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

Ben Annis, SACSAA President, Green River YDC
Doug Bennett, Superintendent, Laurel County School District
Diane Gruen-Kidd, Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities
Justin Hubbard, SACSAA President-Elect, Mayfield YDC
Shannon Jett, Department of Juvenile Justice
Christina Weeter, Department of Education
Lorraine Wilbur, Department for Community Based Services
Angela Winkfield, Department for Community Based Services

“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.
A Message from KECSAC Director Dr. Ronnie Nolan

My Fellow Kentuckians,

As we reflect in the following pages about the many great accomplishments during our second quarter, we are already looking forward to an exciting and busy third quarter. The Legislative session has already started and has been charged with developing a biennial budget. Governor Beshear will be introducing his budget proposal in the coming weeks and has promised a budget that is focused on public education and the needs of our most vulnerable students. We expect SEEK funding to be a center point of this proposal, along with teacher raises, school safety, and increased support for extended school services. While the Governor has committed to prioritizing education in his budget proposal, legislators from both chambers will surely modify that document to promote their priorities, which may include some of the same investments. Even with the discussion around additional investments in education, we know going into the next biennial that budgets will remain tight and that as a Commonwealth we do not have all the resources necessary to invest in every priority. We will continue to support the elimination of specialized tax exemptions that reduce the amount of funding needed to promote and develop a healthy and educated citizenry while also encouraging bold tax reform and new revenue generation for education.

While the legislative session will move with a frenzy over the next several months, this quarterly report provides us the opportunity to reflect on our shared work on behalf of state agency children. We are fortunate to work with servant leaders across Kentucky, in our schools and districts and at the state level with our agency partners. Our shared work and shared vision for providing quality educational services has been a leading force in our efforts to ensure our students have the resources and skills they need and deserve. And while we still have a great deal of work ahead, we also have much to celebrate.

During this quarter we have witnessed a resurgence of energy and attention on education issues at the state level. Governor Beshear recently appointed a new state board of education, made up of individuals with exceptional public education experience. We are extremely pleased that Ms. Lu Young, former superintendent of Jessamine County and KECSAC Interagency Advisory Group member, has been appointed to serve. Ms. Young has always been a fierce advocate of state agency children and we are excited to welcome her advocacy for our children to the state board. In addition, Mr. Kevin Brown, former deputy commissioner and general counsel at the Kentucky Department of Education has been named interim commissioner while a national search for a permanent commissioner is conducted. Mr. Brown has consistently been a strong voice for state agency children throughout his tenure at KDE and we are excited to welcome him back on behalf of the children and youth we serve. Within his first few weeks of service, Mr. Brown has already reached out to countless superintendents across Kentucky as well as our office, to build bridges and seek input about the needs of the students we serve. In partnership with the new board and the new leadership at KDE, our program improvement specialists continue to work with our school districts to ensure high academic standards, while our state partners at DJJ, DCBS, KDE and Behavioral Health are diligently working to meet the treatment needs of our students. This collaborative approach demonstrates a concerted, comprehensive approach to serving state agency children and, I believe, is a model for how we could most effectively meet the needs of all students in Kentucky.

These efforts, along with many others, are detailed within this report. You will find 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.
Policies and Ongoing Initiatives

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 78 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 all of the Specialists conduct a joint monitoring at the same program. At the time of this quarterly report 43 visits had been conducted for the year.

KECSAC will continue to use the updated Program Improvement Monitoring Tool and SIDE document that aligns 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 and KECSAC requirements as well.

KECSAC Names Ms. Sherri Clusky Associate Director

KECSAC is pleased to welcome Sherri Clusky to the team as our associate director. Sherri is formerly an education consultant with the Kentucky Department of Education where she served in the Division of Student Success in the Office of Continuous Improvement and Support. In her role at KDE, Sherri served as a member of the KECSAC Interagency Advisory Group, representing the state department of education. In addition, prior to KDE, Sherri served in various roles with the Pike County School District, serving as program administrator at the Phelps Day Treatment Program, a DJJ contracted day treatment. She brings with her real-life, hands-on experience in our programs as well as state level policy experience related to advancing alternative education in Kentucky. We are confident that Sherri will continue her lifelong mission of improving educational outcomes for our children and youth. We are thrilled to have her on board and look forward to our shared work. Please join us in welcoming Sherri Clusky to the KECSAC team.

Census Collection

Preparation for the 2019 census collection of state agency children began during the second quarter by updating the collection tools and instructions for completing the census documents. The census collection date for KECSAC programs this past year was November 26th. KECSAC census collection is part of the federal Child Find process completed each year. Child Find requires all school districts to identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. The published census data, which is typically published by the KECSAC office in the spring, provides valuable information about state agency children to stakeholders across the state.
 KECSAC Projected Per-Child Rate for 2020/2021

The KECSAC State Agency Children’s Fund (SACF) allocation has been projected for the 2020-2021 school year. This total SACF will be allocated to existing and pre-qualified programs. The SACF rate is determined by the total of funds available and the number of eligible State Agency Children served.

Our current per-child projections are based on our current budget allocation. However, Governor Beshear will be proposing a new budget during the current legislative session. At this time we do not have a final proposed budget and no budget has been approved by the full General Assembly.

Based on the data we have at this time, listed below is the projected per child SACF amount for 2020-2021 school year. The per child amount at this time is only a projection and is contingent upon the total amount of funding available and the final budget allocation provided by the Kentucky General Assembly as well as the total number of state agency children being served in our programs. Please note that new programs may apply for KECSAC funding until the deadline of April 1, 2020. The addition of new programs will decrease the allocation totals for all programs.

The KECSAC State Agency Children’s Fund (SACF) allocation projection for the 2020-2021 school year is $4,076 per child.

This total SACF will be allocated to existing and pre-qualified programs. The distribution of SACF will be based upon Average Daily Membership (ADM) from the 2019-2020 school year for programs operated and/or contracted with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services or the Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. Youth Development Centers and Juvenile Detention Centers are funded based on twenty-five percent of the rated capacity of the program or the ADM, whichever is higher. All other DJJ programs, including day treatment programs, are funded on the ADM. Any new and expanded programs for the 2020-2021 school year will be approved based upon the availability of funding. The KECSAC office anticipates sending the Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) for the 2020-2021 school year in May 2020. The actual per child rate will be included with the MOA.
Policies and Ongoing Initiatives

KECSAC IAG Meets During Second Quarter

During the second quarter of the 2019/2020 school year, KECSAC’s Interagency Advisory Group (IAG) met once on November 12, 2019 at Foothills Academy in Clinton County. During the meeting the group discussed the search underway for a new associate director at KECSAC, and partners contributed thoughts and ideas to how alternative programs can continue to meet the new graduation requirements for students. Partner IAG members also shared pertinent information from each of their agencies. After the meeting Foothills Academy provided lunch for the group in their cafeteria, and conducted a tour of the campus which includes a large woodworking and construction workshop. Some partners also took the opportunity to travel to a cabin owned by the program that students completely built. The cabin will be used as a reward “getaway” for young men in the program as it has both sleeping, living and kitchen ammenities for students and program staff, and is located next to Cumberland River, providing great fishing opportunities.

Foothills Academy has utilized KECSAC mini-grants in the past to help fund a unique music program teaching piano and guitar, and the woodworking and construction program offers students invaluable skills for their future.
KECSAC offers online professional development videos that are available at your convenience and offer EILA credit hours.

Visit kecsac.eku.edu/professional-development to check out our videos and learn more about KECSAC’s professional development opportunities.
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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