

# April Update



## KSDE Early Childhood Program Updates

April 16, 2021

Sent by listserv to Early Learning 0-8 and posted on [the KSDE Early Childhood webpage](#)

**Happy Week of the Young Child!** Visit the **National Association for the Education of Young Children webpage** for resources and the **Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children Facebook page** for tonight's final family engagement event of the week.

### Kindergarten Readiness Resources

**A new tool to promote communities' kindergarten readiness and support strong partnerships between schools and early childhood care and education providers is now available!** All communities in Kansas can and should engage in an intentional, active planning process for transitions to kindergarten. **This Kindergarten Transitions Toolkit** includes a template MOU and workplan. *As a reminder, each school district receiving Title I funds must develop agreements and carry out coordination with Head Start and, if feasible, with other early childhood programs.* We hope that this will be helpful as you increase your community's 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.

### Please help gather Kansans' stories!

The Kansas Children's Cabinet is building a **statewide Our Tomorrows Story Bank**, and needs your help to grow the diverse range of Kansans sharing their stories. This is a powerful, exciting tool that Kansas policymakers are using to make important decisions about policy and programming.

Sharing a story is simple. Kansans can visit the survey link (**in English** or **in Spanish**) to share a short story – just a few sentences – and then answer questions about that story. These stories can then be analyzed. Stakeholders can join facilitated sessions to identify patterns and brainstorm action steps to address what they learn. More than 2,000 Kansans have shared their stories in the past year.

### Here's how you can help engage a broad range of Kansans to make this project a success.

- **Share your own story today!**
- **Help spread the word to encourage Kansans to share their stories.**
  - Here's a sample social media post: *The Our Tomorrows story collection project helps shape decisions in Kansas. Share your family's story of thriving or surviving here to ensure all tomorrows are brighter!* <http://ourtomorro.ws/ECRP>

Visit the **Share a Story webpage on the Kansas Children's Cabinet website** to learn more. If you're interested in discussing options for a more targeted outreach and analysis effort, or if you have any questions, contact the team at [ourtomorrows@ku.edu](mailto:ourtomorrows@ku.edu). **Thank you in advance for your help with this important project.**



## **Congratulations to the Kansas schools honored through Kansans Can Star Recognition Program in the area of Kindergarten Readiness!**

Numerous school districts excelling in outcomes established around the vision for education in Kansas were recognized during the Kansas State Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, April 13. Congratulations to the districts recognized in the area of Kindergarten Readiness! Fairfield USD 310, Goddard USD 265 and Perry-Lecompton USD 343 received recognition at the Bronze level, and Colby Public Schools USD 315, Hillsboro USD 410, Moundridge USD 423, North Jackson USD 335, Rock Creek USD 323 and South Barber USD 255 received recognition at the Copper level.

We know that there is so much fantastic work happening in Kansas communities. We appreciate those who took the time to apply, regardless of whether they achieved recognition in this first year. KSDE will be offering additional guidance to support schools in successfully applying in the future. In the meantime, you can visit the [KSDE Kansans Can Star Recognition Program "How to Apply" webpage](#) for additional information.

### **Add information about available services to 1-800-CHILDREN**

**1-800-CHILDREN** connects Kansans to resources in their area. [Click HERE for a guide to updating the services you provide in the resource directory.](#) Contact Stephanie Boone ([sboone@kscl.org](mailto:sboone@kscl.org)) with questions or requests for support.

### **Preschool Programs Updates**

**The 2021-2022 Preschool-Aged At-Risk program approval form** is posted to [the KSDE Early Childhood webpage](#). This was due **April 2, 2021** in order to be approved by the Kansas State Board of Education in May. Please contact Natalie McClane as soon as possible if you do not currently have a Preschool-Aged At-Risk program but would like to add one next year.

The Kansas State Board of Education approved Kansas Preschool Pilot grant awards for the 2021-2022 school year on Tuesday, April 13. [Kansas Preschool Pilot grant awards are posted HERE.](#)

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.

