

## Response to SB 282

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to express my deep concern about SB 282, which could have significant negative implications for the Early Childhood profession in Kansas. As a father of three, I understand the importance of high-quality, equitable learning environments for children, and I believe that this bill would take us back nearly two decades in terms of progress.

One of the most troubling aspects of this bill is its proposal to reduce the required annual professional development requirements from 16 hours to a maximum of 8 hours. Professional development is critical to preparing and supporting the early childhood workforce, and reducing these requirements would create an inherent risk for young children around the state, particularly in rural areas. The workforce must be prepared with a substantial knowledge base, as defined in the KS/MO Core Competencies, which promote quality care for Kansas children.

In the interest of safety, health, and quality care for children and families in Kansas, I urge the committee to reconsider this proposal. The Office of Child Care under the Department of Health and Human Services suggests 11 Health and Safety topics ranging from child development to emergency preparation and identification and reporting of child abuse. Child Care Aware also recommends 11 minimum standards with 40 hours of initial training. Under this bill, only 8 hours of training would be required, which would provide, on average, only 45 minutes for each of these critical topics. This is simply not enough time to adequately prepare early childhood providers to care for young children.

- [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/occ/new\\_health\\_and\\_safety\\_regs\\_webinar\\_ppt.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/occ/new_health_and_safety_regs_webinar_ppt.pdf)
- [https://www.childcareaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/wecandobetter\\_2013\\_final\\_april\\_11\\_0.pdf](https://www.childcareaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/wecandobetter_2013_final_april_11_0.pdf)

Furthermore, as compared to other professions, 16 hours of initial professional development is modest, especially considering that early childhood providers are caring for the lives of children, Kansas children. I respectfully advise and encourage this committee to evaluate best practices in the field, including a review of the two documents noted above.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to prioritize the safety, health, and well-being of Kansas children by reconsidering the proposed reduction in professional development requirements for early childhood providers. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,  
Matt Connell