2nd Quarter Report

2010-2011

Working Together to Educate All of Kentucky's Children
My Fellow Kentuckians,

As the second quarter comes to a close and the third quarter’s legislative session is right around the corner, I am reminded of the great accomplishments we have made together over the past few years and of the great work we have ahead. As a unified body of servant leaders, working together to meet the ever increasing needs of state agency children, we have much to celebrate and much to do.

State agency children are saddled with many barriers relating to academic preparedness and family support, as well as emotional and behavioral issues. In collaboration with the Kentucky Department of Education, we are working to address these concerns as newly modified academic standards are being developed and piloted across Kentucky. Once again, our teachers and administrators will be essential in helping our students achieve at high levels while encouraging higher expectations for success. We are committed to our partnership in ensuring state agency children receive a quality, equitable education.

The KECSAC internal office team, has also been working diligently to streamline our operating policies and the expectations we have of our state agency partners. These are detailed more extensively inside this report. In addition, our public relations efforts led us to partner with the Kentucky School Board Association and the Kentucky Center for School Safety to develop an informational video about state agency programs and other alternative education programs in Kentucky. We are committed to sharing the story of our children and the great strides they are making in our programs daily. We are also excited to be spearheading a research project aimed at capturing the voices of our children and learning from them in their own words.

These accomplishments, and many others, are highlighted in this second quarterly report. You will find enclosed a summary of our work and accomplishments, as well as details related to our ongoing initiatives. The ambitious action agenda we are highlighting here could not happen without the broad base of support we have formed with our state agency partners, our local school districts and the teachers and administrators working on behalf of state agency children. We appreciate your continued support as we work to enhance the educational services provided to our students.

Sincerely,

Ronnie Nolan, Ed.D.
Trouble Making

The things I did I constantly look over my shoulder, 
I dodge them now, but what about when I get older?

It’s making me manic, 
Now I panic.

The thought of someone looking at me...I can’t stand it.

I thought I could break all the rules, 
Thought gang affiliation was cool, 
Even though I was a tool.

When I did get caught I thought my life was over, 
Thinking no one can help but a four-leaf clover.

But I change at last, 
Picking up altitude fast.

Get to the top being the best I can ever be, 
Being the first to do something with my life in my family tree.

Realizing I do have something to lose, 
Going back to my bad habits I refuse.

Fourteen-Year-Old-Boy
From The Circle Four written by Ramey-Estep Students
Professional Development

KECSAC is sponsoring four installments of our Critical Issues Series for the 2010-2011 school year. The Critical Issues Series seeks to provide quality trainings for educators across the Commonwealth, honing in on special topics of interest to teachers in state agency education programs.

Nearly 130 veteran and student teachers joined KECSAC on October 27, 2010 for the first installment of the Critical Issues Series: Differentiated Instruction. Nancy Gilligan of Strategy Education presented a full day of training on differentiated instruction to the participants, which consisted of KECSAC teachers and administrators as well as EKU College of Education student teachers. Ms. Gilligan focused on responsive teaching and the need to reach pupils with different learning styles. This topic is particularly important for KECSAC educators who are teaching multiple grade levels in one classroom and whose students often face barriers to their success. She provided multiple strategies and activities that can be adapted to any area of content. She also sent participants home with a packet of materials containing specific examples for reading, math, science and social studies.

Ms. Gilligan has been in education for over 30 years. Her career includes teaching on the middle and high school levels, coaching elementary and middle school children with learning disabilities, serving as a District Curriculum and Literacy Specialist working with both administrators and teachers K-12, and as an Academic Dean of a large high school. As an Academic Dean she worked with a faculty of 100 to develop curriculum, instruction, and assessment designed to increase student achievement. Ms. Gilligan was delighted to bring her years of experience to the training and share what she has learned from others. As she states, “I have been very fortunate to have educators I could turn to for assistance with planning and implementing differentiated instruction in the classroom. I am more than willing to do this for others as they begin their ‘differentiated instruction journey.’”

