

# KANSAS EARLY CHILDHOOD RECOMMENDATIONS PANEL

Monthly Meeting Minutes  
Friday, July 21, 2023



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

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## Members Present

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Nichelle Adams, DCF  
Kristen Alhareedi, Sedgwick County Health Department  
Marites Altuna, Kansas State School for the Blind  
Brenda Bandy, Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition  
Sheila Bertelsen, Dodge City Public School-Bright Beginnings Early Childhood Center  
Dana Book, KCSL  
Eldonna Chesnut, Johnson County Department of Health & Environment  
Kristina Cullison, Frontenac Public Schools  
Jarvis Doleman, KDHE  
Nick Engels, Littles Early Learning  
Kerri Falletti, KDC-Office of Rural Prosperity  
Bronwyn Fees, Kansas State University  
Lyda Fincham, Hopeful Beginnings Counseling Services  
Kelly Frantz-Langford, TARC  
Amy Gottschamer, Googols of Learning  
Kim Kennedy, DCF-HSCO  
Hilary Koehn, KPATA  
Tanya Koehn, CCAKS  
Katrina Lowry, Russell Child Development Center  
Karen MacCrory, Mitchell County Partnership for Children  
Malissa Martin, SparkWheel, Inc  
Natalie McClane, KSDE  
Cheisa Myles, Blessed Assurance Daycare  
Leigh Anne Neal, USD 512 Shawnee Mission School District  
Lindsay Orion, KU CPPR  
Stephanie Parks, University of Kansas  
Patty Peschel, KCCTO  
Melissa Rooker, KSDE  
Tabatha Rosproy, Kansas Parent Information Resource Center  
Bethany Samuel, DCF  
Brett Schmidt, Learning Cross, Inc  
Lisa Schmidt, Women's Community Y

Heather Schrotberger, Kansas Head Start Association  
Dana Jo Stanton, Northwest Kansas Economic Innovation Center, Inc  
Logan Stenseng, Thrive Allen County  
Cornelia Stevens, TOP Early Learning Centers  
Tara Taylor, USD 470 Arkansas City Public Schools  
Marie Treichel, KAIMH  
Cora Ungerer, KDHE  
Jateice Vieux, USD 226 Meade Elementary & Junior High School  
Tricia Waggoner, KDHE  
Stephanie Wiggins, KCCTO/KITS  
Christie Wyckoff, KCCTF

## Minutes

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### Welcome

Cornelia Stevens 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.

### July Meeting Agenda

Natalie McClane moved to approve the July agenda and Eldonna Chesnut seconded, with a unanimous vote to approve the agenda as presented.

### June 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes

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

### Kansans' Open Forum - Written and Verbal Comments

Kansans are encouraged to submit comments through the [Kansans' Open Forum Comment Form](#) by 5:00pm the day preceding each meeting to share written comments or to sign up to share verbal comments with the Panel during this portion of the meeting. No comments submitted.

### Welcome and Panel Overview

Cornelia introduced Melissa Rooker, Executive Director of the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund. Welcome to our new Panel members as this is our first meeting of the new cycle of the Recommendations Panel, following the state fiscal year timeline, and good luck to those focusing their efforts elsewhere. Our collaborative effort was originally started by the Preschool Development Grant which is a federal grant program that brought together 4 state agencies (the Children's Cabinet, the Kansas State Department of Education, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and the Kansas Department of Children and Families) that have been working on system level change under the auspices of All In for Kansas Kids. The 2019 Kansas Statewide Early Childhood Care and Education Needs Assessment finds that greater systems alignment is needed to fully realize an efficient and robust early childhood care and education infrastructure. This informs Goal 1: State-Level Coordination, of the [All in for Kansas Kids Strategic Plan](#), which outlines the steps needed to ensure the early childhood care and education system is structured and aligned for maximum impact.

The Kansas [Executive Order 20-02](#) designates the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund ("Children's Cabinet") as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care. It states, "In order to support the Cabinet in fulfilling [these duties], the Cabinet shall convene and maintain a panel of volunteers ("the Panel") with demonstrable early childhood expertise to operate at the pleasure of the Cabinet in an advisory role. The

Executive Director of the Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund shall coordinate the activities of the Panel on behalf of the Cabinet. The Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund shall provide ongoing direction to the Panel, delineating areas in which it would benefit from the Panel’s expertise and establishing responsibilities, governance, and reporting structures as it finds beneficial.”

