

REGIONAL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

Meeting Notes

March 3, 2021 | 11:00 AM – 1:20 PM

Attendance

Analicia Nicholson
Anne Kubisch
Cynthia Hurkes
Dena Haudenschild
Carmen Ellis
Denise Swanson
Gillian Wesenberg

Heather Freilinger
Heidi McGowan
Kathleen Mitchell
Kendra Bickham
Rhonda Janecke
Sandy Henry
Steve Schenewerk

Sue Miller
Troy Duker
Vanessa Pingleton
Vicky Taylor
Athena Wikstrom
Danielle Walker

Welcome and Introductions

Chair, Steve Schenewerk opened the meeting with member introductions and an icebreaker.

Early Learning Division (ELD) and Early Learning Council (ELC) Actions

Members of the Early Learning Council (ELC) and staff from the Early Learning Division (ELD) joined the South-Central Early Learning Hub's Regional Governance Council meeting to discuss the following topics related to the upcoming 2021-2023 biennium:

- What are the ELC's current focuses and priorities?
- How do the Hubs and Raise Up Oregon fit into the ELC's priorities?
- Where does the ELC see the opportunity for Hubs to really have an impact?
- Parent Advisory Councils
- HB 3073 / HB 2054
- Scope of Work / Theory of Change
- Proposed Hub Funding Allocation Formula

Anne Kubisch, with The Ford Family Foundation (TFFF), is an at-large member of the ELC and sees her role on the council as a voice for rural communities. Anne gave an overview of the ELC and Raise Up Oregon (RUO), the ELC's five-year plan which concludes in 2023. RUO has three major goals: children arrive ready for kindergarten, children are raised in healthy, stable, and attached families, and the early learning system is aligned, coordinated, and family centered. The ELC is focusing on early learning system integration and alignment with a strong emphasis on equity and family voice. The Early Learning Hubs play a key role in supporting systems coordination with their work including Preschool Promise Coordinated Enrollment.

Anne highlighted that Early Care and Education is a priority for the Governor Brown and that investments into these programs with Student Success Act (SSA) funding were highly protected in recent budget cuts.

The RUO Progress report for 2019-2020 was released earlier this year. Highlights included:

- Increased early learning slots in Preschool Promise, Oregon Pre-K, Early Head Start and Head Start
- Investments in workforce development and compensation
- Continued emphasis on social-emotional health (supported through CCOs)
- Investments in Home Visiting Programs
- Equity (including rural / geographic inequities)

Early Learning Council Chairperson, Sue Miller, shared the ELC's appreciation of us using RUO as the "north star" in the creation of our Early Care and Education (ECE) Sector Plan. The successful implementation of RUO will be dependent on Early Learning Hubs. She also highlighted our regional work around equity, the creation of our Equity Lens, our successful efforts in supporting child care providers through the Douglas County Child

Care Coalition, and our emphasis on gathering family voice, finding barriers and identifying opportunities. All of which are focuses and priorities of the ELC.

CARES Act funding is being distributed to support child care providers to assist them in either staying open or in reopening. ELC is working with TFFF, Oregon Community Foundation (OCF), and other philanthropic organizations strategizing ways to support child care providers and increase supply across the state.

Additional priorities for the ELC include:

- Workforce development and compensation for child care and ECE programs including Home Visiting.
- Mental health support for parents, caregivers, children of all ages, teachers, etc....

HB 3073

Sue Miller requested that early learning partners look for opportunities to connect with local legislators so that those legislators have early learning on their radar and understand the importance of early childhood related bills.

House Bill 3073 is the ELC's top legislative priority, Sue and Miriam Calderon, the Early Learning System Director, testified for this bill to the legislature about a week ago. House Bill 3073 would change the governance structure of early learning by pulling the ELD out of the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and creating a new, stand-alone agency which is currently called the Early Learning Authority. This change would be beneficial because it would help consolidate and align eligibility of programs as well as make them more affordable and accessible to families. For example, the ELD is working closely with Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) to bring the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program into the new structure of the Early Learning Authority.

