



KDEC NEWSBRIEF

October 2003

Dear KDEC members,

Hello! As you embrace the fall season we hope all of you take time from your busy schedules to relax, refresh and rejuvenate! This year promises to be full of interesting developments in the field. Keep in mind that your membership in KDEC includes access to information at the DEC site: <http://www.dec-sped.org/index.html>. The public policy section has up to date information about all the developments concerning reauthorization and more.

The strength of KDEC as an organization lies in the volunteer spirit of its members and their willingness to collaborate with others. KDEC is a strong professional organization. Thank you to all who attended or presented at the 2003 KDEC conference. Your participation in the conference was the key to its success. Mark your calendars now for the 22nd annual KDEC conference. The conference dates are February 26-28, 2004 at the Wichita Airport Hilton. Watch your e-mail for updated information!



Focus on Membership: 2003 Mini-Grants Awarded

Congratulations to the following applicants who were awarded \$500 from KDEC:

1. Krista Dawson of Barber County Caring Council, Arrowhead West, Inc. Child Services. This grant supported play groups and purchased supplies which target father involvement.
2. Sarah Walters of USD 232, DeSoto. This grant was used to develop and purchase materials for a community inclusion library.
3. Sherry Jagels, SEK Interlocal # 637. The grant was used to purchase equipment and supplies in order to enhance opportunities for school and family communication through unique visual aids.
4. Margy Hornback, McPherson Early Childhood Center. This grant was used to purchase supplemental materials to enrich the basic curriculum in the early childhood center classrooms.



The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) is an international professional organization designed for professionals and families associated with infants and young children with special needs. It was formed as a division of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) in 1973. The Kansas Division for Early Childhood (KDEC) is a state subdivision of the International Division for Early Childhood and began in 1982. Our subdivision is seeking persons to be part of this organization. By joining, you will receive the benefits of numerous publications (Young Exceptional Children, Teaching Exceptional Children, Exceptional Children, and Journal of Early Intervention). KDEC also provides the opportunity to interact, collaborate, and communicate with others in the field; be informed on innovations in research, policy, best practices, and current issues; and be eligible for reduced rates at the KDEC annual conference. New members may contact Ginny Butts, KDEC Membership Chair at ginnyb@futures-unlimited.org or call 620-326-8906, ext. 224 for an application. Or, for easier and quicker membership, visit the Council for Exceptional Children at www.cec.sped.org. Please consider joining our organization and supporting the children and families around the state. If you are already a member, share this information with a colleague and invite them to check out the DEC website at <http://www.dec-sped.org/index.html> for more information about the benefits of membership.

Membership Challenge!

Make it a goal to invite at least one colleague to join you at the conference and or to join the organization this year!

Encourage student membership!



Meet the Candidates for 2004

The candidate for KDEC Vice-President is Dr. Dale Walker. She is a Research Assistant Professor and Principal Investigator in the Schiefelbusch Institute for Life Span Studies at the Juniper Gardens Children's Project at the University of Kansas. Her research interests are in the areas of early language intervention, child care quality, and assessment and observation practices with children at risk for, and with disabilities. She currently directs a research project funded through the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, in the area of promoting language development with infants and toddlers through collaborative partnerships with early child care providers.

She has an extensive record of work in early childhood and early childhood special education. She is also on the editorial review board of *Young Exceptional Children*, and reviews for *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, *Journal of Early Intervention* and *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*.

The candidate for Secretary is Jennifer Oborny. She is currently working as an Early Childhood Special Education Teacher for Barton County Special Services in Great Bend, Kansas, U. S.D. 428. She completed her B.S. in Early Childhood Education in 1999 at Kansas State University and has one year left at Emporia State University for her M.S. in Early Childhood Special Education. Previously she worked as a Parent Educator with Parents As Teachers/Early Head Start for a year and a half in Hays, Kansas, U. S. D. 495. She is married and has two daughters, ages six and one.

