



King County

Department of Community and Human Services
**Developmental Disabilities and
Early Childhood Supports Division**



NEWS & UPDATES

BOARD FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

JANUARY 2026



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

*No January
Board Meeting or Event*

Reserve These Dates!

2026 Board Meetings

Tuesday, February 3

Wednesday, May 6

Wednesday, August 5

Wednesday, November 4

We Want to Hear from as Many Voices as Possible!

Board members and community members bring your friends, colleagues, and anyone passionate about supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and join our Board meetings!

Your voices have the power to shape the services and supports our community depends on. By showing up and speaking up, you help ensure every perspective is heard and valued.

Let's come together, speak up, and build a community where EVERY voice truly counts!

Reasonable Accommodations

American Sign Language (ASL) and Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) services are provided at every Board meeting. If you need other reasonable accommodations to meaningfully participate in Board meetings, please contact Michaelle Monday at Michaelle.Monday@kingcounty.gov. We are committed to providing the supports and accommodations necessary to ensure that our meetings are accessible for all.

Board Chair Remarks

There is still meaningful work ahead that calls for our continued commitment to ensuring that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are supported with the dignity, opportunity, and respect they deserve.

In the coming year, we will deepen our focus on truly listening to the voices of individuals, families, and community members. Every perspective strengthens us. Every experience teaches us. And every voice helps shape the services and supports that move our mission forward.

I encourage each of you to stay engaged, stay curious, and stay connected. Invite others to join this mission. Share your insights. Challenge us to grow. Our strength lies in the diversity of thought, experience, and passion that each of you brings to the table.

Together, we will continue building a community where people of all abilities are valued, included, and empowered to thrive. I am honored to step into this new year alongside you and look forward to all we will accomplish together.

Thank you for your leadership, your energy, and your unwavering dedication. Here's to another year filled with purpose, progress, and possibility.

Appreciation for Community Members Who Participated in the Centering Black Excellence Symposium

On December 9, 2025, the Best Starts for Kids (BSK) Workforce Development Centering Black Excellence Symposium brought together more than 100 participants for an in-person gathering dedicated to uplifting and celebrating the brilliance, leadership, and lived experiences of Black women in the early childhood field. The event fostered learning, community building, and advancing equitable systems of support for children Prenatal to Five and their families. Thank you to all who attended for your ongoing partnership, advocacy, and dedication to equity and community strength.

The symposium centered the professional and lived experiences of the following distinguished speakers:

- Adana Protonentis, Co-Owner, Kindred Consulting
- Dr. Cynthia Davis-Vanloo, Faculty, University of Washington Bothell
- Dr. Debra Sullivan, Founder & Executive Director, Ashé Preparatory Academy
- Dr. Sabine Thomas, Naturopath & Co-Owner, JSOL Studios LLC
- Shayla Collins, Parent Partner

Panel Moderators:

- Ashley Ewings, Community Engagement Lead, King County Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT)
- Breea Wainwright, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist, WestEd

The panelists shared their stories and insights about working in early childhood celebrating progress while also addressing ongoing inequities that impact children, particularly those from marginalized communities. Through open dialogue and collective reflection, participants explored ways to build systems where all children can thrive.

We extend our gratitude to Shanelle Dodson-Dance, BSK Workforce Development Co-Lead, for her leadership and vision, to Ashley Ewings, ESIT, and Breea Wainwright, WestEd for their leadership and support in making this event a success. This symposium represents an important step in our commitment to centering Black excellence, amplifying community wisdom, and building more equitable systems for early childhood development. We look forward to hosting many more gatherings that continue this work.

Board Recruitment: Self-Advocates

Be a Voice for Change — Join the Board for Developmental Disabilities!

Are you a self-advocate with an intellectual or developmental disability who wants to make a real impact in your community? We want *you* on the Board for Developmental Disabilities because your voice matters and your lived experience is essential.

As a board member, you'll help shape programs, guide decisions, and champion the needs of people with disabilities throughout our community. No previous board experience is required; just bring your ideas, your perspective, and your passion. We'll provide all the training, support, and accommodations you need to participate confidently and comfortably.

Our Board meets quarterly, typically on Wednesdays from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., with options to join in person or online. We're committed to making sure you're supported in the way that works best for you.

Ready to make a difference and help lead the way? Your voice can create real change, and we'd be proud to have you join us.

Contact James Ott at James.Ott@kingcounty.gov or visit <https://Kingcounty.gov/DDBoard>.

Your voice can change lives — let's do it together!

Global Family Day

January 1 marks Global Family Day, a time to celebrate the bonds that connect us and the power of family both near and far. Families, in all their forms, provide support, love, and a foundation for growth. This day reminds us that fostering

connection and understanding within our families and communities contributes to a more peaceful and compassionate world. Let's start the year by cherishing these bonds and spreading kindness to those around us.

January Updates

[November 2025 Board Minutes](#)

[November 2025 Board Presentation](#)

[December 2025 Board Minutes](#)

[January 2026 DDECSD Updates](#) (Services for Children/Youth/Adults, and their families)

Next Board Meeting

The next quarterly hybrid Board for Developmental Disabilities meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, February 3, 2026**, from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. at our King County Tukwila office, located at 625 Andover Park W., Suite 200, Hallway Meeting Room 2, Tukwila.



Get inspired, stay informed, and connect with our Board by [subscribing](#) to our newsletter today!



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