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Dr. Andy Tompkins



## KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

The Kansas Educational Leadership Institute (KELI) is the missing link in the ongoing development of educational leaders in Kansas. It is an unbelievable testament to the power of partnership, vision, and persistence. It has also provided the structure for sustaining the vision while seeking continuous improvement in professional development for educational leaders.

As this issue of the *Educational Considerations* is focused on KELI, it seems fitting to mention a bit of history. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Kansas Department of Education received grants for the ongoing development of educational leaders after they had finished a preparation program. Also, KSDE initiated some professional programs specifically for principals and superintendents. These programs focused on increasing the knowledge base of educational leaders as well as providing opportunities for professional sharing and mentoring. The response to these programmatic efforts was very strong and clearly indicated a need for a strong vision and sustained support system for these efforts. However, a solution to sustaining these efforts was not forthcoming.

Now fast forward a few years to a time when factors within the state came together to create a new and sustainable vision. These factors included the growth and maturity of a shared vision with a host of partners from the profession, educational organizations and the Kansas State Department of Education and the commitment of Kansas State University and especially the College of Education to support the ongoing development of educational leaders through the creation of this institute.

The mission of KELI, the programming already established within the first two years of its operation, and the variety of partners who are involved in directing and supporting its efforts are remarkable. Further, this could not have happened at a better time since a large number of practicing educational leaders will be retiring in the next 10-15 years and the need for mentoring and ongoing professional development will be great.

On behalf of the Board of Regents and higher education system in Kansas, I offer our congratulations, support, and continued best wishes for this outstanding initiative that will change the lives of countless educational leaders and those they serve.

Sincerely,

Andy Tompkins, Ed.D.  
President and CEO