

Kansas Interagency Coordinating Council on Early Childhood Developmental Services / Kansas Interagency Coordinating Council Meeting Minutes September 19, 2025

Members Present (19 voting members)

Kathy Kersenbrock Ostmeyer, Chairperson & Service Provider
Lisa Collette, Vice-Chair & Insurance Commission Representative
Melissa Schoenberger, for Melissa Rooker, Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund
Tricia Waggoner, Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)
Angel Spann, for Dr. Watson, Kansas Commissioner of Education,
Sydney Dringman, Kansas Dept. for Children and Families (DCF)
Courtney Hochman, Parent Member
Chanda Gross, Medicaid Representative
Susan Bowles, Service Provider Member
Ann Elliott, Service Provider Member
Erin Schuweiler, Service Provider Member
Monica Ross, Service Provider Member
Marites Altuna, Service Provider Member
Kim Kennedy, Kansas Dept. for Children and Families (DCF) (Ex-Officio)
Lesli Girard, Families Together (Ex-Officio)
Jennifer King, SEAC liaison (Ex-Officio)

Members Not Present

Shanna Hailey, KS Department of Aging and Disabilities
Bronwyn Fees, KSU, incoming Board of Regents representative
Nichelle Adams, Kansas Dept. for Children and Families (DCF)
Senator Renee Erickson, Legislator
Representative Susan Ruiz, Legislator

Nonmembers Present

Stacy Clarke, SICCC Coordinator
Elizabeth Brunscheen-Cartagena, Past parent member
Keisha Cross, Preschool Ross Outstanding Educator
Sarah Sharp, Topeka #501
Dr. Nick Gardner, Topeka #501 Ross Elementary Principal
Dr. Tiffany Anderson, Topeka #501 Superintendent
Dr. Gray, Topeka #501
Megan Ponton, parent

Kacy Seitz, Whole Life Planning
Kelly Frantz-Langford, ITS TARC Topeka Part C Coordinator
Tammy Dreiling, Kid-Link Part C Coordinator

Call to order:

Chair Kathy Kersenbrock Ostmeyer called the meeting to order.
Introductions were made by all present (it was noted that there was a quorum).

Meeting Minutes:

The minutes from August 2025 were reviewed and approved.
Motion made by Susan Bowles to accept minutes
Second by Ann Elliott
Motion carried – All members voted yes

Meeting agenda:

The agenda for September 2025 was reviewed and approved with revisions.
Marites Altuna moved to accept the agenda
Courtney Hochman seconded the motion
Motion carried – All members voted yes

Public Comment:

Lisa Collette spoke as the Family Engagement Coordinator for the Kansas Deaf Blind project. The programs are vital and represent a little more than 1 million dollars in funding. Eight states have had their funding revoked because the words inclusion and transition were found. This fund services less than 1% of the children. Kansas did not receive the deaf-blind funding. Services in jeopardy include braille typewriters. This impedes these children their right to a fair and equitable education. National Family of Deaf Blindness has released a statement. These states are now appealing. An article with more information is attached to these minutes. Oregon, Washington, Wisconsin, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont are the states currently affected.

Local Program:

Elizabeth Caselman, Part C Coordinator spoke about serving families in their natural environment

She spoke about how a child she serves was traveling with her mother as a semi-truck driver so the child's services were supported in the truck, the child's natural environment. Services focused on safety and how to support a child's development when they spend a lot of time in a car seat. One issue was how to provide toys that can be easily retrieved if they fall. Elizabeth was also flexible with meeting times based on when the mom would be in town. Some other places they met included truck stops, restaurants, parks, Wal-Mart, the mall, and a local swimming pool. The provider

supported gross motor development in the mall and at swimming pool. The child is now in child care and the provider now provides services at the child care.

State Program:

Kacy Seitz, CLTC, ChC, & ChSNC, wealth management advisor, spoke about life plans for dependents with disabilities. Whole Life Stories

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Letter of Intent – sent to members as an attachment to the minutes

<https://www.teamimpact.org/>

Planning For Those With Special Needs

82%

of caregivers are concerned they do not have enough financial resources to last their disabled relative's lifetime

77%

of caregivers are concerned they won't be able to retire

70%

believe they will have to compromise their own retirement plans in order to provide for their dependent with special needs

60%

of caregivers with life insurance have less than \$300,000 of coverage and fewer than half have the protection of whole life coverage. However, the lifetime cost of caring for a dependent with autism is between \$1.4 and \$2.4 million

73%

of caregivers don't have long term care insurance

87%

are concerned about what will happen to their child with disabilities when they (mom/dad) are no longer living

59%

have not written a Will addressing the special needs of their relative

67%

of parents have not set up a Special Needs Trust

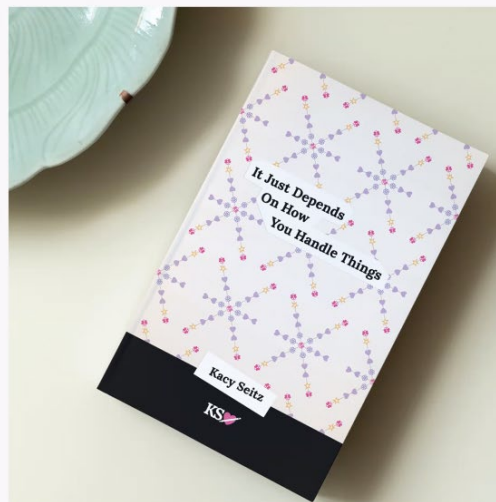
23%

of families have a formal financial plan for their dependent and only 37% work with a financial advisor

*Greenwald & Associates for the American College: Special Needs Caregiver Survey (2016)

KACY'S BOOK

From our firm's founder, Kacy Seitz, comes a bold and honest memoir. A relatable account of her family and their journey of navigating their newborn's brain injury, and ultimately, how they've learned to handle things.



WHY WE'RE DIFFERENT:



DEVELOPING YOUR SPECIAL NEEDS

Life Plan

Understand where you are and where you want to go...

You:

- What are your savings and spending habits?
- What are your short-, medium- and long-term financial goals?
- What do you want for your future?



Your Loved Ones:

- What do you envision for your loved one's life?
- Where will they live?
- Who will provide day-to-day care?
- What social activities do you want them to be a part of?

DEVELOPING YOUR SPECIAL NEEDS

Life Plan

Understand what benefits your loved one is eligible for:

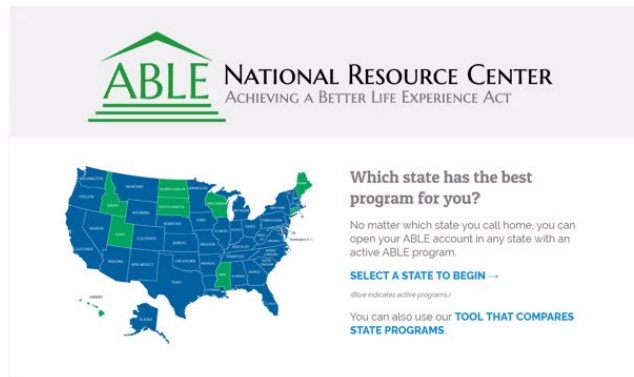
- Social Security: Supplemental Security Income and Retirement Income
- Medicaid: Health care and custodial home care
- Vocational services
- Public school services
- Veterans' benefits



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IS AN ABLE PLAN RIGHT FOR YOU?

1. Talk to your financial professional.
2. Visit ablenrc.org to learn more about your state's ABLE plans.



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RECAP



ASSEMBLE YOUR TEAM:

(1) financial professional (2) government benefit specialist (3) attorney



DEVELOP A SPECIAL NEEDS PLAN

- Understand your current situation.
- Decide what you want for the future.
- Get the benefits your loved one is eligible for.
- Estimate future cost of care.
- Establish and fund a special needs trust and/or ABLE plan.

Sydney Dringman, DCF Deputy Director of Permanency, asked about the cost of Whole Story Planning and how it can help families that may be interested in adopting a child with special needs.

Lesli Girard, Families Together also mentioned working together with DCF with a Parent to Parent group and asked if Kacy would meet with a group doing a book study.

Recognition – Bright SPOTS – Special education Preschool Outstanding Teaching Strategies, interventions and instruction in school districts.

Special Education Educators **Keisha Cross, Ross Elementary School Preschool teacher** from Topeka Kansas for being an outstanding preschool special education

LICC Grants

Approval of new applications: KS16 Johnson County for \$3000 and KS21 Leavenworth County for \$3000. Both are for community outreach

Moved by Ann Elliott

Second by Marites Altuna

Motion passed

Kansas Education Funding Task Force Letter from the SICC

Advising them to review and account for the impact a potential change would have on funding for Part C programs.

ITS Networks have been expressing concerns.

Courtney Hochman made a motion to approve and send the letter.
Susan Bowles seconded the motion.
Motion passed

Family Engagement Stipend Policy

Review the changes to the Family Engagement Stipend Policy to better compensate families with children with increased child care needs.

Moved to accept by Erin Schuweiler
Second by Ann Elliott
Courtney Hochman abstained
Motion passed

SICC members attending conferences

At the October meeting we will review a policy for approving SICC receiving funding to attend conferences.

Committee Reports:

Executive Committee:

Agenda, introduction change, pre-approve grants

EC LRE Committee:

Needs a new chairperson.

Continuing to work on a plan to offer an introduction to Part C and Part B services to child care settings with the goal of child cares having a better understanding of special education.

LICC Support Committee:

Fall LICC Retreat - October 24th, 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

Angie Neal and Elizabeth Brunscheen-Cartagena will present

They need more facilitators because of the large group.

207 people have registered as of today

Systems and Services Committee

-Bronwyn will be the new chairperson

-Kansas needs and alignment with the All in for Kansas Kids Strategic Plan

-ECIPC funding cut but that has been appealed.

Without funding they may be able to do some work and/or provide some resources.

-Kansas career pathways may not be preparing students to work in both KDHE and KSDE early childhood areas. Also looking into varied credentials.

Categorical Aid Workgroup

Continuing to work on the Guidance document for Cat. Aid for Transportation. They have a draft. It needs to be reviewed, and improvements made.

Agency Reports:

KSDE Report – see written report attached

DCF Report – Kim Kennedy flyers for activities in Topeka – Together Kansas

KDHE Report – DMS Report from OSEP is nearly complete – due Oct. 22.

Reviewing Infant Toddler local programs currently

Continuing work on the new database – should go live in spring 2026

Local programs will be providing feedback, specifically about billing insurance soon

Data management conference coming soon

DEC conference in October to learn about best practices and providing services

KDADS Report – no report

KCCTF Report – Melissa = PDG Oct 15 Early Childhood Mental Health Support work beginning with a conference. 50 mental health centers planning to attend along with other important groups.

Families Together – next month will provide a quarterly update



Staff Report

- We have a potential new parent member
- Hilary Crist has resigned her position on the SICC
- Courtney Hochman is at the Parent Leadership Conference today
- Many childcares and health departments have been joining the ASQ Enterprise account
- New Coordinator's Meeting
- Attended 9 LICC Meetings
- Visited Hutchinson preschool and Infant Toddler program
- Coordinating communication between school districts, Part C programs, and KSDE
- A few LICCs are considering organizing into non=profits - exploring

Adjournment:

Motion made by Lisa Collette to adjourn the meeting.

Motion seconded by Angel Spann

Meeting adjourned at 3:09 pm by Kathy Kersenbrock Ostmeyer

Keisha Cross from Ross Elementary in Topeka #501

Provide a brief description about the different early childhood program(s) at your School

At Ross Elementary, we are fortunate to have two strong early childhood programs. We offer a full-day preschool class, as well as two Preschool Intervention Program (PIP) teachers, each of whom leads a half-day class in the morning and afternoon. The PIP program is built around a peer model, which brings together typically developing peers and students receiving special education services. This provides all students with an opportunity to learn from one another in a supportive and inclusive environment.

How do you include early childhood programming into the decision-making process for your k-6 (elementary setting) when it comes to curriculum, school improvement, PLCs, etc.

Our preschool staff are included in the same conversations as our K-5 teachers. They are part of PLCs, professional development, and school improvement planning. Their input is important because we want to ensure that what happens in preschool connects with what students will experience as they transition into kindergarten and beyond.

How does your preschool program differ from other preschool programs in your district? What does your school offer for early childhood students?

Ross is one of only a few schools in the district that offers both a full-day preschool class and the PIP model. That allows us to serve more students and meet a wider range of needs. Our programs focus not only on early academics but also on social-emotional skills, family partnerships, and preparing students for success in kindergarten.

Share a brief description of Ms. Cross and her contribution to your school?

Ms. Cross has made a lasting impact on our school. Families regularly tell me how grateful they are for the foundation she gives their children, and even former students often share the difference she made in their lives. She is also continuing her own learning, working toward another master's degree in special education. Parents often call to request her classroom because they know their child will be cared for and challenged. Preschool sets the tone for a child's entire school career, and we are lucky to have Ms. Cross, who is an educator who puts students first, builds strong relationships with families, and is a true advocate for children.