

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes

January 27, 2022 | 10:00 a.m.

In Attendance, Welcome, Approval of Minutes

Present: Abby Drummond, Analuz Torres, Bob Dannenhoffer, Judi ~~Murray~~, Kendall Sebold, LeeAnn Grogan, Marsha LaVerne, Mckenzy Gausnell, Peggy Whalen, Shawn Lybarger

Staff Present: Gillian Wesenberg, Danielle Walker, Athena Wikstrom, Vanessa Pingleton, Cynthia Hurkes, Connie Rosas, Heather Freilinger, Julie Hurley, Mel Johnson, Susan Stiles-Sumstine

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

COVID-19 Updates and Vaccine Roll Out

Dr. Bob Dannenhoffer shared an update on COVID-19. This is the first time in a long time the news regarding COVID-19 is uniformly good. Cases in Douglas County are falling by about half each week. Hospitalizations are reducing across the state. It does not look like new big variants are coming right now. We have plenty of vaccines. Dr. Bob expects to have mask mandates reduced in all fields, though we do not know what will occur with the Early Learning Division (ELD) rules. It looks like in the next three months COVID-19 will level out at minimal daily cases. We do not know if there will be serious variants in the future.

Shawn advised that she has not heard that Head Start mask requirements will be lifted at this time.

Early Learning Hub Work Plan and Director's Update

Athena provided an update on the Early Learning Hub (ELH) work plans which are due in March. The South-Central Early Learning Hub utilized the Strategic Plan generated by our region to fill in the new template received from the Early Learning Division (ELD), which also requires measurable outcomes. The ELD asked that we include the work of all early learning programs, even if the ELH is not directly involved in the work. The work plan will be an overview of early learning work taking place across the South-Central ELH region.

A steering committee from the Regional Governance Council (RGC) has been working to finish drafting the work plan. The document will be shared at the March RGC to receive final approval before submission to the ELD. Once finalized and submitted to the ELD, the work plan will be shared with our Professional Advisory Committees. If activities change, we can submit updates throughout the year.

Gillian advised that House Bill 4005, creating the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC), was heard in the legislative Ways and Means Committee last Monday. A recording of the meeting can be found on the legislative website: <https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/>.

Child Care for Oregon is presenting the 2022 Child Care Investment Package to the legislature. The Child Care package is a one-time, \$100 million proposed budget that is designed to help increase the availability of care by helping current providers stay open and expand and help new providers launch their businesses. The Child Care Investment package would also increase the amount of money providers who accept Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) subsidies receive per child by \$200 per month, moving towards more equitable rates.

House Bill 4033 modifies how the Tribal Hub will be operated moving forward by recognizing that it will be handled as a government-to-government interaction. This bill was brought forth by the Tribal leaders. If passed, 4033 will allow the Tribes to choose who is appointed to their Hub.

The Preschool Promise Request for Applications (RFA) is expected to be out this spring. Hubs had hoped that Preschool Promise Coordinated Enrollment and Head Start enrollment would more closely align this year. Due to the delay in enrollment for Preschool Promise, as the RFA is not out yet, Hub staff is taking information from parents who are

interested in applying for the 2022-23 school year. As soon as the application is available, staff will contact parents to guide them through the application process.

The Hub still does not have its contract and is unable to access funds. Oregon Department of Education procurement is short-staffed causing delays, additionally, the Department of Justice (DOJ) was short-staffed which also caused delays.

Kindergarten Readiness Innovation and Partnership (KPI) Updates

Cynthia reviewed information about the KPI regional community investment funds. A small group of Regional Governance Council (RGC) members met and approved a regional approach to expend the community funds. They also chose which Raise Up Oregon (RUO) objective the funding would relate to. Members determined that it is important to have one regional Raise Up Oregon objective and strategy for continuity. Each county can choose a different activity that fits under the selected strategy. Members of the committee decided to focus on Raise Up Oregon System Goal 2, Objective 7, Strategy 7.2.

During the March meeting, members of each Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) will have an opportunity to brainstorm activities that could be implemented in Douglas County. Cynthia will put together a one-page document that includes what KPI can spend funds on and the current KPI activities relating to RUO Objective 7, Strategy 7.2.

KPI and Care Connections & Education, the regional Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR), are co-sponsoring a Conscious Discipline series. There were 95 attendees at two consecutive evening sessions that were held virtually. There are three remaining virtual sessions.

An Early Learning Gathering about self-regulation for adults was held this week with 35 attendees. Early Learning Gatherings are being hosted bi-monthly and are an opportunity for early learning professionals, home visitors, and K-3 educators to gather together for shared learning.

Care Connections & Education – Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR)

Care Connections & Education recently hired two new staff members. One of the new hires is an Early Learning Support Specialist Navigator for Klamath Community College (KCC) and will conduct outreach for new providers. The other new hire will be a Quality Improvement Specialist (QIS) focusing on training plans and reviewing the education process from a high level to determine any gaps or recommended improvements. There are big changes coming to the Oregon Registry Online (ORO), and this person will help navigate that as well as some of the basic level training for providers getting started.

