

“Building a community of educators helping people achieve education and workplace success.”

This is the mission statement of the ACT State Organizations, which have been crucial to ACT’s growth as a provider of solutions that promote education and workforce readiness for individuals around the world. ACT’s management and staff have relied heavily on the network for advice both for ensuring that ACT’s programs and services remain relevant to the needs of students, schools, and colleges, and for designing new services responsive to the ever-changing challenges faced by those charged with preparing the nation’s people for education and workplace success.

The ACT State Organizations, consisting primarily of individuals in secondary and postsecondary institutions, have been in existence since ACT was founded in 1959. The network is widely credited with providing an effective communication channel for ensuring the relevance of ACT’s services.

Building a Network

The State Organizations were at the heart of ACT’s initial organizational structure. In 1959, ACT founders E.F. Lindquist and Ted McCarrel began organizing their professional colleagues—full-time employees of colleges and universities—into a network that would lay the foundation for the State Organizations.

The 16 states that joined in 1959 were Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. By the end of the school year, they were joined by Alaska, Idaho, and North Dakota.

The first ACT state coordinators were paid advisors who had direct involvement with ACT’s organization and development. Among their duties were communicating with high schools and colleges in their states; distributing materials such as announcements, publicity pieces, and registration forms to secondary and postsecondary institutions in their states; securing test facilities; handling registration forms; collecting fees; and forwarding reports to high schools and colleges. They also organized state advisory committees that eventually evolved into the State Organizations.

Upon ACT’s founding, McCarrel appointed regional directors to help State Organizations promote the ACT® test. By the time the first ACT test administration occurred in November 1959, the company had successfully recruited colleges and universities across the country to use ACT scores for college admissions.

In 1961, state coordinators became unpaid volunteers, serving as the governing body of and providing guidance to the organization. In subsequent years, steering committees were created. The role of the state coordinator evolved into that of state representative, a position that was either elected or appointed. When ACT established a 15-member Board of Trustees in 1965, state representatives filled eight of the seats,

giving State Organizations representation on the board. Also, new guidelines were created to determine how states could participate in the State Organization network.

Broadening the Scope

In July 2003, a task force was established to redefine the role of the State Organizations following changes to ACT’s governing structure. Prior to that time, many of the State Organizations worked primarily with postsecondary institutions. While ACT’s college admissions and placement exam continued to gain in popularity, ACT had expanded its scope to incorporate new audiences, including secondary educators, workforce professionals, and government administrators at the state and federal levels. As a result, ACT needed to broaden the composition and the role of its State Organizations. In 2004, the ACT Board of Directors adopted the recommendations of the task force. They included:

- Adopting a common statement of purpose for the State Organizations
- Developing and implementing an annual plan of work based on strategic objectives
- Adopting a set of principles addressing the organizational structure and membership of the State Organizations
- Updating the role of the state representative to emphasize the position’s leadership responsibilities
- Designing and implementing a State Organization leadership development program

State Organizations Today

As of ACT’s 50th anniversary in 2009, all 50 states are represented through the 44 ACT state and regional organizations across the country. These organizations have more than 8,000 members, and nearly 6,000 individuals attend the annual conferences. Generally, ACT State Organizations are led by a Council and an Executive Committee consisting of a State Representative, Chairperson, Chair-Elect, Past Chair, and Secretary.

Today, members of State Organizations provide advice and support to ACT. Their duties include:

- Serving as a communication link between educational institutions and agencies and ACT
- Coordinating and facilitating statewide professional development activities related to ACT’s mission
- Providing feedback on the utility and effectiveness of ACT programs and services
- Assisting ACT regional staff in identifying state service needs
- Providing input and advice on future ACT programs and services
- Identifying exemplary applications of ACT programs and services

ACT STATE ORGANIZATIONS

MISSION

Building a community of educators helping people achieve education and workforce success

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

ACT state organizations support and promote informed decision making by:

- Individuals engaged in education and career planning, preparation for further education and work, and lifelong learning
- Parties who are making or influencing decisions by those individuals

The Kansas ACT State Organization

In 1959, the year of ACT's founding, Kansas became one of the first states to create an ACT State Organization. ACT cofounder McCarrel appointed Ellsworth Gerritz, who was then dean of admissions and records at Kansas State University, to be the first state coordinator. A Joint Committee on Testing was organized to study multiple college admissions exams and, under the leadership of the Kansas National Education Association (NEA), advocated the adoption of the ACT. In 1966, the presidents of participating Kansas educational institutions voted to name the Committee on Coordination of Secondary and Higher Education—part of the Kansas NEA—as the official ACT State Organization for Kansas.

