

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

The **February 5, 2021** regular meeting of the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund Board commenced at 9:00 a.m. with a quorum. This was a virtual meeting. Proper notice was published in the Kansas Register.

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

John Wilson, Monica Murnan, LeEtta Felter, Deliece Hofen, DiAnne Graham, Tyler Smith, M.D., Senator Dinah Sykes, Ex Officio members: Commissioner Randy Watson, Amanda Petersen (KSDE), Dr. Carla Whiteside-Hicks, Tanya Keyes (DCF), Rachel Sisson (KDHE), Dr. Karla Wiscombe (KBOR) Cabinet Staff: Melissa Rooker, Amy Meek, and Dyogga Adegbore

Melissa Rooker, Executive Director opened the meeting and announced that Chairman Kim Moore underwent surgery last week and was recuperating. She asked the board to elect a presiding officer as Chair Pro Tem for this meeting.

### **NOMINATION OF CHAIRMAN PRO TEM:**

Dinah Sykes nominated John Wilson for Chair Pro Tem to preside over the February 5, 2021 meeting. Motion seconded by Monica Murnan. The board voted by voice vote in favor of nominating John Wilson as Chair Pro Tem. Motion carried.

John Wilson accepted the Chair Pro Tem position and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **APPROVE OF DECEMBER 4 AND DECEMBER 11, 2020 MINUTES**

Chairman Pro Tem Wilson entertained a motion on the December 4, 2020 and December 11, 2020 minutes.

### **MOTION**

Deliece Hofen moved the board approve the minutes of December 4 and 11, 2020. Motion seconded by Tyler Smith. Motion carried. The minutes were approved as written.

### **AGENCY UPDATES**

Melissa Rooker reported she invited Commissioner Randy Watson, (KSDE), Secretary Lee Norman (KDHE) and Secretary Laura Howard (DCF) to give updates. However, with the Kansas Legislature in full swing, Secretaries Norman and Howard could not join this meeting. Commissioner Randy Watson (KSDE) was present and made remarks.

*Kansas School Readiness*

Commissioner Watson remarked that back in 2015 he discussed with the Kansas State Board of Education his desire to find out what Kansans want for their schools. The Board encouraged him to find out. He toured across Kansas and found out that a common topic that came up was people wanted to see kids age five arrive ready for kindergarten. Since that time, additional funding went to full-day kindergarten, and four-year old at-risk and Parents As Teachers programs were enhanced along with grant funds being provided to scale-up community-based early childhood. Although, those are great accomplishments, Kansas still falls short of meeting the needs of every child.

Commissioner Watson asked the Cabinet and early childhood stakeholders to double down on their efforts and continue to support families in any way that can be done. Supporting families through public/private partnerships, families from prenatal to the time those kids enter school will be better off. Remarkable work has taken place in Kansas over the past five to six years, and if continued on this path, we can transform our state. Kansas can be a great place to raise a child and that will impact the Class of 2034. The work that we do today will be our legacy. Commissioner Watson thanked Melissa and the Cabinet board for their leadership and commitment.

*Phase II of Kansas COVID Vaccinations*

Melissa mentioned Secretary Norman was scheduled to discuss COVID vaccinations. Information on COVID vaccinations can be found on <https://www.kansasvaccines.gov>. Currently, Kansas is in Phase II rolled out and individuals age 65+, those living in congregate settings, high-contact critical workers, and those eligible unvaccinated persons from Phase I can be vaccinated. Phase II also includes K-12 teachers, custodians, bus drivers and child care workers.

Rachel Sisson added that the vaccine data is on the website and updated every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Dr. Smith asked about the ease of signing up for the vaccine even though there is a shortage. She knew of concerns and challenges for some people. In some cases, classrooms and daycares shut down because the teacher or provider had tested positive for COVID. Rachel Sisson responded that since Phase II rolled out, local health departments are administering the vaccinations. They are providing online surveys for signing and getting on the waiting list. Rachel suggested directing people to the *Find My Vaccine* link on the <https://www.kansasvaccines.gov> website or contact their local health department. Monica Murnan remarked that workers in Part C, Parents As Teachers, and Infant & Toddler networks do not fall under the K-12 workers classification. She recommended that superintendents when collecting the list include other workers that serve the school districts are included as eligible workers to receive the vaccination during Phase II.

