



**PARENTS AND
AGENCIES ALIGNING
FOR STRONGER
SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

2026 - 2029

Strategic Plan

BUILDING STRONGER SYSTEMS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Table of Contents

03 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

04 ABOUT PAASSS

05 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

06 STRATEGIC PILLARS

07 EDUCATE

08 COLLABORATE

09 EMPOWER

10 IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

11 IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

12 LEADERSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Executive Summary

Parents and Agencies Aligning for Stronger Support Systems (PAASSS) was founded on the belief that strong communities are built through strong partnerships, empowered families, and coordinated systems of support for children. Since its inception, PAASSS has evolved from a local collaborative serving the Plano area into a growing regional coalition supporting families, children, and community systems across Kendall and Grundy Counties. As the needs of families and communities have evolved, so too has the role of PAASSS.

This 2026–2029 Strategic Plan reflects a renewed commitment to strengthening early childhood systems through collaboration, community voice, prevention-focused supports, and equitable access to resources and opportunities.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING PROCESS

This plan was developed through a collaborative regional planning process that engaged educators, health professionals, nonprofit leaders, parents, school administrators and staff, community organizations, elected officials, and family-serving agencies from both counties. The process included:

- Community screenings of No Small Matter to build shared understanding about the importance of early childhood development and systems investment.
- Two facilitated strategic planning sessions led by Dr. Stacey Randall of Waubensee Community College.
- Community listening sessions in Kendall and Grundy Counties to gather input on the draft plan.
- Ongoing feedback from families, partners, leadership team members, and community stakeholders.

A SYSTEMS-FOCUSED ROADMAP

The result is A Systems-Focused Roadmap Designed to:

- Improve awareness of available resources and supports.
- Strengthen collaboration across agencies and sectors .
- Increase family voice and leadership.
- Improve navigation and coordination of services.
- Ensure underserved families have equitable access to opportunities and support.

This strategic plan serves not only as a guide for PAASSS, but also as a shared regional commitment to improving outcomes for young children and families across Grundy and Kendall Counties.

About PAASSS

Parents and Agencies Aligning for Stronger Support Systems (PAASSS) is a regional collaborative committed to improving outcomes for children and families through coordinated partnerships, shared leadership, and community-driven solutions.

Originally established as Plano Area Alliance Supporting Student Success, PAASSS was founded to strengthen communication and collaboration among organizations serving children and families. When the Grundy-Kendall Regional Office of Education became the fiscal sponsor for PAASSS, the organization's reach and impact expanded beyond the Plano area into a broader regional systems effort across Grundy and Kendall Counties.

Today, PAASSS serves as a trusted convener, connector, and collaborative partner working to align supports, reduce fragmentation, and improve access to resources for families with young children. Through partnerships with schools, health agencies, nonprofits, family-serving organizations, local government, businesses, and parents, PAASSS helps build stronger systems that support children from prenatal stages through school entry and beyond.

PAASSS also plays a key leadership role in regional initiatives focused on family engagement, resource navigation, community awareness, and systems alignment, including backbone support for the implementation and sustainability of the Grundy/Kendall IRIS Network.

MISSION

PAASSS works to strengthen coordinated systems of support for children and families across Kendall and Grundy Counties through collaboration, community partnerships, family leadership, and equitable access to resources and opportunities empowering them to raise children that are safe, healthy, eager to learn, and ready to succeed.

VISION

A connected regional system where every child and family has access to the relationships, resources, and opportunities needed to thrive.

OUR CORE VALUES

COLLABORATION

We believe meaningful change happens when organizations, families, and communities work together toward shared goals.

FAMILY VOICE

Families are essential partners and leaders in shaping the systems, programs, and decisions that impact their lives.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

We are committed to reducing barriers and ensuring all families, especially those historically underserved, have access to opportunities, supports, and resources.

TRUST & RELATIONSHIPS

Strong relationships built on respect, transparency, and shared accountability are the foundation of effective systems work.

