

# Press Release

for immediate release

## Kansas NEA officers elected to three-year terms

**Topeka** - KNEA President Mark Farr, Vice President Sherri Schwanz and Secretary Treasurer Kimberly Howard officially begin new three-year terms in office on July 15, 2015. Elections were held among members statewide with results certified by the KNEA Executive Board in April. President Farr, Vice President Schwanz and Secretary-Treasurer Howard have been serving in their current roles since shortly after the untimely passing of then-KNEA President Karen Godfrey in July of 2014.

KNEA's officers and Executive Board work to promote and ensure quality within the professional education community from K-12 through higher education. KNEA members share a common dedication and vision for strong public schools, professional growth and student success.

**“Everything we’re doing now, our fight to defend our public schools, is offering a real-life lesson to the people we dedicate our careers to. Our students see us modeling democracy, standing up for our beliefs and fighting for equality and fairness. As long as we always take pride in delivering that lesson, the future for all Kansans is bright.” -Mark Farr, KNEA President**

**KNEA President Mark Farr** is a science teacher from Nickerson High School in the USD 309 Nickerson-South Hutchinson School District. A lifelong Kansan, Mark is not only a leader in his school but also in his community where he has served as a first responder and volunteer firefighter. As an accomplished teacher in his district, Mark has worked extensively promoting innovative instructional methods for hands-on science, developed after-school tutoring and enrichment programs and extended his teaching skills as an instructor at the higher education level.

President Farr's experience as a member and leader within KNEA is equally extensive. Mark has served as president, building representative, treasurer, and chief negotiator for EA 309, his local KNEA affiliate. At the state and national levels, Mark has been an active leader in the professional development, political advocacy and organizational leadership arenas. Prior to being elected KNEA president, Mark served two years as vice president and three years as KNEA secretary-treasurer.



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**KNEA Vice President Sherri Schwanz** is a sixth- through eighth-grade choral music and music appreciation teacher in the Lansing USD469 Middle School. Education has been an integral part of Sherri's life; her grandmother was a longtime educator as were numerous aunts and uncles, and her mother worked as a paraprofessional during Sherri's childhood.

Sherri has been involved in leadership throughout the past 15 years. As a mentor to new teachers, a site council representative and professional development facilitator, Sherri has been active within her district. Within her local association, Sherri has served as president, building representative and as a member of its negotiating team.

**KNEA Secretary-Treasurer Kimberly Howard** is an ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) teacher at Washington Elementary in USD 259 Wichita Public Schools. Prior to teaching at Washington, she taught kindergarten at Griffith Elementary, also in Wichita. In her school, Kimberly serves on the leadership team and is the building representative for her local association, The United Teachers of Wichita. She has also served on the USD 259 Professional Development Council. As a leader in her profession, Kimberly has undertaken many duties at UTW (United Teachers of Wichita), KNEA and NEA (National Education Association).

Additional Information & Portraits of KNEA Officers Available Here: <http://www.knea.org/home/234.htm>

Teachers, education support professionals, pre-service teachers, higher education professionals and retired educators compose KNEA's membership. Together, we work as unapologetic advocates for Kansas public schools, students and our profession. KNEA's core values include: Equal Opportunity, A Just Society, Democracy, Professionalism, Partnership and Collective Action.

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