs now must meet high expectations for student improvement. Title V (supplementary materials) funds were nearly eliminated before a grassroots effort by parents and educators convinced a congressional committee to restore two-thirds of the previous year's allocation.

E-RATE

Still a third program impacted in the federal arena was E-rate, the program in which telecommunications companies must deduct a nominal amount from each customer's bill to fund technology enhancements for schools and libraries according to a sliding scale based on the percentage of low income families in the schools.

Last fall, all E-rate applications were frozen until the FCC and the commission that operates the E-rate were able to resolve funding problems. Presently, schools can still apply for money for the current year and can apply for discounts on next year's purchases as well. ■

– Bob Voboril, KAIRS Public Policy Coordinator

Focus for 2005

In 2005, the focus will switch to the Kansas Legislature. First, the legislature will have to respond to a Kansas Supreme Court decision that Kansas public schools are not funded fairly. Hopefully, KAIRS members will have the opportunity to ask for consideration for our at-risk, special needs, and low-income students.

Secondly, the Kansas special education legislation must be rewritten to incorporate the requirements of the reauthorized IDEA legislation. This will have to be watched closely by KAIRS members to ensure that the Kansas state rights for KAIRS students remain intact.

35th Year

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three charter members and one inductee. The Hall of Fame will reside on our website. Our inductees will be honored at the Hall of Fame Banquet at the 2005 Annual Meeting. (See p. 2 for additional information.)

Membership Education

In 2004, guest speakers provided insights at KAIRS quarterly meetings. The April meeting featured Commissioner of Education for the State of Kansas, Dr. Andy Tompkins, who addressed the pressing issue of licensure for first-time teachers in non-public schools.

Dr. Nancy Bolz, Kansas Director for North Central Association spoke at the September meeting. She gave a detailed explanation of NCA and how the association benefits Kansas' schools.

Mike Neal, Ed.D, Assistant Dean for Academic Services for the University of Kansas, addressed members in November, assuring them that KU seeks to place KU students in non-public schools for student teaching experiences.

Communications

KAIRS communicates with its members largely through the monthly electronic *KAIRS Today* newsletter and an annual report. Our Public Policy Coordinator, Bob Voboril, also distributes monthly electronic updates to our public policy liaisons.

The creation and launching of the website, kairs.org was designed to enhance our communication with audiences outside of our membership.

Public Policy Activities

Bob Voboril, KAIRS Public Policy Coordinator, continued

to work with the KAIRS local school public policy liaisons (an internal network of volunteer member-school parents) and distributed monthly electronic updates to this group. Bob was also named to represent religious and independent schools on the KSDE Title I Committee of Practitioners that advises KSDE regarding that program.

Annual Meeting

Despite a Kansas snowstorm, the 2004 Topeka meeting proved to be an excellent source of helpful information for all who attended. The keynote speaker, Joe McTighe, president, Council for American Private Education, discussed the importance of private schools in providing real diversity, without which parents are robbed of the right to direct the upbringing of their children.

Alan Beam, principal, Holton High School and Kal-Tech Men-

tor, provided an intriguing look at the characteristics of the new Millennials and the Gen Y's.

Gary Musselman, executive director, Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA), spoke with high school administrators, giving helpful insights. Celeste Balog, development director, and Mark Bohm, admissions director, The Independent School in Wichita, led a helpful session on marketing.

Distinguished Teacher Awards

Every year, KAIRS pays tribute to its outstanding teachers with each school system honoring one teacher. These men and women are recognized at the Hall of Fame Banquet at the February KAIRS Annual Meeting. The winners are also featured on our web site, kairs.org. (Please see page 4 for the 2005 winners. ■

KAIRS Distinguished Teachers 2005

Christian Schools



Linda Smith has been an outstanding first through fourth grade teacher, and director for both K-8 choral music and K-6 violin during the past 20 years at Maranatha Academy in Shawnee. Her optimistic spirit has served her well as she leads worship for chapels, and constructs creative projects with her students. Mrs. Smith received her B.A. in music education (1963) and her elementary education certification (1966) from Ottawa University.