Spring Fling will be held in both Douglas and Klamath Counties. Kendra Coates will be the keynote speaker, presenting on “unlearning.” The Klamath and Douglas County events will be on the same day, March 14th. There will be training at each location after Kendra provides her keynote virtually in the morning. This is a provider appreciation event. KCC will house the Klamath track and UCC will house the Douglas track.

All of the early learning teams with Douglas ESD are getting ready to move into our new building. The building has been under construction for about a year and will be completed at the end of March so we can all move back in.

Douglas County Child Care Coalition Update

The Douglas County Child Care Coalition is working with the community to open 150 additional infant/toddler slots. To allow for the additional slots, the coalition has a goal of recruiting 40 new providers to fill full-time positions and creating a sub-pool. The Coalition has received funding from a private donor to incentivize individuals entering early learning and to provide retention bonuses. To encourage new providers entering the field, the coalition is providing training stipends for the hours providers are spending on the training, and working with the Southern Oregon Workforce Investment

Board (SOWIB) to recognize the providers for their training. There has been an effort to bring awareness across the county about how important early learning is. The Coalition is looking to hire a campaign manager to market the need of providers and early learning. The campaign manager would also promote any legislation that may come on ballots to improve and fund early learning and provider supports. The Coalition is exploring opportunities to apply for community block grants that would pay providers directly for serving low to moderate-income families. A government office has to apply for block grants, and in Douglas County, CCD will be the holder of the grant. Recognition gifts of cookies and other items were recently given to providers to recognize them as first responders during the pandemic.

Shawn shared that a couple of weeks ago she heard an Oregon Department of Education advertisement on Pandora promoting Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes encouraging high school students to talk to counselors about CTE. The advertisement listed many potential careers but did not include child care. Today she heard an advertisement that did include child care, which was encouraging.

Hub and Partner Updates

Gillian – Gillian shared Vooks.com is offering a one-year free membership for organizations and families. Vooks.com is an online streaming platform dedicated to animated children's books. There are 200 books on the site now, with about 20 in Spanish. You can share this opportunity with your network. Redeem at <https://join.vooks.com/redeem/>. For organizations, enter code VOOKSUS. For families, enter code VOOKSFRIENDS. To access the free membership, individuals only need to provide an email address. The membership is 100% free for the first year, if families or organizations want to continue after the year, they receive an email saying that the year has ended and are given an option to purchase the next year. The site reads the digital books aloud and highlights the words to help children follow along. Athena added children can choose preferences, age, sex, and interests. There are a lot of age-appropriate popular titles included on the site. Many of the books have limited colors and are great for reducing overstimulation that is seen in many items targeting young children.

Julie – Biz4Kids - Biz4Kids has been on hold since the beginning of the pandemic. Mel has been working to get everything ready to relaunch the program. Biz4Kids staff will begin working with the pilot group that was established pre-pandemic and are reaching out to a few additional employers. Businesses can get certified as a "Family Friendly Workplace" and be connected to early childhood programs. Additionally, Businesses can become early childhood program supporters through financial support or volunteer time.

Vanessa - Community UPLIFT - Vanessa shared a brief overview of Community UPLIFT. Community UPLIFT is a coordinated information and referral exchange platform serving expecting families, families with children 0-5 or up to the age of 21 with special needs. For a referral one can text the keyword "uplift1" for Douglas County, "uplift2" for Klamath County, or "uplift3" for Lake County to 484848, www.community-uplift.com, https://douglassesd.k12.or.us/community_uplift/. For more information, contact Vanessa Pingleton at 541-530-1931 or Vanessa.pingleton@douglassesd.k12.or.us.

Gillian and Vanessa met with The Ford Family Foundation (TFFF) to discuss the new grant application and what Phase 3 can look like for the Rural Home Visiting Systems Coordination grant. Phase 3 of the grant will more closely align with the Hub's plans, Raise Up Oregon, and Coordinated Care Organization goals.

Over the last quarter, Community UPLIFT referrals were down and this quarter referrals are back up. Please continue sending referrals so we can get families connected with the resources they need. If anyone knows of organizations that do not know about Community UPLIFT or if providers are not using Community UPLIFT, please connect with Vanessa. Douglas County is planning a hybrid (in-person and virtual) Community UPLIFT Lunch and Learn. The last Community UPLIFT Lunch and Learn was hosted in in 2019.

Connie – Hub Update – Updating the Early Learning Hub's Resource Directory, if anyone needs to update an organization's information or would like to be added, contact Connie or email ehubinfo@douglassesd.k12.or.us. Submissions after February 28th will be included in the next directory update.

