

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes

February 23, 2023 | 10:00 a.m.

In Attendance, Welcome, Approval of Minutes

Present: Robert Dannenhoffer, Shawn Massingale, Colleen May, Abby Drummond, Madison Holmes, Marta Henriksen, Rachel Gustafson, Kyle Riege, Albany Fletcher, Hannah Horvath

Staff Present: Gillian Wesenberg, Heather Freilinger, Athena Wikstrom, Susan Stiles-Sumstine, Cynthia Hurkes, Vanessa Pingleton, Danielle Walker, DeeJay (Diana) Juarez

This meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

COVID-19 Update

Dr. Dannenhoffer shared that COVID-19 is nearly gone. There are occasional cases, hospitalizations, and deaths in Douglas County, however these are not everyday occurrences any longer. There are no worrisome variants being tracked around the world at this time.

There have not been any new cases of influenza in a week. There are some new cases of RSV being seen, and the cases have been declining since the peak occurred in December.

During the pandemic, insurance coverage through Medicare and Medicaid was more accessible. Annual coverage reviews have not occurred for Medicaid (Oregon Health Plan) since before the pandemic. Eligibility reviews and re-enrollment are beginning in April and will span several months, many families may lose insurance benefits.

Early Learning Hub Update

Early Learning Hubs received a toolkit from the Early Learning Division (ELD) to assist with the state update of Raise Up Oregon (RUO), RUO 2.0. Hubs have been directed to facilitate meetings with families and regionally ELD selected sector partners. The SCELH region will work with Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) for a parent focus group and an ODHS staff focus group. This highlights the great relationship between the Hub and ODHS in Douglas and Klamath/Lake Counties. The feedback from the focus groups is due in April, then the Early Learning Council will use the information in updating RUO. The Early Learning Council is the ELD's governance group, they make policy decisions.

The Hub is still working on Coordinated Enrollment for Preschool Promise and are still accepting applications. There are still some openings in Douglas County.

There are over a thousand bills currently making their way through the legislature. The bills that seem to have the biggest child care impact are Senate Bill (SB) 599, House Bill (HB) 2504, HB 2991, and HB 3029. SB 599 passed the Senate and is waiting to be assigned to a committee. This bill requires landlords to allow dwellings to be used as family child care homes and has made national news. HB 2504 directs the Early Learning Council, in consultation with the Office of Child Care and Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care and Education, to adopt rules to address barriers impeding entry into early childhood workforce by international early childhood professionals. HB 2991 directs the Department of Early Learning and Care to commission an independent study regarding barriers to attaining high quality early childhood workforce, this bill is looking to address changes to the Oregon Registry Online (ORO), and other barriers the early childhood workforce is experiencing. HB 3029 directs the Department of Early Learning and Care to establish and implement a child care provider incentive program.

Shawn shared United Community Action Network (UCAN) is following HB 2232 which implements educational apprenticeship programs for early learning.

The Early Learning Division transitioning to the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC) is supposed to include Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) to move from Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) where it is currently housed to DELIC. This transition is expected to take time so that families are not negatively impacted.

Regional System Assessment – Root Causes Update

The SCELH has been completing the Regional System Assessment for the past few months and is nearly finished. SCELH used anecdotal and quantitative data from partners across the region. Most of the data that was used was collected and tracked during the Professional Advisory Committee and Governance Council meetings. Overall, 36 pages of data were collected and reviewed by staff and Early Learning Division contractor, Erin Watson. This data was arranged into themes and then staff identified four major issue areas across the region relating to Raise Up Oregon (RUO) Objective 2 - Families have access to high-quality, culturally responsive, inclusive, developmentally appropriate, affordable early care and education that meets their needs. The Regional Governance Council (RGC) reviewed the four main themes and prioritized root causes contributing to them. The Hub is focusing on root causes that can be impacted by work Hub partners can collectively do now. Some important root causes have been excluded from the document due to the current circle of influence Hub partners have as these root causes may need to be addressed at a state or national level.

Members of the Douglas PAC were given the opportunity to review the prioritized system issues and root causes handout (see attached) and discussed the findings.

Some of the root causes creating barriers to accessing early care and education span across all four themes. The PAC agreed there is a continued lack of knowledge around the terms “babysitting” and “high-quality early care and education.” There needs to be community-wide education to shift thinking around early care and education. Education plays an important role in helping the community understand what high-quality early care and education is. Relying on government funding is not a sustainable structure for publicly funded early education.

