



## Rural Child Care Innovation Program

### Kandiyohi County, MN

### Initial Progress Update – July 10, 2019

Kandiyohi County, MN community joined the Rural Child Care Innovation Program in 2018. At this point, the community has completed the initial phases of the program which has included deep community investigation, a town hall meeting, and development of a Community Solution Action Plan to help guide the local area on solutions to the local challenges.

While work has just begun to implement the solutions developed through this process, initial successes have already been realized.

- Since this process has started, 4 new family child care providers will complete their license in the county and a handful more providers are in beginning stages of getting licensed.
- Two Child Care Business Leadership Cohort have been completed. There was 3 child care centers and 7 family providers that participated.
- Early Head Start have expanded and will be serving 24 additional infants and toddlers in Willmar
  - Would like to find space to co locate all head start programs and provide wrap around care for children
- YMCA is expanding a new center in the Spicer area.
  - They have raised over \$500,000 and will be breaking ground soon with the plan to open this November.
  - For the first year they will have 24 infants, 20 toddlers, and 30 preschoolers. In year two they will reduce the infants to 12 and increase their preschool program. They have a waitlist in process.
- Somali owned child care center is moving forward and in the process of construction
  - Open for 60 children
  - Offer 2<sup>nd</sup> shift
  - Location is near the industrial park where most of the targeted families are employed and have second shifts
- Additional spaces within the county to house family and center based child care are being explored along with local child care programs and the ability to expand their programs

- Ridgewater college
  - Is developing an exploration class that will be held in the evening targeted to people interested in the child care field to get the initial training to increase workforce.
    - The cost of the development \$5,000 has been raised by the Willmar community foundation and the Economic Develop Corp to get this started
    - space is being located at a local church's child care center for the classes and to offer a learning laboratory
  - Is bringing back the Early Education classes to campus starting fall 2019
    - 33 students are currently enrolled for fall 2019
    - Location will also be held at the local church's child care center
- A scholarship fund has been developed through Ridgewater for students entering their courses
  - \$10,000 – SWIF
  - \$2,500 – Willmar Community Foundation
  - \$900 – Economic Develop Corp
  - \$1,000 – Bethesda (Nursing Home)
  - Ridgewater is holding 4 workforce scholarships for students entering their child development classes
- Resource library is being developed
  - Will have supplies and equipment both new and used for providers to access
  - When a provider closes it is a place they can bring their stuff for other providers to access
- NEW FCC networking group for support
  - SWIF is financially supporting some mixers
  - Other local businesses are interested in supporting events and networking opportunities for providers
  - Potential gifts and appreciation gifts are being donated as a way to show appreciation throughout the year
- Presentation to HR directors group to ask for help
  - Space available
  - Support for scholarships
  - Development of an emergency fund for child care programs because of such tight profit margins
  - Support for appreciation activities
  - Sponsor local trainings
  - To kick start the resource library
  - New child care initiative build outs
- Jennie-O Turkey Plant, is offering their training space FREE of charge during the evening and weekends to offer localized trainings to family child care providers.
- Document to help potential providers navigate and support as they go through the licensing process