

Article 1: Role of the Panel

The 2019 Kansas Statewide Early Childhood Care and Education Needs Assessment finds that greater systems alignment is needed to fully realize an efficient and robust early childhood care and education infrastructure. This informs **Goal 1: State-Level Coordination**, of the [All in for Kansas Kids Strategic Plan](#), which outlines the steps needed to ensure the early childhood care and education system is structured and aligned for maximum impact.

The Kansas Early Childhood Recommendations Panel is an advisory group to the Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund. It plays a key role in enabling our state to implement the *All in for Kansas Kids* strategic plan, respond to challenges, elevate recommendations from communities and stakeholders, and make key decisions to help us achieve the vision outlined in our strategic plan.

Kansas [Executive Order 20-02](#) designates the Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund (“Children’s Cabinet”) as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care. It states, “In order to support the Cabinet in fulfilling [these duties], the Cabinet shall convene and maintain a panel of volunteers (“the Panel”) with demonstrable early childhood expertise to operate at the pleasure of the Cabinet in an advisory role. The Executive Director of the Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund shall coordinate the activities of the Panel on behalf of the Cabinet. The Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund shall provide ongoing direction to the Panel, delineating areas in which it would benefit from the Panel’s expertise and establishing responsibilities, governance, and reporting structures as it finds beneficial.”

Article 2: Panel Membership

The Children’s Cabinet convenes, directs, and appoints members to the Kansas Early Childhood Recommendations Panel. The Children’s Cabinet appoints a chair to coordinate the work of the Panel.

Kansans interested in serving on the Panel may submit their interest at any point during the year. The application for membership shall be posted on the Children’s Cabinet website: <https://kschildrenscabinet.org>.

A. TERM OF OFFICE

Executive Order 20-02 sets terms of membership: "The Cabinet shall annually appoint members to one-year terms of service on the Panel, with the option to reappoint and/or replace members by majority vote as the Cabinet sees fit. The Panel's membership shall include, to the maximum extent possible:

- a. A representative of the Kansas Department for Children and Families or its successor agency;
- b. A representative of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment;
- c. A representative of the Kansas State Department of Education representing early childhood education and early childhood special education;
- d. One or more representatives of local school districts;
- e. One or more representatives of institutions of higher education in the State;
- f. One or more representatives of local providers of early childhood care and education services;
- g. A representative from a Head Start agency located in the State;
- h. The State Director of Head Start Collaboration;
- i. A parent of a young child currently receiving early childhood services from the state of Kansas;
- j. Representatives of other entities determined to be relevant by the Cabinet; and
- k. Other representatives as determined by the Governor.

Members of the Panel shall receive no compensation or reimbursements for expenses and shall serve voluntarily. Officers or employees of state agencies who are appointed to the Panel as part of their duties shall be authorized to participate on the Panel and may claim subsistence, allowance, mileage, or associated expenses from their respective agency budgets as permitted by law."

B. MEETING PARTICIPATION

Panel members' active engagement in both meetings of the full Panel and subcommittees or working groups is critical to the success of the Panel in fulfilling its role. Panel members should communicate with the Panel chair or staff if they will not be able to attend Panel meetings. The following constitutes grounds for discussion with a Panel member and possible recommendation to the Children's Cabinet for termination of membership:

- absence from three (3) consecutive meetings of the full Panel in one year, or
- more than five total absences from meetings of the full Panel in any given year.

Members of the Panel may attend and participate in a meeting virtually by means of conference telephone, virtual platform, or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating can hear each other. Virtual participation in a meeting constitutes presence at such meeting.

C. RESIGNATION

A Panel member's resignation must be in writing and submitted to the Children's Cabinet and to the Panel chair.

D. ORIENTATION

New members will receive orientation on the role of the Panel, its norms, and its procedures from the chair, staff, or longstanding Panel members.

