

ORGANIZATION AND PRACTICES OF PARENT-TEACHER  
ASSOCIATIONS IN KANSAS

by

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## INTRODUCTION

The Parent-Teacher Association has been a part of the educational system for many years. It has at different times occupied a conspicuous position in the thought of educators and parents interested in child welfare. It has always been accepted by the advanced thinker who has connected the home and school as social units cooperating in the education of the child.

The present trend in education tends to enhance the position of the home in the educational scheme. This position is not only one of responsibility in training the child in the home. The home also has the responsibility of cooperating with the teacher and the school in carrying on the educational process.

The home and the school are not engaged in totally separate undertakings. The work of each has a definite relation. The success of each is dependent upon the success of the other (15, p. 21).

We cannot think of this relationship without recognizing that education is a gradual process which continues throughout the life of the individual. Powers, habits and tendencies are acquired in a gradual way. Many agencies

take part in the shaping of these ends. They are the product of no single thought or agent.

Throughout the learning process there is much confusion. We make laws directing the schools to do this, that and the other thing concerning the education of our children. Having done this we go our separate ways, confident that the child will be adequately equipped to meet the challenges of life, more adequately equipped than we ourselves have been. We have provided kindergartens, primary and elementary schools, high schools and universities. These have been the source of formal learning (15, p. 22).

Through the years we have gradually come to the realization that the school is more than a means of presenting to our children, by written word, the experiences of man. We have come to realize that the school must also provide in a measure for the development of character, judgment, initiative and power.

Having arrived at this decision it would be folly to assume that the school can accomplish these ends without the assistance of other agencies. Perhaps the most important of these agencies is the home. It is in the home that the foundation must be built upon which the child may rest his future success and happiness.

The word "learning" seems simple enough (15, p. 23). In the truest sense, learning is the accomplishment of

every step in the learning process. Learning to walk is as much a part of one's learning as any formal learning the child may acquire in the later years. The home is clearly responsible for such foundations, such practices in learning and any resultant achievement.

The home is the foundation of the school. The school can never make good the deficiencies of the home. The homemaker finds it difficult to overcome the accepted interpretation of the function of the school, which, in a large sense, has become traditional. We must realize that the school with its complex organization, administration and technique is a modern institution. In the past we have too readily shifted the greater share of the responsibilities in education to the school, confident that it could provide the sum total of education.

Mothers and fathers should be clearly conscious of all things belonging to the mysterious process called learning, and its accompanying part, the act of teaching. These elements must be insured in the home as well as the school. One cannot be a good parent and not be a good teacher.

With the constant improvement in educational methods has come the realization that there is a great need for cooperative effort between the parents, administrators and teachers. This realization has been crystallized into con-

certed action through the organization known as the Parent-Teacher Association. This organization because of its ideals and leadership has come to be a vital factor in present day education.

Being a firm believer in present day thinking along educational lines, several questions arose in the mind of the author of this work. Two of these questions were: Is there an organization so conceived and so organized as to fill the need for a connecting link between the home and school? Is the organization doing anything constructive to fill this need?

This work is an attempt to answer these questions, through pointing out the organization practices and work carried on by the Parent-Teacher Association in Kansas. There is much evidence of the fact that this association is a vital force in education in Kansas.

The motive that prompted the attempt to answer these questions may be described as purely a selfish one, in that the information gathered here may be of use at some future date in the organization of a P. T. A. It is hoped, however, that there may be built up in the minds of other individuals a better appreciation of the work of the P. T. A.

#### HISTORY OF THE PARENT-TEACHER MOVEMENT

Mrs. Theodore W. Bierney, with the aid of Mrs. Phoebe

A. Hearst, called the first meeting of the Congress of Mothers to meet in Washington, D. C., on February 17, 1897, in the hope that fifty or even seventy-five mothers might attend. Newspapers and women's organizations throughout the country gave excellent publicity, ministers and teachers did their part and everyone began to talk about the type of meeting to be held in Washington (31, p. 1).

The response was so great that the arrangements for hotel and rooming accommodations were inadequate. The hall reserved for the meetings proved to be too small. Many hundreds attended the first meeting of mothers of America for the purpose of talking together about the problem of becoming more intelligent mothers. So great was the occasion that President and Mrs. Cleveland opened the White House to welcome those attending the meetings.

Mrs. Bierney, who was at the same time a mother and student of childhood, conceived the idea of parenthood as a profession. In this conception she thought that the united effort of individuals would make for progress in the field of rearing children as surely as they do in other professions--medicine, law and others.

In calling the first meeting there had been no mention made of a plan for organization. Nevertheless those assembled wished to organize so they might have a central bureau of information upon which they might call for help. It was

decided to form a National Congress of Mothers. This organization was effected February 17, 1897. Mrs. Theodore W. Bierney of Washington was made president.

To hold together such a vast organization around one central idea, and assure its efficient and effective functioning, it was necessary to formulate and define certain definite principles, and create and maintain certain standards. The formation of such standards and principles would afford the groups a means by which they might measure themselves and test their adherence to these standards.

The organization saw they could do their best work by close association with the teachers. The idea of including the fathers, who were also interested in the welfare of the children, finally brought about a change in the name of the organization. In 1924 the National Congress of Mothers became the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

From the time of the first meeting in Washington the organization has been a growing one. Today there are state congresses in forty-seven states and Hawaii. Kansas became a member of the national congress in 1914.

