

**Great Start Collaborative Membership Meeting Minutes**  
**Zoom**  
**October 28, 2021 - 1:30-3:00 p.m.**

**Attendance:** Kristyn Bomberg, Debbie Whitford, Kimber Wager, Sara Wilson, Joann Hoganson, Betsy Zandstra, Holly Tiret, Karen Lezan, Ashley Karsten, Amy Cochran, Lindsey Van Dyke, Mallory Willenbring, Jennifer Cottingham, Kristin Gietzen, Sara McMullin, Susan Chang, Madonna Princer, Kayla Johns, Kathleen Neumann, Angela Freier, Kailey Cline, Sara Schmidt, Ray Sutcliffe, Heather Boswell, Cara Sutcliffe, Amber Davis, Jenna Leys, Fredericka Brown, Yolanda Johnson, Linda Pickett, Jayme Vosovic, Tomarra Richardson, Maureen Hale, Paula Brown, Leslie Hawkins, Aarie Wade, Bryana Hopkins, Alissa Finley, Ben Brower

- **Welcome and Introductions**

**Maureen Hale**

**Approval of the August 26, 2021 meeting notes: Approved**

- **Great Start Parent Coalition Report**

**Tomarra Richardson**

- Books Blocks & Balls: Second BBB event held in Sparta. This event is important to continue running in the community as we see in the surveys many parents aren't aware of the developmental screener. 71.4% hadn't heard of the ASQ at the Sparta event.
- Grants: Trusted Advisors 5 grant is wrapping up next month. The application for the final Trusted Advisor grant is being submitted today. Additionally, a grant from the Center for the Study of Social Policy is being applied for to help support the COFI work as phase two moves into canvassing in the 49507 to find out what is important to the community and their needs.
- GSPC Meetings: November's meeting will be Parent Cafes with Parent Reps, Amber and Iris facilitating. <https://fb.me/e/PZGd6KSS> December's meeting will have WIC presenting on nutrition. Please share out with the parents you serve.
- Parent Cafés: Five different cafes happening across the community. Sparta Early Childhood Center, City Impact in Cedar Springs, ICCF, Grace CRC on the southeast side of Grand Rapids, and virtually on Facebook.

- **Diaper Drive Kent**

**Leslie Hawkins**

Our annual Diaper Drive is wrapping up this week. We've raised over \$1000 and will find out how many diapers next week. We will also be picking up diapers and pull-ups from Nestlings next week. Nicole was featured in an interview on Fox17 about diaper need and did a great job. Priority Health is holding their second drive for us at the end of November/beginning of December. We will be able to make a large order to the National Diaper Bank Network of nearly 30,000 diapers at least pushing us to our two millionth diaper collected. Might achieve this by the end of the year or early next year at the latest.

- **Preschool Update**

**Ashley Karsten**

There are still slots available but need staff, including break staff and subs. Increased hourly pay rates. Ashley can help with any questions an interested party might have about a job. Some classrooms opening in January. If anyone would like to have a program reach out to Ashley or Kathryn O'Hara Wallis. Choice Schools, Langley Childcare, ELNC, West Michigan Behavior ????? are adding classrooms. High school degree is all that is needed to sub or work during lunch breaks. What can be managed around credentials? There can be flexibility with compliance plans and can have two years to earn an associates degree. A lot of centers are at half capacity or lower per Aarie. Working hard to find candidates and get them trained. Steepletown has an Early

Childhood Educator Apprenticeship Program. Contact Dick at Steepletown [dick@steepletown.org](mailto:dick@steepletown.org). This program is helping supply staff to centers. Fredericka shared she will be opening a drop-in center next week and getting licensed then as well. Can she have a GSRP classroom with a provisional license? Yes, she can. KEEP program can help centers with mental health support. Email Susan Chang at [schang@arborcircle.org](mailto:schang@arborcircle.org) if they want to use their services. It is helping to assist with child behaviors and decrease the stress staff are feeling.

