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## **UPDATE TO KANSAS HEAD START ASSOCIATION APM**

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### Stay connected with the KSDE Early Childhood team

- [KSDE Early Childhood webpage](#) – updates, contact information.
- Join the Early Learning 0-8 Listserv by emailing Beccy Strohm: [bstrohm@ksde.org](mailto:bstrohm@ksde.org)

### Key Links – Pandemic Response and Recovery

- [Navigating Change 2020](#) Guidance
- [Navigating Next](#) Guidance
- [Kansas Teaching and Leading Project](#)
- [Federal Disaster and Pandemic Relief](#)

### Kindergarten Readiness

- Kansas has developed the *Kindergarten in Kansas* guide for families, available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). The Kansas Parent Information Resource Center makes free hard copies available. You can email Natalie Schweda ([nschweda@kpirc.org](mailto:nschweda@kpirc.org)) if you'd like them. **If you would like this resource translated into additional languages, please contact Rachel Willis ([rwillis@kpirc.org](mailto:rwillis@kpirc.org)).**
- For the 2021-22 school year, districts may apply to begin administering the Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot (ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2) to incoming kindergarteners (for the purposes of the Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot) beginning March 1, 2021. This provides schools additional opportunities to engage with families and support successful transitions into kindergarten.
- Districts can use their ASQ Online account for any child they serve, birth through kindergarten entry, at any point during the year.
- KSDE and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment have finalized an interagency agreement that will allow Part C Early Intervention (tiny-k) programs to administer local ASQ accounts.
- See the Children's Cabinet website for [resources from the Kindergarten Readiness / Transitions Virtual Summit](#).
- See the new KSDE [Kindergarten Readiness Resources Fact Sheet](#).

*Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.*

### **Supports to Strengthen and Improve Early Learning**

**Enrollment Considerations:** While audited enrollment data is not yet available, total preschool enrollment (4-year-old Preschool-Aged At-Risk students, Preschool-Aged students with disabilities, and all other preschool students not funded by the school finance formula) in Kansas public schools declined roughly 13% from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021.

Districts are submitting **Preschool-Aged At-Risk program** approval forms for the 2021-2022 school year. In districts operating approved programs, 4-year-old students who meet an at-risk criterion for the Preschool-Aged At-Risk program and who are enrolled and attending on Count Day will automatically count as a ½ student (0.5 FTE) in calculating enrollment and accompanying weightings for school finance formula funding. KSDE expects that about 235 of 286 districts will have approved programs next year.

**Inclusive Early Learning Settings:** KSDE continues to support local education agencies in improving their preschool programs so that more Kansas preschool students with disabilities can learn alongside their peers without disabilities. The [State Interagency Coordinating Council \(SICC\)](#) has formed an Early Childhood Least Restrictive Environment Committee to gather and analyze information.

**Kansas Parents as Teachers (KPAT) state grant applications** were due April 2. KSDE has directed current grantees to budget a State Fiscal Year 2022 state grant award equivalent to their current award. New and/or expanded funding level requests may be considered in the event the Legislature appropriates additional funding. The State Board will consider state grant funding recommendations in May. Districts can also use other sources of funding (such as district general funds) to begin or expand a KPAT program.

**Kansas Preschool Pilot** grant applications were due Feb. 9. KSDE collaborated with the Children's Cabinet to begin aligning program requirements and application processes between the Kansas Preschool Pilot and the Early Childhood Block Grant. The State Board will consider funding recommendations [April 13-14](#). The amount of Kansas Preschool Pilot grant funding requested remains much larger than the amount of funding available. Other sources of funding are larger, more sustainable options for districts to invest in preschool. These include state school finance formula funds (state enrollment aid and accompanying weightings for preschool

students with disabilities and four-year-old preschool-aged at-risk students), special education funds and federal Head Start grants. In 2022-2023, districts applying for funds will first demonstrate that they are reinvesting these other available sources of funding into their preschool programs before requesting Kansas Preschool Pilot funding to supplement gaps. Districts should plan accordingly, recognizing that competitive grant funding levels are **not guaranteed for future years**. KSDE will be offering additional resources to support districts in understanding preschool funding in the coming months. In the meantime, the [2021-2022 Kansas Preschool Pilot Budget Template](#) and the [Early Childhood Funding in Kansas](#) recording from last year's [Summer Leadership Conference](#) are good resources.

#### **All in for Kansas Kids Strategic Plan**

Kansas continues implementing the [All in for Kansas Kids strategic plan](#) for early childhood. The federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five funds part of this work. The Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund is the lead agency for this federal grant (\$8,943,000 annually) and collaborates with KSDE, the Kansas Department for Children and Families and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Year Two of the three-year grant begins in April 2021. Visit the Children's Cabinet website [to sign up for weekly email updates and biweekly webinars](#). See [previous email updates here](#).

**Help gather stories!** The Children's Cabinet is asking partners for help in expanding and elevating the diverse range of voices in the Our Tomorrows Story Bank. Please use and share the following links to access both English and Spanish language versions of the Our Tomorrows survey with your networks, partners, and communities. It is important that we hear the voices of all Kansas families as we work together to strengthen our early childhood systems! More background is linked [HERE](#).

- Our Tomorrows (English): <http://ourtomorro.ws/ECRP>.
- Our Tomorrows (Spanish): [http://ourtomorro.ws/ECRP\\_es](http://ourtomorro.ws/ECRP_es)

Promotion of the 1-800-CHILDREN resource directory will ramp up in 2021. This [Family Outreach Card](#) and this [Quick Reference Guide for Providers](#) are both useful resources. Kansans can easily connect with the information, local resources and support they need 24/7 by calling 1-800-332-6378, downloading the mobile app "1800CHILDRENKS", emailing or texting [1800CHILDREN@kcsf.org](mailto:1800CHILDREN@kcsf.org), or visiting [1800CHILDRENKS.org](http://1800CHILDRENKS.org).