The second installment of the Critical Issues Series: Closing the Achievement Gap was held on November 4, 2010 at Warren County Day Treatment. This training was designed to target a small group of educators who could spend the day engaged in hands-on teaching strategies and activities.

The second installment of the Critical Issues Series continued with Closing the Achievement Gap on November 4, 2010. This training was designed to target a small group of educators who could spend the day engaged in hands-on teaching strategies and activities. The administration of Warren County Day Treatment graciously hosted the training. April Pieper, an Education Consultant with the Kentucky Department of Education, shared with the group not only the extent to which the achievement gap affects the students in their programs, but resources for helping those students realize success. State agency programs are among those most affected by the gap and the information provided was very beneficial to both teachers and administrators present. The half day training ended with participants eager to learn more about the resources and strategies offered by KDE to combat educational barriers.

Two more Critical Issues Series installments are planned for spring 2011, including Classroom Management on March 16, 2011 and KDE Core Content Areas and Resources on March 30, 2011.
Listen to the Children—Voices that Beg to be Heard: Interviews with State Agency Children

The research design for *Listen to the Children—Voices that Beg to be Heard* has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at Eastern Kentucky University, which grants permission for all research involving human subjects. Designed to provide state agency children an opportunity to voice the successes and barriers they have encountered while receiving services at a state agency children’s educational program, this research will provide background information about state agency children, their adversities, goals and expectations regarding their education. Information gained through this research will be used to inform state policy makers about the intense needs of this population of students and guide future initiatives aimed at improving the educational services provided to state agency children.

With the approval process behind us, staff has begun to focus on implementing the project. In early-December, the interview team, consisting of Kaye Parker, Katie Helton, Heather Carpenter and Lee Ann Morrison, participated in a training lead by KECSAC director and principal investigator, Dr. Ronnie Nolan. This training was designed to familiarize everyone with the research design, review necessary consent forms and brush up on interview techniques. During this training the team role-played interviews.

In mid-December, the interview team conducted sample interviews with student volunteers from Madison County Day Treatment. The complete process was followed – from getting parental consent, to student assent, to testing the interview questions and even transcribing the interview tapes. The information gained from these sample interviews will not be used as part of the research, but the interviews provided valuable training for the interview team.

Over the next six months, KECSAC staff anticipates interviewing approximately 140 students who are currently receiving educational services in one of fifteen selected programs. Programs selected include youth development centers, day treatment programs, group homes, and residential treatment programs so that the “voices” will be representative of the entire population of state agency children. Programs were selected based on the average length of stay of the students. The goal was to select programs where students had the longest length of stay in the hope that all the information gained would be specific and pertinent to the research.

Students will be asked to volunteer to be part of the study. The interview questions focus on the educational experiences of the students since starting school. Specific questions focus on how often the student has changed schools, the transition process when the student changed schools, previous school attendance and their educational experiences while in state agency programs. Each interview is expected to last approximately 60 minutes. All student interviews will be completed by June 30, 2011.

*Voices that Beg to be Heard* is modeled after a project completed by KECSAC in 1996-1997 called *Listen to the Children: Interviews with State Agency Children*. *Listen to the Children* provided insightful personal perspectives about the lives and educational needs of state agency children and we are confident that *Voices that Beg to be Heard* will once again share a rich portrait of our students’ experiences and expressed needs as they are educated in state agency programs.
Alternative Education in Kentucky Video

During the second quarter, KECSAC has worked collaboratively with the Kentucky Center for School Safety to create a video focusing on effective components of alternative education programs in Kentucky. Lee Ann Morrison, Training Coordinator for KYCSS, took the lead in developing the video with significant input from KECSAC staff. The video will focus on common components that, when combined, create an environment where all students can be successful. The hope is that the video will become a resource guide for school districts across the Commonwealth that want to create a new alternative education program or improve their current program.

Filming of the video, which took place at several locations across the state, was completed in mid-December and includes interviews with current and former students of alternative education programs as well as district teachers, principals and superintendents. Editing and final production of the video should be completed in February. Once completed, the video will be available on the KECSAC and KYSCC websites.