Today, the Kansas ACT State Organization is involved in many initiatives, including:

- Conducting an environmental scan to determine the most critical needs for professionals dedicated to improving college and workplace readiness for all Kansas students
- Supporting the Kansas Department of Education's "student engagement" initiative as an effective approach to increasing students' understanding of the relevance of high school to college and workplace readiness
- Examining the potential impact of a statewide adoption of the ACT test for all Kansas juniors
- Expanding the State Organization's network of Kansas education professionals who work to improve college and workplace readiness
- Expanding awareness about and use of the National Career Readiness Certificate
- Hosting an annual professional development conference on college and workplace readiness issues and solutions

Past Kansas ACT State Representatives

- 1959–1979 Ellsworth Gerritz, Dean of Admissions and Records, Kansas State University
- 1979–1990 Vernon Mai, Dean of Student Affairs, Dodge City Community College
- 1990–1997 Richard Elkins, Director of Admissions, Kansas State University
- 1997–2006 Beth Tedrow, Dean of Student Services, Garden City Community College
- 2006–2009 Randy Myers, Dean of Student Services, Hutchinson Community College

State Representatives are elected by the members of the State Organization to serve a term of three years, serving no more than three full consecutive terms.

State Representatives' duties and responsibilities include:

- Serving as a voting member of the Executive Committee and the Council
- Representing the views and interests of members of the State Organization
- Facilitating communications between ACT staff in its regional and national office and the members of the State Organization
- Reporting to the members of the State Organization on significant developments regarding ACT programs and services



Kansas Colleges and Universities That Have Accepted the ACT Since 1959

Allen County Community College
 Baker University
 Benedictine College
 Bethany College
 Bethel College
 Butler Community College
 Central Christian College of Kansas
 Coffeyville Community College
 Dodge City Community College
 Donnelly College
 Friends University
 Garden City Community College
 Highland Community College
 Hutchinson Community College and Area
 Vocational School

Independence Community College
 Kansas State University
 Kansas Wesleyan University
 Labette Community College
 McPherson College
 Neosho County Community College
 Newman University
 Ottawa University
 Pratt Community College
 Southwestern College
 Sterling College
 Tabor College
 University of St. Mary
 Washburn University
 Wichita State University

Current Kansas ACT State Organization Council*

ACT State Representative

Randy Myers
 Dean of Student Services
 Hutchinson Community College

Fred Bradley

Professor, Kansas State University
 Association for Counselor Education and
 Supervision

Cheryl Rasmussen

Vice President for Student Services
 Highland Community College

Chairperson

Pete Helgesen
 Dean of Enrollment Management
 Benedictine College

Aaron Carlstrom

Assistant Professor, Kansas State University
 Kansas Career Development Association

Kent Reed

Counseling Education Consultant
 Kansas State Department of Education

Chair-Elect

Joe Martin
 Principal, Frontenac High School
 Kansas Association of Secondary School
 Principals

Kristi Dixon

Counselor, Blue Valley High School
 Kansas School Counselor Association

Bill Rinkenbaugh

Vice President for Student Services
 Butler County Community College

Past Chair

Susan Johnson
 Counselor
 Kansas Career Development Association

Terrell Davis

Principal
 Stucky Middle School

Melinda Roelfs

Director, Admission and Enrollment
 Services
 Pittsburg State University

Secretary

Lisa Pinamonti Kress
 Director, Admissions and Scholarships
 University of Kansas

Michael Lynch

Associate Vice President for Educational
 and Personal Development
 Kansas State University

Marti Tuck

Counselor
 Erie High School

ACT Liaison

Joe Cruse
 Consultant, Assessment
 ACT West Region

Anthony Lyons

Dean of Students, Dodge City Community
 College
 Kansas Association of Student Financial Aid
 Administrators

Karlene Tyler

Associate Academic Dean
 McPherson College

Terri Blake

Senior Associate Director of Admissions
 Baker University

Jean Redeker

Director of Academic Affairs
 Kansas Board of Regents

William Wynne

Registrar
 Wichita State University

Alisha Bodyk

Counselor
 Augusta High School

Diana Quirin

Counselor
 Parsons Middle School

* As of May 2009