Article 2: Panel Norms

The Panel will abide by the following norms:

A. CHILD- AND FAMILY-CENTERED

The Panel will keep the needs and choices of children and families at the forefront of decision-making to ensure they get what they need to thrive. (All in for Kansas Kids Guiding Principle)

The Panel will support and make recommendations in accordance with the Children's Cabinet's **Commitment to Kansas Children and Families:**

The Kansas Children's Cabinet recognizes that addressing unmet needs across the state is paramount to family flourishing. We are committed to improving the health and well-being of all Kansas children and families by:

- coordinating systems-wide approaches to ensure services are available and accessible across the early childhood ecosystem;
- elevating family voice and choice;
- using data in ethical, timely, and responsive ways in partnership with communities and a broad array of experts; and
- expanding the reach of our programs to allow all families to access the services they want and need for their children.

B. LEADERSHIP

The Panel is informed by the teachings of the Kansas Leadership Center. In particular, the Panel believes that **leadership is an activity, not a position, and that anyone can lead,**

anytime, anywhere. The Panel will decide when it can **give the work back** to a council, committee, or workgroup with expertise, experience, or jurisdiction related to a particular issue. The Panel will recognize that each and every Kansan has a vested interest in supporting our youngest Kansans and their families during a critical period of development that can set the trajectory for success in school and beyond. **We are all early childhood stakeholders.**

C. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Panel will work **transparently and accountably** (*All in for Kansas Kids Guiding Principle*).

D. DATA-DRIVEN

The Panel will use findings to inform the direction of early childhood care and education services. The Panel will routinely seek input and analyze data from multiple sources to ensure policy recommendations reflect the realities of Kansans, as well as current or emerging recommended and/or evidence-based practices. (*All in for Kansas Kids Guiding Principle*)

E. STRENGTHS-BASED

The Panel will use **strengths-based** language and strategies that foster hope, ensure universal dignity, and describe ideal outcomes that Kansans believe are possible. (*All in for Kansas Kids Guiding Principle*)

F. CLARITY

The Panel will **use clear language** to make it easier for all Kansans to understand and engage with its work. (*All in for Kansas Kids Tactic 3.1.5*)

G. REPRESENTATION

Panel members will make clear when they are representing an agency's or organization's point of view. Otherwise, it will be assumed that the viewpoint represents the panel member as a professional in the field of early childhood.

Article 4: Panel Actions

A. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel **recommendations** will include the following:

- Clear identification of the entity that will receive the recommendation
- Background information explaining the issue that includes a description of:
 - How the unique needs of Kansas families have informed this recommendation,

- How Kansas families have shaped this recommendation, and
- The councils, committees, or workgroups with expertise, experience, or jurisdiction related to the issue
- **The Kansas Early Childhood Recommendations Panel recommends that** *[insert recommendation specifying both actor and recommended action]*

B. COLLABORATION

The Panel may contact other councils, committees, and workgroups with expertise, experience, or jurisdiction related to a particular issue **to share information gathered and identify opportunities for further progress**. The Panel may also contact other councils, committees, and workgroups **to request additional information or feedback** on draft recommendations.

C. TIMING AND REPORTING

The Panel may provide recommendations or information, or request information or feedback at any point during the year. The Panel must provide an annual report summarizing its work to the Children's Cabinet.

Article 5: Meeting Procedures

A. OPEN MEETINGS

Per [Executive Order 20-02](#), The Panel shall be subject to the Kansas Open Meetings Act. The Kansas Open Meetings Act recognizes “that a representative government is dependent upon an informed electorate” and sets the policy of the State of Kansas as one where “meetings for the conduct of governmental affairs and the transaction of governmental business be open to the public” (K.S.A. 75-4317). *Review the Kansas Attorney General’s Frequently Asked Questions about the Kansas Open Meetings Act at <https://ag.ks.gov/open-government/koma-faq>.*

B. OPEN RECORDS

Per [Executive Order 20-02](#), The Panel shall be subject to the Kansas Open Records Act. It is the public policy of Kansas that “public records shall be open for inspection by any person unless

otherwise provided, and this act shall be liberally construed and applied to promote such policy” (K.S.A. 45-216). *Review the Kansas Attorney General’s Frequently Asked Questions about the Kansas Open Records Act at <https://ag.ks.gov/open-government/kora-faq>.*

C. QUORUM

A quorum consists of a simple majority of the full Panel membership. The Panel may take official action only when a quorum is present. Members participating virtually count toward a quorum. Final decisions of the Panel must be by a two-thirds vote of the Panel members present.

