

LAKE COUNTY COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

Meeting Notes

February 27, 2024 | 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Attendance

Michael Carter (v)
Michael Benson (v)
Lane Stratton (s)
Jen Schultz

Miranda Philibert
Gail Buermann
Michelle Bassett
Colleen May

Gillian Wesenberg
Danielle Walker

Please note: For ease of member access, South-Central Early Learning Hub – Lake County Community Governance Council meetings will be held virtually unless otherwise notified.

Lake County ESD – Lane Stratton shared that additional funding for Early Intervention / Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) is still being discussed in the legislative short session. Lake County ESD did receive the EI/ECSE grant agreement in late January or early February for the 2023-2025 biennium. Family Engagement Boxes are being sent to rural areas of Lake County in partnership with Take Root Parenting. Families have shared appreciation for the Engagement Boxes.

South-Central Early Learning Hub – Gillian advised the South-Central Early Learning Hub Family Advisory Governance Committee is doing well. The Hub would like to invite additional parents from Lake County to be part of the Family Advisory Governance Committee. Participants receive a \$50 stipend for every meeting they attend. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please contact Athena Wikstrom at athena.wikstrom@douglasesd.k12.or.us or Danielle Walker at Danielle.walker@douglasesd.k12.or.us.

Douglas County will be applying for Family Connects Oregon through United Community Action Network (UCAN) Nurse Home Visiting. Unfortunately, Klamath and Lake Counties do not have the infrastructure or staff available to apply for the program. There is hope that Family Connects can expand into Klamath and Lake Counties in the future.

Community UPLiFT – Danielle shared that community UPLiFT covers Douglas, Klamath, and Lake Counties. Community UPLiFT helps connect expecting families, and families with children birth to five, and up to 21 with special needs, to resources in their community. If you are interested in a presentation about Community UPLiFT, please reach out to Danielle at Danielle.walker@douglasesd.k12.or.us or by phone at (541) 880-4655.

Preschool Promise – Danielle also shared that all Preschool Promise slots at Honker Preschool are currently full. The Hub is excited that Preschool Promise sites received a two-year grant, allowing alignment between Preschool Promise enrollment and enrollment for Head Start. In Lake County, Preschool Promise applications for the 2024-2025 year will open in late March or early April.

Legislative Short Session

Some of the bills currently relating to Early Childhood include:

Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) – ERDC is a subsidy program that helps working families and students with the cost of childcare. The recent ERDC expansion caused funding shortages and resulted in a waitlist for families to receive ERDC benefits. DELC is requesting \$250 million to cover the funding deficit.

CHIPS Childcare for Construction Workforce – requesting \$5 million to assist Oregon CHIP manufacturers with subsidies to help build construction infrastructure.

Child Care Infrastructure Fund – requesting \$5 million in State General Funds to support child care facilities. The funding would better serve licensed home-based providers and small child care centers who are not eligible to receive funding from lottery proceeds.

Early Literacy Success – requesting \$10 million for the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan. The funding request is in alignment with DELC recommendations.

Early Learning Educator Scholarship Program – requesting \$2.5 million to support Early Learning Educator Scholarship Program. The funding request is to meet the needs of program expansion.

Stabilization Funding -- Relief Nurseries, Healthy Families Oregon, and Nurse Family Partnership are requesting stabilization funding to sustain operations and grow services.

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) - Michelle Bassett advised there are currently six child care providers in Lake County. There has been an increase since February of 2023, when there were only four child care providers in Lake County. One exempt child care provider is in the process of becoming a licensed provider.

The Spring Fling Conference will be hosted at Klamath Community College in April. More information and registration will be coming out soon. The Mid Valley STEAM Hub will be the Keynote Speaker at Spring Fling in Klamath County, and Spanish translation will be available.

The Research Institute (TRI) opened the 2024 Start-Up and Expansion Grant for child care providers. Applications for the grant must be postmarked or received by The Research Institute by March 22, 2024.

The Klamath County CCRR office will have a position open for a Quality Improvement Specialist and Klamath Community College (KCC) Navigator. The current staff member in this position is moving out of the state.

North Lake School District – Gail Buermann provided an update about North Lake School District. This year, the Mommy and Me and Preschool programs have the same teacher. In past years, there have been separate teachers for both programs. The Preschool/Mommy and Me teacher is now included with elementary school teachers for training on the district's early literacy curriculum, Heggerty. The Heggerty curriculum ranges from pre-k to second grade. The training provides the Preschool teacher with knowledge of what is important to teach at the preschool level for success in K-2.

Lakeview School District #7 -- Michael Carter advised it is important to share priorities for early learning and school districts with legislators. Legislators are seeing a lack of enrollment in k-12 across the state. Investing in early childhood and k-12 education is an investment in the future. The enrollment trend could be an anomaly caused by COVID.

Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) – Michael Benson advised there are 14 children on Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) in Lake County. Three children additional are in the evaluation process for IFSPs. The three in the evaluation process will likely begin receiving EI/ECSE services soon. Two children recently entered Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) care and will be referred to EI/ECSE for evaluations. Kindergarten transition meetings in Lakeview and North Lake are either scheduled or are in the process of being scheduled.

Michael visited Adel Preschool last week and is participating in other child-find activities. Michael attended a Head Start family night to present about EI/ECSE services and the referral process.

Lake County Public Health -- Miranda Philibert shared that Lake County Public Health is at the end of school exclusions for immunizations. School secretaries were an asset in data collection and communication with families. Lake County Public Health provided the School Exclusion report to the state.

Honker Preschool – Jennifer Schultz provided exciting news that the Community Care Communication Project team submitted a proposal to present at a Trauma Summit in Maryland. The proposal was accepted, and the team will be presenting at the summit in May.

There are currently three children on the private pay list for Honker Preschool. Honker Preschool gets multiple calls per week for families looking for child care opportunities, especially children who are too young for publicly funded preschools. Since January 1, Jen has received six inquiries from families with children ages six weeks to three-years old. The committee agreed that advocating for Baby Promise early in the 2025 Legislative Session would be beneficial, so legislators are aware of the child care need.

Healthy Families – Colleen May advised Vicky Taylor has a few openings for Healthy Families in Lake County. Vicky has the availability to travel to as far as Christmas Valley in Lake County and Bly in Klamath County. Families who are expecting or have recently delivered a new baby could be eligible for services. Healthy Families completes a screening

with each family that looks at stress factors such as employment, marital status, anxiety, depression, family relationships, and more. There is no income requirement for Healthy Families. The goal is to start families receiving Healthy Families services before a baby reaches three months of age, but there are a percentage of families who can start after a baby turns three months old.

UCAN Healthy Families is looking for a new member from Lake County to be part of the UCAN Healthy Families Regional Advisory Committee. If you know of anyone interested in participating in the Regional Advisory Committee, please contact Colleen at colleen.may@ucan.org.

Next Meeting: March 19, at 1:00 pm. The meeting will be hosted one week early due to Spring Break.