

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes

January 25, 2024, | 10:00 a.m.

In Attendance, Welcome, Approval of Minutes

Present: Shawn Massingale, Peggy Whalen, CeCe Lynn, Brendas Tibbits, Cady Lyon, Ryan Chandler, Colleen May, Elise Hansen, Kyle Riege, Liberty Dryden, Marsha LaVerne, Steve Schenewerk, Angie Winters

Staff Present: Gillian Wesenberg, Susan Stiles, Danielle Walker, Ronda Osborn, Robin VanWinkle, Andrea Shaver

This meeting was held virtually via Zoom. Members of the Douglas Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) introduced themselves, then reviewed and approved the November minutes. Cady Lyon made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted, Kyle Riege seconded the motion. No further discussion.

Hub Update

Early Learning Hub - Gillian Wesenberg- There will be a Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) Facilitator position opening soon. Applications will be open to Douglas, Klamath, and Lake County professionals.

The Family Governance Advisory Committee provides family voice to the South-Central Early Learning Hub's Regional Governance Council. The Family Governance Advisory Committee is a group of 18 parents from across the region who have been meeting for the past year and a half. The Hub contracted with Mitten Mommas, a parent leadership consultation group out of Michigan, to help lead the group.

The Hub is collaborating with United Community Action Network (UCAN) to potentially apply for Family Connects Oregon. The application is due March 1, 2024. Family Connects Oregon must be applied for through either the Early Learning Hub, Health Department, or Tribal Government. If Douglas County applies for the Family Connects program, the goal is to ensure readiness for successful early childhood outcomes.

Klamath and Lake Counties have shared they do not have adequate staffing in place to implement Family Connects Oregon. There is one Nurse Home Visitor in Klamath County, while Lake County does not have one.

UCAN Nurse Home Visiting - Elise Hansen- Family Connects Oregon is a universal nurse home visiting program. Family Connects was developed after the Oregon State Legislature passed a law requiring every family in Oregon with a new baby, be offered a home visit with a Registered Nurse. Families are offered up to three home visits with a nurse home visitor who works with the family to identify what the family needs and wants from local resources. Resources could include referrals to other support organizations.

Challenges include nurse recruitment, adequate funding, and getting families interested in the program. There is a stigma around home visiting that needs to be overcome.

Douglas County has infrastructure in place for Family Connects. There is a universal home visiting referral system through Community UPLIFT and relationships with the hospital and doctors' offices have already been built.

Legislative Updates

Legislative Short Session - Gillian Wesenberg

- Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) – ERDC is a subsidy program that helps working families and students with the cost of childcare. The recent ERDC expansion caused funding shortages and resulted in a waitlist for families to receive ERDC benefits. The Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC) is requesting \$250 million to cover the funding deficit.
- CHIPS Childcare for Construction Workforce – requesting \$5 million to assist Oregon CHIP manufacturers with subsidies to help build construction infrastructure.
- Childcare Infrastructure Fund – requesting \$5 million State General Funds to support childcare facilities. The funding would better serve licensed home-based providers and small childcare centers, as the lottery funds process doesn't help them.
- Early Literacy Success – requesting \$10 million for the Birth through Five Literacy Plan. The funding request is in alignment with DELIC recommendations.
- Early Intervention / Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) – requesting \$22 million to support a 5% caseload growth.

- Early Learning Educator Scholarship Program – requesting \$2.5 million to support Early Learning Educator Scholarship Program. The funding request is to meet the needs of program expansion.
- Stabilization Funding -- Relief Nurseries, Healthy Families Oregon, and Nurse Family Partnership are requesting stabilization funding to sustain operations and grow services.

McKinney-Vento Community Presentation

Andrea Shaver, Regional McKinney-Vento Resource Specialist with Douglas ESD, and Ryan Chandler, Director of Student Services for the Winston-Dillard School District, joined the Douglas County Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) to present about McKinney-Vento Services in Douglas County.

The McKinney-Vento Act was enacted in 1987 as a subsection of the Stuart B McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. McKinney-Vento ensures that children and youth experiencing homelessness can enroll and attend school without barriers. McKinney-Vento is an un-funded mandate required of all public schools in the country.

McKinney-Vento Liaisons are tasked with identifying and reducing educational barriers for students experiencing homelessness. Liaisons try to provide transportation to keep kids in their school of origin, create programs, and meet emergency needs. There are gray area situations in identifying students experiencing homelessness, and whether they qualify under the guidelines or not.

