



KDEC
Kansas Division for Early Childhood
Spring 2005

KDEC NEWSBRIEF

KDEC 2005 Spring Newsletter

President's Notes

Isn't it amazing how quickly time passes? It seems like just yesterday this school year was starting and here we all are wrapping things up. As with all endings, I take this time to reflect back on the happenings of our KDEC chapter with much gratitude. Our 2005 KDEC conference was a great success! Thank you to our members, partners, and friends who attended or presented at the conference. The information, resources, advocacy, and networking we get from this annual event are invaluable to our work in the field. I'd also like to extend a heartfelt thanks and warm congratulations to our conference chair and new incoming President, Peggy Miksch, for a job well done! We are truly blessed to have such outstanding leadership within our organization! If you weren't able to make it to this year's conference, we hope to see you next year. Mark your calendars for March 2-3, 2006. Dale Walker, our new conference chair, will be bringing another great lineup for us again in Kansas City. You don't want to miss it!

We are continuing to grow our website. Soon you will be able to access more information about the 2006 conference and the 'Request for Proposals'. You can also find our Newsbrief, Board information, and our Bylaws on the website. We plan to add more information throughout this next year. Take time and check it out at www.kdec.org.

We are excited to announce our new officers for the KDEC Board:

Gayle Stuber, Ph.D, Vice President. This is a four-year term. Gayle is an Educational Consultant, School Improvement and Accreditation, for the Kansas Department of Education.

Chelie Nelson, M.A., CCC-SLP, Treasurer. This is a two-year term. Chelie is the Preschool Technical Assistance Specialist with Kansas Inservice Training System at the University of Kansas.

These positions will begin July 1, 2005. We welcome them to the Board!

Jonni Brown, our current treasurer will be going off the board this year. Thank you Jonni for your dedication and time! You have done a fantastic job!

In closing, it has been a real pleasure serving as your President. I have appreciated this opportunity and would like to thank the Board and you the members for your support. To me, membership in KDEC and participation in the annual conference is a very worthwhile investment in meeting the changing demands of our profession.

Have a wonderful summer!

Jennifer Tasset, KDEC President

Future Issues of the KDEC NEWSBRIEF

This, and future issues of the KDEC NEWSBRIEF will be available only on the website. To save costs and paper use, the KDEC Board decided to make the NEWSBRIEF available on the web site only. We would like to invite you to visit the website at www.kdec.org for future issues of the NEWSBRIEF and other KDEC information. The NEWSBRIEF will be posted on the website quarterly. We hope you will find this new format for the NEWSBRIEF convenient. Please let us know. You can email us at newsletter@kdec.org.

Awards from KDEC

2005 Distinguished Service Provider Award: Jennifer Blair, Special Education Program Coordinator, Geary County Public Schools.

The Distinguished Service Provider Award honors a person who demonstrates innovativeness, imagination, creativity, and the ability to inspire others, and has been in the field for a number of years.

Jennifer has been described as a leader who is willing to take chances, sees the big picture, and at the same time is sensitive to the needs of individual members of a group. She is said to set a course of action, and implement a plan that is built on the strength of her partners. Jennifer holds the highest regards for young children and their families, as well as those she works with.

2005 Outstanding Contributor Award: Tammy Steeples, Ph.D., Life Span Institute, University of Kansas.

The second award presented at the conference the Outstanding Contributor Award. This award honors a person in the field who has made significant contributions to early intervention in Kansas through special initiatives, research, or the development of programs and/or events. These individuals exhibit a sincere commitment to exceptional children, their families and the field of special education and their community.

Dr. Tammy Steeples was named as the recipient for this award. She is a project coordinator on a research grant on beginning communication skills in children with developmental disabilities. Her duties include scheduling, testing, analyzing, intervening, and disseminating information. While these are a list of her current activities, they are only a culmination of her life long commitment to early childhood education. Over the years, Tammy has been a preschool and elementary teacher, and has been a primary supporter of KDEC through membership as well as a past member of the executive board. In addition, the families that she has worked with hold her in the highest esteem.

Tribute to a Special Friend and Colleague ***Submitted by Misty Goosen, KDEC Past President***

On Saturday, January 22nd, the KDEC Board made a special presentation at the home of a dear friend and colleague, Marnie Campbell. A plaque was presented to Marnie expressing how much she has meant to all of us in the field, professionals and families alike. Our purpose was to acknowledge the importance of her contributions to early childhood, and early childhood special education systems in Kansas and to honor her for her long and untiring dedication. The plaque that was presented to Marnie and her husband Steve had the following inscription:

To Marnie Campbell,

In acknowledgement and sincere appreciation for your outstanding leadership in behalf of Kansas Children and their families.

