



KECCS Update

February 2008

Governor Sebelius continues support for early childhood

Governor Sebelius delivered her State of the State Address in mid-January and expressed continued support for early childhood programs and services, stating that “early education is key to preventing school failure.” Highlights of the Governor’s early childhood agenda include:

- a fourth year of the school finance plan which includes all-day kindergarten
- extending the state’s network of quality early learning opportunities for children during their most formative years
- a new Early Childhood Block Grant, driven by research-based programming and accountability measures, focused on at-risk children and under-served areas

For more information on the Governor’s early childhood agenda, see the full text of the [2008 State of the State Address](#) and the [FY09 Governor’s Budget Report](#).

2008 Legislative Session Underway

Early childhood advocates have announced their legislative agendas for the 2008 session and are focusing on a variety of birth through five programs and services. Check out the legislative agendas at the [Kansas Action for Children](#) and [Kansas Coalition for School Readiness](#) websites.

Kansas selected for Strengthening Families National Network

The [Center for the Study of Social Policy](#) has selected Kansas as one of nine Strengthening Families National Network State Partners who have been doing exemplary work in developing and implementing the Strengthening Families approach across the country. The National Network will also include 14 State Affiliates, 7 National Partner Organizations, and several National Affiliate Organizations. Initial priorities for the SFNN support the work of the KECCS Plan and the Kansas Strengthening Families Plan:

- Parent Leadership
- Infrastructure Changes

- Professional Development
- Early Childhood Systems Integration
- Child Welfare - Early Childhood Linkages
- Evaluation
- Community-Based Prevention

The new Kansas Strengthening Families website is coming soon - stay tuned for more information!

Plan in Action

The University of Kansas Institute for Educational Research and Public Service was asked by the Early Learning Coordinating Council (ELCC) and a professional development planning committee led by SRS to assist with this project.

An online survey is being used to collect information about current professional development activities across the State. You are encouraged to complete the survey if you or your agency are involved in the provision of professional development to individuals working in early childhood or early care and education. The Kansas Professional Development Survey can be accessed at:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=eF11O6XtmPln7_2boki1plxA_3d_3d.

Please complete the survey based on professional development activities over the past year. *Feel free to distribute the survey to others who provide professional development activities to early care and education professionals.*

If you need technical assistance, please contact Rebecca Gillam at (785) 864-7123 or by e-mail at keccs@ku.edu.

Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement Underway

Stakeholders and the Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement Committee Leadership group [met in Topeka January 24 & 25](#) to rollout the Kansas system that will support the development and recognition of infant and family professionals within an organized system of culturally sensitive, relationship-based learning and work experiences that promote infant and early childhood mental health. Kansas is the 7th state in the country to implement an endorsement system, developed by the Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health. For more information about the Endorsement, contact Tiffany Smith-Birk at tiffany.smithbirk@srs.ks.gov.

Share your work!

Has your agency created and distributed a new brochure? Have you partnered with another community organization to offer new or expanded services to children and families? Let us know by entering your activities in the [Implementation Tracking Tool!](#) You'll have access to agency reports and information on the KECCS Plan as a whole. **For**

help with getting started, contact Rebecca Gillam at keccs@ku.edu or by telephone at (785) 864-7123.

Tips & Tools

- Project THRIVE at the National Center for Children in Poverty completed a survey to gather information about use of [indicators in State Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems](#). The information will be used by a national workgroup to develop a core group of systems indicators to be used nationwide. State groups such as the Early Childhood Mental Health Advisory Council are currently working on identifying better indicators of systemic success. As we move forward with the KECCS Plan, let's think about *our* use of indicators. What indicators do you use? What data is available? What can Kansas learn from Project THRIVE's work?
- The Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services [HCBS/Autism Waiver](#) will provide services to children with Autism to receive early intensive intervention treatment and allow primary caregivers to receive needed support through services. The Waiver program targets children with Autism Spectrum Disorders from the age of diagnosis through age five. Children and families will receive services from an Autism Specialist that will include individual supports, respite care, parent support and training, and family adjustment counseling. [KVC Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.](#) will serve as the statewide Functional Eligibility Specialist for the new Autism Waiver program.
- The NGA Center for Best Practices has released the winter edition of *Bright Futures*. Included in this issue is a summary of findings from the NGA Center Survey of State Early Childhood Advisory Councils, conducted last fall. Also are summaries of the Governors' Early Childhood Summits held in Alaska, Florida, Oregon, South Dakota and Utah.

Upcoming Events, Conferences & Training Opportunities

- [Equity in Education: A Strategic Workshop for All Educators](#) will be held on February 20-21, 2008 at the Courtyard Marriott in Junction City, KS. Join in to hear Paul Gorski, internationally-known scholar and activist on educational equity and social justice, and participate in a Poverty Simulator.
- Register for the [Kansas Fatherhood Summit!](#) The Summit will be held on April 2 & 3, 2008 at the Jack Reardon Center in Kansas City, KS. Parents and professionals are encouraged to attend.
- Save the date! [Blending Teaching and Braiding Funding of Special Education, Head Start and Community Services](#) will be held on April 25, 2008 at Spiritual Life Center in Wichita. The meeting is for administrators and direct service staff from Head Start, Early Head Start, Part C tiny-k, Part B early childhood special education, public and private preschool and mental health partners. You are encouraged to

invite your collaborative partners (i.e. home child care providers, Parents As Teachers, other early childhood programs interested in learning more about these unique collaborations)!

The meeting is being coordinated by Head Start Collaboration Office, Kansas SRS Health Care Policy – Mental Health, Kansas State Department of Education, Kansas Department of Health & Environment - Infant-Toddler Services, ACF Region VII Regional Office, and Kansas Inservice Training System.

Registration will be available after January 2, 2008. Contact Peggy Miksch (pmiksch@ku.edu or 785-456-8881) for content questions or Robin Bayless (rbayless@ku.edu, 620-421-6550 ext. 1618) for registration questions.

Do you have an event, conference or training coming up that would benefit other KECCS partners? Let us know, and we will promote it on the KECCS website and in the newsletter, the KECCS *Update*. Send information to keccs@ku.edu or contact Rebecca Gillam at (785) 864-7123.