"Mrs. Smith is an 'extra-mile' teacher," says Laura Burch, Maranatha Principal. "She meets the needs of each child she teaches. To that end she works with counselors and learning center teachers, as well as researching literature, to find the answers she needs. She partners with parents to accomplish the goals she sets for students."

Diocese of Dodge City



Rhonda Wurst is responsible for quadrupling the size of the technology department at St. Mary's Catholic School in Garden City, where she has served as the librarian (1994-2003), computer and physical education teacher since 1994. Last year, her dedication included working with community organizations to obtain the proper equipment for the new track program. She earned a bachelor's of science from Kansas State University in 1976.

"Rhonda is a master of time management, multi-tasking and classroom administration," says Trina Delgado, St. Mary's Catholic School Principal. "Each year, there is a library to prepare, athletic equipment to purchase and a technology program to oversee. Rhonda continually strives for the establishment and betterment of these very important programs within our school."

Independent Schools



Dr. Don Schawang teaches speech, drama and ninth grade English, and also serves as Fine Arts Chair at Bishop Seabury Academy in Lawrence. Since 2000, Dr. Schawang has taught literature, directed performances of Shakespeare and coached forensics. He holds a B.A. in English and creative writing (1990) and an M.A. in English and American literature (1992) from Wichita State University and a doctorate in theatre and film from the University of Kansas (2001).

"Dr. Schawang is a tremendous teacher and a phenomenal drama coach," Chris Carter, Bishop Seabury Head of School, says. "His academic training would suggest that he should be teaching on a college campus. But Dr. Schawang knows what an impact he can have on a young person's life by teaching high school."

Lutheran Schools



Mrs. Terri Vanwey has been the beloved middle school language arts teacher at Holy Cross Lutheran School in Wichita for the past 28 years. She has continually built strong relationships with her students in the classroom and as an athletic coach. Mrs. Vanwey advises students regarding their move to high school and makes it a priority to attend her students' high school functions. She received her Bachelor of Arts in education (1974) and a master's of library science (1975) from Emporia State University.

Mr. Bill Dieckhoff, Holy Cross Principal, says, "She has very high expectations from each of her students. They rise to the occasion and in turn are blessed with the basics of writing, which results in their ability to produce excellent term papers and other forms of writing."

Diocese of Salina



Sister Marie Kelley has faithfully served Sacred Heart High School in Salina for the past 60 years. During her tenure, she has taught chemistry, biology, home economics, physics, health, English and religion, and also worked in the Development Office. Her organization and pursuit of excellence enabled her students to succeed. She obtained a B.S. in food and nutrition from Marymount College (1945), an M.A. in human nutrition, clothing and textiles from Kansas State University (1953) and an M.S. in physics from Notre Dame University (1962).

"Sister Marie's professional demeanor maintained a fine balance of being understanding and sympathetic while remaining consistent and firm," John Krajicek, Sacred Heart High School Principal, says. "She continually sustained high expectations for all her students, pushing them to go further than they ever thought possible."

Diocese of Wichita



Marcia Dillon has taught social studies and religion at Trinity Catholic High School in Hutchinson since 1982, and was the 2002 Kansas State Social Studies Teacher of the Year. She helps her students relate current events to their Catholic faith, and daily prayers are the standard for her classes. Mrs. Dillon received her B.A. in history (1982) from St. Mary of the Plains College, located in Dodge City.

"Mrs. Dillon constantly looks for ways to help all students find real success in the classroom. She not only cares about their academic progress but more importantly about their personal spiritual life," Brian Cordel, Trinity High School Principal, explains. "She has a wealth of knowledge and is specifically strong in consistently integrating values and our faith in each lesson."

Mission

Through its common commitment to quality education, KAIRS serves to unify its member schools while respecting their diversity. KAIRS provides a framework for communication and cooperation among independent and religious schools in the state of Kansas, preschool through secondary. In addition, KAIRS strives to maintain productive relationships with the Kansas State Board of Education, the Kansas Department of Education, the Kansas Board of Regents, the local, state, and federal governments, and other agencies that impact quality education.