Kansas National Education Association 2026-2027 Strategic Focus Grant Application

The Kansas NEA budget provides grants to locals within the union working to advance our KNEA Goals, as identified in the KNEA Operational Plan and grounded in our Core Values.

VISION

KNEA works to cultivate fully resourced, supportive and inclusive public education communities that honor the dignity of all people.

MISSION

KNEA is a statewide union, empowering educators to organize for the strong public schools our communities deserve.

CORE VALUES

Equitable Opportunity | A Just Society | Democracy | Professionalism | Partnership | Solidarity and Collective Action

GOALS

- KNEA will advocate for equitable access to public education across Kansas with full state funding for both general and special education.
- KNEA will build organizational capacity to leverage collective resources by increasing membership to more than 20,000 active members.
- KNEA will partner with locals to organize support staff by advancing the Education Support Professional (ESP) Bill of Rights and secure collective bargaining recognition, which includes a living wage.
- KNEA will secure an increase of at least 10% in the statewide average salary for PK-12 certified staff and higher education faculty.

GRANTS ARE FOR ...

- Locals that have a KNEA Member Recruitment, Retention and Engagement (Membership Plan) on file with the KNEA Associate Executive Director.
- Innovative or out-of-the-box activities to support locals in implementing KNEA's Strategic Goals, including ESP Organizing.
- The project cannot be funded independently by a local or UniServ.
- Completed within one year of the grant being approved by the KNEA Strategic Focus Grant committee, with any unused funds forfeited to fund other projects.
- Before you change activities, seek a modification first. Modifications to approved projects are welcome and encouraged during the implementation of the approved grant.

GRANTS ARE NOT FOR ...

- New staff orientation events.
- Routine local programming.
- If a local or UniServ has previously received a KNEA Strategic Focus Grant, in general, the local project will not be approved.
- In general, grants are not meant to purchase equipment, such as button makers, technology, or subscriptions to products.

ELIGIBILITY

KNEA local(s) or KNEA UniServ Districts may* apply for a grant that aligns with KNEA's strategic focus and priorities. The grant should be centered around:

1. Activities aligned with KNEA strategic foci and/or priorities.
2. New projects that cannot be accomplished within a local or UniServ's current budget.
3. Projects that cannot be accomplished with the existing resources of a local or UniServ.

**UniServs should use their Organizing funding first before applying.*

Strategic Focus Grant Flow Chart

Submit a completed KNEA Strategic Focus Grant. → KNEA Focus Grant Committee reviews applications. → Grant approved with award letter sent via email.

Grant denied. → Appeal process.

Grant returned for more feedback or revisions.

Complete all grant activities that have been approved as outlined in the award letter. *(Ask for a grant modification for changes - even if minor - before the activity takes place.)*

- Reimbursement can happen as activities finish or at the end of the grant.
- You must complete an evaluation each time you seek reimbursement.

FUNDING:
The KNEA Board of Directors has budgeted **$4,500** for the **2026-2027 membership year.** If there is a remaining balance from the previous year, it will carry over and be added to the total available for the current membership year.

PROCESS:

1. Submit a completed application following the guidelines provided via email.
2. The KNEA Strategic Focus Grant Committee, composed of KNEA Board Members, meets to review proposals. Applicants will be notified via email of their application status within two weeks of the KNEA Board of Directors.
3. If a grant is denied, an appeal of the decision can be made by writing to the KNEA Executive Director within 30 calendar days of notification.

2026-2027 KNEA STRATEGIC FOCUS GRANT TIMELINE

Application Deadline	KNEA Board of Directors Meeting
Sept. 21, 2026	Oct. 3, 2026
Nov. 23, 2026	Dec. 5, 2026
Feb. 15, 2026	Feb. 27, 2027
March 22, 2026	April 2, 2027
May 17, 2026	June 4-5, 2027

BUDGET GUIDELINES:

The following are the guidelines that the committee will follow when considering funding:

- Events with a cost per attendee must include an RSVP and a list of names submitted after the event. Meals will only be reimbursed at a rate of $15 per person.
- T-shirt reimbursement will be limited to $15.00 per shirt. Any niceties proposed must include KNEA and local branding on the item, including t-shirts, and must have KNEA branding with approval from the KNEA Director of Communications and the KNEA Strategic Focus Grant Committee Chair. Any items that do not include KNEA and local branding will not be considered.
- New staff orientation events are not considered for Strategic Focus Grants.
- Awards or award programs are not likely to be approved.
- Stipends for Association members are not likely to be approved.
- Funding for a substitute for release time will be considered
- Free or reduced memberships for current or potential members, including Aspiring Educators, will not be approved.