The Vice-President position is a four-year term beginning July 1, 2004. This candidate moves from Vice-President, President-Elect, President, to Past-President. The Secretary position is a two-year term beginning July 1, 2004. In the next issue of the Newsbrief, KDEC members will be asked to cast a ballot to approve these two candidates for their respective positions. Before that time, other nominations may be made by any group of ten (10) active members signing a nomination petition. The petition should be sent to the KDEC President. Candidates receiving a simple plurality shall be elected and the results of the election shall be announced to the membership.



2004 KDEC AWARD NOMINATIONS

The KDEC Awards Committee is looking forward to receiving nominations from the field for five special awards to recognize individuals who have made important contributions to the field of early childhood special education. **Now** is the time to give recognition to those who deserve it within our field. The five categories of awards include:

Outstanding Contributor Award

This award honors an individual who has made significant contributions to early intervention in Kansas. This award is open to members as well as nonmembers. Persons who might be considered could include family members, legislators, physicians, educators, and any individuals providing services to young children and their families.

Distinguished Service Provider Award

This award is presented to a current DEC/KDEC member who has demonstrated exemplary performance over a period of at least ten years as a direct service provider and is recognized by members of the profession as someone who demonstrates innovativeness, imagination, creativity, and the ability to inspire. This person must be a member in good standing both currently and for at least the previous five years.

Award of Excellence

This award honors an individual who has made significant contributions in the following areas of early intervention: publications, research, development of new concepts, approaches or programs, new techniques for diagnosis or rehabilitation, improved psychological or education evaluation procedures, improved administrative procedures, practical application of improved teaching devices, and dynamic leadership.

Direct Service Provider Award

This award is presented to a current DEC/KDEC member who has made significant contributions to young children with exceptionalities and their families. The candidate for this award should have less than ten years of direct service in the field. This award honors those who are beginning their career and have made exemplary contributions in their local area.

Outstanding Student DEC Member Award

This award is presented to a current full time student member of DEC/KDEC who has contributed a great deal of time, energy, or support to early childhood special education. This can include activities within their Student CEC Chapter and/or to children who are exceptional and their families.

Please take a few moments of your time to nominate a candidate for one or more of these awards. To nominate an individual simply involves filling out a nomination form, which will be included in the 2004 Conference Information or can be obtained by contacting:

Margy Hornback, Past-President
128 North Park
McPherson, Kansas 67460
Email: margy.hornback@mcperson.com
Phone: 620-241-9590

KDEC newsbrief stories:

INFANT-TODDLER WEB PAGE UPDATED

Kansas Infant-Toddler Services recognizes the need for information that is shared among early childhood professionals and families in Kansas. A useful and convenient resource can be found at the Kansas Infant-Toddler Services Webpage:

<http://www.kdhe.state.ks.us/bcyf/cds/its/index.html>.

This site contains helpful information for families and professionals regarding the purposes of early intervention services, as well as statistical reports that summarize services in Kansas. Examples of information posted on the website includes:

- ♣ The purpose of Infant-Toddler Services
- ♣ Executive Summary
- ♣ OSEP Kansas Self-Assessment

- ♣ KEILS Study
- ♣ OSEP Kansas Annual Performance Report
- ♣ Annual Reports for 2000 and 2001
- ♣ Local Network Contact Information
- ♣ State Regulations
- ♣ Technical Assistance Bulletins
- ♣ Links to Other Infant-Toddler Websites

The Infant-Toddler Staff updated the information on the website in August, and has determined that periodic updates should occur every six months. Although the site remains a work in progress, you can expect to see more information and improved usability featured in subsequent updates. One of the primary goals for the site is to improve access by limiting the chain of links needed to reach the site. Ultimately, Kansas Infant-Toddler Services hopes to attain an address that is easy to locate and accessible independent of the KDHE website.

In addition, Kansas Infant-Toddler Services will accept appropriate and relevant news, announcements, research, and links from anyone who is interested in posting a document to the site. Your document will be reviewed for appropriateness, and should not have a lifespan of less than six months. To post, please attach your document to an email and sent it to: rweir@kdhe.state.ks.us.