Dr. Bob shared a National Public Radio (NPR) broadcast regarding the economic basis of the child care market failure. It can be found at <https://www.npr.org/2023/02/02/1153931108/day-care-market-expensive-child-care-waitlists>.

There tends to be a lack of value for the profession of early care and education leading to a shortage in the workforce. The Umpqua Community College (UCC) cohort for Early Childhood Education currently has 29 participants. The goal of the cohort is to allow students to graduate from UCC without debt.

Dr. Bob shared a root cause analysis of the market failure is the American mindset that young families have to buy child care from small, for profit businesses. America needs to shift their mindset, recognizing that education begins before kindergarten. We also need to shift away from asking the poor to buy a service that is vital to society.

Shawn reflected mindsets and decision-making are seen across most of the issue areas. Three key takeaways stand out: the lack of respect for the profession, the need for more business involvement, and the need for k12 and early care and education decision-makers to coordinate and work together. While many “ground level” employees are working together cross sector, there needs to be buy-in from administrators.

The group agreed with these reflections.

Next Steps:

The Hub will be creating a strategic plan that will cover what community partners and sectors are doing to overcome the barriers relating to RUO Objective 2. This is a community-wide focus, not just an issue for one agency or organization. The strategic plan will provide organizations with the opportunity to work together to reduce duplication. The community will be able to celebrate successes, and partners can work together to brainstorm ideas about overcoming barriers.

Hub and Partner Updates

Madison Holmes – Family Relief Nursery – Madison’s last day with the relief nursery is Monday. Hannah and Albany will be conducting family outreach. There are two spots left in the preschool class. The infant/toddler class is full. Family Relief Nursery is hosting a carnival on April 29th at the Cottage Grove site.

Kyle Riege – Family Relief Nursery – There will be transportation available for families in Drain so they can attend the carnival in Cottage Grove. Excited to have Albany and Hannah stepping into their new positions, and to see what outreach will look like moving forward.

Marta Henriksen – Family Relief Nursery – There will also be a family literacy night at the Cottage Grove library to support family literacy. The date has not yet been announced.

Dr. Bob Dannenhoffer – Aviva – The residency program at Aviva is now filled with 24 family practice residents. The first class of residents is graduating this year and will add to the local primary care workforce.

Athena Wikstrom – Preschool Promise – The SCLEH is still accepting applications for the 2022-2023 school year. There are openings for qualifying families at Roseburg Professional Child Care in Roseburg and at Wildflower in Myrtle Creek. Eligible students turn 3 or 4 by Sept. 1, 2022, are residents of Oregon, and have a family income of up to 200% of Federal Poverty. Apply online at <http://www.southcentralhubenrollment.com/> or contact us by phone at (541) 957-4809.

Danielle Walker – Community UPLIFT – Since January, the SCLEH has received 29 Community UPLIFT referrals with 18 of those being for Douglas County.

Vanessa Pingleton – Home Visiting Systems Coordination – Vanessa will be presenting at the Start Early National Conference on March 16, talking about Home Visiting. The HVSC annual report was due on February 15th. The Hub expects to have an interview with The Ford Family Foundation (TFFF) soon to review the annual report. HVSC and Take Root will be partnering to offer professional development opportunities, be on the lookout for more information about these upcoming events.

Susan Stiles – Take Root – Take Root parenting classes can be found on their Facebook page.

Heather Freiling – Care Connections & Education – Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) – Oregon Center for Career Development has funding to support students who have declared as Early Childhood Education majors to pay for credits and fees for Associates, Bachelor, and Master degrees. February 24, CCRR will host Menaz for a sensory processing training. The annual Spring Fling will be held May 20th at Umpqua Community College.

DeeJay Juarez – Regional Educator Network (REN) – DeeJay is a Design Team Coach for the Regional Educator Network and is charged with helping strengthen the community led educator continuum from early learning to college (P20). DeeJay meets with any school staff to discuss ideas on how to improve the continuum. There are Conscious Discipline workshops currently taking place.

Cynthia Hurkes – Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) – Cynthia has been collaborating with REN for the last few years. Part of the REN collaboration is based on a grant that was given to KPI, Take Root, and Care Connections & Education. The grant is bringing together a cohort of individuals in early learning and home visiting, they would like to also include a kindergarten teacher.

