



# An **APPLE** for the Administrator

Volume 1 No. 1

April, 2010

## Section 1: Introduction and Welcome!

This is the first Administrator's APPLE and is in response to the Administrators Summit in September 2009 when attendees asked for a way to get updates from the state. The focus of the APPLE is early childhood—birth through Grade 3. Content will focus on current work being done at the state level as well as federal information, and hopefully some local stories if available.

We want your input, your thoughts, and your questions. If you want to have an update on anything in particular, please contact the editor. Gayle Stuber is the editor who can be contacted at [gstuber@ksde.org](mailto:gstuber@ksde.org).

Other supporters of the content will be Carol Ayres, Section 619 coordinator and Janet Newton, Parents As Teachers' coordinator. Their contact information is below:

Carol Ayres: [cayres@ksde.org](mailto:cayres@ksde.org)

Janet Newton: [jnewton@ksde.org](mailto:jnewton@ksde.org)



## Section 2: State Overview and Update

For the state update, we are including overviews of several initiatives and potential grant opportunities from the federal level. There is a lot going on!

### Race To the Top (RTTT)

The RTTT application from Kansas was not approved in the first phase. However, Phase 2 is now in process. Early childhood is a part of the application. Early childhood provides support to schools as they try to improve their practices and their students' success. There is a critical need for high quality early learning experiences, including time in Kindergarten through 3rd grade. Keep an eye on the KSDE website for updated information. Your work is critical to school improvement and to the Race to the Top Grant.

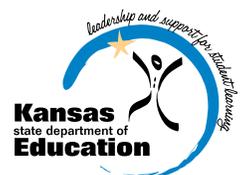
**NOTE:** For research supporting early childhood as a part of school readiness and school improvement, see Section 6 of this newsletter.

For more on RTTT, you can go to: [www.ksde.org](http://www.ksde.org)

### Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC)

The application has been sent to the Governor's Office for completion. It will then be sent to the federal government. States are required to have an ECAC in order to apply for many of the upcoming early childhood federal grants.

For more information, the National Governor's Association has a nice brief of frequently asked questions. Go to: [www.nga.org/center](http://www.nga.org/center)





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## Section 3: Birth to Three

### Parents as Teachers

The process of including the Parents As Teachers program in the KIDS (Kansas Individual Data on Students) system is still in the works. Janet Newton, PAT coordinator is working closely with the KIDS staff at KSDE to set up the addition of early childhood programs in the KIDS system.

Parents As Teachers requires a local funding match of 65 cents on each dollar of state funding. This has always been in place and the growth of the program over the last 20 years shows that local communities and school districts believe in the importance of parent education programs—Parents As Teachers. Keep an eye on the budget discussions—the current budget includes funding for the PAT program. However, there is a possibility, if revenues continue to decrease, that state funding for Parents As Teachers will be eliminated from the budget. All early childhood educators

realize that parents are essential partners in the education of their children. PAT is a critical component of the early childhood continuum.

From our last APPLE: New research reveals positive impact of Parents as Teachers on school readiness.

Among the key findings Zigler cited were:

- Parents as Teachers parents were more likely to engage in home literacy activities.
- Parents as Teachers children had higher school readiness scores and were less likely to be retained a year between kindergarten and third grade.

The RFP for the PAT 2010-2011 is out and due April 30, 2010. The contact for KSDE PAT is Janet Newton. You can contact her at [jnewton@ksde.org](mailto:jnewton@ksde.org) for more information.

## Section 4: The Preschool Years

### School Readiness Data Collection

Results from the fall 2009 data collection are being statistically examined and results will be available in early summer. Kindergarten teachers completed KELI (Kansas Early Learning Inventory) forms on children who participated in the Four Year Old At-Risk Program and the Pre-K Pilot Program in 2008-09. Kindergarten teachers were given the opportunity to get college credit for their participation in the study. All teachers will be asked to complete an online survey about their typical classroom practices.

The Kansas Preschool Program (KPP) work continues. The April meeting was cancelled due to a small attendance. Handouts will be shared via email and an overview of the program will be shared in October at the next Pre-K Summit.

**KPP Outcome:** Each and every child who participated in the Kansas Preschool Program will enter kindergarten ready to be successful.

