

South-Central Early Learning Hub
Lake County Community Governance Council
Minutes – September 28, 2021

Attendees: Jack Thompson (s), Vicky Taylor (s), Michael Carter (s), Amy Hutchinson (s), Gail Buermann (s), Hannah Brollier, Jake Greer, Machel Ramirez, Michael Benson (v), Rejeen Cooper (v), Wendy Brown, Gillian Wesenberg, Cynthia Hurkes, Athena Wikstrom, Danielle Walker, Charlene Shaw, Heather Freilinger

Review Agenda/Meeting Minutes- Approve minutes from May 25, 2021 meeting

Michael Carter made a motion to approve the May minutes as submitted. Amy Hutchinson seconded the motion; all members were in favor.

Election of Officers, Steering Committee, and Voting Members –

Vicky Taylor made a motion to elect Michael Carter as the new chair. Michael accepted the nomination. Amy seconded the motion. No alternative nominees were motioned. All members voted in favor.

Vicky Taylor made a motion to elect Jack Thompson as the co-chair. Jack accepted the nomination. Amy seconded the motion. No alternative nominees were motioned. All members voted in favor.

Michael Carter made a motion to elect Vicky Taylor to the Steering Committee. Vicky accepted the nomination. Amy seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

Michael Carter made a motion to elect Gail Buermann to the Steering Committee. Gail accepted the nomination. Amy seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

Michael Carter made a motion to elect Machel Ramirez as a voting member of the Governance Committee. Machel accepted the nomination. Vicky seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

AmeriCorp –

Suzannah from AmeriCorp shared this is her third month in Lakeview. AmeriCorp is supporting Outback Strong which is a positive social norming campaign, perpetuating positive stereotypes. Outback Strong has been around since 2017. The summer lunch program, infant wellness checks, living well service to connect younger people with older people to help with projects, and the colon cancer awareness campaign have all come from Outback Strong. Suzannah has received feedback that the community did not know who was running Outback Strong or how to connect to it. Outback Strong was a requirement of the Lake County Community Advisory Council (LCAC.) Suzannah is collecting feedback from the community, and recruiting individuals to the Outback Strong committee from at least four organizations in Lake County. The committee currently has representation from the senior population, and would like to have a representative for youth. There will be a weekly workgroup meeting to begin with. Suzannah is hoping to create a mission statement during the workgroups. Individuals do not have to join the committee to attend the workgroup meetings. If you are interested in attending Friday's meeting from 2:00 to 3:00, email Suzannah at Sburke@lakehealthdistrict.org.

Michael asked if the Chamber of Commerce will be attending. Suzannah is just starting outreach, so no one has been recruited from the Chamber yet. Vanessa Pingleton will be attending. Jack recommended contacting the County Commissioners.

South-Central Early Learning Hub –

Gillian shared that the Hub is finishing up Preschool Promise Coordinated Enrollment for the 2021-2022 school year. Reejen advised that Klamath Family Head Start in Lakeview is almost full.

The Hub is updating our Early Care and Education (ECE) Sector Plan. There is a Stewardship Committee meeting coming up with representation from Lake County. The Early Learning Division (ELD) is requesting family voice, updates for priority populations and locations where priority populations are requesting services. ECE Sector plan is one piece of many that will guide implementation for 2022-2023 Preschool Promise. The Hub does qualifying for all Preschool Promise sites across the region except Head Starts and Tribes. Gillian reviewed qualifying requirements for Preschool Promise which are:

- Family is Oregon Residents
- Three or four-years-old before September 1st of the school year
- Families earn up to 200% Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

The Preschool Promise Request for Application (RFA) is expected to be available in November for sites to apply for the 2022-2023 program year. Michael Carter shared that he is interested in applying for Preschool Promise slots. Gail does not intend to apply for Preschool Promise slots. Klamath Family Head Start is planning to continue applying for their current slots, but is not expecting to apply for expanded slots.

The Early Learning Division has also requested a Slot Allocation Assessment to be completed by the Stewardship Committee which includes recommendations for Preschool Promise locations, new slot totals, types of providers, language, and family preference. If anyone is interested in applying for Preschool Promise slots for the 2022-2023 program year, please let the Hub staff know so your community can be included in the Slot Allocation Assessment as this is another piece that will be used to determine slot allocations for next year.

Charlene from Care Connections & Education shared that insurance has been difficult for small providers to get due to the high coverage that is required. The same level of insurance is required for in-home providers as is required for center providers.

The Early Learning Division is going to become its own department which will be known as the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC). January 1, 2023 will be the separation date from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). Part of the new division requirements is moving Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) from the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) to DELIC.

Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) –

Cynthia shared KPI received \$140,000 from the ELD to be spent from April through September. Cynthia brought suggestions for spending the additional funds to county meetings this past spring and received approval from the Regional Governance Council.

In partnership with Care Connections & Education, the regional Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR), KPI is offering 100 participants Conscious Discipline Building Resilient Classrooms training, the beginning level of training for Conscious Discipline. Video training will be available January through June 2022. Every two videos that are completed, there will be a live, virtual, facilitated conversation between a Conscious Discipline trainer and participants. There are ten videos and five virtual, facilitated sessions. Facilitation will be held from 4:00 to 6:00pm and 6:00 to 8:00pm to ensure providers can attend. There are incentives for sessions being attended and KPI is also purchasing books for participants. There will be training credits for providers, though Cynthia is unsure what that will look like at this time.

