



Dr. Olin Terrence "Terry" Sandlin

June 21, 1943 - February 10, 2023

Dr. Olin Terrence "Terry" Sandlin, Ed.D., 79, of Topeka passed away on February 10, 2023.

He was born to Olin Edgar and Helene Mulveta Tarnstrom Sandlin on June 21, 1943. Terry graduated from Greenleaf High School, class of 1961, and from Kansas State University, class of 1965, with a degree in biology. He later received a Master's in Education from Kansas State in 1967 and his Doctorate of Education from the University of Kansas in 1985. He spent his entire career working with and for Topeka Public Schools (USD 501).

A lifelong educator, Terry began his career teaching science at Topeka West High School in 1968. He was named the Topeka Jaycees Outstanding Young Educator in 1973. He later became a counselor and Assistant Principal at Topeka West before becoming, successively, principal of McEachron, Highland Park North, State Street and Whitson Elementary Schools. Dr. Sandlin worked as an administrator for Topeka Public Schools before retiring as Associate Superintendent of Learning and Instruction in 2009 after a brief time as Interim Superintendent of Schools. He was also an adjunct professor of education at Washburn University and the University of Kansas and spent time teaching education at Yale University.

Terry will be remembered for his love of photography, classical music, jazz, dogs, and the many people who came through his life in education in Topeka.

Terry is survived by his wife of 36 years, Georgia; children, Trevin (Shannon) of Atlanta, GA, Ryan Sandlin of Topeka, Ann Goodall of Topeka, and Clayton Funk of Kansas City, Missouri; grandchildren, Miles Sandlin of Atlanta, Quinn and Robert Goodall of Topeka, and Addison and Hudson Funk of Kansas City. Many brothers and sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews, great-nieces and nephews from Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, New York, Ohio, South Dakota and Florida.

Funeral service will be 10 a.m. Saturday, February 18, at Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home, 2801 SW Urish Road, Topeka KS 66614. Burial will follow at Mt. Hope Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made Topeka Public Schools Foundation, PO Box 5883, Topeka, KS 66605, Kansas Public Radio, 1120 W 11th St, Lawrence, KS 66044 c/o Membership, or to KTWU Public Television, 1700 College Ave, Topeka, KS 66621.

Condolences may be sent online to www.kevinbrennanfamily.com.

Cemetery Details

Mount Hope Cemetery

4700 SW 17th Street
Topeka, KS 66604

Previous Events

Funeral Service

FEB 18. 10:00 AM (CT)

Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home
2801 SW Urish Road
Topeka, KS 66614
(785) 272-7888
info@kevinbrennanfamily.com

Tribute Wall



“ Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Dr. Olin Terrence "Terry" Sandlin



Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home - February 16, 2023 at 03:42 PM

CY

Georgia, I just read of Terry's passing online. How very sad. I'll be thinking of you in the weeks and months to com...knowing the great sadness of your loss. You'll have tough times, mixed with love and support from family and friends. Time will help you. Take deep breaths...and hang in there. Terry will live in your heart. We care.

Carol Yoho - February 16, 2023 at 07:58 PM

JF

Prayers for Dr. Sandlin and family, thinking of you. I worked with Dr. Sandlin when I taught 2 years at Highland Park North (1989-1991), then I taught Robert at Wanamaker Elementary. I remember Dr. Sandlin as a dedicated educator. May the memories of happier days as a family bring you comfort in the tough days ahead. The world is a better place because Dr. Sandlin was in it.

Jeannie Fairchild - February 17, 2023 at 07:26 PM

CC

Terry was the kindest friend and colleague to my dear brother Dr. Donovan W. Cook at Washburn University during his professional life, personal life and during his final illness. His friendship was like unto a brother. He took him to medical appointments, arranged for special lighting so he could continue to read and at all times showed compassionate friendship and love. He cared for me the mourning sister, as did his dear wife Georgia. He "illegally adopted" and mentored Don's daughter Jenny following her beloved father's death and supported her wonderful achievements as Children's Librarian at the Lawrence Library. Breakfast with Terry was hearty and delicious and nourishing beyond food, always flavored with love, caring and deep intelligence. A life beautifully lived, wonderfully shared, deeply remembered. What God has given, God has not taken away. I love you always, Terry.

Carmen Cook - February 20, 2023 at 03:01 PM

TP

Dr. Sandlin was my science teacher at Topeka West (Class of '74). Really enjoyed his class.

Tim Palm - March 07, 2023 at 03:31 PM

AW

Terry was my Biology teacher and counselor when I was a student at Topeka West (1970-73), and my friend in later years. The first day I went into his classroom--I must have been a 10th grader--it was empty, but he had written on the board, "I am in the Library escaping the wrath of the Deity" (by which he meant the summer heat!). His humor, his directness, and his gentleness with us students were all legendary. I was hopeless in the lab and he was very patient. I have not lived in Kansas for many years, so I have only now learned of his passing, and am so sorry to hear it. May time and memories of Terry's gentle greatness comfort his family and friends everywhere.

