

REGIONAL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

Meeting Notes

March 13, 2024 | 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Attendance

Steve Schenewerk
Dena Haudenschild
Maurita Johnson
Michael Carter
Rhonda Janecke

Sandy Henry
Kyle Stevens
Liz Hill
Heidi McGowan
Julie Hurley

Gillian Wesenberg
Heather Freilinger
Vanessa Pingleton
Athena Wikstrom
Danielle Walker

For ease of member access, Regional Governance Council (RGC) meetings will continue to be held virtually unless otherwise notified.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair, Steve Schenewerk, welcomed members of the Regional Governance Council (RGC) and individuals introduced themselves.

Members of the Regional Governance Council reviewed the December 2023 minutes. Rhonda Janecke requested a wording revision from “Oregon Health Alliance” to “Oregon Health Authority.” Michael Carter motioned to approve the minutes with the requested revision. Rhonda Janecke seconded the motion. No further discussion or corrections. Minutes stand approved as corrected.

Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) – Doris Duke Foundation

Maurita Johnson shared an update about a new grant Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) received from the Doris Duke Foundation. The foundation selected Klamath and Multnomah Counties to be part of a three-year, \$33 million initiative built upon Oregon’s approach of serving children and families by improving safety outcomes for children. Oregon’s approach combines anti-poverty programs with coaching models to ensure children’s safety, keep families together, and prevent unnecessary child welfare involvement. Of the \$33 million, Klamath/Lake County will receive a total of \$9 million over three years. Most of the funding is allocated for research, but about \$1 million will be dedicated to support families with tangible items (washer/dryer, vehicle repairs or tires, etc..). The Doris Duke Foundation grant kick-off event is in April; Maurita will have more information after the kick-off.

South-Central Early Learning Hub Update

Athena Wikstrom provided an update about the Hub’s Family Governance Advisory Committee, who have now been meeting for over a year. Families have shared that they appreciate the connection to other parents and are beginning to share their lived experiences.

The Family Governance Advisory Committee began development of a self-advocacy one-pager for themselves and their children. The one-pager will include information about their children, such as developmental milestones, medications (previously tried/current), current concerns, diagnoses, and more, that can be shared with professionals like medical providers and teachers. The goal is for families to be able to use the document as an advocacy tool and a way to share key information during a stressful time.

Gillian Wesenberg advised that Early Learning Hubs across the state have been meeting with the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC), the Early Learning Council (ELC), and BUILD to define Early Learning Hubs and their work.

Legislative Update:

- Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) – received an additional \$99.2 million for the ERDC program in its 2023-2025 budget. The legislature also granted an additional \$72 million Special Purpose Appropriation (SPA)

for ERDC. This investment in ERDC will assist with stabilizing the program and ensuring that families currently enrolled in the program can continue to receive subsidized child care.

- CHIPS Child Care Fund – the Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD) received \$5 million to build new child care opportunities and provide funding for those in construction apprenticeship programs to pay for child care.
- Childcare Infrastructure Fund – Did not pass. The bill was intended to support child care facilities, particularly home-based providers, and to access funds for infrastructure.
- Birth to Five Literacy – Passed with a one-year funding allocation of \$9.4 million. Part of the funding will be allocated to Equity Funding, and part will be allocated to Early Learning Hubs through the Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) grant.
- Early Intervention / Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) – EI/ECSE received \$22 million to restore a cut in the 2023 Legislative session. Additional funding is needed to meet current service levels, as funding is based on past years' EI/ECSE service numbers, not the current EI/ECSE service numbers needed.
- Early Learning Educator Scholarship Program – Did not pass. Funding was intended to expand the Early Learning Educator Scholarship program.
- Stabilization Funding -- Relief Nurseries received \$2.7 million, and Nurse Family Partnership received \$3.2 million for stabilization funding. Unfortunately, Healthy Families Oregon did not receive stabilization funding.

Microcenters and Tillamook – Heidi McGowan

Microcenters -- In the last legislation session, Senate Bill (SB) 1040 was passed as an innovative way to create a sustainability approach for child care. SB 1040 defines a micro center as “a child care program located inside a residential or non-residential facility that on a regular basis serves a minimum of three and a maximum of 30 children for more than four hours a day.” Legislation directs the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC) to develop a pilot, selecting three child care facilities to test the model. Areas selected for the pilot include the Oregon Coast, Eastern Oregon, and Willamette Valley. SB 1040 gives priority to communities with the greatest need and requires that pilot programs participate in the child and adult care food program (CACFP).

