



Child Health Advisory Committee

Minutes

August 13, 2026, · 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Call to order: 9:04 a.m.

Zoom Meeting

Present: Wendy Blount, Shannon Borchert, Carole Garner, Nathan Morris, Jennifer Morrow, Lisa Mundy, Dave Oberembt, Carmel Perry, Elaine Prewitt, Camille Richoux, Ray Samaniego, Bala Simon, Jennifer Wessel

Absent: Ashten Black, Patrick Casey, Teresa Henson, Anna Strong

Staff: Shanetta Agnew, Shy Whitley-Smith

Guests: Sarah Brisco, Lindsey Carihfield, Amy Davidson, Samantha Gray, Lucas Harder, Julie Harlan, Taylor James, Sarah Labuda, Cheria McDonald, Laken Ross, Lauren Sermersheim

Review of May-July minutes: C. Richoux moved to accept the minutes. S. Borchert seconded. Motion passed.

Act 1220 & Coordinated School Health Reports: Reports are changed from the previous meeting. W. Blount moved to accept the reports from May-July, J. Morrow seconded. Motion passed.

July, Act 1220 Coordinator Report (Shanetta Agnew & Shy Whitley):

The Arkansas Mental Health Access for Pediatric Primary Care (ARMAPP) held its 3rd Annual School-Based Symposium July 29-30. This year's theme was "Neurodivergence: From Insight to Implementation — Clinical and School-Based Strategies for Supporting Autism and Developmental Differences." A variety of topics were discussed including practical classroom strategies, behavior support and de-escalation techniques, and inclusive instruction and accommodations.



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Latest SHI results:

Rejected Comments	Count of 2026-2027 SHI Final Approval
Approved	955
Missing Required Module(s)	0
Missing Required Topic(s)	0
Missing SHI Assessment	85
Blanks	1
Grand Total	1041

Coordinated School Health Advisor Report (Lisa Mundy & Ariel Rogers):

July CSH – Physical Education professional development for physical fitness assessments

149 teachers

19 LEAs

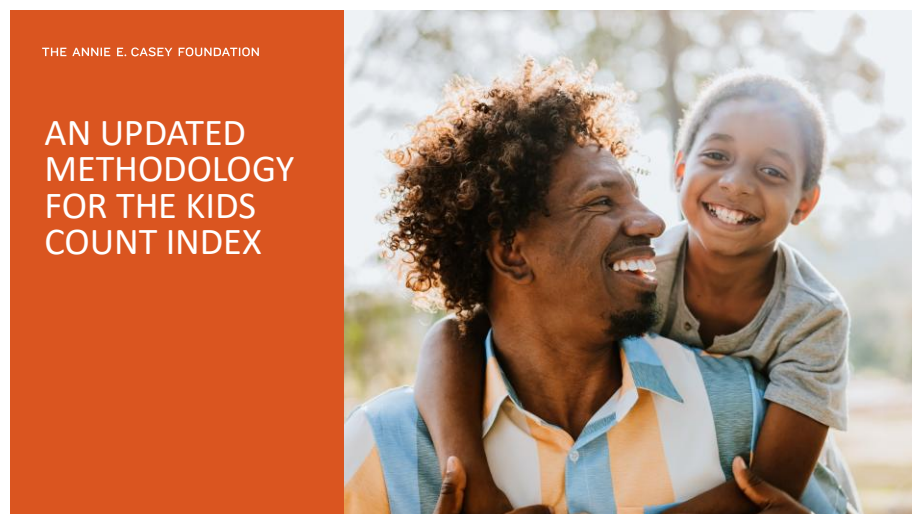
1 charter school

Old Business: *Voting of FY26 Officers:* L. Mundy moved for C. Richoux to serve as CHAC Chair, S. Borchert seconded. Motion passed. S. Borchert moved for J. Morrow to serve as CHAC Vice-Chair, W. Blount seconded. Motion passed.