Directions: *Please ensure each part of your application is complete. If you have any questions about the directions, contact KNEA Strategic Focus Grant Chair Jonathan Eshnaur at Jonathan.Eshnaur@knea.org or your UniServ Director. Please submit your application through the online JotForm at https://form.jotform.com/262595809659174*

1. **Cover Information and Purpose:** Provide a brief overview of your grant application, the purpose and goals of the grant, and the desired outcomes of your grant.
    a. What is the goal and the desired outcomes of the grant application?
    b. How does your grant application align with KNEA's Strategic Foci, Priorities, and Core Values?
    c. How has your local leadership team (local president, vice president, executive board, building representatives, etc.) been involved in the development of the grant application?
2. **Plan of Implementation**
    a. What is the timeline of your grant application, with an outline of implementation?
    b. What strategies (strategy is the action plan that takes you where you want to go) and tactics (individual steps and actions that will get you there) do you plan to use with your Strategic Focus Grant?
3. **Evaluation of Plan:** How do you plan to collect quantitative (numbers) and qualitative data (surveys of members or one-on-one conversations) to guide the implementation of your grant or reflect on the funding for future activities. This data helps the Strategic Focus Grant Committee determine the effectiveness of grants and is not necessarily a reflection of the local or UniServ.
    a. Include your membership number before the grant was implemented and at the conclusion of the grant.
    b. How many members did you gain from this activity? / How many leaders did you identify from this activity?
4. **Budget:** Provide a detailed budget explanation with relevant information to understand how the funds will be utilized and connected to specific activities.
    a. You must have a detailed budget for each activity, including the cost for each activity and the total amount requested. For reimbursement, you will need to have itemized receipts to meet IRS requirements.
    b. You must also include why this work cannot be funded with your current budget or reserved funds.
    c. You must include documentation of your local budget, how much (if any) money is in reserves, and how your local dues dollars are allocated for the current membership year. This is to ensure that the KNEA Strategic Focus Grant Committee is a good fiduciary of our members' dues dollars.
5. **Reimbursement:** All reimbursements require a report, a KNEA Voucher, and an itemized receipt to meet IRS requirements, as well as a report on the implementation of the grant at the time of reimbursement. We encourage locals to seek reimbursement within 30 days of expenditure to ensure timely reimbursement. All reimbursements can use the template provided for progress reports. A final report is required for all grants. If your local needs an advance to complete the grant, please note that in the grant or reach out to Jonathan Eshnaur. Locals have two ways for reimbursement:
        I. Interim reports of activities, including itemized receipts for each expense, can be submitted to Olivia Gragg at Olivia.Gragg@knea.org or Jonathan Eshnaur at Jonathan.Eshnaur@knea.org.
        II. Final reports of activities on grant activities with all itemized receipts after you have completed the work must be submitted to Olivia Gragg at Olivia.Gragg@knea.org or Jonathan Eshnaur at Jonathan.Eshnaur@knea.org.

ANW Educators Association: The purpose of this project is to educate and promote the involvement of the members and prospective members of ANW Educators Association. We want to create a program to reach new employees and help them with re-locating to the area; understanding the processes of ANW Coop; understanding the current Negotiated agreement; and mostly, having someone to serve one-on-one as a mentor to them as they begin their career with ANW. We want to promote ANW-EA as a positive and active association by offering opportunities multiple times a year for staff to participate in a community service project within our local communities. Incorporating other organizations, such as Girl Scouts, 4-H and Student Councils, will help to show unity between us as an association and the communities. ANW Coop provides services to five counties and eight school districts, therefore distance has always been an obstacle in unifying us. Forming connections between members is one way I hope to overcome that obstacle.

Great Bend NEA: We will be hosting a "Poker Run." Starting in a local park, the participants will pick up an entry form and then will travel to five different schools for a playing card. The best Poker Hand will win! At each stop, they will be given information about our organization and the benefits of membership by a team of members. At the end of the "Poker Run," participants will return to the park for a hot dog meal and an optional social/question-and-answer session. We will use the entry forms to follow up with potential members.

Syracuse Education Association: Over the past decade, we have experienced a significant decline in member participation. Our new leadership team wants to focus on recruitment and retention as well as helping members identify local union leaders for current and potential members. We are currently at 22% membership and have a goal of 50% after this event. The funds will be used to purchase a hog to cater for staff and their families at our SEA Back-to-School event. All staff will be invited so that we can educate certified and classified staff about their opportunities with KNEA. We will set up games and activities, and there will be a playset available for children. Before the back-to-school event, the district provided SEA during the in-service with time to present their mission statement and the benefits of joining our Association. During the in-service, data will be collected to assist local leaders with a pre- and post-assessment, identifying any misconceptions staff may have about KNEA and SEA, and determining the staff's most significant concerns. As a result of the conversations and dinner with our current and potential members, we had 11 new members sign on as a direct result of the event! We surpassed our goal of 50% membership for the 2023-2024 school year.

Hill City NEA: A new awareness of social emotional support and trauma-informed care has led to student peace corners becoming a ubiquitous part of the modern classroom. However, classroom peace corners often fail to recognize teachers' needs for a safe and calming space to refocus and de-stress. We are requesting $ 1,500 to create a teacher's peace corner in our faculty workroom, providing teachers with a soothing, tranquil area to address their mental and emotional needs.

