

March 18, 2024 | 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Attendance

Lane Stratton (v)
Michael Benson (v)
Jen Schultz
Rhyanna McLain

Miranda Philibert
Shalom Rorabaugh
Gillian Wesenberg
Vanessa Pingleton

Susan Warner
Athena Wikstrom
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.

South-Central Early Learning Hub – Gillian shared the Department of Early Learning and Care is working with the Early Learning Council (ELC) and BUILD, to define Hubs. Hub Regional Governance Councils are their own autonomous entity. Each of the 16 Early Learning Hubs are housed in different backbone organizations across the state and governed by Regional Governance Councils.

The South-Central Early Learning Hub contracted with Pacific Research and Evaluation (PRE) to learn more about kindergarten transitions and early literacy across the region. PRE is hosting listening sessions for K-12 partners to share information about current kindergarten transition and early literacy activities in Douglas, Klamath, and Lake Counties. The listening sessions will inform the Hub’s Regional Governance Council and assist with Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) strategic planning.

Athena asked the Lake Community Governance Council the following questions:

What kindergarten readiness initiatives are already happening in your communities?

- Honker Preschool (Preschool Promise), local private preschools, and Klamath Family Head Start (Early Head Start/Head Start/Preschool Promise) are available in Lakeview. Each of the programs do a lot of work surrounding kindergarten readiness.
- Adel, North Lake, and Paisley all have school-sponsored preschools. North Lake may also have a private preschool.
- Honker Preschool uses Creative Curriculum.
- Preschool students at Honker Preschool go on a field trip to their future elementary school, Freemont Elementary.
- There is a new Home School Co-Op in Lake County.
 - By law, families must register with the ESD if their child is not enrolled in an accredited school.
- Lakeview School District #7 is planning Kinder Camp for the first week of August. North Lake School District also runs a Kinder Camp in the summer.
- Lakeview School District #7 has a Strengthening Mental Health Fund for children three-years-old through sixth grade. The funds are used to provide an eight-week summer day-camp for children. Parents register students one week at a time. The school creates the curriculum for the summer camp, and the curriculum includes Kindergarten Readiness strategies for the attending preschoolers.
- Early Head Start is a program for children six weeks to three-years, is a year-round, and has eight slots. Head Start, for children three to five-years, does not operate in summer months.
- Head Start Kindergarten Transition Day with Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) is on April 26, 2024.

- Take Root offers Ready! For Kindergarten curriculum. Ready! for K was offered virtually last year but will hopefully be offered in person this year.
- Last year, Take Root also offered a School Readiness workshop, and are planning to offer it again.

In an ideal world, what else would you be doing to support kids and families to transition into kindergarten?

- There is a child care deficit in Lake County for children six-weeks to three-years-old. Early care is a good transition for children going into preschool. Many parents cannot work due to lack of infant/toddler care.
- Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) and UCAN Healthy Families are the only two home visiting programs in Lake County. However, Head Start teachers are also home visitors. At Head Start, families receive two social service visits per child per year.
- Head Start does not currently offer home-based preschool programming in Lake County..
- Due to state requirements, a lot of child care programs decline expanding their preschool services into infant and toddler care.

What ideas do you have to support kindergarten transitions?

- Head Start had a Community of Practice meeting with kindergarten teachers from Klamath Falls, Merrill, and Bonanza. During the meeting, Head Start teachers shared what they do to support kindergarten readiness, and asked kindergarten teachers about expectations for children entering kindergarten. Kindergarten teachers focused on children’s social-emotional needs over academics. Academics will come as children are able to self-regulate.

Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) - Michael Benson shared a couple of children have recently been qualified for EI/ECSE. There is a focus on kindergarten transitions right now.

Lakeview School District #7 – Jen Schultz advised that eight high school students will be interning and running the upcoming summer camp, with adults supervising. The interns will make the preparations for camp together, and each will take Conscious Discipline video training.

Klamath Family Head Start – Lakeview Site – Shalom Rorabaugh – Head Start is hiring for open positions. Head Start is a great career-pathway opportunity for the early care and education workforce. Head Start reimburses employee school costs for up to a bachelor’s degree. Head Start also pays for employee Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential, and Family Service Credential (FSC).

Head Start is currently full for the 2023-2024 school year. There is a large waitlist for Early Head Start, but not for preschool.

South-Central Early Learning Hub- Gillian Wesenberg provided a 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 childcare facilities, particularly home-based providers and 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 the \$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 need.

- 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.

Preschool Promise received a two-year grant for the 2023-25 biennium funding. This has enabled the Hub to align enrollment more closely with Head Start. The 2024-2025 Preschool Promise application will open this week.

Danielle shared about Community UPLIFT. Community UPLIFT helps connect expecting families and families with children from birth to five, and up to twenty-one with special needs, to resources in their communities. If you are interested in more information or a presentation about Community UPLIFT, contact Danielle at (541) 880-4655 or by email at Danielle.walker@douglasesd.k12.or.us.

Take Root – Bailey Guido – Take Root is getting ready to wrap up Warner Valley Engagement Boxes. The final box is based on indoor play which will include items for families to make sensory bins with donations from local businesses. The box will include dirt, moon sand, lava timers, and an indoor obstacle courses with painter tape and streamers. Take Root will be meeting with Lane to discuss another series of Family Engagement Boxes, potentially going out to families in North Lake or Paisley.

Upcoming classes include Healthy Cooking, a virtual How to Win at Adulthood for teens and their parents, and a virtual Babies Don't Come with Instructions. In-person play dates are also being offered.

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) – The Spring Conference will be held at Klamath Community College on April 29, with a theme of Steam. Six and a half hours of training is included in the conference, as well as lunch, and opportunities to win door prizes. Key Note and most breakout sessions will be interpreted in Spanish. Early Bird Registration fee is \$35. After April 12, the fee goes up to \$50.

Next Meeting: April 22, 2024, at 1:00 pm.