NEW TEACHER LICENSURE EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2003

Kansas is now one of 5 states (joining Iowa, Idaho, Nebraska, New Mexico) to offer a combined early childhood/early childhood special education teacher credential for Birth through Grade 3. Instead of a certification system, the state moved to license teachers and administrators, and recognizes other state credentials for related services personnel such as speech-language pathologists, audiologists, OTs, PTs, school nurses, etc. No longer is dual credentialing required.

One issue that has been of concern to early childhood teachers who are not teaching in a school program is that of renewal. The new system was established for teachers and administrators working in schools. However, in reality a great number of early childhood teachers are employed outside the school system and may also wish to keep up their certificate/license.

Renewal requirements are listed on the individual certificate. Additional information is available on the web page of the Teacher Education and Licensure Team at the Kansas State Department of Education: www.ksde.org Click on the name of the team, then Regulations. Go to KAR 91-1-206, which gives the requirements for renewal through Individual Professional Development Plans, which must be approved by the local district's Professional Development Council. Sections (a)(b)(c) give general requirements. Section (d) says that a person who is unable to attain approval of their PDP through the local council may appeal to the KSDE License Review Committee for approval.

KANSAS INTERAGENCY EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS BIRTH THROUGH FIVE

Thanks to the efforts of SRS, Head Start, KDHE, and KSDE, our state is in the process of developing early learning standards consistent with K-12 curriculum standards. This is a federal requirement for many programs already, and is expected in many others as well. Instead of having multiple standards, early childhood personnel in the field have begun meeting to do this work collaboratively. Gayle Stuber from KSDE and Jean Morgan from SRS are chairing this work. Contact Gayle at 785-296-5352 or gstuber@ksde.org and Jean at 785-368-6355 or JEM@srskansas.org if you have ideas to share.

NEW PRESCHOOL BILL SIGNED BY GOVERNOR

The Coordinating Council on Early Childhood Developmental Services championed a bill in the 2003 Kansas Legislature so that public schools would be able to offer a regular preschool program and charge a fee to cover expenses. Not only would this new law provide additional "slots" for community's preschoolers (cited as an issue in both rural and urban areas), but also would be another possible program where children with IEPs might receive their services in the least restrictive environment.

The Kansas State Department of Education issued the following information to schools to clarify various issues:

Information to Schools 2003 Senate Bill 82, Amending K.S.A. 72-67,115 to Allow Schools to Offer Preschool Programs and Charge Fees

In 2003 SB 82, K.S.A. 72-67,115 is amended to read as follows:

- (a) The board of education of any school district may:
- (1) Offer and teach courses and conduct preschool programs for children under the age of eligibility to attend kindergarten,
 - (2) Enter into cooperative or interlocal agreements with one or more other boards for the establishment, operation and maintenance of such preschool programs,
 - (3) Contract with private, nonprofit corporations or associations or with any public or private agency or institution, whether located within or outside the state, for the establishment, operation and maintenance of such preschool programs,
 - (4) Prescribe and collect fees for providing such preschool programs.
- (b) Fees for providing preschool programs shall be prescribed and collected only to recover the costs incurred as a result of and directly attributable to the establishment, operation and maintenance of the preschool programs. Revenues from fees collected by a board under this section shall be deposited in the general fund of the school district and shall be considered reimbursements to the district for the purpose of the school district finance and quality performance act and may be expended whether the same have been budgeted or not and amounts so expended shall not be considered operating expenses.

Introduction

Schools have been authorized for several years to provide preschool programs but they lacked the authority to charge fees for them. SB 82 amends the law to allow school districts to provide preschool programs for children under kindergarten age and to charge fees for the program. The fee may be charged only to recover the costs incurred in providing the program. Nondisabled children attending these preschool programs are not counted in the school finance law for general state aid funding, but children with disabilities who have IEP's are counted as one-half pupil.

Why is this law important to local districts?

