

KANSAS EARLY CHILDHOOD RECOMMENDATIONS PANEL

Monthly Meeting Minutes
Friday, August 20, 2021



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

Members Present

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

Kelly Davydov, Child Care Aware of Kansas

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

Sheila Hermocillo, USD 443 Dodge City

Callie Hoffman, Kansas Parents as Teachers Association

Kim Kennedy, Kansas Department for Children and Families

Audra Kenneson, Rainbows United

Esther Kottwitz, USD 497 Lawrence

David Lindeman, University of Kansas Life Span Institute at Parsons

Kelli Mark, Kansas Department of Health and Environment

Malissa Martin, Communities in Schools Mid-America

Natalie McClane, Kansas State Department of Education

Lucas Neece, City of Lindsborg

Patty Peschel, Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities, Inc.

Amanda Petersen, Kansas State Department of Education

Rachele Rickard, United Way of the Plains

Dannah Schatz, Russell Child Development Center

Lisa Schmidt, Women's Community Y

Cornelia Stevens, TOP Early Learning Centers

Jenny Welch Buller, University of Kansas Center for Public Partnerships and Research

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

Jennifer Adhima moved to approve the agenda and Crystal Henry seconded, with a unanimous vote to approve the agenda as presented.

July 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Gail Cozadd moved to approve the July minutes and Jennifer Forker seconded, with a unanimous vote to approve the July minutes as presented.

Kansans' Open Forum - Written and Verbal Comments:

No comments submitted.

Kansas Early Learning standards (KELS) discussion

Kim Kennedy and Natalie McClane provided a recap of July's meeting which included a refresher about the history of the Kansas Early Learning Standards and how they are used. Kim raised a question to the Panel to think about if there are any gaps that should be considered in the future in regard to the [Kansas Early Learning Standards](#) and the accompanying [toolkit](#)? Panel membered provided the following suggestions and comments:

- Wonder if there could be work on the social-emotional section to recognize that the very youngest do have some of developmental activities happening in these areas.
- We might consider an acronym for "Social-Emotional Development" besides "SED", which is also used for a specific mental health diagnosis. "S/ED" may be a good alternative.
- Appreciated the alignment section in the toolkit. Could there be alignment done with the myIGDIs for preschool?
- In the toolkit, having links open in a new tab if possible may be helpful.
- The special needs' identification section includes good information in regards to training for providers. We also need to ensure the human and financial resources are available to the providers, instead of just knowledge.
- It is important to think about Memorandums of Understanding when considering these resources.

- The standards and toolkit contain a lot of information, which can be difficult for families to follow. Is there a way to create a condensed version, or more user-friendly version that would be easier for families to follow. The Wichita coalition of partners working on kindergarten readiness developed a similar resource at the local level.
- Appreciate the layout of the Standards. Easy to follow layout with the grids and age ranges.
- Support section of the toolkit is very valuable. Breaking support materials down by standard would be a suggestion.

In considering what stakeholder groups should be engaged in updating the standards, Panel members shared:

- Child care providers have a stake in these standards. This is an important tool with lots of resources for those willing to spend the time digging into them. It's easy to get bogged down or to misuse these resources, even though they do clearly state that they are not to be used as an assessment. Need to understand the purpose of the tool so that users are not over-assessing or presenting learning in ways that are not developmentally appropriate and don't improve quality. Need to make sure as we go forward that we are mindful of how we use these resources and the expectations of how they will be used.
- This is used heavily in higher education curriculum. This update will be helpful, as everything we do we apply the Kansas Early Learning Standards to. It is laid out nicely for those who are doing education at a higher level, too. Students include child care providers, teachers in public school districts, parents, administrators at schools and child care centers.
- In a district preschool program that includes Head Start, state Preschool-Aged At-Risk, and early childhood special education, we utilize the Kansas Early Learning Standards to make sure curriculum is aligned, and look at progression of skills from Pre-K to kindergarten. We find this really helpful as we have conversations and collaborate with kindergarten teachers and administrators.
- An alignment to FastBridge Pre-K would be helpful.

Stakeholders can reach out to [Natalie McClane and Kimberly Kennedy](#) to share your feedback to inform planning to update these resources.

Supporting You Peer Support Network

Heather Smith, System of Support Section Director at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, presented on [Supporting You, A Peer Support Network](#).

