

KLAMATH PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes

October 23, 2024 | 10:00 AM – Noon

Attendance

Rhonda Janecke	Stephanie Sullivan	Melissa Dorsey
Jill O'Donnell	Brayanna Paradice	David Lev
Amber Martinez	Sylvia Cox	Gillian Wesenberg
Kathleen Walker-Henderson	Jessica McAuliffe	Heather Freilinger
Holly Mancebo	Jane Nicholson	Amber Singh
Laura Barajas	Bethany Holmes	Athena Wikstrom
Jessie McClung	Jordon Falconio	Danielle Walker
David Elliott	Jennifer Jakson	
Kay Ortega	Mary Ruiz	

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 September 2024 minutes. Bethany Holmes made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Jill O'Donnell seconded the motion. No further discussion. Motion passed.

ACES Overview

Amber Martinez with Citizens for Safe Schools joined the Klamath Professional Advisory Committee meeting to provide an overview of the two-hour Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Resiliency training. The training is based on a landmark population study that showed that adversity and trauma in childhood can have lifetime impacts on health outcomes, mental health outcomes, and social outcomes.

If your organization would like to schedule an ACEs and Resiliency training, complete the form available online at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdYZqftD1kfsSup-ERsbhUM0n6-eRfyX3wQn_K2qvg0JMeDjQ/viewform.

There is an upcoming Train the Trainer event on November 7 and 8, in-person at the Klamath SOESD office including a virtual option. Lunch will be provided. Sign up at <https://forms.gle/FmjKteMwt8R8UqUo9> by Oct 30th. Contact klamath_promise@soesd.k12.or.us for more information.

Social Emotional Health Metric – Health Aspects of Kindergarten Readiness (HAKR)

David joined the Klamath Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) to discuss the Health Aspects of Kindergarten Readiness, Social Emotional Health Metric for Oregon Health Authority. The HAKR is an incentivized metric for all Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) in Oregon and is primarily focused on individuals who are members of Oregon Medicaid through Oregon Health Plan (OHP). Oregon Health Plan members account for about 40% of Klamath County residents. The data collection tends to be an accurate representation of the community as a whole.

The social-emotional health metric, mandated by the Oregon Health Authority, underscores the importance of children being socially and emotionally prepared for kindergarten. Cascade Health Alliance (CHA) is collaborating with local providers, educators, health professionals, and community organizations to establish a holistic support system for families. The partnership aims to ensure early detection of developmental delays, allowing children to receive timely assistance, which reduces trauma and encourages early intervention. The focus of this metric is on children who have been continuously enrolled with CHA. Data is being collected on members who have received behavioral health assessments or services during the measurement year, emphasizing the importance of proactive support for young children's social-emotional health.

Some rural communities, like Bly, Bonanza, and Chiloquin, see higher rates of children receiving behavioral health assessments or services than Klamath Falls. Sylvia shared that Klamath Family Head Start has a Child Family Counselor for Klamath Falls, Merrill, Bonanza, and Lakeview. Kay shared that Oregon Child Development Coalition (OCDC) refers children to specialists, like behavioral health providers, when the need is identified. Children attending OCDC receive support services in their classrooms. Both programs work closely with Early Intervention / Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE).

During the survey of behavioral health providers last year, and in looking at appointment availability, CHA determined there was between 18% and 27% availability for behavioral health services for children in the 0-5 age range. CHA is now looking for input on how to guide the next steps for the Health Aspects of Kindergarten Readiness Metric.

Members of the Klamath PAC shared their thoughts:

- Group therapy options for young children could be beneficial.
- Many CHA members do not know that CHA Case Managers are available to all members and can help navigate OHP services like behavioral health. Increasing community knowledge about Case Managers or creating a direct referral system for Case Management could benefit clients.
- There is a lack of social emotional health support in K-5 classrooms. Children are not getting the level of support in the K-5 as they are in preschool settings. There are not enough para pros or social emotional personnel. Behavioral health waitlists can be over a year.
- There is a need for behavioral health education for parents, teachers, and preschools.
- The Help that Helps training is available through the Self-Healing Communities Program. Help that Helps covers brain science and how it relates to behavior. The training gives free, simple, and specific strategies to help parents focus on patience, resiliency, and building connections with their children.
- There is a need for more pediatric providers and Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapies. There is only one pediatric Occupational Therapist in Klamath Falls. The ABA therapy waitlist is a year and a half.
- Increase bilingual services for individuals who do not speak English. Klamath Basin Behavioral Health (KBBH) only has one therapist who speaks Spanish.
 - CHA focuses on certifying bilingual individuals as medical translators.
- Sky Lakes Pediatric Therapy doesn't have much equipment for children. Additional equipment or an updated facility would be helpful for children in pediatric therapy services.

South-Central Early Learning Hub Update

Gillian Wesenberg shared that all 16 Early Learning Hubs across the state are still working with the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC), the Early Learning Council (ELC), and the national research organization Build, to develop definitions that clearly express the work and role of Early Learning Hubs.