Troy Duker, Operations and Policy Analyst with the ELD, shared additional information about House Bill 3073. House Bill 3073 also aligns and clarifies the roles of the Early Learning Council, Early Learning Division, and Early Learning Systems Director. The ELD is currently in a conversational period with stakeholders throughout the state. There was concern from stakeholders about the EI/ECSE program being moved from the oversight of the ODE to the future oversight of the ELD. Currently, this bill would grant the Early Learning Systems Director and ELC authority to collaborate and consult with the State Board of Education and ODE about rule-making for the program. Another change in the bill is the renaming the Early Learning Division to the new name of the Early Learning Authority. There are concerns around the new name. Some alternate possible names include: Early Learning and Care Authority or Early Childhood Authority.

After the upcoming legislative hearing, amendments will be drafted and the bill will follow the remaining legislative process.

Troy also shared information about House Bill 2054, which narrows the scope of eligibility for the Early Learning Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) to ensure the monies that are being disbursed are going toward kindergarten transition. The Early Learning Hubs will remain the pass-through entity for these funds. There are no foreseeable issues with getting this bill to the floor.

Scope of Work / Theory of Change and Proposed Funding Allocation Formula

Early Learning Hub Managers Carmen Ellis and Denise Swanson, Hub Managers with the Early Learning Division (ELD,) shared a presentation on the upcoming Scope of Work, Theory of Change, and the new proposed funding allocation formula for Early Learning Hubs. All presented information is in draft form until the legislative and ELC approval.

Carmen walked through the Oregon Early Childhood Systems Theory of Change document, which is a framework of strategies for Early Learning Hubs. To develop the Theory of Change, the following questions were asked:

- What impacts do we want to see for children and families?

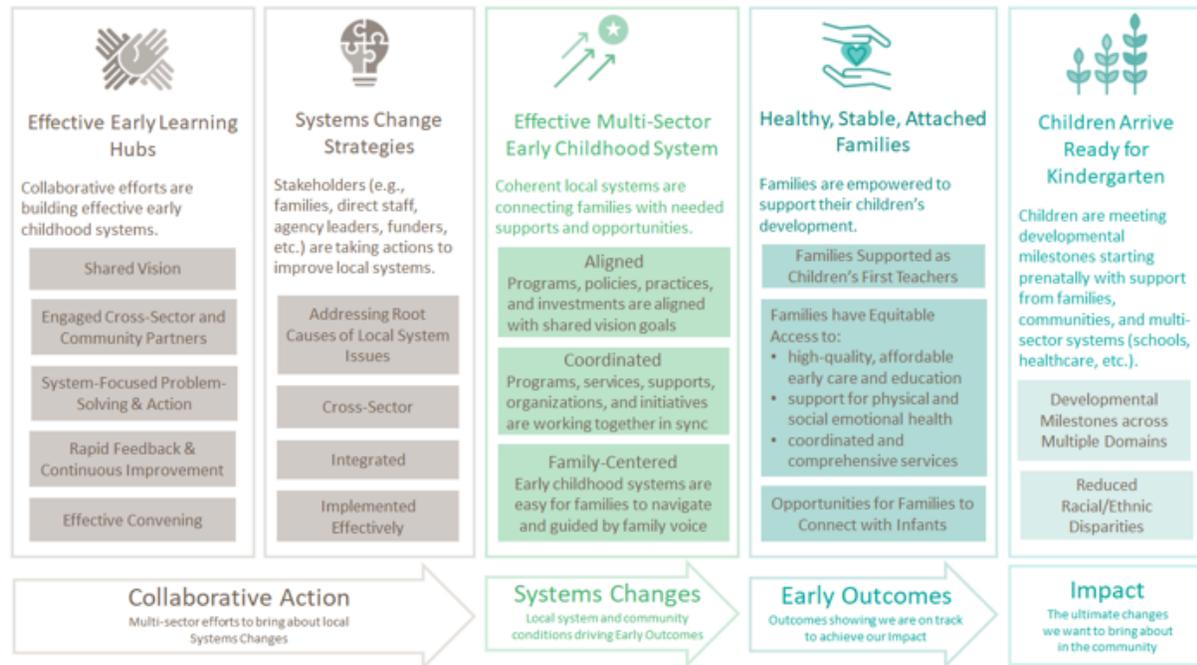
- What changes do we need to do to bring about the impact?
- What will we do to create the impact?

