

Sept. 24, 2024 | 10:00 AM – Noon

Attendance

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|------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| David Elliott | Kathleen Walker-Henderson | Vanessa Pingleton |
| Holly Mancebo | Jennifer Watson | Athena Wikstrom |
| Jennifer Jackson | David Lev | Laura Barajas |
| Jane Nicholson | Tara Webster | Ronda Osborn |
| Katherine Duarte | Gillian Wesenberg | Amber Singh |
| Jessie McClung | Heather Freilinger | Danielle Walker |

Please note: For ease of member access, South-Central Early Learning Hub – Klamath Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings will be held virtually unless otherwise notified.

Welcome and Introduction

The Klamath PAC reviewed and approved the June 2024 minutes. Kathleen Walker-Henderson made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. No further discussion. Motion passed.

South-Central Early Learning Hub

Gillian overviewed Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC) Policy Option Packages (POPs) submitted to the Governor. Once all state agencies submit POPs, the Governor prioritizes the POPs and compiles a recommended budget that is submitted to the Legislature, who creates the state budget. The Governor’s recommended budget will be released in December and shared with the legislature.

- POP 101: \$5.7 million for agency operations staff
- POP 105: \$3.1 million for child care licensure staff (to reduce ratio to recommended one licensuror per 50 child care providers) (Federal Funds)
- POP 580: \$25 million for Early Literacy
 - Dolly Parton Imagination Library
 - Early Learning and Kindergarten Guidelines revision and professional development
 - Other investments (To Be Determined)
- DELIC recognizes that there are other funding needs. Additional funding needs that were not prioritized by the Governor’s office for POP submission, include:
 - Suspension and expulsion plans for early care and education settings
 - Employment Related Day Care (ERDC)
 - Tribal Early Learning
 - Family Childcare Provider Health Coverage
 - Ongoing access to other DELIC programs (ex. Preschool Promise, Relief Nurseries, etc.)

Jennifer Jackson shared the tribes voted to split DELIC allocated funding evenly between each of the tribes. The tribes are working with DELIC to develop legislation for the Early Learning Fund for Tribes. Tribes will have the ability to utilize funding for what each tribe decides is necessary to support early learning programs.

Gillian provided an update about the Family Governance Advisory Committee. The South-Central Early Learning Hub is looking for additional family membership in Klamath and Lake Counties. Members receive a \$50 stipend per meeting they attend. The Family Governance Advisory Committee is working on building their group structure. Members applied for and were awarded grant funding through the Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) Request for Application (RFA). The group will be planning for and then placing Little Free Libraries throughout the region. Libraries will include diverse books for children ages birth through five. Jessie suggested working on the project with SMART Reading.

Gillian provided an update about legislation revolving around suspension and expulsion in early care and education settings. Beginning July 1, 2026, children in any early care and education settings, can no longer be suspended or expelled regardless of how the program is funded. Douglas ESD received a Suspension and Expulsion Planning grant from the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC). The South-Central Early Learning Hub will facilitate the first year of planning. There are concerns that limited funding will cause implementation challenges for the South-Central Early Learning Hub region, as each Early Learning Hub in the state will receive funding for one full time employee to provide support for teachers. Due to the size of the South-Central Early Learning Hub region, it will be difficult for one individual to support all child care settings across the region.

Heather added there is a lack of support and resources for children with behavioral or developmental concerns in early care settings. The state is working to develop a process to connect child care providers with local support resources. Supports could include teacher coaching or child referrals to Early Intervention / Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE). The goal of the process is to get support to providers before children are at risk of removal. Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) agencies across the state received contract amendments to hire Inclusive Specialists. The Inclusive Specialist for the region is Jaelynn Luna in Klamath County. Jaelynn will serve the region with a primary focus on Klamath and Lake Counties.

Gillian also gave an update on the Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) Request for Application (RFA). Partners who were awarded funding have been notified. A few applications were sent back to applicants with revision requests to more closely align with the RFA requirements.

Athena provided an update on the statewide RFA for Preschool Promise reallocation slots. The South-Central Early Learning Hub region has eighteen slots available for redistribution. No slots were reallocated to the South-Central region in the RFA process. Applicants who met DELIC RFA requirements did not match the needs of the region at this time. The Hub is working with DELIC to release a new RFA process for providers to re-apply for reallocation slots.

Trends on Thriving

Katherine Duarte with Klamath County Public Health joined the Klamath Professional Advisory Committee meeting to present about the local Trends on Thriving (TOTs) Infant Mortality Prevention Coalition. In 2019, TOTs launched an initiative with a focus on reducing infant mortality because the 2018 Klamath County Community Health Assessment indicated a high infant mortality rate in Klamath County. Based on the infant mortality rates in 2018, TOTs became a priority area of the 2019-2022 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Priority areas for the CHIP have shifted since 2022, but TOTs work continues through Title V Maternal-Child Health Block Grant Funding.

Infant mortality is complex. The TOTs group has focused on:

- Maternal nutrition
- Breastfeeding
- Potential effects of wildfire smoke exposure during pregnancy
- Connection to prenatal care
- Substance use (smoking/vaping, opioids, marijuana, meth, general drug use, etc.)
- Oral health
- Infant injury prevention (car seats, infant safe sleep)

In 2023, TOTs partnered with Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU) to complete a breastfeeding needs assessment. OHSU received 92 community surveys and hosted nine provider interviews. Based on feedback and looking at current trends, supports, and education, OHSU recommended the following:

- Education for new and expecting parents
- Prioritization of perinatal mental health
- Education for providers
- Education for community partners on breastfeeding issues
- Establishment of a formal referral system for breastfeeding concerns

There has been recent breastfeeding and infant nutrition supports added in Klamath County, including the addition of:

- One WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor
- One WIC International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC)
- La Leche League of Klamath Falls, a peer-to-peer breastfeeding support group
- Sky Lakes Nurture Nook, supporting all caregivers of infants with infant nutrition and/or breastfeeding
- Connect, Restore, Thrive (CRT) Counseling, who has a focus on the link between breastfeeding and maternal mental health

TOTs also guided a wildfire smoke exposure during pregnancy research study through a partnership with Oregon State University (OSU) and OHSU, to learn more about personal exposure to chemicals in the air during wildfires. The final report was submitted to an academic journal, and an infographic titled Wildfire Smoke Exposure During Pregnancy was designed and released to the public. The infographic can be found here:

- English (<https://www.healthyklamath.org/wildfiresmokeguide>),
- Spanish (<https://www.healthyklamath.org/elhumo>).

The TOTs group is also working to distribute consistent messaging about infant safe sleep across the community. Cribs for providers, including Oregon Child Development Coalition (OCDC), the Pregnancy Hope Center, and Sky Lakes, offer safe sleep survival kits to members of the community. Sky Lakes Birth Center became certified at the gold level for safe sleep. TOTs also hosted Sweet Dreams Begin with Safe Sleep training opportunities.

TOTs is collaborating with Community UPLiFT to increase data collection and connect families to programs that assist with safe sleep environments, safety equipment, and Infant Nutrition (breastfeeding and formula feeding) supports.

Partner Updates

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) / Care Connections & Education - Heather Freilinger – The Klamath County Fall Conference is November 2 at Klamath Community College (KCC). More information will be provided soon. The Douglas County Fall Conference is October 4 and 5 at Umpqua Community College (UCC). Friday night, there will be a showing of Forget Me Not: Inclusion in the Classroom. The keynote speaker for Saturday is Rusty Keeler, an expert on Risky Play. Registration and more information can be found online at: [2024 Early Childhood Care and Education Conference - Risky Play - Umpqua Shopping cart \(enrole.com\)](#).

The Strong Start network, which provided a year of training to childcare providers who have been in business less than two years, ends in December. Next January, Strong Start will be repeated, allowing providers to join the Strong Start network at any time throughout the year. CCRR Website: <https://672care.org/>

Take Root Parenting Connections – Laura Barajas – Take Root is partnering with Central Oregon Disability Support Network (CODSN) for an Individual Education Plan (IEP) workshop. The Klamath County fall training calendar is out, and a virtual flyer is available.

Community UPLiFT – Danielle Walker – Community UPLiFT has received a total of 1,459 regional referrals since 2017. Of those, 851 have been in Douglas County, 558 in Klamath County, and 22 in Lake County. Three referrals have come from counties outside the South-Central region. Last quarter, there was a total of 85 referrals, with 47 in Douglas County, 35 in Klamath County, and 3 in Lake County. Referrals are up a total of 19 referrals from the same quarter in 2023. So far this quarter, Community UPLiFT has received 78 referrals with 43 in Douglas County and 34 in Klamath County.

Preschool Promise – Athena Wikstrom – All Preschool Promise sites in Klamath County are full. There was a high rate of turnover in comparison to previous years due to enrolling students earlier and in alignment with other publicly funded programs. More families had the ability to apply for multiple programs and select the program that best suited their needs.

Jennifer shared The Klamath Tribes Preschool Promise site is also at capacity. The Klamath Tribes currently has 10 slots and will be requesting additional slots in the next biennium.

Klamath Promise and Southern Oregon ESD – Jessie McClung - ACES overview trainings, ranging from 20-minutes to two hours, are still available for free to community partners. If you're interested in becoming an ACES trainer, there is a two-day train the trainer course on November 7 and 8.

Klamath Promise is a sponsor of the Spanish radio station, La Patrona. If you have content to broadcast, Klamath Promise has advertising slots that they are willing to share with community partners for free. Translation is available through La Patrona if needed.

Next Meeting:

Agenda Topics: Cascade Health Alliance (CHA) segment on Oregon Health Authority Social-Emotional Health measure for children ages one through five.

October 23, 2024, from 10 am to noon.

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