

February 22, 2023 | 10:00 AM – Noon

Attendance

Rhonda Janecke	Alana Strickland	David Lev
Cynthia Hurkes	Kay Ortega	Charlene Shaw
Vanessa Pingleton	Sanora Hoggarth	Gigi Zen Melinda
Heather Freilinger	David Elliott	Gomez Dena
Gillian Wesenberg	Alexis Mann	Haudenschild
Amber Singh	Crystal Lemus	Jessica McAuliffe
Kathleen Walker Henderson	Jessie DuBose	Athena Wikstrom
Tillie Crowley	Bethany Holmes	Danielle Walker

Please note: The Klamath Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) was held virtually due to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) concerns.

Welcome and Introduction

The PAC reviewed and approved the January minutes. Kathleen Walker-Henderson made a motion to approve minutes as submitted. Rhonda Janecke seconded the motion. No further discussion.

South-Central Early Learning Hub Update

The South-Central Early Learning Hub (SCELH) is working towards concurrently finalizing the Regional System Assessment (RSA) and the Raise Up Oregon (RUO) 2.0 update. The Hub has been given the opportunity by the Early Learning Division (ELD) to work with Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) who will be hosting focus groups with families and ODHS employees. All Early Learning Hubs across the state will gather focus groups and ask the same questions about what is needed for RUO 2.0. Raise Up Oregon is roadmap of all early learning across the state through a cross-sector collaboration including the state leaders of health care, human services, public education, housing, higher education and workforce development as well as early care and education. RUO can be found online at <https://oregonearlylearning.com/raise-up-oregon>.

The legislature is in session, Descriptions of House Bills (HB) and Senate Bills (SB) can be found online at https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/listbills/CurrentSessionBills.html

Gillian shared information about bills relating to childcare:

SB 599 - Requires landlord to allow dwelling to be used as family child care home, subject to conditions.

HB 2504 - Directs Early Learning Council, in consultation with Office of Child Care and Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care and Education, to adopt rules to address barriers impeding entry into early childhood workforce by international early childhood professionals.

HB 2991 - Directs Department of Early Learning and Care to commission independent study regarding barriers to attaining high quality early childhood workforce.

HB 3029 - Directs Department of Early Learning and Care to establish and implement child care provider incentive program.

The SCELH hired a new Home Visiting System Coordinator, Madison Holmes, who is currently working at Family Relief Nursery in North Douglas.

Regional System Assessment – Root Causes Update

The SCELH has been completing the Regional System Assessment for the past few months, and is nearly finished. SCELH used anecdotal and quantitative data from partners across the region. Most of the data that was used was collected and tracked during the Professional Advisory Committee and Governance Council meetings. Overall, 36 pages of data was collected and reviewed by staff and Early Learning Division contractor, Erin Watson. This data was arranged into themes and then staff identified four major issue areas across the region relating to RUO Objective 2 - Families have access to high-quality, culturally responsive, inclusive, developmentally appropriate), affordable early care and education that meets their needs. The Regional Governance Council (RGC) reviewed the four main themes and prioritized root causes contributing to them. The Hub is focusing on root causes that can be impacted by work Hub partners can collectively do now. Some important root causes have

been excluded from the document due to the current circle of influence Hub partners have as these root causes may need to be addressed at a state or national level.

Members of the Klamath PAC were given the opportunity to review the prioritized system issues and root causes handout (see attached) and discussed the findings.

Some of the root causes creating barriers to accessing early care and education span across all four themes. The PAC agreed there is a continued lack of knowledge around the terms “babysitting” and “high-quality early care and education.” There needs to be community-wide education to shift thinking around early care and education. Education plays an important role in helping the community understand what high-quality early care and education is. Partnerships could form across multiple sectors to support change. For example, leveraging partnerships by utilizing ongoing campaigns about mental health and tying the campaign to early brain development and early childhood education, would expand community knowledge about the importance of early care and education. Support and advocacy at a state and national level would also help communities understand what high-quality care looks like.

There tends to be a lack of value for the profession of early care and education leading to a shortage in the workforce. In addition, alternative family structures (blended families, single parent families, dual working households, etc.) have become more common, leading to a higher need for childcare and alternate hour care. With workforce shortages, families are not able to access care they need (infant/toddler slots, after hours/2nd shift care, care in geographically isolated areas).

Next Steps:

The Hub will be creating a strategic plan that will cover what community partners and sectors are doing to overcome the barriers relating to RUO Objective 2. This is a community-wide focus, not just an issue for one agency or organization. The strategic plan will provide organizations with the opportunity to work together to reduce duplication. The community will be able to celebrate successes, and partners can work together to brainstorm ideas about overcoming barriers.

Equity Lens

Gillian shared an impactful mission and vision statement she heard recently relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The mission statement was, “by 2028 we will redesign how we work together so that race, class, and disability no longer predict families’ access to and use of quality early childhood supports and services that ensure readiness for kindergarten and beyond.” And, vision was to “generate the solutions that we have not even thought of, thought through, unlocked or untapped.” The discussion also included that translation goes beyond translating words into languages. Words in different cultures mean different things. It is important to have someone available to explain the language cultural piece as well. People who are not able to see will appreciate hearing the words on PowerPoint slides. Before meetings, it’s helpful to be aware and accommodate the needs of the individuals attending.

Rhonda recommended that we need to be aware of who is not at the table, and to keep asking ourselves if we are being equitable. Then, find out what we can do be more equitable by receiving input from individuals/families about their needs.

Dena provided input from the Early Learning Gathering discussion about shifting vocabulary around family dynamics and cultures. With blended families, single parent families, resource families, and kinship care becoming more prevalent, we need to look at ways to move past exclusionary vocabulary. For example, changing “muffins with mom” or “donuts with dad” to something like “pastries with the important adult in your life,” or “muffins in the morning.” This simple change in wording becomes an inclusionary practice for all caregivers.

Athena had the ability to share the Equity Lens with our ELD consultant, Erin Watson, who appreciated the equity work the region has done. Erin may be linking the Equity Lens as a resource for Early Learning Hubs across the state in creating their strategic plans. This is a huge kudos to everyone who helped in the development of the Hub’s Equity Lens.

Jessie shared that the Klamath Promise adopted the Equity Lens as their official Equity Lens.

Developing documents at a lower reading level increases accessibility for individuals and makes translation into different languages easier.

Partner Updates

Rhonda Janecke - Community Baby Shower – The Community Baby Shower will be held on October 7, 2023 at Klamath Community College, Building 4 from 10:00am – 1:00pm. There is a planning meeting for the Community Baby Shower tomorrow, February 23 at 2:30pm. Let Rhonda Janecke know if you are interested in participating in the planning meeting.

Heather Freilinger – Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) – CCRR has an opening for a full-time Preschool Promise Coach in Klamath Falls. The Oregon Center for Career Development is offering Early Learning Degree Pathway Scholarships for

individuals to obtain an ECE specific college certificate, AA/AAS, BA/BS, or MA/MS from an Oregon Community College or public University. More information can be found online at <https://conta.cc/3XUqeVH>.

Upcoming CCRR workshops:

Foundations of Sensory Processing, Nuts and Bolts of Regulations <https://conta.cc/3XUqeVH>

Nature Play: Exploring Effective Strategies for Early Environmental Education <https://conta.cc/3logayn>

Athena Wikstrom – Preschool Promise – The SCELH is still accepting applications for the 2022-2023 school year. There are openings for qualifying families at Little Learners and Nic Nacs Quality Childcare. Eligible students turn 3 or 4 by Sept. 1 2022, are residents of Oregon, and have a family income of up to 200% of Federal Poverty. Apply online at <http://www.southcentralhubenrollment.com/> or contact us by phone at (541) 957-4809.

Klamath Promise – Save the Date: June 1 Graduation Sensation Parade and Party in the Park! 12 noon, downtown! ACES Overview for your organization: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdYZqftD1kfsSup-ERSbhUM0n6-eRfyX3wQn_K2qvg0JMeDjQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

Kathleen Walker-Henderson – Kudos to Southern Oregon University (SOU) Early Care and Education Bachelor's program. The program is all online and has a great articulation agreement with Klamath Community College (KCC).

Sanora Hoggarth – Take Root – The schedule for upcoming Take Root classes can be found online at: <http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/calendar/monthview?eso=001jNqdvbumscz8fNAWNX6nEw==&year=2023&month=1>. Ready! for Kindergarten for three and four-year-olds is starting on February 27. The Challenge of Discipline, partnering with Care Connections and Education on February 28 On March 2nd, Kathleen will be teaching a Parenting a Second Time Around (PASTA) series with the first topic being the Language of a Caring Adult. Take Root participated in the Winter Wings Festival last weekend. Take Root will also be attending the Sky Lakes Community Wellness Health Fair on March 4th.

Sanora Hoggarth – Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) – The Early Learning Gathering was held virtually on February 21. KPI is working with Safe Families for Children and A Family Gathering Place Relief Nursery to provide Conscious Discipline for families. KPI is also looking for partners to help distribute the TeachMy Kits for Toddlers. Let Sanora know if you are interested in Conscious Discipline or in distributing TeachMy Kits.

Charlene Shaw – A Family Gathering Place – A Family Gathering Place is excited to announce they started their first parenting classes for families participating with A Family Gathering Place.

Vanessa Pingleton - Home Visiting Systems Coordination (HVSC) – Vanessa will be presenting at the Start Early National Conference on March 16, talking about Home Visiting. The HVSC annual report was due on February 15th. The Hub expects to have an interview with The Ford Family Foundation (TFFF) soon to review the annual report. HVSC and Take Root will be partnering to offer professional development opportunities, be on the lookout for more information about these upcoming events.

Danielle Walker – Community UPLIFT – Since the beginning of the quarter, there have been 29 total Community UPLIFT referrals, 18 for Douglas County, and 11 for Klamath County. Community UPLIFT is a free service to providers and individuals that help connect families to resources across the region. Family Resource Facilitators connect with families, get to know them, and offer referrals to services based on indicated needs. Dena shared that she was able to share Community UPLIFT brochures with the Sky Lakes Birthing Center.

Dena Haudenschild -- Klamath Early Childhood Development Center – Klamath Early Childhood Development Center is hiring for a few different positions, including a classroom teacher and a Speech Language Pathologist.

Discussion

Updates to the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program:

The primary changes to the program mean that students no longer need to work to qualify for child care assistance. All students will receive additional child care hours each week for study time. Additionally, many families will qualify for more child care hours due to a change in the way part-time and full-time coverage is calculated. The ERDC program, currently administered by ODHS, will move to DELC on July 1, 2023, when the agency is officially established.

Next Meeting:

March 22, 2023 from 10 am to noon.

