

US Forum Connection

<https://dkgusforum.org/>

US Forum Steering Committee

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Updates on the Mental Health Resolution !

At the International Convention in July, 2022, a resolution titled, "On Recognizing Mental Health Issues for Educational Staff and Promoting Support Services," was presented by the Washington State Organization. This resolution passed with overwhelming support from DKG members who were in attendance.

This resolution challenges DKG members to:

- 1) Educate themselves on mental health issues in schools,
- 2) Inform members of current mental health legislation for schools so that they can take action,
- 3) Promote destigmatization of mental illness, and
- 4) Engage in activities that demonstrate emotional support for educators.

Exciting, late-breaking news.....

Recently introduced legislation, **HR 744** sponsored by Representative Suzanne Bonamici, (OR-1), is now in a U.S. House Subcommittee. The legislation is titled, "Supporting the Mental Health of Educators and Staff Act of 2023," and is based on the Mental Health Resolution of DKG!

DKG members are urged to ask their US Representative to co-sponsor this bi-partisan legislation.

Please contact your US Representatives to support this legislation. Let's get co-sponsors from all over the country on this bi-partisan legislation!

**To locate the name of your Representative to the
U.S. Congress, go to:**

congress.gov

US Forum

Mission

The mission of the US Forum is to serve the interests and concerns of its members.

a. The emphasis is on sharing information and ideas and exploring solutions to identified issues.

b. Participating US Forum members can engage with the issues of concern of all members at the US Forum sessions during international conferences and the international convention.

(US Forum Guidelines, 2021)

Advocacy Statement

The US Forum is dedicated to being an advocate for women, children, and education by implementing actions which enable change and improvement to social institutions, systems, legislation, and practices that impose hardships or impact negatively on individuals, groups, or families.

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What's Happening with the US Forum at the 2023 International Conferences?

If you are attending one, or all, of the International Conferences in July, 2023, you will want to schedule time to attend the US Forum session!

At these sessions, you can hear informative speakers, participate in activities that will enhance your professional and personal growth, and discuss issues of importance to DKG members!

The conference locations and US Forum Session times are:

Detroit - Fri. July 14, 2:45-4:45 p.m.

Phoenix - Fri. July 21, 2:45-5:00 p.m.

Tampere, Finland - Sat. July 29, 9:00-11:00 a.m.

See you there!

National Legislative Seminar

**March 10-13, 2024
Washington, D.C.**

Mark your 2024 calendars for an exciting opportunity to enhance your advocacy skills, learn from experts about federal legislation related to education, women, and children, speak with your legislators, and visit key historical sites in Washington, DC. The National Legislative Seminar returns in March, 2024 and you do not want to miss it!

Watch for more information to come soon!



Webinars from the US Forum

The US Forum Steering Committee has sponsored two informative and engaging webinars for DKG members since taking office in July, 2022.

In December, Dr. Ellen W. Williams, psychologist, provided a timely and very helpful session titled, "Coping with the Blues in the Red and Green Season."

In May, Dr. Sarah Stitzlein, professor of Education and Philosophy, at the University of Cincinnati, spoke on the topic of "Our Schools, Our Democracy, Our Responsibility."

Please contact your Region Representative if you have ideas for future webinars that you would like to have presented!

Your Voice Matters! Results of the October 2022 Survey of DKG Members

By: Bev Johns, NE Representative

On October 23, 2022, the US Forum Steering Committee designed and disseminated a survey that was sent to all members of the Forum. The intent of the survey was to determine the issues that are most important for the Forum to address, in addition to mental health for educators.

The survey was sent through Facebook pages and emails to State Presidents and US Forum representatives in every state. A total of 2746 responses were received.

Respondents were asked to prioritize, from a list of current concerns, the issues they would be most interested in as the focus for the work of the US Forum.

In addition to *Mental Health for Educational Staff and Promoting Support Services*, (DKG, 2022), here are the issues, in order of priority, as selected by the respondents:

1. Safety from Gun Violence in Schools and Community
2. Poverty/Homelessness/Food Insecurity
3. Working Conditions/Recruitment and Retention of Educators and Staff
4. Censorship of Speech/Materials/Books
5. Bullying and Cyberbullying
6. Social Media and Importance to Mental Health
7. Retirement Security/Caregiving
8. Privatization of Public Education
9. Women's Health
10. Human Trafficking
11. Climate Change
12. Voting Rights
13. Racism as a Public health Crisis
14. Violence against Women

In addition to prioritizing issues, respondents were also provided an opportunity to suggest other issues of concern, and to state which Forum sponsored activities are most beneficial to them. The results of this survey will be used to guide the agenda of the US Forum Steering Committee during the current biennium.

Many thanks to everyone who helped disseminate the survey to the members in their states and to those who responded!!