

# BACK ON OUR FEET

**How KAC and you  
helped rebuild Kansas  
in 2018 and beyond**



At KANSAS ACTION FOR CHILDREN, we look back at the 2018 legislative session with gratitude and pride.

**GRATITUDE** to lawmakers who made prudent choices and to all of you who have supported our work through the years.

**PRIDE** because we collaborated — staff and lawmakers and friends — to shape the state budget and enhance funding for early learning programs.

Kansas is positioned to continue making sensible budget and tax policy that allows for investments in our shared priorities: great early education, affordable health care, and thriving communities for children and families.

## FLASHBACK

Let's **remember where we were** at this time last year.

A bipartisan majority in the House and Senate had just ended the Brownback tax “experiment.” A half-decade of cuts, disinvestments, and credit downgrades had come to an end. It was an amazing accomplishment, made possible by advocates across the state.

But ending the tax plan was **just the beginning.**

We knew that kids across the state wouldn't succeed without resources, and we knew that advocacy had to continue. So we rolled up our sleeves and got back to work.

○ The Kansas House stopped a risky tax plan rushed through during the veto session. The premise of the bill was to clarify how Kansas conforms to federal tax changes. But without a clear fiscal note and with many questions about treatment of overseas corporate income, lawmakers rightly rejected the bill.

○ \$4.2 million from the Children's Initiatives Fund will expand the Kansas Preschool Program so more Kansas students can benefit from preschool opportunities that prepare them to succeed in kindergarten and beyond.

○ Both chambers passed a budget that begins to reinvest in our state's essential services, enhancing funding for K-12 education, early childhood and higher education, infrastructure, and state services. Serious work remains — but this is a great start.



○ \$1 million from the Children's Initiatives Fund will begin Communities Aligned in Early Development and Education, a pilot program to increase early learning opportunities in Wyandotte County.



○ Lawmakers didn't sweep funds from the Children's Initiatives Fund or the Kansas Endowment for Youth, and \$2.4 million from the CIF will restore services for young Kansans harmed by budget cuts. Investments in Early Childhood Block Grants, the Child Care Quality Initiative, Autism Diagnosis, Family Preservation, and the Healthy Start/Home Visitor program will mean more children can thrive.

# MAKING IT HAPPEN

What was accomplished this Legislative session? How did we all shape policy for children and families — and the budget and tax laws that support that work? Follow along!

○ \$1 million more from the Children's Initiatives Fund will allow Parents as Teachers to provide life-changing home visiting services to more Kansas families.

○ An amendment was added to the budget that clarifies how Kansas will make deposits into the state's "Rainy Day Fund." This is a fiscally responsible step that helps ensure essential state services will not be jeopardized during economic downturns.

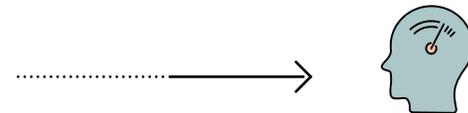
○ The House rejected the "tripwire" budget proviso added into the budget omnibus bill that would have automatically eliminated most of this year's budget work if the Supreme Court rules that school finance is inadequate.

○ \$1 million more in FY 2018 and \$1 million in FY 2019 will support tiny-k, also known as Infant-Toddler Services, to provide mandatory early intervention services for infants and toddlers with special needs.



○ The Legislature expanded the 4-year-old at-risk program to allow school districts to serve 3-year-old children if space is available, and the school finance plan increases state aid for that program by \$2 million.

○ The Senate rejected calls for a Convention of States, a dangerous effort to alter the U.S. Constitution that could slash spending for all safety net programs.



Simply put, **actions taken now** are laying a stronger foundation for early learning and development as Kansas seeks to prepare every one of our state's children for success.

## HOW YOU HELPED

Every step of the way, you were there with us. When we asked you to speak up and tell lawmakers what mattered to you, you raised your voice. When we talked about the importance of early education and commonsense budget policy, you listened.

- » You helped send 2,722 messages to lawmakers.
- » You helped customize 542 of those messages.
- » We added 430 first-time action takers to our lists.
- » We mobilized constituents to contact their lawmakers in 123 of 125 House districts and 40 of 40 Senate districts this session.

## THANK YOU.

But the job continues. We're not slowing down, and you can't either.

## THE FUTURE

Kansas Action for Children looks forward to continuing this progress over the rest of this year and beyond. Our team is spending the summer and fall visiting with stakeholders about how Kansas can build a more comprehensive early learning system so that every Kansas child can access high-quality early learning opportunities.

We are also devoting time and attention to considering policy choices that will advance race equity in our state, because we can't achieve our goals if some kids are left behind.

TOGETHER, we can make Kansas the best state to raise a child and to be a child.

TOGETHER, with all of you, we look forward to the work ahead.

TOGETHER, we can reach for the stars.

Ad Astra,

Annie McKay  
Kansas Action for Children President and CEO