The purpose of supporting you is for individuals and families to have connections through a system of support. The mission is to connect with a trained peer who shares experiences to support the health of their family. It is an opportunity for individuals to gain support from peers who have experienced something similar to what they have. The vision is that

strengths-based supports and services are available to promote healthy families and relationships. This is reflective in *All In For Kansas Kids* Strategy 3.1: Provide families with tools and information to support their children's interests, healthy development, and learning.

Peer support is identified as one of the strongest measures of connectedness for individuals and communities. The reach goes beyond the special healthcare needs population. The concept of peer support and parent to parent connections is not new, but the Family Advisory Council wanted to create this to target other populations, and families can connect in one place.

Supporting You is created to provide a network of programs without having to merge all programs into one system of oversight. The intended outcome of participating in Supporting You is to be supported. It doesn't replace the need for professional care, but it is believed that when there is peer to peer connections, families are healthier, stronger, and more connected.

The goal is to expand the number of Network Programs. A Network Program is a unique population not covered by existing Network Programs. There is a desire to support individuals and families through peer to peer connection. A Promotional Partner has a desire to spread peer to peer supports for existing populations.

The structure of Supporting You includes a Network Administrator that provides network oversight, database management, and program recruitment. The Network Programs have a Program Coordinator, who manages program management, network evaluation, and delegation of duties, a Peer Support Administrator, who oversees Support Peer recruitment, Connected Peer matches, and ongoing support for all Peers, and a Support Peer, who is a support for a peer looking for someone to talk to. A Connected Peer is someone looking for support from someone who has "been there before."

Heather utilized a JamBoard for members to add notes and ideas in response to the question of "Who might best benefit from this support?" The responses were collected via the [JamBoard](#) tool:

- Families with young children who have children with social emotional concerns or behavioral concerns.
- New Mothers
- Head Start/Early Head Start Programs
- Parents of children with mental health diagnoses
- Parents who are working from home while also watching their children at home (either 0-5, and/or school aged children doing virtual school) due to the pandemic.

- Families of early childhood and beyond would benefit from the alignment and progression of services available to them, at what age they should sign their child up for these services. (Some waitlists are a couple of years.)
- Rural childcare providers to communicate and work together ideas, etc
- Seems to be that we are seeing more children with Apraxia.
- Refugee/immigrant/dual language families adapting to new surroundings
- Student-parents
- Military bases
- Parents of children with low incidence disabilities
- Childcare providers to assist with early intervention
- Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) families that may have more concerns around bias and equity for their children.
- Teen moms and Dads, Stay-at-Home Dads, Single Dads, Dads in general.
- Children diagnosed with dyslexia
- Same-sex parents
- Parents with LGBTQ children – see [Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays Lawrence/Topeka Chapter](#)
- Families of children with multiple and low-incident exceptionalities
- Child care directors/teachers
- *Previous ideas shared - Pregnant/Postpartum Women / New Moms; Foster/Adoptive Parents; Adolescents/Youth; Child Care Providers*

Who are key partners for these new populations?

- Pediatricians could connect parents to this program when a diagnosis is given
- Providers, Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies, Child Care Aware of Kansas, professional organizations serving local providers like Child Care Providers Coalition of Kansas and Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children, licensing surveyors could reach providers.
- [Kansas Children's Service League has parent support groups](#). Maybe there's a population in there not thought of yet?

Who are key partners for pregnant/postpartum women and new moms?

- Early childhood home visitation programs
- Early Head Start
- Mental health agencies that deal with postpartum depression
- Early childhood providers. Hospitals, Physicians, La Leche League local groups, Doulas (I think they have an organization), Lactation Consultants.

Who are key partners for pregnant/postpartum women and new moms?

- Children’s Alliance of Kansas
- Foster, Adopt, Connect is a non-profit in the Kansas City area
- [LGBT Adoption & Adoption Choices of Kansas](#)

Who are key partners for child care providers?

- Child Care Aware of Kansas is a great resource for centers
- Kansas Department of Health and Environment licensing surveyors, professional organizations like Child Care Providers Coalition of Kansas and Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children

Stakeholders can share feedback about who might benefit from targeted peer support (for example, foster and adoptive parents, teen parents, child care providers) with [Heather Smith and Cora Ungerer](#)

Work Group Breakout Sessions

Three Panel Work Groups will focus work in the coming months on Child Care Recruitment & Retention, Family Partnerships, and Quality & Environments. Work Groups spent time reviewing existing efforts and beginning plans for next steps.