The Theory of Change is based on Raise Up Oregon (RUO), with existing state plans and documents, stakeholder input, and research into evidence-based practices. The Theory of Change organizes the ELD’s best thinking about what needs to happen to have the desired impact for children and families. This theory can be adjusted as strategies are implemented.

The main goal of the Early Learning Hubs and the Theory of Change is that children arrive ready for kindergarten, which is the impact that we are working towards. Carmen also shared the Early Outcomes showing that we are on track to achieve the desired impact of healthy, stable and attached families. The system changes to achieve early outcomes are effective multi-sector childhood systems where systems are aligned, coordinated, and family centered. The collaborative action to bring about these systems changes include effective early learning hubs, and multiple systems change strategies such as stakeholders, families, direct staff, agency leaders, funders, etc., taking actions to improve local systems.

Oregon Early Childhood Systems Theory of Change

The following describes a draft theory of change to guide early childhood systems building efforts in Oregon. Each section of the theory of change shown below is described on the preceding pages.



Budget Note

The ELD completed a budget note report for the legislature to look at the relationships between Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) and the Early Learning Hubs and their relationship to each other, their goals, and if they should be combined. The decision was the Hubs and CCRR should not be combined and the work on the budget note gave the ELD a chance to broadly assess the early learning system. The knowledge gained from this assessment is shown in the Scope of Work by more explicitly outlining collaboration and partnerships between Hubs and the CCRR. The Scope of Work will also show Hub requirements for:

- Increased staffing capacity
- Increased leadership and voice for families
- Increased role as regional leaders for community planning

- Increase in the planning, implementation, feedback and evaluation process

Denise Swanson shared that when Hubs were generated, the goal was for them to be local conveners and planners, by working with local partners and other Hubs across the state, to implement system changes. Denise gave additional insight into the Scope of Work and the upcoming requirements of Early Learning Hubs:

- Hubs will receive a toolkit, template, and data from the ELD to assist in completing an assessment to uncover “root-causes” in the region.
- Hubs will reconvene the Regional Stewardship Committee to update the Early Care and Education Sector Plan, identify priority populations, and update our strategic plan.
- Hubs will be required to formalize and initiate the Parent Leadership Council into their governance structure to build parent leadership in the community. The ELD will provide a “how-to” toolkit.

Denise also explained the current funding for Early Learning Hubs across the state, and the proposed funding formula for the 2021-2023 biennium. The current Governor’s budget includes a \$1.4 million cut to Early Learning Hubs.

The current funding formula for Early Learning Hubs is based on SNAP benefits and only accounts for poverty levels across the state. The new, proposed funding formula, has an increased base funding amount, and is based on the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS):

- Poverty: Children under six living below 200% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- Race / Ethnicity: Children of color under six not living in poverty
- Home Language: Adults 18 and older in limited English-speaking households

The proposed funding allocations increase funding for some Hubs and create a loss of funding for six Early Learning Hubs, including the South-Central Early Learning Hub region. Denise also discussed Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) funding and advised that KPI funding will be rolled into Hub funding.

The group asked questions and discussed the proposed funding formula. Questions included concerns about the accuracy of data, how the formula effects geographically isolated regions, equity, and other barriers such as transportation. Suggestions for a more accurate funding formula from Council members included looking at the overall health outcome rankings, graduation rates, and single parent households.

Director Update

Gillian overviewed marketing efforts for Preschool Promise in the South-Central Early Learning Hub region. Radio advertisements are being played in Douglas and Klamath Counties in both English and Spanish, and Lake County is advertising their own Preschool Promise program due to state contracting with the Head Start in Lakeview. Cascade Health Alliance (CHA) added Preschool Promise to their website and sent out a text messaging campaign to families on the Oregon Health Plan (OHA) with children ages 3 and 4-years-old.

The South-Central Early Learning Hub hired a new Family Resource Facilitator for Douglas County, Ceresse Harris, whose start date is March 17.