Contact Natalie McClane ([nmclane@ksde.org](mailto:nmclane@ksde.org)) with preschool questions.



## Early Childhood Special Education Updates

As we navigate this school year, please continue to refer to the **School Year 2020-2021 Compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Kansas Special Education for Exceptional Children Act for Reopening Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic** to address frequently asked questions around providing special education and related services to students with exceptionalities during COVID-19.

**Indicator 6 Preschool Environments Update:** The agency is continuing to review Early Childhood Least Restrictive Environment (ECLRE) data as we explore options to promote inclusive preschool programming. We are continuing to conduct individual meetings with districts, coops, and interlocals to analyze data, facilitate ECLRE discussions, and better understand the system structures set up across state. Our goals are to increase the number of preschool students with disabilities who are learning in the least restrictive environment, and increase the number of students of all abilities with access to preschool.

**Indicator 7 Preschool Outcomes Update:** KSDE is interested in reviewing and perhaps updating the Curriculum Based Assessments (CBA) list used as required assessments on the Outcomes Part B application of the Authenticated Applications on the [www.ksde.org](http://www.ksde.org) website. We will be sending out a survey to gather stakeholder input soon to help inform our decision.

**Indicator 12 Reminder:** Keep accessing the **Part C to Part B Electronic Referral system (CBER)** to accept any children who reside in your district and remember to check on those children who have approaching summer birthdays. It is important to plan ahead. IEP's must be written before the child's third birthday regardless of missed appointments, when school staff are on vacation, or schools are on summer break.

Contact Julie Rand ([jrand@ksde.org](mailto:jrand@ksde.org)) with early childhood special education questions.

## State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) Updates

The next SICC meeting takes place today, Friday April 16, from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. The topics for the meeting will include:

- Local Program Presentation
- Planning for the Council's summer retreat
- State Agency Updates

The SICC has also organized the first ever statewide Local ICC/Early Childhood Coalition Annual Retreat for the morning of April 23. This will be virtual, and please feel free to invite anyone that might be interested. A flyer has been sent out on the early learning listserv with more information and you can **register for the Local ICC/Early Childhood Coalition Annual Retreat here**. You're also welcome to contact Jordan Christian with any additional questions you have.

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

Contact Jordan Christian ([jchristian@ksde.org](mailto:jchristian@ksde.org)) with State Interagency Coordinating Council questions or to request the Zoom link to join upcoming meetings. You can also visit the **State ICC website** for more information.



## Kansas Parents as Teachers Updates

Thank you all for submitting the FY21 Kansas Parents as Teachers (KPAT) Mid-Year report. The Kansas State Department of Education appreciates your work and will use the data in future conversations when appropriate.

The final PATNC Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) Spring Town Hall Round Table is on Wednesday, April 28 at 1:00 p.m. CST. [Register here for the PAT National Center DEIA Spring Town Hall.](#)

The Target Fidelity Project Office Hours for April are cancelled due to the PATNC DEIA Round Table.

An Implementation Support Webinar for April is cancelled because Shelley Tellez will be out of the office. If you have implementation questions, please contact Nis.

The 2021-2022 Kansas Parents as Teachers EXTENDED grant application is posted to [the KSDE Early Childhood webpage](#). This application is due April 17, 2021. Use this application if you are requesting new or additional funds. Please note: If requesting additional funds, you must complete BOTH the renewal and the EXTENDED grant applications and submit them by their respective deadlines.

As we near the final quarter of the grant period, please mark your calendars with upcoming deadline dates. Deadline dates can be found on page 5 of the [SY2020-2021 Grant Requirements, Assurances, and Application](#). If you have questions or need assistance with the reporting requirements, please contact our office as soon as possible.

Contact Nis Wilbur ([nwilbur@ksde.org](mailto:nwilbur@ksde.org)) with Kansas Parents as Teachers and Parents as Teachers questions.