An Early Learning Gathering was held this week and 32 individuals attended with a focus on family engagement. The next Early Learning Gathering is April 18 and will focus on family engagement again.

KPI is partnering with Creating Community Resilience along with other groups. KPI has been assisting in planning and providing incentives for groups who provide Conscious Discipline training.

Colleen May -- Healthy Families – Healthy Families is still accepting referrals for Douglas and Klamath County, while Lake County will have spots coming up as three families are graduating. Let Colleen know of any families that might be a good fit for the Healthy Families program. Preparing public testimony for HB 5013 for Healthy Families. Douglas County hired a bilingual Family Support Specialist.

Shawn Massingale – UCAN Head Start / Early Head Start – All Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms are open. UCAN is accepting applications for teacher assistants.

There are openings for Early Head Start for home based programs, especially in South Douglas County. Applications are open for the 2023-24 school year for Head Start and Early Head Start.

Glide's Preschool Promise site is ready to open as soon as a teacher is hired.

Governor Kotek toured the UCAN site including the food pantry and mobile food pantry. She also toured the Gary Leif Navigation Center downtown.

Future Topics

Health Updates with Dr. Dannenhoffer

Next Meeting Date

Next meeting March 23, 2023 from 10:00am – 12:00pm.

Prioritized System Issues and Root Causes from Regional System Assessment

• = Current or planned regional strategy addresses this root cause

	Issue 4: Low wages and benefits paid to ECE workforce due to a Market Failure in the ECE business model give insufficient, sustainable investment in ECE as an essential community infrastructure	Issue 3: Not enough ECE workforce who represent communities served and can deliver high-quality ECE	Issue 2: Not enough ECE slots that meet families’ needs and preferences Lack of infant toddler slots, after hours/2 nd shift care, care in geographically isolated areas	Issue 1: Many families are unable to access ECE that is high-quality, affordable, and meets their needs and preferences
Mindsets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many in regional still devalue ECE, seeing it as babysitting vs. a respected profession that promotes brain development and drives economic ROI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many in regional still devalue ECE, seeing it as babysitting vs. a respected profession that promotes brain development and drives economic ROI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of support to integrate children with disabilities into ECE classrooms
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few regional government, businesses, and institutions have goals focused on funding ECE as critical community infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some regional partners lack <i>explicit</i> goals of increasing ECE workforce diversity (culture, gender) and trauma-informed practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Decision-Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> K12 and ECE decision-makers not always collaborating Hub has limited influence on local government decisions about ECE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> K12 and ECE decision-makers not always collaborating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> K12 and ECE decision-makers not always collaborating Need for more regional engagement of families in decision-making in ways that are accessible and authentic ECE providers not always engaged in regional decision-making about ECE Hub has limited influence on local government decisions about ECE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> K12 and ECE decision-makers not always collaborating Need for more regional engagement of families in decision-making in ways that are accessible and authentic
Policies and Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some ECE settings encourage families with “behaviorally difficult” children to transfer to another ECE program Some ECE providers have practice of not referring children on their waitlist to alternative publicly funded ECE slots
Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for more connections and engagement with businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on available ECE slots and how to access them not reaching all families
Program Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current ECE business model cannot support inconsistent and limited population density in geographically isolated regions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for more ECE training/supports on de-escalating behaviors, behavioral health ECE professional development costs a lot, workforce can’t recoup due to low wages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some ECE business owners lack business skills (taxes, business modeling, etc.) – not enough professional development on this (shared services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some new staff within organizations across region don’t know about UPLiFT referral process and don’t use it as they could
Financial Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> K12 education offers higher wages which draws ECE workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable ECE licensable facilities are not available or affordable to buy or renovate* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

Current (or planned) Regional Strategies that Address these Root Causes

	Issue 4: Low wages and benefits paid to ECE workforce due to a Market Failure in the ECE business model give insufficient, sustainable investment in ECE as an essential community infrastructure	Issue 3: Not enough ECE workforce who represent communities served and can deliver high-quality ECE	Issue 2: Not enough ECE slots that meet families' needs and preferences Lack of infant toddler slots, after hours/2 nd shift care, care in geographically isolated areas	Issue 1: Many families are unable to access ECE that is high-quality, affordable, and meets their needs and preferences
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