

# KANSAS EARLY CHILDHOOD RECOMMENDATIONS PANEL

Monthly Meeting Minutes  
Friday, March 11, 2022



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Visit the [Children's Cabinet website](#) for meeting materials and the [YouTube recording](#).

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## Members Present

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Nichelle Adams, Kansas Department for Children and Families

Jennifer Adhima, Kansas Head Start Association  
Rachel Anno, Kansas Department for Children and Families

Mallory Arellano, Newman University

Emily Barnes, Barnes Child Care

Paula Branizor, Kansas Department of Health and Environment

Jennifer Forker, Hutchinson Community College

Jennifer Francois, Kansas Institute for Early Childhood Education and Research

Amy Gottschamer, Googols of Learning Child Development Center

Crystal Henry, Family Conservancy

Eva Horn, Institutions of Higher Ed

Esther Kottwitz, Lawrence Public Schools USD 497

David Lindeman, University of Kansas Life Span Institute at Parsons

Kelli Mark, Kansas Department of Health and Environment

Malissa Martin, Community in Schools, Mid-America

Natalie McClane, Kansas State Department of Education

Lucas Neece, Sprout House Learning

Amy Meek, Kansas Children's Cabinet & Trust Fund

Patty Peschel, Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities, Inc.

Amanda Petersen, Kansas State Department of Education

Kate Roggenbaum, Parent Leader

Dannah Schatz, Russell Child Development Center

Lisa Schmidt, Women's Community Y

Cassandra Sines, Parent Leader

Cornelia Stevens, TOP Early Learning Centers

Reva Wywadis, Child Care Aware of Eastern Kansas

## Minutes

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### Welcome

Amanda Petersen called the meeting to order with a quorum present, described processes for a remote meeting, and directed participants to **the [Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund website](#)** for meeting materials.

### Meeting Agenda

Reva Wywadis moved to approve the agenda and Cornelia Stevens seconded, with a unanimous vote to approve the agenda as presented.

### February 18, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Maritas Altuna moved to approve the February minutes and Amy Meek seconded, with a unanimous vote to approve the minutes as presented.

### Kansans' Open Forum - Written and Verbal Comments:

No comments submitted.

### Proposed Work Group Recommendations follow up discussion

Amanda Petersen facilitated a follow up discussion from the Work Group Recommendations. Amanda gave thanks to everyone for their hard work to develop the recommendations and taking the time to review them.

### **Recommendation #1:**

*The Kansas Children's Cabinet, in its role as the Early Childhood Advisory Council, recommends state agencies and contracted partners utilize federal relief funding to design and implement a plan to issue one-time bonus payments to help retain individual child care professionals in licensed child care settings.*

### **Changes Made/Background Information:**

There was a minor change made to the wording. We changed child care providers to child care professionals. Shares the background information that makes the connect for the [All In for Kansas Kids Strategic Plan](#). It also highlights the national resources, and findings of the [Needs Assessment](#), as well as the feedback that we've received from childcare professionals that helped inform this plan. This recommendation also describes who is impacted by this issue, as we remember that we are all early childhood stakeholders. It also highlights other work that has already been done on this issue.

A member says that the group spent a lot of time making sure that the suggestions and the recommendations would be meaningful. *"We just know that without a workforce we cannot address the childcare needs of families across the state, and felt like even though we know this won't fix things for the long haul, it would certainly be an acknowledgment of the hard work that our early childhood professionals do every day."*

Another member included that *“It shows two times within the recommendation that it is important to emphasize this is not to take the place of a wage and compensation effort. This is complementary to sustainability grants that are already going out, but this is not in any way to be taken as a recommendation that supersedes the idea of a broader wage and compensation plan for the workforce.”*

**Motion to Approve Recommendation:**

- Lucas Neece made a motion to approve this recommendation.
- Mallory Arellano seconded the motion.
- 2 abstentions
- The motion passed with more than 2/3 majority.

