

KANSAS EARLY CHILDHOOD RECOMMENDATIONS PANEL

Monthly Meeting Minutes
Friday, July 16, 2021



Visit the [Children's Cabinet website](#) for meeting materials and the [YouTube recording](#).

Members Present

Nichelle Adams, Kansas Department for Children and Families

Jennifer Adhima, Project Eagle, Kansas Head Start Association

Marites Altuna, Kansas Deaf-Blind Project

Rachel Anno, Kansas Department for Children and Families

Emily Barnes, Barnes Child Care

Amanda Billings, Stepping Stones Academy

Tanya Bulluck, Child Start, Inc.

Gail Cozadd, Kansas Children's Service League

Shelly Crome, Communities in Schools Mid-America

Tabitha Ewing, YWCA Northeast Kansas

Jeremy Fite, Hilltop Child Development Center

Jennifer Forker, Hutchinson Community College

Jennifer Francois, Kansas Institute for Early Childhood Education and Research

Amy Gottschamer, Googols of Learning Child Development Center

Crystal Henry, The Family Conservancy

Kim Kennedy, Kansas Department for Children and Families

Audra Kenneson, Rainbows United

Esther Kottwitz, USD 497 Lawrence

Lorrena Kravitz, Kansas Department of Health and Environment

David Lindeman, University of Kansas Life Span Institute at Parsons

Malissa Martin, Communities in Schools Mid-America

Natalie McClane, Kansas State Department of Education

Amy Meek, Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund

Lucas Neece, City of Lindsborg

Callie Peace, Kansas Parents as Teachers Association

Patty Peschel, Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities, Inc.

Amanda Petersen, Kansas State Department of Education

Dannah Schatz, Russell Child Development Center

Lisa Schmidt, Women's Community Y

Cassandra Sines, Sines Virtual Assistant Service

Cornelia Stevens, TOP Early Learning Centers

Reva Wywadis, Child Care Aware of Eastern Kansas

Minutes

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.

Meeting Agenda

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

June 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Marites Altuna moved to approve the June minutes and Cornelia Stevens seconded, with a unanimous vote to approve the June minutes as presented.

Kansans' Open Forum - Written and Verbal Comments:

No comments submitted.

Follow-up from previous meetings - Debbie Deere

Debbie Deere provided a recap of the June meeting, detailing the work of the maximizing federal relief dollars to support early childhood in Kansas feedback, feedback sessions on 1-800-CHILDREN and Kansas Power of the Positive, and reflections on the first year of the Panel.

Welcome/Early Childhood Recommendations Panel Overview

Melissa Rooker, Executive Director of the Kansas Children's Cabinet & Trust Fund, welcomed the Panel into the second year of convening, and all the new members who have joined this year. Melissa provided a reminder that the Panel was created as part of an [Executive Order](#) issued by Governor Kelly in February 2020. That order designated the Children's Cabinet as the state's Early Childhood Advisory Council. The order empowered the Children's Cabinet to set up a standing committee, and the Panel's job is to bring expertise to the table when there are topics for discussion and projects that need feedback and input from the field, and when there are items to design, implement, and recommend. The chief recommendation to come out last year was the [Kindergarten Transitions Toolkit](#), and it is housed on the Children's Cabinet website. It is recognized that the members of the Panel have a wealth of knowledge to bring to conversation. When gathering on the Panel, the ask is to serve for the greater good, and the expectation is to be communicators, and carry the message of the Panel, distribute and disseminate

whatever materials and information that will be helpful to those who do not sit in these meetings. The purpose of all of this is to coordinate and align. The [All In For Kansas Kids Strategic Plan](#) serves as the backbone, and will be used to refer back to. The issues the Panel will entertain this year are a compilation of planned activities, and some will also be spur of the moment, when a need arises. The agenda will reflect these combinations. A great example is the Public Service Announcements produced [in English](#) and [in Spanish](#) as part of the #KSBeatsTheVirus initiative. Melissa expressed her thanks and gratitude to everyone for serving on this Panel.

Panel Member Introductions

Amanda Petersen opened the floor for introductions from all members of the Panel. An updated listing of Panel members for the current year will be located on the [Children's Cabinet website](#).

Plans for 2021-2022 Panel Year

Debbie Deere discussed the planning for Panel year 2021-2022 in collaboration between Debbie, Amanda Petersen, Children's Cabinet team, and KU Center for Public Partnerships and Research.

Input from the Year One Collaborative Survey was considered, and used to discuss and evaluate the progress of the Panel. Debbie reviewed the new meeting format that will begin in August. This format will be:

Part 1: Housekeeping Items and Presentations

- Approval of the agenda/minutes/Kansans Open Forum comments
- Previous meeting follow-up
- Presentations from agencies/initiatives/organizations from within the early childhood system - the focus of these presentations will continue to be for the Panel to work through a particular issue with specific asks from the presenters, rather than a presentation of information only. For example, Panel members might view a recent webinar with an informational presentation, then be prepared to give specific feedback on that topic during the Panel meeting.
- Any individuals/groups interested in presenting can continue to contact Debbie Deere at ddeere@ksde.org with presentation requests. Debbie will consider availability at future Panel meetings and coordinate these requests. All efforts will be made to accommodate as many requests as possible, including priority issues that might bubble up at the last minute. We encourage Panel members to connect with Debbie early if they have issues they are working on this year that might benefit from collaborative work with the Panel - this is a big help in planning for upcoming meetings.