- Each work group will have recommended focus areas for the first 2-3 months of work that have been identified as current opportunities within the early childhood system and/or needs identified in the *All in for Kansas Kids* strategic plan.
- Panel leadership and facilitators have identified initial discussion questions for August meeting. Group members are invited to bring related issues that they see in their work to the group for discussion.
- Each work group will have a facilitator, chair(s) and note taker.
- Content advisors who are not appointed Panel members may be invited to participate.

Work Group 1: Child Care Recruitment & Retention Notes

Sara Gardner (Facilitator) welcomed Work Group members. Lisa Jeanneret and Jennifer Pishny from the Kansas Department for Children and Families are serving as content advisors.

The group discussed existing child care recruitment and retention efforts. These include governance efforts (Child Care Systems Improvement Team recommendations related to licensing and surveyor supports, Workforce Development Advisory Group efforts related to equity, diversity, and inclusion), efforts funded by the federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five ([Quality Subgrants](#), [Child Care Provider Experience Mapping](#), workforce registry development), efforts funded by federal relief funding ([Child Care](#)

[Sustainability Grants](#)), and local efforts, such as the Finney County Economic Development Boot Camp. The group reviewed the Strategic Plan Audit and was invited to make edits.

General discussion:

- It's not okay to have our professionals not make a living wage. We shouldn't model that it IS okay. Balance of showing non-financial support to our staff while also publicly demanding a different narrative and rates for professionals.
- Is there data on professional turnover?
- Information on how to retain? Centers are struggling
- Peer Groups for child care directors exist in local areas. Kansas Head Start Directors have regular calls to connect with one another. Regional groups meet in-person or virtually depending on comfort.

The group began discussion of the below items and will continue in September if needed.

Focus Area 1 – Documenting recruitment and retention challenges (6.1.5)

RECRUITMENT: What are specific barriers for recruiting new child care providers?

- Challenges to recruit new providers (owners, centers)
 - Expensive on-ramp and overwhelm with the process (applies to both Centers & Family Child Care; and urban and rural)(Solution: closer connection)
 - Barriers to accessing philanthropy (must be a 501c3)
- Challenges to recruit child care professionals
 - Professionals finding other jobs even after expressing interest and signing on. (no hard data on reasons why but example is using child care as a way to show job history)
 - Can't compete with pay (Target, Chipotle) in an employee's market
 - STUCK. Little clarity on how to advance. What are leadership roles beyond Center Director? People are looking for something more challenging (solution: is there creativity around different roles? specialist roles, ex. PBIT. should come with financial incentives)
 - Lack of individualized/intentional professional development to support the unique strengths and goals of professionals.
 - Lack of clarity of honest job expectations (solution: how to clarify in interview process). People want to work with children - how can we be transparent about WHAT that actually looks like.
 - No time to invest in shadowing because trying to fill vacancies as quickly as possible. (solution: time to break up interview process into days with on-site work in between?)

- Interviews scheduled but not showing up
- Centers losing money to onboard but people leave for other centers who might pay more. (solution: have new staff pay upfront but reimburse past X amount of days retained)
- What are efforts to retain that you dislike or find ineffective?

RETENTION: What are specific barriers for retaining existing child care providers?

- Challenges to retain providers (owners, centers)
 - Isolation? (solution: extra efforts to stay connected; mentorship; always going to be there - takes capacity and time)
- Challenges to retain child care professionals
 - COVID made education VERY hard. Incredibly difficult circumstances and ongoing pandemic "I don't know that I can do this another year" (Solution: how can we create positive work environments; stagger work schedules (four 10-hour days) so there are longer mental breaks)
 - Centers losing money to onboard but people leave for other centers who might pay more. (solution: have new staff pay upfront but reimburse past X amount of days retained; communicate)
 - Centers can't compete with salary differences in a community (ex. centers charge higher rates and have nonprofit status or are part of for-profit system like a hospital)
 - Patchwork funding is unsustainable
 - Lack of understanding of opportunity/advancement
 - Lack of value (solution: extra efforts to stay connected; mentorship; always going to be there - takes capacity and time; celebrating achievements and life successes)
 - Lack of Center Director time/capacity to support staff (solution: remove burden by either paying or having Job Corps-type program to free time/resources)
 - Message that it's okay to pay low wages; acceptance that low wages and benefits! (solution: retirement program via state; more pay parity with K-12)
- What are efforts to retain that you dislike or find ineffective?
 - Bonuses are great but not sustainable and so time-limited; no long-term promises.

