Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children

Mission

We are committed to the belief that all children can learn and have a right to quality education. KECSAC protects and assures this right by accessing resources and providing support to programs that educate State Agency Children.

Those children who do not receive an education of quality cannot realize their greatest potential.

We believe these goals are achieved through the process of interagency collaboration.

To accomplish the mission, all members of this statewide partnership must exemplify and publicly promote collaborative relationships with its partners and other associates.

Interagency Advisory Group

Doug Bennett, Laurel County School District
Sue Buley, SACSAA President, Adair YDC
Sherri Clusky, Department of Education
Diane Gruen-Kidd, Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities
Barbara Hamilton, Department of Juvenile Justice
_chrissy Jones, Franklin County School District
Sylvia Kuster, Department of Juvenile Justice
Paula Saenz, Department for Community Based Services
Jill Tabor, SACSAA President-Elect, The Brook Dupont
Denise Weider, Department for Community Based Services

“The Working Together to Educate All of Kentucky’s Children”

In accordance with the KECSAC regulations, 505 KAR 1:080, the Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children has a governing structure that includes oversight by an Interagency Advisory Group (IAG) composed of representatives of the state agencies, KDE, the State Agency Children School Administrators’ Association (SACSAA) and a superintendent from a school district that provides education to state agency children. This group is to provide recommendations for policy and procedure development for KECSAC. The independent representatives of the state agencies, including KDE, are appointed to serve on the IAG by their respective commissioners. The president and president-elect of SACSAA serve on the IAG and are elected to those positions by the membership of the independent organization. The superintendent member of the IAG is selected by standing members of the IAG, based on recommendations or nominations by SACSAA membership. All members of the IAG serve without compensation from KECSAC.
My Fellow Kentuckians,

Over the last several months the Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children (KECSAC) has been working with our committed collaborative partners to meet the educational needs of children and youth who are in the care or custody of the Commonwealth. We have been faced with two very new realities about our student population. With the implementation of Senate Bill 200, our juvenile facilities have seen dramatic reductions in both the number of students being served and their length of stay. This seems to be happening at the same time as a rise in the enrollments of students being served in Department of Community Based Services programs. Along with our local school districts, we are working to adjust to our new normal. During this quarter and leading up to it, we have collaborated to ensure our students are getting the services they need, both in the classroom and out.

As we continue to find solutions to our changing student population demographics, we must also continue working to deliver the highest-quality educational experience possible. I am proud of the great work taking place across Kentucky to address education outcomes for our students while simultaneously continuing to raise our academic standards. We know that to break the chains of generational poverty many of our students face, we have to provide a quality education. Our programs, our teachers, our administrators and state partners are the difference between a life of promise for our students and a life of lost opportunity. Our alternative programs of distinction, including Bullitt Alternative Center, are leading the way in modeling high expectations with “in-the-trenches” strategies that work for our students.

KECSAC is committed to our continuing work on behalf of state agency children, in an increasingly diverse community with increasingly diverse needs. With this in mind, our program improvement specialists, including our newest addition, Mr. Sonny McManus, provide on-site monitoring and support to our local school districts and programs through a comprehensive annual review process. No other education programs in Kentucky undergo such a comprehensive review process annually and we are proud of the growth our programs have accomplished. We also know we still have a lot of ground to make up for our kids. With our collaborative partners, working together for the best interest of children and youth in state care, we are making tremendous strides in helping our students become self-sufficient, contributing members of our larger world community.

You will find enclosed a summary of our work and accomplishments, as well as details related to our ongoing initiatives. The work 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.
Policies and Ongoing Initiatives

Bullitt Alternative Center Shares Their Best Practices At November Teaching In Action

Bullitt Alternative Center in Shepherdsville hosted a KECSAC Teaching in Action Training on November 20. Staff from other state agency children programs, the Department of Education and KECSAC joined Principal B.J. Ritter as he welcomed the group and shared the mission and vision of the education program. Bullitt Alternative Center is a Kentucky Department of Education School of Distinction in Alternative Education for 2015.

This model program uses data-driven instruction and interventions to help each child find success, which is manifesting itself in a greatly reduced recidivism rate among Bullitt County students. Mr. Ritter attributes part of this success to the staff’s targeted efforts around transitioning students back to their sending schools and using data on behavior referrals to reduce and prevent disruptions.

