



TENNESSEE PTA
94th Annual Convention
Memphis, Tennessee

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TENNESSEE PTA OUTSTANDING SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

Karen Carson

**5th District Knox County Schools
East Tennessee Region**

In her profession of pediatric nursing, Karen Carson's career has been devoted to the welfare of children. As chairman of the Board of Education, she never has lost sight of the fact that the welfare of the child comes before anything else that must be accomplished. She has been a great proponent of the school system's "Birth to Kindergarten", "Solid Foundation", and "Parents as Teachers" initiatives. She believes that if a child is healthy and happy at home, the child will be a better student. She has witnessed first hand the need for sufficient laws that will protect our children. She had made certain that council input and representation is solicited by groups working for the passage of such laws (Metropolitan Drug Commission, Safe Kids, etc.). She has brought the need for parental engagement back to the forefront of this board's agenda. She has been instrumental in helping the school system bring in experts in engaging families with the message to all families, parents and educators that parents need to be full partners in their children's academic careers.

To strengthen community ties, Karen serves on the Great Schools Partnership (a coalition of business leaders, community members, educators both K-12 and higher education, elected officials and PTA) as treasurer. To involve the community in decisions that affect our children, families and school system, she works tirelessly. To seek input on a hotly debated zoning for a new high school, she took public forums to the community by holding a series of meetings in high schools that may be impacted by zoning decisions.

Karen is the school board representative to the PTA Teacher Supply Depot, where she is a frequent volunteer. She is an active participant in Knox County Council PTA events, and also participates as often as possible at the local unit level. A former president of both a local unit and council PTA, she keeps PTA families she serves involved and informed about issues through PTA/PTSA newsletter articles, e-mails, and phone calls, recapping school board meetings to PTA presidents. She works closely with council PTA board members to facilitate frequent conversations between council and school board members to insure a PTA perspective on hot topics.

Karen is constantly asking the school system and the community to provide the best for all children, to challenge "business as usual in order to give each and every child the tools they need to be successful in school and in life. With her community involvement through PTA and pediatric nursing, and her continued support of PTA since becoming Chairman of the Board of Education, she is the perfect candidate for Outstanding School Board Member.

Congratulations to Karen Carson, Tennessee PTA's 2007 Outstanding School Board Member!

Presented May 4, 2007