- Can't compete wage-wise with private business (even fast food)

Focus Area 2 – How to Address Documented Challenges – Build plans around documented challenges. Things to consider in planning:

- What are short-term solutions, and elements needed for these solutions?
- What are long-term solutions, and elements needed for these solutions?
- What is being done or explored now that should be continued or invested in more broadly?
- What are uniquely rural solutions?
- What are uniquely urban or semi-urban solutions?
- What are systemic changes at the state level?
- What are the different players and roles needed for the solution? (ex. funder, champion, trainer, licensing expert, parent/family outreach, system-level committee or governance, etc.)

Focus Area 3 – Solution Design/Toolkit

- Is it possible to design a community-level toolkit to help communities address child care recruitment and retention challenges at a local level – either for short-term/emergency OR long-term needs?

In September the group will continue discussion and identify goals for addressing these areas.

Work Group 2: Family Partnerships Notes

Meghan Kluth (Facilitator) welcomed Work Group members. Heather Smith and Cora Ungerer from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment are serving as content advisors. Family Partnerships is a Panel Work Group because it is a critical part of the *All In for Kansas Kids* Strategic Plan and there are many efforts going on at local and state levels. These include:

- The [Family Advisory Council](#) is part of the Kansas early childhood governance structure and works with both the Title V/Maternal Child Health program and the *All In for Kansas Kids* strategic plan.
- The Family Leadership Team is a collaborative group of family leaders and state agency representatives that meets quarterly.

Strategy Guide - The University of Kansas Center for Public Partnerships and Research, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund collaboratively developed a strategy guide; this living document outlines planned work in this area. The primary goals are:

- Increased Alignment across State Agencies
 - Opportunities for increased representation and engagement
 - Identify opportunities for various state level family leadership groups to collaborate
 - Establish shared resources for program on engaging families for families and professionals
 - Develop and disseminate family engagement tools and
- Family Voice
- Evaluating and increasing representation and equity

A Family and Consumer Partnership Toolkit will be co-created by the Family Leadership Team and the Family Advisory Council with support from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the University of Kansas Center for Public Partnerships and Research. The goal is to complete the toolkit by the end of 2021; discussion today will help inform outline of toolkit and group focus areas.

- Who is the toolkit for? Professionals. It has been suggested to create one for families as well.
- Who is on the Family Leadership Team? - Family Advisory Council representatives, Family First Family Council representatives, Kansas Department for Children and Families, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Parent Information Resource Center on behalf of the Kansas State Department of Education, and the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund.

The group discussed collecting input from families:

- How do you collect input from families in your work? What is most effective?
 - Just did a survey with families across 14 child care centers. Offered online, center directors could print and collect. Were surprised at the number of responses. Gathered qualitative and quantitative information
 - This is challenging for us. Do family needs assessment survey. Most helpful if we call them first and let them know what's happening and why. Invited families through a call for in person event, personal connection is helpful

- The Thought Exchange platform - group started a hub to gather information on community needs. Had a much better response than predicted.
- If you feed them they will come! Helps get families in. Provide child care. Collecting individual data from families give incentive to get the information.
- Parent Cafés, asking broad questions in person, brainstorming, Head Start-surveys and interviews
- Is a sweet spot in scheduling a time to get both professionals and parents? Sometimes daytime works well- steer away from Wednesday nights; Lunch worked well for both; Wednesday days worked well for professional parents, but not as well for families; Friday lunches; Saturdays; If mainly professionals- workweek; Evenings for families
- Have an Annual Family Day event - have families plan the event- move to different regions each year.
- Schools use the Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ), Orientations, and Kindergarten Transition Time, Advisory Councils or Interagency Coordinating Councils

The group reviewed questions for next work group sessions. The work group will begin with Topic 2 in September.

- Topic 1 - Collecting Input from Families
 - How do you currently collect input from families in your work, and what is most effective?
 - What new, innovative ideas do you have for engaging and partnering with the families you serve?
 - What have you participated in that you particularly loved, as a family representative or in other settings?
 - What types of input collection do you dislike or find ineffective?
- Topic 2- Defining What's Important
 - What does family partnership mean to you? What gaps, if any, are there between what you currently see happening to partner with families, and what you would like to see?
 - How should a program show the value they place on family engagement and partnership? If you were wanting to be involved in something where families are at the CENTER of the work what do program staff need to do/say to show you that?

- Topic 3 – Program Design
 - When a program or service is being created or changed, when should families be brought to the table? What factors do program staff need to consider about the timing of this? Specifically, how should families be engaged in this process, and how often?
- Topic 4 – Leadership
 - When we say parent/family leadership – what comes to mind?
 - What family leadership programs are you aware of throughout Kansas? Where are there opportunities to increase opportunities for family leadership?

