

Board Excellence

Information for Local K-State Research and Extension Board Members

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From the Associate Director ...

We look forward to seeing you at an upcoming K-State Research and Extension Partnership meeting.

These annual meetings reinforce the partnership between K-State and the local board in providing effective extension programs for Kansans. This is my opportunity to meet with and hear from local board members. The meeting schedule is as follows:

- January 18 in Yates Center
- January 19 in Manhattan
- January 25 in Cimarron
- January 26 in Wakeeney

More details will be available from your local office in December.

— Daryl Buchholz, dbuchhol@ksu.edu

Watch for Agent Annual Reports

One of the most important responsibilities of a board member is providing input to an agent's Action Plan, Professional Development Plan, and Performance Review. Soon after October 1, board members will receive electronic copies of these documents for each agent in the local unit.

Action Plans give focus to an agent's educational program and lead to more measureable impact.

A Professional Development Plan is a proactive plan intended to enhance the agent's effectiveness through participation in professional association meetings, workshops, graduate study, or in-service opportunities.

The Agent Performance Review provides an opportunity to increase job understanding and

satisfaction, recognizes performance that meets or exceeds expectations, and establishes areas in which development is needed. In the performance review process agents provide specific examples of their efforts in five categories: program development, professionalism, volunteer development, interpersonal skills, and management skills. Board members review the agent's information and respond with comments.

When board members receive these documents, they complete them and submit to the appropriate administrator, who will compile and share feedback with the board chair and agent during the performance review.

The performance review is a confidential process and is not to be discussed with anyone other than the agent, board members, and the appropriate administrator. To learn more visit:

["Agent Performance Review."](#)

Schedule an Orientation Session for New Board Members

New county extension board members will be elected this fall and will begin their terms in January. Board members sometimes schedule an orientation session to assist those new members.

["New Board Member Orientation"](#) can be found on the K-State Research and Extension Board Leadership website: www.ksre.ksu.edu/boardleadership. Click on "Board Leadership Modules." Resources include a Powerpoint presentation, presenter's guide, sample notebook for board members, and a participant outline.

The orientation session might be led by the local unit director and/or current board members. The orientation module takes 60 to 90 minutes. It is usually scheduled separately, rather than as part of a regular board meeting.

Self-Assessment Assists Boards in Developing Leadership Skills

It is almost time for boards to complete the ["Excellence in Board Leadership Self-Assessment."](#)

This voluntary process, designed to support local boards in leadership and development, was introduced at Partnership Meetings early this year.

At the beginning of the year boards set goals based on best practices to guide their work. From October through December, each board reviews its goals. Boards that achieve a set standard will be recognized for their accomplishments at January 2012 Partnership Meetings.

The self-assessment is available on the Board Leadership website at: www.ksre.ksu.edu/boardleadership.

Kansas 4-H Military Partnerships Help Families across the State

Kansas 4-H military partnerships help to bridge the gap for caring people to connect and support military-connected youth and their families across the state.

These partnerships in Kansas include 4-H clubs on Fort Riley, Fort Leavenworth, and McConnell Air Force Base. More than 700 members in 4-H clubs on the installations experience a positive environment to build self-confidence, master new skills, and develop a sense of belonging.

Another partnership in Kansas is *Operation: Military*

Kids (OMK). OMK is the U.S. Army's collaborative effort with American communities to support the families of active duty, National Guard, and Army Reserve soldiers affected by the War on Terrorism.

Kansas received a grant to build community-based support for military children whose parents are deployed. OMK provides a wide variety of programs including summer camps, community awareness campaigns, school support groups, and staff and volunteer training sessions. For more information go to: www.4-hmilitarypartnerships.org, or contact Diane Mack, 4-H Youth Development Specialist, Northeast Area Office, dmack@ksu.edu.

Extension Districts Include 40 Counties in Kansas

The decision to become part of a district within K-State Research and Extension is an important one. Forty Kansas counties have agreed to create or join one of the 14 districts formed to date. Such choices bring change and exciting new partnerships, and can help ensure future relevance and sustainability.

Board members who want to know whether districting is the right move for their county, might ask:

- Are we as effective as we should be in meeting the educational needs of our residents?
- Are we as relevant as we should be in delivering cutting-edge information to address local issues?
- Are our programs sustainable in their current format?
- Do we have the political and public support necessary to pursue districting?

The ["Forming an Extension District"](#) module can be found on the Board Leadership website: www.ksre.ksu.edu/boardleadership. Click on "Board Leadership Modules."