

Childcare Task Force of Ellis County Meeting Minutes

July 27, 2022

Welcome Center – 2700 Vine Street

Virtual Option: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

1. Committee Member Introductions: Those in attendance at the meeting are highlighted in yellow.

Amy Gerstner	Child Care Provider	Child Care Provider
Amy Staab	KDHE	Childcare Licensing Surveyor
Andrea and Nick Felder	Bright Minds Academy	Providers
Andrea Hoss	Child Care Provider	Child Care Provider
Andrew Cutright	Hays Area Children’s Center	Board member
Angie Tetlow	Parent of potential provider	Provider
Barb Wasinger	State of Kansas	111th District Representative
Brett Schmidt	Learning Cross Preschool	Provider
Brianna Bernasconi	Child Care Licensing	
Brooke Deines	Shining Stars Preschool	Provider
Callie Lewis	Child Care Provider	Child Care Provider
Dacia Haselhorst	TreeTop Security	Possible provider link
Dana Stanton	Northwest Kansas Economic Innovation Center	Childcare Program Director
David Clingan	Grow Hays	Community Advancement
Donna Hudson-Hamilton	Early Childhood Connections	Early Childhood Development
Doug Ford	Hays Area Children’s Center	Board member
Doug Williams	Grow Hays	Community Advancement
Eddie Herrman	HaysMed	Employer
Erin Gibson	Child Care Provider	Provider
James Robben	Grow Hays	Possible child care project
Janice Wilson	USD 388	K-12 Education
Jean Basgall	Child Care Provider	Provider
Jeff Brull	HaysMed Foundation	Parent
Jeff Pfeifer	Victoria Senior Center	Community Advancement
Jennifer Burgardt	Childcare Aware of Kansas	Community-Wide Resource
Jennifer Hecker	Options	Community connection
Jessamyn Staples	Nex-Tech Wireless	Parent
Jill Keller	KDHE	Childcare Licensing
Kaitlin Robben	Hays Medical Center	Parent
Kayla Ford	Golden Belt Cooperative	Representative
Kayla Hollern		
Kristy Younger	Potential Child Care Provider	Potential Provider
Laney Roths	FHSU Early Childhood	Instructor
Lisa Lane	Ameriprise Financial	Parent
Lucy Bouscher	Child Care Provider	Child Care Provider
Melissa Schoenberger	Kansas Dept. of Health & Environment	Field Services Supervisor
Michelle Dannels	Early Childhood Connections	Provider
Mindy Kuhn	Child Care Provider	Provider
Olga Detrixhe	Nex-Tech	Parent / HACC board member
Patrick McGinnis	Breathe Coffee House	Community advancement
Rebekah Meyer	Childcare Aware of Kansas	Health Consultant
Sandy Jacobs	City of Hays	Mayor
Sarah Meitner	Heartland Community Foundation	Grant Resources
Sarah Wasinger	The Chamber in Hays, Kansas	Community advancement
Shae Veach	HaysMed	Employer
Shelley Scheck	Daycare	Provider
Steve Keil	DSNWK	Employer

Tasha Eichman	Nex-Tech Wireless	Parent
Tori Ruder	Ruders Rugrats Daycare	Daycare Provider
Tricia Dreher	Child Care Provider	Child Care Provider

2. Grant Writing Update – Upcoming Deadlines

- Schmidt Foundation Update
Wasinger shared that the Schmidt Foundation has pledged \$30,000 to go towards a marketing campaign to attract additional day care providers to start a child care business as well as engage the business community in helping to remedy the county’s child care dilemma.
- Dane G. Hansen Foundation Grant Update
Wasinger said that she submitted a grant proposal to the Dane G. Hansen Foundation to serve as the match for the Schmidt Foundation grant. The task force should receive an update about this grant by the next meeting.
- Future Dane G. Hansen Foundation Grant Requests (cycles close the 25th of each month)
 - Child Care Provider Substitute Pool Grant
A sub-committee will need to be formed to discuss how this would work before a grant can be written to pay for the project.

Providers shared concerns for being able to vet their own subs and shared that it would be ideal if subs could meeting with parents and kids to ensure that it would be a good fit.

We would need to identify the agency that would be in charge of managing the subs, and we would need to figure out how to schedule subs. Wasinger said she would be connecting with USD 489 to see if there could be a potential partnership to utilize their software that manages their teacher sub pool.

