



SOUTHERN OREGON SUCCESS UPDATE

February 2019

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GRADUATION RATES UP IN JACKSON & JOSEPHINE COUNTIES

It was great to see how much progress is being made when the state released the graduation rates for 2018 last month. All of our districts have much to be proud of in engaging and supporting students.

The Phoenix/Talent School District, which has been working to implement trauma-informed practices for several years now (including Restorative Justice with Resolve), saw a 10% overall graduation rate increase, and a 20% increase in graduation for students in special education. When asked about these increases during an interview on KOBI recently, district

Superintendent Brent Barry gave credit to the district teachers and staff who go all out to make connections with their students.



In Josephine County, Illinois Valley High School saw an increase of 8%, and at a recent Illinois Valley Community Partners meeting, district Superintendent Dave Valenzuela also gives credit to connections, and to community partnerships.

The Medford School District reached an 80% graduation rate, showing strong progress over the past several years. It is also extremely encouraging to report that students in the district who are working with the Maslow Project and facing the challenges of homelessness, also graduated at the 80% level, a significant accomplishment.

There is growing interest regionally, statewide and nationally in what is being called a Whole Child, Whole Family, Whole School and Whole Community approach. All of our districts are working to meet students and families where they are, to develop positive school cultures and effective partnerships in their communities. A good deal of progress is being made, and there is still much more to do to make sure every student can thrive.

ACES TRAINING TEAM OFFERS WORKSHOP IN SELF-REGULATION & RESILIENCE

The Southern Oregon ACEs Training Team is now offering follow up workshops in Self-Regulation & Resilience for schools and organizations that have already had the ACEs training offered by the team. The ACEs sessions feature the NEAR curriculum (Neurobiology, Epigenetics, Adverse Childhood Experience and Resilience) developed by ACE Interface. Well over 300 sessions have been offered now to close to 12,000 people in our region since May of 2016.

Any group that has already had the NEAR presentation is welcome to contact Peter Buckley at peter_buckley@southernoregonsuccess.org to schedule a 2-hour workshop in Self-Regulation & Resilience. The workshop will include a short review of the NEAR material, information on how self-regulation factors have been degraded in recent years, and specific tools to increase self-regulation on a personal level as well as with colleagues, students, clients, etc.

The workshops are in response to what is being seen as a crisis in self-regulation in our schools and elsewhere (please see the report on “Disrupted Learning” below). Our goal is to raise awareness of what is happening with our children and communities, and to increase self-regulation skills across the board.

There is no cost for hosting a workshop. The Southern Oregon ACEs Training Team is administered by Southern Oregon Success and funded by AllCare, Jackson Care Connect, the SOESD, Options for Southern Oregon, Rogue Workforce Partnership and the Oregon Community Foundation.



Significant in-kind contribution of staff time is provided by the Grants Pass School District, Head Start, Jackson County Mental Health, the Lieberman Group, Ashland School District, Three Rivers School District and Westminster Presbyterian Church.

If you have not had the chance to attend an ACEs training session with the NEAR curriculum, you can schedule a session for your group by emailing Peter Buckley at the email address above, or you can attend any of the upcoming open trainings held every month in Medford, Grants Pass and in the Three Rivers School District. [Please check out the full schedule](#) for more information.

REGIONAL STRATEGY MAP SPURS PRIORITIES

Dozens of leaders in education, health care, human services, public safety and workforce development gathered at the end of January for the Southern Oregon Success Key Leaders event, focusing on the unveiling of a regional strategy map created in partnership with Laura Porter and Kathy Adams of ACE Interface.

The visual developed for the process is titled “The River of Challenges,” depicting obstacles and hazards faced by children growing up in the Rogue Valley from preconception through adulthood. Combined with feedback collected over the past several months from group events, online surveys and focus groups, the discussion on strategies needed to address the identified challenges led to six specific strategies rising to the top: Assessment & Screening, Colocation of Services, Coordination of Services, Engagement, Education, and Redesign Systems for Dual Generation.



The Southern Oregon Success Steering Committee will now use information from the discussion of the six strategies and specific suggestions for action steps to develop our priorities and work plan for 2019-20.

Priorities for the current year emphasize self-regulation, including an increase in self-regulation skills on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, a decrease in suspensions in K through 2nd grade, and a decrease in teen suicide attempts. We’ll report on the work plan and priorities for our collaboration in our May newsletter.



