

KANSAS EARLY CHILDHOOD RECOMMENDATIONS PANEL

Monthly Meeting Minutes
Friday, September 15, 2023



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

Members Present

Nichelle Adams, DCF
Kristen Alhareedi, Sedgwick County
Health Department
Marites Altuna, Kansas State School for
the Blind
Mallory Arellano, Newman University
Emily Barnes, Barnes Child Care
Sheila Bertelsen, Dodge City Public
School-Bright Beginnings Early
Childhood Center
Dana Book, KCSL
Eldonna Chesnut, Johnson County
Department of Health & Environment
Kristina Cullison, Frontenac Public
Schools
Nick Engels, Littles Early Learning
Kerri Falletti, KDC-Office of Rural
Prosperity
Bronwyn Fees, Kansas State University
Kelly Frantz-Langford, TARC
Amy Gottschamer, Googols of Learning
Lisa Jeanneret, DCF
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
Tabatha Rosproy, Kansas Parent
Information Resource Center
Bethany Samuel, DCF
Brett Schmidt, Learning Cross
Lisa Schmidt, Women's Community Y
Heather Schrotberger, Kansas Head Start
Association
Dana Stanton, Northwest Kansas
Economic Innovation Center, Inc
Cornelia Stevens, TOP Early Learning
Centers
Tara Taylor, Arkansas City Public Schools
Ly Tran, DCF
Marie Treichel, KAIMH
Cora Ungerer, KDHE
Jateice Vieux, USD 226 Meade
Elementary & Junior High School
Tricia Waggoner, KDHE
Stephanie Wiggins, KCCTO/KITS
Christie Wyckoff, KCCTF

Minutes

Welcome

Cornelia Stevens, Chair, 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.

September Meeting Agenda

Leigh Anne Neal moved to approve the September agenda and Natalie McClane seconded, with a unanimous vote to approve the agenda as presented.

August 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Tabatha Rosproy moved to approve the August minutes and Eldonna Chesnut 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.

Kansas Early Childhood Needs Assessment Update

Cornelia introduced Chris Tilden of KU CPPR to give an update on the Early Childhood 2023 Needs Assessment. This Needs Assessment is supported by the 2023 PDG Birth to Five planning grant and builds upon the 2019 Needs Assessment and annual updates. It will inform development of the new Early Childhood System Strategic Plan. Data has been collected from an array of recently produced evaluations, needs assessments, and perspectives from individuals/organizations impacted by the system. Including but not limited to: Developmental health survey and engagement sessions, KCCTO Career Pathway engagement sessions, key informant interviews with closed child care operators due to the pandemic, Early Childhood Transition Task Force tour, and stories through Our Tomorrows. Over the last month the team has been reviewing and synthesizing the quantitative and qualitative findings.

This Needs Assessment has been framed by principal goals of the All In for Kansas Kids Strategic Plan and guided by key findings of the previous Needs Assessment.

AIFKK Principal Goals

- Coordination/Collaboration: state, local, private sector
- Family Knowledge and Choice
- Workforce

- Quality and Environments
- Capacity and Access

3 Key Findings of 2019 Needs Assessment

- Financial and geographical disparities in access and availability of ECCE services
- Families are struggling with access to affordable child care
- The early childhood workforce is stressed due to a broken business model where families cannot afford care and providers cannot afford to pay adequate wages, and in some cases keep the doors open

There have been many examples of progress and accomplishments through efforts of many individuals and organizations. Recent accomplishments, across all Strategic Plan principal goals, will be noted in the 2023 Needs Assessment.

Coordination/Collaboration

- The State Directors Team and ECCE governance groups have collaborated on numerous initiatives (1-800-Children, Data Trust, CommonApp, Career Pathway, Workforce Registry, etc.)
- Local collaboratives like Local Interagency Coordinating Councils are growing and building relationships.
- Private partners like Child Care Aware of Kansas and the Kansas Children’s Service League and agencies like the Department of Commerce are collaborating with ECCE governance to advance the field.
- While coordination has greatly improved, inefficiencies in the coordinated multi-agency model place Kansas next to last among states in efficiency and effectiveness of early childhood systems (Bipartisan Policy Center, 2023). Due to this Governor Kelly’s Executive Order 23-01 established a task force to recommend a new governance system/approach.

Family Knowledge and Choice

- Significant increase in utilization of 1-800-Children.
- Success with pilot projects like Bridges (KDHE), now integrated into KDHE Maternal and Child Health (MCH) programming in four communities.
- Large increases in developmental screenings through ASQ statewide enterprise.

