

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes

April 22, 2021 | 10:00 a.m.

In Attendance, Welcome, Approval of Minutes

Present: Abby Drummond, Analuz Cruz, Dr. Bob Dannenhoffer, CeCe Lynn, Crystal Morrison, Joanie Josh, Judi Mahoney, Kendra Bickham, Shawn Lybarger

Staff Present: Gillian Wesenberg, Danielle Walker, Susan Stiles-Sumstine, Athena Wikstrom, Heather Freiling, Vanessa Pingleton, Alisa McDonald, Ceresse Harris

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this meeting was held virtually via Microsoft Teams.

COVID-19 Updates and Vaccine Roll Out

Dr. Bob shared a COVID-19 update. Last week had the highest case count the world has seen in a week. South America, the Middle East and India are seeing a lot of cases. Cases in the US are only slightly increasing. Last week was the best week in six months for Douglas County. New variants of the COVID-19 virus which are spiking cases around the world have not yet arrived in Oregon. In Douglas County, forty percent of people have been vaccinated with one shot. Medical providers are finding it difficult to get more individuals vaccinated at this point. There are 900 slots at the vaccination clinic this weekend and only 200 people have signed up. The goal is to get as many people vaccinated as possible. It has been found that the vaccine works well with the new variants. Individuals can sign up for the clinic at Douglas Public Health Network's website. There are flyers for the vaccine clinic that Dr. Bob will send out today.

Educators in Douglas County have had 35 positive COVID-19 cases since March 1. Of the 35 cases, 34 individuals were not vaccinated. About 50% of educators in Douglas County are vaccinated.

Counties experiencing a lot of COVID-19 cases have a variant that spreads quickly. While the vaccine is less effective against the new variant, it is still very effective against all variants. Everyone should follow public health measures to ensure COVID-19 is less likely to spread. The virus mutates when it spreads, so slowing the spread will slow the mutations.

Roseburg Schools Community Engagement Update

Gillian shared that Roseburg Public Schools is engaging in the Authentic Community Engagement project that Winchester was previously involved in. The Hub is working with Portland State University (PSU) to survey staff and families to find out what is needed for families to reengage in schools and what they would like as they return to in-person classes. Juliana Marez is working to get feedback from families who are homeless, families who speak Spanish, and Tribal families. Reach out to Juliana or Rick Burton if you would like to be involved. There are stipends for participating families.

Legislative Update

Miriam Calderon, current Early Learning Division (ELD) Director, is moving to the Biden / Harris administration and Alyssa Chatterjee has been appointed by the Governor as the interim director of the Early Learning Division (ELD).

Gillian and Shawn reviewed some of the legislative bills that are under review which connect to the Hub's work. The bills which were discussed include:

- Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) has not always been granted through the Early Learning Hubs, House Bill (HB) 2054 will update the current rule so that KPI will be a funding stream for all Hubs and the KPI work will be integrated into the Hub work.
- HB 2503 expands eligibility for certain child care subsidy programs. It failed to advance.
- HB 2059 modifies the directive to childcare to provide improvement systems (improving SPARK). This bill passed in the house and is now in the senate.
- HB 2055 proposes the creation of a Tribal Early Learning Hub. Early Learning Hubs are encouraged to keep the Tribes in their region involved in decision making. There is a public hearing April 28 at 3:15 for this bill and it has been referred to Ways and Means.

- HB 2166 calls for a review of public education for equity and the use of suspension and expulsion.
- Senate Bill 236 declares a state of emergency to eliminate expulsion and suspension in early learning.
- HB 2484 calls for child care to be allowed in rental homes.
- HB 3073 would change the ELD from a division to its own authority creating a new agency. This bill also requests that Employment Related Daycare (ERDC) be moved under the new authority from Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS).

There is a joint Ways and Means group doing virtual roadshows through April, anyone who wants to speak on behalf of programs can attend. Head Start is encouraging individuals to provide testimony on the importance of early childhood and preschool. District 4 is tonight. The link to attend is:

<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Committees/JWM/2021-04-22-17-30/Agenda>

There has been a lot of personnel changes in the state. Joan Blough, ELD Systems Director, left the Early Learning Division. The childcare division director left as well. A lot of change is occurring including new positions are being added.

There was a Budget Note last legislative session that defined the roles of the Early Learning Hubs and Child Care Resource and Referrals (CCRRs.) One aspect of the Hub's role, which includes partners and committees, includes working with the CCRR, raising awareness of childcare shortages, identifying partners, and assisting the CCRR to reduce suspension and expulsion in black, colored, and disabled communities.

