

## **KANSAS CHILDREN'S CABINET AND TRUST FUND MINUTES**

The **February 2, 2024**, regular session of the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund board virtual meeting commenced at 9:00 a.m. with Chair Don Hineman presiding. There was a quorum. Proper notice was published in the Kansas Register.

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Don Hineman, Chair, LeEtta Felter, John Wilson, DiAnne Graham, Senator Renee Erickson, Monica Murnan, Tyler Smith, M.D., Amanda Petersen, (KSDE), Dr. Carla Whiteside-Hicks (DCF), Matthew Billinger, (DOC/JJ), Dr. Karla Wiscombe (KBOR), Amy Raymond (Supreme Court) and Dr. Jessie Piper, (KDHE).

Cabinet staff: Melissa Rooker, Amy Meek, Christie Wyckoff, and Dyogga Adegboire.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:**

Chairman Don Hineman called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

### **APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 1, 2023, MINUTES**

John Wilson moved for approval of the December 1, 2023 minutes. Motion seconded by LeEtta Felter. Motion carried.

### **CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND ACCELERATOR GRANT PROPOSALS (ROUND 2)**

Chairman Hineman commented that a Round 1 set of recipients were awarded funds at the October meeting. Most of the funds were set aside for a Round 2 group for consideration for approval at today's meeting. Chairman Hineman asked Melissa to give an overview.

Melissa remarked the federal funds provided are through the American Rescue Plan Act through the U.S. Treasury as an infrastructure intended for broadband development. The U.S. Congress have also passed legislation to focus on infrastructure, broadband, and constructions projects. The purpose of this funding must be to fund construction of multi-purpose community facilities that help people with education, work, health monitoring and childcare needs of families, and childcare services.

Melissa reminded the board that the Office of Recovery and she negotiated with the U.S. Treasury, for approximately 18 months, to include childcare as a required function of these community facilities for receiving the funding. All applicants had to show how they would meet all required outcomes outlined in the application.

The funding available for this second round totals \$28 million for construction-only projects. Applicants had to address work, education, health monitoring, new licensed childcare requirements, and provide a five-year sustainability plan along with 15 percent community asset match. Applications were due December 18, 2023. Funding must be spent by September 30, 2025. Applications were screened for eligibility and thoroughness by external reviewers. Internal reviewers screened for diversity of geographic areas, viability, and compliance with federal rules. KU CPPR staff supported technical assistance through webinars and responded to questions;

however, they did not participate in reviewing applications. There were 46 submissions totaling \$150.4 million in Round 2. Seven applications are on the slate of recommendations for a total \$27,745,991 to provide 458 new child care slots. **The list of slate of recommended grants is attached.**

John Wilson asked if the \$150 million was total amount requested. Melissa responded Yes. Dr. Tyler Smith asked why two entities on the slate were recommended for \$4.9 million instead of the requested \$5 million. Melissa responded that federal rules related to reporting and procurement change at the \$5 million mark.

The board viewed a PowerPoint displaying the Round One and Round Two grants across the state map. Chairman Hineman remarked on how impressed he was with the work put into the RFP process and the geographic diversity of the slate.

**MOTION:**

It was moved by LeEtta Felter moved the Children’s Cabinet approve the slate of Capital Projects Fund Accelerator Grants as presented. Motion seconded by DiAnne Graham.

Chairman Hineman called for a Roll Call Vote.

Board Member Renee Erickson had to leave the meeting early.

John Wilson	Yes
Tyler Smith, M.D.	Yes
DiAnne Graham	Yes
LeEtta Felter	Yes
Chair, Don Hineman	Yes

Motion was 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.

**KANSAS EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS**

Natalie McClane, Education Program Consultant, KSDE, gave an overview of the proposed revisions to the Kansas Early Learning Standards.

One of the duties of the Children’s Cabinet is to act on recommendations in the capacity as the state Early Childhood Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care, according to the Kansas Executive Order 20-02. This role comes with the responsibility to “make recommendations for improvements in State early learning standards and undertake efforts to develop high-quality comprehensive early learning standards, as appropriate.”

The Kansas Early Learning Standards (KELS) is a document that provides information and guidance to early childhood providers and teachers, on the developmental continuum of learning for children from birth through kindergarten. It is a dynamic resource that providers and teachers can use if they choose as they plan activities for, choose and implement curriculum, and engage

in conversations with young children and their families around early learning. (There are no mandates in place related to KELS.)

They were formed with the following goals in mind.

1. To Create a continuum that links early development to school readiness and later learning in school and life.
2. To provide a clear overview of milestones in a young child's development, and how experiencing quality early learning opportunities can facilitate this development.
3. To provide guidance for early learning professionals that enhance and support their abilities to create experiences and environments that promote early learning opportunities and support families.