As a next step, group members will consider what they would like to see come out of this work group.

Work Group 3: Quality & Environments Notes

Mary Baskett (Guest Facilitator substituting for Debbie Deere this month) welcomed Work Group members. Megan Smith from the Kansas Department for Children and Families is serving as a content advisor.

The group reviewed areas highlighted during the July Panel meeting:

- Today's focus: Identify gaps and develop recommendations related to specific areas of quality (special health care needs, culturally responsive care, etc.)
- Later focus: 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 businesses (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)

Focus Area #1 / August-October: Identify gaps / barriers / challenges / needs to provide care for children with special health care needs.

Many Panel members have highlighted this as an area deserving focus. We need to better understand the gaps and opportunities to strengthen child care services available to children with Special Health Care Needs and resources across the system.

What is happening now, and where are there connection points?

- Emily Barnes shared that as a child care provider, she relies heavily on her local tiny-k program that provides Infant-Toddler Services (Part C early intervention services). She has experience serving those with special needs and uses the Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) when she identifies a potential need. She connects families to Part C infant toddler specialists, their school district, and/or their pediatrician.
- Jeremy Fite shared that at their center, tiny-k and the school district are great partnerships. Good relationship with many of their providers, open line of communications so that the connection to service is fast. Often tiny-k providers will meet with our teachers to help implement practices.
- What kind of resources are readily available in rural areas? Is teletherapy working/available everywhere? Salina had a 3% population drop between the 2010 and 2020 Census, it's difficult to recruit young professionals to rural areas. Key may be to use technology to ensure broader access, if possible.
- The tiny k network is a resource for every community in Kansas – we need make sure everyone knows how to refer to those programs. Lack of knowledge that those services are available could still be a barrier. In the last 18 months during the pandemic, tiny k programs have effectively used telehealth, ultimately a successful shift as learned to work with families and coach families from a distance.
- Providers in more rural areas are doing the best they can with what they have. Desire to support families is there, working to continually improve knowledge and skills, but the reality is that the support systems are often inaccessible for the families.
- More and more information coming out on the effectiveness of telehealth intervention. More and more tools available to use telehealth to support families. Also have observed a need for more programs open to caring for children with special needs. Many variables are at play: for example training, supports, education on needs for families and providers.
- Behavioral concerns are a primary reported challenge, can be indicator of developmental needs.

What does this look like from a provider perspective?

- What is the role of local Interagency Coordinating Councils (ICCs)? Are members familiar with ICCs? This is not the same for everyone, depending on geography. In Southwest Kansas, we really utilize our ICC.
- Timeliness of response is essential when addressing behavioral needs in a classroom. Shared struggle with foster referral.
 - MOUs between providers can help address some of this, by identifying roles and responsibilities in advance.
- As a child care provider, there are both success stories and stories that didn't work out. Even when bring in all the resources and have a background in addressing these needs, it sometimes still doesn't work out for some families because of safety concerns. Programs are doing their best, but most child care programs do

not have the overhead to hire more staff to work one on one with some children who need more supervision/support.

- David Lindeman noted that a part of our challenge is for child care providers to know about and be engaged with their local interagency coordinating council. Dave chairs the [Kansas State Interagency Coordinating Council](#) and noted that, as a group, the Council has not heard much from the field in terms of child care and children with disabilities or special health care needs. As individual council members we know that this is an issue, but as a group we have not heard much about this issue. The State ICC would welcome feedback from the field during regular public comment periods to help prioritize this area in their work. Dave asked for workgroup members to spread the word about opportunities to come to the State ICC and share challenges.
 - State ICC meetings are the third Friday of the month at 1PM; those who are unable to attend during that time can share written feedback.
 - Could the State ICC ask local ICC members to reach out to providers in their communities and gather stories and feedback to bring back to the state level?
 - As a child care provider in a rural community, not sure what the local ICC is or how to contact them. Initially our local economic development council was connection to find a building and get started. In a rural community, just surviving – there are just four other providers in community, all full with waiting lists, which is very stressful. The group suggested contacting local ICC or local child care licensing surveyor, who often serves on the council. The state website, www.kansasicc.org/, is a good place to start; it includes [Local ICC contact information](#). Jordan Christian (jchristian@ksde.org) is staff to the State ICC and can connect stakeholders to their local ICC.
- Additional funding for staff to support additional needs – whether medical needs or trauma and behavioral needs – is essential. Most families won't be able to afford that and it will not work in a tuition model.