**Recommendation #2:**

*The Kansas Children’s Cabinet, in its role as the Early Childhood Advisory Council, recommends the State Interagency Coordinating Council and Local interagency Coordinating Councils collaborate to implement the following strategies.*

- Broaden Local ICCI participation and membership through strategies such as: holding meetings outside the normal 9-5 hours, provide stipends for time and/or travel, provide/support childcare for council members.
- Research funding opportunities to provide stipends to early childhood care and education professionals/family members for their time spent serving on the State and Local ICCs.
- Promote communication of LICC members, to create awareness of community resources and share them throughout their communities to address the need of children/families with development delays, disabilities, and/or special health care needs.
- Sponsor community engagement events, provide informational materials, and identify how these events and resources can be networking opportunities, while informing their community partners about the challenges of families and professionals in working with, and addressing the needs of, children with developmental delays, disabilities, and/or special health care needs.
- Propose monies be included in the State ICC budget to fund community projects proposed by LICCs in support of the *All in for Kansas Kids Strategic Plan*, Goal 2.

**In Order to:**

- Promote membership and participation of family members/early childhood care and education professionals (in accordance with K.A.R. 28-4-565)
- Equitably engage with local early childhood care and education professionals/family members, to elevate their voices, needs, interest, and contributions within the governance system of their local community.
- Promote the *All in for Kansas Kids Strategic Plan*, Goal 2,1,1, to “Create the opportunity for providers and families to access information about the available resources in their community” and statewide.

Included background information highlights of the recently published resource from the center for law and social policy around engagement strategies,, [Shaping Equitable Early Childhood Policy: Incorporating Inclusive Community Engagement Frameworks into Expanded Data Strategies by the Center for Law and Social Policy \(CLASP-2021\)](#). It highlights the importance of parents and early childhood care education providers sharing gaps to services, and it discusses the *All in for Kansas Kids Needs Assessment* from 2019. It coordinates the partnership with the State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC). It describes why this is important and who is impacted by this issue, and other potential connections for groups within the Kansas early childhood care and education system, who are connected to this system and with this issue.

Debbie Deere gave thanks to all the work group members for all the work that has been put into this, and the meaningful thought process that went into focusing on this idea from the very beginning, and how it has evolved into what everyone is seeing today.

**Motion to Approve Recommendation:**

- Emily Barnes made a motion to approve this to the Kansas Children’s Cabinet.
- Shelia Bertelsen seconded that motion.
- 2 abstentions
- This motion passed with more than 2/3 majority.

**Important Message from the Family Partnership Work Group Members:**

Thank you again for your work to date. It is so exciting to see family partnership being talked about across the early childhood system in ways that leverage the great work that has been done to date, as well as explores new ideas. We have some updates and a proposed new direction to share with you.

The Panel leadership team met and reviewed the recommendation for a shared definition of family partnership and has encouraged the work group to move forward by handing the work off to the Family Leadership Team. If the Family Leadership Team accepts, they will review existing definitions and determine next steps to either adopt existing language system-wide or recommend something new for adoption. At that time, the Family Leadership Team will bring their guidance back to the Panel for consideration. The Panel may then consider putting forth a recommendation for system adoption. Although this means that the recommendation will not be put forth for a vote at our March meeting, this does not in any way mean the work is stopping. Rather, it is a pivot point, and a reflection of the group’s work to identify next steps for implementation and how the work can be handed off appropriately within the governance structure.

**Work Group “Phase 2”**

Debbie Deere presented an overview of "Phase 2".