Table 1 shows the growth of the organization over the past few years. Even the depression years have not seriously affected the growth of the organization. A drop in membership would be the natural thing to expect in such times. The loss was almost negligible. The past year

shows a net gain of almost 200,000 members and over 500 units.

Table 1. Growth of the national parent-teacher movement, 1920-37.

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Growth in Units, 1936-37		
	<u>1936</u>	<u>1937</u>
Continuing units	19,145	21,200
New units	5,767	2,943
Dropped units	4,297	4,077
Net gain over 1936		585
Total membership (individuals)	1,877,073	2,056,777

Growth in Individual Membership, 1920-37

1920	189,282
1922	401,490
1924	651,387
1926	968,995
1928	1,275,401
1930	1,481,105
1932	1,393,454
1934	1,664,145
1936	1,877,073
1937	2,056,777

## ORGANIZATION OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS

### Structure of Organization (15, p. 118-124)

The system under which this unique organization holds closely together its membership of about two million members, men and women, in forty-nine states and territories may be summarized briefly in the following manner:

#### The Annual Convention

The annual convention is the governing body of the congress. It is composed of the board of managers, made up of the presidents of the forty-nine state and territorial branches, and voting delegates from each branch.

#### The Board of Managers

This board is composed of the national officers and state presidents, together with the national bureau of managers and committee chairmen whom they elect. This board is authorized to carry on the work of the congress between the annual conventions.

#### The Executive Committee

The executive committee is the servant of the board of managers and performs for it such duties as the board may assign to it. The committee reports to the board and to the convention and has no independent authority.

#### The State Branch

The state branch is the representative of the national



congress in the state. It is pledged to carry out the objectives and policies of the national congress.

#### The District Convention

The district convention is the representative of the state branch in the district, therefore it is pledged to carry out the national objectives and policies in its territory.

#### The County Council

The county council represents the state branch in the county and carries the work of the congress to the individual members in every locality in the county.

#### The Local Association

The local association unites the members to carry out the plans of the congress and promotes the welfare of the children in its own community.

#### The Individual Member

Each member belongs directly to both the state and national congress, and is responsible for the attainment of their objectives.

#### The City Council

If the city is large enough to contain more than one school unit it may organize a city council which consists of all the local associations within the city. The city council directs the work of all the local associations by means of a local board or commission consisting of representa-

tives of the local organizations.

#### Departments of the National Congress

Included in the organization of the national congress are five departments with thirty or more standing committees. These departments are:

1. The department of organization and efficiency.
2. The department of extension.
3. The department of home service.
4. The department of public welfare.
5. The department of education.

The National Parent-Teacher, formerly the Child Welfare magazine, is the official publication of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

#### THE STATE CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS

The State Congress of Parents and Teachers is a branch of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. It is organized for the purpose (15, p. 135) of extending parent-teacher influence within the state boundaries and works directly under and in accord with the national congress. According to the by-laws the purpose of the state branch is to promote the objectives and interests of the national congress. It is the aim of the state organization to unify and strengthen all interests and forces which are represented in the individual associations which comprise its

membership.

To accomplish this purpose it is necessary for the state branch to keep a very close connection with the local units. This is done through city, county and district organizations; a central office, or headquarters, from which state and national literature is distributed; extension service, through correspondence and personal visits by officers and field workers; the publication of a state bulletin; city, county and district conferences and state conventions.

In order to be of the most service to its local groups, the state branch keeps in close touch with what the national office, national officers and chairmen of the committees are doing for the local associations. It acts as a medium of communication between the national congress and its members within the state. It not only carries state and national aids to the local units but sends to the national congress information as to the problems, gains and important accomplishments of the local units.

The membership (15, p. 158) of the state branch consists of the members of the local units and such other individual members as may be provided for in the state by-laws. All members of the state branch whether joining through a local unit or as individual members are members of the national congress; state and local membership car-

ries with it membership in the national congress.

The membership includes men and women. Any person who is interested in the aims and purposes of the organization, and who desires to promote these purposes, is eligible to membership. It is encouraging to note that greater numbers of men are becoming active members.

Membership includes people of all creeds, political affiliations and social positions. It is entirely democratic and based upon the common interest which people have in the development of their own and other people's children.

The organization (15, p. 138) of the state branch is on the same general plan of the national congress, with corresponding officers, departments and standing committees. The state chairmen work in connection with, and under the direction of the corresponding national chairmen, and with them make up the national committees.

The president of the state branch, as soon as elected, becomes a member of the national board of managers, which between annual conventions is the governing board of the national congress. The state is privileged to send its president and three other officers, or their alternates, beside one representative for each thousand members, to the national convention.

The state branch is entitled to receive and send out the national literature which is published free for distri-

bution among its members. It is also entitled to a reasonable amount of service from the national field and extension secretaries.

#### PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION UNITS IN KANSAS

In Table 2 will be found the extent of the P. T. A. in Kansas in terms of school units. By a school unit is meant a separate school and not a school district or area.