From: The Kansas Division of Early Childhood

Marnie devoted her life to making the world a better place for young children with disabilities and their families. Much of her insight and knowledge was gained first hand as a parent of a child with a hearing impairment. Early on she taught classes at Johnson County Community College for sign language interpreters, and provided community education to families and providers through the ARC in Overland Park. She moved on to become a curriculum consultant for the University of Kansas as they designed new classes for the deaf education program, and later became the Hartely Family Center Director at the KU Medical Center where she developed early childhood programs for families with hearing impairments.

Marnie's devotion to the field didn't stop there. She decided that she could have a bigger impact on the field by working directly with state policy makers. In 1992 she became the Coordinator

of the Infant Toddler Program (Part H), at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and later moved to the Kansas State Department of Education where she became the Education Program Consultant for Early Childhood and Family Programs.

Kansan families are not the only ones who have felt the positive impact of Marnie Campbell. Marnie has been well known and respected as a key figure in national discussions regarding young children with special needs and their families. In these groups Marnie was an advocate for family centered practices and inclusive services for all children.

Marnie lost her long battle with cancer on February 23, 2005. She was a dear beloved person whose wonderful leadership, positive energy, and caring approach touched all of us in some way. She has indeed, as our Kansas logo states, “Made A Difference”!

Next Year’s KDEC Conference

Our next KDEC conference, *Making a Measurable Difference for Young Children and Families* will be in a Kansas City location that is still being finalized. Specifics about where the conference will be held and the request for proposals will be included in the Summer Newsbrief in August and on the website at www.kdec.org. Dale Walker will be the conference chair this year. Plans are underway for a dynamic conference so stay tuned. We welcome and encourage membership involvement in the conference. It is a great opportunity to meet with other colleagues from Kansas and nationally. If you would like to volunteer or have suggestions, please contact Dale Walker.

News from the State and Beyond

Gayle Stuber, PhD

School Readiness in Kansas: The process of defining ‘School Readiness’

Early Learning Guidelines: A Developmental Sequence Leading to K-12 Standards

The major purpose behind the Early Learning Guidelines is to develop a set of early standards or guidelines that are aligned with the Kansas K-12 standards. There are four major purpose statements to support the development of the Guidelines:

1. To create a continuum that links early development to school readiness and later learning in school and life;
2. To provide a clear statement of what young children should know and be able to do as a result of experiencing quality early learning opportunities.
3. To provide guidance for families and early learning professionals that enhance and support their abilities to create experiences that promote early learning opportunities; and
4. To show that during the early years, children acquire skills, knowledge, and abilities in all developmental areas (e.g., social-emotional, physical, early literacy, mathematics, music) critical to future learning.

The Early Learning Guidelines ARE designed to:

1. Recognize the importance of the early years as learning years.
2. Serve as a guide for appropriate curriculum development/selection.
3. Serve as a guide for creating quality learning environments and opportunities.

The Early Learning Guidelines are NOT designed to:

1. Serve as a curriculum in an early childhood program or other setting.
2. Exclude children from a program, school, or activity.
3. Serve as an assessment for children, families, or programs.

Kansas School Readiness Project

The School Readiness Project is gearing up to collect data this coming fall on the four components of the Framework: family, community, school, and child. Indicators for each component are measured by specified pieces of data that are collected at the county and state levels. Results of the 2004 baseline data collection provide a preliminary description of entering kindergartners, their kindergarten classrooms, and their families, communities and schools. For further information, please email Gayle Stuber at gstuber@ksde.org.

Federal Update from DEC

OSERS IDEA regulations hearings are taking place across the country. Below are some of the recommendations being put forth from DEC. These are also available on the DEC website at www.dec-sped.org

1. ***DEC recommends that language be clear that IDEA personnel qualifications include preschool special education teachers.*** Revised personnel qualifications language under the Part B statute states- “The State educational agency has established and maintains qualifications to ensure that **personnel necessary to carry out this part** are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, including that those personnel have the content knowledge and skills to serve children with disabilities” (Sec. 612(a)(14)). The language further goes on to include specific language related to special education teachers at the elementary, middle and secondary level; related services personnel; and paraprofessionals. Although preschool special education teachers are not specifically addressed in this language, DEC believes the statutory language is clear that preschool special education teachers are included due to the reference above **“personnel necessary to carry out this part...”**

