

# KANSAS EARLY CHILDHOOD RECOMMENDATIONS PANEL

Monthly Meeting Minutes  
Friday, August 18, 2023



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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, DCF  
Kristen Alhareedi, Sedgwick County  
Health Department  
Marites Altuna, Kansas State School for  
the Blind  
Mallory Arellano, Newman University  
Brenda Bandy, Kansas Breastfeeding  
Coalition  
Sheila Bertelsen, Dodge City Public  
School-Bright Beginnings Early  
Childhood Center  
Dana Book, KCSL  
Tanya Bulluck, Child Start, Inc  
Eldonna Chesnut, Johnson County  
Department of Health & Environment  
Kristina Cullison, Frontenac Public  
Schools  
Jarvis Doleman, KDHE  
Nick Engels, Littles Early Learning  
Bronwyn Fees, Kansas State University  
Lyda Fincham, Hopeful Beginnings  
Counseling Services  
Kelly Frantz-Langford, TARC  
Kim Kennedy, DCF-HSCO  
Hilary Koehn, KPATA  
Tanya Koehn, CCAKS  
Katrina Lowry, Russell Child Development  
Center  
Karen MacCrory, Mitchell County  
Partnership for Children  
Malissa Martin, SparkWheel, Inc  
Natalie McClane, KSDE

Cheisa Myles, Blessed Assurance Daycare  
Leigh Anne Neal, USD 512 Shawnee  
Mission School District  
Lindsay Orion, KU CPPR  
Stephanie Parks, University of Kansas  
Patty Peschel, KCCTO  
Bethany Samuel, DCF  
Lisa Schmidt, Women's Community Y  
Heather Schrotberger, Kansas Head Start  
Association  
Dana Stanton, Northwest Kansas  
Economic Innovation Center, Inc  
Logan Stenseng, Thrive Allen County  
Cornelia Stevens, TOP Early Learning  
Centers  
Marie Treichel, KAIMH  
Cora Ungerer, KDHE  
Jateice Vieux, USD 226 Meade  
Elementary & Junior High School  
Stephanie Wiggins, KCCTO/KITS  
Christie Wyckoff, KCCTF

## Minutes

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### Welcome

Cornelia Stevens 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.

### August Meeting Agenda

Natalie McClane moved to approve the July agenda and Eldonna Chesnut seconded, with a unanimous vote to approve the agenda as presented.

### July 21, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Leigh Anne Neal moved to approve the June minutes and Karen MacCrory seconded, with a unanimous vote to approve the minutes as presented.

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

Kansans are encouraged to submit comments through the [Kansans' Open Forum Comment Form](#) by 5:00pm the day preceding each meeting to share written comments or to sign up to share verbal comments with the Panel during this portion of the meeting. No comments submitted.

### Early Childhood Transition Task Force

Cornelia provided an update on the Early Childhood Transition Task Force. You can find a summary of all action items to date and other task force updates on the Governor's website on the [Kansas Early Childhood Transition Task Force](#) landing page. Over the course of the Community Engagement Tour, the Task Force hosted nine in-person sessions and one virtual session with participation from over 500 Kansans. There were several similarities in issues brought up at multiple stops along the tour that are being elevated: licensing improvement, lack of workforce and respect for the early care and education professionals, child care affordability, accessibility (transportation, geographic boundaries, language), system navigation, funding (special education, mental health services), and the social stigma to receiving benefits. There were also many things that were celebrated: school districts offering more pre-school slots and partnering with community based programs to expand access, more business support through public-private partnerships, professional passion and pride of the work that is being done by early care and education professionals. After reviewing the participant feedback from the Community Engagement Tour, conversation at the meeting focused on what a single agency would look like and the challenges that could arise from that. Due to those challenges and the need to elevate issues from the tour, work groups are being formed to assist in this process with the main goal to make things better for children, families, and providers in the system.

## Developmental Health Actionable Solutions Opportunity

Cornelia introduced Rachel Gardner of KU CPPR to discuss the actionable solutions that Panel members can bring back to their communities. In the fall of 2022, as part of the All In for Kansas Kids Strategic Plan implementation efforts, CPPR conducted a survey to learn about how Kansans understood the topics of early childhood developmental health, screening processes, and available resources. Nearly 1,500 families and providers across the state participated in the survey. The survey results are being used to improve existing awareness efforts around developmental health and to prioritize new initiatives and education. Following the survey, [Family Engagement Sessions](#) were held in the Spring of 2023. Kansans from all regions of the state participated in the 6 independent virtual sessions (five in English, one in Spanish), with 93 family participants. These sessions were used to elevate parent voice, increase parent knowledge, and to give parents the opportunity to work together to generate small, actionable solutions that could be implemented in communities across Kansas to improve developmental health experiences for all families. Many ideas were generated from these sessions that were compiled and sent out in an additional survey where participants could vote on what solutions they believed would be most impactful. From that feedback, three main categories arose: technology (ex. An app to create instant access to local developmental health resources and information), process (ex. Family resource kits – tangibles/toys/tools for in-home use to support developmental growth), and connection (ex. Increased awareness around in-home supports such as home visiting, child care, and pre-K). If you would like to learn more or are interested in implementing any of the ideas developed in your community, please contact Rachel Gardner at [rachelgardner@ku.edu](mailto:rachelgardner@ku.edu).

Panel members were curious as to how this work interacts with Help Me Grow work and if the two are connected. The response was that they are somewhat interconnected and that the initial survey was created due to the feedback that was provided by ASQ screening participants.

