



**Promoting Educational Quality  
for all  
State Agency Children  
Through  
Statewide Collaborative  
Relationships**

Kentucky Educational Collaborative  
for  
State Agency Children  
2004-2005  
Annual Report



# Message from Executive Director



Dear State Agency Partners and Friends,

This past year has been most productive in spite of several significant challenges. Due to spouse job relocation, degree completion, and other such issues, vacancies occurred in several key central office positions. We were fortunate to attract several outstanding individuals to fill the vacant positions. The transition was relatively seamless and there was little or no disruption to KECSAC service delivery.

The work of the Program Improvement Specialists continues to be successful and to expand. During the 2005-2006 Fiscal Year, the Program Improvement Specialists will be given additional days in their contract to increase their service and availability to programs and school districts. In coming years, they will focus more intensely on the achievement gap between SAC and traditional school students. They will also begin to focus more closely on the SACF and SEEK expenditures. The State Board of Education has directed KECSAC to have districts utilize the CATS scores to develop program improvement plans for their SAC programs. In compliance with this, future MOAs with KECSAC school districts will include this utilization of CATS scores and the submission of a Program Improvement Plan.

We were very proud to know that Ramey Estep-High School of Boyd County in Rush, Kentucky was the first and only State Agency Program in the Commonwealth to receive SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) accreditation. This is an important academic achievement for the administration, staff, and students Ramey-Estep.

Due to the efforts of our outstanding student workers, Leslie Hensley and Tiffany Beddoe, KECSAC was presented the 2005 "Best Place to Work" award by the Student Service Office at Eastern Kentucky University. This was a very special highlight of the year.

The outside evaluator, Rona Roberts, is in the process of gathering the data and information that will enable her to complete the KECSAC Outside Program Evaluation that is conducted on a biennial basis. This report will provide the central office staff and our State Agency Partners with valuable insight into KECSAC program effectiveness. This report will be completed by January of 2006.

During the past year, two perpetual challenges were the funding for SACF programs and the difficult relationships between the education and treatment components in a number of SAC programs. Based on the opening of new programs by DJJ and requests from new school districts, all indicators are that the need for increased State Agency Children funding will continue. The cost of educating SAC students has become an ever increasing burden for school districts. The original purpose of KECSAC was to reduce that burden. One immediate remedy is to link SEEK annual increases to KECSAC annual increases.

The difficult relationship between education and treatment in programs for State Agency Children has been an historic one. During the past year there have been several unfortunate examples of this problem among KECSAC funded programs and districts. In the coming year we will invest our efforts and resources toward enhancing the relationship between education and treatment in state agency programs.

*Outside cover: Japanese garden created by students at a KECSAC program.*

# Background

## KECSAC Timeline

- 1990 - Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA)
- 1992 - Senate Bill 260 passed
  - Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children established. (KRS 158.135).
- 1994 - House Bill 826 passed
  - Definition of State Agency Children expanded to include youth placed or financed through the Cabinet for Families and Children and other residential treatment programs
- 1996 - House Bill 117 passed
  - Department of Juvenile Justice established.
- 1998 - House Bill 447 passed
  - Definition of State Agency Children expanded to include youth in therapeutic foster care and juvenile detention facilities.

In 1990, the Kentucky General Assembly passed the landmark Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA). KERA called for sweeping changes in the funding and delivery of elementary and secondary education in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. However, it did not specifically address the needs of State Agency Children. In response to this deficiency, the Kentucky General Assembly passed Senate Bill 260, which called for the establishment of the Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children (KECSAC). In March 1994, the definition of state agency children broadened the eligibility for State Agency Children beyond those located in state operated and contracted day treatment, group homes, and residential placements to include youth placed or financed through the Cabinet for Families and Children in other residential treatment programs.

In 1996, the General Assembly established the Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice and transferred responsibility for youthful and public juvenile offenders to the new agency. In 1998, the statute was again revised with the passage of House Bill 447 and House Bill 689, which expanded the definition of State Agency Children to include youth in therapeutic foster care placements and those confined in state operated juvenile detention facilities.