### Four year old at-Risk & Pre-K Programs

The RFP for the grant application was out and due back very quickly! This is a shorter timeline than in the past, but this timeframe allowed us to send the request for Four Year Old At-Risk Slots to the Kansas State Board of Education at their April meeting for the Board approval. Letters will be sent out after the April meeting to all districts applying.

Unfortunately, the budget did not allow KSDE (for the first time!) to add any new programs to the 187 districts that currently have a 4 yr AR program. We were not able to add new child 'slots' either. All programs that are currently in place were included in the board request, but a few districts missed the March 9 deadline. If you are interested in continuing your current 4 year AR program—and did not complete a continuation application, PLEASE contact Gayle Stuber as soon as possible at [gstuber@ksde.org](mailto:gstuber@ksde.org).

### Early Childhood Special Education:

Children who have special needs should have the opportunity to live, play, and learn in the same types of environments as their peers. In the Special Education world, one way to help this happen in the preschool and school years is to provide a 'least restrictive environment' for all children who have special needs. Carol Ayres at [cayres@ksde.org](mailto:cayres@ksde.org) is the contact person for the Early Childhood Special Education programs.

Carol represents KSDE and teachers of the Section 619 programs (3-5 early childhood special education programs) on the State Interagency Coordinating Council—the SICC. This Council provides advice and counsel to the Part C (early intervention, babies and toddlers who have disabilities and their families) and Part B, Section 619 programs in Kansas. State agencies have representative members. The Governor nominates both parent and provider members every year.





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## Section 5: Kindergarten through Third

**Spring 2010:** We will be following the kindergarten children from 2006-07 into 3rd grade this spring. We have our list—and will get the results of the state assessments given this spring to help us examine the kindergarten practices, home practices, and preschool experiences that make a more long term impact on child learning. We did this last year and two years will help us look at results in more detail. Results from this statistical review will not be available until the fall of 2010.

**Fall 2010:** We are working with the Children’s Cabinet to gain funds to do some follow-up into Kindergarten with our current four year olds. We also hope to follow the 2009 kindergartners into first grade to see how the kindergarten year impacted student learning.



## Section 6: SEEDS of Knowledge and Resources

**(1)** KSDE is working to collect input from the field regarding aspects of programs and supports that help children be more prepared for success in school. We will be sending out online surveys to get your input on policy questions and research questions that can help us ‘get at’ what you want to know! The timeline is being determined—and this will, of course, be voluntary on your part.

**(2) School Readiness Listening Tour:** Teachers and parent educators who work with children ages birth to 3 will be asked to come in the morning; teachers who work with 3 year olds through Kindergarten will be invited for an afternoon conversation; and, parents will be given an opportunity to share their thoughts in the early evening. We need your expertise! More to come later!

We are having four stops on the ‘tour’:

- a. **June 14:** Topeka area
- b. **June 15:** Salina
- c. **June 16:** Wichita area
- d. **June 17:** Garden City area

**(3) A peek into the future:** We will be having our second annual Administrator’s Summit in Junction City on September 30. The planning for the content is still in process, but we hope to use the Kansas Early Learning Standards as a center-piece.

**(4)** The National Center for Research on Early Childhood Education (NCRECE) has some excellent briefs that connect research to practice. There are two in particular that might be useful to you as an administrator of early childhood programs. For copies, go to: [www.ncrece.org/wordpress/](http://www.ncrece.org/wordpress/)

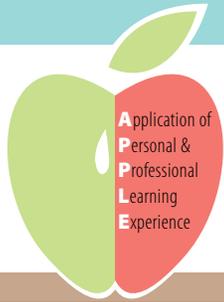
- [Learning How Much Quality is Necessary to get to Good Results for Children](#)
- [Promoting Children’s School Readiness: Rethinking the Levers for Change](#)

Happy Spring—it will get here soon! We are all ready for warm weather, sun, and outside time!

Send questions, comments, and suggestions to Gayle at her email address below.

Thank you again for all your help and support this year—Keep in touch!

Gayle Stuber  
[gstuber@ksde.org](mailto:gstuber@ksde.org)  
Editor of the APPLE



# An **APPLE** for the Administrator

Volume 1 No. 2

May, 2010

## Section 1: Introduction and Welcome!

This is the second volume of the Administrator's APPLE. The focus of the APPLE is early childhood—birth through Grade 3. Content will focus on current work being done at the state level as well as federal information, and hopefully some local stories if available.