Retired teachers could be a great group to pull from to build the sub pool. FHSU students in the 2nd track program could also make a good fit for the sub pool. Express Employment Connections may be a possible option KDHE could pay for the fingerprints and background checks.

- Infant Care Sustainability
The task force discussed keeping an open mind about writing a grant that would support infant care specifically. Since infants greatly impact how many other spots providers can have, task force members discussed the idea of subsidizing infant spots for in home providers and centers.
- Certification Level Incentivization Grants
There are grants available for child care providers depending on their level of certifications. These, however, would be individual grants that providers would have to apply for to qualify.

3. Creating a Mission and Vision Statement (Former task force mission and vision are below)

Mission Statement:

To create and maintain a sustainable, quality childcare environment that assists in attracting employees to Ellis County, while developing our children into the next generation of community leaders and workforce.

There were no additional changes suggested for the mission statement. The task force will look at approving the mission statement at the next meeting.

Vision Statement:

*A community in which current and prospective employees are productive while their children are nurtured and ~~learn~~ **educated** in a safe and stimulating childcare environment.*

The suggestion was made to change learn to educated to match nurtured. The task force will look at approving the vision statement at the next meeting.

4. Update from Childcare Aware of Kansas

Burgardt shared that the sustainability grant funds are still available for child care providers. She encouraged providers to apply for the grant funds if they are not already receiving them. Providers will earn more from the grant funds than they will have to claim as income for their taxes. She encouraged any providers to reach out to her if they had questions.

5. Letters of Support for Child Care Projects

Wasinger shared that she has written three letters of support for various projects focused on opening up new capacities for child care in Ellis County in the past month. Wasinger said that she was unable to share what the projects all entailed right now but would share more information once she was given the permission to do so.

6. Creating Focus Groups Addressing Child Care

- Possible facilitation by Betty Johnson from Dane G. Hansen Foundation
 - Provider-based focus group
 - Parent-based focus group
 - Employer-based focus group
 - Faith-based focus group
 - Education-based focus group
- When could these start, and who would like to be involved?

Task force members shared that having focus groups would be beneficial to get feedback from the various factions to ensure our direction moving forward is in alignment with what the community wants and needs. The feedback from these group meetings would be used in conjunction with the survey data that was collected last year.

Wasinger said she would connect with Betty Johnson to see if she would be willing to facilitate the focus group conversations.

7. Tina Payne Training

- When would be the best time of year to do this?
Providers shared that late fall would likely be the best time to have a training.
- Would this be hosted on a weekend or evening?
Providers shared that a weekend would be the best option to catch most providers.
- What other options could be added into this event to be beneficial for providers?
 - Trainings by Andrea

8. Pay to Play Employer Option

- Location
- Employment arrangements/benefits/pay/etc.

- Number of spots (How much would one spot cost to hold per year for an employer?)

Wasinger said that this discussion would be a majority of the content that would be discussed at an employer-based focus group meeting. Wasinger said she will be visiting with employers during membership meetings to see who is interested in this option.

9. **Survey/Questionnaire to Businesses from Child Care Aware of Kansas**

- Survey is being reopened and will close July 31st
Burgardt said that she could provide an update with survey results once the survey closes.
- Please help circulate the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GZHFFHW>
Task force members were encouraged to share the survey via all of their communication channels.

10. **Future Meeting Date/Time: Wednesday, August 31st at 5:30 p.m.**

Wasinger asked attendees to consider if anyone would like to serve as the task force's secretary to take minutes during meetings. Those unable to attend should reach out to Wasinger if they are interested in filling that role.

Long-Term Goals for Task Force

- Ellis County currently needs to open 700 spots to reach full capacity
- Capacity building for current providers – Tina Payne training
- Development of a pay to play program and how that would work
- Providing greater access to child care for children with special needs
- Giving access to benefits like health insurance to providers
- Creating pay equity and addressing livable wages
- Adding CDA certification at local high schools
- Establish a foundation fund to subsidize infant care
- Address need for second shift care
- Investigating and working with local legislators to see if birth to five child care could be funding much like K-12 education is. B. Wasinger shared that she would work with the legislature budget committee to obtain a dollar amount for this idea.
- Considering stipends for long-term providers

The meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Wasinger, Child Care Task Force of Ellis County facilitator