

All In For Kansas Kids



Early Childhood Recommendations Panel

Meeting April 17, 2026



Welcome

Thank you for serving Kansas children, their families, and our state's early childhood care and education professionals!

This is a remote meeting.

- Today's meeting materials are posted on the [Panel Meetings webpage](#) on the Children's Cabinet site.
- Panel members will clearly identify themselves when they begin speaking.
- Panel members can use the "raise hand" feature to show they are ready to share.
- The virtual chat will not be used during this meeting in compliance with KOMA and for accessibility purposes.

Recommendations Panel

The Kansas Early Childhood Recommendations Panel serves as an **advisory group** to the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund (Children's Cabinet). The Children's Cabinet was established in 1999 (K.S.A. 38-1901) to assist the Governor in developing and implementing a coordinated, comprehensive delivery system to serve Kansas children and families. Additionally, the Children's Cabinet plays a key role in enabling our state to implement the **All In for Kansas Kids** early childhood system strategic plan, respond to challenges, elevate recommendations from communities and stakeholders, and make key decisions to help us achieve the vision outlined in the strategic plan.



Purpose

Today's Agenda

- Welcome
- Approval of April Agenda
- Approval of March Meeting Minutes
- Panel Introductions
- Kansans' Open Forum / Kansas in the News
- Home Visiting Showcase
- Work Group Updates
- System Updates
- Key Take-Away's
- Adjourn
 - *Work Groups will meet following adjournment*

Action Items

Panel members - please clearly identify yourself when you begin speaking to make or second a motion.

- Approval of April agenda
- Approval of March minutes

Panel Introductions

- Christina Small
- Bethany Samuel
- Mandi Waugh
- Malissa Martin



1 minute each

Kansans' Open Forum

Kansans are encouraged to submit comments through the Kansans' Open Forum Comment Form by 5:00 p.m. 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.

Kansas in the News



Highlights from our session:

- ★ We analyzed the current early childhood system to better understand where we are and where we need to go.
- ★ Groups got creative, envisioning a future where every child and early childhood professional has the resources they need to thrive.
- ★ We wrapped up by exploring local and statewide priorities with an ongoing commitment to student learning and workforce support.

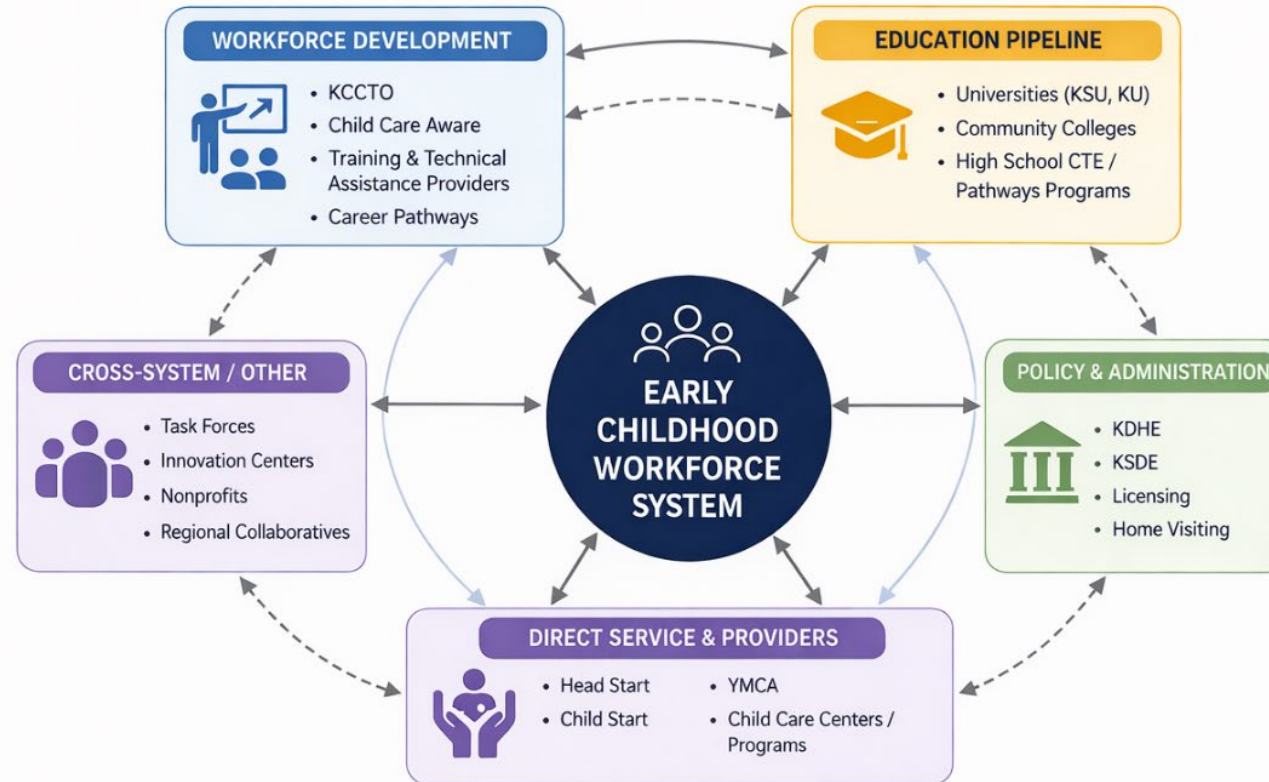
A huge thank you to everyone who shared their expertise and reflections. Let's keep this momentum going! 🙌