Newly passed legislation prohibits children in early care and education settings, regardless of funding, from being suspended or expelled beginning July 1, 2026. In preparation, the state released suspension and expulsion planning grants to help support the implementation of the legislation. Douglas ESD applied for the planning grant and has created an interagency agreement with the South-Central Early Learning Hub to facilitate the planning process from now until June 2025.

The South-Central Early Learning Hub has been working closely with Child Care Resource and Referral to develop focus groups of parents, behavioral health providers, in-home child care providers, center-based child care providers, and community partners to determine needs and capacity when it comes to supporting childcare providers in the upcoming legislation. The Hub is contracting with Heidi McGowan to facilitate the focus groups, and with Dr. Amy King to assist with developing the implementation plan.

The state is developing a warmline or warm form for child care providers to reach out when they experience children in their programs who may have challenging behaviors. The warmline / warm form process is still under development.

Preschool Promise is full, except for one opening at Gilchrist Elementary and two openings at The YMCA of Klamath Falls. The Klamath Family Head Start Lakeview site, which does its enrollment, has three Preschool Promise openings. The South-Central Early Learning Hub provides marketing for Preschool Promise sites across the region and is

advertising in Lakeview, Gilchrist, and Klamath Falls, to fill the remaining Preschool Promise openings. There was a high student turnover rate at the beginning of the school year, which has now slowed down. The Hub began accepting Preschool Promise applications and enrolling students into Preschool Promise programs earlier in the program year than in previous years, due to two-year state contracting for Preschool Promise grantees. The application process better aligned with other publicly funded programs, which allowed families to apply for multiple programs and select the program of their choice. The alignment between programs accounts for some of the turnover seen early in the program year. Sylvia shared that Klamath Family Head Start moved to a four-day week (Mon. – Thurs.), based on last year’s attendance and parent input. This leaves some families in need of child care on Fridays. Head Start has noticed a spike in families selecting in-home care providers.

Jennifer advised The Klamath Tribes Early Child Development Center Preschool Promise site also sees some turnover. Some families enroll in the program and bring their children a few times before removing them. Children this happens with may experience separation anxiety and cry at drop-off because they have not experienced a child care setting before and have historically been cared for at home. While it is developmentally appropriate for children to experience these emotions until routines are established, it is still difficult for parents to feel comfortable leaving their children in care.

In addition to offering Preschool Promise at The Klamath Tribes Early Child Development Center in Chiloquin, the Klamath Tribes provides a child care subsidy to all eligible families throughout Klamath County. Some child care providers in areas like Klamath Falls charge more for care than the subsidy allows. This creates an additional burden for families to cover the remaining cost for child care.

Holly with the Klamath Falls City School District Preschool Promise program, Little Learners, shared contacting families at the beginning of the year to confirm enrollment was difficult. Additionally, some families who completed the enrollment process chose not to have their students attend.

Partner Updates

Citizens for Safe Schools – Amber Martinez – Citizens for Safe Schools received a three-year grant from the Department of Justice to implement a Restorative Justice Program, which has been proven to reduce suspension and expulsion rates. Citizens for Safe Schools is hiring two full-time employees, certified in Restorative Justice Facilitation, to serve the schools at every grade level. Services are free to students and families and include responses to bullying, theft, physical fighting, or threats of harm. The program takes responsibility from school administrators, preserving school relationships with families and students. In any of these instances, one staff member would respond and be the support person for the student who has caused harm, and one staff would respond and be the support person for the student who was harmed. Restorative Justice staff would talk with students about what happened, what the impact was, and how students can move forward. This could be a letter, community service, etc.

Strategies in Restorative Justice have been implemented and have successfully worked at the elementary level. There is also evidence of bullying behaviors in three- and four-year-olds in preschool. The Restorative Justice team will change the language and approach for the preschool and elementary age ranges.

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) -- Amber Singh – Amber is new to Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR). Part of Amber’s job is to be a Quality Improvement Specialist, and another aspect of her job is to help with the navigation and recruitment of the Klamath Community College (KCC) Early Care and Education (ECE) Cohort. As of this week, there are 51 students in the KCC ECE Program. If anyone needs continuing education for ECE, contact Amber Singh at amber.singh@douglasesd.k12.or.us.

Community Baby Shower – Danielle Walker – The Community Baby Shower was held on October 5, 2024. Over 300 individuals attended the event. Ninety-five attendees indicated that they or their partner were expecting, and families advised they were caregivers of 217 children under age six. Over 55 large gifts were distributed to families, and 29 community partners were tabling at the event.

Community UPLIFT – Danielle Walker – Community UPLIFT is always accepting referrals to help connect expecting families, families with children birth to five and up to 21 with special needs, to resources in the community.

Community UPLiFT has had over 1,500 regional referrals since its inception in 2017. Last quarter, July – Sept 2024, there were 93 regional referrals, 48 in Douglas County and 44 in Klamath County.

If you're interested in a presentation about Community UPLiFT or interested in receiving referrals from Community UPLiFT, contact Danielle Walker at Danielle.walker@douglasesd.k12.or.us.

Next Meeting:

November 20, 2024, from 10 am to noon. The November meeting is one week early due to Thanksgiving holiday.