Equity Lens

Heidi McGowan advised that the South-Central Early Learning Hub was interested in getting thoughts from our regional leaders regarding an opportunity to work with Cliff and Alexis over the next year. How can they support us locally and regionally to continue in partnership with them?

The group suggested having a Regional Subcommittee and working together to increase diversity, equity and inclusion skills that can be shared with others across the region. Email Gillian and Heidi if you are interested in participating in an equity subcommittee

Dena Haudenschild shared that equity is a main focus for the state and it is concerning when partners do not have any updates to share when discussing equity in Hub meetings.

Partner Updates

Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) – Cynthia shared information about the Teach My Kits distribution, and advised that the majority of kits have been distributed to partners. There are less than 100 kits to distribute in Klamath County, and Douglas County is working on phase two of distribution which will include distributing kits to child care providers through the Douglas County Childcare Coalition. In Lake County, all kits have been distributed to partners with the majority of kits already distributed to families.

Community UPLiFT – Vanessa Pingleton shared that Community UPLiFT has received 651 referrals to-date. Community UPLiFT is looking to improve their coordinated information and exchange process by expanding the data portal to include access to additional users and the ability to include family of child care plans generated by local Coordinated Care Organization (CCO).

Community UPLiFT hosted professional development trainings with Dr. Amy Stoeber and will be partnering with Lake District Prevention and Take Root Parenting to offer additional trainings with Dr. Amy Stoeber. More upcoming professional development opportunities include Facilitating Attuned Interactions (FAN) Trainings for Supervisors as well as level 1 and 2 trainings.

Community UPLiFT is also gathering Family Surveys about the process and materials that were developed by partners across the region. Vanessa advised they are also working with Portland State University (PSU) to do Home Visiting Systems Coordination Journey Mapping. PSU will be contacting and interviewing families to gather data on the Community UPLiFT Process.

Gillian shared she has heard our system is working well. Community UPLiFT offers a personal touch that other referral systems do not. Community UPLiFT listens to parent's voice and choice. Family Resource Facilitators are available in each county to work closely with parents. Families are in charge of what supports and resources they are looking for and choose to accept.

Care Connections and Education, Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) – Heather Freiling advised that the CCRR contracting with the state has moved from Umpqua Community College (UCC) to Douglas ESD as of January 1, 2021. Care Connections and Education hired two new Klamath County Employees, Preschool Promise Project Lead and Coach, Charlene Shaw, and Preschool Promise Quality Improvement Specialist, Melissa Minor. CCRR is offering many free resources to Preschool Promise and other child care/preschool programs, including health and safety trainings for new COVID-19 requirements.

The CCRR in Douglas County is working to develop a Quality Improvement Network for childcare providers that will offer a small business certificate upon completion of the one-year program. There are currently 15 participants in the network, and Care Connections and Education is hoping to expand this network to Klamath and Lake County providers in the future

CCRR has an Early Learning Development grant with availability for Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) training for both English and Spanish speakers.

There are no or low-cost classes at Klamath Community College (KCC) and Umpqua Community College (UCC) for degrees and certificates in early learning pathways.

The CCRR is also working with Early Childhood Behavioral Health consultation, and will be providing a Second Step training around social-emotional health that will include Conscious Discipline.

Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) - Rhonda Nyseth shared that the Klamath County Day of Hope will be on April 1st. Contact Rhonda to pick up Pinwheels for Child Abuse Prevention in Klamath County.

The Oral Health Coalition in Klamath County is offering Free Dental Clinic Days in Malin on May 22 and in Merrill on May 23. Contact Rhonda if you are interested in hosting a booth at the event; free food will be provided to volunteers.

The Klamath County ODHS Symposium will be hosted on August 24 and 25 with Cory Jewell Jensen as the Keynote Speaker.

Cascade Health Alliance (CHA) – Rhonda Janecke advised that CHA CCO received a grant to help provide families and youth with access to case management or counseling. If a family needs to access virtual case management or counseling, they can apply to receive a new tablet or phone, or for minutes for their current device.

[Next Meeting Date](#)

June 2, 2021 from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm