



WELCOME TO OUR
KQ Newsletter
we're so glad you're here!

LETTER FROM OUR ACTING PRESIDENT/PRESIDENT ELECT



It is with great privilege that I get to reintroduce KCSEA, the Kansas Child Support Educational Association, formerly known as the Kansas Child Support Enforcement Association, to everyone in the Kansas Child Support Community. Like many other child support programs, agencies, and associations around the country, we are changing with the times. We are moving from the negative connotation of enforcement and promoting education.

Welcome to our first KCSEA Quarterly newsletter or what we like to call "The KQ". The KQ is the perfect medium to assist in sharing knowledge and experiences in the child support community not only around the state of Kansas but from around world. Through The KQ the association can share quarterly editions, which will provide informational and educational articles to facilitate public relations and awareness of child support related programs, concerns, and issues.

The current KCSEA Board of Directors is thrilled to bring the association out of hiatus.

Not only do we plan to bring back the quarterly newsletter The KQ, but we also plan to hold an Annual Educational Conference in 2024 along with many award recognitions and the Jim Robertson Scholarship Fund. KCSEA has the full support of the current IVD Child Support Director, IVD Child Support Contractors, and many of the NIVD Child Support Court Trustees, which will allow for a very successful educational experience.

In January of 2023 Child Support Professionals from around the state came together to reinstate the Board. The current Board of Directors will be introduced in the next edition of The KQ. Many of our 2023 & 2024 objectives are based on rebranding from enforcement to education. Our KCSEA mission is to support those who encounter the child support program through education, collaboration, and progress.

As the board continues to look to the future with plans for the 2024 KCSEA Educational Conference, the award of the Jim Robertson Scholarship, and many other recognition awards we would like to hear from you. Please visit [Survey Monkey](#) to complete a brief survey regarding KCSEA and what you would like to see in the future from the association.

To learn more about KCSEA, the Jim Robertson Scholarship Fund, the 2024 KCSEA Educational Conference, and the KCSEA Board please visit www.kcsea.org.

Sincerely,
Dustin R Whitaker
KCSEA Acting President/President Elect

KCSEA History

FROM THEN TO NOW

In the mid 1980's, the Kansas Child Support Services Administration team, consisting of Jim Robertson, Randy Barker, and Jamie Corkhill, recognized communication and information sharing between child support, the judiciary, court trustee and contractors had to be improved for the program to be successful. The federal government had just mandated each state establish a child support commission, which included judges and legislatures, to develop data driven support guidelines and procedures to benefit children. KS CSS Administration felt this group could serve as a basis for an ongoing organization comprised of child support for professionals to improve communication and ease tension and misunderstandings between all parties.

To move this idea forward, KS child support partnered with Kaye (Billeaux) Farley of the Office of Judicial Administration (OJA) to take the lead in the development of an association to meet the program's needs.

The Kansas Child Support Enforcement Association (KCSEA) developed as an outgrowth of the Governor's Commission on Child Support Enforcement that was established in January 1985. As the term of the Governor's Commission on Child Support Enforcement was coming to an end, several members of the commission expressed an interest in establishing a standing professional association that would continue some of the work begun by the commission.

OJA took the lead in the development of such an association. Kay (Billeaux) Farley contacted the National Child Support Enforcement Association (NCSEA) for information about establishing a state charter. She also invited members of the Governor's Commission on Child Support Enforcement and other interested parties to an organizational meeting to discuss establishment of a professional association.

Become a KCSEA Member

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

- **MAY 18, 1987**
The first planning meeting was held at the Kansas Judicial Center, Topeka, Kansas
- **OCTOBER 20, 1987**
The Articles of Incorporation were filed on behalf of the Kansas Child Support Enforcement Association, Inc.
- **OCTOBER 21, 1987**
The incorporators met to appoint officers and standing committees
- **SEPTEMBER 23, 1988**
First Annual Conference is held at the Ramada Inn, Topeka, KS. Jim Robertson took primary responsibility for planning the agenda
- **1988-2013**
KCSEA's Conference remained an annual training and networking opportunity to benefit the education of child support employees.
- **2013**
Child Support is privatized and conferences are put on hold due to lack of funding. The Association remained active by awarding scholarships, disbursing informational and educational newsletters, and ensuring the Kansas Corporation Code was kept up to date.
- **2022**
Ali Robertson, daughter of Jim Robertson, took the lead on reestablishing the KCSEA Board using the established Bylaws as a guide. Board members who were on the 2013 KCSEA Board were asked if they wanted to hold their position with the Association and the vacant positions were filled with a diverse child support knowledge base.