The center has an outstanding group of staff who use and develop best practices in the areas of standards based grading, building resiliency, behavior management, transition, and college and career preparation. The teachers, counselors, instructional aids and other stuff all exude an excitement and a level of dedication to their students that is felt throughout the building.

KECSAC would like to thank the staff of Bullitt Alternative Center for welcoming us into their school and sharing valuable resources with colleagues from around the state.

KECSAC Program Improvement Process Updates

As part of KECSAC’s ongoing program improvement process and continual growth model for helping local school districts meet the educational needs of state agency children, KECSAC Program Improvement Specialists perform annual site visits and monitoring of each of the 85 funded KECSAC programs, operating in 51 local school districts across the Commonwealth. Throughout the monitoring period (which coincides with the school year) programs receive individual visits, or “team” visits where two or all three of the Specialists conduct a joint monitoring visit at the same program. *At the time of this quarterly report 48 visits had been conducted by Specialists for the 2015/2016 school year.*

During the 2014/2015 year a work group of KECSAC staff and school administrators was created and collaborated throughout the year to revise our Program Improvement Monitoring Tool and SIDE document in order to align our monitoring standards to AdvancED standards, which KDE uses for their school monitoring. In addition to the AdvancED standards, the monitoring tool also includes standards that relate to alternative settings...
Policies and Ongoing Initiatives

and KECSAC requirements as well. The new Program Improvement Tool, which is being implemented this year, is what Program Improvement Specialists use to audit the educational services provided to determine if the AdvancED standards, as well as standards pertaining to SAC, are developed and implemented accordingly. During visits they will observe classrooms, review prepared evidence, and interview the school administrator, program administrator, teacher(s), and students. If needed, recommendations for improvement are communicated to the program and a follow-up visit is scheduled. Attention is also paid to progress made from the previous year’s report to ensure programs are continuing to meet standards and improve curriculum. If you have questions about the Program Improvement Process feel free to contact Dr. Ronnie Nolan or Cindy Held at (859) 622-6552.

State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children

The State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children (SAPEC) held their second meeting of the fiscal year in Louisville, KY on November 22-24, 2015. It coincided with the Kentucky Council for Exceptional Children Conference held at the Galt House. KECSAC Director Dr. Nolan, serving a second three-year term, was elected secretary and will serve as a member of the executive committee of the Panel.

During the meeting, members held a public hearing, reviewed the Kentucky Department of Education’s (KDE) recommendations for the State Systemic Improvement Plan as well as the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report. The next SAPEC meeting is scheduled for February 18-19, 2016 at the Capital Plaza Hotel in Frankfort, KY. A public hearing is scheduled for February 18 at 6:30 p.m. at the hotel.

KECSAC IAG Meets Twice During Second Quarter

During the second quarter of the 2015/2016 school year, KECSAC’s Interagency Advisory Group (IAG) met twice. One meeting took place at Lincoln Village Regional Juvenile Detention Center in Elizabethtown, KY on October 20, and the other took place at KECSAC’s office located in the Martin House on Eastern Kentucky University’s campus in Richmond, KY on December 11. The December meeting was moved from December 8th to the 11th due to schedule conflicts with the Governor’s Inauguration.

During the October meeting, discussions focused on how programs are supporting students academically to ensure they graduate and how KECSAC can further support, and work towards making graduation a priority in programs. Senate Bill 200 was also discussed among the group since it has had impacts on many KECSAC programs. The meeting ended with a tour of the Lincoln RJDC where members toured the classrooms, and learned about the curriculum and projects students are involved with. At the December meeting, much of the meeting centered around updates from partnering agencies on the IAG. Department of Juvenile Justice Representatives shared information about several projects they are currently implementing, including technology-driven initiatives that will help update and increase technology and Internet usage at their programs. Other representatives shared information regarding progress on upcoming and ongoing regulations and projects that impact state agency children. The group also enjoyed a catered holiday meal since it was the last IAG meeting of the year.
Policies and Ongoing Initiatives

KDE Welcomes Sixth Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt

During the second quarter one of KECSAC’s partnering agencies, The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), officially welcomed Stephen L. Pruitt as the new commissioner of education. Commissioner Pruitt comes to Kentucky as the state’s sixth commissioner with an extensive background in education at the local, state and national levels.

