

**Great Start Collaborative**  
**June 25, 2020, 1:30 – 3pm**  
**Zoom**

**Attendees: Tonya Clevenger - Campfire West Michigan 4C, Maggie Lancaster – Grand Rapids Children’s Museum, Linda Pickett – GVSU, Lisa Ellison – Parent Rep, Frank Florido – Network 180, Shonteonna Cox – Parent Rep, Alyce Hernandez – Catholic Charities, Nicole Pratt – Milestones CDC, Ben Brower – DAB/St. Johns, Susan Chang – Arbor Circle, Claire Titcombe – Cherry Health, Heather Boswell – First Steps Kent, Latesha Lipscomb – Parent Rep, Paul Westdale – HMGK, Yolanda Johnson – Parent Rep, Jeran Culina – Talent 2025, Abby D’Addario – KDL, Ray Sutcliffe – Parent Rep, Sarah Wilson – HealthNet of West Michigan, Krysten Bomberg – WGVU, Maureen Hale – PNC, Tomarra Richardson – Parent Liaison, Dr. Nkechye Ezech – ELNC, Sara Proano – KDL, Sarah Laman – Parent Rep, Crystal Bulgarella – GSQ, Elizabeth Zandstra – GRPL, Joann Hoganson – KCHD, Alyssa Bryan – Family Futures, Emily Skavnak – NFP, Jennifer Cottingham – Easterseals, Nirali Bora – KCHD, Summer Wright – Comprehensive Therapy Center, Cara Sutcliffe – Parent Rep, Alissa Hofstee – KISD, Chana Edmond-Verley – Campfire West Michigan 4C, Wendy Wheeler – DHHS/CPS, Ashley Karsten – KISD, Kathleen Neumann – GRCC, Nicole Burman – Parent Rep, Aarie Wade – Baxter CDC, Christina Pocklington – Parent Liaison, Paula Brown – Director, Leslie Hawkins – Coordinator, Melissa Werkman – Children’s Advocacy Center**

- **Welcome and Introductions**  
**Maureen Hale**

**Approval of the April 23, 2020 meeting notes: Approved**

- **Great Start Parent Coalition Report**  
**Tomarra Richardson**

**Christina Pocklington**

- Welcome to our three new parent reps, Katie Szarowicz, Ray Sutcliffe, and Sarah Laman. Katie will be a part of Early Learning Partners and Parent Support Stations and Cafes. Ray will be facilitating Dad’s Cafés.
- Grants: Trusted Advisor Four grant submission was approved. The grant will run from July 1<sup>st</sup> through the end of November. A \$15,000 United Way grant and an anonymous grant for \$12,000 to purchase diapers and formula was received.
- Great Start Parent Coalition Zoom Meetings: Last week the coalition meeting was a virtual legislative night. Six legislators or staff attended: Commissioner Jim Talen, Commissioner Milinda Ysasi, Senator Brinks, Senator MacGregor, Rep. Huizenga, and Rep. Afendoulis's staff member. Three parents shared stories related to childcare, education, and housing. Next meeting will be on self-care with Marguerite Morgan. Biweekly parent rep check-ins are also being held. When coalition parents were polled self-care scored highly for needs.
- Communication: A resource newsletter is going out twice a month. The resources are now also being sent to those organizations working with families experiencing homelessness. There is also a monthly general GSPC newsletter. The social media presence is active on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest.
- COFI: The second session of COFI has begun. Small check in every two weeks with those that are interested by Nicole and Iris. Refer your parents that would like to engage.