Mini-grants were allotted to four different organizations, everyone who applied was able to receive funds. Groups that received mini-grants were the North Douglas Relief Nursery, Gathering Place Relief Nursery, and Klamath Family Head Start for Klamath and Lake Counties. Funds were also provided to the Umpqua Valley STEAM Hub to assist with STEAM kits.

KPI purchased eight slots from Opening Doors. Slots will be allocated based on the percentage of Spanish speaking families served in each county. Right now, two will be in Douglas, two will be in Lake, and four will be assigned to Klamath County. Opening Doors can take place either in November or January.

KPI purchased 336 Teach My kits, and Take Root will provide them to families on demand. Kathleen Henderson-Walker will provide training, then families will receive a kit at the end of their training. KPI also purchased 240 Ready for Kindergarten kits. Take Root will provide Ready for Kindergarten sessions.

Gillian reviewed findings from a survey the Hub completed with Pacific Research and Evaluation (PRE) and the Hub Family Focus Groups. The most interesting feedback from families is that they want to be accepted into their child's school and classroom, they want to feel heard about their child's needs, and they want to know what is needed for their child to be ready for kindergarten.

EI/ECSE –

Michael Benson shared that there are 11 children receiving Early Intervention / Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) services in Lake County right now. One child in North County is requiring regional supports as the needed services are not available in Lakeview. It is closer for the family to travel from Christmas Valley to Bend, than to any other location where services are available. Lake County EI/ECSE contracted with High Desert Education Service District (ESD) for the family to receive services from there. EI/ECSE was getting into a good routine, but is now shut down due to COVID, and will remain closed for another week. EI/ECSE has received a few medical referrals recently. Referrals were slow at times last year, which was likely due to children not going to doctors and activities as they have before due to COVID. Currently three children are being served in EI and eight are being served by ECSE.

Lake County School District #7 –

Michael Carter advised that the bid for contractor is currently open for the third time for the child care building. Two new bids have come in so far, they are expecting additional information to be available by February 1st. Michael is working with principals to provide an option for students to receive their child care accreditation. Michael is looking for ways to lower the \$4 an hour child care fee for families. The district is losing money charging families \$4 per hour. Fifteen staff members, and 22% of students were out last week due to having COVID or quarantining. Had to quarantine one 5th grade class, is out until Oct 4th. The school district is struggling to provide transportation as there are not enough bus drivers. Michael Carter is certified to drive bus, in emergency cases.

Gillian shared with the group that Student Investment Account / Student Success Act (SSI/SSA) funds could be used to fund prek classes.

Lake County ESD –

Jack Thompson shared that outlying schools have started well. There are 11 students enrolled in Plush and seven in Adel. Adel is currently all girls. The ESD is providing COVID tests for school district staff and testing has been going well.

North Lake School District –

Gail Buermann advised the preschool is up and running again this year. Four-year-olds are attending two days a week. Children birth to three-year-old in the Mommy and Me class is attending three times a month. The school has doubled preschool class time per family request.

The preschool contact is Cheyanne Church whose last name is now Houseman. Michael Benson is going to schedule screenings in North Lake. Gail does not know how many students are attending classes right now due to the delay in the start of the school year. The school expected 16 students in the four-year-old class.

North Lake School District has not had to have school shutdown, but has had students and teachers out with covid.

Klamath Family Head Start –

Reejen shared that all three of their classrooms are in covid quarantine, affecting 48 students. Classes will be back in session October 4th. The Head Start staff are currently sanitizing the site, conducting porch visits, and providing online learning. Klamath Family Head Start is currently short staffed, and has had a hard time hiring people back after summer. Reejen is hoping to be fully staffed by the middle of October. All three classes are almost full.

Lake County Library –

Amy Hutchinson advised the library is back to requiring masks. They are continuing preschool story time virtually. David is transitioning to another position at the library. The library is still hiring for part time support.

Healthy Families –

Vicky shared that Healthy Families has been receiving more referrals for families in Christmas Valley and Paisley than in Lakeview. Vicky leaves Lakeview by 7 am on Thursdays to go to Christmas Valley.

Vicky shared that she checks in with library in North Lake every other week to bring books back down. She will take books up north if needed.

Adult and Juvenile Probation –

Jake shared that the juvenile department is back to being fully staffed. Referrals were steady over the summer. There has been an increase in compliance lately, so it's looking good both in Lakeview and in North Lake. Staff are spreading time between schools across the county.

Amy asked if there were concerns with a youth, should they be referred to the juvenile department. Jake advised that all concerns should go through dispatch.

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) –

Charlene Shaw advised that Care Connections & Education, the regional CCRR has Conscious Discipline incentives for individuals who attend upcoming trainings. The CCRR staff has been busy with stabilization grant applications. Providers can receive substantial grants and the amount available increases based on the demographics served. Stabilization grants have to be allocated by December. Providers who were Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) License Exempt by March of 2021 can apply for stabilization grants. Providers who receive grants can use funds for bills back to January,

2020 and use it for rent, remodeling, and payroll. Twenty percent of the grant received has to go towards improving employee pay, and can be in the form of a one-time bonus, or increased pay.

Next Meeting: October 25, 2021 at 1:00 pm