



SOELS Steering Committee
 May 15, 2018
 AllCare Health, 1701 NE 7th Street, Grants Pass
 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Members Present (X):

x	Hannah Ancel Jackson Care Connect	*	Martha Ibarra Hispanic Comm Rep	x	Nancy Nordyke SO Head Start
*	Scott Beveridge SOESD	*	Rosemary Jernigan DHS, District 8	x	Lisa O'Connor FNC
	Amy Buehler Jackson Co. Mental Health	x	Jennifer Johnstun Primary Health of Jo Co	x	Kelly Soter Jackson Elementary
	Susan Fischer AllCare CCO	x	Geoffrey Lowry Oregon Child Dev. Coalition	x	Pam Thompson Arbogast EI/ECSE
x	Michelle Gallas Imagine That	x	Karla McCafferty Options of So Oregon	x	Andrea Wakeland Parent Voice
x	Michelle Gury Parent Voice	x	Eileen Micke-Johnson RCC	x	Mary Wolf CCRN
x	Kerri Hecox, MD	x	Lee Murdoch Retired Physician		Susan Zottola GP SD #7

*Participating via Zoom

Staff:

x	René Brandon Director	x	Chelsea Reinhart Early Learning Facilitator	x	Karen Johnson Administrative Assistant
x	Teresa Slater Early Learning Facilitator	x	Molly McLaughlin Early Learning Facilitator		

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME AND GREETINGS

E. Micke-Johnson called the meeting to order @ 2:11 pm. New members were present and introduced themselves: **Position 2:** Parent Representative for Josephine County, Andrea Wakeland. **Position 17:** Human and Social Service--Substance Abuse Treatment Representative, Dr. Kerri Hecox.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

R. Brandon clarified that, at the top of page three of the March 20, 2018 minutes, 36% of children having access to Head Start, Oregon Pre-K, and Preschool Promise represents the percentage of children in Oregon who are eligible and have access to the three programs, based on the Children's Institute data. The figure demonstrates the great need and limited capacity to serve eligible children, due to limited funding. Minutes from March 20, 2018 were approved with no opposition.

HUB FINANCIAL UPDATE

R. Brandon provided update, as S. Fischer was not present. She explained that we are on track with Hub Coordination spending, and reminded the committee that the report does not reflect the activity through the end of March, but the amount that the ESD has transacted at the end of March. She advised that Hub Coordination is the fund that pays for the majority of Hub staffing costs and provides a flexible funding source to cover costs such as WizeHive, the contract management database that the Committee voted on last month by email, and passed unanimously.

Other funding sources covered:

- KPI (Kindergarten Partnership & Innovation)
 - First quarter was when schools were getting back into session and starting to launch activities.
 - Next quarter will be a more accurate representation of all activity through June.
 - Teresa shared that in the first week of May, every elementary school in the Three Rivers and Grants Pass School Districts offered at least one session of Ready for K! Over 300 unduplicated parents participated in GPSD, and about 150 in TRSD.
- School Readiness
 - Most funds were awarded through RFP process in January.
 - Four out of the five grantees are running strong.
 - It has been a slow rollout for SMART, as hub assists them in determining the best way to implement their outreach pilot for children on partner waitlists.
 - EI/ECSE programs in both counties are receiving funding for staff to offset bottleneck caused, at least in part, by increases of developmental screening metrics .
- Healthy, Stable and Attached Families
 - No activity reported; it is emerging work just starting this program year.
 - Oasis Center of Rogue Valley will providing wraparound support for families in recovery to prevent relapse following residential treatment.
 - The Hub, in partnership with CCRN, is contracting with child care providers to hold spaces for these children and will coordinate training for the early learning workforce to be equipped to support children who've experienced trauma as well as their families navigating early recovery.
- Family Support
 - Unique funding stream as the focus is on the family unit, and not specifically the child.
 - No expenditures to date; the Hub is in the process of convening groups.
 - About one year ago, The Hub's Agency Advisory Council identified priority groups on which to focus our funding streams. Children without early learning opportunities and children with special needs are priority focus areas for our School Readiness fund.
 - For Family support, it is:
 - Families in recovery
 - The Hub is in planning phases with recovery partners to start Kaleidoscope Play and Learn groups specifically for children and families in recovery.

