AN ACT establishing the foster care task force.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:

Section 1. (a) There is hereby established the foster care task force. The task force shall: Review the level of oversight and supervision by the Kansas department for children and families over foster care contractors, including, but not limited to, reports from the division of post audit and the 2015 and 2016 special committees on foster care adequacy; and review the duties of those individuals responsible for foster children and other such areas of concern regarding foster care. At the beginning of the 2018 regular session of the legislature, the task force shall submit to the president of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives, the house committee on children and seniors and the senate committee on public health and welfare a recommended corrective action plan improvements regarding the safety and well-being of the children of the state of Kansas and that may include proposed changes to current law, rules and regulations and child welfare system processes. The task force shall submit progress reports at the beginning of the regular session of the legislature each year thereafter.

(b) The department shall, on request, provide data and information on foster care programs, including, but not limited to:

(1) The number of children in foster care;

(2) the number of children in foster care who are outside the county of original residence;

(3) the average length of stay in foster care before reintegration with the child's parents or placement in a permanent home;

(4) foster home licensing and inspection data, including a list of prohibitive offenses for foster home licensure;

(5) the annual numbers and types of cases of substantiated and documented maltreatment of foster children and actions taken by the department and its contracting agencies to resolve such cases;

(6) foster home alcohol, tobacco and firearm use rules and regulations;

(7) the latest quarterly reports from foster care contractors;
(8) an annual crossover youth report examining the number of youth exiting home placement who are subsequently adjudicated as juvenile offenders; and
(9) the number and the types of arrests or convictions, or both, of foster parents;
(10) the highest, lowest and average number of days between a child's removal from the parental home and adjudication; and
(11) information on the number of days of school missed per year by foster care children, by grade, for grades one through 12.

(c) The task force shall consist of 18 voting members appointed as follows:
(1) Two members of the house committee on children and seniors appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;
(2) one member of the house committee on children and seniors appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives;
(3) two members of the senate committee on public health and welfare appointed by the president of the senate;
(4) one member of the senate committee on public health and welfare appointed by the minority leader of the senate;
(5) two members one member of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;
(6) one member of the house of representatives appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives;
(7) two members one member of the senate appointed by the president of the senate;
(8) one member of the senate appointed by the minority leader of the senate; and
(9) six eight members jointly appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate, as follows:
(A) A district court judge who maintains a child in need of care docket;
(B) a district magistrate judge appointed or elected to serve a county in Kansas other than Douglas, Johnson, Sedgwick, Shawnee or Wyandotte county;
(C) a member of the person certified as a Kansas CASA association court-appointed special advocate;
(D) a social worker licensed by the behavioral sciences regulatory board;
(E) a guardian ad litem; and
(F) a law enforcement officer;
(G) a foster parent who is a representative of a foster parent organization; and
(H) a family law attorney with experience in providing legal
services to parents and grandparents in child in need of care cases.

(d) The secretary for children and families and each entity that contracts with the department to provide reintegration, foster care and adoption services shall individually appoint one ex officio non-voting member to the task force to provide information and advice to the task force.

(e) (1) Legislative members shall be appointed for terms coinciding with the legislative terms for which such legislative members are elected or appointed.

(2) Members jointly appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate shall be appointed for a term ending on July 1, 2020.

(3) Ex officio members shall be appointed for a term ending on July 1, 2020.

(4) All members appointed to fill vacancies in the membership of the task force and all members appointed to succeed members appointed to membership on the task force shall be appointed in the manner provided for the original appointment of the member succeeded.

(f) The members originally appointed as members of the task force shall meet, upon the call of an appointed member designated by the speaker of the house of representatives as the first chairperson, within 30 days of the effective date of this act. The first vice-chairperson of the task force shall be elected by a quorum of the task force. Annually thereafter, the chairperson and vice-chairperson shall be elected by a quorum of the task force members appointed by the president of the senate. The roles of chairperson and vice-chairperson shall alternate annually between the members appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate. On and after the effective date of this act, the task force shall meet at least six times a year on the call of the chairperson. Additional meetings may be held on the call of the chairperson when urgent circumstances exist that require such meetings. Nine Ten voting members of the task force shall constitute a quorum.

(g) If approved by the legislative coordinating council, members of the task force attending meetings authorized by the task force shall receive amounts provided for by K.S.A. 75-3223(e), and amendments thereto.

(h) In accordance with K.S.A. 46-1204, and amendments thereto, the legislative coordinating council may provide for such legislative and professional services as may be requested by the task force.

(i) The provisions of this section shall expire on July 1, 2020.

Sec. 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its publication in the Kansas register.