Melissa gave an overview of the work being done among the state agencies. The Children's Cabinet serves as the "hub" for much of the early childhood work. The Children's Cabinet's role is also to make sure the work aligns with impact and sustainability based on the operating statute. The Children's Cabinet functions as:

Manager – Administers grants, fund administration, and strategic planning process,

Connector – Connects a diverse group of early childhood stakeholders made up of government, private sectors and non-profit organizations to tackle children's initiatives,

Champion – Moves forward children's initiatives and conveying why it is important to invest in early childhood, and contributing to innovative program approaches.

Strategist – Identifies opportunities to collaborate to deal with barriers to peak performance.

Evaluator – Assesses the use of CIF funding, provides data to help the Cabinet in decision-making about policies and recommendations.

Melissa discussed the various projects the state lead agencies (DCF, KDHE, KSDE and KCCTF) participate in through System Impact and Sustainability. The programs include Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECID) which will have the first pilot in the Spring 2021, KS Common App/grant application, Workforce Registry, 1-800 CHILDREN, and Three-year Preschool Development Grant (PDG). PDG funding has been used as start-up funding. DCF, KDHE, and KCCTF participate in IRIS. The work on the sustainability costs was being discussed. Melissa talked about the services and promoting the 1-800-CHILDREN.

John Wilson asked what is the total costs of those programs. Melissa said we are exploring what the total costs will amount to. Year 1 of the PDG award, we had \$8.9 million dollars awarded and granted out approximately \$3 million dollars of that total through sub-grants. Then the 1-800-Children program price tag for Year 1 was \$350,000. It is professionally staffed. The remainder helps support this work.

Dinah Sykes commented that on the State Senate side, many of the budgets heard are initially pushed into one of the standing committees instead of going directly to Senate, Ways & Means. She asked Melissa if she was planning on requesting funding be added to the KSDE budget. Melissa responded the Cabinet's budget (CIF) is an annual appropriation from the Master Tobacco Settlement and is limited by the annual state share. THE KCCTF budget request was voted on at our June 2020 meeting – it was a request for stable funding, no cuts.

Tanya Keys, Deputy Secretary of DCF attended on behalf of Secretary Laura Howard and talked about the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) federally funded program that assists low-income families acquire child care services while they work.

### **PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT RENEWAL GRANT UPDATE**

Melissa remarked that a year ago, information about the PDG application was presented to the Cabinet. The award was received last April. Sarah O'Keefe, a graphic artist helped capture an image of all of the projects and activities performed by the State Agency team and stakeholders over the past year. (See, All In For Kansas Kids link on the [www.kschildrenscabinet.org](http://www.kschildrenscabinet.org) website). Melissa said that more graphic artwork will be shared with everyone in the coming weeks.

Melissa talked about updates to the Strategic Plan Needs Assessment work.

- Common Grants App now used for applying for grants with the Kansas Children's Cabinet.
- Preschool Development Grant (Quality Subgrant) awards were approved,
- Collection of Impact User data from the 1-800-CHILDREN line  
943 users in 90 days primarily searching for information on food delivery, food pantry, preschool, emergency food, housing, health matters
- Top counties using service were from Cowley (107), Finney (149), and Sedgwick (742)
- Action Steps link will be updated

### **PDG B-5 EVALUATION**

Mr. Chris Tilden, Research Project Manager at The University of Kansas, Center for Public Partnership & Research presenting information on program data collection, reporting, domains, governance, and data on children served, families, demographics, staffing, fiscal information, and federal year-end report to meet federal compliance with the Preschool Development Grant Birth-5 evaluation for project period 4/30/2020 to 4/29/2021.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD RECOMMENDATIONS PANEL UPDATES**

Amanda Petersen, Panel Chair

Amanda Petersen reminded everyone about the role of the Early Childhood Recommendations Plan. The Panel serves as an advisory group to the Kansas Children's Cabinet board. (See <https://www.kschildrenscabinet.org/pan-meetings> for the latest information).