New Business:

Presentation: Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, “2026 Kids Count” data book-Health Policy Director Camille Richoux, MPH, DrPH(c)

(slides are below)





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What's New

- **Adding scores alongside rankings**
- **0–1,000 scale for all domains and overall**
 - 0 = worse outcomes
 - 1,000 = better outcomes
- **Scores show:**
 - How far apart states are from each other
 - Where states have opportunity for improvement
 - Trends over time
- **Scores are anchored to 2019**
 - Last complete snapshot of child well-being before COVID-19 pandemic
 - Provides a long enough runway for evaluating progress over time

What Stays the Same

- Same 16 indicators across the same 4 domains
- Equal weighting across indicators and domains
- State rankings — overall and by domain
 - Ranking order also remains largely the same
- Every state still has room to improve
 - Scores are not a target or a goal

Evolution of the KIDS COUNT Index

- **RELEVANCE:** KIDS COUNT has **been refined over time**
- **EXPANSION:** Major overhaul in 2010: **16 indicators, 4 domains**
- **FEEDBACK:** Network partners say rankings alone don't show the full story
- **LIMITATIONS:** Gaps, **trends and progress were hard to see**
- **LISTENING:** Partners' feedback led to a **review of the index in 2024**
- **WHAT'S NEW:** Scores tell a **fuller story**

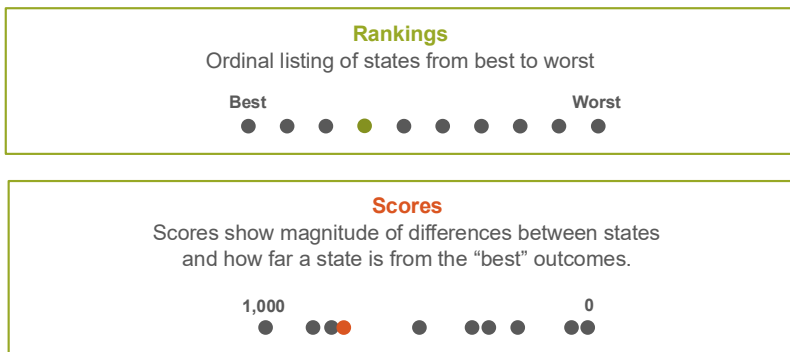


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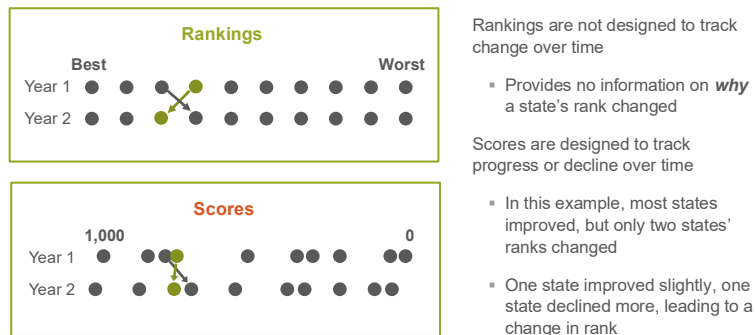
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What Scores Add: One Year of Data



5

What Scores Add: Trends Over Time





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How Rankings and Scores Work Together

Rankings are best for:

- Quick comparisons
- Headlines
- Broad public communication

Scores provide information on:

- Gaps between states
- Progress and setbacks within and across states over time
- Which domains are driving scores up or down

Together, scores and rankings paint a more complete picture.