Anne Wallace - March 17, 2023 at 07:33 PM

CB

“ Dr Sandlin was my science at Topeka West HS. He was an amazing teacher and an incredibly interesting person

Cindy Bronaugh - February 17, 2023 at 07:45 PM

SR

“ Terry was a dedicated educator. May God rest his soul.

Susan Rogers - February 17, 2023 at 06:48 PM

RK

“ Terry was an incredible friend and an inspirational leader among those of us who knew him from childhood to the present. My wife Carol and I extend our heartfelt condolences to Georgia and all the children and grandchildren. Our memories of Terry are forever, and I cherish them. I am confident that everyone who attended Greenleaf High School feel the same way and will always be proud of Terry. --
Ron Klataske

Ron Klataske - February 17, 2023 at 02:51 PM

RK

I wish I could be at the service tomorrow, but we are in Colorado for medical appointments today.

Ron Klataske - February 17, 2023 at 02:53 PM

MC

I went to Greenleaf Grade School with Terry and was his friend all of our lives. What fun, happy and wonderful memories I have of Terry. He never, ever forgot my tap dancing and the music that was present in my family. He is missed by everyone who knew him, of this I am certain and those memories are cherished. My condolences to your whole family. Martha Hurst Carroll

Martha A. Carroll - March 23, 2024 at 10:27 AM



“ Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Dr. Olin Terrence "Terry" Sandlin.



February 17, 2023 at 10:20 AM



“ I worked with Dr. Sandlin at Topeka Public Schools. He always carried a smile and recognized you with a warm "hi". My most rewarding time in my life was being a neighbor for 25+ years with he, Georgia and their doggies! Terry loved dogs as I do. That is where I saw his compassion, wit, and love of family. I could not have had better neighbors then Terry and Georgia. It was a blessing. Hugs to Georgia. Prays for you and your family.
Karen KC Crawford

Karen Crawford - February 16, 2023 at 06:07 PM



“ The John Barbush Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Dr. Olin Terrence "Terry" Sandlin.



The John Barbush Family - February 16, 2023 at 03:30 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dr. Olin Terrence "Terry" Sandlin.



February 16, 2023 at 03:20 PM

ML

“ *The world has lost a true gentleman. I will forever appreciate his intelligence, wit, compassion and wisdom. As an educator he was a role model and leader for students and his professional colleagues. I extend my sincerest sympathy to his family and to all who will miss him.*

Mick Lowe

Mick Lowe - February 16, 2023 at 12:55 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Olin Terrence "Terry" Sandlin.*



February 16, 2023 at 11:09 AM

SH

“ *Terry was a great teacher. One of my favorites at Topeka West. He was a good friend and colleague of my Dad, Dr. Owen Henson, and a good friend and mentor of mine.*

Scott Henson - February 16, 2023 at 10:47 AM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. Olin Terrence "Terry" Sandlin.*



February 16, 2023 at 10:23 AM

JH

“ I met Dr. Sandlin back in the 70's when he was at Topeka West. I remember every time I saw him he had a smile and knew every student by name. He was genuinely concerned about all people and was one of the only teachers that made it a point to stand in the halls in the morning and greet students! It was obvious he loved his job! Several years later I found out that he was a friend of my next door neighbors and I had the pleasure of meeting him again! Every holiday celebrated at my neighbors house, Terry and his beautiful wife Georgia were there. I looked forward to the events because Terry and I shared a love for photography and animals and his wit and humor were one of the bright spots in my life. I could talk to him for hours and at every conversation I learned something new. As I sit here and write this tears are falling because a great and kind gentle man was taken way too soon! I will miss our talks and the knowledge he had on so many subjects. He was compassionate, kind, giving in everything he did. Georgia and family I am sending you much peace and comfort in the days to come and many hugs! Godspeed Terry, you are greatly missed!

Julie Hoffman - February 15, 2023 at 04:46 PM

WF

“ With love, Reibus family purchased the Gracious Lavender Basket for the family of Dr. Olin Terrence "Terry" Sandlin.



With love, Reibus family - February 15, 2023 at 04:43 PM

TC

“ I had the pleasure of being a student in Dr. Sandlins' photography class in 1976 at Topeka West High school. I remember him as a very soft spoken, kind and fair teacher that wanted no more than to know his students were learning something that he has a passion for. His style of teaching made it fun and enjoyable.

Dr. Sandlin came to the 60th anniversary celebration at McEachron Elementary School. Since I work at the school I had the pleasure of talking to him. He and my dad knew each other very well because my dad was also an educator and his friend.

As a very hyperactive student I had a hard time concentrating. He must have known this because he would give me "busy work" to keep me on task.

Dr. Sandlin will be greatly missed not only as an educator that loved his students but as a friend to so many. My thoughts and prayers are with your family.