Jim Robertson Scholarship

The Jim Robertson Scholarship originated in 2007 and was originally called the KCSEA Scholarship. It wasn't until 2009 that the scholarship name was changed to Jim Robertson Child Support Enforcement Scholarship. In 2008 Jim Robertson, previous Child Support Director, retired after 32 years of service in the child support program, including 20 years as Kansas IV-D Director. It was right and just to honor Mr. Jim Robertson and his legacy of the longest running Child Support Director by changing the name of this scholarship. Jim Robertson was a pioneer in the child support program and always went the extra mile to help the families of Kansas.

The purpose of the scholarship is to help defray the costs of a student's attempt of furthering their education. However not just anyone furthering their education can apply for the Jim Robertson Scholarship. The applicant or the applicant's relative must be an active member of KCSEA with dues paid for the current year. This allows the opportunity for either the member themselves or a family relative to apply for the scholarship. Applicants include high school seniors, full or part time college students planning on attending a two or four year community college, university or vocational school with a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

In most recent years, scholarships were awarded as follows:

September 2017	Rianne Richard	\$1000
August 2016	Addison Donohue	\$1000
June 2014	Alise Murray	\$1000
June 2013	Alise Murray	\$1000

Over the years the amount of the Jim Robertson Child Support Enforcement Scholarship has varied. The scholarship has been made possible by the generous donations of the KCSEA members. These donations determine the amount of the scholarship each year. The KCSEA members have had lots of fun over the years raising money to contribute to the scholarship with various fund raisers including "Kiss the Pig" and "Silent Auction" just to mention a few. Jim Robertson himself brought in the most collections to have a smooch with the adorable piglet.



Jim Robertson Scholarship

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

KCSEA Questions with Jim Robertson

WHAT NEED WERE YOU TRYING TO MEET WHEN KCSEA STARTED BEING A TOPIC OF CONVERSATION?

There was a need to enhance working relationship and information sharing between CSS, court trustees, judges, legislature, and contractors. When KCSEA was established in the 1980s, turf battles, lack of trust, and misunderstandings inhibited the child support programs ability to progress. We hoped the KCSEA organization would provide an opportunity for face-to-face discussion on topics being misunderstood and allow an opportunity to clear up unanswered questions amongst one another.

WHAT WAS THE ORIGINAL INTENTION IN FOUNDING KCSEA?

In addition to increasing working relationships between CSS, court trustees, judges, legislature, and contractors we felt socialization amongst child support staff was important. By recruiting the most knowledgeable and accomplished speakers in Kansas and other high performing states would help relay valuable operational information and allow our program to adopt the best policies.

Also, we felt by providing a social opportunity for our staff could present a relaxed atmosphere where all those invested in child support could meet one another, create a working relationship, and increase their knowledge base throughout the program.

HOW HAVE YOU SEEN KCSEA GROW OVER THE YEARS?

I (Jim Robertson) was the first Keynote Speaker, so they have improved the quality of people brought in for that job *laughs*!

I believe the advancement of technology has a great impact on KCSEA's ultimate goal, child support education. Technology has made it easier promote KCSEA (through email, virtual newsletters, and its own website) and provide more effective, efficient, and diverse trainings with the ability to share the information with those who were unable to attend the conference.

I have also seen a growing interest in the legal field to attend the KCSEA Conference to gain CLEs. Providing this opportunity has kept child support services in connection with courts, whom we need a working relationship with.



Current Board Members

Officers:

Acting President - Dustin Whitaker
 President Elect - Dustin Whitaker
 Acting Past President - Dustin Whitaker
 Vice President - Ali Robertson
 Treasurer - Amy Shaum
 Secretary - Tulasi Long

Board Members:

Shannon Kroh
 Nicolette Bennett
 Terri Greer
 Katie Rolfe
 Brandi Ridgeway
 Kristie Haynes

Board Members:

Dani Williams
 Stacey Fitch
 Carina Lee
 Jessica Dieckhoff
 Sarah Delgado
 Lori Myers

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



Child Support Survey

Learning about Kansas' valued staff and partners who work in child support will help KCSEA to better support you and shape our goals for the future. We hope you will take the time to complete this anonymous survey!

As the board continues to look to the future with plans for the 2024 KCSEA Educational Conference, the award of the Jim Robertson Scholarship, and many other recognition awards we would like to hear from you.



