

**KANSAS EARLY CHILDHOOD RECOMMENDATIONS PANEL  
MEETING**

**Friday, October 16, 2020**

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Visit the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund website for meeting materials and the  
[YouTube recording: https://kschildrenscabinet.org/panel-meetings/](https://kschildrenscabinet.org/panel-meetings/)

**Members Present**

Nichelle Adams, Kansas Department for  
Children and Families

Jennifer Adhima, Project Eagle,  
University of Kansas Medical Center  
Marites Altuna, Kansas Deaf-Blind  
Project

Rachel Anno, Kansas Department for  
Children and Families

Mallory Arellano, Newman University  
Emily Barnes, Barnes Child Care  
Deanna Berry, Russell Child

Development Center

Tanya Bulluck, Child Start

Rachele FioRito, United Way of the Plain

Jenny Flinders, University of Kansas  
Center for Public Partnerships and  
Research

Kelly Frantz-Langford, TARC, Inc.

Amy Gottschamer, Googols of Learning

Kim Hawkins, USD 233 Olathe Public  
Schools

Sheila Hermocillo, USD 443 Dodge City  
Public Schools

Peggy Kelly, Kansas Head Start  
Association

Kim Kennedy, Kansas Department for  
Children and Families

Emily Killough, Children's Mercy Kansas  
City

Lorrena (Lori) Kravitz, Kansas  
Department of Health and  
Environment

David Lindeman, University of Kansas  
Life Span Institute at Parsons

Kelli Mark, Kansas Department of Health  
and Environment

Natalie McClane, Kansas State  
Department of Education

Amy Meek, Kansas Children's Cabinet  
and Trust Fund

Paula Neth, The Family Conservancy

Patti Peschel, Kansas Child Care  
Training Opportunities, Inc.

Amanda Petersen, Kansas State  
Department of Education

Dee Rankin, Child Start, Inc.

Sarah Rivers, Via Christi Rehabilitation

Angie Saenger, Child Care Aware of  
Kansas

Jan Scheideman, Riley County Health  
Department

Cassandra Sines, Sines Virtual Assistant  
Service

Chelsea Schulte, Kansas Child Care  
Training Opportunities, Inc.

Christi Smith, DCCCA

Heather Staab, Kansas Department of  
Health and Environment

Cornelia Stevens, TOP Early Learning  
Centers

Amber Tankersley, Pittsburg State  
University

Reva Wywadis, Child Care Aware of  
Eastern Kansas

**Welcome:** Amanda Petersen 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:

<https://kschildrenscabinet.org/panel-meetings/>

**Meeting Agenda:**

Amy Meek moved to approve the agenda and Cornelia Stevens seconded, with a unanimous vote to approve the agenda as presented.

**August 21, 2020 Meeting Minutes:**

Dave Lindeman moved to approve the September minutes and Marites Altuna seconded, with a unanimous vote to approve the August minutes as presented.

**Follow-up from last meeting - Debbie Deere**

- Good discussion on Covid19 response, and what has been happening over the past six months. Highlights from this discussion were shared with the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund at their October 2 meeting. Approved minutes will be shared with Cabinet members.
- Discussed various existing councils, committees, and workgroups in the Early Childhood profession. Work to develop a resource directory that will be posted soon on the Cabinet's website is close to completion. The directory will be on-going and kept up to date.
- Conversation about the importance of exploring policy options for paid leave for early childcare and education providers. Exploring research on policy options is ongoing.
- Gathered interest in participation for Kansas Leadership Center training. Grant application was submitted October 15, and approval is pending.

**Kansans' Open Forum - Written and Verbal Comments:**

None presented

**Kindergarten Transitions Memorandum of Understanding**

Overview of today's discussion - Amanda Petersen

- Discuss the Kindergarten Transitions Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) - the work that has been underway, and the process and pieces that we have to make sure we are focusing on this very important element of our Kansas early childhood system. I am so appreciative that so many members of the panel have stepped up to be able to work on this the past several months.
  - **Background** - Peggy Kelly
    - Expressed pleasure in leading this group, and appreciation to the workgroup participants: Natalie McClane, Marites Altuna, Sheila

Hermocillo, Reva Wywadis, Amy Gottschamer, Rachel Anno, Mallory Arellano, Jan Schneideman, Kim Kennedy, Dee Rankin, and Cornelia Stevens as panel members. Debbie Deere and Jordan Christian also participated as supports. A significant amount of time and energy went into this work. This is the inaugural group to bring a recommendation for consideration to the Panel. It is a learning experience as well as a discussion opportunity.