- Other needs to be determined.
 - Teen Parents
 - In April, the Hub had a regional kickoff with providers connected to teen parents. Services were identified that are available in the region, opportunities to make new connections, and top needs for this group.
 - County-specific groups are now convening monthly and needs and activities are being identified.
 - Foster Families
 - C. Reinhart has been working with the Foster Parent Association. The Hub is providing preliminary Strengthening Families training and will conduct a survey to determine their needs.
- FCCN (Focused Child Care Network)
 - Pass-through funding stream; all funding is distributed through a contract with Child Care Resource Network to provide support to 20 Spanish-speaking child-care providers.
 - Program is going very well and participants are very engaged and making progress in their professional development goals.
 - Spending is on track.
- Preschool Promise
 - Providers are Kid Time, Imagine That, Roots and Wings, Family Nurturing Center, Head Start, and CCRN, which supports the seven Spanish-speaking providers who have Preschool Promise classrooms.
 - They invoice the Hub monthly.
 - We have discovered that programs are more affordable than they has estimated, which is great news. However, this presents a dilemma: there is funding remaining at the end of the program year. In Year 1 (16-17), there was an uptick in June spending (\$158,000 additional funds spent on materials and supplies. The next agenda item is Preschool Promise and we will explore this further.

PRESCHOOL PROMISE

E. Micke-Johnson announced that the next item on the agenda was an action item pertaining to Preschool Promise funding, and read a statement from the bylaws, Article XIV – Standard of Conduct, Section 3: Recusal: “Should a conflict or appearance of conflict of interest develop the staff and/or Steering Committee member shall immediately declare the conflict or potential conflict of interest and thereafter recuse themselves from any further discussions of the issue and any subsequent votes on the issue.”

R. Brandon summarized that if any member receives Preschool Promise funding, sits on the board of an agency that does, or has a child in a Preschool Promise program, they should recuse themselves of any further discussions or votes on the issue, per Article XIV, Section 3 of the bylaws. The following members recused themselves: Scott Beveridge, Michelle Gallas, Martha Ibarra, Jennifer Johnstun, Lee Murdoch, Nancy Nordyke, Lisa O’Connor, Kelly Soter, Andrea Wakeland, and Mary Wolf.

R. Brandon described the reporting requirements involved in managing Preschool Promise funds:

- Annual Monitoring Process
 - There is a detailed and thorough process checklist used to ensure hub and programs are in compliance with the Preschool Promise program.
- Monthly Reporting
 - Hub collects attendance and vacancy data as well as success stories and identified challenges from each program, and synthesizes into one report for the ELD.
- Monthly Invoicing
 - The providers submit their monthly invoices in an excel workbook the Hub provides. It shows expenses to date as well as the remaining funds for the program year. It is designed to help them easily determine if they are on track, and plan ahead.
- Program Analysis and Future Projection
 - The Hub performs a mid-year check-in with each program to determine if any budget rightsizing is needed.
 - Unspent funds will be redistributed to underfunded programs or rolled into new enrollments for the next year.
- Fiscal Review
 - The Hub will be conducting a fiscal review and has met with Dan Weaver, Southern Oregon ESD Business Manager, to determine what the criteria should be for this type of financial review.
 - We currently collect receipts for all non-personnel expenses that programs submit for reimbursement. To reconcile reimbursements for personnel expenses, we are asking for general ledger reports at the end of the year.
- Preschool Promise Challenges & Expansion
 - Preschool Promise is the largest investment of the Early Learning Hub, and serves the fewest number of children for the money invested.
 - The model for Preschool Promise is to reimburse for the cost of delivering services for the program year, and it cannot pay for anything that is not Preschool Promise related.
 - In year one, monthly expenses remained relatively steady, with a huge spike in June - \$158K over the monthly average, due to an increase in materials and supplies. This was unavoidable in Year 1, when programs were new and costs to deliver services were estimates.
 - Most programs are more affordable than anticipated and unspent funds can be used to purchase additional slots for next year.
 - Some programs want to “spend out” the funds by purchasing materials and supplies instead of rolling them over to next year to serve more children.
 - The Hub asked programs to send proposals for how to spend unallocated funds for the rest of the year; we felt some were not the best use of Preschool Promise funds and that investing in serving more children should be the priority.

