

Great Start Collaborative Membership Meeting
June 24, 2021, 1:30 – 3pm
Zoom

Attendance: Ben Brower, Nicole Pratt, Mallory Willenbring, Jayme Vosovic, Jaime Mueller, Angela Freier, K'Sandra Earle, Heather Walczewski, Karen Lezan, Nirali Bora, Tomarra Richardson, Sara McMullin, Jennifer Leys, Kelsey Perdue, Ashley Karsten, Kristin Gietzen, Betsy Zandstra, Wendy Wheeler, Alissa Finley, Michelle Eason, Kathleen Neumann, Cara Sutcliffe, Iris Gipson, Heather Boswell, Kristyn Bomberg, Alyssa Bryan, Anna Silva, Kayla Johns, Nicole Burman, Joann Hoganson, Ray Sutcliffe, Shanequa Mosley, Maggie Lancaster, Jennifer Cottingham, Tequia Adams, Sarah Wilson, Paula Brown, Leslie Hawkins Amber Davis, Chana Edmond-Verley, Aarie Wade, Latesha Lipscomb, Frank Florido

- **Welcome and Introductions**

Joann Hoganson

Approval of the April 22, 2021 meeting notes

- **Kids Count Data Presentation**
Michigan League for Public Policy

Kelsey Perdue,
Kids Count Project Manager

Kent County childcare monetary amount data is based off one child/home.

WIC enrollments are based on all children, not those eligible.

Why are there higher rates of CPS investigation vs, 10 years ago? More mandated reporter training and a centralized access point to report. Vast number of cases are for neglect which indicate poverty and the need to help support families with resources.

The pandemic has shown the greater community what those in early childhood already knew, our community and state is experiencing a childcare crisis. 7% or less of income is considered affordable but for most people it not in an affordable range. Only 9% of Michigan families can afford care. If the ability to afford care isn't an issue, access is. Childcare centers and providers typically are in high socio-economic areas for supply and demand purposes. Not working for childcare providers either. Some of our lowest wage worker and half are eligible for public assistance because pay is so low. Providers who do agree to accept subsidy will not find it is enough to cover the cost of care. Michigan has one of the lowest eligibility rates in the country for childcare subsidy. Goal is to get to 250% of the rate of FPL.

Links from MLPP:

- [Main 2021 Kids Count in Michigan Data Book Page](#) (THIS PAGE LINKS TO ALL OTHER MATERIALS):
- [Full Data Book](#)
- [County/Regional/City Profiles](#)
- [Heat Maps of Key Data](#)
- [Resources for Advocates](#) (Great to share with partners) (including graphics to share)
- [News Release](#)
- [Definitions and Sources](#)
- [Key Findings and Recommendations](#)
- [2021 National KIDS COUNT Data Book](#) (Also launched yesterday)
- <https://mlpp.org/child-care-in-michigan-by-county/>
- [Think Babies Advocacy Hour](#)
- [Governor's Plan](#)
- [ARP City Info](#)
- [ARP Local Township Info](#)
- [Budget Breakdown](#)

➤ [Child Care Action Alert](#)

• **Great Start Parent Coalition Report**

Tomarra Richardson

- Books Blocks & Balls Event is August 14th from 10am – 1pm and is transitioning to an in-person event with location TBD. This is a Help Me Grow Event with an emphasis on promoting developmental screenings. We would like partner giveaways to be early childhood development themed with a focus on building fine & gross motor skills. We will be sending out additional details soon, along with a suggested list of giveaways to our partner organizations for families. Email Tomarra and Nicole if you would like to participate.
- COFI: The second phase is beginning in July. Iris and Shanequa started out as graduates and are now facilitating. Families are still welcome to sign up and do not have to go through Phase One to do Phase Two.
- Trusted Advisors: The TA grant consists of Latinx and Northern Kent Coalition meetings which have both kicked off. Three Family Activity Nights will be held with accompanying kits for families to pick up. First is being held tonight and is Spring into Art. The next two are Summer STEM and Fall into Music. Parent Cafes are also being held in person in the SE Grand Rapids.
- Diaper Drive: Sparta United Methodist, a small local church collected over 11,000 diapers from Mother's Day to Father's Day.
- Iris shared she had three ICCF staff come to her Parent Support Station and they had questions about childcare. The information shared by MLPP will be great to share with them. They also want to partner with GSC as they serve families.

• **First Steps Kent Update**

Heather Boswell

First Steps Kent will offer four funding opportunities this summer for the Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage. Funding opportunities will include Outreach and Navigation, Healthy Development, Early Learning, and Parent Support and Education. New for 2022 is Child Safety Initiatives under Parent Support and Education which will support providing pack and plays and car seats along with the accompanying education. Also Early Learning and Literacy. There will be two Pre-Proposal Conferences to provide information about the proposal process. Both sessions will contain the same information. There is no need to attend both. Sessions are 14th and 15th. Flyer in the chat. Reach out to Heather with questions. After preconference will need to submit questions in a written format to be answered. For more information go to their site: <https://www.firststepskent.org/articles/preconference%20>

• **Great Start Readiness Program Update**

Ashley Karsten

There are 5873 slots, that total 2900 full day slots. There are currently 1833 students in the intake system. Governor Whitmer has proposed a GSRP expansion increasing slots to 17,400. Also increasing the per slot match to a full day to \$8,692. There is another \$50 million one time funding proposed to support expansion.

• **GSC Updates**

Paula Brown

Joann Hoganson

- Budget: Document shared with group shows expenses through March 30th. If you have any questions, contact Paula. We are on track with our budget. The second half of the year there will be larger expenses, especially with COVID restrictions being lifted.
- Local Program Funds Update: Nine applications were received. They were a diverse pool of organizations, some that applied that aren't engaged in the GSC work giving the opportunity to expand our community partnerships. We still need three to four more GSC members to review the applications. Looking for people to review applications. Kate Lara, Wendy Wheeler, Paula, Tomarra Richardson, and

Amber Davis are currently on the committee. The goal is to information the awarded organization(s) August 1st. Volunteers can't be employed by one of the organizations that applied.

- GSC Nomination Committee: Two officer positions for 2021/2022 year beginning on October 1st through September. Chair and Vice-chair for Joann's seat. Per operating guidelines, the exec team is forming a nominating committee. Kristin Gietzen is chairing, Maureen and Paula as well on the committee. Please let us know if you'd like to join to committee. Short commitment. July through September with four to six meetings. At least one in person. End goal is to bring recommendations for candidates to the exec team for selecting. If you'd like to nominate someone for either of these roles, please send your nomination directly to Paula or Maureen. The chair should demonstrate a commitment to early childhood and to recognizing the value of diverse agencies in our efforts to forward the cause of early childhood. A willingness to be inclusive and actively listen to many voices. Is interested in both the data as well as the anecdotal stories of community members. Unbiased toward any particular community partner. A visionary and able to see potential for change and growth. Organized and good with follow-through.

- **Partner Announcements:**

- GRCM: Congratulations to the Children's Museum reopening this week! No need to register online as of this week!!!
- WIC clinics are now open to in person visits. Haven't been able to test children for lead so expecting there will be a spike.
- Debbie Whitford: Michigan Alliance for Families now able to meet in person again. Hired another part time parent position for central western Kent. Leah Groves, a former parent rep is in the new position.