What's Changing Mathematically

	2025 and earlier	Starting in 2026
	Standardize indicator values into z-scores	Use a min-max transformation with 2019 as an anchor
Normalization	$Z_{is} = \frac{StateValue_{is} - GrandMeanAcrossStates}{StandardDeviationAcrossStates}$ • 0 = Grand mean across states • Higher (positive) values = worse performance • Lower (negative) values = better performance	$S_{isy} = 1000 - \left[\frac{(StateValue_{isy} - MinState_{i2019})}{(MaxState_{i2019} - MinState_{i2019})} * 1,000 \right]$ • Multiply by 1,000 to place state indicator values between 0 and 1,000 • Subtract from 1,000 to reverse the scale • 0 is worse performance and 1,000 is better performance
Aggregation	Sum z-scores for relevant indicators to obtain the domain scores and overall score • Equal indicator weighting	Average indicator scores in each domain and across all 16 for the overall score • Equal indicator weighting
Display	Ranking of states from the best (lowest) score to the worst (highest) score overall and by domain	Domain and overall scores Ranking of states from the best (highest) score to the worst (lowest) score overall and by domain

What This Means in Practice

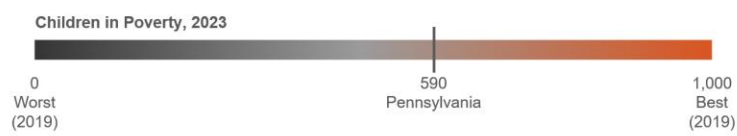
- Scores are on 0–1,000 scale
 - 0 = worst state performance in 2019
 - 1,000 = best state performance in 2019
 - Scores can fall below 0 or exceed 1,000, but are capped for reporting
- Most rankings remain stable
- Scores reveal deeper differences
- Trend analysis is now possible



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How the Updated KIDS COUNT Index Works

Normalizing a single indicator



$$PovertyScore_{2023_{PA}} = 1,000 - \left[\frac{(16.9 - 28.1)}{(28.1 - 7.1)} * 1,000 \right] = 590$$

- Repeat across all 16 indicators

How the Updated KIDS COUNT Index Works

Aggregating across indicators for domain and overall scores



$$EconomicScore_{PA2023} = \frac{590 + 577 + 608 + 852}{4} = 657$$

- Places each state on a fixed scale anchored to 2019
- Shows the distance from worst to best outcomes
- Enables tracking progress over time



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How the Updated KIDS COUNT Index Works

Change over time

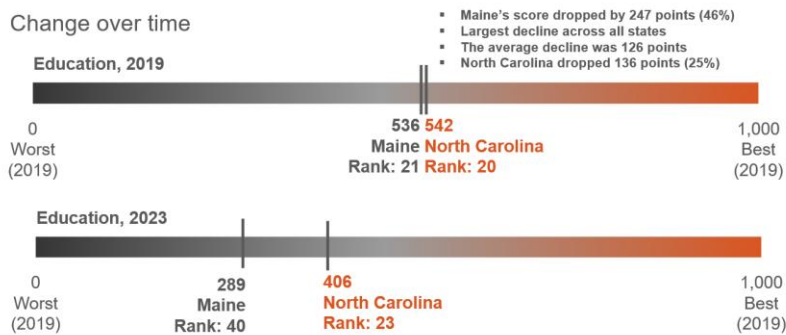
Maine: Education Domain

	2019	2023	Change
Young children not in school	56%	66%	Worse
4 th graders not proficient in reading	64%	74%	Worse
8 th graders not proficient in math	66%	75%	Worse
Students not graduating on time	13%	14%	Worse

- Across the board declines in Education
- What do these declines mean for Maine's Education score?
- How is Maine doing compared to other states?

How the Updated KIDS COUNT Index Works

Change over time





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How the Updated KIDS COUNT Index Works

Change over time *and* differences across states

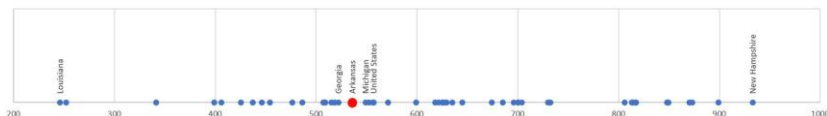
Focus on larger differences in scores across time or across states

- Overall scores: differences of 5 points or more
- Domain scores: differences of 15 points or more
- These minimum gaps refer to the average impact of a single percentage point change or difference in a single indicator

Arkansas Data!