Community Partner Award

Each year, KECSAC and the State Agency Children School Administrators Association (SACSAA) honor exemplary educators and support personnel. These awards are designed to highlight the dedication and skill that teachers, administrators and support staff in KECSAC programs are bringing to the education of students at-risk. This year, we are adding a new category that seeks to recognize a community member or organization that has shown outstanding support to state agency children and programs. Nominees could include civic, religious or corporate organizations or individual community members. The new Community Partner Award, along with the traditional categories of School Administrator, Teacher and Support Staff Person of the Year Awards, will be presented at the 10th Annual Alternative Strategies for Educating Students At-Risk Conference on July 19-21, 2011. Also presented at the conference will be the KECSAC Student of the Year Award, the second year this award will be given out along with a scholarship for postsecondary education pursuits.

Interagency Advisory Group

KECSAC’s Interagency Advisory Group met twice during the second quarter. The first meeting took place at The Providence School in Nicholasville, home to the KECSAC program, All God’s Children. The Providence School is one of KDE’s identified Best Practice Sites for Alternative Education in the commonwealth. The group toured the facility, led by student volunteers, and was able to ask a panel of students questions about their experiences at The Providence School and what improvements they would make if they were in charge. The improvement echoed by many of the students was the desire to see regular schools as committed to individual success as they know the teachers and staff of The Providence School are to their success.

The second meeting took place in Frankfort at the Berry Hill Mansion, where the topics of discussion included the new KECSAC Standards & Implementation Procedures Guidebook, the Listen to the Children research project, the Alternative Education Video, the coming Status Offenders Legislation up for debate, staff position upgrades in the KECSAC central office and organizing professional development events for the 2011-2012 school year.

KECSAC Procedures & Implementation

In order to provide guidance and support for local school districts, private child care providers and state agencies serving state agency children as they work to plan, design, implement and evaluate state agency children education programs in Kentucky, KECSAC has developed a Standards & Implementation Procedures Guidebook. It includes many of the state statutes and regulations that govern the administration of state agency programs as well as the standards and indicators used to evaluate the quality and sustainability of the services provided to state agency children. The standards, suggestions and implementation strategies provided in this document shall be considered requirements for new program development or for modification of existing programs. The information shall be used to create programs that are flexible and effective in assisting state agency children with overcoming academic, social, emotional, behavioral and psychological challenges so they can learn, graduate and become productive members of society.
The purpose of the document is to identify standards of implementation and operational procedures for local school districts serving state agency children and to ensure an equitable and quality education program for state agency children. Such procedures strengthen programs, and enhance the opportunity for increased student achievement and success. Additionally, the standards will provide the following:

a. operational guidance for state agency children programs;
b. clear procedures and standards for developing and enhancing state agency children programs;
c. clear procedures and standards for transitioning students from state agency programs to traditional schools or other services;
d. clear procedures for increasing and strengthening services provided by local school districts serving state agency children;
e. clear procedures for strengthening the articulation and coordination of services for students in state care or custody;
f. clear elements of effective state agency children programs.

State agency programs for children who are in the care or custody of the Commonwealth of Kentucky continue to evolve as the needs of our students change. Our state partners, the Kentucky Departments of Education, Juvenile Justice, Community Based Services and Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities, are committed to providing a quality educational experience for our state agency children and are working in collaboration with each other and local school districts to ensure the effective delivery of educational standards to our students. State agency programs are diverse, often reflecting the needs of the partnering state agency, but they all speak to the ingenuity and creativity with which individuals have sought to overcome barriers that may impede the delivery of quality services to state agency students who are at-risk of school failure due to a lack of academic success, behavior problems and various other factors. It is our goal that this policy and procedures guidebook will help facilitate the delivery of quality educational services to our Commonwealth's most at-risk student population.

### KECSAC Administrative Budget & State Agency Children’s Fund

#### Administrative Budget

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#### SACF

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