There are approximately nine thousand school units in Kansas. For example, greater Kansas City, Kansas, has forty-six graded school, five junior high school and three high school units or a total of fifty-five school units. Each school unit is a potential P. T. A. unit.

By looking at Table 2 we find that there are 546 affiliated P. T. A. units in Kansas. This is 6 percent of the potential maximum units for Kansas.

It is well to recognize here the fact that there are in Kansas schools many units patterned after the P. T. A. which are not affiliated with the state organization. They cannot, in the truest sense of the word, be called P. T. A. organizations. In many instances, no doubt, these unaffiliated organizations are doing good work. In a majority of cases they are merely social clubs without a definite program. They do not receive the benefit of materials and bene-

ficial information available to the congress units through the state and national organizations.

In looking at the small percentage of schools with P. T. A. units there is only one conclusion to draw, that is, that too many schools and communities are not doing what can reasonably be expected of them in furthering the close relationship of school and home.

There are in Kansas 882 first, second and third class city school systems. First and second class cities make up 9.9 percent of this total. At the same time 38 percent of all the P. T. A. units in Kansas are found in first and second class cities. It is true that school units are more concentrated in the larger cities. Notwithstanding this fact, the percentages show a greater percent of organization in the larger cities.

These facts would indicate that the larger, more thoroughly organized city systems are quicker to grasp the opportunities offered by the P. T. A. Several reasons may be advanced for this condition. The leadership in administration of the city school is more aggressive. The tenure of office is longer and makes more possible the carrying out of a long term program. The need for an association such as the P. T. A. is more evident in the large city in many instances, due to greater diversity of interests among city children.

There are approximately 800 high school units in Kansas. Of this total 9.2 percent have P. T. A. units. This seems rather a small percentage, for there are few high schools in Kansas that are too small to support an association. Under proper leadership all the high schools in Kansas are well able to have a P. T. A. It is conceivable that there are many rural districts in Kansas that would find it hard to maintain an individual unit. This should not be true, however, of the Kansas high schools.

Table 2. P. T. A. units in Kansas.

Total number of congress units	546
Total number of units reporting	365
Type of organization	
Rural	109
Urban	212
Not designated	44
Elementary	252
High and junior high school	43
Combined elementary and high school	39
College and university	0
Not designated	31
Public schools	361
Private schools	0
Parochial	4

Table 3. Number of units in state organization.

	<u>1936</u>	<u>1937</u>
Continuing units	361	440
New units	134	94
Dropped units	93	77
Total units	495	555
Net gain	41	60

## P. T. A. MEMBERSHIP IN KANSAS

Membership in the P. T. A. in Kansas presents several significant facts. One of the most outstanding, perhaps, is the fact that out of a total membership of 38,140 only 17 percent are men. There are perhaps several reasons for this. It is a well established fact that child training and care is carried on largely by the mother due to the fact that the father is absent from the home a large part of the time. It is highly probable that the mother feels the need of an organization such as the P. T. A. in matters pertaining to character education, the exceptional child and other pertinent matters of child welfare.

Again there is the possibility that the local unit has nothing to offer the father in the way of a definite program in which the father can participate and feel at home. Many associations are meeting this need by forming dads'



clubs, father and son clubs, hobby clubs, junior government and junior officials' clubs and junior-adult recreation clubs--anything to bring the fathers and men into the organization on a basis of relationship to the children.

Teacher membership in associations shows that a large percent of the teachers in schools maintaining units of the P. T. A. belong to these units.

A total of 2,856 or 88 percent of the teachers in schools maintaining P. T. A. units are members. The high percentage of teacher membership may be due in part to the fact that teachers are expected to belong. In some instances pressure may be brought to bear by the school administration. This should not be interpreted, however, to mean that teachers become members only for these reasons. The proper interpretation would probably be that the administrator sees the advantages of such an organization and urges membership for the good of the teacher. There are few administrators who do not seek the best for their teachers. In another sense teachers as a group are greatly interested in seeking the best advantages for the students under their instruction.

A majority of the units, 75 percent, reported 100 percent membership of their teachers.

Table 4. Membership.

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Total state membership	38,140
Total membership reported	30,645
Number of teachers	2,856
Number of men	6,427
Total number of teachers employed in reporting schools	3,247
Schools with 100 percent teacher membership	275

## Dues

15 cents	127 units
20 cents	8 "
25 cents	218 "

In several instances were 15 cents and 25 cents per family.

Fifteen cents per member entitles them to membership in national and state congresses.

## PROGRAMS OF LOCAL UNITS

The programs held by the local units are in all probability the best index to the type of work being done. The program as we shall interpret it here means the type of work done at the regular meeting time. In these programs the local unit attempts to set out the essentials of a particular subject in an educational way. It is educational in that it attempts to acquaint parents or people of the community with some local problem or current trend.

The Kansas Congress of Parents and Teachers has set a group of topics which serve as a guide in the formation of the programs for the year. Not all of the units have programs under each topic during the year. The local leadership may feel the need of concentrating on one or several of the topics, according to the local need. In other cases there may be needs felt which do not conveniently fall under any of the topic outlines.

Closely connected with the yearly calendar of programs we also find some special monthly programs designed to fill a special need or assist some local program which is being carried on by other local organizations.