The Kansas Early Childhood Recommendations Panel is an **advisory group** to the Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund. It plays a key role in enabling our state to implement the *All in for Kansas Kids* strategic plan, respond to challenges, elevate recommendations from communities and stakeholders, and make key decisions to help us achieve the vision outlined in our strategic plan.

## Meeting Procedures

Cornelia shared all meeting procedures with the Panel, including the Kansas Open Meetings Act, Open Forum procedures, voting procedures, Panel Recommendations, system collaboration, and the Panel SharePoint HUB. All of which are discussed in detail below.

### Kansas Open Meetings Act:

Executive Order 20-02 requires the Panel to be subject to the Kansas Open Meetings Act:

- “A representative government is dependent upon an informed electorate.” The policy of the State of Kansas is that “meetings for the conduct of governmental affairs and the transaction of governmental business be open to the public” (K.S.A. 75-4317).
- Review the Kansas Attorney General’s Frequently Asked Questions at <https://ag.ks.gov/open-government/koma-faq>.

### Open Forum Procedures:

- Each speaker shall be allowed to speak for three minutes.
- Panel members may ask clarifying questions of the person making the presentation. The speaker will have up to one minute to respond. The presiding officer may grant additional time.
- Information may be submitted to the Panel in written and electronic form. This information shall be included in the meeting minutes.
- Following the Kansans' Open Forum portion of the agenda, the presiding officer will acknowledge the participants and announce that the Panel will determine if any of the issues will be addressed at future meetings.
- In the event of a meeting conducted virtually, the Panel may require that it will only accept written comments. The posted agenda shall outline the procedures for providing written feedback.

### Voting Procedures:

- The Panel will strive first for consensus in decision making.
- If consensus is not possible, participants may call for a vote.
- Each Panel member is entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote.

- A vote of **two-thirds** of those members present is necessary to approve any formal action taken by the Panel pursuant to Article 4: Panel Actions.
- The votes of Panel members participating virtually shall be included on matters submitted to a vote.

Panel Recommendations:

- Clear identification of the entity that will receive the recommendation
- Background information explaining the issue that includes:
  - Description of how considerations of equity have informed this recommendation
  - Description of how Kansas families have shaped this recommendation
  - Description of the councils, committees, or workgroups with expertise, experience, or jurisdiction related to the issue

System Collaboration:

- The Panel may contact other councils, committees, and workgroups with expertise, experience, or jurisdiction related to a particular issue **to share information gathered and identify opportunities for further progress**. The Panel may also contact other councils, committees, and workgroups **to request additional information or feedback** on draft recommendations.
- The Panel may provide recommendations, information, or requests for information or feedback at any point during the year. The Panel will provide an annual report summarizing its work to the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund.

Panel SharePoint HUB:

Lindsay shared her screen and gave the Panel a tour of the HUB, all of its features, and where everything is located in real time.

- **Meeting Materials** (agendas, minutes, recordings, resources)
- **AIFKK Tactic Work Groups** (overview, resources, meeting notes)
- **News/Updates** – Panel updates, webinars, ECCE system updates

## AIFKK Workgroups Overview

Brenda Bandy gave update on **Strategy 4.2**: Promote family-friendly workplaces throughout the public and private sectors. This strategy is broken down into 3 subcategories via the strategic plan and this work group has come up with recommendations for each.

- 4.2.1 Identify and leverage resources, programs, and policies that bolster efforts to create family-friendly workplaces in Kansas.
  - Recommendations:
    1. Create a one-stop shop for information, policy examples, and HR support

- 2. Invest in existing programs to expand and enhance what has been created. (**Policies** – could be employee policies or legislative (paid leave))
- 4.2.2. Partner with employers to create family-friendly workplaces in Kansas.
  - Recommendation:
    1. Kansas Children’s Cabinet creates employer resources such as a stand-alone website that links to relevant groups, Departments of Commerce and Labor, and Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM); it includes an interactive state map that shows services available in a given area.
- 4.2.3 Build commitment to create conditions that lead to safety, stability, and nurturing relationships.
  - Recommendation:
    1. Kansas Children’s Cabinet creates a business case campaign aligning with existing efforts for employers to invest in family-friendly workplace policies. (Business case – Justification for a proposed project or undertaking based on its expected commercial benefits.)