School readiness research indicates that one of the most influential factors for young children is that they have quality preschool experiences. Increasingly, the general public seems to understand that the years from birth through age 5 are perhaps the most important in a child's life. Early brain development research estimates that half of what children learn in life, they know by the age of 5. Accordingly, schools should also be very concerned about what early childhood services are available in their community – from prenatal care, nutrition and health services, quality child care settings, sufficient preschool programs, parent education, and similar services – because the school will benefit by having a higher number of “ready children” if those services are accessible and affordable in their communities. Having children ready to learn when they enter school should result in higher achievement, fewer referrals to special services, fewer grade retentions, and fewer disciplinary concerns.

Frequently Asked Questions

The following Question/Answer list may help identify issues and respond to questions already identified:

1. When will the law be effective?
Upon publication in the statute book, which will be July 1, 2003.
2. May districts adopt a sliding fee scale for the preschool program?
Yes, such decisions are local. It also may be that local businesses or private funders may contribute scholarship funds to allow low-income families to send their children to preschool.
3. Are teachers in preschool programs required to have an early childhood teacher certificate/license?
No, teachers in preschool programs are not required to have an early childhood teacher certificate/license, except for those special education and 4 year old at-risk programs in which the children are counted in the school finance law for general state aid funding.
4. If the school decides to contract with a for-profit or not-for-profit preschool program in the community, will teachers in the program be required to have an early childhood certificate/license?
No. See the answer to Question #3.

5. Are preschool programs operated by the public schools required to be licensed by KDHE? Maybe. According to current KDHE licensing regulations, public school preschool programs are not subject to KDHE requirements if the preschool will operate within the school for 4 or fewer hours/day. For an off-site location, regardless of hours, the preschool must meet KDHE licensure standards. The state contact in the KDHE Bureau of Child Care Licensing is Mary Murphy, 785-296-1273 or mmurphy@kdhe.state.ks.us
6. When may schools charge or not charge a fee for preschool programs? The amended law allows schools to charge a fee, however, we want to offer the following guidance for school programs:
- Schools that already offer preschool programs using local and/or donated funds may begin to charge fees or may continue to offer the program at no cost.
 - Schools may establish preschool programs and charge a fee for children attending the preschool program except for any child who is counted for general state aid funding as a child with a disability or an at-risk child.
 - Parents as Teachers, Title I, Even Start, 4-year-old at-risk preschool programs, and early childhood special education preschools may NOT charge fees for their instructional services to children identified as eligible for the program. However, these programs are allowed to charge the same materials/activity fees that the school charges for general education.
7. Can nondisabled peer models attending an early childhood special education preschool program for children with disabilities be charged fees? Yes, any nondisabled child who is participating in a special education early childhood program may be charged a fee to participate in the preschool program.
8. Will the early childhood special education teacher of a reverse-mainstreaming preschool program count towards categorical aid if peer models are charged fees for participation in the program?
- If the district offers an early childhood special education “reverse-mainstreaming class” for preschoolers with disabilities and includes 50% or less nondisabled peer models, full categorical aid may be claimed for the early childhood special education teacher of this class. If more than 50% of the class is nondisabled children, the categorical aid for the early childhood special education teacher would be prorated.
 - If the district offers a preschool program for typically developing children and integrates a limited number of children with disabilities (less than 50%) into this program, and if the teacher of the integrated class is an early childhood special education teacher, state categorical aid will be prorated. The children with IEPs could not be charged an instructional fee to participate in the class.
9. Are preschool programs eligible for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) or the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)? Yes, if children are not included in the district general state aid funding, then they would participate in the CACFP. Children counted in the district general state aid funding would participate under the NSLP (ECSE, 4 year old at risk).

10. Are preschool teachers to be paid according to the district salary schedule and qualify for the same benefits as other teachers?

These are decisions for local school boards and negotiated agreements.

11. What transportation requirements apply to preschools?

For nondisabled preschool children, a school district may offer transportation services or not. School districts could charge nondisabled preschool children for transportation that would be offered. However, for preschool children with disabilities whose IEPs call for transportation as a related service, the schools are required to provide transportation. Larry Bluthardt at KSDE is a resource, lbluthardt@ksde.org.