Provider training and support – what is out there and what is needed?

- Many who work in the early childhood field do not have training to serve children with special needs. They might go online or go to a local class, but there is a huge gap. The expectation when people drop a child with an early childhood caregiver is that they will handle everything. In a school, in first or second grade, there is a specialist on staff who can support. It's an expectation for early childhood caregivers but there is very little resources to provide support. In a child care facility located on a university campus, there is a behavior consultant on staff from the Child Psychology program. That's a great resource for staff. Still don't have the resources to provide training to a broader spectrum of staff so that all staff are prepared to provide safe, quality services to children with special needs.
- If there are resources, would they count toward state licensure or continuing education requirements? That seems like an important consideration.

- The [Kansas Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities \(LEND\) Childcare Provider Training](#) provides regular quality training for child care providers and provides clock-hours for licensing. A key for providers is repetitiveness; need focus on the basics, continuity, and training that builds on previous training.
- As certified teachers in the school setting move to provide services in the least restrictive environment, how are we empowering teachers to meet the needs of all learners within the classroom?
- Locally, Reno County offers Kaleidoscope, a 6-hour training day that is approved for KDHE child care clock hours – people will not come to a conference if it's not approved for clock hours. At Hutchinson Community College, and across the state at community colleges, programs have at least one special needs course. However, do not have the content experts or in-depth courses.
- A question for child care providers who have attended good trainings in the past. How important is follow-up support to effective trainings to support implementation of those practices? Absolutely – special education is an entire field with many different roles, and nobody gets to that place with just one two-hour training course. So whether it's mentorship, collaboration with tiny k, making connections with professional and specialists is very helpful. Important to note that a provider's dedication and time to commit to these trainings matters, too.

The group will continue this discussion in September.

Work Group Breakout Sessions – Reports

Following the breakout of the Work Groups, Panel members joined back together to provide reports from their meetings:

Child Care Recruitment & Retention

Work Group looked at existing and ongoing efforts and identified the Child Care Systems Improvement Team, Workforce Development Advisory Group, Preschool Development Grant subgrants, Registry, Child Care Career Pathway, and Strategic Plan audit. General discussion focused on the group's recruitment and retention challenges. Looked at ways to recruit new providers with networking and supporting groups. Feeling stuck on how to offer something that is more appealing when compensation cannot be higher, in an effort to compete with other career opportunities. Noted different challenges in rural and urban areas. Group will identify 2 or 3 big focuses for the group to drill down on for specific recommendations for the Panel. Will try to be solution focused.

Family Partnerships

Reviewed background of work that has taken place, and how important family voice is. There is a lot of synergy through the *All in For Kansas Kids* Strategic Plan. As a part of the strategy guide, there is a lot of focus on alignment. Themes moving forward to look at are elevating family's goals, and evaluating and increasing representation and equity. Need to engage families and gather their input first. First topic discussed was collecting input from families and what has been effective. Topics down the road – program design, how families should be engaged and how often, and leadership.

Quality & Environments

Worked through discussion questions to gain a deeper understanding on the gaps and opportunities for children with special healthcare needs. Discussed Part C Infant Toddler Services, and how consistently the services are offered across the state, and if there is an opportunity to work on outreach. Telehealth and teletherapy resources were noted, and how they have been utilized in assisting this population of families, especially during the pandemic. Stories were shared regarding resources and funding available for providers assisting children with special healthcare needs. Group noted there is a gap for additional staffing support. Trainings were also discussed as needing to be expanded. Call of action for work group participants was to gather stories of struggle and share with [statewide and local interagency coordinating councils](#) as appropriate.

Requests for Future Agenda Items

No requests at this time.

Bright Spots

Cornelia Stevens shared the [TOP Parent Scholarship](#) program opportunity with TOP Early Learning Centers in Wichita, and noted there have been about 20 parents who have graduated so far. Cornelia shared that one parent who received the scholarship is now a licensed teacher.

Tanya Bulluck shared on September 23, [Child Start](#) will host an early childhood focused recruitment event for centers. Centers are welcome to recruit at the event. Information on the event is forthcoming. It will be a virtual platform, and the center will need to be live and engaged through the platform.

Upcoming Meetings (all via Zoom)

- Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund Meeting – Friday, October 1, 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.
- Early Childhood Stakeholders Group Meeting – Friday, October 1, 1:30-3:00 p.m.

- Early Childhood Recommendations Panel meeting – Friday, September 17, 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.