Heather shared that the ELD wants to see that the Hub is bringing groups together and assisting in reaching goals. The CCRR is waiting for their work plan to come out at the end of June.

There is funding coming for the summer that will be granted to providers, K12, KPI, and others. The ELD has not shared what the priority in spending will be, and it will have to be a quick turnaround to spend funds. A lot of opportunities are coming.

Shawn shared that the state has been very vague about summer funding. School Districts are anticipating having money for summer activities. Sutherlin School District has a flyer out for an eight-day kindergarten camp that parents can sign up for. South Umpqua, Roseburg Public Schools, and others have indicated that they will have some kind of summer program and will get the information to Shawn when it's finalized. Head Start will not have a summer program, and will encourage families to take students to the school district that they will transition to. Early Head Start will be year-round.

Gillian shared that Hubs encourage the funds to be spent strategically and in a coordinated manner.

There is a real problem with children being suspended and expelled from early learning programs. Alison Hinson is assisting with behavior supports, and there's a lot more work that's needed. If a child is asked to leave a school district early learning program, they will still be enrolled in kindergarten for the next school year, which is only putting off the concern for later.

Kindergarten Transition with an Equity Lens Focus

Registration is now open for kindergarten, Head Start, and Preschool Promise for the 2021 – 2022 school year. The question of how we can get families enrolled earlier in preschool to allow for equitable practices was posed to the group. For the 21-22 school year, Head Start has already done their first selection from applicants and returning students. Some Head Start sites are already 70% full.

Shawn posed the question, "How can we be sure that we are being equitable in the enrollment process?" The group was split into three groups to discuss. The groups shared back the following suggestions:

- Families should be contacted by phone regularly opposed to just digitally.

- Many Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) families have family coaches who could reach out to them, families who receive SNAP may be more difficult to reach.
- Making sure ODHS employees are educated on the services available will benefit families.
- Marketing needs to be in the primary language of the families.
 - Head Start puts multiple language flyers in food boxes as well as sharing them digitally.
- Shawn shared that we should make sure children are immunized now so that they don't have to get caught up at the beginning of the school year during exclusion.
 - Healthy Start has access to immunization database to see if families are on schedule. CDC has materials on why vaccines are important. Also ask about barriers to getting immunizations.
 - Address immunization barriers
 - Exclusion rates were the lowest in the county this last year.
 - Group wondered if children's vaccines could be done at COVID-19 vaccination clinics.
 - That would be daunting at the clinics because organizers would have a difficult time keeping the children's vaccine population and the COVID vaccination population separated. Also, each of the COVID-19 vaccine's vials have to be used within 3 hours, therefore, it cannot be dispersed over time.
 - Would it be possible to do a separate immunization clinic for school vaccines?
 - Evergreen had received a grant previously but it may have expired / been used at this point.
- Judi shared that dentists and providers are cancelling well child exams. Especially dentists, so well child exams are late.
- Invitations to enroll in programs in diverse languages.
- Promoting programs in many different places and forums.
 - Including additional partner agencies
 - ODHS
 - WIC
 - United Community Action Network (UCAN)
 - Oregon Health Plan (OHP) Assistants
 - Salvation Army
 - Mobil Food Pantry
 - Different forums include:
 - Calling
 - Texting
 - Emailing
 - Flyers
 - Billboards
 - Facebook
 - Are there some COVID-19 funds that we could use to put up signs for enrolling in Preschool around the county?
- Sharing information with the schools so the information can be sent out to all families to target those who might have younger children at home.

Abby shared that any communications which are sent to her are forwarded to everyone in Douglas County ODHS.

Regional Parent Focus Group in May and June

Regional Parent Focus Groups will be held in May and June. Gillian shared that the Early Learning Division (ELD) is continuing to define the role of Hubs, which includes identifying and serving priority populations. The ELD is requiring Hubs to have a parent council as part of the governance council. Heidi is going to ask parent questions around what they need, what they see our community needs as being, how organizations can assist with supports, and parents' experiences in the early learning community as a first step in creating the parent council. There will be stipends for parents who participate (one per household). We want to be sure we are getting parents from all walks of life to get a

clear picture of parents' needs and experiences community wide. This feedback will be used in conjunction with Roseburg Public School's feedback, though these parent groups will have a different regional target audience.