Prioritized System Issues and Root Causes from Regional System Assessment

• = Current or planned regional strategy addresses this root cause

	Issue 4: Low wages and benefits paid to ECE workforce due to a Market Failure in the ECE business model give insufficient, sustainable investment in ECE as an essential community infrastructure	Issue 3: Not enough ECE workforce who represent communities served and can deliver high-quality ECE	Issue 2: Not enough ECE slots that meet families’ needs and preferences Lack of infant toddler slots, after hours/2 nd shift care, care in geographically isolated areas	Issue 1: Many families are unable to access ECE that is high-quality, affordable, and meets their needs and preferences
Mindsets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many in regional still devalue ECE, seeing it as babysitting vs. a respected profession that promotes brain development and drives economic ROI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many in regional still devalue ECE, seeing it as babysitting vs. a respected profession that promotes brain development and drives economic ROI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of support to integrate children with disabilities into ECE classrooms
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few regional government, businesses, and institutions have goals focused on funding ECE as critical community infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some regional partners lack <i>explicit</i> goals of increasing ECE workforce diversity (culture, gender) and trauma-informed practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Decision-Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> K12 and ECE decision-makers not always collaborating Hub has limited influence on local government decisions about ECE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> K12 and ECE decision-makers not always collaborating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> K12 and ECE decision-makers not always collaborating Need for more regional engagement of families in decision-making in ways that are accessible and authentic ECE providers not always engaged in regional decision-making about ECE Hub has limited influence on local government decisions about ECE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> K12 and ECE decision-makers not always collaborating Need for more regional engagement of families in decision-making in ways that are accessible and authentic
Policies and Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some ECE settings encourage families with “behaviorally difficult” children to transfer to another ECE program Some ECE providers have practice of not referring children on their waitlist to alternative publicly funded ECE slots
Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for more connections and engagement with businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on available ECE slots and how to access them not reaching all families
Program Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current ECE business model cannot support inconsistent and limited population density in geographically isolated regions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for more ECE training/supports on de-escalating behaviors, behavioral health ECE professional development costs a lot, workforce can’t recoup due to low wages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some ECE business owners lack business skills (taxes, business modeling, etc.) – not enough professional development on this (shared services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some new staff within organizations across region don’t know about UPLiFT referral process and don’t use it as they could
Financial Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> K12 education offers higher wages which draws ECE workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable ECE licensable facilities are not available or affordable to buy or renovate* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

Current (or planned) Regional Strategies that Address these Root Causes

	Issue 4: Low wages and benefits paid to ECE workforce due to a Market Failure in the ECE business model give insufficient, sustainable investment in ECE as an essential community infrastructure	Issue 3: Not enough ECE workforce who represent communities served and can deliver high-quality ECE	Issue 2: Not enough ECE slots that meet families' needs and preferences Lack of infant toddler slots, after hours/2 nd shift care, care in geographically isolated areas	Issue 1: Many families are unable to access ECE that is high-quality, affordable, and meets their needs and preferences
Mindsets				
Goals				
Decision-Making				
Policies and Practices				
Connections				
Program Components				
Human Resources				
Financial Resources				
Environment				

South Central Early Learning Hub Equity Lens



1. Get on the same page & surface assumptions:

- A. What, if any, are our commitments and/or agreements regarding diversity, inclusion, and equity? (example: equity statement, values statements, etc.)
- B. What is/are the goal(s) of the decision or program?
- C. What are the intended outcomes (of the decision or program)? What does success look like?
- D. What assumptions are we making (about people, systems, outcomes, intentions)? Do we need to check any of those assumptions for accuracy?
- E. Where is, or might, bias (implicit or explicit) be showing up?



2. Involve stakeholders & engage multiple perspectives:

- A. Whose perspectives, vision, and voice are being represented? Whose are missing? Are those who are most impacted and/or historically underserved represented? How will we bring those perspectives to the table?
- B. Who has the decision-making power and/or influence? How will those most impacted lead, influence, give input, or guide the decision or policy under review?
- C. What data do we need? How will we get it? How are we interpreting the data?

Advancing equitable outcomes for children and families in the South-Central Early Learning Hub



3. Assess equity impact:

- A. Do the affected children and families, who need it most, have needed resources to participate or be successful?
- B. Are we supporting the children and families' social and emotional well-being in making this decision?
- C. Does the policy, program, practice and/or decision affect, ignore, or worsen existing disparities based on social identity? How? How might we address or mitigate these?
- D. What might unintended consequences be? How will we know, or attend to them?
- E. Is our approach or strategy actually worsening the situation or causing harm (example: mental or emotional health)?



4. Take action for equity:

- A. What are our next steps? What do we need to re-evaluate?
- B. What interventions could eliminate or mitigate the inequities, disparities, or harm that we uncovered?
- C. How will we evaluate, and gather information on the impact of the policy, program, practice, or decision that was made?
- D. How will this program or decision be communicated? What level of transparency is needed? How will those most impacted be communicated with?