

Great Start Collaborative of Jackson County
School Readiness Committee Meeting
December 9, 2021
Zoom Meeting
1:00 – 2:00 P.M.



Present: Bridget Griffith, Kelly Sheppard, Katie Wimmer, Codi Benjamin, Becca Hurst, Kelsea Jabkiewicz, Wendy Bell, Karyn Head, Cathy Brubaker, and Kelly Friedland

Welcome

- Completed introductions and shared where we would go for the holidays if we could go anywhere.

Preschool Update

- ISD Early Childhood team is in the process of creating a county-wide Child Data report.
- Child Data will be provided to School Readiness in January or February.
- GSRP expansion allowed us to open 3 new classrooms in Jackson County: Michigan Center, Western Woodville, and East Jackson Dettman Rd. location.
- We will ask for additional slots next and the following year as the state GSRP expansion continues.
- The increased number of classrooms required us to hire another Early Childhood Specialist to provide coaching and support.
- State now funds GSRP at the same pupil allotment as K-12 students.
- GSRP can only have a maximum of 18 children in a classroom and most have 16.
- A class of 16 children requires two teachers and 18 children requires 3 teachers.

- The ISD Early Childhood team is encouraging our programs to put additional funding toward teacher salaries.
- GSRP classrooms can move to remote learning if they are required to shut down for Covid.
- Head Start has had at least one classroom shut down regularly and holds two Zooms a day for virtual learning and teachers reach out twice a week.
- Virtual attendance seems to be higher than last year.
- The Office of Head Start is requiring all employees and partners to be vaccinated by January 31st.
- Head Start is holding a question and answer Zoom meeting for staff to ask doctors questions about the vaccine without administration present.
- There are religious and medical exemptions.

Kindergarten transition Kits.

- ISD Early Childhood team has enough funding for transition kits again this year and are in the process of receiving quotes.
- Kits include items such as: scissors, blank book, crayons, 10 frame, foam letters, alphabet chart, feelings chart, a book, rhyming and alliteration cards.
- Principals and superintendents requested self-help materials.
- We will continue to provide videos on self-help skills without purchasing additional items.
- Most likely will be purchasing 1,400 kits this year.

0-3 Focus

- Would like to enhance our focus on the 0-3 age group.
- Look at what resources are available.
- Infant mental health services are being provided by other agencies.
- Question if anyone had asked Jen Grant about agencies.
- Becca offered to reach out to her and will bring it back to the group.
- Bridget will reach out to WIC on what services they are aware of.

Bright by Text

- Free text messaging service to caregivers of children prenatal through age 8.
- Involve free activities and games and resources on child development.
- Can link local resources for anything going on in the community.
- Still have some marketing materials in English and Spanish.