The Commonwealth of Kentucky annually provides residential and community based services to over 18,000 youth. These State Agency Children (SAC) are the responsibility of the Kentucky Departments of Juvenile Justice, Community Based Services, and Mental Health and Mental Retardation, which operate, fund or contract for services from a variety of programs including residential facilities, group homes, and day treatment centers. These three state agencies, along with the Kentucky Department of Education, comprise the core membership of this innovative statewide collaborative dedicated to the quality education of State Agency Children. The College of Education at Eastern Kentucky University, the State Agency Children School Administrator Association, and a superintendent from a local education agency also play critical roles as partners in this unique collaborative. The educational services for State Agency Children are the responsibility of local education agencies in the school district where the program for youth is located. State Agency Children also reside in private childcare and mental health (contracted) programs operated by non-profit, not-for-profit, and for-profit child welfare agencies and organizations.

The education of at-risk youth represents a significant component of most agencies' treatment interventions. Prior to the establishment of the Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children, the education programs for SAC were traditionally limited by complex funding, management, and limited coordination of services. The different levels of educational services provided to youth compounded the inequities that existed in the delivery of educational services to many at-risk and delinquent youth in Kentucky.

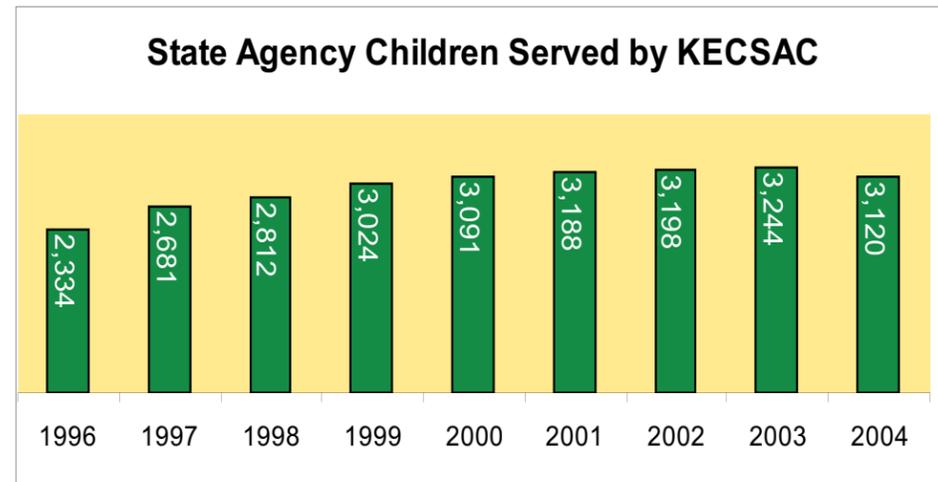
Fiscal Year 2004-2005 is the 13th year the Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children has worked with local education agencies and programs to provide an education that meets the varying needs of State Agency Children. This education includes academic, pre-vocational, vocational, special education, social skills, and post-secondary offerings, which are in compliance with state and federal educational laws and regulations.

# Census

The Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children (KECSAC) conducted a census of State Agency Children (SAC) on December 1, 2004. On this date, there was a total of 3,120 SAC whose education was provided or supervised by programs receiving support from the State Agency Children Fund. This represents

Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice, and six percent (6 %) were children in Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation programs.

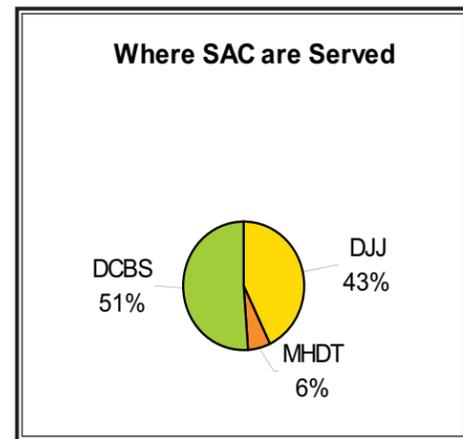
The 3,120 children enrolled in a SAC programs on December 1, 2004 represent a small number of the total number of students served over the twelve-month period. Each year since 1998, the census has asked treatment programs to provide a count of the number of different children (not including repeat admissions of the same child) who have been served since the last census date. Between December 1, 2003 and December 1, 2004 an estimated 18,017 SAC were provided educational support in 113 programs. This represents a decrease of 661 or (3.52%)



a decrease of 124 children or 4% under the 2003 count. During the same time period, the number of school districts participating in KECSAC decreased from 59 to 56, while the number of programs decreased from 117 to 113.

below the 2003 figure. Chart 1 shows trends of the number of SAC served on the census date.

