

REGIONAL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

Meeting Notes

Sept. 15, 2021 | 11:00 AM – 1:20 PM

Attendance

Steve Schenewerk
Alyssa Chatterjee
Charlene Shaw
Athena Wikstrom
Gillian Wesenberg

Cynthia Hurkes
Dena Haudenschild
Heidi McGowan
Maurita Johnson
Rhonda Janecke

Michael Carter
Analicia Nicholson
Vanessa Pingleton
Danielle Walker

Please note: The Regional Governance Council (RGC) meeting was held virtually due to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) concerns and guidance on public meetings from the Governor.

Welcome and Introductions

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

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

Gillian shared an update about the release of November request for applications (RFAs) for Preschool Promise expansion from the Early Learning Division (ELD). In the next biennium, the ELD will receive expansion funds that were granted by the Oregon Legislature. In order to prepare for the Preschool Promise expansion, the ELD has requested the South-Central Early Learning Hub (SCELH) convene the Regional Stewardship Committee to provide input on a mini-update to the Early Care and Education (ECE) Sector Plan. The mini-update is due on October 7, 2021 and will be used as a tool by the ELD to inform the Preschool Promise RFAs and slot allocation.

The Stewardship Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for either September 29 or 30 from 10:00 am – noon. Members of the committee, including parents, will provide family voice and feedback on current ECE Priority Populations, Geographic Regions, and Family Preferences. The Stewardship Committee will review new data gathered by the Hub and our partners. Findings from families across the region, gathered from Family Surveys conducted by Pacific Research and Evaluation (PRE), Family Focus Groups, hosted in English by East Consulting and Associates and in Spanish by PRE will be shared with the committee. Some additional data includes Head Start and OPK Community Needs Assessments, Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and Coordinated Care Organization (CCO) data, Community UPLiFT Family Journey Mapping, and data from the Early Learning Map of Oregon (ELMO).

Child Care and COVID Update

The Regional Governance Council discussed the recent impact of the COVID-19 surge and effects on child care providers.

Douglas County's largest child care provider, Little Wellspring Christian Preschool and Child Care Center, is closing at the end of September, leaving approximately 150 children unserved. The Douglas County Child Care Coalition is working with providers and businesses to create new slots. If Klamath or Lake Counties are interested in having discussions about the generation of a Child Care Coalition, similar to that of Douglas County, the Hub would like to support these conversations.

Michael Carter shared Lake County is in survival mode due to fires, and, as a result of the fire evacuations, many children are out of school.

Lakeview School District is sending two newly hired preschool staff members to college. These staff are fast-tracked to graduate with early childhood education degrees to become preschool teachers. The district is

also partnering with Eastern Oregon University for the curriculum to provide high school students with CTE for early childhood college credits. Students will participate in an accelerated program and will be early childhood teachers once they graduate high school.

Charlene Shaw advised the most prominent barrier to child care facilities is finding qualified teachers. One in-home Preschool Promise provider in Klamath County, however, had difficulties securing ELD required insurance levels and unfortunately lost the ability to continue providing Preschool Promise services to nine children.

Relating to insurance requirements, Michael Carter provided insight into the Northwest region, who utilized a co-op model between providers which made insurance requirements easier to meet. Douglas ESD could potentially oversee the co-operative. Steve let the RGC know that the Douglas County Child Care Coalition is looking into a shared-services model to support providers.

Sandy Henry advised the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians partnered with Western Oregon University to offer a Grow Your Own program to support people of color becoming classroom teachers. Last year, there was a partnership with Chemeketa to support teachers of color to graduate as a step 7 on the Oregon Registry through a project of the Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care and Education. Umpqua Community College (UCC) or Klamath Community College (KCC) may be able to partner in a similar program.

Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI)

Cynthia Hurkes provided an update about the Kindergarten Partnership and Innovation summer early learning funding expended between April and June; then additional funds which needed to be expended from July and September. KPI summer funding expenditures were approved by the Regional Governance Council with input from the three county Professional Advisory Committees.

KPI, in partnership with Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR), will offer Conscious Discipline courses to 100 participants. There are ten videos and five virtually facilitated sessions. Also included are incentives for sessions being attended, and KPI is purchasing books for participants.

Additional funding will be used to train facilitators for the Abriendo Puertas (Opening Doors) parenting series and to purchase curriculum for individuals being trained to facilitate the series. Trained facilitators will have the ability to implement the series through their agency and Take Root Parenting Education is willing to sponsor a series.

Mini grants were allotted to 4 different entities, totaling \$27,500. Grants were awarded to A Family Gathering Place (kindergarten transitioning), Klamath Family Head Start (Conscious Discipline training for staff and parents), Family Relief Nursery (family engagement), and Umpqua Valley STEAM Hub (print materials and purchase books for STEM kits).

KPI also purchased 336 Teach My Kits for toddlers (two-three-year-olds) to be distributed throughout the region. Kathleen Walker-Henderson will provide training via on-demand videos. Once a family completes the on-demand training, they will receive a Teach My Kit. Ready! for Kindergarten kits were also purchased for 240 families, and Take Root will provide the Ready! for Kindergarten trainings.

Investments and Actions

Athena shared information about the generation of Preschool Promise site videos which were contracted by the South-Central Early Learning Hub for providers to promote their programs. The Overview and Wildflower Child Care videos were shared with the group, and can be found at the following links.

- Overview: <https://vimeo.com/580844447/541e1574b4>
- Wildflower Child Care: <https://vimeo.com/562681722/71822a2f8f>

Lakeshore kits for infants 6 to 36-months-old were distributed regionally to priority populations. Kits were purchased by the South-Central Early Learning Hub with approval from the Regional Governance Council.

Decision-Making Process

Heidi shared her role in facilitating the Regional Governance Council's decision-making process. It has been three years since the decision-making process was updated. Heidi reviewed the decision-making process that is currently in place.

The Early Learning Division (ELD) requested that Hubs move away from county thinking about investments to a regional approach. There is also a need to align investments with the Early Learning Hub's Strategic Plan and Raise Up Oregon.

Proposed changes included:

- Removing – "County governance fills in a one-page collective impact concept including additional community investments, community documentation and consumer input for each funding recommendation. "
- Removing – "County governance provides targeted collective impact funding recommendations including leveraged community investments to the Regional Governance Council for approval, March 2018."
- Updating - "Aligns with and is reflected in the EL Hub's strategic plan" to include Raise Up Oregon.

Heidi asked the group what they thought had worked well with the process?

Regional Governance Council members shared they have been impressed at the way the Hub is able to get information into the hands of families. The Early Learning Hub has been able to help partners identify that each county in the region has similar needs. Regional partners have been able to work together in making decisions based on needs of communities rather than the needs of specific organizations. Decisions are prioritized and funding supports the entire region.

The Regional Governance Council appreciates the two-way communication process between the RGC and county Professional Advisory Committees. They would like to continue gathering feedback from Professional Advisory Committees and receiving information at the RGC meeting.

The group would like to see the roles on the decision-making process more clearly defined, and include a "cheat-sheet" for new members as well as keeping a focus on equitable outcomes for families.

Heidi will revise the decision-making process and bring it back to the group

Early Learning Division Update

Alyssa Chatterjee, Early Learning Division Director joined the RGC to provide an update on the ELD. Alyssa shared a slide deck with updates, including information on:

- Legislative updates and requirements
 - HB 3073 – Establishes the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC)
 - HB 2166 – Suspension and Expulsion Prevention
 - SB 236 – Suspension & Expulsion Ban
 - HB 2055 – Tribal Early Learning Hub
 - HB 2166 – Partner Engagement
- 2021-2023 Program Expansions
 - \$68M – Program expansion, roughly 4000 new slots:
 - Preschool Promise
 - Oregon Pre-K (OPK)/Head Start
 - Oregon Prenatal to Three/Early Head Start
 - Healthy Families Oregon
 - Early Childhood Equity Fund
 - Parenting Education
- Stakeholder Engagement

- Legislator and policymakers
 - Legislative progress reports
 - Expectations of lawmakers
- Parents, families, and providers
 - What have families experienced?
 - What do families want to experience?
 - What have providers experienced?
 - What do providers want to experience?
- Opportunities for connection
 - Early Learning & Kindergarten Guideline Updates to
 - Include infants and toddlers
 - Positive racial identity development
 - Strengthening coordination between early care and education and EI/ECSE
 - Targeted supports through KPI
 - Community planning and program expansion

Partner Updates

Community UPLIFT – Vanessa Pingleton shared there have been 769 regional referrals since Community UPLIFT started. Community UPLIFT now has its own page linked to the the South-Central Early Learning Hub’s web page. Seven new providers have been added to the data portal, and 39 agencies can receive referrals through Community UPLIFT. Community UPLIFT is piloting a project with Sutherlin School District to connect unaccompanied youth directly to a Family Coach with the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS).

The data portal is being expanded to include Family Care Plans from Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) and other organizations. The expansion will also include adding the ability for community partners to pull their own reports, and the ability for referring partners to view how the referrals they have submitted are progressing in the process.

Family Journey Mapping with Portland State University (PSU) was completed to determine a family’s journey through the Community UPLIFT process.

Community UPLIFT partnered with UCAN Healthy Families to offer a training about Breaking the Iron Cage of Poverty and Teaching and Learning Tools for People Who Work with Individuals Living in Poverty.

Take Root – Classes are scheduled for fall term, and will continue virtually for the time being.

Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians – Sandy Henry shared that Yimisa Preschool Promise is open and has 15 students.

Next Meeting Date

December 8, 2021 from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm