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Lee A. Norman, M.D., Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

September 11, 2019

Dear Child Care Licensee:

I would like to take a moment to recognize you as a Kansas licensed child care provider in our state that families trust with their most precious resource—their child(ren). Thank you for your dedication, commitment and compassion. Working with young children is a cultivating profession and KDHE values the substantial amount of time and effort you give every day for children and families. You have a direct impact on the health and well-being of children in your care, and your commitment and passion support a successful future by:

- Creating positive interactions that help children make connections to support their physical, social, cognitive, and emotional development;
- Forming relationships with parents, serving as key partners in supporting children's developmental health;
- Offering a safe, secure, and nurturing environment that protects young children from harm; when they are away from home and away from their parents/caregivers;
- Creating experiences that build a solid foundation for children's academic and behavioral successes, positioning them for early and lifelong success as well as shaping how they interact with and treat others; and
- Participating in ongoing professional development opportunities, adapting and further developing competencies and skills to support your work with young children to ensure they thrive.

KDHE appreciates your continued work as we strive to build upon and strengthen the early care and education system in our state. Licensed and regulated child care benefits our state in many ways, including but not limited to:

- Supporting families by providing connections to community resources and supports that help families thrive;
- Making a positive difference in communities through small business creation, increasing the accessibility and availability of child care so parents/caregivers can contribute to the workforce; and
- Nurturing the next generation of caring citizens and capable, skilled workers to grow the Kansas economy.

Every child deserves a champion and KDHE sees licensed child care providers like you as that—our children's biggest supporters and champions! This past year, KDHE has been working together with our partners across the state to support Kansas children and their families. To learn more about what's been happening, what we've been hearing from Kansans just like you, and where we are going together, visit <https://kschildrenscabinet.org/early-childhood-initiatives-in-kansas-2019/>. Should the opportunity arise, please take a moment to speak with your community leaders and representatives on the value of the work you do, and the economic impacts made by child care professionals in your community or region.

KDHE is grateful for your contribution to meeting the needs of Kansas families, Kansas communities, and Kansas values. Good beginnings *do* last a lifetime, especially when children have access to healthy, safe, and nurturing licensed child care!

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lorrena Steelman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Lorrena (Lori) Steelman
Child Care Licensing Director