We want your input, your thoughts, and your questions. If you want to have an update on anything in particular, please contact the editor. Gayle Stuber is the editor who can be contacted at [gstuber@ksde.org](mailto:gstuber@ksde.org).

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Janet Newton: [jnewton@ksde.org](mailto:jnewton@ksde.org)



## Section 2: State Overview and Update State

The major update is the budget—what a spring we have all had! As of today—May 15, the budget has been passed and sent to the Governor. Details are still to be determined, but funding through the Children's Initiative Fund (CIF) is safe and available for next year as it was this year! A HUGE sigh of relief for everyone, I am sure! Thanks for all your help and support!

### The School Readiness Listening Tour: Face-to-face & Online survey

The Kansas State Department of Education Early Learning staff will conduct a face-to-face School Readiness Listening Tour June 14-17. The intended audiences for the Listening Sessions are teachers, parent educators, social service, health and mental health professionals and others working directly with children birth through Kindergarten and their families. Parents are invited to a separate session in the evening (same dates) from 5-6 p.m.

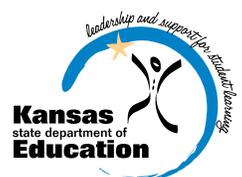
Administrators will receive an opportunity to provide input via a survey monkey that will be sent out on May 19. Please look for the email—or send an email to Gayle Stuber at [gstuber@ksde.org](mailto:gstuber@ksde.org) to receive an email with the link to the survey. The purpose is to get input on your thoughts related to school readiness. The results of the Listening Tour and electronic survey will be presented at the "Making Decisions Count for Children" meeting in July to help

inform short and long term intentional data collection planning that will help direct future state level decision-making. Results and on-going updates regarding this project will be posted on the KSDE Early Learning Services Unit website later in the summer.

### Additional Early Childhood Updates

KSDE Early Learning Services hosted Jacqueline Jones, Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Early Learning; John White, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Rural Outreach; and Patrick Kerr, Public Affairs Specialist from the US Department of Education on March 25, 2010 to discuss early learning programs in rural Kansas school districts. Their visit included an opportunity to meet with Dr. Diane DeBacker, interim Commissioner, Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, and Dr. Gayle Stuber, Early Learning Services Coordinator to discuss challenges and potential supports for rural school districts in Kansas.

KSDE Early Learning Services hosted Jacqueline Jones, Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Early Learning, John White, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Rural Outreach, and Patrick Kerr, Public Affairs Specialist from the US Department of Education to discuss early learning programs in rural Kansas. Their visit to Kansas included an opportunity to





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meet with Dr. Diane DeBacker, Interim Commissioner, Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, and Dr. Gayle Stuber, Early Learning Services Unit Coordinator.

In addition, the group visited USD 321 Kaw Valley to observe and discuss the effectiveness of their early learning programs including challenges as a rural school. USD 321 has built a continuum of early learning programs birth through Kindergarten that blend funding streams to provide a high quality foundation available to all children in the district. The group visited the PAT parent/child playgroup which provided an excellent overview of PAT. Parents provided their perspectives on the benefits of PAT including the positive relationship they have built with school staff. The tour included observation of the Pre-k classrooms serving children ages 3 to Kindergarten. The district has a strong partnership with the local Head Start. Children eligible for Head start funding, children with disabilities and typically developing children are together and provided with dynamic developmentally appropriate classrooms with licensed teachers. The district provides full day Kindergarten and staff in all programs work together to provide seamless transitions between programs that are child and family friendly.

The group also visited with a family with a child with Down's Syndrome. The parents told about their positive experiences with Part C Infant-Toddler Services and the smooth transition to the district's Part B Section 619 Early Childhood Special Education services within the school. The district's philosophy that positive relationships and engagement of families in their programs was evident.

As a rural district, USD 321 has had to close 2 schools in the most rural areas of their district. Mr. McDaniels provided an overview of the challenges in making such difficult decisions and the impact on local communities and their work to transition children and families into their new schools within the district. The early learning program and dedication of Mr. Jim McDaniels, and all of the district staff made a positive impact on Ms. Jones as she included descriptions of the visit in her Keynote address the next day at the Early Childhood Rural Institute. KSDE was flattered to showcase high quality Kansas Early Learning programs in our schools.



