KLAMATH PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes

February 26, 2025 | 10:00 AM – Noon

Attendance

Daniel Craig
Ashley Silva
Megan Grayson
Dena Solyst
David Lev
Jane Nicholson
Kay Ortega
Jessie McClung
Kathleen Walker-Henderson
Gillian Wesenberg
Vanessa Pingleton
Athena Wikstrom
Ronda Osborn
Danielle Walker

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 January 2025 minutes. Kathleen Walker-Henderson made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Amber Singh seconded the motion. No further discussion. Motion passed.

South-Central Early Learning Hub Update

Gillian shared that BUILD has completed its contracted work to help define the roles and responsibilities of Early Learning Hubs. The work included collaboration between Early Learning Council (ELC), Early Learning Hubs, and the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELC). This effort has provided greater clarity on the scope and function of the Hubs. BUILD has submitted rule recommendations to the ELC and DELC, which are currently under review. Once DELC releases the drafts for review, input from community partners is welcome.

The legislative long session has just begun. This is the final week to file a bill for legislative review—unless you're a legislator, who have additional time to introduce bills. The legislature is awaiting funding forecasts, and the state is facing uncertainties around federal funding.

Dr. Dawn Bailey conducted training in Douglas County earlier this week. Gillian attended, and the session was well received by attendees, who expressed strong interest in bringing Dr. Bailey back for additional professional development. Dr. Dawn will be leading sessions in Lake County on March 10–11 and in Klamath County on March 31–April 1. The training focuses on Preschool Life Skills and De-Escalation Strategies.

If a substitute is needed to attend the training, reimbursement for substitute costs is available. Other reimbursement such as mileage is also available.

The Hub has also contracted with Dr. Amy King, an expert in trauma-informed and trauma-responsive practices, to lead a Cards for Connection training. The training includes three training sessions: one full-day virtual session in April, followed by two half-day virtual sessions in May. These sessions will focus on trauma, resilience, and therapeutic interventions for trauma that may present in classrooms. Additionally, there will be ongoing Cards for Connection implementation support opportunities for attendees.

Dr. King emphasizes that therapeutic responses can be implemented by anyone—not just therapists. Cards for Connection serves as a classroom tool, and the training will focus on how to use these cards effectively with children from prenatal to age five. The cards are developmentally appropriate for this age range, and many strategies also involve working with families, equipping them with practical tools they can use at home.

Registration will open soon, with space for 50 participants across the region, including approximately 15 spots for Klamath County. Participants are asked to attend all sessions.

Both Cards for Connection and Dr. Bailey's professional development training aim to provide valuable tools for professionals working with children and families. These tools serve as a proactive approach to help providers prepare

for the Every Child Belongs legislation, which bans suspension and expulsion in all early care and education settings beginning July 1, 2026.

Danielle shared an opportunity for families to participate in a Kids in Transition to School (KITS) at Home cohort. KITS at Home, developed by Katherine Pears at the Oregon Social Learning Center in Eugene, is an 8-week online course. Katherine and her team spent several years researching the gaps schools see when children enter kindergarten. This research-based training is designed for families whose children haven't had the opportunity to attend preschool, especially those in remote or geographically isolated areas.

The training is available in both English and Spanish, with cultural differences between the two options. Families are encouraged to choose the one that best suits their needs. The program focuses on providing social-emotional and academic experiences that prepare children for kindergarten by turning everyday tasks into learning opportunities, such as sharing, sorting, and counting when preparing meals.

Danielle provided an update on the Preschool Promise Program. The opening at Gilchrist Preschool Promise has been filled. However, there is still one available spot at the YMCA of Klamath Falls. Several qualified families have expressed interest in this opening, and the spot is expected to be filled by the end of the week. Once placement at the YMCA is finalized, all available spots for Preschool Promise Programs across the region that the Hub handles qualification and enrollment for, will be fully enrolled.

The returning student form for Preschool Promise students who remain age-eligible for the 2025-2026 school year will be released this week. For new 2025-2026 Preschool Promise students, the Hub will open new student applications as soon as the state releases the revised application and gives the go-ahead.

The Hub accepts Preschool Promise applications year-round to maintain a waitpool of eligible students, allowing any available openings to be filled quickly.

Danielle also provided an overview of Community UPLiFT, which connects expecting families, families with children from birth to age five, and children up to 21 with special needs, to community resources. Family Resource Facilitators conduct motivational interviews with referrals to identify specific needs and offer information and referrals to programs.

Online referrals can be completed at community-uplift.com or via smartphone by texting the keyword "uplift1" to (541) 351-3100. Community UPLiFT also has a 30-second public service announcement available with subtitles in both languages:

- Spanish subtitles
- English subtitles

Danielle is happy to offer Community UPLiFT presentations—either in person or virtually. The Hub is also always looking to add providers who are interested in accepting referrals from Community UPLiFT. For more information, contact Danielle at Danielle.walker@douglasesd.k12.or.us or by phone at (541) 880-4655.

Cascade Health Alliance (CHA) – Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Services

Daniel Craig presented to the Klamath Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) regarding the newly updated SDOH services process for Health-Related Social Needs (HRSN) and Flexible Services funding available to Cascade Health Alliance (CHA) members.

