

KANSAS CHILDREN'S CABINET AND TRUST FUND

MINUTES

The February 7, 2020, meeting of the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund was called to order by Chairman Kim Moore at 9:30 a.m. The meeting was held in the Kansas Association of School Boards, located at 1420 SW Arrowhead Road, Room 101 in Topeka. Proper notice was published in the Kansas Register.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Kim Moore, John Wilson, Shari Weber, LeEtta Felter, Terri Rice, Sen. Dinah Sykes, Tyler Smith, M.D. (via zoom), Rebekah Gaston, DCF, Amanda Petersen, KSDE, Rachel Sisson, KDHE, Karla Wiscombe, KBOR. Cabinet Staff: Melissa Rooker, Amy Meek, and Dyogga Adegbore

WELCOME

Chairman Kim Moore welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Chairman Moore remarked he was pleased that Lieutenant Governor Lynn Rogers would be joining the Cabinet to present during the "Bright Spots" agenda item. Lieutenant Governor Rogers will be sharing information from his Kansas rural prosperity listening tour.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Moore asked for a motion on the November 1 meeting minutes and November 8 Retreat minutes. John Wilson moved the Children's Cabinet approve the minutes of November 1, 2019 and November 8, 2019, as written. Motion seconded by Dinah Sykes. Motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S UPDATES

Melissa Rooker, Executive Director announced Cabinet meetings will be held at the Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB) unless space is not available. She expressed appreciation for KASB allowing the Children's Cabinet to conduct its meetings at their beautiful facility. The public library will be used as a back-up location.

Melissa reported she gave testimony before the House Children and Seniors Committee and the Senate Ways and Means Committee. She will be giving testimony before the Early Learning Caucus and both the Senate and House Rural Caucus educating them about the Children's Cabinet.

Melissa announced that Kansas was not one of the states selected to receive the first round of Preschool Development Grant (PDG) Renewal for FY 2020 funds. However, the good news is that Kansas is being considered to receive a smaller grant. No official letter has been received. Melissa said the four (4) state agencies involved with the PDG project are committed to keeping the work going with or without renewal grant funding.

Melissa is recruiting a team of outside individuals to review the 23 applications for Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) State Fiscal Year 2021 RFP. Details about the review process and selected recipients will be reported at the April meeting. Melissa distributed the updated, refreshed design of Blueprint for Early Childhood booklet along with a one-pager. New sections include the Needs Assessment and the Early

Childhood Systems-Building components. She welcomed feedback and questions. John Wilson said he liked the new design and graphics. Copies are on www.kschildrenscabinet.org.

BRIGHT SPOTS

Chairman Moore remarked the Cabinet had discussed at the Retreat highlighting “Bright Spots” in early childhood at every Cabinet meeting. Chairman Moore welcomed Lieutenant Governor Lynn Rogers and Jillian Fisher, Office of Rural Prosperity (ORP) Outreach Director to the meeting.

Lieutenant Governor Rogers reported the tour took him to 12 sites pre-selected from northeast, north-central, northwest, southeast, south-central and southwest Kansas. He and his team traveled 4,700 miles in 12 weeks to host 130 meetings with anywhere between 40 to 120 attendees at each event. At the facilitated community gatherings, participants were divided into randomly-selected small groups and asked three questions:

1. What does prosperity look like to you?
2. What has your community done well?
3. What roadblocks/barriers stand in your way?

See the full ORP report on line at www.ERP.ks.gov. The Lieutenant Governor conversed with Kansas communities outside of Topeka to search for alternative solutions to common issues in each community, connect communities with other communities, and with state agencies. Those conversations with Kansans provided the blueprint to the Office of Rural Prosperity. Lieutenant Governor Rogers reported that approximately 20 percent of the state does not have access to broadband with 65 percent of the internet availability/wifi tests having failed. He also talked about the challenges of encouraging young people that go off to college or join the workforce outside of their communities to return to get jobs or step up in supporting their communities. Terri Rice asked if communities had any success encouraging youth to return to their community to seek jobs. Lt. Governor replied, only a small number returned to live and work in their community and step up to leadership roles.