To show that during the early years, children acquire skills, knowledge and abilities in all developmental areas which are critical for future learning. This is the fourth revision of the Kansas Early Learning Standards. The first document was completed in 2006 with a second revision done in 2009 and a third revision in 2014. As with previous revisions, the work focused on updating the standards based upon new and current knowledge and research. Additionally, specific focus was placed on developmentally appropriate practices, ease of use and accessibility, as well as supporting children from all different backgrounds.

This document is another result of the extensive collaboration that is a part of the Kansas early childhood education community. The early childhood community worked collaboratively and intensively to develop a high-quality and useful document that will be helpful to all early childhood care and education professionals and be supportive to the work of the K-3 teaching community.

Guidance from multiple state, local and national sources was sought during the review process updating the Kansas Early Learning Standards. National, state, and local resources were used to develop a document that is firmly grounded in research, evidence-, and developmentally appropriate educational practices. Partners included early childhood experts from the Department for Children and Families, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund, Head start Representatives, Childcare Training Partners, 2- and 4-year college representatives, childcare providers, preschool teachers and more.

Board member Monica Murnan joined the meeting.

Chairman Hineman remarked he was impressed with the simplicity achieved in revising the KELS. He thanked Natalie for her presentation.

Monica Murnan said she appreciated the detail that went into updating the document. It is a document she has viewed and followed over the years. KELS is helpful in the field. Dr. Tyler Smith thanked Natalie for the work that went into the KELS. She particularly appreciated the matrix measurements had been separated out in the document.

Chairman Hineman asked the board for a motion.

MOTION:

John Wilson moved the Children’s Cabinet adopt the Kansas Early Learning Standards update as presented. Motion seconded by Monica Murnan. Chairman Hineman called for a Roll Call Vote.

John Wilson	Yes
Tyler Smith, M.D.	Yes
Monica Murnan	Yes
DiAnne Graham	Yes
LeEtta Felter	Yes
Chair, Don Hineman	Yes

The motion was 6-0. Motion carried.

**IMAGINATION LIBRARY OF KANSAS 501C3**

Melissa Rooker, Executive Director discussed the process leading up to development of the Articles of Incorporation of the Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library of Kansas, Inc. She obtained the services of a local law firm to assist with drawing up the Articles. Chairman Hineman asked for clarification on whether the 501c3 was set up in order to continue the effort of accepting donations through fundraising and providing a safety net. Melissa responded yes, that was correct. Melissa added that the next step would be filing the Articles with the IRS. She requested the board’s approval to move forward. John Wilson noted the names of current board members were reflected in the document in perpetuity. Melissa remarked yes, the existing board will be reflected in the initial Articles, but the membership can be updated through the by-laws as needed.

After considerable discussion, Chairman Hineman asked for a motion.

MOTION:

DiAnne Graham moved the Children’s Cabinet directs staff to submit an application to the Internal Revenue Service for the formation of a 501c3 non-profit corporation in support of the Imagination Library of Kansas. Motion seconded by Tyler Smith.

Chairman Hineman called for a Roll Call Vote.

John Wilson	Yes
Tyler Smith, M.D.	Yes
Monica Murnan	Yes
DiAnne Graham	Yes
LeEtta Felter	Yes
Chair, Don Hineman	Yes

The vote was 6-0. Motion carried.

## **PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

Melissa Rooker provided background and accomplishments detailed in the updated PDG Needs Assessment. Back in 2019, the principal messages were that geographic location shapes availability and the access to early childhood services and that some families struggle to gain basic needs which affects early childhood development. Melissa asked Dr. Jessica Sprague-Jones, KU CPPR to share details about the process and purpose of the Needs Assessment. After considerable discussion, there was consensus among board members that the Needs Assessment document was on the right track. Dr. Sprague-Jones reiterated that the document is still being tweaked and the final draft will be available by end of this month. Melissa said she and CPPR team members can be available to visit with members, individually about suggestions or recommendations for additions to the Assessment before a final draft is printed end of February. Board members Monica Murnan and John Wilson remarked how pleased they are with the amount of work invested into the updated Needs Assessment.

No further action was needed by the board today.

## **AGENCY UPDATES**

Dr. Karla Wiscombe, Director of Academic Affairs, Kansas Board of Regents reported:

- KBOR is standardizing the Math Pathways across the programs. For example, Elementary Education and Early Childhood will be selecting between College Algebra, Contemporary Math, and Elementary Statistics to include under their program this semester.

Amy Meek, Director of Early Childhood, Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund reported:

- The Implementation Grant for PDG started in April 2023. It supports the work of the Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan along with the existing PDG Planning Grant. Wrapping up activities, particularly in family engagement, under the Planning Grant which terminates April 29, 2024.
- Moving forward with the Workforce Registry. Implementation Grant funding supports that project. We have gained support through various meetings relative to the revisions to the Kansas Early Learning Standards,
- Next round of applications for Early Childhood Recommendations Panel opens April 1 and application form will be posted on the [www.kschildrenscabinet.org](http://www.kschildrenscabinet.org) website. Membership terms run July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.