DEC believes that the revised statutory language intends all personnel providing services under IDEA, including preschool teachers, meet personnel qualification requirements established by states. Therefore, ***DEC recommends that language in the regulations clarify that states must establish and maintain qualifications to ensure preschool special education teachers are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained.***

2. ***DEC appreciates*** the proposed NPRM language in 300.8(b) that clarifies that local school districts can select subsets of age ranges when determining their policy to use developmental delay to determine preschoolers eligible for Part B as DEC had recommended in our February comments.
3. ***DEC appreciates*** the addition of “travel training instruction” to the definition of “orientation and mobility services” at 300.34(c)(7) as DEC had recommended in our February comments.
4. Paperwork Reduction- According to the new statute, up to 15 states may receive authority from the Secretary to waive Part B requirements for no more than 4 years to reduce paperwork and noninstructional time burdens that do not assist in improving educational and functional results. Civil rights requirements cannot be waived and nothing can affect the right to FAPE or waive procedural safeguards under Section 615. (Sec 609) ***DEC recommends that regulatory language specifically clarify what Part B requirements can be waived, which cannot and what civil rights requirements apply.***
5. Natural Environments - ***DEC does not believe that the new statutory language in IDEA 2004 related to natural environments in Part C represents a change in federal policy.***

The conference report language indicates that the change was made "...to recognize that there may be instances when a child's individualized family service plan cannot be implemented satisfactorily in the natural environment." This represents policy under IDEA '97 and does not reflect a change.

Further, the conference report language states "...The Conferees intend that in these instances, the child's parents and the other members of the individualized family service plan team will together make this determination and then identify the most appropriate setting in which early intervention services can be provided." This language seems to represent policy under IDEA '97 and does not reflect a change.

DEC also notes that other statutory language related to natural environments remains the same:

"To the maximum extent appropriate, early intervention services are provided in natural environments, including the home, and community settings in which children without disabilities participate (Sec. 634(4)(G))

The IFSP must contain "A statement of the natural environments in which early intervention services will appropriately be provided, including a justification of the extent, if any, to which the services will not be provided in a natural environment; (Sec. 636(d)(5))

Therefore, DEC strongly recommends that current regulations related to natural environments be retained and any additional regulatory language reinforce that: (a) the IFSP team determines the appropriate setting for the child; (b) no member of the IFSP team can unilaterally select the setting; (c) services can only be provided in a setting other than a natural environment if the child's outcomes cannot be achieved in a natural environment and the team's justification is documented; and (d) the home is not the only natural environment.

6. **Early Intervening Services** The new statute includes language that allows for the provision of early intervening services through interagency financing structures, for students in kindergarten through grade 12 (with a particular emphasis on students in kindergarten through grade 3) who have not been identified as needing special education or related services but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in a general education environment. (Sec. 613(f)) ***DEC notes that the statute is silent on providing early intervening services for children aged 3 to 5 and does not restrict this provision for use in preschool. Given the current emphasis on early academic and behavioral support, DEC recommends that the NPRM language at 300.226(a) be revised to specify this provision can be applied to the entire age range under Part B of 3-21 years.***
7. **Part C Invited to IEP Meeting** - New IEP language was added as follows: "(D) IEP Team Transition- In the case of a child who was previously served under part C, an invitation to the initial IEP meeting shall, at the request of the parent, be sent to the part C service

coordinator or other representatives of the part C system to assist with the smooth transition of services.” (Sec. 614(d)(1)(D))

DEC recommends that regulatory language in the NPRM at 300.321(f) be clarified to require that LEAs must notify parents of this opportunity to invite Part C personnel to the IEP meeting.

8. **CAPTA Requirements** - The new statute includes language requiring policies and procedures to accept referrals for a child B-3 who “(A) is involved in a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect; or (B) is identified as affected by illegal substance abuse, or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure;” Conference report language states: “The Conferees intend that every child described in 637(a)(6)(A) and (B) will be screened by a Part C provider or designated primary referral source to determine whether a referral for an evaluation for early intervention services under Part C is warranted. If the screening indicates the need for a referral, the Conferees expect a referral to be made. However, the Conferees do not intend this provision to require every child described in Section 637 (a)(6)(A) and (B) to receive an evaluation or early intervention services under Part C.”

DEC recommends that the conference report language related to CAPTA be incorporated into the regulations clarifying that states may develop and implement policies that allow screening of children referred under 637(a)(6) in order to determine if evaluations are necessary. Under this language a child would have to be evaluated if the screening yielded information that the child needs an evaluation.

