

KANSAS CHILDREN'S CABINET AND TRUST FUND MINUTES

December 6, 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, Monica Murnan, John Wilson, Senator Renee Erickson, Dr. LeEtta Felter, Representative Kristey Williams, Dr. Tara Wallace, Amanda Petersen, (KSDE), Matthew Billinger, (KDOC). Derik Flerlage, (KDHE), Dr. Carla Whiteside-Hicks, (DCF), Dr. Karla Wiscombe, Brandi Wells (KBOR). Staff: Melissa Rooker, Christie Wyckoff, Dyogga Adegbore.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:

Don Hineman, Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

On behalf of the board, Chairman Hineman extended condolences to Melissa Rooker and her family on the loss of her father.

Chairman Hineman welcomed Dr. Tara Wallace to the meeting. Dr. Wallace replaced Dr. Tyler Smith-Howells as a governor appointee to the Children's Cabinet board.

Chairman Hineman announced his decision to appoint Melissa Rooker as his permanent designee to the Education Funding Task Force which was created in statute by the legislature to review the school finance formula and make recommendations ahead of the 2027 legislative session.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 6 REGULAR SESSION AND THE RETREAT MINUTES

Chairman Hineman remarked there were two sets of minutes to adopt. In the absence of an objection, Chairman Hineman adopted the October 4, 2024, regular session and retreat minutes by acclamation. There were no objections. Both sets of minutes were approved.

2024 CHILDREN'S CABINET ANNUAL REPORT

Dr. Jessica Sprague-Jones, Assistant Director at The University of Kansas Center for Public Partnership and Research (CPPR) gave an overview of the annual report. Board members received an electronic draft copy of the report prior to the meeting. Melissa remarked the annual report will be presented to the governor once finalized and approved by board vote. The report highlights the Cabinet's progress, data for impact, children's future, and recommendations. It is a report that covered the scope of the Cabinet's work for the past year. Topics include Cabinet's vision and goals, one-time, on-going, competitive funding from federal and Tobacco Master Settlement dollars. Other highlights covered program profiles, CIF Accountability Process, ECBG, CBCAP, Capital Projects Fund, Childcare Accelerator grants, the Kansas Early Childhood Data Trust, *Our Tomorrows*, Young Families experiences of Social Connections, other grants and services focused on forward-thinking ideals to impact children's future in Kansas.

After the presentation, the board had time for clarifying questions and discussion. Board members brought the following motions for a vote as to whether to include additional policy recommendation in the annual report.

MOTION:

Monica Murnan moved the board in its role as strategist, recommends enhanced state investment in the early childhood care and education system to better meet the needs of young children and their families, reduce CIF transfers to other agencies, and maximize Master Settlement Agreement dollars towards Children’s Cabinet priorities as outlined in the Blueprint for Early Childhood and the *All in For Kansas Kids* Strategic Plan. Motion seconded by John Wilson.

Chair Hineman called for a Roll Call Vote.

John Wilson	Yes
Monica Murnan	Yes
Dr. Tara Wallace	Yes
Rep. Kristey Williams	Yes
Dr. LeEtta Felter	Yes
Senator Renee Erickson	No
Chair, Don Hineman	Yes

Motion carried.

MOTION:

Monica Murnan moved, and John Wilson seconded the motion for the board recommend the Governor and the Kansas Legislature work together to identify the appropriate method for unification of early childhood programs and services and create an implementation plan that recognizes the role of the Children’s Cabinet, in alignment with the Early Childhood Transition Task Force Recommendations. The board supports exploring options to:

- fully realize the Cabinet’s statutory role as outlined in K.S.A. 38-1901:
- retain the Children’s Cabinet governing board oversight of the Children’s Initiatives Fund as outlined in K.S.A. 38-2103.
- retain the role of the Children’s Cabinet as the state’s Early Childhood Advisory Council in accordance with the federal Health Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 (Kansas Executive Order 20-02).
- establish methods of collaboration and coordination between the Children’s Cabinet board and the unified entity’s administrative leadership.

Chair Hineman called for a Roll Call Vote.

John Wilson	Yes
Monica Murnan	Yes
Dr. Tara Wallace	Yes
Rep. Kristey Williams	No
Dr. LeEtta Felter	Yes
Senator Renee Erickson	No
Chair, Don Hineman	Yes

Motion carried.

John Wilson pointed out the importance of the board reiterating its support for recommendations from last year's annual report. Three ideas had been supported revolving around supporting basic needs of Kansas families, childcare subsidy, and data-driven decision making.

Senator Erickson asked whether including Medicaid in the motion had been historically done in the past motions. Melissa responded no; Medicaid had not been included in the motions.

MOTION:

John Wilson moved, and Monica Murnan seconded the board recommend, increasing to access to work and family support programs that help children and families meet their basic needs. Research clearly shows that children thrive when their basic needs are met, and that parents and caregivers are better able to support children when their own basic needs are met. The Kansas Children's Cabinet believes current restrictions to childcare assistance, cash assistance, nutrition assistance, and health insurance programs undercut the investments made through the CIF and blunt the efficiency and effectiveness of early childhood care and education programs. The comprehensive Statewide 2019 Needs Assessment and 2023 Needs Assessment Update document these concerns.

Chair Hineman called for a Roll Call Vote.

John Wilson	Yes
Monica Murnan	Yes
Dr. Tara Wallace	Yes
Rep. Kristey Williams	No
Dr. LeEtta Felter	Yes
Senator Renee Erickson	No
Chair, Don Hineman	Yes

Motion carried.

MOTION:

LeEtta Felter moved the board adopt the 2024 Annual Report recommendations as amended. Motion seconded by Monica Murnan.

Chair Hineman asked for a Roll Call Vote.