On December 1, 2004, 50.1% of all State Agency Children in KECSAC-supported programs were classified as having one of the three major categories of incident disability. As Chart 2 shows, 28.7% of SAC had a low incident disability (the most severe type), 17.5% had a moderate incident disability, and 3.9% had a speech disorder. The percent of SAC with no identified disability was 49.9%.



Based on new programs scheduled to open in 2006 and requests from several new school districts, there will be

an increase in State Agency Children during the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

Fifty-one percent (51%) were children educated in programs of the Cabinet for Families and Children (CFC), forty-three percent (43%) of these programs were operated or contracted by the

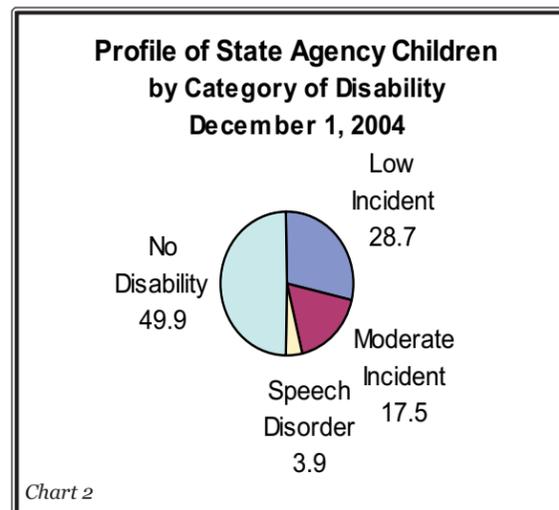


Chart 2

# Achievements

## KECSAC Staff Changes

Over the past year, KECSAC has been able to maintain its intense level of activity, even with staff vacancies created by the transition of personnel. Each of the vacancies were filled with highly experience applicants who made their entrance to the KECSAC central office team relatively seamless. Our new associate director is Dr. Ronnie Nolan. Monica Santa-Teresa assumed the position of training specialist. Monica is responsible for the many professional development events that KECSAC hosts each year. New budget specialist, Kristine Estill, will oversee the SACF funds and the KECSAC internal operating budget.

## Presentation to State Board of Education

In April, KECSAC presented the 2003-2004 annual report to the Kentucky State Board of Education (KBE). The KECSAC director, associate director, program improvement specialists, educators from Ramey-Estep High School and Morehead Center, and a graduate of the Morehead education program made the presentation.



Paula Stafford, Morehead Center teacher; Dr. Ronnie Nolan, KECSAC Associate Director; and April Collins, former KECSAC student at Morehead Center discuss April's presentation to the Kentucky Board of Education.

Discussion regarding program improvements at the KBE presentation resulted in KDE issuing a letter to KECSAC that requires all KECSAC programs to have a program improvement plan in place by the 2006-2007 school year.

KDE also invited KECSAC to attend a meeting to

discuss how A5/A6 programs should be audited and who was responsible for auditing each of the alternative education programs across the state.

## Education and Mediation

Providing mediation and disseminating information about the important need of state agency children remains an important task of KECSAC. During the past year, KECSAC staff met with political and community leaders across Kentucky to educate leaders of critical KECSAC needs as well as provided mediation services to school districts and programs. Staff provided mediation services to three school districts, new program orientation to four school districts, and visited three civic organizations to inform them of KECSAC's function and needs. Staff met with a representative of Mental Health/Mental Retardation Services to discuss educational issues relating to mental health day treatment programs.

