

**Child Care Task Force of Ellis County Meeting Minutes**

**August 22, 2023**

**Welcome Center – 2700 Vine Street**

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

**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.*

**Vision Statement:**

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

• **Committee Member Introductions:**

Amy Gerstner	Doug Williams	Melissa Schoenberger
Amy Staab	Eddie Herrman	Michelle Dannels
Andrea and Nick Felder	Erin Gibson	Mindy Kuhn
Andrea Hoss	James Robben	Monique Koerner
Andrew Cutright	Janet Brungardt	Rebekah Meyer
Angie Tetlow	Janice Wilson	Sabina Hoffman
April Brown	Jean Basgall	Sandy Jacobs
Barb Wasinger	Jeff Brull	Sara Bloom
Brett Schmidt	Jennifer Hecker	Sarah Meitner
Brianna Bernasconi	Jessamyn Staples	Sarah Wasinger
Brooke Deines	Kaitlin Robben	Shae Veach
Callie Lewis	Kara Burkholder	Shane Smith
Chelsey Ladd	Katie Dorzweiler	Stephanie Keller
Dacia Haselhorst	Kayla Ford	Steve Keil
Dana Stanton	Kelly Horn	Tanya Koehn
Dava Gaschler	Kristen Gaschler	Tara Witthuhn
Dave Van Doren	Kristy Younger	Tasha Eichman
David Clingan	Laney Roths	Tori Ruder
Donna Hudson-Hamilton	Lisa Lane	Tricia Dreher
Doug Ford	Lucy Bouscher	Vernie Pritchett

• **Prospective Child Care Provider Event**

- Discuss feedback received by local providers as many are sharing that too many open spots exist currently. The need for childcare spots is largely infant care, but other openings for older children is much higher. Sarah shared regulations for lowering the 18-month guideline for infants to 12 months is being reviewed and in the works. 21 or more providers in town have openings according to Andrea. The older times had the market for older preschoolers, now those numbers are getting lower and something else needs to change.

- Want to maintain positive relationships with all providers Tori and Andrea mentioned posting to Facebook groups for their openings, Child Care Aware and word of mouth between providers.
  - Should we pull back from this event until more information can be collected/timing doesn't feel right It was mentioned that the providers needed to decide if we hold off on child care provider recruitment events. We will hold off on the event that was scheduled for October and consider a different date after the newer child care center openings have settled and the community has a better understanding of the need for additional providers.
- **Marketing Sub-Committee Updates – Tasha Eichmann and Katie Dorzweiler**
    - Current child care provider appreciation campaign
      - Tori Ruder was spotlighted in the campaign. Impressions were:
        - Analytics
          - 18k impressions and 89 clicks on Hays Post
            - We've ran 2 pushdowns so far.
            - 1 300x250 around the child care event.
          - 3 radio ads: Dana Stanton, Tia, Mike Morley (His Audio is attached)
          - 53k impressions and 56 clicks on Facebook
            - We've ran 2 campaigns one around child care event, one general.
          - 55k impressions on OTT
            - 1 video running so far, we need to update this.
    - Childcare provider of the month needs a business sponsor.
    - Radio advertising: Mike Morley and soon Shae Veach/Eddie Herrman
    - Facebook: Provider focus posts / Appreciation event / Professional Development Series posts / New child care provider welcomes / Child care regulation forum? Only 5 providers took the time to go through the process. If more can participate that would be ideal.
    - OTT – the video is currently being featured on a variety of platforms
    - Breakdown of current metrics
    - Share the most.
  - **Child Care Regulations Forum**
    - Discuss email to Melissa Rooker, Executive Director of the Kansas Children's Cabinet. Per Brett, this group is running the Pathways program. The regulations are being reviewed specifically childcare models to be combined into one license and can grow with their business. It can take years to get done, but childcare provider feedback is pushing it forward. The Pathways Program is also gaining on setting a professional rating. Per Sarah, Christina Janney will help us with another article about the progress. Any suggestions on article

content, email to Sarah if thoughts don't want to be shared publicly. Donna mentioned this is the first year in a long time she hasn't lost staff due to the daycare shortage. We are making progress.

- **Northwest Kansas Economic Innovation Center Announcements**

- Sub pool update
- Child Care Conference updates. Good feedback on the 2 day conference. Key note speaker was awesome.

- **Food Program Updates**

- No grants are currently available for supplementing income for food programs for providers
- Connection with U.S. Senator Roger Marshall's office. They are interested in the CACFP program and looking to enhance it. It could be state-wide instead of just Ellis County
- U.S. Congressman Tracey Mann on Hunger Committee
- Should we draft a specific letter with an ask to send to our local legislators regarding the food program? Andrea mentioned a petition of the food program tiers to even them all out instead of difference rates (pre-pandemic differences) that Dayna put together. What we would like to see changed. Examples- tiering and changing the restriction on commercial building locations cannot receive CACFP funding. James Robben, when you get enough people sending the same letter it does make a response coming up. He recommends sending letters to Tracey Mann and Roger Marshall since they are on the Ag Committee since the bill is up this year. Sarah can get a letter format together, but providers need to provide the details on the specific details on what needs to be changes. The more personal / quantities of letters the better from the Kelly can help us with the stats on what tiers are in Sunshine and others from her sources.

- **Child Care Provider Appreciation 2024**

- June 20, 2024 from 6 to 8 p.m. Kelly Koerner from High Plains Mental Health will be our guest speaker. It is still pending on KDHE approval to count as CE hours. K-State is working is getting on speakers and content for KDHE approval as well for CE hours per Monique. Sarah also mentioned ones that wouldn't qualify CE hours about activity ideas could also be included. Brett mentioned a toy / book trade by providers at an event that was really successful.
- Rose Garden Banquet Hall & Catering – venue is confirmed
- Working with Members to Enhance Number of Sponsors for the Event in 2024
- Title Sponsorship for the event is confirmed

- Two other sponsorships are confirmed
- **Child Care Provider Professional Development Series**
  - October 26<sup>th</sup> from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Rose Garden Banquet Hall & Catering
    - High Plains Mental Health Center certification – Kaley has not yet heard back from the state on this, and it was sent over 30 days ago. Their communication shares 60 days for approval.
  - January 25<sup>th</sup> from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Rose Garden Banquet Hall & Catering
  - April 25<sup>th</sup> from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Rose Garden Banquet Hall & Catering
  - Sub-Committee Members: Tori Ruder, Dana Stanton, and Sarah Wasinger – Others? Please stay after meeting to schedule time to meet
  - \$5 registration fee for Ellis County providers and give them a priority date and open up the series to others if room is still available
  - Meeting on August 2<sup>nd</sup> from 5:30 to 6:30 to continue with plans at the Welcome Center

- **Early Childhood Transition Task Force Updates – Sara Bloom**

KS Legislator YouTube videos of the Task Force meetings are posted. 1) Support public / private partnerships to support recognizing providing childcare as necessary entity 2) Transition Logistics 3) Streamline the application progress. 4) Provide operational grants. The task force broke into three separate task force to divide and conquer the items needed. Combining four different agencies can be a challenge.

- **Child Care Aware of Kansas Grant Update**

Sarah will request the funding each month. Then the Chamber will disperse the remaining funds related to staff monthly.

- **Round Table Updates from Task Force Members**

- Holy Family Elementary Preschool Ribbon Cutting – September 6<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m.
- HaysMed Child Care Center Ribbon Cutting rescheduled – September 14<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m.

ECC- Go Truck Go is September 14<sup>th</sup>

Tori Ruder is going to speak at TMP for career day. Will provide an update next month

James Robben- The Grove is still moving forward with their project, but is listening to the feedback on the centers in town and they are reviewing the childcare center due to the feedback.

Sarah Bloom- Seed Grants are open again, but not eligible for Ellis County.

Andrea said she is a supporter of the centers, but mostly there are only two in-home providers will attend the task force meetings. She mentioned the evening meeting option try it one time a year.

HACC is moving flexibility around to accommodate the needs of the infant shortage.

Brett mentioned renovations have started at his new facility.

- **Future Meeting Date and Time: September 26th at 4 p.m. – Hays Welcome Center**