



### **Proponent Written Testimony for HB 2785, the Creation of the Kansas Office of Early Childhood Services**

#### **To the House Committee on Commerce, Labor, and Economic Development:**

My name is Dr. Craig A. Correll, and I am writing in strong support of the creation of the Kansas Office of Early Childhood Services (K-OECS). I believe this initiative represents a crucial step towards improving the lives of children and families across our state by streamlining access to vital resources and promoting their overall well-being.

#### **Current Challenges:**

Currently, numerous state agencies oversee various early childhood programs, causing confusion and creating challenges for families and providers alike. This fragmented system can be particularly difficult for rural communities, where resources and access points are often scarce.

#### **Benefits of K-OECS:**

- **Increased Efficiency and Streamlined Services:** Bringing early childhood services under one umbrella eliminates bureaucracy and red tape, simplifying access to critical programs for families and reducing administrative burdens for providers.
- **Enhanced Coordination and Collaboration:** A unified office fosters collaborative efforts across programs, ensuring a more comprehensive and consistent approach to supporting children's development.
- **Improved Service Delivery:** Streamlined operations and consolidated resources enable the K-OECS to better understand and address the specific needs of each community, delivering services more effectively and efficiently.
- **Cost Savings:** Optimized operations and reduced administrative overhead can lead to significant cost savings for the state, freeing up resources to directly benefit children and families.

#### **USD #445 Mission Statement**

Building on our culturally diverse community, USD 445 will prepare all students for life-long learning by providing resources for a comprehensive quality education in a safe environment that promotes high academic achievement and responsible citizenship in a global society.



## **Supporting Kansas Families and Children:**

By establishing the K-OECS, we invest in the future of our state. Accessible and high-quality early childhood programs not only enhance children's development but also empower families to participate more actively in the workforce, strengthening communities and contributing to economic growth. This initiative demonstrates our commitment to nurturing the next generation and building a brighter future for Kansas.

## **Call to Action:**

I urge the House Child Welfare and Foster Care Committee to vote in favor of establishing the K-OECS. This critical initiative holds immense potential to improve the lives of countless children and families, laying the foundation for a more prosperous and equitable future for Kansas.

## **Personal Story:**

I am writing in strong support of the creation of the Kansas Office of Early Childhood Services and the proposed investments in childcare within the KSDE Children's Cabinet budget. These initiatives represent crucial steps towards improving the lives of Kansas children and families, strengthening our communities, and building a brighter future for our state. Coffeyville Public Schools has a robust Early Learning Center. I can speak firsthand of the struggles dealing with the current bureaucracy as it relates to early learning centers and child care centers. We currently must abide by rules and regulations of; KSDE, KDHE, Children's Cabinet, State Fire Marshall and others. Many times, similar regulations exist with multiple entities, yet can be vastly different.

**Thank you for your time and consideration.**

**Sincerely,**

**Dr. Craig A. Correll**

Superintendent of Schools

Coffeyville Public Schools

President - Kansas School Superintendents Association

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