

Phi Delta Kappan

Impact Factor: 1.1

5-Year Impact Factor: 1.2

Submission guidelines

Write for Kappan magazine

[See the current Call for Manuscripts for upcoming themes and deadlines.](#)

Kappan sits at the intersection of practice, policy, and research. Our audience includes K-12 teachers and administrators, researchers, university faculty working in the K-12 arena, and policy makers at all levels of government, from federal officials to state departments of education to local school boards.

We are interested in article related to teaching, learning, leadership, policy making, and research in K-12 education. We are not an activist publication, but we are active educators who believe that the quality of our work can affect the quality of education throughout the world.

Kappan follows a traditional school calendar with issues from September through May (including a combined issue for December and January).

What we publish

Feature articles. These articles focus on research, policy, and practice in preK-12 education. They are typically 2,000 to 3,000 words and should not exceed 3,500 words. In each issue, we publish multiple articles [related to a specific theme](#); however, we welcome submissions on other topics as well.

Backtalk. These are opinion essays on topics of interest to the education profession. Contributions for Backtalk do not generally relate to the issue theme, but we do welcome submissions that respond to recent *Kappan* articles. Essays should be roughly 700 to 1,200 words.

Person. These are personal first-person stories about the happenings in and around school — big and small, serious and silly — that shaped the writer's thinking about teaching

and learning. They should be roughly 1,000 to 2,000 words.

Most accepted articles are published in print and online, although some appear online only.

All feature article, Backtalk, and First Person submissions should be sent to manuscripts@pdkintl.org.

How do I know what topics are of interest to *Kappan* editors?

Kappan publishes a [call for manuscripts](#) that identifies themes of special interest to editors. If you have a topic that fits into one of those themes, you may improve the chance that your manuscript will be accepted. However, no issue of *Kappan* will focus exclusively on one topic, so editors like to review a broad range of topics throughout the year.

What makes an article acceptable to the editors?

The best way to learn whether your article is a good fit for *Kappan* is to become a regular reader of the magazine.

We want manuscripts that explore issues of significance to K-12 education. We want manuscripts that present compelling arguments or information on those issues. We want articles that are written so well that readers find it difficult to set them aside. We want articles that compel our readers to action. That action may be as simple as calling the article to someone's attention or as large as improving classroom practice or becoming politically active to change a law or a regulation.

What are my chances of being published?

Kappan receives 10 to 12 manuscripts every week, so competition for publication is fierce. *Kappan* accepts about 10-20% of all submitted manuscripts.

Most manuscripts that are rejected are poorly written, poorly organized, lacking in depth, excessively long, not original or timely, or concern an obscure topic that would not be of interest to the general readership of the magazine. We also consider what else has been published on the same topic in recent months and whether other manuscripts on the same topic have already been accepted for publication. Therefore, a rejection is not necessarily a reflection on the quality of a submission. Sometimes, it's just a matter of timing.

Kappan will not consider poetry or speeches for publication. We do not consider manuscripts simultaneously submitted to another publication.

How do I submit a manuscript?

Manuscripts must be submitted by e-mail, preferably as Microsoft Word documents. Include an abstract (not to exceed 100 words) with your article and a cover letter that identifies the

writer and provides complete contact information. E-mail to manuscripts@pdkintl.org.

Do not insert your manuscript into the text of your e-mail.

How long does it take for the editors to make a decision?

We acknowledge all manuscripts within a week of receiving them, and we respond by e-mail to the author submitting the manuscript. A decision about acceptance takes up to 12 weeks. Authors are notified by e-mail.

Who makes the decision to publish?

The editors. *Kappan* is not a peer-reviewed publication, though for articles that are particularly technical or specialized in nature, we do sometimes ask experts in the given field to weigh in on its suitability for publication.

What is the ideal length?

Submitted manuscripts should not exceed 3,500 words. Editors will decline to read manuscripts that are excessively long.

[Backtalk](#) essays should be roughly 700 to 1,200 words, and [First Person](#) narratives should be 1,000 to 2,000 words. Writers should indicate when they are submitting a manuscript specifically for these sections.

What reference style is used?

Kappan uses APA reference style. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of their references.

How much will *Kappan* editors change my manuscript?

