Karen Kalinowski was born and raised in Edmore, ND. She received a BS Degree in Music Education from UND, and a Masters in Music Education from MSUM. She studied Kodaly methods at NDSU and completed the Master level in Orff methods at Hamline University. After retiring from teaching elementary music, she became a Nationally Certified Teacher of Music in Piano through MTNA and taught piano lessons through Mrs. K's Studio.

She met her husband Roger when they were both employed by Fort Totten Little Theatre in 1974. They enjoyed working together in high school, community, and summer theaters for over 40 years in Breckenridge, MN, Lamoure County, Valley City, Wyndmere, Fort Totten, and Wahpeton, ND where they both taught school.

She has accompanied instrumental and vocal music students in a number of schools over the years, and continues to accompany students at Davies High School in Fargo.