- Every \$10K saved at the end of the year is one additional enrollment for the following year. (\$10K per year is our regional average for serving one child.)
- Good fiscal stewardship and expanding the program to serve more children is the goal of the Hub; therefore, we are asking the Steering Committee to vote on whether serving additional children with unspent funds should be the priority over other requests received, such as the purchase of equipment, storage, or recapturing staffing costs that were not part of the budget proposal. These are the requests the hub has received from programs for remaining funds.
- Matters discussed:
 - At the beginning of year one, the Hub asked each program how much it would cost to prepare their sites to serve Preschool Promise children. Those start-up expenses were paid with one-time capacity-building funds.
 - The Hub requires programs to list the names of those staff serving Preschool Promise children, their FTEs, and the hub monitors the child-staff ratio.
 - Preschool Promise mandates 20 hours of professional development per year. There is an additional funding stream the hub receives of \$130,000 per year to be used exclusively on professional development for Preschool Promise programs. (This is a large amount of funding and the Hub has asked ELD if these funds can be used to serve additional children, but has been advised they must be spent on professional development costs only.)
 - The Hub heard from partners that at least one Preschool Promise Provider complained that the Hub is not easy to work with and is making it difficult to deliver the program. R. Brandon shared that, at the Preschool Promise provider meeting last week, she encouraged providers to communicate their concerns directly with the Hub.
 - Hub has learned that the State may require Hubs to provide expense reports for Preschool Promise, and it will not bode well for our region with a recurring uptick in spending at the end each program year. The concern is it may result in decreased funding, if it appears expenses are not directly related to month-to-month operations and that perhaps our region doesn't need as much funding as it receives.
 - The hub is requesting direction from the Steering Committee: What is the priority: to provide flexibility at the end of the program year to invest excess funds for materials and supplies, or to serve more children?
- Motion was made to roll over excess funding in this year's budget for additional enrollment opportunities next year. Motion G. Lowry/Second K. McCafferty. Motion passed with unanimous consent.
 - P. Thompson-Arbogast asked to add language to the proposal that consideration be given to include appropriate provisions for changes in staffing levels. Hub staff provided clarification that legislation has set a child-staff ratio to which programs must adhere.

- Preschool Promise will increase by 3% next year, about \$50K - \$60K.
- One of the new Hub Roles & Indicators identified by The Early Learning Council is providing supports to underserved populations, including rural communities.
 - In our region, the cities of Rogue River, Prospect, Butte Falls, and Gold Hill are four examples where there are gaps in access to quality, affordable child care.
- In an effort to redistribute some slots to these underserved areas, the Hub recommends an RFP process for Preschool Promise funding starting with the 2019-2021 biennium.
 - The existing programs would be required to apply for Preschool Promise funds for the 2019-2021 biennium.
 - The intention is not to remove Preschool Promise programs from existing sites, as sizable investments have been made in these sites, but to expand and build a broader Preschool Promise network.
 - Concerns were raised that this process could destabilize some programs, particularly if a substantial percentage of their funding comes from Preschool Promise dollars.
 - The cost per child may need to be adjusted for some programs, demonstrated by their surplus funds at the end of the year.
 - With the possible reduction in Preschool Promise funding, it might not be the best use of funds to spend on start-up costs for new sites.
 - How will we reach this underserved population without putting RFP process in place?
 - If RFP process seems too destabilizing at this time, the Hub has the prerogative to reduce existing slots and move them to new locations.
 - The Committee felt comfortable with this option for the time being and postponed any further discussion of implementing a fully open RFP process for Preschool Promise funds for a future meeting.

RECRUITMENT OF NEW MEMBERS & ALIGNMENT WITH BYLAWS

Item deferred until next meeting due to time.

HUB ROLES & INDICATORS – PROGRESS TO DATE

Item deferred until next meeting due to time.

UPDATES, EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

L. Murdoch and K. Soter are stepping down from the Steering Committee. Their service in assisting with the formation and ongoing evolution of the early learning hub system is greatly appreciated!

P. Thompson-Arbogast is retiring from EI/ECSE in June, but will remain a member of the Steering Committee until a transition plan is determined.

NEXT MEETING

July 17, 2018

Southern Oregon ESD

101 N Grape Street, Medford

2:00-4:00 p.m.

NOTE: Since this meeting, it has been announced that the July meeting will begin at 1 pm and the first hour will be a facilitated discussion between the Steering Committee and The Early Learning Council, to assist the ELC in the creation of their strategic plan.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 pm

Submitted by K. Johnson