The following issues are examples of possible topics that may be brought to the Panel for feedback:

- Early Learning Standards
- Career Pathways
- Diversity/Equity/Inclusion
- Links 2 Quality
- Workforce Registry
- Child Care Systems Improvement Team
- PDG Sustainability planning
- Ongoing federal funding planning

Part 2: Tasks and Workgroups

Workgroups with specific tasks and timelines that address identified key issues within the early childhood system and the *All In For Kansas Kids* Strategic Plan, will be developed.

- Workgroups will meet during monthly Panel meetings for up to 60 minutes.
- Three panel work groups will start in August.
- Group progress will be assessed quarterly.
- Groups may be added or adjusted throughout year.
- Members will have the opportunity to change groups, likely twice per year.
- Each group will have a facilitator and group leader(s).
 - Groups will share updates with the full Panel during monthly meetings.
 - Panel and group leaders will help facilitate connections with other groups in the governance structure as needed.
 - There will be coordination with complementary work occurring across the early childhood system.
 - Initial groups have been identified as core needs within the *All In For Kansas Kids* Strategic Plan, areas of interest shared by Panel members, and by utilizing available resources.
- Resources and Data Available
 - [All In For Kansas Kids Strategic Plan](#)
 - [Needs Assessment](#)
 - [Strategic Plan Audit](#) (Summer 2021)
 - [Child Care Provider Experience Mapping](#)
 - Coordination and information sharing with other groups/initiatives
 - [Our Tomorrows Story Bank collection](#)
- Work Group Options. Panel members will make their top two choices:
 - Child Care Provider Recruitment & Retention
 - Family Partnerships
 - Quality & Environments

- Defining Group Priorities – as the groups get started, we'll consider these questions:
 - What gaps do we see related to our focus area in the system and within individual's roles and organizations?
 - How can the group's work best coordinate with and complement other ongoing efforts in the system?
 - Whose voices are missing from the conversation and how can we engage them?
 - What are our key goals for the next 3 months? (e.g. developing a formal recommendation)
- **Group 1: Child Care Provider Recruitment & Retention**
 - Focus Areas:
 - Review and provide feedback on career pathways
 - Discuss strategies for public/private partnerships to help address workforce and childcare shortages in communities
 - Review and develop recommendations for Child Care Provider Experience mapping ideas, such as strategies to increase child care provider recognition
 - Group will be coordinated with Workforce Development Advisory Group, Professional Development Implementation Team, Child Care Systems Improvement Team
- **Group 2: Family Partnerships:**
 - Focus Areas:
 - Support development of family engagement toolkit in partnership with KDHE, Family Advisory Council and Family Leadership Team
 - Discuss recommendations for State level alignment around family engagement practices
 - Discuss recommendations for family information hub
 - Group will be coordinated with Family Advisory Council and Family Leadership Team
- **Group 3: Quality & Environments**
 - Focus Areas:
 - Identify gaps and develop recommendations related to specific areas of quality (special health care needs, culturally responsive care, etc.)
 - Identify opportunities within Strategic Plan Goal 7
 - Barriers related to local zoning and homeowner association regulations to support the operation of high-quality licensed childcare business (Tactic 7.1.2)

- Improve the quality of early childhood care and education programs, services, and physical environments through equitable, community-based approaches (Strategy 7.2)
- Group will coordinate with Child Care Systems Improvement Team
- Next Steps:
 - Please submit your top two choices for a work group to Debbie Deere by August 1, 2021.
 - Debbie Deere, ddeere@ksde.org

Part 3:

- Workgroup Reports/Next Steps
- Future Agenda Items
- Bright Spots
- Upcoming Meetings
- Adjourn

Debbie will include the template for Panel recommendations in the follow-up email for the meeting.

[Kansas Early Learning Standards 101](#)

Natalie McClane, from the Kansas State Department of Education, and Kim Kennedy, from the Kansas Department for Children and Families, presented background information on the Kansas Early Learning Standards to provide a foundational understanding on the topic for all Panel members. Natalie and Kim credited previous work done to develop [the Kansas Early Learning Standards toolkit](#) to create much of the content for this presentation.

The [Kansas Early Learning Standards](#) (KELS) are designed to be used by early childhood care and education professionals across the state of Kansas. They provide information reflective of typical child development, and are designed to link standards from early learners up to older learners as they move through school and education.

In 2006, the first version of the KELS Document was completed to fulfill a federal government request to develop standards that were aligned with the State’s K-12 content standards.

In 2007, the Kansas Early Learning Document was revised to include information on using the Early Learning Standards to develop standards-based IEP’s, a section on using the Early Learning Guidelines with a focus on learning through play and developmentally appropriate practices, and include updated resources and expanded Early Learning Connections.

