



Preschool Coordinator Advisory Group (PCAG)

Kentucky Department of Education

Meeting Minutes

April 29, 2021

The second meeting of the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE's) Preschool Coordinator Advisory Group (PCAG) was held virtually on April 29, 2021.

Whitney Stevenson, PCAG chair, led the roll call of members. At the time of roll call, all members were present with the exception of Jennifer Walrod, who joined in after.

Gretta Hylton, KDE Associate Commissioner in the Office of Special Education and Early Learning, welcomed the group and shared her appreciation of the time and work being put in for students through the advisory group, along with all of KDE's early childhood partners.

The group norms were reviewed by Stevenson.

Stevenson reviewed and approved the last meeting minutes, upon the motion of Anna Shepard, seconded by Crystal Lewis. She shared that one responsibility of the PCAG was to take information back to regions and share with the Regional Training Centers (RTC) and peers.

Many updates were shared with the group by Kentucky early childhood partners, using guiding questions.

KDE updates included:

- Taysha Oglesby on preschool enrollment, using the guiding question, "What type of additional guidance is needed to help districts understand that ESSER funds may be used for preschool programming?"

She shared that enrollment was down this year by 25% across the state. Using the Dec 1 and March 1 counts, she shared that there were 15,098 students eligible for preschool services in the state. Forty percent of those students were considered at risk, while about 60% qualified for preschool with a disability. A question was asked about using ESSR funds. Taysha Oglesby shared that the money can be used for items according to the federal and state guidance.

- Andrea Bartholomew addressed GMAP and preschool determinations with the guiding question, “What type of additional guidance is needed to improve the GMAP and Determinations process? Is this process helpful to districts?”

Bartholomew shared that this is the second year for using GMAP for preschool determinations. Through the process, there has been updated information and lots of feedback from the first year. Applications should be approved by May 15. Districts and Head Starts have been trying to get ideas for implementing full utilization, which has proven to be a big issue. She shared that the hope was to get the document out to districts in June. Members of the PCAG asked about getting feedback on adding GMAP items in the budget. For example, how descriptive should information be on child find activities? Bartholomew shared that we need to be very descriptive, as if someone has no idea about your district. She also shared that KDE wants to provide more support and plans on sharing training on GMAP with stakeholders.

- Jen Riley addressed Indicator 12 changes with the group with the guiding question, “What type of additional guidance is needed for districts regarding the changes to Indicator 12 monitoring?”

Riley shared that the Preschool Performance Report would be coming soon. If a district scores less than 100%, they will receive a corrective action plan. If a district scores a 100% on the indicator, they can expect a spot check. Another question was about the biggest changes that can be expected from Indicator 12. This year, the indicator will be completed using a Google Form rather than the usual Survey Monkey form. There also will be a change in the monitoring, as there will be a 10% spot check.

- Malaika Williams addressed trauma-informed care with the guiding question, “What type of additional guidance is needed from the KDE surrounding trauma-informed care for preschool students, families and staff?”

Williams encouraged the group to review the KDE toolkit. There are many strategies from the Harvard Center for Developing Minds. She also shared that district school boards are supposed to have policies around trauma-informed care developed and approved by July 1, 2021.

Whitney Stevenson introduced Amy Neal, director of the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Education, to the group. Her guiding questions were “How can the GOEC best support districts with the standards roll out? How would training be best delivered?”

She shared that Kentucky should be proud of the early childhood programs in the state as she shared the priorities of the governor’s office. She said that in 2019, the strategic plan of the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Education was to unify the early childhood system and strengthen and cultivate community partnerships.

She then shared updated plans with the group. The Office of Early Childhood Education has applied for two grants for over \$2 million dollars. She also shared information about new early childhood standards rolling out, and about technical assistance and training with stakeholders. Districts can expect to see a rollout sometime in July. She also shared that there has been a 150% increase in participation with webinar trainings for the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Education.

Kristy Lewis, PCAG co-chair, shared a Head Start update with the group, with the guiding question, “How can districts and Head Start partners strengthen relationships?”

Lewis shared that Amanda Flanery is the Head Start collaboration director from the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Education. A new program manager for the state, Maria Goss, from the Head Start office in Atlanta, Ga., was just announced as well. The two are great resources and an asset for insight and information.

Stacey Stevens, director of the Ashland Regional Training Center, shared an update on behalf of the RTCs in the state. Her guiding question was, “Districts rely on RTCs for trainings and support. How can RTCs support state initiatives, such as PBIS, standards rollout, social emotional support, etc.?”

Stevens thanked the group for their time and efforts. She shared that there are five regional training centers in the state. “We are all alike. We are all different,” she said. She shared the various trainings and support that the RTCs provide, and that each RTC has a PBIS coach. They will provide some academies as they support the statewide initiatives with district programs.

PCAG then moved into their priority work of quality programming with the guiding question, “How will quality be ensured and measured in the future? What is next after the pandemic? How do we connect quality to regulation?”

A variety of measurements were discussed, and the group shared things that should be carefully considered after coming back from the pandemic, such as social emotional development and quality interactions between students and teachers.

The group also discussed common concerns about summer school or camps for students, enrollments being down and ways to partner with communities to get the word out about early childhood education in districts.

Closing remarks were shared, and Joseph McCowan shared the exit slip. The group adjourned upon the motion of Barry Lee and was seconded by Whitney Fowler.

Next meeting date: July 28, 2021