PREVENTION & EARLY INVESTMENT

Investing early in children and families creates stronger long-term outcomes for individuals, communities, and systems.

COMMUNITY RESPONSIVENESS

We listen to and learn from the communities we serve to ensure our work reflects local needs, strengths, and priorities.

SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY

We believe partners across sectors share responsibility for improving outcomes for children and families.

Strategic Planning Process

The development of the 2026–2029 Strategic Plan was intentionally designed as a collaborative and community-informed process. PAASSS recognized the importance of engaging diverse voices and building shared ownership around the future direction of the organization and the broader regional early childhood system.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS & SHARED LEARNING

Prior to beginning formal planning, PAASSS hosted two community screenings of the documentary No Small Matter to create shared understanding around the importance of early childhood development, systems alignment, and long-term investment in children and families.

THE SCREENINGS WERE HELD IN:

- Kendall County on January 13, 2026
- Grundy County on January 20, 2026

Together, more than **50** community members attended, including educators, parents, health professionals, childcare providers, nonprofit organizations, legislators, business leaders, and community stakeholders.

These events helped establish a shared foundation for the strategic planning process and reinforced the need for stronger coordination, prevention-focused supports, and investment in early childhood systems.

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSIONS

PAASSS invited a diverse group of regional leaders and partners to participate in a two-part strategic planning process facilitated by Dr. Stacey Randall, Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Innovation, and Planning at Waubensee Community College.

PLANNING SESSIONS WERE HELD ON:

- February 4, 2026 in Kendall County
- February 17, 2026 in Grundy County

EIGHTEEN INVITED PARTNERS REPRESENTING MULTIPLE SECTORS FROM BOTH COUNTIES PARTICIPATED IN THE PROCESS, INCLUDING:

- School districts and early childhood programs
- Health departments and medical providers
- YMCAs and nonprofit organizations
- Family educators and parent leaders
- Community foundations and United Way organizations
- Regional systems leaders and service providers
- Parents and family representatives

Participants explored PAASSS’s evolving role within the regional system, identified opportunities for greater alignment and impact, and helped define the strategic pillars, goals, and initiatives included in this plan.

FINAL REVIEW & ADOPTION

The PAASSS Leadership Team reviewed the final draft of the strategic plan on May 13, 2026. The completed plan was then presented to the full collaboration for final review and feedback on May 21, 2026. The 2026–2029 Strategic Plan officially takes effect on July 1, 2026.

Strategic Planning Process

Following the planning sessions, PAASSS hosted listening sessions in both counties to gather additional community input and validate emerging priorities.

COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSIONS

Following the planning sessions, PAASSS hosted listening sessions in both counties to gather additional community input and validate emerging priorities

LISTENING SESSIONS WERE HELD ON:

- April 8, 2026 in Kendall County
- April 23, 2026 in Grundy County

MORE THAN 50 ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS PARTICIPATED ACROSS BOTH SESSIONS, REPRESENTING MULTIPLE SECTORS INCLUDING:

- Education
- Healthcare
- Social services
- Mental health organizations
- Faith-based organizations
- Local government
- Community agencies

Feedback from these sessions directly informed revisions to the strategic pillars, action steps, outreach priorities, and systems strategies included in the final plan.

FINAL REVIEW & ADOPTION

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Strategic Pillars

The following strategic pillars emerged from the collaborative planning process and reflect the shared priorities identified by partners, families, and community stakeholders.

These pillars guide PAASSS in building stronger systems, advancing equity and improving outcomes for all young children and families across Kendall and Grundy Counties.



1

Educate

Lead efforts to educate families, partners, and the broader community about early childhood development, available resources, and the long-term impact of early investment.



Knowledge builds stronger futures



2

Collaborate

Serve as a trusted convener and connector, aligning partners across Kendall and Grundy Counties to reduce fragmentation and improve outcomes for families with young children.



Partnerships create impact.