## Federal

The current administration has a strong focus on collaboration—and is also very supportive of including early childhood in many federal applications. Jacqueline Jones is Secretary Duncan's Senior Advisor on Early Learning. She works closely with Joan Lombardi who is under Health and Human Services and is the Inter-departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development at the Administration for Children and Families. A current project is a Listening and learning about early learning tour. The four topics are:

- Understanding Preschool-Grade 3 Structures
- Workforce and Professional Development
- Family Engagement
- Standards and Assessments

Go to [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov) for updates on the tours which took place in April and May.

**Early Learning Challenge Fund (ELCF):** This grant was pulled from one federal bill and put into the health reform bill. It was not included in the final version so at this point, the Early Learning Challenge Fund is still in 'limbo'. As we find out more, we will keep you posted.

**Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC):** The application has been sent to the Governor's Office and should be completed now that the budget work has been done. It will then be sent to the federal government. As was noted in the last APPLE, states are required to have an ECAC in order to apply for many of the upcoming early childhood federal grants. For more information, the National Governor's Association has a nice brief of frequently asked questions. Go to: [www.nga.org/center](http://www.nga.org/center)

**Race To the Top (RTTT):** The Kansas RTTT application was sent in to the federal government in January, but was not approved. For more on RTTT, you can go to: [www.ksde.org](http://www.ksde.org)

**Promise Neighborhoods (PN):** This is a new program to significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children in our most distressed communities.

Because the challenges faced by communities with high concentrations of poverty are interrelated, Promise Neighborhoods is taking a comprehensive approach designed to ensure that children have access to a continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions, with strong schools at the center, that will support academic achievement, healthy development, and college and career success.

Please visit [www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html) for the full application, summary documents, and the opportunity to register for several informational and application webinars in the coming days and weeks.

Additional inquiries should be submitted to [promiseneighborhoods@ed.gov](mailto:promiseneighborhoods@ed.gov). Staff at the US Dept.



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of Education will review all questions submitted and post answers to the most frequently asked questions on our Web site.

**ESEA—NCLB:** The US Department of Education is starting to review the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: ESEA (formerly known as the No Child Left Behind Act) for re-authorization. There is a Blueprint that describes the focus from the federal perspective. Here is the information from the USDOE Website. Go to <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/publicationtoc.html> for the entire document.

This blueprint builds on the significant reforms already made in response to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 around four areas: (1) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness; (2) Providing information to families to help them evaluate and improve their children's schools; (3) Implementing college- and career-ready standards; and (4) Improving student learning and achievement in America's lowest-performing schools by providing intensive support and effective interventions.

## Section 3: Birth to Three Parents as Teachers

The RFP for the PAT 2010-2011 was due April 30, 2010. The applications will be sent to the Kansas State Board for approval at their June 2010 meeting. The legislature passed a budget that did not cut any Children's Initiative Funds (CIF) so PAT maintained the same funding level as the current year—2009-2010.

The contact for KSDE PAT is Janet Newton. You can contact her at [jnewton@ksde.org](mailto:jnewton@ksde.org) for more information.

Another Federal Grant: On March 23, 2010, President Obama signed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Act) which included \$1.5 billion in mandatory funding over 5 years for high quality, evidence-based, voluntary early childhood home visitation services. This investment will significantly expand home visitation services, helping to ensure that more children prenatal to age 5 have the opportunity to grow up healthy, safe, ready to learn and able to become productive members of society. KSDE is fully committed to pursuing funding for PAT through the federal home visiting process to provide funds for additional personal visits for at risk P-3 families; expand to provide 3-5 PAT for at risk families in partnership with 4 year old at risk and preschool programs to close the achievement gap; and to expand PAT to rural districts with no or few home visiting services in partnership with our Kansas home visiting partners including Healthy Families, Early Head Start, Healthy Start and Infant Toddler Early Intervention.





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## Section 4: The Preschool Years

### School Readiness Data Collection

Results from the fall 2009 data collection are being statistically examined and results will be available in early summer. Kindergarten teachers completed KELI (Kansas Early Learning Inventory) forms on children who participated in the Four Year Old At-Risk Program and the Pre-K Pilot Program in 2008-09. Kindergarten teachers were given the opportunity to get college credit for their participation in the study. All teachers will be asked to complete an online survey about their typical classroom practices.

The Kansas Preschool Program (KPP) work continues. The April meeting was cancelled due to a small attendance. Handouts will be shared via email and an overview of the program will be shared on October 6 at the next Pre-K Summit.