12. Is district residency required for children attending preschools?

Again, this is a local decision. However, districts may wish to open enrollment to neighboring communities because such flexibility might allow additional children to be included from areas having limited preschool availability.

13. What is the appropriate teacher-child ratio for preschool programs?

KSDE does not set class sizes. However, for preschool age children, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) recommends different ratios based on the child's age: NAEYC's accreditation criteria for centers (NAEYC, 1991) indicates that, with two adults, recommended group sizes are no more than 6-8 infants, 8-12 toddlers, 14-20 preschoolers, and 16-20 kindergartners. "Smaller numbers may be necessary in the case of children with certain emotional or behavioral problems who require more intensive and direct supervision" (www.naeyc.org). KDHE licensing requirements for Kansas preschools also sets ratios based on ages of the children. See www.idir.net/~dccda/regs.shtml.

| <u>Number</u> | <u>Ages</u> | <u>Requirement</u> |
|-----------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 9 infants | Birth-12 months & walking | 1 teacher for each 3 children |
| 10 toddlers | 12 months/ walking-2 1/2 yrs | 1 teacher for each 5 children |
| 14 toddlers | 2-3 years | 1 teacher for each 7 children |
| 20 preschoolers | 2 1/2-3 years | 1 teacher for each 10 children |
| 24 preschoolers | 3 years-kindergarten | 1 teacher for each 12 children |

The Early Childhood Education Quality Standards in Kansas also address the issue of teacher-child ratio (www.kskits.org/html/bestpractice/qs.html). See the section entitled "PERSONNEL" and the Outcome, "ALL PROGRAM STAFF POSSESS A HIGH LEVEL OF SKILL AND KNOWLEDGE FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE ROLES." Standard 2 reads: "Sufficient staff, combined with organizational structure, ensure positive interactions and constructive activity among children, staff, and families." Indicators under that standard are:

Indicator 1. Adult-child ratios are based on current research findings and professional recommendations, considering number and ages of children, nature of the physical setting, and number of children with special needs in the program. When age groups are mixed, the lower ratio prevails.

Indicator 2. The adult-child ratio is sufficient to ensure adequate supervision, frequent personal contacts, and time for individual instruction and meeting diverse needs of all children.

Indicator 3. Time is allocated for regular, ongoing opportunities for staff and families to work

collaboratively and cooperatively as a team.

Indicator 4. The staff exhibits developmentally appropriate interaction techniques, such as positive guidance, child-level communication, and child-initiated interactions. Such behavior is supportive of children's cognitive, psychological, and biological development.

Early Childhood Resources

Resources available to assist schools considering a regular preschool program include the Early Childhood Education Quality Standards for Kansas (available on the KSDE website www.ksde.org under Student Support Services Team, Resources.) In addition, schools may access other early childhood information on these websites:

National Association for the Education of Young Children, www.naeyc.org

Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children, www.kaeyc.org

KDHE Child Care Licensing Bureau, www.kdhe.state.ks.us

Kansas Inservice Training System, www.kskits.org

HOW TO ACCESS RESOURCES FOR GOOD START, GROW SMART

We've all heard about President Bush's new requirements for K-12 in the No Child Left Behind legislation. However, less well known is the companion program for 0-5 called Good Start, Grow Smart. Many well-prepared documents address early childhood issues for this age group, including various audiences like parents, other caregivers, teachers, etc. The booklets use current information about the importance of reading to children and what adults can do to foster their development. Attractive and colorful, the booklets have a nice balance of text and photographs. The reading level is not too high, and there is enough "white space" so that the narrative doesn't overwhelm readers.

