

Welcome from the Executive Editor

The College of Education at Kansas State University is dedicated to developing future educators who are practitioner-scholars at all levels of the educational endeavor. The research conducted by our faculty and our graduate and undergraduate students is a critical and vital aspect of this goal. In 2014, Dean Debbie Mercer created the position of Associate Dean for Research; I was honored to be selected for this position. As Associate Dean, one of my tasks is to promote the recognition of the research of our College of Education students. We decided to create a journal as a special venue dedicated to showcasing student-led research in the college. Haley Downing and Paul Maxfield, graduate students in the college, were recruited to be the first managing editors. They consulted with faculty and students to develop a name and platform, and the *Prairie Journal of Educational Research* (PJER) was born.

Haley and Paul worked with the publisher, New Prairie Press, to design PJER as a peer-reviewed online open-access journal. After months of developing policies and processes, as well as the actual online platform for the journal, PJER was officially launched in April, 2014. Haley and Paul also recruited editorial board and reviewers, which included faculty and students from all departments in the college, demonstrating their commitment to including students at every stage of the process, so that they can gain experience in all facets of the academic publication process.

Manuscripts arrived and were reviewed, editorial board meetings were held, and when Haley graduated, Meaghan Cochrane took over her editorial role. And here we are, offering to you the first volume of the *Prairie Journal of Educational Research*. The papers selected for the first edition demonstrate the knowledge-building research conducted by our students. The studies represent both the depth and variation in topics our students approach as well as the diverse methodologies they study with our faculty.

I offer my congratulations to the editorial board, the reviewers, and the authors. I am especially cognizant of the ongoing hard work and dedication of the managing editors, Haley, Paul, and Meaghan, as well as that of our faculty, who provide excellent coursework, advising, and mentoring to develop our students as future researchers in their fields. Those students will go on to conduct research and utilize evidence-based practices to maximize the potential of all learners.

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