## Funding Restored

The KECSAC programs, school district officials and friends who contacted their legislators and KDE representatives were effective in communicating the need to financially support KECSAC educational programs. During the Kentucky Legislative budget meetings, the KECSAC budget was restored to \$10.4 million, up from \$9.4 million the prior year; however, still below the previous \$10.8 million.

**Risk**  
More than others think is safe

**Care**  
More than others think is wise

**Dream**  
More than others think is practical

**Expect**  
More than others think is possible



**KECSAC Staff**

*Left to right: Dr. Norman Powell, Director; Kaye Parker, Communication and Reporting Specialist; Monica Santa-Teresa, Training Assistant; Dr. Ronnie Nolan, Associate Director, and Kristine Estill, Budget Specialist*



**KECSAC Mission Statement**

KECSAC is committed to the belief that all children can learn and have a right to a 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 that 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 our partners and other associates.



**Interagency Advisory Group (IAG)**

*Left to right: Nijel Clayton, Kentucky Department of Education; Denise Weider, Department for Community Based Services; Becky Tonietti, President of State Agency Children School Administrators Association; Dr. Norman Powell, KECSAC Director*

**Dr. Marlene Helm  
Named Interim Dean of College of Education**

Dr. Marlene Helm, a “highly experienced educator and administrator with more than 30 years of solid and diverse experience,” has been named interim dean of Eastern Kentucky University’s College of Education.

Dr. Helm joined the ECU faculty in 2004 after serving a year as interim superintendent of Fayette County Schools. From 1999 to 2003, she served the Commonwealth as Secretary of the Education, Arts and Humanities Cabinet.



Helm succeeds Dr. Mark Wasiesko, who resigned to become the Bank of Kentucky Endowed Chair in Educational Leadership at Northern Kentucky University. Wasiesko had served as dean since 1999.



**KECSAC Student Staff**

*Leslie Hensley, left. Tiffany Beddoe, right*

**“Best Place To Work”**

The KECSAC office recently won the first “Best Place to Work” award presented by ECU’s Student Services office. KECSAC is pleased to be recognized as a place that hires and supports ECU students.

Dr. Powell said of the award, “This is one of the nicest things that has ever happened to KECSAC. I am deeply moved by the students’ comments and honored to have such dedicated student assistants.” The students who work for KECSAC are dedicated and committed, to both their studies and the goals and mission of KECSAC.

# State Agency Children's Fund

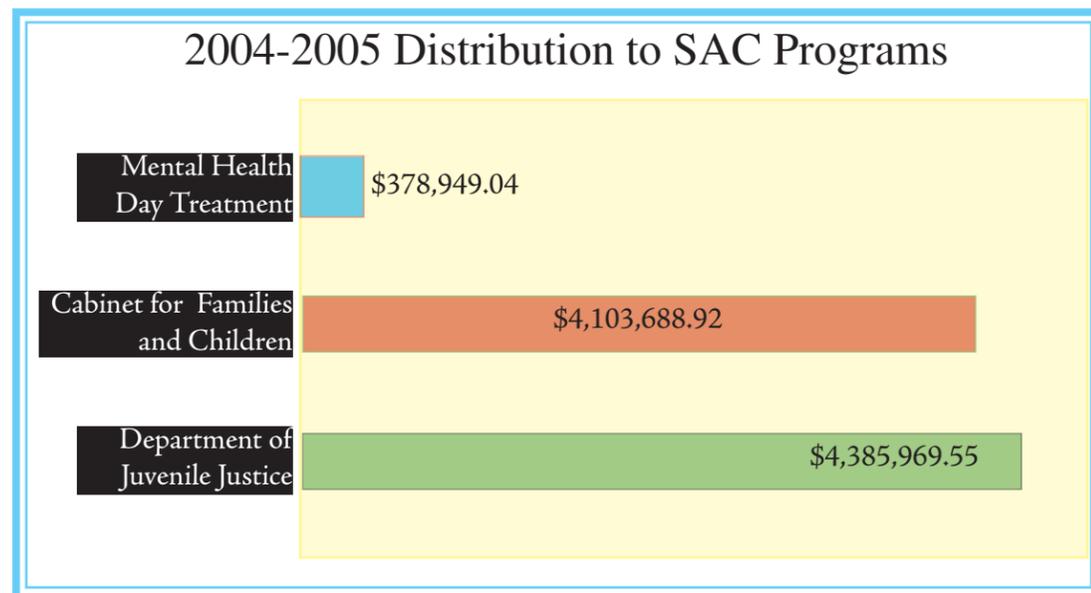
Established by the General Assembly in 1992, the State Agency Children's fund is collaboratively managed by KECSAC and the Kentucky Department of Education through a contract with the Department of Juvenile Justice. These funds are provided quarterly to support the education of SAC in local school districts. The funding amounts for SAC programs are based on Average Daily Membership or, in the case of DJJ programs, based on rated capacity. The funding rate for 2004-2005 was \$2,514 per child.