Here is a list of general information and specific documents:

1. General information, Executive Summary for "Good Start, Grow Smart: The Bush Administration's Early Childhood Initiative" is on web at www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/earlychildhood/sect1.html If you click "next chapter," you get to Section 2, which includes "The Importance of Early Childhood Cognitive Development" and "Early Childhood Care and Education." Section 3 includes "Funding for Early Childhood Care and Education" that is followed by a breakdown of programs by agency: Department of Health and Human Services (Head Start, Early Head Start, Child Care Development Fund, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Social Services Block Grant). Under the Department of Education, the following programs are listed: Title I-supported Preschool Programs, Early Reading First, Even Start, Special Education Preschool Grants and State Grants, Special Education Grants for Infants and Families, and Early Childhood Professional Development Program. Under "Research Programs," the following are listed: National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education and the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study. Section 4 includes "Meeting Early Childhood Needs" showing the steady increase of funding for early childhood over the past 10 years. Section 5 is about "Strengthening Head Start" and addresses the assessment to be done this fall. Section 6 describes "Partnering with States to Improve Early Learning, addressing topics such as "Encourage states to set quality criteria for early childhood

- education, early learning guidelines, professional development, program coordination, expand state flexibility in child care match, establish new state program integration waivers, establish early childhood educator academies, provide guidance to states on coordination of services.” Section 7 discusses “Providing Parents, Teachers, and Caregivers Information on Early Learning” and summarizes initiatives such as “highlight early childhood education research, provide a guidebook for parents and families, provide a guidebook for early childhood educators and caregivers, and award ‘sunshine’ schools and initiatives.”
2. The following booklets were developed through the Partnership for Reading, Bringing Scientific Evidence to Learning. They involved the National Institute for Literacy, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and the US Department of Education. To learn more about their Partnership for Reading, visit www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading, phone 202-233-2025.

Specific booklets for Infants and Toddlers:

- a. A Child Becomes a Reader, Birth to Preschool: Proven Ideas from Research for Parents. For copies, call 800-228-8813 or email edpuborders@edpubs.org. The booklet can also be downloaded at the Partnership for Reading website at www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading.
 - b. Healthy Start, Grow Smart: Your Newborn. These are 5-1/2 X 8-1/2-inch, brief booklets for parents. Ordering information is the same for each of the 12 monthly series: Call toll-free at 877-433-7827 or 800-872-5327. With a TTY, call 800-437-0833. You can email your request to edpubs@inet.ed.gov You may also order online at www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html/ On request these booklets are available in alternate formats such as Braille, large print, audiotape or computer diskette. For more information contact the Alternate Format Center at 202-260-9895 or 202-205-8113.
 - c. Healthy Start, Grow Smart: Your One-Month-Old (Two-Month-Old....Twelve-Month Old). Use the same ordering information as for “Your Newborn.”
3. Specific booklets for Preschoolers:
 - a. Put Reading First, Helping Your Child Learn to Read: A Parent Guide for Preschool through Grade 3. For copies, call 800-228-8813. Email edpuborders@edpubs.org. Download at www.nifl.gov
 - b. Teaching Our Youngest: A Guide for Preschool Teachers and Child-Care and Family Providers. To order, call 877-433-7827 or 800-872-5327. With a TTY, call 800-437-0833. Email your request to edpubs@inet.ed.gov Order online at www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html Download at www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/teachingouryoungest/
 4. Specific booklets for Early Primary:
 - a. A Child Becomes a Reader, Kindergarten to Grade 3: Proven Ideas from Research for Parents. To order, call 800-228-8831 or email edpubsorders@edpubs.org The booklet can also be downloaded at www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading

- b. Put Reading First, The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read: Kindergarten through Grade 3. To order, call 800-228-8813 or email EdPubOrders@aspensys.com To download, go to www.nifl.gov

- 5. Another Bush early childhood program is the Early Reading First grants, specifically targeted for low-income schools. The one grant funded in Kansas is in the Topeka Public Schools. For information about the federal grant program, see www.ed.gov/PressReleases/01-2003/01232003.html

If you received this news brief by mail and want to receive it by email, please contact at **Peggy Miksch at martin1@wamego.net** and we will add you to the e-mail database. Thanks!