## Early Childhood Integrated Data

Cornelia introduced Emily Bertels Kaufman of KU CPPR to talk about data and a project seeking to integrate data across agencies that support children in Kansas. The goal of this project is to provide the distinct number (unduplicated count) of Kansas children being served in programs across early childhood programs at the state level. Their focus is on the largest systems serving children: child care, public pre-K, Part B, Part C, and home visiting. As a first step they are gathering preliminary aggregate data from existing sources and working with agency stakeholders to further refine data and develop a dashboard to display the data. This project is authorized under the [Early Childhood Data Trust](#), an initiative of All In for Kansas Kids. Comprised of five state agencies who are sharing data and information to improve the quality, effectiveness, and equity of programs and services for Kansas children and families. The approach being taken to put this project into motion started with discovery sessions with agency staff in January and February 2023, then standard data requests were developed and sent out between May and August. Data processing started in June and will continue through September. As they are

processing data they are also starting to develop the visualization of what this dashboard will look like and have held feedback sessions with stakeholders between July and August. Next steps include data audits between August and September, final adjustments (final design, data quality checks, technical documentation) between September and November. Starting in 2024 they will hold further engagement opportunities referred to as Data Summits. For information on these Data Summits or about the Integrated Data project you can contact the team at [ECIDS@ku.edu](mailto:ECIDS@ku.edu).

Panel members raised several questions about the Integrated Data project:

- Who the target audience was for the 2024 Data Summits? Anyone who works with data in their agency.
- What is the integrated data being collected? Currently focusing on the basics (mostly demographic and program information).
- Will the data be updated annually? Yes. It won't be updated live but each year the Data Trust will return to the agencies to request updated data sets.

## AIFKK Tactic Work Group Members

### 4.2 Family Friendly Workplaces:

- Marites Altuna
- Mallory Arellano
- Brenda Bandy
- Dana Book
- Tanya Bulluck
- Kerri Falletti
- Malissa Martin
- Bethany Samuel
- Tara Taylor

### 6.1.1 Compensation

- Bronwyn Fees
- Kelly Frantz-Langford
- Hilary Koehn
- Karen MacCrory
- Tabatha Rosproy
- Brett Schmidt
- Lisa Schmidt
- Heather Schrotberger
- Cornelia Stevens
- Tricia Waggoner

### 7.1.2 Zoning

- Kristen Alhareedi
- Emily Barnes
- Eldonna Chesnut
- Jarvis Doleman
- Nick Engels
- Tanya Koehn
- Christie Wyckoff
- Ly Tran (DCF SME)

### 6.1.5 Recruitment and Retention

- Nichelle Adams
- Sheila Bertelsen
- Kristina Cullison
- Lyda Fincham
- Amy Gottschamer
- Kimberly Kennedy
- Katrina Lowry
- Natalie McClane
- Cheisa Myles
- Leigh Anne Neal
- Stephanie Parks
- Patty Peschel
- Dana Stanton
- Marie Treichel
- Cora Ungerer
- Jateice Vieux
- Stephanie Wiggins
- Lisa Jeanneret (DCF SME)

## Bright Spots

- Dana Stanton: The Northwest Kansas Economic Innovation Center held their first annual Northwest Kansas Child Care Provider Conference where over 140 child care providers received 16 hours of KDHE approved training to fulfill their professional development requirements. This conference was FREE to all participants and they look forward to continuation of this conference.
- Eldonna Chesnut: Senator Marshal convened a group of child care leaders to discuss the issues of child care which was a good start to advancing child care in Kansas.
- Jarvis Doleman: The first three categories of the Regulations Review have been finalized and drafts have been moved to legal for review. For the final category they will push through the necessary big changes but will then meet with partners to have an additional review of this category to see what can be done to make things better for those program types. In regard to statistics for licensing, since September, child care capacity has increased by 2900 slots across the state and are averaging 50 applications a month. New electronic waivers for background checks and fingerprints have increased the speed at which new hires can be onboarded into the system, removing an unnecessary barrier.
- Marites Altuna: The Kansas State School for the Blind is able to provide support to 29 infant/toddler program networks across the state, year-round, at no charge because of our partnership with Kansas Early Childhood Developmental Services. If you are serving any kids with vision impairments and need general accommodations or adaptations reach out to Marites.
- Tanya Bulluck: Due to the results of our Community Needs Assessment we discovered that our HeadStart Early HeadStart families were struggling getting to school due to lack of transportation. Due to this data we are now piloting a program with Wichita transit where all families can receive free bus passes for their entire family that can be used not only for school, but for all transportation needs.
- Nichelle Adams: As of January 2024, the P-EBT program (supplemental food assistance for school-age children that receive free or reduced school meals) will be issued an additional \$120 per child. More information on P-EBT programs and how to apply [here](#).
- Tanya Koehn: Child Care Aware has launched their 2023 Supply Demand report. You can find live data for the entire state of Kansas on their website [here](#).
- Karen MacCrory: Just wanting to shout out that the data on the Child Care Aware website is extremely useful and helpful! We have utilized the data to present to the county administrators and connected it with staff retention in Elementary and High Schools and now have 3 new group homes and 2 districts partnering with child care facilities.
- Brenda Bandy: Our governor has proclaimed August as Kansas Breastfeeding Month which is also National Breastfeeding Month. We have a new child care program, Little Sprouts Daycare in Kiowa county. They are another family child care program that achieved the breastfeeding friendly child care provider designation

bringing our total number to 39. If you know of any other programs you can get in touch with the Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition or Child Care Aware of Kansas to help with the application.

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

- [Early Childhood Recommendations Panel](#) – Friday, September 15, 9:00 a.m. –11:30 a.m.
- [Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund Meeting](#) – Friday, October 6, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

#### Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:53am.