- Workgroup was asked to bring work in three particular contexts:
  - How equity informed this recommendation:

The equity aspect factors into the implementation of this tool. The tool was developed as a resource that communities can utilize in their own kindergarten transition process. By its nature, it is multi-voiced, and the intent is that various entities will be involved in these MOUs and in creating how they are used in each community. Parents and different organizations, schools, Head Starts, childcare providers, and other potential partners with an interest, can find a space to be involved in the actual implementation of the MOU and its documents.
  - We were asked to describe how families helped shaped this recommendation:

We went to the *All in for Kansas Kids* Needs Assessment and there were clear comments from families stating that they needed smoother transitions, in ways to support children and young families with a continuum of care and a continuum of support, from prenatal birth through elementary, but specifically includes transition into kindergarten. Disconnect is also common in transitions, particularly from early childhood to K-12, leaving families unsupported and at-risk. We used points from the Needs Assessment specifically, to help us focus on making sure we were providing components that were going to be supportive to families.
  - We were asked to talk about councils, committees, work groups with expertise, experience or jurisdiction related to this issue:

This workgroup was well populated with many different perspectives. Represented were local education, institutions of higher education, local providers of early childhood and development, Head Start, as well as a parent of a young child currently receiving early childhood services from the state of Kansas. We were able to have a diverse and wide array of perspectives. We looked at how does what we bring forward connect with the *All in for Kansas Kids* Strategic Plan, and

there were six references to this Strategic Plan. Also considered was its connection to the use of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, a standard assessment used to assess children's learning needs as they make this kindergarten transition. Family voice is sought through feedback. All families are informed and given assistance.

- Amanda Petersen - Referenced *All in for Kansas Kids* Strategic Plan on Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund website. Plan is broken into strategies and then into tactics within those strategies. When you see tactics referenced, you can click on an individual tactic to see what it is, with the idea being that all of us have a role to play in putting that plan into action.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Presentation** - Natalie McClane
  - This MOU was created, so any community could pick it up and make it their own. We've broken it up into five sections:
    - Scope of work
      - It helps programs lay out the purpose of their collaboration; how they are going to work together. It talks about roles and responsibilities for each of the players. They can define what outputs they'd like to see from this collaboration, and how data is going to be shared. They'll establish timelines and consider other potential partners who can help in the transition process, and determine the resources that each participant will provide.
    - Term of agreement
      - Lays out the timeline of the MOU, and how long it is going to last.
    - Compensation, Payment, and Funding
      - If there is any compensation, pricing or payment, this is where they will talk about that. There may not be any, so they may not need this section.
    - Termination
      - Programs would describe how termination of the MOU will be carried out.
    - Reporting Requirements
      - Programs would define the desired outcomes of the work and how they will be evaluated.

- We've also included an appendix. The appendix gives program's examples on activities, data sharing, and potential partners they could include. The body of the MOU refers to the appendix. We didn't want to make people feel that these were all required or requested. Just to give ideas on things they could use as activities, and data sharing.
  - It was stressed that the MOU is actually the product and the end result of an intentional planning process that may take a significant amount of time, depending on where a community is starting from. This was intended to be the documentation of an intentional work product. An MOU is a community or systems level agreement. The MOU itself is with the entities.
- **Work Plan Template Presentation** - Amy Gottschamer
  - This document was created as a visual, with steps that align with the MOU
    - Plan Step 1: Roles & Responsibilities - List team members, their roles, and responsibilities.
    - Plan Step 2: Activities and Milestones - List activities and outputs/milestones. See appendix. Can include a data sharing plan.
    - Plan Step 3: Potential Partners - List other agencies or individuals that may be included. See appendix.
    - Plan Step 4: Timelines and Duration - Identify timelines for each activity.
    - Outcomes Step 1: Outcomes by Activity - What changes will you expect to see?
    - Outcomes Step 2: Desired Benefits of Outcomes - What benefits do you expect as a result?
    - Outcomes Step 3: Evaluate Outcomes - How will the outcomes be evaluated?
    - Outcomes Step 4: Unexpected Outcomes - Can you identify any unexpected outcomes?
  - The template is designed to be a digital tool, that can be built to however the users need it to be.

**Questions/Discussion - Amanda Petersen**

- The Panel was presented with the following questions for discussion: What will make this meeting be a successful one? What do we want our next steps to be?