## Other KSDE Updates, Upcoming Professional Learning and News You Can Use

### April 7, 2021 Division of Learning Services Lunchtime Hot Topics Video Updates

- [Announcements and \*Navigating Next\*: Brad Neuenswander](#)
- [Redesign Update: Tammy Mitchell and Jay Scott](#)
- [Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot: Amanda Petersen](#)
- [Early Childhood Updates: Amanda Petersen](#)
- [Focus On The Class of 2021: Kansas Board of Regents](#)

Visit [the Kansas Teaching and Leading Project website](#) for recorded videos and live professional learning opportunities. The Kansas Association of Education Services Agencies, in collaboration with the Kansas State Department of Education, created this website to provide relevant, timely and impactful professional development support to education professionals in order to build their capacity for effectively developing and implementing key components of the [Navigating Next](#) and [Navigating Change guidance](#) for Kansas school districts. **If you are a school or partner with ideas, lessons learned, resources or other information to share with your peers, we hope that you will read this message and consider submitting a proposal to add content to the Kansas Teaching and Leading Project.**



**April is Child Abuse Prevention Month.** As the Kansas chapter for Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) America, Kansas Children's Service League (KCSL) has put together [this Child Abuse Prevention Month Toolkit](#) of resources.

**Teacher Appreciation Week** takes place this year May 3-7. The Kansas State Department of Education is working on several ways to thank and show appreciation to Kansas teachers during this week. One of those ways is through the **#DedicateAnApple** campaign - Commissioner Dr. Randy Watson will highlight some of the state's great teachers through a video shoutout message each day of Teacher Appreciation Week. We need your help. Do you have an outstanding teacher who deserves to be recognized? Did he or she go above and beyond during the COVID-19 pandemic? We want to know! Send your teacher's name, along with what they teach, and why Dr. Watson should **#DedicateAnApple** to this amazing educator to Ann Bush ([abush@ksde.org](mailto:abush@ksde.org)). Your teacher could receive a video shoutout from Dr. Watson and be featured through our social media accounts.

**KSDE is seeking volunteers to upload KIDS data for Dyslexia and early literacy screening for the 2020-2021 school year.** There will be three additional fields on the KIDS EOYA report this year for this purpose (Fields D60, D61 and D62). For the school year 2020-2021, this is voluntary. However, in the school year 2021-2022, this will be required. View the Dyslexia Universal Screening Brochure on the [KSDE Dyslexia webpage](#) for additional information.

**Are you interested in sharing a best practice or lesson you learned while educating during a global pandemic?** The U.S. Department of Education is creating a [Best Practices Clearinghouse](#) to highlight lessons from the field. The KSDE Redesign Team would like to collect your submissions for two reasons. 1- We would like to publish our own story in a Kansas brief this summer to highlight the tremendous work that has occurred this year. 2- We would like to submit a robust package from Kansas, and so we believe a unified approach will be more impactful. You can submit your brief independently if you prefer; we are not trying to be gatekeepers of this opportunity. However, if you would like to be part of the Kansas submission from KSDE (which includes KSDE formatting it for you), please answer [this Best Practices Clearinghouse survey](#). We are asking that all submissions be made by April 30, 2021 so that we can submit all Kansas stories by May 31, 2021. Again, our goal is to shine a light on all of the innovative practices Kansas schools implemented this year! If you have questions about this opportunity, please email [redesign@ksde.org](mailto:redesign@ksde.org).

**The Kansas State School for the Blind** is pleased to announce the **Preschool Enrichment Program** for children ages 3 to 5 who are blind or visually impaired. This program will be Tuesday and Thursday mornings, June 8-24. [Click here for more information, brochures, and registration for the Summer 2021 Kansas State School for the Blind Preschool Enrichment Program.](#)

**The Kansas Emergency Rental Assistance (KERA)** program helps renters get the assistance they need to avoid eviction or utility shutoff. Kansans who have experienced hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic and need assistance to pay rent or utility bills may be eligible. [Visit the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation website](#) to learn more.

**The Kansas Association for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (KAIMH) Virtual Conference is April 29-30.** [Visit the KAIMH website](#) to register.