In addition to serving K-12 populations, liaisons are also responsible for providing services to the preschool population, who are the highest risk group experiencing homelessness.

Sutherlin is the only school district in Douglas County with a dedicated, full-time McKinney-Vento Liaison.

In two years, Douglas County went from identifying less than 3% of the K-12 student population, to identifying almost 8% of the student population, as experiencing homelessness.

Douglas ESD supports all willing school districts in Douglas County to help underserved youth succeed in their education.

Winston-Dillard School District staff are supporting the identification of students experiencing homelessness. Remaining American Rescue Plan funding will be able to provide some support for displaced students, but funding must be allocated by September 2024 and expended by December 2024. No additional American Rescue Plan funding will be available after that point. The biggest challenge in relation to McKinney-Vento is funding.

In Winston-Dillard, some McKinney-Vento identified families have received food, clothing, or hotel stays with the assistance of Pastor Steve Schenewerk and a collaboration between local church congregations. Grocery Outlet in Winston has agreed to help provide food support where they can.

Sub-grants for McKinney-Vento are available through the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). Unfortunately, Douglas County has never received an ODE grant for McKinney-Vento. There is a plan being developed for either schools themselves, or Douglas ESD, to apply for McKinney-Vento grant funding during the next fiscal cycle. There is ongoing work around advocating for permanent, flexible funding, that will benefit youth experiencing homelessness and their access to education.

On February 5th, Douglas ESD is launching a quick-reference resource guide that will make it easier for Douglas County McKinney-Vento liaisons to connect families to resources. It will be reviewed every month for accuracy and will be available to the entire community.

Partner Updates

Umpqua Health Alliance (UHA) -- Cady Lyon – UHA offers Flexible Spending for their members. Flexible Spending could be utilized for a motel stay and/or first and last month rent.

There is a System of Care (SOC) breakfast every month. It is a good way to learn about other programs in the area.

Communities United Resource Network (CURN) -- Andrea Shaver – CURN meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month. It's a place to share needs and find resources.

There is a barrier submission form available through UHA that provides a way to make movement when a barrier exists.

Community UPLiFT -- Danielle Walker – Last quarter, October through December 2023, Community UPLiFT received a total of sixty referrals regionally. There were twenty-nine in Douglas County, thirty-one in Klamath County, and one in Lake County. Since the beginning of January, there have been a total of sixteen referrals regionally, with nine in Douglas County, and seven in Klamath County.

Preschool Promise – Danielle Walker – The South-Central Early Learning Hub accepts Preschool Promise applications all year. The Hub will be opening applications for the 2024-2025 school year soon.

Early Learning Hub - Gillian Wesenberg – This is the first year Preschool Promise sites have received two-year contracts. The Hub is excited to be able to coordinate and align enrollment processes with other publicly funded preschool programs like Head Start.

Take Root Parenting Connection -- Susan Stiles – Take Root is hosting a Screen Strong training on February 9th and 10th at Roseburg High School. The training will focus on brain development, screen overuse, and why screens are so addictive. Saturday, February 10th, the target audience will be adults, caregivers, and educators. It's a deep dive into brain development and what happens with screen addiction. Tonight is Take Root's first parent support group meeting. The group is planning to meet every two weeks.

Family Relief Nursery -- Kyle Riege – The Family Relief Nursery Drain site is still under renovation and is scheduled to be completed in two weeks. Family Relief Nursery is still providing services for the families by doing home visits, providing respite care for families at other sites and offering parent and play groups.

UCAN Healthy Families -- Colleen May – Healthy Families is fully staffed with five family support specialists in Douglas County. Healthy Families is accepting referrals for families in Douglas County.

UCAN Healthy Families is hiring for a Healthy Families Program Manager position.

UCAN Head Start/Early Head Start -- Shawn Massingale – Head Start and Early Head Start are actively looking for two new sites to rent. Green and Winchester classrooms will be moving at the end of this school year.

UCAN Head Start is currently hiring. Anyone interested in applying can go to the UCAN website to look for career opportunities.

Head Start applications open February 1st for the 2024-2025 school year. Applications for Early Head Start are accepted year-round.

Next Meeting Date

March 21, 2024, from 10:00 am – noon.