- Diaper Donation: 146,000 diapers were delivered to Salvation Army this week. They have been sorted into orders for our partner organizations. Pick up will take place on Monday and Tuesday of next week. The diapers received this week along with the donation received last month from the National Diaper Bank Network bring the total collected and distributed during COVID to 447,000.
  - Parent Cafes: Taking place every Monday night, targeting Northern Kent based on the work plan under our BMH work group.
  - Facebook Live Circle Time: currently doing twice a week specific to a Success Basics tip. Each book reading in the circle time will feature a person of color. The videos can be found on YouTube as well.
- **Small Group Discussion:** Members gave a summary of the discussion in their breakout rooms related to the question, how is what's happening in the world today influencing your thinking and action regarding early childhood? One group shared there was a common theme in their group. There needs to be a movement from talking to action regarding the disparities and inequalities. Some group members acknowledged the question was triggering and difficult to share. Others agreed and said it's important to have hard conversations if we want things to change. Resources shared in chat:
    - Harvard Implicit Bias Test: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>
    - Anti-Racist Baby: <https://www.amazon.com/AntiRacist-Baby-lbram-X-Kendi/dp/0593110412>
- **State of Child Care in Kent County**  
**Chana Edmond-Verley**  
 Working with 70% of childcare homes across the region and in contact multiple times a month with providers. Decline in childcare providers since 2006. Talent 2025 had done a study ([http://www.talent2025.org/uploads/files/Talent2025\\_ChildCare\\_Survey\\_Results.pdf](http://www.talent2025.org/uploads/files/Talent2025_ChildCare_Survey_Results.pdf)). Pre-COVID there were no open slots in childcare. Licensed and license exempt slots don't fill the need in our community. Family and friends filling the need underground. Why are there such drastic declines? Requirements became more significant especially for home-based providers. 16,000 licensed providers to 8000 providers (GSRP included in those numbers). Kathleen shared her home providers group attendees leave childcare because they have the sense there is an expectation of needing to become a mini center. Tonya shared she was never able to make an income being a provider, she did it because she loved caring for children. Tiered rating system can be burdensome on home-based providers. 200 childcare providers polled at Campfire's yearly conference pre-COVID: licensing and earnings/profits biggest issue for declining providers. Maybe it's over regulated and can be tiered. Asked for interest in shared services over half said no. Only 15% said they have a high interest and 33% said maybe. Send questions or thoughts directly to Chana or to Leslie. 30% of workforce is saying they can't get to work without childcare.
- **Legislative Update**  
**Ashley Karsten**  
 GSRP/Funding for Education is covered in Ashley's Power Point). Content is related to what the impact COVID has had on funding for GSRP and education in general as well as possible future direction. Still waiting on GSRP funding. Hoping to maintain funding. A budget cut would likely mean programs would close.

- **GSC Updates & Announcements**  
**Paula Brown**

**Leslie Hawkins**

Play Campaign is being pushed out on social media. Please share the content on your Facebook pages.

- **Partner Announcements**

KDL: KDL, in partnership with Feeding America, is offering Met-UP & Eat-Up lunches in 12 of our libraries and together with the meals we will have available a hands-on activity called "WONDER WORKS". This project aligns perfectly with our Summer Wonder learning challenge. The activity bag has all the materials needed for the STEAM project and it is appropriate for younger children. Attached in the email are sample activities and what learning target are. Here are the **KDL Branch Meet Up Eat Up Sites & Service Details**

**Alpine Township Branch M-F serving: 12:30-1:30 pm**

**Walker Branch M-F serving: 12:30-1:30 pm**

**Tyrone Township Branch M-Th 12:30-1:30 pm**

**Comstock Park Branch M-F serving 12-12:30 pm**

**Plainfield Township Branch M, W, F serving: 11:15-12pm**

**Gaines Township Branch M- F serving: 11:30-12:30 pm**

**Kentwood Branch M- F serving: 11:30-12:30 pm**

**Kellogsville Branch M-F serving: 12-1pm**

**Wyoming Branch M-F serving: 12-1pm**

**Nelson Township Branch M, T, W, F serving: 12:30-1:30 pm**

**Spencer Township Branch M-F serving: 12:30-1:30 pm**

KDL also has a daily live broadcasting for preschoolers that parents and kids can access at 9:30am every weekday. It is called Wimee's Words and it can be accessed via social media or through our webpage. We are always accepting participants that would like to "virtually visit" with us, so if there are any parents interested, we will happily take them. They can also just join live and share comments and ideas with us. The main site for this is <http://www.wimee.tv/>