**Kansas Children's Service League has several free child abuse prevention training topics scheduled during the upcoming months.** [Click here for a current schedule and descriptions through April, and to register.](#)



**The Kansas Department for Children and Families has extended the deadline and expanded the income limits for the Low-Income Energy Assistance program.** Many are struggling to pay high energy costs following February's extreme cold. On March 11, Governor Kelly announced two changes to the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) to help Kansans navigate high utility bills: **the application deadline is extended to 5:00 p.m. on May 28** and income requirements are increased to 150% of the federal poverty level. [Click here to learn more about the Low-Income Energy Assistance program.](#) **Please share!**

**The Kansas Department of Health and Environment Bureau of Family Health Family Advisory Council (FAC) invites families to join the Child and Women/Maternal Work Groups.** Dedicated family members or consumers across the state can join the FAC to share what it is like to live in their community and access services. This year the FAC is expanding to include family and consumers from all maternal and child health populations! Until now, this group has represented families of children with special health care needs. Their hard work and successful advocacy has prompted an expansion to target the broader needs Kansas families and consumers. Throughout 2021, the FAC will be adding several work groups. [Click here to learn more about the FAC,](#) and [apply here to participate in the Family Advisory Council.](#)

**Stay up to date on the Kansas early childhood system:** The team supporting the *All in for Kansas Kids* strategic plan shares weekly email updates and hosts webinars every other week Wednesday at noon. Visit the [Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund website](#) to sign up.

**The Kansas Parents as Teachers Association is offering "Supporting Healthy Attachment For Families in Crisis" on April 29 at 1:00 p.m.**

**The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is hosting the virtual Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) Symposium on June 9-10.** Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) is the foundation on which quality early learning is built. Join NAEYC for a one-of-a-kind event featuring the leading voices in the field and their perspectives on the new DAP statement. NAEYC's DAP Position Statement has been a guide post for the field for more than thirty years. Deepen your understanding of the revisions to the Position Statement and the upcoming 4th edition of Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs. DAP Symposium participants will hear directly from the authors on the "why" behind the changes that appear in the new statement. [Visit the NAEYC website to learn more and register.](#)

**The National P-3 Center is offering a 10-month, fully online P-3 Leadership Certificate Program** intended to engage elementary principals, school district administrators, and early care and education leaders. This Certificate Program provides timely, intentional professional development to build and support leaders with the skills and knowledge to implement effective strategies that meet the needs of young children and their families. Applications are due June 11; the Program year begins June 21, 2021. [Visit the National P-3 Center website](#) to learn more and to register for informational Zoom webinars on April 20, April 22 or April 27.

**Mark your calendars! The 2021 STEM Innovation for Inclusion in Early Education (STEMIE) Fest is Oct 4-8, 2021.** [Check the STEMIEFest website](#) for 2020 content and updates.



**Help the Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition reach new moms with an important survey!** The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [Office on Women's Health](#) is sponsoring the creation of a campaign that encourages new moms who might be at risk for postpartum depression to reach out for help. Please share this post encouraging mothers to participate:

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health (OWH) wants your help to learn about your experience as a new mom. They want to learn how to make it easier for new moms to get help if they feel pressure with a new baby and other life issues. They are looking for new moms to take a survey about their experiences. If you are a woman who has had a baby within the last year and you are willing to answer questions about your experience as a new mom, you will be helping other moms in the future. The survey will take about 20 minutes. If you are willing to help, please click on the link <https://forms.gle/dgiRYiGdHt2FX4mp8> - or paste it into your Web browser - that will take you to our sign-up form.

Once a mother completes the form, a link to the survey will be sent to their email address in a few days. The survey can be completed online or over the phone. No personal identification information (name, address) will be collected.

Thank you for all you do to celebrate early learning, young children, their teachers, families, and communities year-round. Feel welcome to email or call any of us if you have questions, requests for technical assistance or an issue it'd be helpful to think through together.

### **Amanda, Nis, Natalie, Jordan, Julie and Beccy**



For more information, contact:

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