9. **Three Years to Kindergarden Option** - DEC recommends that regulatory language be included to clarify that when the amount appropriated for Part C exceeds the \$460 million trigger, 15% of the amount of funds that exceed \$460 million level would be made available to states that opt to participate in the three to kindergarden option.

In addition DEC requests clarification as follows:

- States be allowed to take a portion of the option e.g. age 3-4 or only age 3 or only age 4.
- Language should be included that a child cannot return to Part C after transitioning to Part B preschool services.
- “Kindergarden age” should be defined by the state.

10. **Definitions** DEC requests regulatory language be included for the term “scientifically-based” and the guidance should be aligned with NCLB language as long as the guidance ensures that single-subject, correlational, and qualitative research are included in the definition along with random assignment experiments.

DEC notes that the *DEC's Recommended Practices* initiative is one which identifies, promotes and supports the use of scientifically valid practices based on a synthesis of best available research evidence integrated with professional and family wisdom and values.

In addition, DEC recommends regulatory language on “peer-reviewed research” be consistent with the work of the National Research Council (2005). Further, related to the matter of involving consumers in the peer review process, DEC asks that the department find ways of involving consumers that do not compromise the quality of the review decisions. Examples of this, which should be considered, are found in NCR report (e.g. participating in retrospective reviews of agency portfolios, serving on priority-setting committees).

KDEC Membership

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 membership@kdec.org or call 620-326-8906, ext. 224 for an application. Or, for easier and quicker membership, visit the Council for Exceptional Children website at www.cec.sped.org. Please consider joining our organization and supporting 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.

Student Membership

Sanna Harjusola-Webb

KDEC Student Representative, University of Kansas

The Kansas Division for Early Childhood (KDEC) would like to extend an invitation to currently enrolled early childhood/early childhood special education university students to join our organization as student members. The benefits are HUGE for the nominal dues required. CEC, DEC, and KDEC provide many opportunities for you to become involved with the organization, and also support you as a student and a future early childhood professional. CEC's continuing education programs provide current news, state-of-the-art resources, and new ways of reaching

students. CEC also provides you with essential training programs, materials, planning, and continuing education opportunities.

A student must first be a member of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) for a dues amount of \$46.00, and then additionally join the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) for the amount of \$12. That means for a total dues amount of only \$58.00, a student will receive the following:

Teaching Exceptional Children (6 issues per year)

Exceptional Children (4 issues per year)

CEC Today (7 issues per year)

Journal of Early Intervention (4 issues per year)

Young Exceptional Children (4 issues per year)

Student members of CEC and DEC automatically are members of KDEC. In addition to the five different journals that are received during the year, student members have access to Student Educator Professional Liability Insurance for the low cost of \$12 per year. The policy is the same as that offered to professional members, but does not include job protection benefits. As each student needs this during their practicum experiences, this insurance is available to student members at this low yearly cost. Student members also have reduced conference rates for national, regional, and state meetings. Please find out more about the benefits on the CEC website: http://www.cec.sped.org/mb/curr_members.html#benefits

If you are currently a student member, please share this information with your peers and encourage them to join you in this professional organization. If you are a regular CEC/DEC member but have the opportunity to encourage a student to join KDEC through CEC/DEC, please do so. You will find opportunities to have a voice in public policy, and to become a part of a large network of local, national and international expertise and knowledge. Also, ask DEC or dec@dec-sped.org, is a great resource for students when looking to find answers to questions about young children with special needs.

This is a wonderful opportunity for upcoming practitioners to join their national and state organizations, and participate in future policy development and best practice in the field of early childhood/early childhood special education.

We Need Your Help at the 2006 Conference

Are you friendly, outgoing and willing to make a difference by assisting your fellow KDEC members? If you answered YES, then we need you to join the ranks of other KDEC members who volunteer their time to ensure that the Kansas Division for Early Childhood continues to be the most informative, educational and inspiring event year after year. Volunteering is a great way

to meet and get to know other early childhood professionals, plus you'll be doing something to help your member organization.

The KDEC seeks volunteers for the upcoming 2006 Conference, Making a Measurable Difference for Young Children and Families, to be held In March 2006 in Kansas City. Various tasks will be available such as help at registration desk, assist as a chairperson in a session, and volunteer at the registration/information desk. For more information and to apply for a volunteer position, please contact KDEC.

If you have questions about the KDEC NEWSBRIEF contact Dale Walker at newsletter@kdec.org