

## KAIRS Perspective

***Our commitment*** to the total formation of the human person, rooted in spiritual values, makes our schools unique and distinctive. The highest priority of KAIRS is that independent and religious schools remain free to pursue their missions while supporting Kansas's legitimate concern for the quality of education.

Parents are the first and best educators of their children, and they should be able to choose the most appropriate school for their children without financial penalty. KAIRS, therefore, believes that all parents and students should be treated equitably in educational policies and regulations and access to those government-funded services and programs to which they are entitled as residents, citizens, and taxpayers.

We believe that discrimination against parents who choose religious or independent schools for their children has been detrimental to educational achievement as a whole, and, in particular, for those who have the fewest choices: low-income families. We believe that a more neutral stance that respects local decision making, shared religious and community values, and high expectations for every child would benefit all families and all schools.

## State Board of Education

### ***Accreditation***

KAIRS urges all member schools to maintain accreditation by a reputable accrediting body. More than 40 states recognize several different models of accreditation without penalizing non-state-accredited schools, and we believe Kansas would benefit from such an approach as well.

### ***Access to Federally Funded Services***

The Kansas State Board of Education should designate an official to serve as a liaison to keep religious and independent schools informed about federally funded services and programs and to arbitrate inter-district disagreements.

## State Board of Regents

### ***Qualified Admissions***

KAIRS supports higher admission standards for college students but opposes differential treatment for students who graduate from Kansas schools accredited by a process other than Quality Performance Accreditation.

## Legislature

### ***Teacher Licensure and Renewal***

KAIRS believes that teachers should undergo rigorous preparation and ongoing formation. Teachers should be able to use their experience in any school accredited by a reputable accrediting agency in order to obtain and renew professional licenses. In addition, any school accredited by a reputable accrediting agency should be allowed to form a Professional Development Council in order to assist their teachers in license renewal.

### ***Special Education***

The current state special education laws should be enforced and fully funded. Whenever possible, services should be provided on-site by the district where the student attends school.

### ***Teacher Tax Credit***

We support continuation of the federal tax credit that reimburses teachers for out-of-pocket expenses incurred as part of their teaching duties.

### ***School Funding***

Following the precedents set in higher education and statewide funding formulas, KAIRS recommends that funding for all programs, state and federal, follow the individual, not the system. A voucher concept, particularly one that assists students from lower-income families, is one possible approach, as long as it respects each school's unique mission.

## Parent Tax Credits

KAIRS recognizes that parents of students in all school settings incur educational expenses. We believe that all parents should be able to receive a tax credit for their legitimate educational expenses, including tuition.

## Kansas State High School Activities Association

KAIRS is committed to the value of high school activities that are free from cheating or recruiting of athletes. KAIRS proposes that KSHSAA continues with a compliance committee composed of public and KAIRS-member representatives to assist KAIRS in investigating any allegation of violations of KSHSAA rules by any member institution, public or non-public



# KAIRS Profile

## Schools

116..... Elementary/Middle Schools  
23..... High Schools  
1 ..... Early Childhood Center

## Students (35,006) Represented by the following Schools and Associations:

Assoc. of Christian Schools International  
Catholic:  
*Dodge City Catholic Diocese*  
*Kansas City, KS Catholic Archdiocese*  
*Salina Catholic Diocese*  
*Wichita Catholic Diocese*  
Independent  
Lutheran Schools-Missouri Synod  
Seventh-day Adventist

## Teachers

2,390 full-time teachers

## Grade Levels

Pre-school..... 2,841  
Grades K-6 ..... 19,775  
Grades 7-12 ..... 13,104

Families: 22,260

## Accrediting Organizations:

ACSI – Assoc of Christian Schools International  
ISACS – Independent School Association of the Central States  
KSDE – Kansas State Department of Education  
NCA – North Central Association  
NLSA – National Lutheran School Accreditation  
QPA – Quality Performance Accreditation  
SDA – North American Division Seventh-day Adventists



2009 – 2010

# Public Policy Agenda

State Board of Education

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State Board of Regents

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Legislature

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Kansas State High School Activities Association