3

Empower

Center families, especially those historically underserved, as leaders, decision-makers, and drivers of change in the early childhood system.



Families lead communities to thrive.

Educate

Lead efforts to educate families, partners, and the broader community about early childhood development, available resources, and the long-term impact of early investment.

1.1

GOAL 1.1

INCREASE COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF AVAILABLE EARLY CHILDHOOD RESOURCES

By 2029, families and community stakeholders will better understand early childhood development and available supports.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Develop a simple, consistent messaging framework
- Present annually to stakeholder groups, local leaders, businesses, and elected officials
- Create a basic, easy-to-use resource guide
- Launch new awareness efforts, outreach campaigns, and community events
- Increase access to multilingual and culturally responsive information

SUCCESS MEASURES

- Number of families reached annually through awareness efforts
- Increased participation in community outreach events
- Increased awareness and engagement based on surveys and feedback

1.2

GOAL 1.2

EXPAND ACCESSIBLE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILIES AND PROVIDERS

By 2029, families and providers will have increased access to practical, relevant education that supports early childhood success and school readiness.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Develop parent education workshops connected to developmental milestones and transitions
- Expand provider-focused training opportunities
- Increase multilingual and accessible learning options
- Partner with schools, libraries, park districts, and community organizations
- Build awareness of available supports across developmental stages

SUCCESS MEASURES

- Number of participants engaged annually
- Increased participant knowledge and confidence
- Expanded access to culturally and linguistically responsive learning opportunities

Collaborate

Serve as a trusted convener and connector, aligning partners across Kendall and Grundy Counties to reduce fragmentation and improve outcomes for families with young children.

2.1

GOAL 2.1

BUILD AND ALIGN A CORE PARTNER NETWORK

By 2029, PAASSS will be widely recognized as a trusted connector across Kendall and Grundy Counties to improve early childhood outcomes.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Identify and strengthen relationships with core partner organizations
- Expand collaboration with medical providers and healthcare systems
- Strengthen partnerships with school districts and early childhood programs
- Develop partnership agreements and shared expectations
- Increase cross-sector communication and systems alignment

SUCCESS MEASURES

- Number of active core partners
- Increased partner engagement and attendance
- Growth in collaborative initiatives and shared projects

2.2

GOAL 2.2

IMPROVE SERVICE COORDINATION AND NAVIGATION

By 2029, families will experience a more connected system with clearer pathways to services and supports.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Pilot shared referral and follow-up processes
- Improve navigation supports across organizations
- Develop shared communication practices among partners
- Identify service gaps and “drop-off points”
- Use data and feedback to improve coordination efforts

SUCCESS MEASURES

- Number of families successfully connected to services
- Increased referral follow-up rates
- Improved coordination among participating organizations

Empower

Center families, especially those historically underserved, as leaders, decision-makers, and drivers of change in the early childhood system.

3.1

GOAL 3.1

BUILD PARENT LEADERSHIP AND VOICE

By 2029, PAASSS will support a network of parent leaders who actively shape programs and decisions throughout the region.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Launch parent leadership opportunities focused on advocacy, financial guidance, and community engagement
- Establish clear pathways for parent input in decision-making
- Reduce barriers to participation through childcare, incentives, transportation support, and flexible participation options
- Establish a regional Parent Advisory Group

SUCCESS MEASURES

- Increased number of engaged parent leaders
- Increased parent participation in planning and decision-making
- Expanded representation from diverse communities

3.2

GOAL 3.2

INCREASE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND EQUITY-FOCUSED ACCESS TO RESOURCES

By 2029, families-especially those historically underserved-will feel informed, supported, and connected to opportunities and resources.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Identify priority populations and underserved communities
- Partner with trusted community connectors
- Develop culturally responsive outreach materials
- Conduct targeted outreach before families reach crisis points
- Improve awareness of available supports and services

SUCCESS MEASURES

- Increased participation from underserved populations
- Increased family engagement across both counties
- Expanded access to culturally relevant information and supports

Implementation & Accountability

The success of this strategic plan depends on continued collaboration, shared leadership, and ongoing reflection. PAASSS recognizes that meaningful systems change requires long-term commitment, flexibility, and strong partnerships across sectors.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PLAN WILL INCLUDE:

1

ANNUAL REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND PROGRESS

We will regularly assess our progress, celebrate successes and adjust strategies as needed to stay responsive to community needs and emerging opportunities.