Pittsburg Education Association: Through the efforts of our union, which included taking the time to listen to both members and nonmembers, we identified numerous questions regarding the Structured Literacy Seal Requirements from the Kansas State Department of Education. Two members took the Praxis 7002 test, passed it, and designed a test preparation presentation with accompanying activities in the process. On a scheduled workday, lunch was prepared and served to all invited members, including administrators, interlocal (special education) staff and nonmembers. We had nine attendees, plus the presenter. The presentation covered the test, options for locations to take the test, and the required score for the test. Participants worked in pairs to complete 10 stations where they analyzed sample questions, engaged in sorting activities, matched concepts, and discussed ideas. Participants expressed gratitude and stated that the activities and resources provided helped them focus on their studying for the test. We enjoyed a great conversation about the KNEA online VESi program and other topics of interest. Our workshop demonstrated to members and potential members that our union is there for all educators.

2026-2027 KNEA Strategic Focus Grant Application

Name(s):	
Phone:	
Email:	

Grant Title	Amount Requested	Local/UniServ

Does your Local Association/UniServ leadership support the grant application?	Is Your UniServ Director aware of this grant application?	Has this grant been shared with the representatives of the Local (executive committee, building representatives, etc.) or UniServ Board?
No	No	No

Does your Local/UniServ have an organizing/membership plan?	No

Total Amount Requested	Dates of Implementation

Purpose of Project: Describe the project and how your grant addresses one or more of the KNEA foci and/or priorities. Be sure to include how you've engaged your local governance/ UniServ board in the development and future implementation of the grant.	
Goals and Outcome: Describe and explain the desired results of the grant if it were successful.	
Evaluation of Grant: What data (quantitative and or qualitative) do you plan to collect to evaluate the grant? Please include your current membership number for your local/UniServ.	

2026-2027 KNEA Strategic Focus Grant Application

(Continued)

Plan of Implementation and Budget:

Provide a detailed budget explanation that includes relevant information to ensure a clear understanding of how the funds will be utilized. Include the strategies (the action plan that takes you where you want to go), tactics (steps and actions that will get you to the goal), and timeline. You must explain how this grant cannot be funded by the local/UniServ within the current budget or local reserves. Provide a detailed budget for each activity/item, the cost of each activity/item, the total amount requested, and an explanation of how that activity/item cannot be funded with current local funds.

Activity/Item	Cost of Activity/Item	Explanation of Proposed Tactics to Implement Activity	Explanation of Strategy and Timeline of Implementation of Activity	Explanation of Why This Activity Can't Be Funded with Current/Local Funds

2026-2027 KNEA Strategic Focus Grant Reimbursement and Evaluation Form

INSTRUCTIONS:

- **Please note the evaluation due date printed in bold text in your award letter. Your evaluation must be submitted on or before that date.** Evaluation is an integral part of the grant process, necessary for KNEA records, and helps the KNEA Strategic Focus Grant Committee better understand organizations' experiences and inform our grantmaking at an aggregate level across priority areas. The committee hopes to learn from organizations, recognizes that projects often turn out differently than planned, and believes as much can be learned from challenges as from successes.
- If submitting your evaluation on a separate page, please answer all questions in the order listed using the provided headings.
- Reimbursement requests must include an evaluation and itemized receipts. Interim requests must also include an interim report and completed KNEA Voucher. Documentation can be submitted to Olivia Gragg at Olivia.Gragg@knea.org, by mail at 715 SW 10th Avenue,Topeka, KS 66612-1686, or by fax to 785-232-6012 (Attn: Olivia Gragg).
- Expenses incurred before a project/program is completed should be submitted for payment on an interim basis, with final costs submitted at project completion. Vouchered expenses should reflect the approved budget; if one area is under spent, you cannot spend additional funds in another area. All receipts and final evaluations are due no later than one calendar year from the award date. An evaluation is required before awarding any further KNEA Strategic Focus Grants.

INFORMATION

Name(s):	
Phone:	
Email:	

Grant Title	Amount Requested for Reimbursement	Dates Covered for This Report

Please Select One	Amount Requested for Reimbursement
☐ **Interim Report** ☐ **Final Report**	

Please include a written report attached to the reimbursement request with the following:

1. **Narrative:** Describe the project/program and location where the grant funds were used, including participants present,activities completed, supplies/equipment purchased, staff involved, and any other concrete information regarding this grant.
2. **Results:**
   - Utilizing the goals and objectives outlined in your original proposal, briefly summarize specific quantitative and qualitative results of each of the stated goals and objectives. If available, please include any relevant outcome data, significant accomplishments, success stories, knowledge gained, and/or lessons learned.
   - What difference did this grant make in the community and/or the members you were serving? Please include the membership number of your local.
   - If the variance from the original project occurred, explain how the actual project varied from your initial plans and why.
   - Describe any unexpected benefits or challenges encountered with this project.