Logan Stenseng gave update on **Tactic 6.1.1 Update:** Develop recommendations to increase compensation and benefits for early childhood care and education professionals.

Quality workforce compensation and benefits in early childhood education (ECE) refer to a competitive pay and benefits package that meets the needs of educators, aligns with other professional fields, and ensures continual growth through quality-based metrics and incentivizing professional development. Providing a clear career pathway with graduated compensation and benefits, securing sustainable funding through public and private intervention, and investing in a well-funded professional development system with the capacity to support career pathways and quality improvement initiatives.

The challenges and barriers identified by this work group were high turnover rates in the ECE workforce, recruitment challenges, lack of a career pipeline/growth opportunities and the need to incentivize professional development, lack of revenue needed to enable programs to sustainably pay for quality, and lack of access to quality care.

The following are the next steps identified by this work group:

- 6.1.1 Committee should continue, compensation/benefit recommendations issue is broad and needs more time allotted to develop specific strategies.
- Invite all relevant agencies and early childhood educators to the workgroup, compile a list of completed/ongoing projects to learn from and identify data gaps to developing a strong workforce compensation/benefits plan.
- Follow-up on research with Kansas cost of quality project (How can we build off their research, prevent duplication of work).

- Attend the ECE Transitions Task Force community engagement meetings to elevate/learn about communities' perspectives regarding ECE workforce development

Amy Gottschamer gave update on **Tactic 6.1.5 Update**: Document and address recruitment and retention challenges (includes all early childhood care and education professionals).

After removing the benefit/wage/compensation piece and researching several articles and websites on the topics the major ideas discussed by this work group were:

- Standing up a mentorship structure using child care providers
- Involvement in marketing campaign (advisory capacity-Recruitment)
- KAIMH endorsements—includes reflective supervision, might be a way to lean into mentoring, but also offering professional opportunities to director providers that might make them want to stay in the field
- Funding for communities that already have sub-pools stood up, earmarked for Family Child Care providers, to enable them to participate in professional local, regional, or state boards.
- Create a Mental Health toolkit for Providers and Directors with suggestions and resources.
- Systems level change at DCF that would allow for more licensed programs to become eligible for Add-On payments to facilities related to program quality, like the program currently in use with Head Start. (Allowing for better ratios, plan time, lower stress, higher retention).

As next steps they would like to further explore the possibility of add-on payments to facilities for quality, through DCF, by pulling in outside experts, including DCF and other partners. As well as complete a final draft of a document reflecting all of the current recruitment and retention challenges and solutions for the future use of others and finding a place for it to permanently live, possibly on the All In For Kansas Kids website under the Strategic Plan.

Eldonna Chesnut gave update on **Tactic 7.1.2 Update**: Study local zoning and homeowner associations across the state to identify laws that adversely affect the ability to operate a child care business in residential and commercial spaces.

This work group reviewed zoning information gathered (Johnson County information and other KS information), discussed creating a crosswalk of zoning information and child care regulations, asked for a survey to go out to child care providers statewide regarding their understanding/perception of zoning restrictions (released but data not yet available), researched American Planning Association for links to child care, and discussed how to gather data on home owners associations (HOA's) that negatively impact childcare providers. From these tasks the recommendations they presented are as follows:

- Encourage the Statewide GO Team and the Childrens' Cabinet to make reducing zoning restrictions a priority issue
- Collaborative work should be undertaken by these groups with the Kansas Chapter of the American Planning Association regarding policy work
- Collaborative work should be undertaken by these groups with large developers and planners to create model zoning regulations that are child care friendly