D. CHAIRPERSON

The Children's Cabinet should annually designate a chair. In the event that the annual designation of Panel chair is not forthcoming from the Children's Cabinet, the Panel must designate an interim chair. The chair is a full participating member of the Panel and must:

- Be responsible for developing meeting agendas, scheduling meetings and ensuring completion of all tasks associated with Panel meetings;
- Preside over all meetings of the Panel, or designate a facilitator. In the absence of the chair the Children's Cabinet may designate a Panel member to preside over the Panel meeting;
- Collaborate with the Executive Director of the Children's Cabinet to support the work activities of staff support to the Panel;
- Organize subcommittees and work groups as necessary; and
- Perform all duties incident to the position of chair and all other duties as prescribed by the Panel.

E. VOTING

- The Panel will strive first for consensus in decision making.
- If consensus is not possible, participants may call for a vote.
- Each Panel member is entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote.
- A vote of two-thirds of those members present is necessary to approve any formal action taken by the Panel pursuant to Article 4: Panel Actions.
- The votes of Panel members participating virtually shall be included on matters submitted to a vote.

F. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Kansas early childhood system needs Kansans' engagement and input to work effectively and continuously improve. Stakeholders will be invited to share input on an ongoing basis through a variety of channels, including regular email updates, a public web portal, regular webinars, and the Kansas Early Childhood Stakeholders meetings. Stakeholders will have the

opportunity to identify opportunities for improvement or request study and potential action on particular issues by notifying Panel staff. Regular Panel meetings shall include a Kansans' Open Forum to provide Kansans the opportunity to share comments with the Panel. The presiding officer should determine appropriate constraints to balance the importance of gathering public feedback and allowing the Panel enough time to conduct its regular business. The posted agenda will outline the procedures for providing public feedback during the Kansans' Open Forum. Typical procedures will be as follows:

- Each speaker will be allowed to speak for three minutes.
- Panel members may ask clarifying questions of the person making the presentation. The speaker will have up to one minute to respond. The presiding officer may grant additional time.
- Information may be submitted to the Panel in written and electronic form. This information must be included in the meeting minutes.
- Following the Kansans' Open Forum portion of the agenda, the presiding officer will acknowledge the participants and announce that the Panel will determine if any of the issues will be addressed at future meetings.
- In the event of a meeting conducted virtually, the Panel may only accept written comments. The posted agenda will outline the procedures for providing written feedback.

G. PLACING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Panel meetings must include the opportunity for Panel members to request future agenda items for consideration at future meetings. The agenda will be posted to the Children's Cabinet website and shared at least one week prior to the meeting. Discussion will be limited to items on the proposed agenda. Should there be a desire to submit additional items for the agenda, changes to the agenda can be made by a majority vote at the beginning of each meeting.

H. MINUTES

Draft copies of minutes will be mailed or sent electronically to Panel members prior to the next scheduled Panel meeting. At that next meeting, this draft will be considered and edited, as necessary. A majority vote will approve the minutes. Approved minutes of the Panel meetings must be posted to the Children's Cabinet website in a timely fashion.

Article 6: Working Groups and Subcommittees

The Panel chair may organize working groups or subcommittees to advance the work of the Panel. Such subcommittees must follow Kansas Open Meetings Act and Kansas Open Records Act requirements.

Article 7: Amendments to Norms and Procedures

These norms and procedures may be altered, amended or repealed and new norms and procedures that comply with [Executive Order 20-02](#) may be adopted by formal action of the Panel at any regular or special meeting of the Panel. Proposed changes must be submitted in writing to the Panel chair or staff member and received by all members of the Panel at least 15 days prior to the scheduled meeting at which action is to be taken.

History

Adopted July 17, 2020

Amended January 15, 2021