Jillian Fisher talked about the Office of Rural Prosperity and work groups on housing, childcare and workforce. Representatives from each ORP work group also traveled to the listening tours. She shared information specific to the Phillipsburg Child Care Center. Each community has their own set of challenges. Jillian remarked that ORP wants to make sure that their work is aligned with the Children’s Cabinet’s Blueprint for Early Childhood. Melissa remarked that the needs discussed from the ORP listening tour are very similar to the findings of our Community Engagement Tour and will be reflected in our work as well.

Chairman Moore thanked Lieutenant Governor Rogers and Jillian for their presentation, then invited Melissa to further discuss the Blueprint for Early Childhood document to the Cabinet. LeEtta Felter, looking at the various programs reflected in the Blueprint, asked whether dyslexia screening should be included in the Blueprint. She said that the Olathe School Board, of which she is a member, recently discussed dyslexia screening needs, provider training, and whether grant opportunities were available. Melissa responded that it was embedded as part of the universe of services reflected in the mixed delivery system with crossover between several services (health care, early intervention, preschool education). She added that the State Board of Education has taken steps to change Kansas Department of Education policies to include dyslexia training and strategies.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS-BUILDING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Amanda Petersen, Director, Early Childhood, KSDE showed a short video and talked about new Needs Assessment report. Draft copies were handed out to the Children's Cabinet. The report was produced through a collaboration between the, Kansas Department for Children and Families, Kansas State Department of Education, Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund and Kansas Department of Health & Environment, funded by the Preschool Development Grant Birth -5 federal grant awarded in 2018. Amanda remarked that over the past year, more than 6,100 Kansans shared and provided feedback on the needs in the state at community engagement sessions across the state. The team held community engagement sessions in the 53 community engagement sessions in 33 communities, heard from 2,279 Kansans. Details about the community engagement sessions and the Needs Assessment Report can be found on the Children's Cabinet website at www.kschildrenscabinet.org/needs-assessment/. Chairman Moore remarked that with a needs assessment, what is next and will a set of priorities be established. Amanda, replied yes, the team is working on a strategic plan that will address the findings of the needs assessment. This afternoon's stakeholders meetings, will allow others to provide feedback. By the April 3 Cabinet meeting, a draft strategic plan will be presented for adoption by the Children's Cabinet. John Wilson remarked he assumed there was a database containing contact information from the participants and the team will continue to maintain contact and share information with them. Amanda replied, yes there is a contact list of 1,400+ Kansans that are a part of the list. Weekly e-mail updates are sent to keep everyone connected to the work. Weekly webinars are conducted with those serious and want to stay connected to critical updates with the work.

Senator Dinah Sykes remarked she appreciated having a strategic plan in the works, especially as a lawmaker. The legislature is looking at the State Budget and different proposals. She asked how can Kansas legislators continue to engage in this process and "baby steps" that can be taken. Amanda turned to Melissa and other team members, and asked if they could respond as to legislators taking into consideration the state budget and related legislation impacting community engagement work:

Melissa noted that she is working with lawmakers regarding the Cabinet recommendation for increased investment in the Early Childhood Block Grant.

Rachel Sisson remarked that KDHE has two bills that they are supporting relating to safe, healthy and nurturing child care by way of child care home, daycare or preschool. SB 312, is an amendment to existing legislation and relates to imposing civil fines for operating a child care facility without a license. It allows KDHE the ability to issue and fine any facility non-compliant to repeated notices for operating without a license. The second bill relates to expanding the span of conditions that newborn babies are screened for while in the hospital. It is SB 364, and looks at increasing the cap for fee funding in order to expand screening for kids in Kansas.

Rebekah Gaston responded that DCF is developing a proposal regarding TANF requirements for parents to work at least 20 hours a week to stay eligible recipients of TANF dollars. DCF is planning to introduce a bill that would allow single parents to enroll in evidence-based home visiting programs to help satisfy the work requirement.

John Wilson, remarked that although he is not on the State Agency Directors' team, he shared another bill that should be of great interest to everyone. SB 252 is the Medicaid expansion bill and is currently in the Senate Public Health & Welfare Committee with scheduled action next week. It is a critical bill because

Medicaid expansion can help reduce infant mortality, cover more children with health insurance, and improve overall health and economic conditions of a household.

