



## Southern Oregon Early Learning Services

### SOELS Governance Council

June 16, 2020

2:00-4:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

<https://soesd.zoom.us/j/94868124175>

Meeting ID: 948 6812 4175

Attendees (Via Zoom): Eileen Micke-Johnson, Geoffrey Lowry, Brettani Shannon, Jeanne Grazioli, Mary Hough, Kimberlee Whitney, Crystal Rowbotham, Brittain Zimmerman, Lisa O'Connor, Kerri Hecox, Samantha Watson, Susan Fischer-Maki, Katherine Clayton, Martha Ibarra, Mary Wolf, Adrienne Auxier, Jessica Durrant. Hub Staff: René Brandon, Teresa Slater, Chelsea Reinhart, Molly McLaughlin, Vicki Risner

Agenda Item	Point Person
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<b>Call to Order</b>	<b>Eileen</b>
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<b>Welcome &amp; Greetings</b>	<b>Eileen</b>
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- Eileen Micke-Johnson with RCC, Early Childhood & Elementary Education program and one of the co-chairs along with Geoff.
- Geoff Lowry, the program director for OCDC for Jackson and Josephine Counties and one of the co-chairs.
- Mary Wolf, with Child Care Resource Network and Family Support and Connections
- Susan Fischer-Maki, Allcare Health, my role here is as translator and bridge between health care transformation and what's taking place in the early childhood and K-12 systems
- Brettani Shannon, Parent rep for Josephine County
- Crystal Rowbotham, Parent rep for Jackson County
- Kim Whitney, with the Department of Human Services, the district manager for child welfare and self sufficiency in Jackson and Josephine Counties.
- Britt Zimmerman, Kid Time Children's Museum and The Learning Loft Preschool
- Jessica Durant, Direct of K-8 curriculum and instruction along with federal programs for the Three Rivers School District in Josephine County, Grants Pass.
- René Brandon, Director of the Early Learning Hub
- Chelsea Reinhart, Early Learning Hub

- Teresa Slater, Early Learning Hub, works primarily with the early learning to kindergarten transition.
- Molly McLaughlin, Early Learning Hub, currently supporting Preschool Promise programming in our region and beginning to shift to Coordinated Enrollment shortly.
- Jeannie Grazioli, Executive Director of the Medford School District in the Teaching and Learning department.
- Sam Watson, Community Health Manager with Jackson Care connect, one of the CCO's serving Jackson County.
- Vicki Risner, Early Learning Hub
- Adrienne Auxier, Program manager at Kairos Jackson Services in the mental health area.

### **Additions or changes to the Agenda**

No changes or additions.

### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

PowerPoint Presentation

René: This is an annual document that Governance Council members review and update. All of you who are part of this Governance Council are considered Public Officials, under Oregon Public Meeting Law, while you are performing your duties on the Council. Members are held accountable to public meeting law and adhering to the law as outlined under conflict of interest. We have been going through a process over the last year and a half with Consultant Heidi McGowan, who you all met at our retreat last month in May. She has been helping us fine tune and ensure that all of our practices were aligned with public meeting law and conflict of interest requirements. We want to make sure that we are above any questions in the way we're doing business.

In the near future, Vicki will be sending that annual document to everyone. Please electronically fill out the information and send it back to us, as we need to keep on file. Every program year we will revisit that document to identify any conflicts either actual or potential that you have declared. During each meeting, a council member is expected to declare if they have either potential or actual conflict of interest to ensure that everyone else on the council knows about it and that the appropriate actions are being taken.

This is verbiage directly from the document that you will receive: The SOELS Governance Council is the decision-making body of the collaborative governance structure for the Early Learning Hub of Jackson and Josephine Counties. Governance Council members selected to serve on the Council shall be required to state an actual or potential conflict of interest in all deliberations, correspondence or discussions where the actual or potential conflict of interest could have bearing on actions or decisions of the Governance Council.

On the next slide, it defines what those are for you. What we have discovered through our journey here is that sometimes that's not really clear. If we have a topic that we are going to vote on that is related to funding and you're not sure, if you have a conflict of interest, we can have a conversation about it in the meeting. We can work our way through it.

In a potential conflict, a Governance Council member shall be allowed to participate in discussion or vote with a potential conflict of interest, once that potential conflict has been announced.

In an actual conflict, a Governance Council member shall not be allowed to participate in discussion or vote if there is an actual conflict of interest. All budgeting, funding, grant appropriations and other related transactions shall be approved by a vote of the Council members who are not involved in the conflict.

Some common examples would be because this is a cross sector membership it's not uncommon that one of the members around the table is part of a program that would directly benefit from a vote that we are taking to fund something. And so they would declare an actual conflict of interest. It could be that someone sits on a board of directors for another entity that could be receiving funds. That would be an actual conflict of interest. A potential conflict of interest could be that you are providing some type of consultation to a program that could potentially receive funding. You wouldn't be necessarily benefiting but there could be some benefit to you if that program received additional funding. Sometimes it's a little bit murky, and the whole spirit behind it is just transparency.

Eileen: Say I was a parent and I had a child enrolled in OCDC and Geoff applied for a grant from an entity that SOELS awarded the money for or made recommendations, as a parent I would need to declare a conflict of interest as would Geoff as the director of that program. Another example, if I sat on the board of the Family Nurturing Center and we were discussing money that is going to relief nurseries, or we were talking about a grant award that they had applied for, we would declare a conflict of interest.

The third bullet point on the slide states that Governance Council members may participate in other votes related to agencies, budgets and grants if the vote will not have a bearing on the organization that they are representing causing the actual or potential conflict of interest. It might be just one small portion of the meeting that you would abstain from voting and discussing. The rest of the meeting would be open for you to participate.

