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PDK
International

For Immediate Release

A letter to PDK members

ARLINGTON, Va. — As longtime members of PDK International, Joshua Starr and I feel privileged to lead an organization that has served public education so well and so thoughtfully for more than a century. Few CEOs and boards can say that their organization has lasted as long or built so rich a tradition.

But PDK is not immune to the challenges that confront many organizations with long histories. Since 1992, PDK's membership has declined precipitously, from 130,000 members to 15,000 members today. If PDK is going to survive and continue to serve public education as the prestigious organization it always has been, then its leadership must rethink how to build on its strengths and legacy as it moves into the future.

Josh, the staff, and the PDK International Board of Directors have identified several strategic areas as we rethink every aspect of the organization:

- Expanding the annual PDK poll of the public's attitudes toward public education;
- Partnering with school system leaders who are seeking to improve teaching and learning;
- Increasing accessibility and use of Kappan magazine; and
- Expanding Educators Rising throughout the country.

PDK's new strategic direction requires a new governance structure that better reflects 21st century nonprofit leadership. Although the regional approach to governance served the organization well in the past, PDK now needs a board structure that provides appropriate oversight and accountability while allowing for maximum flexibility.

Shifting board governance requires a membership vote to allow the current board to change PDK International bylaws without seeking a vote of members for each change. PDK members will receive ballots via email on May 2 asking them to support that change in PDK bylaws. (PDK members who do not have a valid email address will receive instructions through the U.S. mail for voting online; paper ballots are available on request.) Voting closes May 31.

PDK members can stay updated on the organization's progress by making regular visits to the PDK web site — www.pdkintl.org — or by following Josh Starr on Twitter (@JoshuaPStarr), PDK on Twitter (@pdkintl), or by checking PDK's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/pdkintl).

DOUGLAS CHRISTENSEN, chair
PDK INTERNATIONAL Board of Directors

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