Heather encouraged reaching out to parent groups for parent leaders to join.

Athena will attend the Douglas County UCAN Head Start Policy Council to recruit someone from that group.

Heather shared that Relief Nurseries also have parent groups and Yoncalla has a parent leadership group. Being able to replicate Yoncalla Early Works would be amazing.

Abby suggested foster parent representation and will reach out to child welfare to request involvement.

Hub and Partner Updates

CeCe – Evergreen Family Medicine – Evergreen Family Medicine Women's Health is going to be hosting a prenatal class every Tuesday from May 25 through June 29 from 6-7 pm. The class will be open to community members (not just Evergreen patients). If you know anyone who would like to register or to receive more information have interested parents reach out to CeCe at 541-464-6464 Ex: 2338 or by email at clynn@efmpc.com. We have been hosting these Prenatal classes virtually for the last two courses, accommodating COVID-19 guidelines.

Susan – Take Root Parenting Connection – Take Root is in the third week of all parenting series. There will be workshops through June. The Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative's (OPEC) Annual Conference is being held May 3 through 6 virtually.

Vanessa - Community UPLIFT – As of March 31, Community Uplift had received 672 referrals regionally since the beginning of the pilot in 2017. Douglas County received 47 referrals in the last quarter, bringing the total referrals received in Douglas County to 339 to date. Ceresse is in training and will be taking over referrals.

Vanessa is in the planning process for trainings that will include a partnership with Take Root, Healthy Families, and Lake District Hospital for a six series training by Dr. Amy Stoeber. These trainings will focus on trauma informed care, and include family/kinship, first responders, trauma triage, and trauma informed care in communities.

Alisa and Heather – Care Connections and Education / Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) – Spring Fling is May 15 and will be held virtually. There is a back-to-school cohort, Pre-K cohort, and a business cohort currently in process.

Judi – Healthy Family – Healthy Families submitted testimony letters for HB 5555 to increase funding.

Abby - ODHS - Emergency SNAP allotments have been approved for May. ODHS usually finds out about the allotment approval on the last day of each month, so it was nice seeing it earlier. Changes have been made to emergency allotments that allow SNAP families to receive maximum allotment regardless of what they typically qualify for. All families are receiving an additional \$95 per month, even if they were receiving the maximum SNAP benefits previously. Twelve million dollars was received in support service funds for TANF families, which may be released as additional TANF payments to qualifying families. If these funds are dispersed to families, they are expected in September / October.

The STEP program is getting vamped up. Employment and training activities are available for families. There are a lot more jobs than applicants in our community.

Abby would like to discuss using Community UPLIFT to connect McKinney Vento students with resources.

Spanish Outreach is being made with COVID-19 kits from Peace at Home including gift cards, sanitizer, masks and more.

Analuz - Regional Outreach Coordinator for Community Outreach Program with Oregon Health Plan – is ensuring individuals getting vaccinated for COVID-19 across the state. Many bilingual / bicultural employees are supporting

vaccine events. They are attending events to assist and support however the coordinating organization needs among non-white and non-English speaking populations. The group is working on informing non-white communities of the importance of getting vaccinated. There was a webinar in Arabic and they are helping with different Asian languages and will have a Spanish webinar coming up. Mama Mia is working to educate the Spanish speaking community in Douglas County around COVID-19. Social Media has worked well, the state has been working hard to get videos out in different languages. Oregon Community Health Workers Organization may have individuals who can volunteer.

Dr. Bob – Douglas Public Health Network - Have a COVID-19 vaccination event this weekend. Would love support from Analuz for future vaccination events.

Crystal – North Douglas Relief Nursery – The Relief Nursery is moving forward and opening classes. The classroom in North Douglas is almost full. Children who are two-years-old and under will continue receiving respite.

Kendra – Aviva – The recruitment process for the residency program has been finalized and the next group of residents was selected. The new residents will begin work at Aviva in June. There will be a virtual ground-breaking ceremony.

Shawn – Head Start - Taking applications for Head Start and Early Head Start, applications can be found at the UCAN website. Head Start is hiring teachers, assistants, bus drivers, a home visitor, and more. Employment applications can also be found on the UCAN website. The new parking lot has been finished, so staff does not have to park down at Costco anymore. There is a remodel occurring off of the food pantry building to add a kitchen at the main campus.

Future Topics

COVID-19 Updates with Dr. Dannenhoffer

Next Meeting Date

Next meeting May 27 from 10:00am – 12:00pm.