

The logo for the Kansas Association of Teacher Educators (ATE-K) features the letters 'ATE-K' in a large, blue, serif font. The letters are set against a light blue background with a dark blue wave-like shape at the bottom.

Kansas Association of Teacher Educators

A Letter from the ATE-K President (Fall/Winter 2021)

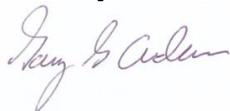
Greetings to you as we race toward the end of another year of uncertainty and opportunity. As the new incoming President of ATE-K, I wish you all the best as we near the halfway point of this academic year. It is a great privilege to serve such a talented community of scholars, practitioners, and teacher educators. The challenges before us are great, but so is the opportunity for change, innovation and improvement. The pandemic has been an ongoing disruptive force but at the same time it has led to some unexpected silver linings (communications, camaraderie, educational technologies, a renewed focus on equity, reflection, self-care, and adaptability) to name a few. As an educational community we have had to be creative, flexible and reflective, like never before.

Kansas is facing an enormous challenge in the form of a teacher shortage. KSDE reports a current total of 1253 unfilled teacher vacancies this fall across the State compared with a total of 771 reported at the same time last fall. KACTE and ATE-K just concluded a joint fall conference at Washburn University an online focused on the teacher pipeline in Kansas. I sensed an energy, a focus, urgency and some optimism among the attendees about rolling up our sleeves and addressing this need. We are all an essential component in doing just that.

The ATE-K board is currently in the process of expanding our vision and outreach in serving the development of new and current teachers. In the coming months you will notice some changes in the form of email updates, a new Facebook group, website updates, a spring conference focused on teacher resilience and hopefully some new professional development opportunities. Mark your calendars now for our spring conference planned for Friday, April 1, 2021.

This journal, *The Advocate*, is also a powerful tool in serving teacher educators in our state and across the nation. This issue of *The Advocate* contains three thought provoking articles that will appeal to university faculty and K-12 educators alike. I hope you find them as intriguing as I did. My thanks to the ATE-K Board, the reviewers for *The Advocate*, and my Co-editor and Executive Director of ATE-K, Dr. Laurie Curtis, for all the hard work and support in serving the preparation of teachers in Kansas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gary G. Andersen".

Dr. Gary G. Andersen, ATE-K President