In 2013, the Kansas Early Learning Standards were revised a third time in light of changes to the K-12 content standards, other program updates, and updated research in early childhood. The Kansas State Board of Education voted to adopt the Kansas College and Career Ready Standards (now the Kansas Curricular Standards) for K-12: October 2011, Head Start revised their Child Development and Learning Outcomes Framework: 2011, and Parents of Teachers has updated their Foundational Curriculum. The revision placed a greater emphasis on the use of knowledge and skills (conceptual learning) along with the acquisition of skills. Key changes in this revision included:

- Incorporating high level thinking strategies such as analyzing, evaluation, and interpretation
- A new organizational format to align with the Kansas College and Career Ready Standards (now the Kansas Curricular Standards)
- Ensuring developmentally appropriate instruction and play remained a priority as it has been in the past

All Three Revisions:

- Aligned with the K-12 Standards
- Provide the foundation for later learning
- Built upon the continuum of learning: Birth to age 5 and aligned with Kindergarten-Grade 3 and beyond
- Can be used by family and professionals working with young children birth to age 5 regardless of the setting

The Standards are for everyone, and applicable in any setting, and the purpose of the Standards include:

- To create a continuum that links early development to school readiness and later learning in school and in life
- To provide a clear statement of what young children should know and be able to do as a result of experiencing quality early learning opportunities
- To provide guidance for families and early learning professionals that enhance and support their abilities to create experiences that promote early learning opportunities
- To show that during the early years, children acquire skills, knowledge, and abilities in all developmental and content critical to future learning areas (e.g., social-emotional, physical, early literacy, mathematics, music)

The Standards Provide:

- Opportunity to promote quality learning experiences for all young children
- A learning continuum from birth to formal schooling
- Established developmentally appropriate expectations
- Provide for program accountability
- Provide common language for communicating the importance of early learning

Kansas Early Learning Standards are designed to:

- Recognize the importance of the early years as learning years
- Serve as a guide for appropriate curriculum development/selection
- Serve as a guide for creating quality learning environments and opportunities through play and planned activities

The Standards are **not** designed to:

- Serve as a curriculum in an early childhood program or other setting
- Exclude children from a program, school, or activity
- Serve as an assessment for children, families, or programs

Kim Kennedy provided an overview of what the Standards look like and how they were designed. They were designed to create a continuum that links early development to school readiness, and later learning in school and in life. Two documents used in the development guided the revision work: School Readiness Framework, and Kindergarten through 3rd Grade: Content Standards.

KELS Contains Eight Domains which include:

- Approaches to Learning (ATL)
 - Focuses on the ways in which children engage in learning and develop the desires, and strategies to pursue lifelong learning
- Physical Health and Development (PHD)
 - Focuses on those areas of physical development essential for total well-being, including nutrition, safety, health, and motor development.
- Social-Emotional Development (SED)
 - Focuses on the development of friendship skills, social problem solving and the ability to self-regulate when frustrated, enhancing the child's overall ability to participate in the learning community and grow with their peers
- Communication & Literacy (CL)
 - Focuses on learning the language system to be able to say what they think, ask questions, and form new ideas. It also emphasizes developing reading and writing skills to learn about new ideas and express themselves in print
- Mathematical Knowledge (M)
 - Focuses on the natural mathematical skills children are born with and assists them in gaining a deeper understanding of math concepts such as numbers and operation, geometry, measurement, data analysis and patterns
- Science (S)

- Focuses on supporting children’s ability to explore, investigate and problem-solve things in their natural world such as forces, the world around them and animals and their habitats
- Social Studies (SS)
 - Focuses on teaching children about life in communities and in families and how living and working together in light of our similarities and differences
- Creative Arts (CA)
 - Focuses on providing a safe environment along with materials and opportunities for children to express themselves creatively through movement, acting out stories and visual arts

It has been eight years since the last revision of the KELS, and input from the Panel is requested. Before the next meeting in August, Panel members are asked to review the [KELS](#) itself, and the [Toolkit](#), to provide input and feedback. If you currently use the KELS, please share what you find helpful or could be improved.

Contact Kimberly kimberly.kennedy@ks.gov or Natalie nmcclane@ksde.org for any questions related to this ask.

Year 2 Panel Collaboration Evaluation Survey

Amanda Petersen asked each member of the Panel to complete a two-part survey by the end of July. The purpose is to evaluate collaboration and the effectiveness of the Panel, and these survey results will be used as a baseline to compare to the year end survey. Debbie will include this information in the follow-up email for members to complete.

Requests for Future Agenda Items

No requests at this time.

Bright Spots

Amanda Petersen shared the Child Tax Credit as a recent bright spot for families. More information is available at www.childtaxcredit.gov.

Upcoming Meetings (all via Zoom)

- Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund Meeting – Friday, August 6, 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.
- Early Childhood Stakeholders Group Meeting – Friday, August 6, 1:30-3:00 p.m.
- Early Childhood Recommendations Panel meeting – Friday, August 20, 9:00-11:30 a.m.
 - Third Fridays of the month, beginning at 9:00 a.m.
- Scheduled workgroup meetings will be posted on the [Panel Meetings webpage](#) of the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund website (kschildrenscabinet.org)

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.