Amanda Petersen, Director of Early Childhood, Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) reported:

- Pleased the Children's Cabinet board voted to approve the updates to the KELS. The Kansas Board of Education also approved the updates at its January 2024 meeting.
- Register Apprenticeship Teacher Program pilot is a partnership with KSDE, Kansas Department of Commerce, and local school districts. The program encourages teachers to seek a degree in elementary education. The program will be expanded and include more

school districts and higher education partners. Early Childhood Unified will be incorporated into the program as one of the licenses an apprentice can pursue after completing the program. The license will allow a preschool teacher to teach in general education and special education sites. Information about the program can be found in the KSDE Weekly Newsletter and on the All In For Kansas Kids website; <https://allinforkansaskids.org/>.

- KBOE will be considering Kansas Preschool Program grant applications at the February 14 meeting. Funding comes from TANF and CIF. The program has grown significantly since it started as a pilot in 2006. The program supports 60 grantees. The review team elected to operate the program as renewal grants for next year. Approximately \$250,000 is available for competitive bid and the KBOE will be acting on recommended programs at its February meeting.
- KSDE reviewed 95,000 ASQ Screenings statewide. The use of that tool has increased. If interested to knowing more about the screenings, the State Interagency Coordinating Council will be discussing ASQ as an agenda item at its February 16 virtual meeting.
- KSDE is reviewing updated accreditation system and quality classroom instruction in public and private school districts in Kansas.

Amy Raymond, Chief of Trial Court Services, Office of Judicial Administration:

- Attending on behalf of Justice Keynen Wall. Amy was welcomed back to the Cabinet meeting.
- Preparing for the Inaugural Child Welfare Summit on April 15-16, 2024, in Topeka. All three branches will be participating along with child welfare partners. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and collaborate on methods for improving child permanency in the child welfare system. Each district will be a bring a team to the event. Presentations are lined up. Melissa said she is registered.
- Publishing a Child-In-Need-Of-Care code book which will be posted on the supreme court's website.

Matthew Billinger, Juvenile Justice Oversight Committee Coordinator, Kansas Department of Corrections reported:

- Stepping Up Initiative was expanded and launched last year under Kansas Department of Corrections. The effort originally established for lowering incarcerated adults with mental illness and substance abuse disorders now helps juvenile justice system facilities staff to better detect youth who could benefit from behavioral health services to avert re-incarceration. Kansas is the first state to include youth under the program. Legal agreements have been fully executed. A planning team consisting of several state agencies has been hard at work implementing its ideas for operating the program.
- DOC preparing to launch a family engagement initiative where coaching supervision personnel will be engaging with more families and educate them on the court process and accessing resources.

Melissa reported that Dr. Whiteside-Hicks had to depart the meeting early and left a written report on behalf of Kansas Department for Children and Families.

- We are drafting our FFY2025 – FFY2027 CCDF State Plan. The draft is due to Office of Child Care by March 26, 2024, and we will soon begin reaching out to community and state agency partners for input.
- We are continuing to work with community and state agency partners to build the agenda for our upcoming triennial CCDF federal onsite monitoring visit. We will share the schedule once it is completed.
- We are increasing the initial income limit for child care subsidy to 85% of State Median Income effective 04/01/2024. This is the highest federally allowable limit.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Melissa Rooker updated the board on the following items,

- Discussed realigning early childhood state governance and where services will be housed. Governor Kelly has issued an executive order a year ago establishing an early childhood transition task force to begin thinking through the process of realigning early childhood programs and services under one state entity. The task force reviewed what other states did in the way of realigning early childhood programs. They also traveled around the state to seek feedback from early childhood stakeholders. The task force completed a report and submitted it to the governor in late-December 2023. We are awaiting legislation to be introduced about the transition.
- Governor's budget contains a line item recommending \$30 million dollars to the Children's Cabinet for expansion of the Child Care Capacity Accelerator grants. There is another proposal for \$5 million using SGF dollars for one-time for a public-private partnership for child care expansion and sustainability in Northwest Kansas. The Dane G. Hansen Foundation approved \$5 million dollars of its funds for the project. Board members might remember this discussion from the August 2023 meeting. Additional fundraising from the private sector is planned until the endowment has \$25 million.
- HB 2613 proposes a demand transfer of \$300,000 out of the Key Fund to the AG's office for the DARE Program in schools. We will continue to monitor the bill.
- Governor's Budget Recommendation includes a proposal to lapse CIF funding to DCF for the Family Preservation fund (replacing CIF funds with SGF). The available CIF funds were added to two new line items - \$1.1 million transfer to DCF to support the Workforce Registry and \$815,000 for Incentives for Specialty Care (Baby Steps). We will continue to monitor the budget process.

### **FUTURE MEETINGS:**

All meetings are held the first Friday of every other month from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. as virtual meetings until further notice. Future meetings are scheduled April 5, June 7, August 2, October 4, and December 6, 2024.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business for discussion, Chairman Hineman adjourned the meeting at 11:19 a.m.