Amanda reported on the December meeting. There was discussion about the COVID Vaccination Plan, gaps between community needs and state programs and discussion on the COVID in 2020 and the lessons learned.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD RECOMMENDATIONS PANEL UPDATES (Contin.)**

Amanda report on the work underway includes:

- Kindergarten Transitions Workgroup distributing the Kindergarten Transitions Recommendation, Memorandum of Understanding, and toolkit.
- Engaging Providers Workgroup will be determining how state agencies can better involve providers while developing policies or seeking feedback.
- Panel members gearing meetings to focus on discussion and action.
- Shared a video on hashtag #KSBeatTheVirus, available in English and in Spanish. Video can be found on the <https://www.kschildrencabinet.org> website and recommended to for sharing on social media.

### **DIRECTOR'S UPDATES**

Melissa Rooker updated the Cabinet on various activities:

- KCCTF, KDHE and DCF were chosen to join the ACF sponsored Thriving Families, Safer Children Round Two Learning Cohort. It is a grant opportunity with no funding attached.
- CBCAP Demonstration Project Phase I – relates to racial disparities in child welfare; participating with DCF
- ECBG applications accepted through the Common Grants App. Deadline is 11:59 p.m., February 9, 2021,
- Corona Virus Relief Funding extension. Congress made funding will be available. Cabinet will be offering additional fund to existing Remote Learning Grant recipients from last fall,
- Early Childhood Recommendations Panel appointments available. Watch the [www.kschildrencabinet.org](http://www.kschildrencabinet.org) site for information. Appointments begin 7/1/2021.
- Board members were sent the Annual Report for 2020. Additional copies can be requested.
- Stakeholder Engagement Opportunities – CCDF stakeholders survey forthcoming on the Cabinet website and stakeholder's engagement sessions will be scheduled to discuss the CCDF Plan, other early childhood care and education policies, services and funding decisions.

Dr. Carla Whitehead-Hicks, DCF discussed the Kansas CCDF Plan provided the dates for the Engagement webinars. The webinars are scheduled: February 10, 19, 24, 26, and 27, 2021.

Monica Murnan asked about the Thriving Families, Safer Children opportunity and whether the Cabinet applied for the grant. Melissa replied Kansas was chosen to participate. Tanya Keys added that DCF applied for a grant with National Governor's Association (NGA) and will involve the same partners. The Cabinet was pleased to hear this information.

### **UPCOMING CABINET MEETINGS**

April 9, 2021 (Virtual)  
June 4, 2021 (Virtual)  
August 6, 2021 (Virtual)

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

John Wilson suggested the Cabinet pay attention to the Kansas Senate acting on the tax legislation under Senate Bill 22. There is the potential for \$175 million in lost revenues to the state if passed. He stated that it is concerning and comes at a time when there are many needs in the state. It also impacts early childhood and opens the door to the possibility of securitization of CIF. Monica Murnan asked if there was a coordinated effort for participation in discussions and taking action concerning SB 22. John remarked that KAC has a blog that is available to participate on. KAC would host an "action alert" if the state loses money that impacts children's programs.

John reported the Kansas Action for Children (KAC) Kids County data is available at <https://www.kac.org>.

John requested that if anyone has stories to share about removing barriers to applying for child care and food assistance to contact Mitch Rucker at [mitch@kac.org](mailto:mitch@kac.org). Melissa Rooker remarked that stories could be pulled and shared from *Our Tomorrows* project.

Monica remarked that while there is discussion about early childhood collaborations, there are opportunities to work with the local school districts as ESSER funding comes available addressing the impact of the pandemic on elementary and secondary schools. It is important to let the districts know about these connections.

Amanda Petersen reported that the Kansas Board of Education will be meeting on February 9-10, 2021. The State board will be receiving the next phase of guidance to USDs returning to schools during the pandemic. Amanda encouraged everyone to visit <https://kansasteachingandleadingproject.org>. The Teaching and Leading Project provides a collection of resources for educators and school leaders.

Dr. Tyler Smith announced that clinical trials to begin administering COVID vaccinations to children under 16 years of age will begin soon.

Chair Pro Tem Wilson asked for a motion for adjournment.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business for discussion, Monica Murnan moved the board adjourn its meeting. Motion seconded by LeEtta Felter. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.