In Tables 5, 6 and 7 may be found the grouping of these programs according to three different plans. Table 6 lists

the programs, individual programs, held by the local units. It will be noted the programs are listed under several different headings. A total of 1,914 individual programs was reported. In several instances it required more than one meeting period to complete the study at hand. These several meetings are listed here as one program. The first column indicates the type of program, the second column the number of separate programs conducted and the third column gives the percentage that number is to the total.

Table 5 presents the total individual programs reported. Table 6 presents the programs grouped under topic headings as set out by the state organization. Table 7 lists the special monthly programs given.

Out of the 365 units reporting 243 or 66.5 percent made out their programs in advance for the year. This proved to be very desirable from the standpoint of the success of the year's program. It provided a sufficient time for the leaders to gather material and gave the persons in charge of program-making an opportunity to make a complete survey of the needs in planning the programs.

In 156 instances the programs were printed and handed out to the membership at the beginning of the school year. In 73 additional cases the program was printed or presented to the membership in some manner other than individual program sheets, many units making use of the local newspaper.

Table 5. Individual programs.

	<u>No. of Programs</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Founders' day	266	15.0
Safety	204	10.7
Character education	180	9.5
Parent education	155	8.2
Legislation	134	7.0
Music	109	5.6
Child hygiene	100	5.3
School education	88	4.7
Home education	78	4.5
Recreation	68	3.5
Summer roundup	67	3.5
Juvenile protection	66	3.4
Mental hygiene	59	2.9
Art	53	2.7
Radio	52	2.7
Motion pictures	48	2.5
Homemaking	38	1.9
Library service	28	1.4
Social hygiene	26	1.3
Students' aid	22	1.1
Exceptional children	18	1.0
Alcoholics and narcotics	13	0.6
Humane education	10	0.5

Table 6. Grouping of programs under topics according to state program.

	<u>No. of Programs</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Character building	102*	28.0
Parent education	36	9.9
Child welfare	25	6.85
Family and community	15	4.2
Relation of school, home and community	15	4.2
Safety	11	3.1
Successful family living	10	2.72
The Kansas child--his home and community	8	2.2
Young lives in a modern world	5	1.37
Health	6	1.6
School legislation	4	1.1

\*Indicates number of Kansas units.

Table 7. Special monthly programs reported  
by local organizations.

	<u>No. of Programs</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Founders' day	54	14.67
Safety	41	11.2
Fathers' night	22	6.1
Parent education	16	4.4
Character education	15	4.2
Health	15	4.2
Music	16	4.4
Christmas	14	3.8
Home	12	3.3
School legislation	12	3.3

#### COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION

The committee organization of local associations in Kansas is shown in Table 8. The number and wide diversity of committees indicates that the local units are well organized. It also indicates the necessary division of work required to maintain a functional P. T. A. organization.

The types of committees setup points out the fact that many were formed to meet a local need. Benefits derived from committee organization lie in the maintenance of interest, the feeling of being a part of the organization and the

feeling of being of use to the organization.

The P. T. A. is successful only to the extent that the committees accept their responsibility and discharge their duties.

Table 8. Organization committees.

	<u>No. of Committees</u>
Program	347
Membership	338
Publicity	319
Hospitality	320
Finance and budget	278
Publication	261
National Parent-Teacher	224
Class or home room mothers	99
Devotional or spiritual	51
Study groups	42
Health	40
Mutual help	26
Child welfare	26
Pre-school	20
Hot lunch	15

#### P. T. A. STUDY GROUPS

Within the P. T. A. the study group is the place in which difficult problems are attacked and solved. Here it



is that a well planned course of study is followed with the idea of arriving at some solution. The study group is usually composed of a smaller group within the local organization. The members of the study group are members because of an active interest in the subject at hand.

Within this group a problem may be viewed from its various angles without fear of intimidation or of embarrassment because the members are unified in purpose if not always in thought.

The number of study groups, number of members participating and the type of study conducted will be found in Table 9. A total of 4,101 members or 10 percent of the total membership participated in some study group.

Under the heading "Subjects of Greatest Interest" in Table 9 parent education stands out. It is interesting to note that parents are interested in educating themselves as well as their children.

Table 9. Study groups.

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Number of study groups reported	1,710
Total number enrolled	4,101
Correspondence courses	46
Our Homes study groups	6
Our Schools study groups	1
International relations	0
Radio listening groups	27
National congress programs	13
State congress programs	24
Subjects of Greatest Interest	
Parent education	70
Radio listening groups	24
Pre-school	19
Curriculum study	17
National Parent-Teacher Magazine	17
Character growth	19
Family and community	13
Education in Kansas	12
Homes and homemaking	10

## INSTITUTES AND SCHOOLS OF INSTRUCTION

The national and state congresses maintain each year a p. T. A. institute or school of instruction. In a large sense these are essentially for officers. Especially new officers just assuming their duties are urged to attend these schools. Training classes and conferences with experts and individuals of wide experience are held in each field.

Colleges are beginning to realize the importance of the P. T. A., in several instances are offering courses in instruction. In some cases the course is a regular curriculum course. In others it is a special course conducted on short term and summer basis. Thirty persons completed these courses during 1937. An additional 46 completed national or state correspondence courses.