LeeAnn – Creating Community Resilience - Lunch, Learn and Connect to learn about adverse childhood experiences will be held March 16th at 11:30 am to discuss the Homeless Youth Solutions Roadmap Study results. Consultants have been

gathering data addressing youth homelessness and are looking for final qualitative information from the community to be included. Anyone can register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/lunch-learn-connect-homeless-youth-solutions-roadmap-tickets-273175283627>. The April Lunch will be a panel highlighting LGBTQ+ supports. Registration will be sent out once it is ready.

Maureen - United Community Action Network (UCAN) – The Mill Street office was sold to the city of Roseburg to be used for resources for individuals who are homeless. The city will be building 36 pallet houses in an effort including the Coordinated Care Organization (CCO), Mercy, UCAN, AVIVA and Adapt. They will be looking for land for family site camping in the future. The CFO for UCAN is moving out of state.

Shawn – United Community Action Network (UCAN) Head Start / Early Head Start – Head Start has continued to work within COVID regulations. They are accepting student applications and most sites have openings for 3-5-year-olds with a waitlist for infants and toddlers. UCAN has begun taking Head Start and Early Head Start applications for 2022-2023. If a student is enrolled as a 3-year-old, they are approved for the next year. If families have a sibling of a current student to enroll, they can talk to their family visitor. UCAN is currently hiring Head Start / Early Head Start teachers, bus drivers, assistants, family services staff, and more.

UCAN is conducting weekly testing on unvaccinated staff at Head Start. They have had a few tests come back positive for individuals who were asymptomatic or had mild cold or allergy-like symptoms.

Cynthia – KPI - Still have five subscriptions open for Conscious Discipline as some individuals have dropped out. Targeted participants are preschool teachers, home visitors, administrators, and some high school teachers. The Conscious Discipline series consists of online trainings and three remaining facilitated meetings.

KPI has a slot available for a parent or educator to become certified in Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors.

If you are interested participating in Conscious Discipline or becoming certified in Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors, contact Cynthia at cynthia.hurkes@douglasesd.k12.or.

Susan - Take Root - Part one of “Babies Don't Come with Instructions” was held last night, part two is next Wednesday and individuals can still sign up. “Teach Your Child to Talk” will take place in March and is being taught by a Speech-Language Pathologist. “Parenting During the Pandemic” is also coming up.

Kendall - Family Relief Nursery – The relief nursery in Drain has open seats for two to five-year-olds as well as outreach caseload and respite for infants. They just lost one teacher and are losing an aide. They will be posting available positions soon. Once they receive American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, they will be renovating the site to open a second classroom in January 2023. Once the new classroom opens, they will be hiring additional staff.

Marsha – Family Development Center (FDC) – FDC is trying to hire staff. They have a few openings at the main Roseburg site and a few preschool openings at the Sutherlin site. All of the other sites are full. On March 19th the mask mandates will be lifted in schools which will hopefully be helpful for programs. Also, FDC has mental health therapy services for children and families. FDC has a therapist on-site in South County and Green one day a week. Referrals for therapy can come through the main center and then people will get connected.

Abby – Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) – Emergency allotment for SNAP has been approved for March, with Executive Order 20-3 and state of emergency ending April 1. It is anticipated that the emergency allotment will not be approved for April. Once emergency allotment benefits are no longer approved, ODHS will continue providing emergency benefits for one additional month. Cases are automatically recertifying for SNAP if they recently recertified for OHP or do not have income changes.

ODHS has a new shelter deduction for unhoused individuals. Asking families to be sure that their income is as accurate as possible.

Judi - Healthy Families - Judi is working with undocumented families who are worried about applying for benefits because they are concerned about having to repay the benefits back later due to public-charge. Abby advised the families to discuss their concerns with legal counsel and SNAP benefits don't count towards a public-charge. Public-charge focuses on individuals seeking citizenship or public residency and looks as if there will be a cost to the public if residency or citizenship was given to an individual.

Athena suggested Joan Marie with Legal Aid might be a good resource for undocumented individuals. She also advised that undocumented individuals can still apply for Preschool Promise.

Dr. Bob shared public-charge links: <https://www.uscis.gov/public-charge> and https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/legal-docs/USCIS_Public_Charge_Interagency_Letter_11.16.21.pdf.

Judi also shared that Healthy Families has a job opening for a Family Support Specialist, with a preference for bilingual applicants. Healthy Families is holding virtual and in-person visits based on family preferences.

Dr. Bob - There is still a moderate risk of getting COVID. He encourages individuals to continue to wear masks when inside. When cases are low, it is not super important to wear a mask unless you are at high risk or going to a crowded event. Stay home when you are sick

Janel – Sutherlin School District – Sutherlin School District is hiring staff members in a variety of positions. One can find the open positions at Sutherlin.k12.or.us.

Future Topics

COVID-19 Updates with Dr. Dannenhoffer

Next Meeting Date

Next meeting March 17 from 10:00am – 12:00pm. One week early due to Spring Break.