What do we think needs to happen in Kansas, to realize the goals that are outlined in the strategic plan and build the kind of state we want to see? The following talking points were discussed among the Panel members:

- We had a lot of conversation in the work group. What is this and what does it do? We can recommend, but we can't say to communities in Kansas that you must do this, and that this is the only way this work can be done in Kansas. We are creating resources and tools to support a community to come together. We need to be clear in our messaging that this is a supportive tool, and that these are resources. There is no right way for it to end up. The right way is the right way for your community.
- Possible ways to disseminate: We all have websites, social media, email listservs, and our own circle of influence within the early childhood world. We recommend everyone spread word of this, so it is easily accessible once it is formally accepted.
- This is not something that has to be state-level down. This is really for anybody who wants to collaborate and work together. It gives people a framework of where to begin.
- A long list In Appendix of who partners might be. Some people may be partners for one event (i.e. Health Department, Public Library.) They are still a partner, but they do not necessarily need to sign the agreement.
- In recent years, the Ages and Stages Questionnaire assessment has been worked into grant programs through Childcare Aware. This could be one way to get the information out. Early childcare providers can then be active in the use of it. This might be one avenue to distribute the information.
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire is listed In Appendix, perhaps as a data-sharing tool.
- I envision an introduction of why this is important. Some folks may not know who they need to talk to.
- We can think about Kansas State Department of Education sharing the tool with school districts, Head Start sharing with Head Start programs, and possibly Childcare Aware sharing with childcare facilities and families. Do we think this would reach most of our targeted audience?
- Kansas Department of Health and Environment would have licensing surveyors who have access to emails for all licensed providers in their counties.
- Kansas Quality Network site for providers through Links to Quality work.
- Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children and Child Care Provider Coalition of Kansas would also be venues we would encourage to share this.

- May be good to inform pediatricians that the MOU exists. An awareness of it.
- Pediatricians use same Ages and Stages tool at well-child check. This would correspond nicely. We can put something out with the Kansas American Academy of Pediatrics chapter and try to do some type of information sharing.
- More entities to consider - local Interagency Coordination Councils that are heavily focused on transition and the State Home Visitation Group.
- Hospital Associations mailing lists to area hospitals who can get word out to rural areas.
- We can get on Family Practice Association of Kansas mailing list, too.
- Message from Zoom chat: Do not forget Early Childhood Block Grant funded programs, and make sure we can reach out to private-run preschools.
- Another group that has surfaced from the larger work we are doing, are the private school systems.
- Kansas State Department of Education has a list of all the kindergartens that are accredited by Kansas State Board of Education. We are able to connect with that group. Since kindergarten is not mandatory, there are some unaccredited programs out there.
- Parents as Teachers organization would be good.
- Chamber of Commerce or economic development entities.
- From Zoom chat: someone mentioned Maternal and Child Health local agencies. Communities also have social services agencies.
- Post-secondary Institutions could benefit from reviewing this model, as they are building the workforce.
- From Zoom chat: Kansas Action for Children.
- A helpful next step would be developing a short intro message to share with wide audience. That concisely spells out what goes into the transition to kindergarten. We have resources that communities can choose to use, or they can make their own. Thinking of those resources, we have the two we talked about today and the webinars for the *All in For Kansas Kids* work. Once we have the message to share, we want to share with panel and members listed here to share on their own networks.
- Attention pointed to Recommendation Panel, Norms/Roles/Procedures, Article Four: Panel Actions: Do we have what we need to make a formal recommendation?

After clarifying the purpose of the recommendation, the Panel began work on drafting the Template Recommendation.

Concluding all edit suggestions from Panel members, Amanda Petersen asked for a motion to move the formal recommendation forward. Amanda Petersen notes that the Panel serves as an advisory group to the Cabinet, but would be appropriate that we recommend the Cabinet adopt the recommendation.

- Peggy Kelly - Moved that the Kansas Early Childhood Recommendations Panel recommends that the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund adopt this kindergarten transitions recommendation and the accompanying toolkit.
- Amy Gottschamer - Seconded the motion, with a unanimous vote to pass the motion.

### **Requests for future agenda items**

No requests at this time.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

- Kindergarten Transitions Summit: November 13, 9 a.m.-12:00 p.m., <https://kschildrenscabinet.org/kindergarten-readiness-summit-2020/>
- Recommendations Panel: Friday, November 20 – 9:00 a.m. via Zoom. Third Fridays of the month beginning at 9:00 a.m.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.