School Districts receive notification of an estimate of the per child amount for the coming fiscal year every December. The purpose of this notification is to enable school districts to finalize their budgets.

An annual Memorandum of Agreement is established between KECSAC and participating local school districts. Through a reimbursement system, all expenses are reported in the MUNIS format and the payment checks are distributed quarterly back to local districts by the Kentucky Department of Education.

Quarterly meetings with the Kentucky Department of Education were implemented this fiscal year to improve communication between KECSAC, KDE and school districts in an effort to increase efficiency in managing the State Agency Children's Fund.

For the 2004-2005 fiscal year, KECSAC distributed a total of **\$8,868,607.51** to **113** programs in **56** school districts throughout the State of Kentucky.



# Program Improvement

During state fiscal year 2004-05, KECSAC Program Improvement Specialists monitored 113 programs in 56 districts across Kentucky. This was the fifth year that all KECSAC programs have been monitored annually since the 1992 creation of KECSAC.

Following the visit, the Program Improvement Specialist compiled and submitted a written summary to KECSAC. School district superintendents, school administrators, program administrators, and the IAG representative for the specific program type received a copy of the report.



KECSAC Program Improvement Specialists  
front to back: Russell Behanan, Central Region; Lue Cole, Eastern Region, and Roy Chapman, Western Region

Data obtained from the site visits were evaluated to determine the level of program development and/or implementation for each KECSAC program. This data is very valuable to KECSAC in determining how well programs are doing according to Kentucky Standards and Indicators, as well as helping to determine needed professional development events.

Program administrators, teachers, and staff may use this data to identify specific strengths and program improvement needs. This is the second year that KECSAC has evaluated Programs using the KDE Standards. Data obtained at the end of the 2004 - 2005 school year is used to establish the reliability and validity of the evaluation tool and whether or not a standards evaluation system can be used to improve program proficiency.

Improvement specialists noted any specific technical support needs in the site report. KECSAC arranged for an educational consultant to provide follow-up training designed to meet the specific needs of 16 programs noted to have technical assistance needs. Trainings included:

- curriculum planning
- use of technology
- authentic, multiple assessment
- collaboration between education and treatment staff
- differentiated instructional strategies
- program improvement plan development

## Scholastic Audit Training

KECSAC continually strives to align the program improvement process with state audit processes. Russell Behanan, Roy Chapman, and Lue Cole, KECSAC program improvement specialists, along with Dr. Ronnie Nolan and Kaye Parker, attended the three-day Scholastic Audit Review training provided by the Kentucky Department of Education on October 27, 28, and 29, 2004. This training was invaluable in assuring KECSAC programs are reviewed in accordance with KDE standards and wording used in the reports is consistent with standards required by auditors across the state.

# Professional Development

Providing quality professional development opportunities for educators and administrators who work with state agency children is a high priority for the staff at KECSAC. During the fiscal year 2004-2005, KECSAC provided eight professional development opportunities attended by 778 educators and administrators.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Educating Kentucky's At-Risk Students in Alternative Settings was held on July 27-29, 2004 at the Perkins Center on the ECU campus in Richmond. This conference was attended by 191 people, including 31 graduate students who received three hours of graduate credit for participation in a week long training that included this KECSAC sponsored training conference.