### Pre-K Pilot Program

Applications for 2010-2011 have been received from the current Pre-K Pilot sites and were approved by the Kansas State Board of Education at their April 2010 meeting. The program was flat-funded for 2009-2010 and for 2010-2011 at \$5 million. Approximately 1500 children are supported through Pre-K Pilot funds. Data on local child outcomes will be collected at the end of the school year. Programs have been asked to provide information regarding curricular and assessment choices along with information collected on Kansas Early Learning Standards and Benchmarks for four year olds. Results will be available in late summer or early fall.

Funding for the Pre-K Pilot program is provided through the Children's Initiative Fund that is administered by the Children's Cabinet.

### 4 Year Old at Risk Program

Applications for 2010-2011 have been received from the school districts with current programs and were approved by the Kansas State Board of Education at their April 2010 meeting. No new slots (children) or new programs were approved for 2010-2011. Approximately, the same number of children/ slots were approved by the State Board as were approved last year—7893 children. Data on local child outcomes will be collected at the end of the school year. Programs have been asked to provide information regarding curricular and assessment choices along with information collected on Kansas Early Learning Standards and Benchmarks for four year olds. Results will be available in late summer or early fall.

### Early Childhood Block Grant: Demonstration Early Learning Community

This grant includes three communities: Liberal, Coffeyville, and Rossville. All three communities have collaborative preschool classrooms of four year olds (three year olds only in Rossville, USD 321). These classrooms include children who have

special education needs. Data collection of the first year of implementation will be completed in late spring 2010. A website is being developed—it is currently a link on the Kansas Head Start Association website -- [www.khsa.org](http://www.khsa.org). This project is funded through CIF and administered by the Children's Cabinet.

### Section 619 (Submitted by Carol Ayres)

The cross state training on Child Outcome Summary Form data quality concluded on Friday, April 16th in Newton. This cross program training was targeted for experienced professionals who are involved in the rating process. The purpose of the training was to provide information on a systematic process that local programs may adopt to insure validity and reliability of their data.





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## Section 5: Kindergarten through Third School Readiness Project

Children who were in Four Year Old At-Risk Program in 2008-09 and in the Pre-K Pilot at 2008-09 were followed into Kindergarten to determine the school readiness of children who participated in these programs. Third grade assessment scores of Kindergarten children from 2006-07 will be examined in late summer and compiled with results from last year (Kindergartners from 2005-06). Future data collection will depend upon availability of funding. Reports are shared upon request and will be posted on the ELSU website later this summer or early fall 2010.

**Spring 2010:** We will be following the kindergarten children from 2006-07 into 3rd grade this spring. We have our list—and will

get the results of the state assessments given this spring to help us look at kindergarten practices, home practices, and preschool experiences that make a more long term impact on child learning. We did this last year and two years will help us look at results in more detail.

**NEXT YEAR (2010-2011):** We are continuing to plan for next year. As a major part of our state level work, a small group of state level early childhood experts is reviewing the School Readiness data that are currently available—with the express purpose of determining what we know, what we want to know—and what data need to be collected for us to find out. More to come later—keep in touch!

## Section 6: SEEDS of Knowledge and Resources

- (1) **Online Survey:** Please keep an eye out for an email with a link to the Survey on School Readiness. We need your input!
- (2) **Summer Literacy Workshop:** June 9-10 in Hutchinson. This is for teachers and administrators who work with students who have severe cognitive disabilities.
- (3) **Special Education Services Leadership Conference:** July 29-30 in Wichita. Please go to [www.ksde.org](http://www.ksde.org) and look under 'Conferences' for registration information.
- (4) **MTSS Summit:** September 9-10 in Wichita. Go to [www.ksde.org](http://www.ksde.org) and look under 'Conference' for registration information.
- (5) We will be having our second annual **Administrator's Summit** in Junction City on September 30. The planning for the content is still in process, but we hope to use the Kansas Early Learning Standards as a center-piece.
- (6) **Tri-State Regional Special Education Law Conference:** November 4-5, 2010 in Omaha. This conference focuses on legal issues in special education.

We hope that this APPLE will be helpful to you. Send questions, comments, and suggestions to Gayle at her email address below.

Thank you again for all your help and support this year—Keep in touch!

*Gayle*

Gayle Stuber

[gstuber@ksde.org](mailto:gstuber@ksde.org)