The concept of a Microcenter sets new businesses up with a regulatory structure that makes small group child care more financially viable and sustainable than current approaches. Microcenters open creative ways of housing certified family childcare by removing requirements that a family child care must operate in a residence. With this change, a microcenter could be housed in unused elementary classrooms, unused county-owned buildings, and community spaces inside public housing, to name a few.

There are three approaches to Microcenters:

- Microcenter network - multiple sites with one director overseeing every site.
- Single site microcenter.
- Co-location site - several family child care providers operating different programs in one location.

The concept of Microcenters shows promise, but providers will need support and guidance for the model to work.

Tillamook County – The Tillamook Creamery approached Heidi to help them develop a county-wide plan for child care sustainability and expansion. The four areas of the plan include affordability, workforce development, stabilization or existing child care slots, and the creation of new child care slots. Tillamook’s is working to identify three years of funding to accomplish the plan through funding from community partners like the hospital and other large businesses.

Budget Committee

Steve Schenewerk reported that the Budget Committee sent a memo to Douglas Education Service District (DESD) requesting line-item clarification. The Budget Committee met with Superintendent, Analicia Nicholson and Executive

Director of Early Learning, Julie Hurley, to ask questions about the memo response. After the conversation, the Budget Committee reviewed and adopted the proposed 2023-2025 budget.

Preschool Promise

Athena Wikstrom shared that there is only one Preschool Promise opening in the region.

Preschool Promise Grantees received a two-year contract for the first time, allowing the South-Central Early Learning Hub to align enrollment more fluidly with other publicly funded preschool programs. This will also allow the Hub to open applications and begin placing students into Preschool Promise sites earlier than prior years. Applications for 2025-2025 are now open, and the Hub is continuing to accept 2023-2024 Preschool Promise applications through the end of the current school year. Hub staff is participating in tabling events to promote the South-Central Early Learning Hub, Preschool Promise, and Community UPLIFT.

Community UPLIFT

Danielle Walker provided an overview of the Community UPLIFT Quarterly Reports. At the end of the last quarter, October-December 2023, Community UPLIFT had received a total of 1,278 referrals. During the quarter, Community UPLIFT received 31 referrals in Douglas County, 27 referrals in Klamath County, and 1 referral in Lake County.

Crystal Clear Doula Services in Klamath County, and Housing Authority of Douglas County (HADCO) in Douglas County were added to the Community UPLIFT data portal to receive referrals. Staff continue to meet with community partners to present, answer questions, and provide training for Community UPLIFT.

Klamath County Public Health requested Community UPLIFT collect data from families about access to safe sleep environments for infants and car seats for children.

Community UPLIFT received continuing funding for Goodwill Vouchers in Douglas and Klamath Counties. There was a funding increase from the prior six-month period from \$160 to \$200 per county. Lake County is not eligible for the Goodwill Voucher program, as there is no Goodwill located in Lake County. Families who indicate a need for clothing or household necessities can receive a voucher worth \$20 to be used at their local Goodwill store.

Regional Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR)

Heather Freiling shared that Care Connections and Education, the region's Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR), is a state agency meant to support the increase of child care providers in the region. CCRR offers classes required for individuals to start their own child care businesses. CCRR also offers professional development and coaching opportunities through child care networks and cohorts across the region. College Navigators are available at both Klamath Community College (KCC) and Umpqua Community College (UCC). Navigators support college students in Early Care and Education cohorts across Douglas, Klamath, and Lake Counties. While some CCRR trainings are in-person only, most are offered hybrid or virtual, increasing access for providers across the region.

The Klamath County Spring Fling Conference will be hosted at KCC on April 29 with Keynote Speaker, Chris Springer, discussing STEAM. The keynote and additional trainings will be offered with Spanish translation.

The Douglas County Spring Fling Conference will be hosted at UCC on May 18 with Keynote Speaker, Amy Williams, discussing Behavior Supports and Responsive Guidance.

Also on May 18, KCC will be having a training about the Pyramid Model. The Pyramid Model is used by Preschool Promise Coaches when working with Preschool Promise grantees.

Douglas County Child Care Coalition - The Douglas County Child Care Coalition will be hosting a Business Summit about Family Friendly Business Practices on April 4.

Closing

With no additional business, the Regional Governance Council adjourned at 1:12 pm.

Next Meeting: June 12, 2024, at 11:00 am