

**Childcare Task Force of Ellis County Meeting Minutes**

**January 27, 2022**

**Welcome Center – 2700 Vine Street**

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

1. Committee Member Introductions:

Amy Staab	KDHE	Childcare Licensing
Barb Wasinger	State of Kansas	111th District Representative
Berny Unruh	Cottonwood Extension District	Family Community Wellness
Betsy Wearing	Dane G. Hansen Foundation	Programs and New Initiatives
Brooke Deines	Shining Stars Preschool	Provider
Bradford Wiles	Cottonwood Extension District	Early Childhood Development
Brett Schmidt	Learning Cross Preschool	Provider
Corey Burton	USD 388	Superintendent
Dacia Haselhorst	TreeTop Security	Possible provider link
Donna Hudson-Hamilton	Early Childhood Connections	Early Childhood Development
Doug Williams	Grow Hays	Community advancement
Eddie Herrman	HaysMed	Employer
Hali Bielser	Uhlig, LLC	Parent
Jeff Pfeifer	Victoria Senior Center	Community Advancement
Jennifer Burgardt	Childcare Aware of Kansas	Community-Wide Resource
Jennifer Oborny	Hays Area Children’s Center	Infant/Toddler Early Intervention
Jill Keller	KDHE	Childcare Licensing
Kaitlin Robben	Hays Medical Center	Parent
Kayla Ford	Golden Belt Cooperative	Representative
Kelly Horn	Sunshine Connections	Child and Adult Care Food Program
Laney Roths	FHSU Early Childhood	Instructor
Lisa Lane	Ameriprise Financial	Parent
Melissa Schoenberger	Bureau of Family Health	Child Care Licensing
Patrick McGinnis	Breathe Coffee House	Community Advancement
Penny McGinnis	Tiger Tots	Provider
Rachel Gardner	University of Kansas	Research Project Coordinator
Rebekah Meyer	Childcare Aware of Kansas	Community-Wide Resource
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	VP Regional Operations & Marketing
Shelley Scheck	Daycare	Provider
Tasha Eichman	Nex-Tech Wireless	Parent
Tori Ruder	Ruders Rugrats Daycare	Daycare Provider
Zach Woolf	FHSU Foundation	Parent

2. Communities in Action for Ellis County: Jennifer Burgardt – Childcare Aware of Kansas

- Date: March 10<sup>th</sup> from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Welcome Center (Lunch provided by The Chamber)
  - Identify additional Steering Committee members to attend. Current Steering Committee members include: Doug Williams, Donna Hudson-Hamilton, Sarah Meitner, and Brett Schmidt.
  - We can have up to ten spots at this workshop. Would anyone else have the availability/desire to serve on the Steering Committee?
  - Steering Committee members may work in more frequent capacities outside of monthly scheduled meetings as needed.

- Items that will be discussed during this session:
  - Pre-planning and support. This may include support for initial coalition-forming, a preliminary needs assessment, or other key activities to build initial readiness (we are through most of this)
  - Communities in Action Workshop. This workshop is a tailored experience designed to meet the unique needs of individual communities. Community teams learn from child care content experts, hear directly from child care providers, receive customized child care supply/demand data, and delve into development of short- and long-term goals during structured planning time with an expert community coach.
  - Follow-up support. Ongoing support is tailored to the readiness, pace, and scale of each community to support successful execution of the action plan.

### 3. Funding for Communities Through Childcare Aware of Kansas

Communities working on child care capacity can participate in *Communities in Action* and will be selected based on their overall level of readiness and need (with priority given to underserved and underrepresented communities).

Selected communities will receive funding to support the following:

- Designated local “backbone” support for emerging/existing early care and education coalitions (including meeting facilitation and support, communication needs, etc.).
- Supplies to support coalition-building and recruitment, childcare capacity action plan development, and early implementation activities.
- Ellis County can apply for \$9,000 in funds.
  - How should/could we utilize these funds?
  - Must be spent by April 30<sup>th</sup>
- This funding cannot go directly to providers. It is intended to get county initiatives off the ground and running.
- It can be utilized towards a community center project that includes daycare and designing the facility (architect fees)
- Considering using some of the funds for the senior housing project north of HaysMed.
- Can use funds towards getting feedback from providers
- Cannot use funds towards food
- Can host events to answer questions about choosing childcare as a career path (drawings/door prizes)
- Complete an informational hour in Ellis, Hays, and Victoria. We tentatively have an informational hour schedule in Ellis on March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Wasinger will contact Staab and Schoenberger to see if they are available for that evening. All committee members will be welcome to attend that event, and more details will be communicated once they are finalized. We will invite the local Fire Marshall, Sunshine Connections, an accountant, Rick Feltenberger from the SBDC, and offer door prizes for attendees. We will shoot for the first week of April for the Hays event and will need to identify a time to schedule in Victoria.
- Another possible option for using the funds would be to develop an infomercial about becoming a child care provider. Woolf may be able to assist in the creation of this video.

### 4. Ellis County Childcare Survey Update: Bradford Wiles – KSU Research and Extension

- Total surveys completed – 796 surveys were completed
  - Lack of options and cost were identified from the survey data
  - We will need to look at the survey data and what type of child care people identified wanting more of in the future and apply for grants based on the feedback in the survey
- When survey data will be available for the task force – the uncleaned data is included as attachments in

the email that is sent out. The clean data will be posted to The Chamber's website and Facebook pages for others to share. Please do not share any of the uncleaned data reports with anyone. Wasinger will send those reports out once they are released by Wiles.

- Plan for rolling out to the community
5. Workforce Pathways: Brett Schmidt – Learning Cross Preschool  
Schmidt shared that the Kansas Children's Cabinet is working on creating a ranking system for rating child care providers and their expertise. The rankings will start at one (1) on the bottom side of the scale and cap off at eight (8). This could be beneficial for our community as it would be an additional means of attracting workforce if Ellis County has higher ranked child care providers than other counties.
  6. Sharing Childcare Resources on Chamber Website: Sarah – The Chamber
  7. Chamber Membership for Childcare Providers: Sarah – The Chamber
  8. Dane G. Hansen Foundation NWKansas Cares for Kids Grants
    - May apply for grants after data from surveys is finalized
    - Grants are due by the 25<sup>th</sup> day of each month
    - <https://danehansenfoundation.org/grants/nw-kansas-cares-for-kids/>
  9. Resource Updates from Task Force Members
    - Hudson-Hamilton shared information on HB-2414 that offers tax credits for employers that offer child care for their employees.
  10. Future Meeting Date/Time Suggestions – February 17<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
    - Future agenda items:
      - Review survey results
      - Decide which grants we should apply for and how we want to utilize the funds we would receive
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#### Challenges facing current providers:

- Keeping a house a home and business simultaneously
- State regulations in Kansas are more stringent than in surrounding states
- Making a profit as a business model
- Classification of infants for available spots

#### Possible incentives to consider for current and future providers

- Offset the cost of liability insurance for providers
- Utility/internet discounts
- Food assistance/reimbursement
- Equipment