Workforce

- The number of child care workers in licensed facilities grew between 2022 and 2023, surpassing pre-pandemic numbers.
- Overall, providers felt good about their career, social and emotional health, and financial stability (KCCTO workforce survey).
- Significant progress made on Career Pathway and Workforce Registry

Quality and Environments

- Over \$8.5 million in PDG funds have been invested in local efforts to train workforce, equip facilities, and ensure high quality services for children and families.
- Links to Quality (L2Q) has developed an ECCE Standards of Quality and provides diverse resources to support efforts to providers to build skills, resources, and connections.
- Newly announced Child Care Capacity Accelerator grants funded approximately \$43 million to support capacity-building in the ECCE system.

Capacity and Access

- Well over 100,000 Kansas children received child care services in facilities supported by stabilization funding distributed to providers in the state.
- For the first time in 5 years, in 2023 the number of child care programs in Kansas grew, from 4,064 in 2022 to 4,144 in 2023 (Child Care Aware 2023 Supply Demand Report).

Chris then opened the floor for Recommendations Panel members to give their input on these general findings. Conversations were centered around gaps in funding for in-home child care programs, cost of care/affordable care, and how Kansas can mirror other states with strong early child care systems.

The team currently working on the Needs Assessment will continue to do additional presentations (State Director's Meeting, All In for Kansas Kids monthly webinar) to receive more feedback from early childhood stakeholders in order to do more refinement leading up until the Children's Cabinet meeting on December 1st for final endorsement.

Kansas Early Learning Standards Revision

Cornelia introduced Kim Kennedy, DCF and Natalie McClane, KSDE to give an update on the newest revision of the Kansas Early Learning Standards. Early learning standards describe the concepts and skills children develop and learn along the developmental continuum from birth to kindergarten entry. Work started on this revision in February of 2022 and between then and now the core team and content area specialists have covered: Approaches to Learning, Physical Health and Development, Social Emotional Development, Communication and Literacy Skill Development, Mathematical Knowledge, Science, Social Studies, and Creative Arts. The content area specialists were experts on the topic areas including: child care providers, pre-school teachers, Head Start teachers and directors, trainers, 2 and 4 year college representatives, and KSDE staff that specialized in each of the K-12 subject areas.

Major changes included eliminating duplicative or developmentally inappropriate standards, eliminating Social Studies as its own set of standards and incorporating it within Science and Social Emotional standards, and changing verbiage throughout to

make the document more concise. These current edits are being drafted into print by the KSDE Graphics and Communications team.

Moving forward, between September and October, they will be presenting their revisions to several large groups (Head Start APM Group, KSDE Annual Conference, State Interagency Coordinating Council) to elicit more feedback. There will then be a Public Comment Period on KSDE’s website in late October to get additional public opinion before presenting the standards to the KSDE Board of Education for final approval. Once approved, the final presentation will be given at the December Kansas Children’s Cabinet meeting. After full approval there will be a statewide dissemination of the final document to early childhood providers, launching a website to house the KELS and appropriate resources to accompany the standards, and trainings.

Kim and Natalie then opened the floor for questions, comments, and feedback from the Recommendations Panel members. Conversations were centered around additional inclusive verbiage throughout, and distinction between specific standards. The general consensus of the Panel was thanks and gratitude for the hard work from this team and the necessary changes being made to the standards to make them more concise and easily palatable for those working in early childhood.

AIFKK Tactic Work Group Reports

Cornelia introduced a representative from each work group to provide an update on the work they have done thus far.

Tactic 6.1.5 Recruitment and Retention

Group went over the recommendations and comments that came back from CPPR and the Children’s Cabinet and discussed how to focus their work and determine who they’re addressing and eventually provide a document that can be a useful tool.

Strategy 4.2 Family Friendly Workplaces

Group discussed the feedback that came back from CPPR and the Children’s Cabinet regarding specificity and were able to identify some agencies that are currently doing family friendly work. They believe promoting family friendly work through various state departments is most important, as well as a marketing campaign to accompany these efforts.

Tactic 6.1.1 Compensation and Benefits

Group took feedback from CPPR and the Children’s Cabinet into consideration in order to determine next steps and to continue building on last year’s work. Their main focus is refining a definition of competitive compensation and benefits, mapping out all the elements of a compensation and benefits system, and locating potential opportunities and leverage points within that system.

Tactic 7.1.2 Zoning

Group reviewed the feedback from CPPR and the Children's Cabinet and have started work formulating an additional recommendation focused on creating a toolkit.

Bright Spots

- Emily Barnes: Selected as a Leadership Initiative recipients and the magazine just came out. Wouldn't have been able to advocate as successfully without the help of this group and others.
- Eldonna Chesnut: Shout-out a collaboration in effect in Johnson County, working with Women Business Center. Putting on two Town Halls with the Chamber of Commerce and Businesses being their target audience and discussing the importance of early care and what they can do to help child care providers across the county, as well as their employees.

Upcoming Meetings: (all via Zoom)

- Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund Meeting – Friday, October 6, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- Early Childhood Recommendations Panel – Friday, October 20, 9:00 a.m. -11:30 a.m.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:37 am.