Professional Development for New Educators was held on September 1-3, 2004 in Richmond. Seventy-two educators new to KECSAC programs attended this mandatory training. Dr. Betty Siegel, President of Kennesaw State University in Georgia, treated the attendees to her wit and charm as she expressed how important it is for teachers to convey to their students the belief that anyone can succeed, if they "dare to dream."

According to participant's written evaluations, this training was a success.

The 2004-05 statewide SACSAA meeting was held on September 28, 2004 at the Galt House in Louisville, Kentucky. Ninety-four administrators attended this mandatory KECSAC meeting. SACSAA presented awards to four outstanding educators nominated by their peers. Linda Borders, Bardstown Day Treatment/Buckhorn Academy in Bardstown Independent School district, was honored as the Outstanding Support Staff of the Year. William Greenwell, Rice Audubon in Jefferson County, was named Vocational Teacher of the Year. The Administrator of the Year award was presented to Sonya Wilds, Pulaski County Board of Education, and



Attendees at "Strategies to Reduce Substance Abuse Among Students" workshop thoughtfully consider questions from Decisions™ game.

Dero Downing of Warren Regional Juvenile Detention Center in Bowling Green City Schools was named Teacher of the Year.

The 2004-2005 KECSAC Workshop Series focused on "Strategies to Reduce Substance Abuse Among Students". The workshops were held in Bowling Green on October 19th, Somerset on October 20th, and Richmond on October 21st. Phil Diaz, keynote speaker and CEO of Gateway Community Service, Inc., the largest provider of substance abuse treatment and prevention services in Northeast Florida, provided attendees with strategies for preventing drug abuse in schools. Phil Davis, President of Reality Unlimited, Inc., and creator of Decisions™, The Drug Prevention Game, demonstrated how the reality game is an excellent tool to engage children in fun and non-invasive discussions aimed at teaching ways to avoid friends and situations that encourage drug



SACSAA Award Winners  
left to right: Linda Borders, Sonya Wilds, William Greenwell, and Dero Downing

use. Ninety-three attendees participated in these workshops. Reviews of the workshops were positive and attendees expressed gratitude that KECSAC focused on this critical issue.

The KECSAC Orientation training was held on December 3, 2004. This training was geared towards programs and staff who were new to KECSAC. Attendees were acquainted with the MOA process, the program improvement site visit, and other items important to KECSAC programs. Twenty-two personnel attended this training.

In February, KECSAC co-sponsored two events designed to promote diversity. On February 8, 2005, KECSAC, in conjunction with the ECU College of Education, co-sponsored a day-long diversity symposium for the staff and students of the College of Education. KECSAC also co-sponsored the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Diversity Conference on February 9-10, 2005.

KECSAC sponsored a technology training held at ECU. Attendees at this training were introduced to the newly published *KECSAC On-Line*, a discussion board that will allow KECSAC programs



Russell Behanan speaks to State Agency School Administrators at the annual statewide meeting held in September.

to communicate via an on-line community with educators at other KECSAC programs. Phil Davis, creator of the role-playing game Decisions™, presented training to 60 Department of Juvenile Justice staff in March. Decisions™, a drug prevention game, provides adults a way to communicate with children about drugs in a fun and non-invasive manner.

## Vision

As the Collaborative enters the 13th year of operation, a critical component of continued success will involve cooperation among the Kentucky Departments of Education, Community Based Services, Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services, Juvenile Justice, local education agencies and private residential treatment providers throughout the Commonwealth.

The paramount task facing the staff of KECSAC is to continue to maintain a spirit of trust and cooperation among the various groups concerned with the education of State Agency Children while adapting to program and legislative changes. The guiding principle of KECSAC's effort in this area will be to work for the best interest of Kentucky's State Agency Children.



Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children  
104 Case Annex  
Eastern Kentucky University  
521 Lancaster Avenue  
Richmond, Kentucky 40475  
[www.kecsac.eku.edu](http://www.kecsac.eku.edu)