While these numbers do not seem large they grow in importance when we think of the numbers that will benefit by contact with those who have completed the course. The interest and knowledge gained cannot help but carry over to large numbers of individuals.

Table 10. Training courses.

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P. T. A. institute or school of instruction	232
Training classes and conferences	171
Courses in parent-teacher work in colleges or normals	30
Persons completing a national or state correspondence course	46

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE  
STATE, DISTRICT AND NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

In cities having more than one P. T. A. unit a council may be formed. This is also true of counties. A city or county, for example, may decide to form a council. To do this they elect officers for the entire county or city. This set of officers directs the activities of the entire group of units. This in no way affects the individual unit in regard to the work of the local unit. The local unit retains its own organization.

There is much benefit to be derived from a council of units. There is a more unified effort distributed over a larger area. A beneficial exchange of results and ideas is made possible. The larger unit may command more attention in that it is city wide or county wide. In larger cities a city wide campaign may be launched whereby the entire city reaps the benefit. In many instances the individual unit

may forfeit the benefits derived from a constructive program because it is not far reaching enough. It does not reach sufficient numbers of people to create a unified public opinion.

In Kansas 247, 47 percent, of the units reported membership in a council. As would naturally be expected a large majority, over 87 percent, of the councils are in cities of first and second class. The rest are county councils.

At stated times during the year district, state and national groups hold conventions. The purpose of the conventions is to improve the work of the units. This is done through the obtaining of inspirational and instructive speakers. Men and women have made a study of needs and purposes of the P. T. A. Group meetings are held in which officers receive instruction and guidance in their special work. Ideas are exchanged. Delegates become acquainted with the programs or the purposes of the larger sections.

The Kansas congress has delegates at all of these conventions. The delegates in turn bring to the local units the benefit of these contacts with leaders in the field. The convention forms a very useful connecting link between the entire organization and the local unit.

Table 11. Attendance at council, district, state and national meetings.

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Number of units reporting membership in an organized council	237
Delegates sent to	
District meetings	250
State conventions	254
National conventions	13

P. T. A. COOPERATION WITH OTHER  
LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Few organizations find it possible to carry on an extensive program without the assistance of other organizations. For example, any safety campaign, to succeed, must have the cooperation of all local organizations.

The P. T. A. has found this to be especially true in the promotion of its program. As a result we have many instances in Kansas where the P. T. A. has worked with some other local organization to promote some work of community wide interest or benefit.

Because of the great number of instances we can mention here only a few. Some examples of cooperation are:

Cooperation with boards of education in a building program.

Cooperation with county and local medical associa-

tions in dental inspections, vaccination and inoculation campaigns.

Cooperation with civic clubs in safety campaigns.

Cooperation with farm bureaus in promoting project exhibits and county fairs.

Cooperation with churches in go to church weeks.

These are only a few examples of the many instances to be found. Each community has its individual problems and must meet them. The P. T. A. plays an important part in any community setup which is designed to cope with community problems and promote community activity.

In Table 12, page 38, a list of joint projects carried on by Kansas associations during the year may be found. Table 11 also gives a complete list of projects carried on by Kansas associations. In looking at this list it is readily seen that cooperation with other organizations would increase the effectiveness of the project in many instances.

Following is a complete list of organizations with which associations in Kansas have cooperated in carrying on some local program:

Girl Scouts	Community clubs
Boy Scouts	Community chest
Elks' clubs	Y. W. C. A.
Lions' clubs	Y. M. C. A.
Kiwanis clubs	Farm bureaus
Women's clubs	Good cheer clubs
Civic clubs	Dads' clubs
Churches	Salvation Army
American Association of University Women	
Kansas State Teachers Association	
Northeast Johnson County Association	
Argentine Activities Association	
County medical associations	
Legion of Women Voters	
State board of health	
Boards of education	
Dental societies	
American Legion	
Red Cross	

#### ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS

One of the outstanding practices of the P. T. A. is



the conducting of and cooperating in community projects and activities.

Many beneficial results are obtained from projects of this type. In many cases the P. T. A. can accomplish an end where other agencies would fail, because the P. T. A. works in cooperation with the school and a favorable public opinion can be created in this manner. Leadership in a successful P. T. A. usually depends upon one's interest in school affairs. Because of this the projects are born of necessity or a unified interest.

The list of projects found in Table 12 will bear out the statement that the P. T. A. is one of the helpful organizations to be found in any community. These projects were all reported by congress units in Kansas. They are not merely possibilities but have actually been part of the program of work for the associations in Kansas.

An analysis of this type of work shows the most work has been done in the fields of child hygiene, legislation, school aid, safety and library service.

During the last regular term of the Kansas legislature the P. T. A. was especially active. The legislative committee, working in cooperation with the Kansas State Teachers Association, was influential in securing much needed school legislation. These two organizations working in cooperation

carried on a definite program for education of the people in the needs of the schools in Kansas. This was done by supplying local units with literature and conducting special informative meetings with some well informed individual in the community or from outside the community presenting the facts about Kansas schools and their needs.

Character projects were carried on by only three units. The feeling for the need of character education is felt keenly as indicated in Table 6 which shows a total of 180 programs conducted on this subject. The fact remains, however, that there was little done in the way of activities or projects to follow up these programs. There are many ways of building character through the project. Recreation programs designed to keep the young people interested in constructive things, character films are available in large numbers.