Economic Well-Being 2024

Rank = 33, Score = 536

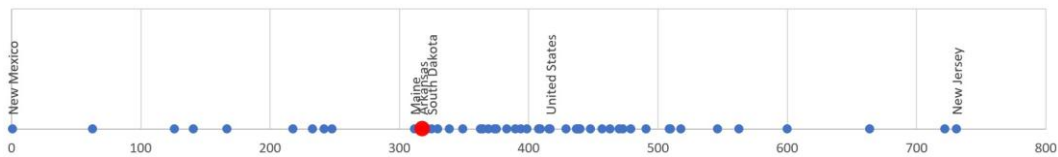




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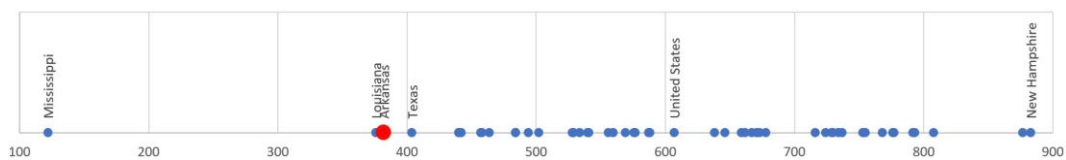
Education 2024

Rank = 40, Score = 318



Health 2024

Rank = 48, Score = 382

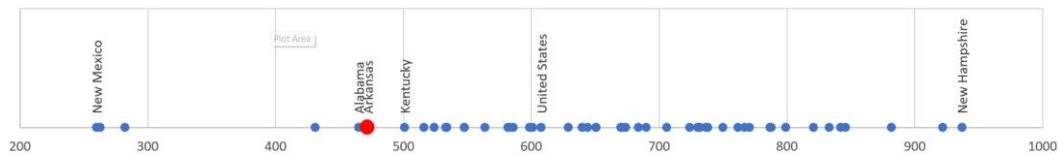




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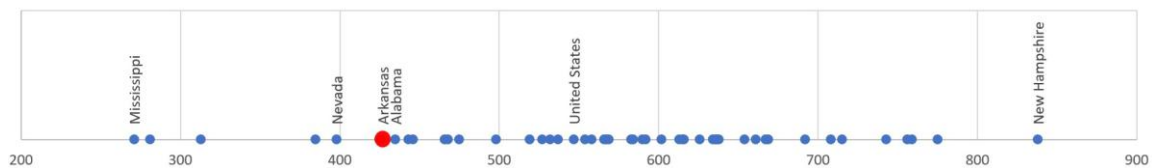
Family and Community 2024

Rank = 45, Score = 472



Overall 2024

Rank = 43, Score = 427



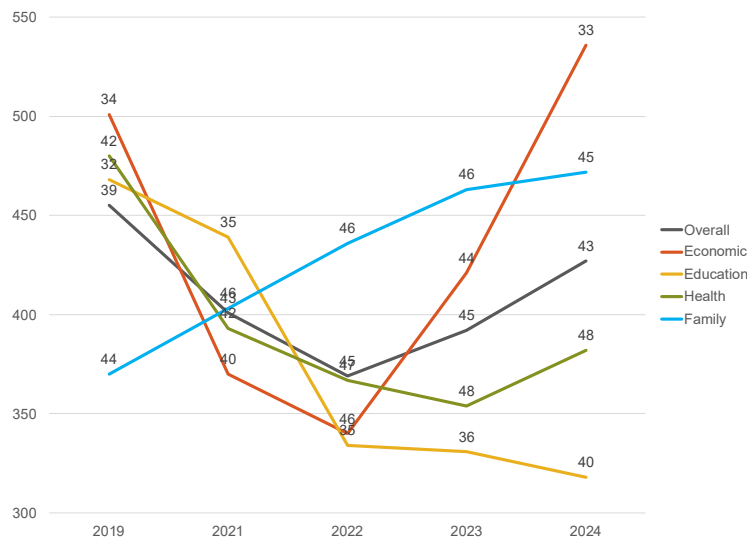


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Scores
(and
ranks)
over
Time



B. Simon inquired if our economic indicators are better, because others have gotten worse. C. Richoux informed the committee that we have made improvements, but our baseline is still higher for the child poverty rate and that were behind compared to the U.S. average. B. Simon mentioned the information should be shared with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP).