 **Workforce Convening**

All In For Kansas Kids - Facebook

Kansas in the News

Multi-Sector Discussion –
Coordinated, forward-thinking solutions will build a stronger, more effective early childhood workforce.



BY THE NUMBERS

 **68%**
of respondents represent the Early Childhood sector

 **34%**
of respondents focus on Workforce Training or Technical Assistance



Workforce Convening

Kansas in the News

Key Takeaways

- Broad but fragmented system: Strong cross-sector representation, with growing alignment and momentum toward more **coordinated, forward-thinking solutions**.
- Shift from support to strategy: The system is moving beyond training and policy support toward innovative solutions for long-term workforce challenges like compensation, pathways, and retention

Priorities

- Elevate and sustain the workforce: Priorities center on improving compensation, strengthening career pathways, and positioning early childhood as a **viable long-term profession**.
- Build a coordinated, data-driven system: Emphasis on stronger cross-sector alignment and using data to guide statewide workforce strategies and solutions.



Workforce Convening

Next Steps

Home Visiting

Lisa Williams, KSDE Parents as Teachers
Coordinator



Recommendations Panel

Guiding Principles:

- Meeting children's unique needs
- Supporting parents
- Prioritizing efficiency and effectiveness



Kansas Home Visiting

Conversation About Home Visiting

You will hear:

- What home visiting is like for families
- Challenges and realities of home visiting
- Meaningful moments and success stories
- What makes high-quality home visiting programs effective
- Role the family has in shaping their home visiting plan and services
- More about the home visiting workforce
- What the home visiting landscape in Kansas looks like



Let's Talk

Home Visiting Presentation Team

- **Ashley Eck**, USD 273 Beloit Parents as Teachers
- **Holly Frye**, Kansas Department of Health and Environment
- **Hilary Koehn**, Kansas Parents as Teachers Association
- **Angie Mendez**, USD 233 Olathe Parents as Teachers
- **Teia Perez**, Kansas Children's Service League, Healthy Families America
- **Virginia Schwiethale**, Kansas Children's Service League, Healthy Families America
- **Lisa Williams**, Kansas State Department of Education



Who are we?

What is Home Visiting?