Tracey Cook - February 15, 2023 at 04:11 PM

JD

“ I worked with Terry at different schools through the years. He was always available for a short (usually very funny) chat, some coffee and fantastic book recommendations. My advice to everyone was, "If Terry recommends a book to you....read it. You won't be sorry." Thank you Terry for the years of great books and interesting conversation.

Julie Daniel - February 15, 2023 at 01:04 PM

RW

“ There are so many fond memories I could share of my years as an educator working in Topeka Public Schools with Terry as my principal. It would fill too many pages. No one was as dedicated to his staff and students than Dr. Sandlin. I think his greatest skill as an administrator was Terry's ability to see a person's potential and lead them to see it too. For this Terry quickly gained the respect of his staff. I remember Terry talking about working on Sunday mornings on school paperwork so that during the week, he could maintain his "open door policy" to teachers, staff, parents, community members and children.

Dr. Sandlin would take the time each Christmas season to write individual cards to each staff member. These cards were the most heartfelt messages to receive. I want to thank the Sandlin family for sharing Terry with us. His love, respect and dedication to service of others will never be forgotten.

Roxanne Wendt - February 15, 2023 at 11:56 AM

MW

“ I am saddened to hear of Terry's passing. The world has lost a very fine and compassionate man. I became acquainted with Terry while working at USD 501 and he always had a friendly smile and a friendly hello.

Mark Wanamaker - February 15, 2023 at 11:48 AM



“ Blue Caribbean Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Olin Terrence "Terry" Sandlin.



February 14, 2023 at 11:44 PM

DH

“ I worked with Terry at Highland Park North. He was dedicated to all students and their families. He was respected by staff and encouraged us to think out of the box on how we could support them. Terry, another teacher and I got together a couple of years ago for coffee. We reconnected and celebrated those years. He definitely had a strong influence on the teacher I am today.

I pray for you and your family during this time. Remember Terry is still making a difference with the impact he had on the educators he worked with. We will continue his work.

Deb Hess - February 14, 2023 at 10:35 PM

DA

“ Dear Mrs. Sandlin and Family,

On behalf of Topeka Public Schools, our condolences are extended to your family. While I did not have the privilege of meeting Dr. Sandlin, I have the privilege of knowing him through the employees in the Burnett Administrative Center and in our schools that had the honor of working with him. I have learned that he taught many of our current leaders at Washburn and in Topeka Public Schools, his impact will continue leaving an imprint on so many children as a result.

Based on the comments of many employees who knew him, Dr. Sandlin has been a tremendous force on Topeka, Kansas and the many students, fellow teachers and administrators he mentored throughout Topeka Public Schools and the community today. His roles as teacher, principal, administrator, and later interim superintendent, has impacted this city and leaves a legacy for us all. This legacy also ripples throughout the globe to wherever these students and mentees have chosen to serve. As a gift to your family, I will be donating a brick in his honor to be placed at the front of the Burnett building so all who enter will see his name and the message you select to place on it. Mr. Sandlin's life made a tremendous impact on all in Topeka Public Schools.

My personal prayer is that God's grace comfort and strengthen you as you remember the life of a good and faithful servant.

*Dr. Tiffany Anderson
Topeka Public Schools
Superintendent*

Dr. Tiffany Anderson - February 14, 2023 at 05:10 PM

DN

“ To all of Dr. Sandlin's Family: You have my sincere condolences as you navigate this new territory without his warm smile, quick wit, and gracious presence! Not only did I value his relationship as a colleague in Topeka Public Schools, but Dr. Sandlin was also my professor during my years as a master's student at Washburn University. His classes were ones that I always looked forward to attending after a long day at work, and the "study group" meetings in his home were always welcoming. You were blessed to have him in your lives. I count myself blessed, as well. May God's peace continue to give you sweet memories, endless comfort, and rich joy.

Dr. Beryl New - February 14, 2023 at 02:22 PM

DN

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Dr. Beryl A. New - February 14, 2023 at 02:20 PM

SC

“ I was so very sad to hear of Terry's passing! I had not seen Terry for a long time, but I want you to know that he had a very positive influence on my life! When Terry was Principal of Highland Park North, I was a teacher at Hudson Elementary. Both of our schools were chosen as two of the first five TPS "Comer Schools." We both were on the first trip of educators to go to Yale for training, and I got to know Terry a little at that time. I was lucky to get to know him better when I later became the district Facilitator of the Comer School Development program. During my years working with him, he was Principal of State Street, and then later at Whitson. I absolutely loved working with Terry!! There was NO ONE who was more dedicated to the Comer program than Terry. He was the epitome of the program....caring about ALL students, involving parents in the school, and having shared decision-making with stakeholders. That was not easy for all all principals, but it is what Terry WAS by nature! I will always remember Terry for his love of being a dedicated educator, his incredible intelligence, and his wonderful dry sense of humor! I am holding all those who loved Terry very close in my heart!!

Sara Cocolis - February 14, 2023 at 01:29 PM