Kappan editors will edit their manuscripts. Acceptance of a manuscript does not mean that it will be published exactly as submitted. *Kappan* editors may propose minor changes; we may suggest a major rewrite of the article. We may propose cutting your article a little bit or substantially. If a writer is unwilling to engage in the editing process, then the writer should not submit a manuscript for publication in *Kappan*. Writers will, of course, see an edited version of the article, and they will have an opportunity to discuss changes with an editor.

Although we welcome author suggestions for titles, *Kappan* editors will make the final decision on the title for each article.

What about diagrams, tables, graphs, photographs?



All visual materials, such as figures, diagrams, and photos, should be submitted in high-resolution digital format, preferably JPG (300 dpi at a minimum of 2,100 × 3,000 pixels). When taking photos, use the largest or finest format available. Images should be at least a few MB in size.

Please secure signed releases from parents before submitting any images of students. In cases where an author is submitting work (photos or artwork) done by another person, obtain that person's written permission and include information crediting that person. Releases should be transmitted to *Kappan* along with the images. Always include caption information with photos.

When submitting charts and graphs, please include raw data points. *Kappan* will nearly always remake charts, graphs, and other figures. Having raw data makes this much easier. Please double check all data for clarity and accuracy. In cases where an author is submitting charts or graphs from another source or publication, obtain written permission from the source and include information crediting the source. This includes graphics downloaded from a web site.

Authors should familiarize themselves with [Sage's Accessibility Guidelines](#) to ensure their manuscripts meet recognized accessibility standards.

Do you pay for manuscripts?

Kappan does not pay for manuscripts, but all authors receive a complimentary one-year PDK International membership.

Who holds copyright on *Kappan* articles?

Authors retain copyright, though our contributor's agreement provides *Kappan* a license to publish your work in print and online, requires that you wait for a minimum of six months before re-posting or distributing the article online, and requires that when you re-use the material you include a citation of the original publication.

Art and Photography Guidelines

Kappan rarely hires photographers, artists, or illustrators for specific assignments.

We are most interested in looking at stock photos depicting a variety of school situations and arts depicting concepts relevant to education. Some subjects that we would like to see include racially and ethnically diverse students in classrooms or engaged in educational projects and groups of teachers and administrators interacting with one another and/or with children. *Kappan* prefers to choose from (and is more likely to buy) work that features diverse people in a variety of roles.

We sometimes need photos of specific age groups — kindergarten, early elementary, late elementary, middle or high school students. We will only use photographs of children that have model releases signed by parents. We also cover some topics that work best with people turned away from the camera or in shadow.

Artists are selected to receive assignments based on samples and their previous experience. Many types of media are appropriate — pencil, graphite, acrylic, gouache, wash, ink, paper collage, construction — and should be submitted as digital art sent via e-mail.

Illustrators are expected to work from the original manuscript, concept notes or the design director's sketches to come up with several roughs or thumbnail sketches to show a choice of concepts and compositions. These may then be selected, refined or altered by the editors or design director.

To be considered for freelance assignments or stock purchases, please send a link to your web portfolio to kappan@pdkintl.org.

Cartoonist guidelines

Kappan cartoons are well-known in the field of education and considered a hallmark of the publication. *Kappan* editors review hundreds of cartoons every year but publish only a few per issue.

Keep in mind:

We receive a lot of submissions that play off of the same small handful of subjects (e.g., bad report cards, detention, missing homework, over-testing, misbehaving or sarcastic students, and technological change). Please feel free to explore the many other kinds of human drama and wackiness that go on in K-12 education. We also strive for diversity in our pages, so we're especially appreciative of submissions that include students, educators, and families of color, as well as a mix of genders in leadership roles, doing domestic tasks, playing sports, and so on.

Cartoons are typically reviewed within six weeks after the close of the stipulated submission periods of April 1-30 and November 1-30.

To submit original cartoons, please create a single pdf file with one cartoon per page. Name the pdf file using this format:

PDK_YourLastName.pdf

Attach the pdf file to your e-mail and send to: manuscripts@pdkintl.org

Use the subject line: CARTOON SUBMISSION

Please limit your submissions **to no more than 20** for each April and November submission period.

We will review the cartoons and contact you by return e-mail to let you know whether we're going to purchase any. If we decide to purchase cartoons, we'll ask you to send a high-resolution jpg or tiff file.

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