Child hygiene seemed to be one of the most popular fields in which to conduct projects. The list of projects under this heading is self explanatory: each one an essential part in a good community health program.

Of the units reporting (346) 255 or 70 percent reported carrying on some type of project during the year.

It is impossible to describe all the projects here. Mention should be made and descriptions of some projects made so the reader may get an understanding of some of the

work being done. A description of several projects is offered here for that purpose.

In a city of the second class the P. T. A. made itself responsible for furnishing milk each morning to the undernourished children in the first three grades of the common school, including the kindergarten. In fairness to the association it should be mentioned here that a preliminary project had been carried on in which the needy children had been determined. The expense incurred in this project was met, in part, through an art exhibit. This of course in itself could be called a project.

Another example of a project carried on by an association is that of a children's library. This project was carried on by a group in a third class city. This city had no library other than that in the rural high school. The association secured two trunks of fifty books each from the traveling library bureau. The cost was \$2.50 for each trunk for six months. This library was housed in a room of the rural high school. Members of the association took turns checking out the books after school hours. The desire for good reading was greatly increased through this project.

In still another instance a city of the third class conducted a character education campaign through means of motion pictures. The films were kept three days. During this three-day period one was allotted to the local schools.

The remaining two days were given over to the surrounding rural schools. Transportation was furnished by the local association and entire rural schools were transported to see the picture during an afternoon showing. The films were educational in nature, showing the results of social disease in one instance and the other a film on family situations requiring schooling in character education. The project was such an outstanding success that plans have been started for another project, this time on the subject of safety. It should be mentioned here that the project would have been impossible without the cooperation of the owner of the local motion picture house.

Many more instances could be mentioned here. A glance at the projects listed below will give an idea of the usefulness that can be rendered by an association through the project or activity.

Table 12. Activities and projects.

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Number of units reporting, 255.

Art--8 units reporting.

Good picture for each school room.

Added art course to curriculum.

Art exhibit.

Prize picture--moved from room to room.

Alcohol--2 units reporting.

Lectures at assembly time.

Table 12 (cont.)

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Character education--3 units reporting.

Furnished mothers to take grades one and two  
to week day Bible school.

Building chapel for week day Bible school  
(no church near).

Took children to exhibit of Holy Land.

Child hygiene--72 units reporting.

Pre-school clinic.

Examinations for glasses, teeth etc.

Vaccination and immunization clinics.

Helped establish county health nurse system.

Bought first aid kit.

Sponsored cancer control and t. b. tests.

Furnished transportation for nurse during epi-  
demic.

Exceptional child--5 units reporting.

Defective speech clinic.

Founders' day--10 units reporting.

Programs.

Refreshments served--proceeds to Founders'  
day fund.

Home education--2 units reporting.

Encouraged good reading.

Table 12 (cont.)

---

Homemaking--6 units reporting.

Classes.

Free institute for homemakers.

Humane education--0 units reporting.

International relations--0 units reporting.

Juvenile protection--3 units reporting.

Furnished suitable clothing for patrol boys.

Legislation--38 units reporting.

Telephone messages to state legislature on  
child labor amendment.

Telephone messages to governor regarding  
school legislation.

Better school legislation programs.

Joined teachers to study school legislation.

Education of voters--how to mark ballots.

Library service--37 units reporting.

Purchased World Books for school.

Entertainments for library funds.

Free book exchange.

Book shelves.

Traveling library.

Vacation reading clubs.

Helped keep library open in summer.

Collected used books for school library.

Table 12 (cont.)

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---

Established library in school.

Aroused interest in children's reading room  
in city library.

Mental hygiene--0 units reporting.

Motion pictures--15 units reporting.

Held benefit motion picture at local theater.

Provided motion pictures for pupils.

Bought motion picture for school.

Visual education--building up film library.

Music--16 units reporting.

Paid for orchestra leader.

Organized orchestra.

Entertainment--band benefit.

Bought instruments for children.

Bought piano for school.

Bought song books for school.

Paid admission for underprivileged to Phil-  
harmonic concert.

Parent education--14 units reporting.

Vocational homemaking classes.

Parent education classes.

Fathers' club organized.

Mothers' club organized.

Paid leader to conduct study groups.

Table 12 (cont.)

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Radio--18 units reporting.

Purchased radio for school.

Broadcasts--Coffeyville and KFH, Wichita.

Programs.

Listening in groups.

Recreation--20 units reporting.

Playground equipment.

Supervised summer playground work.

Recreation nights for parents and children.

Patrol boys entertained.

Built tennis courts.

Fixed up basement of school for social center.

Safety--36 units reporting.

Erected safety signs.

Petitioned for sidewalks near school.

Talks and plays on safety.

Junior patrols.

Bicycle safety clubs.

School education--24 units reporting.

Improvement of school building.

Redecorated school interior.

Better lighting equipment.

Installed desks and lights.

Worked for bonds for addition to school.



Table 12 (cont.)

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Worked for bonds for junior college.

Social hygiene--2 units reporting.

Motion picture--the Gift of Life.

Special meetings.

Student aid--105 units reporting.

Hot lunches.

Milk and clothes for needy.

Paid high school expenses for one girl.