“RAISE UP OREGON”—FIVE YEAR PLAN FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD ANNOUNCED

An ambitious five-year plan to increase early childhood education and services in the crucial preschool years has been announced by the Early Learning Division of the Oregon Department of Education and our state’s regional early learning hubs, including our own Southern Oregon Early Learning Services (SOELS).

The plan, “Raising Oregon,” is data-driven, comprehensive and vitally needed. You can find the full plan at this link to [the Oregon Early Learning Division website](#).

EYE-OPENING REPORT ON “DISRUPTED LEARNING” FROM ODE & OEA

The Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Education Association have released a report on “Disrupted Learning” following a statewide series of listening sessions with educators and community members. The report describes the rapid increase in behavior problems with students over the past several years and includes specific recommendations for efforts to address this issue on the school, district and state levels.

For anyone working with children or raising children, this is an impressive and highly recommended report. You can find it at [this link](#).

ACES & ASANTE

One of our region’s biggest employers, Asante, has committed to becoming a trauma-informed organization and to implementing trauma-informed practices at all levels. Asante has been certified as a Sanctuary Model organization, a nationwide program of best practices, and has hired Jennifer Nidalmia to be their Resiliency Program Coordinator.

As part of her work, Jennifer is partnering with the Southern Oregon ACEs Training Team to do presentations for Asante employees, including multiple recent sessions at the Ashland Community Hospital.

For more information on Asante’s focus on trauma-informed practices and resilience, please contact Jennifer at JENNIFER.NIDALMIA@asante.org.



RESILIENT COMMUNITIES: BLUE ZONE IN GRANTS PASS



Transforming Wellbeing in Grants Pass

Blue Zones Project is a community well-being improvement initiative designed to change the way people experience the world around them. By impacting environment, policy, and social networks, Blue Zones Project makes healthy choices easier. As a result, people can live longer, better, and communities can lower healthcare costs, improve productivity, and boost national recognition as a great place to live, work, and play.

A Blue Zones Community® is an area in which citizens, schools, employers, restaurants, grocery stores, and community leaders have come together to optimize residents' longevity and well-being. Grants Pass was selected to be a Blue Zones Project demonstration community through a competitive state-wide process. Community champions for the Project include Asante Three Rivers Medical Center, Primary Health of Josephine County, AllCare Health, Siskiyou Community Health Center, Club Northwest and the Grants Pass YMCA.

Living Longer, Healthier Lives

Blue Zones Project was born out of National Geographic explorer Dan Buettner's eight-year examination of communities across the globe where people were happily living the longest. A team of medical researchers, anthropologists, demographers, and epidemiologists uncovered nine common characteristics that help identify a path for up to 12 extra years of life, regardless of geographic location. These shared lifestyle behaviors are known as the Power 9® and focus on helping people move naturally, eat wisely, connect with others, discover purpose, and change their environments.

The Grants Pass Blue Zones Project staff help Grants Pass citizens do this by convening walking and potluck groups who agree to get together once a week for ten weeks. Research shows that if people get together once a week for 10 weeks, 60% of those people will maintain those social connections. The Grants Pass staff also convene Purpose Workshops to help people better understand their natural gifts and how they might use those gifts within the community.

They work with schools, employers and churches to make the environment healthier. Many of us spend the most of our day at work – so having healthy choices at our workplace is key. Blue Zones Project offers **solutions**



for worksites to inspire employees to be happier and more productive at work and at home. A healthier employee costs less, too. When workers feel better and more connected to their colleagues, they miss less work, make greater contributions, and have lower healthcare costs. Finally, the Blue Zones Project staff work with grocery stores and restaurants to make sure that healthy food options are available. These solutions have measurably lowered healthcare costs, increased productivity, and improved the quality of life for residents in Blue Zones Project communities.

Learn More: facebook.com/bluezonesprojectgrantspass

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK

The Facebook page for Southern Oregon Success features almost daily postings of events taking place in our region and information shared from all over as part of our learning community efforts on what works and what doesn't in helping kids and families thrive.

If you do Facebook, check us out and Like us at Southern Oregon Success.

If you do not wish to receive future Updates from Southern Oregon Success, please email peter_buckley@southernoregonsuccess.org with the subject line of "Unsubscribe"