Certain CHA members are eligible for HRSN benefits. These benefits include:

Climate Devices – Available for members with clinical conditions worsened by extreme weather or who have population risk factors (e.g., at risk of homelessness). Members may receive up to five climate devices, including:

- Air conditioners
- Air purifiers
- Heaters
- Mini refrigerators
- Portable power supplies

Housing Benefits – For members with clinical risk factors who are currently housed but at risk of homelessness [(as defined by Housing and Urban Development (HUD)], benefits include.

- Rental and utility assistance
- Clinically necessary housing modifications
- Tenancy services

Flexible Services are non-billable, health-related items and services to improve the health and well-being of individual CHA members. Examples include:

- Rental Assistance
- Temporary housing assistance (motels/hotels)
- Gym memberships
- Automotive repairs
- Items to support members with health conditions
- Items to improve the housing environment (appliances, pest control, accessibility improvements)
- Communication / Education equipment (such as phones or computers)

Members must testify that they have accessed other resources before utilizing Flexible Services funding, as CHA is the payer of last resort. CHA requests that members utilize healthyklamathconnect.com to find resources before applying for Flexible Services through CHA.

Flexible Services cannot be utilized if the request overlaps with any other assistance the CHA member is currently receiving, or that is partially or fully covered under any Oregon Health Plan (OHP) medical services. Additionally, CHA is limited by the number of vendor agreements in place with community partners. CHA is continuously working to expand the scope of Flexible Services to improve access for CHA members.

Some requests are currently unavailable under Flexible Services, including:

- Some utility assistance (water, phone, internet)
- Vehicle registration and/or insurance
- Mortgage assistance
- Durable medical equipment (unless the member has been denied via authorization)

Applications for both HRSN and Flexible Services are available through one form on healthyklamathconnect.com, listed as SDOH Services by Cascade Health Alliance. Once submitted, the application is reviewed for HRSN eligibility first. If it does not qualify for HRSN, it is then screened for potential funding under Flexible Services. The processing time is estimated at 4-6 weeks. Given the high volume of applications (over 1200 since re-launching SDOH July 1, 2024) and only two Full-Time Employees (FTE) handling the workload, there may be delays.

Funds under both programs are not intended for emergency situations. However, urgent requests can be sent directly to Daniel Craig at danielc@cascadecomp.com.

Starting January 1, 2025, certain CHA members will have access to HRSN Nutrition Supports, which include Medically Tailored Meals (MTMs) and Nutrition Education. Members cannot self-attest to the clinical necessity of these services. To qualify, members must request an assessment for medically tailored meals from their primary care provider. Once referred, a Registered Dietician (RD) at Sky Lakes Health and Wellness Center will assess eligibility, based on meeting all of the required factors, including:

- A medical condition that necessitates medically tailored meals
- A qualifying population factor
- Low food security as defined by the Food Security Six Item Short Form from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

CHA is proud to report that they have served 95% of the members who submitted SDOH applications.

Daniel also mentioned that the grant application process for community partners at CHA is being revamped. The new process will be piloted with the Community Advisory Council (CAC). Once the process is approved, applications will go through the CAC for review and funding approval.

Partner Updates

Home Visiting Systems Coordination (HVSC) – Vanessa Pingleton – Vanessa Pingleton also shared that a Home Visiting gathering is scheduled for April 21 in Medford, with the location to be determined. Travel reimbursement and food will be provided by The Ford Family Foundation (TFFF).

At this time, HVSC funding is transitioning from TFFF to the Center for Coordinating Oregon's Home Visiting Systems (CCOHVS). The transition is expected to be completed by June 30.

Take Root Parenting Connection – Vanessa Pingleton – Take Root is wrapping up the winter term with a few remaining parenting events. The spring term schedule will be released soon.

Care Connections and Education / Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) – Amber Singh -- Klamath Community College (KCC) is open for Spring Term registration. There is a lot of availability in the Early Care and Education (ECE) grant program through (DELC). Anyone who lives and works in Oregon can attend the ECE program for free.

The Spring Fling Conference is March 15 from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm. Sharon Krull, founder of PlayPower will be the keynote speaker for the Spring Fling.

Klamath Community College (KCC) – Kathleen Walker-Henderson -- KCC Foundation scholarship applications will open next week and remain available until April 21. KCC also received a grant from the Humming Frog Foundation to help address barriers to college attendance. As part of this support, students can apply for emergency assistance of $250 per year. Humming Frog Foundation applications require a referral from a KCC staff member9

The KCC Community Benefits Resource Navigator is available to assist students in applying for both the Humming Frog Foundation and KCC Foundation scholarships.

Klamath County Library – David Lev -- The Klamath County Library will host Big Bang Boom, a pop/rock music group from Greensboro, NC that plays parent-friendly children's music, on Tuesday, March 4, at 4:30 PM.

Klamath Chapter of the Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children (ORAEYC) – The Klamath Chapter of ORAEYC has made the difficult decision to cancel the 2025 Children's Early Learning Fair, which traditionally takes place in April. Efforts are underway to recruit additional support from ORAEYC members.

Klamath Falls City School District (KFCS) – Danielle shared that the KFCS Kindergarten Round-Up will take place on May 20 at 5:30 PM. All KCSD elementary school locations will host the event simultaneously.

The Klamath County School District (KCSD) – Danielle shared that KCSD will be hosting Kindergarten Round-Ups in May, but dates have not yet been announced. Additionally, KCSD will offer Play2Learn nights, with the schedule to be released soon.

Next Meeting:

March 19, 2025, from 10 am to noon.