2

ONGOING PARTNER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

We will maintain open, consistent communication and create meaningful opportunities for partners to stay informed, share ideas and contribute to collective impact.

3

DATA-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING

We will use data and community insights to guide decisions, measure outcomes and ensure our efforts are effective, equitable and aligned with regional priorities.

4

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK OPPORTUNITIES

We will actively listen to families and community members to ensure their voices help shape our work and hold us accountable.

5

CONTINUED FOCUS ON EQUITY AND PREVENTION

We will prioritize strategies that reduce barriers, promote early investment and center the needs of families who are historically underserved.

6

ALIGNMENT WITH REGIONAL SYSTEMS INITIATIVES AND EMERGING COMMUNITY NEEDS

We will stay connected to regional efforts and adapt to emerging community needs to ensure our work contributes to a stronger, more coordinated early childhood system.

PAASSS leadership and partners will use this plan as a living document to guide decision-making, strengthen collaboration, and ensure accountability to children, families, and communities across Grundy and Kendall Counties.

Implementation Timeline

The three year implementation framework provides a roadmap for advancing PAASSS priorities across the region.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Increase access to early childhood resources and supports

Improve coordination between agencies and systems

Strengthen parent leadership and community voice

Increase equitable access to opportunities and services

Build sustainable regional partnerships across Kendall and Grundy Counties

2026–2027

Build & Launch

- Build infrastructure and align resources
- Strengthen partnerships and communication
- Launch outreach and engagement efforts
- Establish baseline measures and data systems

2027–2028

Expand & Deepen

- Expand parent leadership initiatives
- Deepen service coordination across systems
- Strengthen regional engagement and voice
- Refine strategies based on data and feedback

2028–2029

Sustain & Evaluate

- Evaluate progress and impact
- Refine systems strategies for long-term success
- Scale effective initiatives and innovations
- Sustain collaborative efforts and partnerships

This timeline is a flexible framework that will be reviewed annually to adapt to community needs, measure progress and maximize impact for children and families.

Leadership Acknowledgement

PAASSS extends sincere appreciation to the many individuals, organizations, families, and community leaders who contributed their time, expertise, and leadership throughout the strategic planning process.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION IS EXTENDED TO:



DR. STACEY RANDALL, WAUBONSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

for facilitating the strategic planning process.



MEMBERS OF THE PAASSS LEADERSHIP TEAM

for their vision, guidance and ongoing commitment to improving outcomes for children and families.



COMMUNITY PARTNERS

representing education, healthcare, nonprofit organizations, local government, and early childhood systems for their collaboration, insight and dedication.



PARENT LEADERS AND FAMILY REPRESENTATIVES

who ensured family voice remained central throughout the process.



COMMUNITY MEMBERS

who participated in the No Small Matter screenings, planning sessions, listening sessions, and feedback opportunities.



This strategic plan reflects a truly collaborative regional effort grounded in shared commitment to children, families, and communities.

Join Us on This Journey

CONNECTING FAMILIES. EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES. ALIGNING SUPPORT FOR EVERY CHILD.

At PAASSS, we believe lasting change happens when families, organizations, and communities move forward together.





Our 2026–2029 Strategic Plan represents more than goals on paper. It is a shared commitment to building a stronger, more connected regional system where every child and family can thrive.

Whether you contribute your time, talent, resources, or voice, you are part of this mission.

Together, we will...
Educate. Collaborate. Empower.

BUILDING STRONGER SYSTEMS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



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