2024 Educational Conference

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

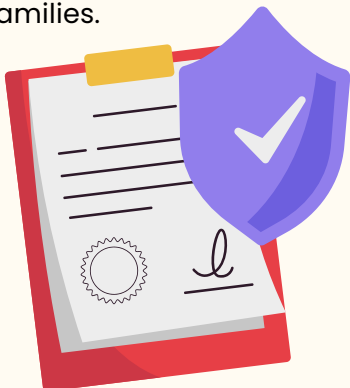
NCSEA 2023 Policy Forum

WRITTEN BY AMY SHAUM

As captured on the NCSEA Policy Forum website, the NCSEA Policy Forum, traditionally held in early February in Washington, D.C., provides a unique opportunity for professionals to discuss and learn about the most recent developments and initiatives on the federal, state, and local levels. Experts provide the latest information on issues that impact the child support program. This year's Policy Forum theme was "Engagement-Delivering Quality Services with a Passion for Helping Families." Attendees in person and via live stream enjoyed several dynamic plenary sessions over the two and a half day conference geared toward inclusion of various perspectives and priorities.

To kick off the event, we heard from OCSE Commissioner Tangler Gray who expanded on her vision of Engagement with focus on People, Process, and Performance. Commissioner Gray shared her priorities for this Administration to extend flexibilities to programs during public emergencies, improve our collaboration with tribal programs, and reinvest in programs that support fathers and further employment.

NCSEA's Policy and Government Relations Committee provided highlights of their identified improvements and solutions for legislative proposal. The ambitious proposed changes support the shift in the program's mission from recovery of TANF to family support and will improve performance and quality service delivery to families.



Changes to the Federal Performance Measures, refinement of intergovernmental processes, modifications to the way child support programs are funded, and updates to enforcement measures to acknowledge our current economy are included in NCSEA's comprehensive legislative proposal.

Plenaries III and IV brought forth crucial approaches to reduce the divide between child support programs and the families we serve by building capacity and improving engagement with families. Agencies across the nation are working to change the way families view the child support program through methods such as recognizing and acknowledging the unintentional trauma the child support program can cause while working with families, using electronic hearings to serve families more efficiently, and meeting the customers where they feel safe. Through federally funded Section 1115 grants, Special Improvement Project (SIP) grants, and Section 1115 waiver demonstration projects, States have been provided opportunities to test new ideas geared toward moving their programs toward engagement.

The following day's sessions had Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) at the core of each conversation, as a continued topic of focus at the NCSEA Policy Forum. Attendees heard from people who have been successful in implementing change in their program's culture and were provided with tools to help programs go from concept to practice.

NCSEA 2023 Policy Forum

OCSE Commissioner Gray and Associate Commissioner of the Children's Bureau, Aysha E. Schomburg, jointly issued Dear Colleague Letter on July 29, 2022, which set the stage for a shift in seeking reimbursement from families for the costs of foster care. The default position for our IV-E partners is NOT to secure an assignment of support rights for children receiving IV-E foster care payments. The guidance allows agencies to determine if/when to secure an assignment of rights and encourages agencies to establish policies outlining the rare circumstances where an assignment will be secured. This policy change is supported by research showing it is not in the best interest of any family to be pursued for child support when already facing economic insecurity and family instability. Reducing a parent's income can delay reunification and is not cost effective for child support programs.[BRI] [TL[2] KS DCF is currently reviewing possible legislative changes that will help move KS towards this goal.

A panel made up of parents with lived experience in working with child support and representatives from varied human services agencies shared their perspectives on how thoughtful coordination and collaboration can lead to better outcomes for families. Aligning child support with parallel programs helps to improve access to assistance, promote supportive services, and enhance employment and training opportunities for all parents and caregivers.

A meaningful and inspiring presentation helped attendees to understand the importance of how we engage justice involved families. The University of Wisconsin Institute for Research on Poverty's most recent data on the prevalence of periods of incarceration among noncustodial parents shows returning from incarceration presents substantial challenges. These challenges were brought to life when attendees were fortunate to be given a first-hand perspective of a father, his work with other fathers, and how he came to be where he is now.

The 2023 NCSEA Policy Forum wrapped up with discussions about debt reduction programs and declining child support caseloads. Debt reduction programs can help encourage parents to pay more support and reduce stress to families. Relationships between coparents and between parents and child support systems can be improved when programs acknowledge and take action to remedy unintended consequences of arrears on low-income payors.

Child support caseloads are steadily declining even though IV-D agencies offer a free program aimed to help children and families. A national survey highlighted a few of the reasons: child support has a negative stigma, child support is weaponized, child support is used as a threat, and child support recipients endure unfair criticism. The good news is that no legislative changes are needed to help correct the issue. States can make internal policy changes while applying a DEI lens, improve access to services, accept influencer assistance via partner agencies and parent participant groups, and by improving customer service.

In addition to experiencing the multiple engaging and educational sessions, Policy Forum attendees had the opportunity to reconnect with old friends and colleagues and make new connections. Kudos and thanks to NCSEA and their Policy Forum Planning Committee for another great conference!