Purchased books and costumes for children.

Paid expenses of children taking scholarship tests.

Maintained student loan fund.

Selected list of joint projects.

County hobby show and circus.

Thrift shop.

Bundle day.

Mothers' chorus.

Provided scholarships.

Adult education programs and classes.

Health programs.

Safety programs.

County summer recreation projects.

Worked to keep beer from being sold near school.

Table 12 (concl.)

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Bought miscellaneous equipment for schools.  
Helped finance educational trips.  
Provided rest room for teachers.  
Had executive committee take general information courses.

A list of some results obtained through efforts of parent-teacher associations follows. This list of items was not taken from data obtained in Kansas but is the result of a study made by the United States office of education (31, p. 8).

1. Terms of schools have been lengthened.
2. School attendance has been improved.
3. Uniform systems of text books have been established.
4. Improvement of school buildings, sanitation and apparatus.
5. New buildings secured.
6. Brought about standardization of some school systems.
7. Playground equipment purchased.
8. Musical instruments purchased for school.
9. Library books and pictures purchased for school.
10. School grounds beautified.
11. Warm noon lunches served.

12. Milk supplied for underweight children.
13. Dental clinics held.
14. Tuberculosis clinics and general physical examination clinics.
15. Cases of tardiness lessened.
16. Correction and remedial practices established for defective.
17. Organization of junior banks.
18. Picture shows censored and supervised.
19. Sponsored reading rooms.
20. Sponsored health crusades.
21. Sponsored safety campaigns.
22. Created scholarships.
23. Created student loans.
24. Raised standard of home life through child study.
25. Eliminated friction in communities between groups.
26. Established friendly relations between parents and teachers, eliminating discipline problems.
27. Improved moral standard of the community.
28. Parents became better acquainted with school methods through school visitation.
29. Improved child recreation in the community.
30. Established night schools.

31. Many accomplishments in Americanization.
32. Community halls built.
33. Established kindergartens.
34. Sponsored and chaperoned school dances.
35. Purchased equipment for school lunches.
36. Furnished home room mothers.
37. Furnished parent class sponsors.
38. Established opportunity rooms.
39. Organized mothers' study circles.
40. Organized pre-school study clubs.
41. Organized educational reading and study groups.
42. Gave financial aid to crippled children.
43. Sponsored sex educational programs.
44. Sponsored educational radio programs.
45. Instituted adult recreation programs.
46. Supplied clothes for needy children.
47. Sponsored book week activities.
48. Purchased first aid kits.
49. Sponsored extension study.
50. Sponsored immunization programs.

#### P. T. A. PUBLICATIONS

Many publications are available to the local organization through the state office. These different publications are prepared for the express purpose of aiding the

local association.

The official organ of the P. T. A. is the National Parent-Teacher. This magazine is published monthly at Washington, D. C., and contains helpful material for building programs, case studies and articles dealing with experiences of other local associations throughout the United States. Each issue contains at least one book review and articles dealing with topics of current interest to P. T. A. members.

There are many other publications of value to the P. T. A. member. Table 13 contains a list of some of these publications. This table also indicates the use made of these publications by units in Kansas.

The office of the president of the Kansas Congress of Parents and Teachers has available at different times bulletins dealing with subjects of current interest to Kansans.

Table 13. Use of P. T. A. publications.

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National congress publications

Associations reporting use of P. T. A. manual

Officers	326
Committee chairmen	259

Local package material distributed in 331 units

Additional material from state office, 223 units

Units using

National Parent-Teacher	291
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A new force in education	9
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Our homes	46
Our public schools	63
Parent education yearbook	28
Kansas publications	
Units using	
Kansas bulletin	76
Parents' day bulletin	11
Present status of text books	0
P. T. A. calendar	0
Relation of teacher and	
community	0
School legislation	8

#### SUGGESTIONS MADE BY ASSOCIATIONS

Each year associations belonging to the state congress are given an opportunity to make suggestions and recommendations for the betterment of the program.

These recommendations made by local units are shown on pages 51 and 52. Local needs are indicated in this list. All are practical and within the realm of possibility.

In addition to the recommendations offered by the local units, several have occurred to the writer while making this study, some of which follow.

Any organization to be successful must show results. These results must be tangible and evident to interested

persons. In the P. T. A. one of the most important means of obtaining tangible results is through the project. Many times individuals and organizations think they have done their duty when they have held discussions or programs pertaining to the topic in question.

Regardless of the amount of education and discussion, which in itself is a valuable part of a program, there will be no lasting results if some follow-up activity is not used. For example, a program on child hygiene becomes a living, vital thing when it is followed by an activity such as the distribution of milk to the undernourished children in the community. The results of one project of this type mentioned earlier in this work proved the value of this activity. In this project it was found that a large percent of the children given milk improved so rapidly they no longer needed the service after the seventh month. The suggestion here is to supplement a constructive discussion with a concrete activity in keeping with the topic of discussion. Many associations are passing up splendid opportunities to render a desirable and much needed service.

Another obvious need is in relation to the legislative program. This program usually receives added impetus only immediately prior to a session of the state legislature. The constructive school legislation passed at the last regular legislative session is an example. This legislation was

due largely to the work of the P. T. A. and the legislative committee of the Kansas State Teachers Association, and deserves the highest commendation.