- **Child Care Update**

**Chana Edmond-Verley**

A lot is going on GSQ as the Resource center is in the lead in our area with the childcare stabilization funds. Vibrant Futures is working with them. Heather and Annemarie are at the table. They are all meeting weekly to discuss how equity will be applied as the funds come. Vibrant Futures did a survey of providers and submitted to the state. It was used to help make decisions on how the funding will be used. Grant will open on November 8<sup>th</sup> and only open for 30 days. The state has to report to the federal government by December 11 what they have expended. 50% must be allocated by then. A home provider could get \$3300 minimally and a center \$9000. If you're serving infants and children, subsidy children, children with special needs more funding would be received. Also, if they are in the quality system and open for non-traditional hours. A home could get an additional \$10,000 and a group home \$20,000. Can use funds to get and retain staff. Providers need to get ready to apply. GSQ and Vibrant Futures will be sending things out information for providers. Providers GSQ profile needs to be up to date, it will help the process go faster. Needs to have a sigma #. If you received funds from the government earlier in the pandemic they likely have that number. Video coming out from GSQ's to help guide providers. Tax preparer to available from FSK to help with questions and benefits providers may have. In prior funding some people lost benefits because of the influx of funds. Should set aside a third of the funds to pay for taxes for for-profit. Some parts are straight forward but other parts are very complicated. Want to be inclusive and make sure this money is gotten into all providers hands. Vibrant Futures sends out a quarter of a million dollars each month to providers, so they have a good sense of who struggles to get their information in of the star rated providers. They can help bring those providers along. 2-3% decline of providers each year and now 9% since COVID. Joann shared at the Health Department the employees they lost has been because they don't have childcare. All sectors need quality affordable care. These webpages are where people can go to get information: [www.michigan.gov/childcare](http://www.michigan.gov/childcare) GSQ and Vibrant Futures will be shared on social media as well. Who can support in home providers if they are uncertain about taxes and other issues? Go to tax preparer if they have one. Creating FAQ's to help with concerns. Should have that ready to share out tomorrow. Money going out in January giving providers time to plan and put aside what they need for taxes.

- **GSC Updates**

**Paula Brown**

- FY22 Budget: down a small amount based on population reduction of children. School readiness: may consider spending funds in creative ways as some may choose to not have their child in school right now. ELP is merging with Kent Advisory with GSQ. Social Emotional Health (formally Behavioral Mental Health) talking about importance of play funds to create videos, social media posts and trauma informed approaches. Funds for HMG outreach and engagement for HMG. Buying items to help with the ASQ. Funds for NPP for Success Basics and Ready4K. Carryover will also be applied to workgroups to help move the work forward. Reach out to Paula with any questions on the budget. Funding two programs, Baby Scholars and Bright Beginnings.
- FY22 Work Plan: Had our review call with Office of Great Start. Budget and plan have been approved. This is something that we can pivot on if necessary, when different needs arise. Group broke into breakout sessions to do a system scan for each of our four outcomes.

- **Partner Announcements**

- Sharon Schmidt, KCHD: There are locked bags available for people to keep their marijuana in to keep it away from children to prevent accidental ingestion. If you're interested in having a supply of them, contact Sharon. Several hundred left and would like to get them into the right hands. [Sharon.schmidt@kentcountymi.gov](mailto:Sharon.schmidt@kentcountymi.gov)
- Conductive Learning center: Recruiting for early childhood program, Conducting Readiness, that runs five days a week for five hours a day. Highly subsidized rate for a month. If you know a student or family with motor delays refer to them. Leslie will send brochure for the program out to the GSC. [Afreier@conductivelearningcenter.org](mailto:Afreier@conductivelearningcenter.org)
- MSUE teaches an online series on Powerful Tools for Caregivers for Parents of Special Needs children. It is free. [tiret@msu.edu](mailto:tiret@msu.edu) <https://www.canr.msu.edu/powerful-tools-for-caregivers/>
- MLPP: 1.4 billion passed more to do and things to make permanent [https://www.ecic4kids.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/2021\\_Think-Babies-MI-Policy-Agenda.pdf](https://www.ecic4kids.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/2021_Think-Babies-MI-Policy-Agenda.pdf), <https://normalwasneverenough.org/>
- Normal was Never Enough campaign was featured on By Leaps & Bounds <https://www.wgvunews.org/podcast/wgvu-by-leaps-bounds>