He started his education career as a high school chemistry teacher in Fayetteville and Tyron, Georgia. He later served as the science and mathematics program manager and director of academic standards with the Georgia Department of Education. Subsequently, he was named associate state superintendent for assessment and accountability and ultimately chief of staff for the Georgia Department of Education.

Most recently, Pruitt served as senior vice president for Achieve, Inc., a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit education reform organization based in Washington, D.C. During his tenure with Achieve, he coordinated the development of the Next Generation Science Standards. Pruitt also served as president of the Council of State Science Supervisors and a member of the writing team for the College Board Standards for College Success (Science). In addition, he served on the National Academies of Science Committee on Conceptual Framework for New Science Education Standards which developed the Framework for K-12 Science Education – a foundational document for the Next Generation Science Standards.

A native of Georgia, Commissioner Pruitt holds a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from North Georgia College and State University, a master’s degree in science education from the University of West Georgia and a Doctorate of Philosophy in chemistry education from Auburn University.

Pruitt and his wife are the parents of two children. Their son attends the University of Colorado-Boulder and their daughter is a high school junior.

DJJ Continues Integration of Trauma-Informed Care In Programs

The National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) defines trauma as the experience of violence and victimization including sexual abuse, physical abuse, severe neglect, personal loss or death, domestic violence and/or the witnessing of violence, terrorism, or disasters. Studies show that traumatic events often lead to mental health disorders and interaction with the criminal justice system.

Studies show that many juveniles entering into the justice system report having experienced six major traumatic life events, not including the trauma inherently experienced as a result of incarceration. Adolescents in confined residential settings often have extensive trauma histories and experience profound behavioral, emotional, and interpersonal problems. In a national survey of adolescents, 70 percent reported at least one form of victimization within the last year, and nearly half had been victimized more than once during that time.

Two of the primary focus areas within the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) infrastructure, where preliminary trauma work has been initiated, are the Department’s clinical programming and staff training. In 2014, the Kentucky Justice and Public Safety Cabinet, in collaboration with DJJ, received a $500,000 grant to fund the initial implementation of trauma-informed care within the department. The intent of this initiative is to create a level of understanding and education regarding what trauma does to youth and to equip staff with
the skills needed to provide effective treatment and healthy interactions. The research which has occurred in the past decade has elevated the importance of trauma integration within juvenile justice systems. The findings and outcomes have provided the impetus for juvenile justice entities and systems to implement trauma-informed screenings, assessments, and treatments within their settings. Creating a trauma-informed setting is a process which requires knowledge acquisition and behavioral modification, cultural and organizational paradigm shifts, and policy and procedural change at every level of an organization. As explained by The National Center for Trauma-Informed Care, this type of care changes the “paradigm from one that asks, ‘What’s wrong with you?’ to one that asks, ‘What has happened to you?’” As a result of integrating trauma-informed care in DJJ facilities, Kentucky is quickly becoming a national leader in working to heal youth in confinement.

DJJ and the University of Kentucky Center for Trauma and Children have selected seven sites, which have started the trauma-informed care integration process.

The sites are:
1) Campbell Regional Juvenile Detention Center
2) Lake Cumberland Youth Development Center
3) Eastern District Community Services–Region 2a
4) McCracken Regional Juvenile Detention Center
5) Morehead Youth Development Center
6) Murray Group Home
7) Northern Kentucky Youth Development Center

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**Quarterly Budget Updates**

**Administrative Budget**
- 1st Qtr: 52.3% ($289,751.79)
- 2nd Qtr: 28.7% ($159,267.79)
- Remaining: 19% ($105,291.42)

**State Agency Children’s Fund**
- 1st Qtr: 67.55% ($6,415,665.59)
- 2nd Qtr: 13.05% ($1,238,999.50)
- Remaining: 19.40% ($1,843,178.91)

*SACF fund reflects budget information totals submitted by districts as of 01/15/16*
“Working Together to Educate All of Kentucky’s Children”

Kentucky Department of Education
Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice
Kentucky Department for Community Based Services
Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities
State Agency Children School Administrator Association
Local Education Agencies
Eastern Kentucky University/College of Education