S. Labuda mentioned she was surprised some of our health measures were much lower and doesn't seem to be reflected in the report. Such as food insecurity, infant mortality, and maternal mortality. C. Richoux shared that most of the indicators chosen to report data are reflected in the economic environment and the status of children's uninsurance. S. Borchert asked if there is data on the full-time insurance benefits and that information will not be available until June of 2027. J. Morrow stated the report is great from a high school perspective and if a 10-minute overview can be shared with the students within the district she works at. Several of them are doing research projects and assignments that could use access to this information and discussion.

C. Garner mentioned the loss of the Affordable Care Act tax credits will have a negative impact on insured families. C. Richoux mentioned the tax credits ended in 2025 and that there are lower marketplace enrollments.

No additional comments/feedback was made from CHAC; S. Agnew will include the presentation slides in the meeting minutes.



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Member & Non-Member Updates/Announcements:

- S. Borchert shared that the Travelers Youth Foundation Board will host its Pitch, Putt, and Paws, “first-ever Unity sports clinic. Taking place on August 16, 2026, from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM at Dickey-Stephens Park, this groundbreaking event is 100% free and open to children of all ages. It’s designed specifically for children with disabilities, this hands-on clinic provides a customized, empowering athletic experience. Every station is fully accessible, ensuring that all participants can experience the joy of baseball, softball, and golf in an environment tailored to their unique needs.
- C. Richoux shared the various upcoming events for the Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families. [Events Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families \(AACF\)](#)
- S. Labuda shared there has recently been a lot in the news regarding immunizations, but there have been no changes to immunization policy or none that require changes of availability or school requirements. All vaccines are available to students and insurance are still covering those services.
- C. McDonald shared the “Back to School” (livestream event) with all the co-ops was held July 28th and over 500 nurses were in attendance and received CNEs. Dr. Dillaha reported on immunizations, a parent and student talked about “When It’s Not Asthma Exercise-Induced Laryngeal Obstruction.” July 30th & August 4th they had two “School Nurse Academy’s” with partnership with the Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Department of Health, and Arkansas Children’s Hospital. Updates were made on technology, diabetes, boundaries & leadership, and mental health. Over 160 were in attendance for both sessions. Lastly the Arkansas School Nurse Association wrote a grant with the community foundation and were awarded. They will provide a review free to school nurses in the state who want to obtain a national board certification. Scholarships will be offered for nurses to take the examination next year.
- S. Agnew shared that Arkansas Children’s hospital has a new pilot program called “Mind Matters” that is seeking school partnerships to improve students’ mental health and resilience. There will be 12 interactive lessons to help students better guide their emotions. S. Agnew will send to the wellness chair directors within the central and northwest portions of the state.
- L. Mundy shared the quarterly Coordinated School Health meeting will be held Wednesday September 10, 2026, at 8:30a.m. via Zoom. Presentations will be focused on topics such as substance misuse and opioid recovery partnerships.



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Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82188157602?pwd=cMg1WAWAkNknHOSmxbWQTUWac2tOKA.1>

Meeting ID: 835 8229 5337 Passcode: 229369

One tap mobile: +1 646 931 3860 US, +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

State Board of Education meetings are held monthly on the 2nd Thursday and Friday of each month.

July 9-10 at 9:00 am

August 13-14 at 9:00a.m.

September 10-11 at 9:00a.m.

October 8-9 at 9:00a.m.

November 12-13 at 9:00a.m.

December 10-11 at 9:00a.m.

State Board of Health meetings are held quarterly on the 4th Thursday of each month.

July 23 at 10:00 am

October 22 at 10:00 am

November & December (falls on holiday)