

LAKE COUNTY COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

Meeting Notes

September 23, 2025 | 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Attendance

Lane Stratton (v)
Michael Carter (v)
Michael Benson (v)

Shalom Rorabaugh
Bryanna Paradise
Jake Greer

Athena Wikstrom
Danielle Walker

Please note: For ease of member access, South-Central Early Learning Hub – Lake County Community Governance Council meetings will be held virtually unless otherwise notified.

Approval of May 2025 Lake Community Governance Council meeting minutes will take place in October 2025.

South-Central Early Learning Hub – Athena Wikstrom reported that Gillian is currently out of the office on leave. The South-Central Early Learning Hub received a draft contract and is awaiting the final Hub contract from the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC).

The Hub’s Strategic Plan will be presented at the upcoming Lake County Community Governance Council meetings to gather feedback and make revisions before being taken back to the Regional Governance Council. Hub staff will collect input from each county throughout this process. The Strategic Plan aligns with Raise Up Oregon, DELIC’s statewide early learning strategy, available at: <https://www.oregon.gov/delc/about-us/pages/raise-up-oregon.aspx>. Revisions will be made to align the Strategic Plan with the second version of Raise Up Oregon, which was released after the Hub's Strategic Plan was finalized. While the content of Raise Up Oregon 2.0 remains largely the same, the numbering and organizational structure have been updated.

Athena also shared that Preschool Promise applications are open for the 2025–2026 school year. Honker Preschool Promise is currently full and has a waitpool. The Hub maintains a year-round waitpool for eligible students so openings can be filled quickly if they become available. Preschool Promise serves many families who experience frequent moves or changes in circumstances, resulting in a high level of mobility in the Preschool Promise program. When families relocate within Oregon but outside of Douglas, Klamath, or Lake Counties, efforts are made to connect them with the Early Learning Hub in their new region to ensure continued access to Preschool Promise. The Preschool Promise application includes wording that allows for information to be securely shared with relevant partners, including other Early Learning Hubs and Head Start programs. This wording also allowed the Hub to work closely with Shalom at Klamath Family Head Start Lakeview Site during the transfer of Preschool Promise slots from Lakeview Head Start to Honker Preschool, ensuring a smooth transition for children and families. Some families have recently shared that full-day preschool is not a viable option for them due to personal circumstances like employment schedules or a lack of transportation.

Community UPLIFT connects expecting families, families with children 0-5 or up to 21 with special needs, to resources in Douglas, Klamath, and Lake Counties. Online referrals can be completed at community-uplift.com or via smart phone by texting the keyword “uplift3” to (541) 351- 3100. For more information about Community UPLIFT, contact Danielle Walker at Danielle.walker@douglasesd.k12.or.us. The Preschool Promise application has two questions that generate Community UPLIFT referrals, and families are being contacted when they indicate they need assistance connecting to additional resources or if they are interested in a referral to Early Intervention / Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE).

The Family Governance Advisory Committee currently includes one member from Lakeview, who has played an instrumental role in establishing and maintaining Little Free Libraries throughout Lake County. These libraries are in Plush, Paisley, and at the Food Share in Lakeview. The libraries are regularly stocked with books

in multiple languages, including English, Spanish, dual-language formats, Tribal languages, Tagalog, and Farsi. Books feature titles that promote diversity, social-emotional development, neurodivergence, potty training, and other early childhood themes. All books are selected for children ages 0–5. This initiative was made possible through a grant from the Regional Governance Council and is funded by Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) and Early Literacy funds. Suggestions for additional titles are welcomed.

Early Intervention / Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) - Michael Benson shared that EI/ECSE started the school year with 13 families, however some have since moved away. Several evaluations are ready to proceed, and EI/ECSE is following up with families whose children were identified during the summer months. More than half of the new referrals that have been received are in North Lake County, over 50 miles outside of Lakeview. A new EI/ECSE assistant has been hired and is undergoing training to support with evaluations and related tasks.

Klamath Family Head Start Lakeview Site – Shalom reported that Head Start in Lakeview is fully enrolled with an active waitlist. The Early Head Start (EHS) program, serving children ages zero to two, is full and includes four children under the age of one. The toddler classroom, for ages two to three, has nine children. The duration class for ages three to five is also at capacity with twenty children.

Head Start is fully staffed and has had a strong start to the school year, including some necessary classroom adjustments and the onboarding of new staff. The waitlist reflects ongoing community need. Head Start classrooms follow the School District schedule, operating Monday through Thursday. Children under three receive services from 7:30 am to 3:40 pm, while those ages three to five attend until 3:00 pm. Hours are based on Head Start contracting requirements.

Lake ESD -- Lane shared that there are four children at Adel in the kindergarten transition classroom. Plush does not have a kindergarten transition classroom this year. Numbers for Paisley not currently.

Lakeview School District # 7 -- Michael Carter shared difficult news regarding the recent passing of Riddle School District Superintendent Dave Gianotti. He also noted the resignation of the Lakeview School District football coach and shop teacher earlier that morning. Despite these challenges, the school year is off to a strong academic start with solid foundations in Language Arts and Math. A Request for Proposal (RFP) has been released for the gym floor at Honker Court.

Financially, things are stable but not strong, and there is concern about potential federal funding interruptions if a government shutdown occurs. Such an event would significantly impact rural schools, including those in Lake, Douglas, Klamath, and Wheeler Counties.

Take Root Parenting Connection – Bailey shared she has returned from maternity leave and reported a smooth summer thanks to team support. Planning is underway for the fall schedule, which will include family activities, an online teen series and workshops like Routines for Family Success.

Home Visiting Systems Coordination -- Vanessa shared that there was a smooth transition of Home Visiting Systems Coordination (HVSC) from The Ford Family Foundation (TFFF) to the Center for Coordinating Oregon's Home Visiting Systems (CCOHVS), housed with Portland State University (PSU). The transition took place on July 1, 2025. A final interview with TFFF occurred at the end of August, where Robin Hill-Dunbar offered praise for the region and how the region's successes in many areas are being shared across the state. TFFF will continue to support HVSC work but will primarily be through funding directly provided to CCOHVS.

Vanessa also shared about the Parent Leadership group, which is a collaboration between Take Root, UCAN Healthy Families, and the Klamath County System of Care (SOC) through Cascade Health Alliance (CHA). Parent Leadership is going well, and attendance remains steady. Participants are in the process of building foundational knowledge about the various programs.

The Take Root / Home Visiting Systems / Family Support Leadership Meeting was held on September 22. Workgroups at the Leadership Meeting focused on the development of an informational Public Service

Announcement (PSA) about early childhood home visiting and its benefits. They also discussed planning for a trauma summit-style event, which may be renamed and could include breakout groups and trainers.

Athena added that Gillian also serves on the state Early Learning Council (ELC) Home Visiting Committee, providing a rural and frontier perspective. She is also working to ensure Tribal voices are represented, recognizing that home visiting can look different for Tribal communities.

Next Meeting: October 28, 2025, at 1:00 pm.

Adjournment: With no further business, the Lake County Community Governance Council was adjourned.