Since that time, however, there has been a definite lull in activity. There is much more to be done in the way of beneficial school legislation. The P. T. A. can be of invaluable service by setting up a program which will keep the people conscious of these needs during the periods between legislative sessions. The final effort will be much easier to accomplish if this is done.

It would seem also that we have not made use of the possibilities of the radio in furthering the program of the P. T. A. In some instances the radio is being used, but most of its possibilities are before us. The radio reaches so many people with a minimum of expense that it seems the P. T. A. will profit greatly in the future by more extensive use of this medium. In addition we can reach many who are not members of the P. T. A.

The extent of the organization should also come in for consideration. Most rural sections are largely unorganized. Most rural schools consider themselves too small to support a P. T. A. This may be an inferiority complex rather than an actuality. Our suggestion in this case would be to urge organization on a community basis rather than a school unit basis. This plan would include several school units in one



organization. In practically all instances the people of a community have common interests. The automobile and improved roads make possible the inclusion of large territories in one association. The meetings could be rotated among the several rural schools. The benefits here are evident. There would even be a large carryover to the rural and city high school.

Visual education is also possible to a greater extent than is evident in the present P. T. A. program. This is true especially of first and second class cities. Most units of this size have projection apparatus in the schools which are available to the P. T. A. organizations. Films in a wide range of subjects are available at a very nominal cost.

In each case we believe these suggestions are a possibility and in most cases a necessity if the P. T. A. is to function in all its possibilities.

The suggestions for adding to usefulness of congress publications are as follows:

Program material for rural schools.

Information for motion picture chairmen.

Information on pre-school child.

Articles in reference to study groups.

Practical parent education outlines.

Publicity for radio programs.

Information for radio and publicity chairmen.

Religious material.

Practical problems and ways to meet them.

The following is a suggested list of new publications:

Project programs.

Information for rural districts.

Radio schedules.

Information on social hygiene.

New service for installation of officers.

Follow up literature on legislation.

Material on motion pictures.

Visual education information.

Human interest skits.

Charts of contagious diseases.

#### AREAS OF INFLUENCE IN P. T. A. WORK

Hetzel (11, p. 138) outlines three major fields of influence in relation to the welfare of our boys and girls. These are three fields upon which parent-teacher organizations must concentrate in order to make sound and beneficial contributions to the best interests of children.

First, the most important area or field is that of environment. After children are born they can do nothing about their heredity. What they may become rests with the cultural surroundings into which they are placed. Society

will reap as it has sown. The most dominant aim today is material gain. We do not stop to reflect on the fact that real happiness cannot be bought with money. We have been sacrificing some of the finer attitudes at the expense of the material attitude. We are building selfishness and individualism. We have been indifferent to our social welfare. If only the adults were affected it would not be so serious. But the sad part is that which places children too immature to choose in an environment of this type. We are spending millions each year to cure the diseases of delinquency, criminality and immorality but are spending relatively little to prevent them through the mediums of education, recreation and decent living conditions.

The second deserving area which needs much attention is our public school systems. They should be well equipped. Many are not. There should be a corps of well trained, well paid teachers in charge. The tendency the past few years has been to sacrifice quality of instruction for cheap instruction. School teachers are among the poorest paid professional people at work today. This condition cannot exist long without a telling effect on the schools and teaching profession.

The third area is that of legislation. In cooperation with the teachers the parents should stand solid for basic legislation pertaining to financial needs of the school,

equalization of educational opportunity, stabilization and elimination of fluctuation from year to year due to political influence. The child must go to school when its age demands it. Bridges, parks and roads can wait, education cannot. Parents and teachers must take action and show united effort so the best interests of the children will be protected.

Without adequate solution of these basic problems the parent-teacher association can at best say that it has only partially fulfilled its duty and can at best be only partially successful and permanent. The fine work already done is indicative of their future contributions.

### CONCLUSIONS

1. The Parent-Teacher movement was conceived in the mind of a mother who believed the training of parents could be placed on a professional basis in much the same manner as training for law, medicine and the other professions.
2. There is a definite need for cooperation between parents and schools because the training of children is a much more complicated procedure than has been true in the past.
3. The Parent-Teacher Association is doing a splendid work when properly organized under competent leadership.
4. There is great need for expansion in membership so the

benefits may be even more far reaching in their scope.

5. There is need for stimulation of interest among men. More men should be elected to office in local associations.
6. More work should be done in the rural sections. There is very little organization among the rural and smaller schools and districts.
7. Work in concrete projects and activities seems to be the most lasting and beneficial as well as being a means of arousing interest.
8. The Parent-Teacher Association is making good use of the cooperative idea by cooperating with other local organizations to promote local improvement.
9. The P. T. A. has proved itself to be a powerful influence as shown by the legislative program it has sponsored.
10. Study groups within the P. T. A. have proved to be an efficient way to get at the root of a problem of interest to the group.
11. The best organized units are found in the urban sections. Here also is found the most clearly defined outline or program of activity.
12. The Parent-Teacher Association is a growing organization as shown by the steadily increasing membership. This indicates a growing interest in the problem of training

children. It also indicates a greater willingness to share the responsibility of training children with others, both on the part of the parent and the teachers or school administrators.

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