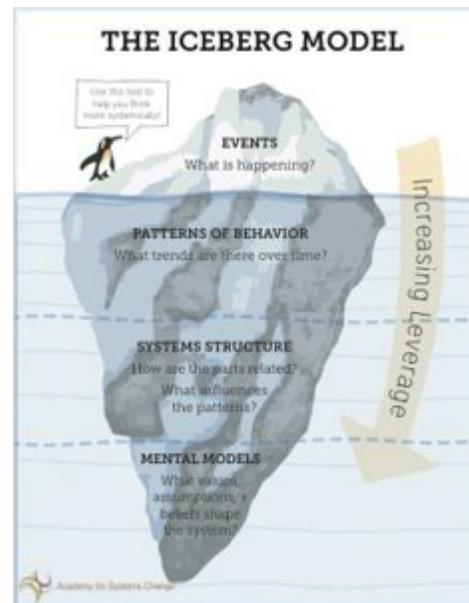
The workgroup plans to continue to work on this issue by reviewing survey results and creating talking points for providers and advocates to utilize when talking to city/county planners, city councils and others. They are also considering the creation of a zoning and child care regulations crosswalk and will continue to research HOAs and how best to gather information from them.

Lindsay will be sending out an email to all panel members with information on the future tactic work groups and will ask each member for their group preferences.

### From Idea to Recommendation

Cornelia introduced Sara Gardner of KU CPPR to give some thoughts and insights on how ideas become recommendations and how we move them forward in the system in order to get creative juices flowing.

The Recommendations Panel as whole is a part of a bigger systems change effort. Systems are made up of elements, interconnections, and purpose/function. Keep in mind that systems have a lot of elements to them (programs, services, people, policy), these are the most noticeable but the changes have the fewest downstream impacts. Purpose (human systems, how are they acting/behaving)/function (non-human systems, function of policy) least obvious but the most crucial determinant for behavior change, and these changes make a drastic impact. Interconnections are how these relationships hold systems together and operate through flows.



From Idea to Recommendation, here are the questions you need to ask after identifying what you are solving for:

- What is the specific problem?
- Who does the problem effect?
- When does this problem present itself? Do you have proof?
- Where does this problem occur?
- Why does this problem occur? Why is it recurring?

These questions can help you shape the language in your recommendation. If you can answer all 5 of them you are already a leg up on the specificity needed to move your recommendation forward.

After identifying what you are solving for, you need to figure out what you are going to recommend. Focus on the MVP (minimum viable product), which is picking a sliver of a problem or a solution instead of taking on the whole thing and move through the following:

- Pick a WHO – who are you solving a problem for? Who is being hurt the most?
- Map their experience from start to finish – how do they navigate the process?
- Identify a Solution Point – pick micro-solution points in order to solve (low leverage vs. high leverage)
- Build a Use Case – scenario planning, what are the ripple effects?
- Test/Iterate/Refine – ask those dealing with their problem their thoughts on your solution

When writing a recommendation you must understand the landscape and pathways, talk with your peers and other governance groups, and utilize Cabinet staff and support staff as a sounding board.

## Bright Spots

- Malissa Martin, announcing that the transition to SparkWheel was completed officially as of July 1<sup>st</sup>. Work will remain the same but will now have greater flexibility to meet the needs of Kansas communities.
- Brenda Bandy, the Kansasc Breastfeeding Coalition training “[How to Support the Breastfeeding Family](#)” for child care providers is now available in Spanish and is being offered 4 times a year. Next trainings are August 4-10 and October 5-12.
- Logan Stenseng, Thrive Kansas looking to hire some part-time Regional Field Organizers across the state to begin championing the message of early childhood and supporting the workforce. Please disseminate this information to your networks so we can hire some great people across the state. Also, the Allen County Child Care Task Force has had a lot of momentum recently and it’s been exciting!
- Jarvis Doleman, KDHE moving aggressively through the Regulations Review process, currently on track with original timeline. Second provider feedback session will happen tomorrow (7/22) via Zoom. Traveling the state with Derik Flerlage to regional public health meetings and getting good information to improve the system.
- Jateice Vieux, this is my first meeting and I am very excited to get started!
- Cornelia Stephens, Early Childhood Transitions Taskforce had their community engagement tour at the end of June to hear from local representatives and the attendance outcome was exponential! Rooms were full and people were engaged at all 9 stops with over 500 participants. 3 common themes across all locations: funding, compensation, and transportation.

### Upcoming Meetings: (all via Zoom)

- Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund Meeting – Friday, August 4, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- Early Childhood Recommendations Panel – Friday, August 18, 9:00 a.m. -11:30 a.m.

### Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:26am.