Chairman Moore asked that a bill tracker of relevant bills to be sent to the Children's Cabinet members routinely and posted on the website: www.kschildrenscabinet.org.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS-BUILDING STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Melissa Rooker and team members Karen Beckerman, DCF, Rachel Sisson, KDHE and Amanda Petersen, KSDE gave an update about the draft strategic plan and shared the principles of how they arrived at the strategies outlined in the draft. Copies of the draft plan were distributed to the Cabinet members and will be posted for a public comment period until February 24. LeEtta Felter asked about data collection. Amanda described the proposal to develop a Data Trust Agreement and create an Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS). Melissa talked about the Governor's Council on Early Childhood committee taking the lead regarding a proposal to establish a state-level public-private partnership. Discussion took place regarding the development of a fiscal mapping process, currently in its infancy.

Chairman Moore remarked he has concerns when seeing numerous recommendations in a strategic plan. He recommended focusing in on three or four items. We need to monitor our progress at each Cabinet meeting. Assign responsibilities. Melissa remarked that will be done and we will embed the items in the agenda. She remarked the Stakeholders Advisory Team meeting is scheduled in this room following the Cabinet meeting. They will be reviewing this draft too. We are requesting input through February 24. Amanda reported that a finalized plan will be presented at the April Cabinet meeting. Chairman Moore thanked the State Directors Team for their work.

EX OFFICIO REPORTS

Kansas Board of Regents

Dr. Karla Wiscombe, Director, Academic Affairs reported:

On an upcoming KBOR agenda for approval, is Pittsburg State University's newly created early childhood unified program that would include Special Education and Early Childhood together as a bachelor's degree.

Karla remarked she has been involved in working with military articulations. With the number of service members that are leaving the State, KBOR is pursuing awarding college credit for the training that service personnel have and for experience in the military, linking to high demand occupations such as early childhood, education, and nursing. Chairman Moore said he was glad that she mentioned the military because the military has been a leader in early childhood work. Melissa said the military personnel were engaged at community engagement session in Manhattan. She welcomed Karla to present at a future "Bright Spots" segment of a Cabinet meeting.

Kansas Department for Children and Families

Rebekah Gaston, Director of Policy and Economic & Employment Services reported: There is new Governor's Executive Order to re-organize and merge Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) with Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) and then add-in the Juvenile Justice division currently housed within Kansas Department of Corrections. She added it will help parents help their kids thrive and better connect families with services. John Wilson asked Rebekah what could stop the reorganization. Rebekah said the Legislature has 60 days to vote to stop it if they do not see the benefit.

Kansas Department of Health and Environment

Rachel Sisson, Director, Bureau of Family Health reported: She already discussed two legislative initiatives in SB 312 and SB 346. KDHE is in the midst of developing of a new strategic plan for Part C, Infant/Toddler Services. KDHE wrapped up townhall meetings revolving around maternal and child health for their block grant that KDHE administers for women, infants, children and adolescent health care needs.

Kansas State Department of Education

Amanda Petersen, Director, Early Childhood reported: RFPs for the Kansas Preschool Pilot and Kansas Preschool Aged At-Risk programs. Applications are due April 3. KSDE encourages early learning screening for dyslexia. Kansas has one of four nominees for the National Teacher of the Year, Tabatha Rosproy, who is a preschool teacher from Winfield, Kansas. Amanda introduced Julie Rand, a new staff member on her Early Childhood team at KSDE

EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL

Melissa Rooker announced that Governor Laura Kelly issued Executive Order 20-02 re-establishing the State Early Childhood Advisory Council. Melissa read the Executive Order. Kansas Children's Cabinet is the designated State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care and will create a Recommendations Panel of early childhood professionals who will be recruited to provide technical expertise and bring recommendations to the full Cabinet. Nominations for seats on the Panel will be announced soon.

NEXT MEETINGS

The April 3, June 5, and August 7, 2020 meetings are scheduled at KASB. The October 3 and December 4, 2020 meeting locations to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for discussion, John Wilson moved the Cabinet adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Dinah Sykes. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.