John Wilson	Yes
Monica Murnan	Yes
Dr. Tara Wallace	Yes
Rep. Kristey Williams	No
Dr. LeEtta Felter	Yes
Senator Renee Erickson	No
Chair, Don Hineman	Yes

Motion carried.

KCCTF GRANTMAKING POLICY

The board discussed the option of presenting its general recommendations in a separate document from the annual report. Ultimately, no changes were made.

Melissa remarked the board discussed the KCCTF Grantmaking Policy at its last retreat. She asked if the board whether they would like to adopt that policy at this meeting. Chairman Hineman remarked that from time to time, questions arise about how KCCTF grant applications are approved.

MOTION:

Renee Erickson moved the Cabinet adopt the Grantmaking Policy as presented followed by a second by John Wilson.

Chairman Hineman asked for a Roll Call Vote.

John Wilson	Yes
Monica Murnan	Yes
Dr. Tara Wallace	Yes
Rep. Kristey Williams	Yes
Dr. LeEtta Felter	Yes
Senator Renee Erickson	Yes
Chair, Don Hineman	Yes

Motion carried

AGENCY UPDATES

Amanda Peterson, Kansas State Department of Education.

- Announced the Kansas Parents As Teachers Program went through rigorous accreditation process. A cohort of twenty-five programs went through this process recently and received Blue Ribbon status, which is the highest designation. The names of the programs will be reported in the next KSDE Weekly Newsletter or can be found on the www.ksde.gov website.
- Reported Kansas Preschool Pilot grant application was announced for the 2025-2026 school year. Application is posted on the KSDE website and are due January 16, 2025.
- Those interested may desire to tune-in to the next Kansas State Board of Education meeting scheduled December 10 and 11, 2024. The board will vote on how Kansas students interact with digital technology and social media following the recommendations for student screen time. The board will also receive an update presentation on December 10 about the Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S2s8pYklP98&t=16762s>.

Matthew Billinger, Kansas Department of Corrections/Juvenile Justice Authority.

- Continuing work with detention and supervision staff on Family Engagement Initiatives,
- DOC will have ten grant opportunities coming up that focus on youth entering the prevention and juvenile justice system.
- Sending out flyers and looking into the possibility about media advertising about the various grant opportunities available.

Dr. Carla Whiteside-Hicks, Kansas Department for Children and Families

- DCF is one of seven states awarded a federal grant to streamline some of our services. One of those services relates to how we better coordinate between Child Welfare and TANF program.
- The LIEAP Program application has opened. Accepting applications through March 31, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. Encourage applicants to apply online.

Dr. Karla Wiscombe and Brandi Wells, Kansas Board of Regents

- Dr. Wiscombe announced her retirement with the KBOR and introduced Brandi Wells. Brandi will be the new KBOR designee to the Children's Cabinet board.
- Brandi discussed her background in early education.
- Announced new Regent, Kathy Wolfe Moore was recently appointed to the KBOR by the Governor last October. Regent Moore is a former Kansas Legislator.
- Highly recommended having former Regent Dr. Cindy Lane, present to the Cabinet board on the Blueprint for Literacy, credentialing, and the great work happening.

Chairman Hineman thanked Karla for her service on the board.

Derik Flerlage, Kansas Department of Health and Environment provided a written report:

- Moving forward with new proposed regulatory updates to childcare licensing regulations
 - These updates are focused on “school-age programs” and would change that license type name from School-age Programs to “Out of School Time Programs”. This reflects a suggested change from partners and providers and matches national lingo.
 - This also is intended to allow for childcare assistance eligibility for these Out of School Time Programs.
 - This packet will also contain some “clean-up” from the recent changes that went live in August 2024. Such as removing the prohibition of 15-passenger vans.
- Child Care Health & Safety Grants
 - Purpose is to assist providers in attaining regulatory compliance when that compliance comes with a cost.
 - As of 11/18/2024:
 - 173 applications received.
 - Total requests equal over \$1.596M
 - Approved \$487,000
- PDG Planning
 - KDHE working to create a competitive grant opportunity for local communities to address childcare needs how they see fit. Anticipating an informative online seminar in January, application rollout in March/April 2025 and first awards July 2025.
- Child Care Systems Improvement Team (CC SIT) Regional Roundtables
 - Awaiting final confirmation of date and location
 - Next one will be in Topeka in mid-January 2025. Held in the evening.
 - Providers and public invited at-large. Elected officials (local, county, state, etc.) are invited and will also receive specific invites to their email inboxes in the next couple of weeks.
 - Purpose is to serve as a quality assurance/improvement arm to the KDHE childcare licensing program in an advisory capacity. However, we (KDHE) want all childcare comments. KDHE will act as a liaison for childcare comments/issues/successes that we do not directly oversee.
 - Program must be willing to be vulnerable to continue improving.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Melissa Rooker, Executive Director gave updates:

- The 2023 PDG Planning Grant wraps up end of the month. All that remains are filing federal reports.
- Child Care Capacity Accelerator has \$180,000 unobligated State Fiscal Recovery Funds (known in Kansas as SPARK) of the \$20 million. The intention in holding back some funds was to cover some of the administrative costs of the program and cover “rainy day” requests. She asked for the board approval to for discretionary allocation of these funds. Board members said they had no concerns. There was unanimous consensus for staff to proceed and report back to the board on how the dollars were spent.
- ECBG RFP application process will include a competitive RFP that opened in mid-November with applications due in early January 2025. Staff will present a recommended slate at the April 2025 meeting.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

The next meeting is scheduled Friday, February 7, 2025, and as a virtual meeting. 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. The 2025 Meeting Schedule: April 4, June 6, August 1, October 3, and December 5, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

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