- Voluntary, free, and evidence-based
- Partnership between the family and home visiting professional
- Parents are a child's first and most important teacher
- Home visiting professionals are well trained
- Promotes child development, health and well-being, literacy, and school readiness
- Empowers parents and strengthens families
- Individualized to meet the needs of every family
- Helps families connect to resources and other families



Home Visiting

Relax, Listen and Engage



Let's Talk

Home Visiting – Panel Perspective

- What surprised you most about home visiting?
- What would strengthen home visiting policy and practice in Kansas?
- What should be the top (1-2) priorities for the home visiting infrastructure in Kansas?



Share your ideas!

Work Group Updates

Melissa Schoenberger, Chair



2025-2026 Work groups

April Meeting Request: Workgroup Check-In

- What is your work group exploring?
- Any “aha moments” in your work groups?
- Unforeseen barriers?
- What can the Panel assist your work group with?



Overview

2025-2026 Work groups

- **Ecosystem**
- **Family Friendly Workplaces**
- **Targeted Journey**
- **Mental Health**



Updates

All In For Kansas Kids



System Updates



Statewide Opportunities

Care and Wellness Conferences, Family Driven Connections. This **FREE** event brings together Kansas early childhood professionals, mental health providers, and families to focus on mental health and special healthcare needs.

Registration : https://kusurvey.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_06qYoiUsTz6y0ES

- May 6: Wichita, Wichita State University's Eugene M. Hughes Metroplex
- May 7: Salina, Tony's Pizza Event Center
- June 26: Olathe, KVC Ball Event Center, 21350 W 153rd Street



System Updates

What is the Progress Dashboard?

- The online (dynamic and evolving) home to document our state's progress towards the goals outlined in the AIFKK Strategic Plan.
- Reflects the state's approach to monitoring progress towards that vision by establishing and sharing indicators/data/stories of that progress.
- An initiative governed by the Kansas Early Childhood State Directors Team and implemented by KU-CPPR.



AIFKK Strategic Plan



Improving Referrals and System Navigation

What We're Doing

[Strengthening and growing referral networks](#)

[Building awareness of services](#)

[Connecting families to the services they need](#)

[Increasing routine screening and referrals](#)



Supporting the Early Childhood Workforce

How We're Doing

[Standing up the Workforce Registry](#)

[Exploring Compensation Strategies](#)

[Implementing New Competencies and Standards](#)

[Expanding Links to Quality](#)

Dashboard Orientation

- **Priority Areas** (ex. *Improving referrals and system navigation, Supporting the early childhood workforce, Increasing family engagement and voice*).
- **What We're Doing** – alignment with SP actions/goals
- **How We're Doing** – data stories and indicators of progress (in collections)
- **Bright Spots**– Initiative spotlights
- **Collaborate With Us** – Data, Feedback, Stories, etc.
 - [Form Link](#)



AIFKK Strategic Plan

AIFKK Dashboard:

<https://allinforkansaskids.org/about/strategic-plan/#sp-dashboard>

Key Take-Aways

Key Take-Aways:

- Home visiting matters because it meets families where they are—literally and figuratively.
- Data is a powerful tool and tells the story we struggle to articulate. Please collaborate and share your story.



Lessons Learned

2026-2027 Panel Applications

Early Childhood Recommendation Panel 2026-27 membership applications will be accepted from **April 3 - May 4, 2025** on the Children's Cabinet website:

- Any Kansan interested in applying is welcome
- June 5, 2026 – membership recommendations presented to KCCTF Board for approval
- The membership year will extend from July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027
- Contact Lindsay Orion(lindsayorion@ku.edu) with questions

<https://kschildrenscabinet.org/apply-for-the-early-childhood-recommendations-panel/>



Application

Meeting Schedule

Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund

- June 5, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- Livestream via [Children's Cabinet YouTube](#)

Panel Meetings

- May 14 (*3rd Thursday*)
- June 26 (*4th Friday*)



Upcoming Meetings

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