Work group process options:

- Potential development of a recommendation
- Partnership/Collaboration with another group within the governance system
- Partnership/Collaboration with another agency/organization/early childhood stakeholder group

Work group process:

- Determine what the next few months will look like
- Group members will drive the ideas/work forward
- What is meaningful work for your group?
- Identify new areas of focus
- Identify connection points

Amanda Petersen shares a word of encouragement before break out rooms. *"I see really incredible leaders on the screen and know that we have so many folks that are responsible for projects at the local level or the state level. I encourage the group to think about the Panel as a terrific resource that we have available in our work."*

### Work Groups went into their breakout sessions

- Child Care Recruitment & Retention
- Family Partnerships
- Quality & Environments

### Work Group Reports:

- **Child Care Recruitment & Retention –**

The group talked a lot about the formal recommendation that they put forth was for the retention bonuses. This recommendation is not to be a replacement on actually working on this wage issue. Talked about if that was something they could do if it belonged in their group or somewhere else and what data they would need to tackle something like that. Who would they need to align with and if there is anyone tackling this wage issue. Who they could partner with and how to get resources to see what else is happening. No formal decision made in the work group, but great conversation.

- **Family Partnerships –**

They focused on having the Family Leadership Team in on the process of the shared definition for family engagement. When they talk about bringing people to the table they are talking about bringing families. If a recommendation is made to engage a certain organization then the express intent is to have them bring families to the table. They want to make sure this is done correctly and not leave anyone out of the process. Family navigation is a huge need as identified in the [Needs Assessment](#) and the strategic plan. They talked about 1-800-Children and the efforts that have been made to connect families with resources. KCSL is moving towards creating physical family resource centers.

- **Quality & Environments –**

The group wants to make sure they are focusing on engaging child care professionals and making sure that the various state organizations are doing work that impacts child care providers. Talked about how day time meetings are the big takeaway there. How do we make sure we are going to where providers are already? How do we make sure we do not have to create new meetings?

A member said in addition to not making unnecessary meetings and utilizing tools that are already set up. Try to focus on the intentionality of what does the early childhood professional voice say and how do we use that and let's not reinvent the wheel with new tools.

### Future Agenda Items:

Debbie Deere presented information on the potential for future agenda items and how Panel members can contribute to this on behalf of the agencies/organizations that they represent.

- Upcoming agenda times are available
- Opportunity for members to share agency/organization information relevant to Panel work
- Opportunity for members to bring your agency/organization's work to the Panel for:
  - Support
  - Feedback
  - Make an "ask"

Sara Gardner, KU-CPPR, wanted to let everyone know that they are updating the statewide needs assessment. They did a comprehensive needs assessment with the initial Preschool Development Grant (PDG) planning grant in 2019. It is a very large document that they have often referenced. Last spring they did an update for calendar year 2020, it's much shorter. It's about 20 pages or so. It does present a snapshot and an update on some of those data points. They are doing the same effort again this year, so it will cover calendar year 2021. Her ask is, *"If you have any surveys or any data sets that speak to a unique need, and think it would add benefit for the state to see it, please send that to her. She will connect you with the lead on the assessment work."* ([sgardner10@ku.edu](mailto:sgardner10@ku.edu))

### Bright Spots:

- A member shared that we have all done terrific work and that we had a really thorough process to vet and review and think through recommendations that will be shared with the panel on April 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Another member thanks everyone for all the hard work they have been doing.
- A member wants to say thank you to Amanda Pedersen for her recent presentation to the Kansas Legislative Early Learning Caucus on Kindergarten transitions. She had a lot of fun and it was a really good opportunity to share and made good connections with state legislators. Amanda Petersen was also recently voted the Kansas Head

Start Association's Kansas Children's Champion and is so deserving of that reward. Congratulations Amanda!

- A member was looking at data and saw that most child care facility enrollments are back to their pre-pandemic enrollment. It is encouraging to see this and that teachers are back in the classrooms.

#### Upcoming Meetings: (all via Zoom)

- Early Childhood Recommendations Panel meeting – Friday, April 15, 9:00 a.m. -11:30 a.m. (schedule changed)
- Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund Meeting – Friday, April 1, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- Early Childhood Stakeholders Group Meeting – Friday, April 1, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

#### Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 10:28am.