There is one exception to abstaining from voting: If a council member is met with an actual conflict of interest and the member's vote is necessary to meet the minimum number of votes required for official action for a quorum, the member may vote. The member must take the required announcement and refrain from any discussion, but may participate in the vote required for official action by the governing body. This prevents actions items from getting delayed because we have a smaller community that does tend to have a lot of conflict of interest.

Eileen: Just a reminder this is Oregon Public Meeting Law so you'll see the Oregon Revised Statute numbers there for your reference.

René: And for those of you that have been around for a while, we have shared the Public Meeting Law to you. And for those of you that are new to the council, it is part of that Goggle drive that was shared with you during your onboarding. Very soon Vicki will be emailing out that document for you to review. When you are reviewing it and signing it, if there any questions don't hesitate to reach out to Eileen or myself for clarification. That's it for this piece of it.

### **Budget Forecast**

René: Working from the PowerPoint: This is a little bit of history so everybody on the council can see where we are with our budget. Back in 2019, HB 3427, now known as the Student Success Act, was passed that was anticipated to bring \$2 billion from corporate activities tax into early learning and K12 education. The breakdown was that about 50% of that would go to the Student Investment Account going directly to the K12

education system. About 30% would be utilized by Oregon Dept. of Education for statewide education initiatives. And then the remaining 20% would go into the Early Learning account.

The Early Learning account is the focus for this council. The priorities were increase slots in the Oregon Prekindergarten, in Preschool Promise, more funding to relief nurseries, to Healthy Families Oregon and to parenting education. Also adding an Early Learning Equity Fund to Oregon to address disparities in access and in outcomes for students in Oregon.

The impact of COVID-19 on state budgets means that state agencies have been asked to look at what it would mean to have up to a 17% reduction in current contracts. The way that that was translated was 8 ½ % per year. But because we are now at the end of the first year of the biennium, it could be up to a 17% cut for existing funding, all to be absorbed in this second half of the current biennium. We were asked to do an exercise just to see what that would look like until we learn more from the Early Learning Division.

We took the original amount that the Early Learning Hub in Southern Oregon was awarded for each of those funding streams on the left: Kindergarten Partnership & Innovation (KPI), School Readiness, Healthy Stable & Attached families, Family Support and Hub Coordination. We did the exercise of looking at what the original award amounts were for each funding stream, subtracting the full 17% reduction, subtracting what has been spent to date as well as contracts that we currently have in place with other entities to fulfil the work that we've identified as priorities in the region, and funding going towards hub staff and to SOESD as our backbone agency, with a 5.26% indirect. Taking all of these into account, the column on the right is what's remaining with a full cut of 17 percent.

The one caveat to that is that we really don't know what the impact of KPI is going to be. There is the potential that there could be no KPI funding for the second half of the biennium. That's worse case scenario. As another exercise, the Early Learning Division has asked us to identify the types of activities that we have going on and what it would look like at a 25% reduction, 50% reduction, 75% reduction or if it was completely eliminated for that second year of the biennium. All of this was just an exercise. There was no clear understanding yet if some of the funds would be held harmless, if some of the funds might absorb more of a cut, some of our funds could receive less of a cut, we just don't know. We are in a holding pattern until we learn more. There is hope that we'll have a little bit more information at the conclusion of the legislative short session which begins on June 24<sup>th</sup>. We are hoping to have a little more clarity at that time, but it's possible that we won't really know what we are working with until late July or even August.

In this analysis we did not include Preschool Promise or MIECHV funding. Our contract with the Early Learning Division to support Preschool Promise ends June 30<sup>th</sup>. All of those funds go directly out to provide programming so there will not be a reduction in that funding. MIECHV is federal and there isn't an anticipated cut right away because it's a federal funding stream and is handled differently. The Family Support fund is also federal funding and it's possible that that one will also not be impacted during this cut, at least there could be a delay in possible reductions.

René: To summarize, the remaining amount for each funding stream is what hasn't been spent or obligated. Again, this was just an exercise. Take KPI for example: It looks like there is almost \$200,000 remaining after a 17% cut. This is excluding all of the work that we were about to enter into, a lot of it for summer jump start programs and Ready for Kindergarten, parent training activities. There is a lot of activity that happens in the second half of the biennium beginning in the summer that is on pause. Our communications to our partners is that we just don't know. It could be that we would have this much remaining if there was only a 17% cut. If KPI is eliminated for the second half of the biennium there will be no dollars left in KPI.

This PowerPoint will be shared after the meeting as well so you can refer back to it. If any other questions come up after the meeting feel free to send them our way.

### **Coordinated Enrollment Update**

Molly: For Preschool Promise we are wrapping up the last month of year 4. For the past four years, all participating Preschool Promise providers have had the task of doing outreach to families, eligibility and recruitment on their own. For the 2020-2021 Preschool Promise year, the ELD has charged hubs with providing Coordinated Enrollment. So instead of having that on the plate of every participating provider, the families will be going to the hubs and working through a process being developed by the ELD. The tasks that will be underneath that umbrella will be the marketing, the outreach, the recruitment and the determining of the eligibility. We will help families get familiar with all of the Preschool Promise programs that exist in our region and honor parent choice in placement.

COVI-19 has impacted the rollout of Coordinated Enrollment. We are still awaiting that final guidance, eligibility application, and intake forms that will be part of that process. In the past families who were eligible were put on a wait list. This process will be adding families to a pool with prioritization that will be aligned with all of the sector work that happened at the end of 2019 to identify each region's priority populations, families that were furthest from opportunity.

René: I would also add that we are now working with the Rogue Challenge's collaborative, learning more about their closed loop referral system because we feel this would be a way to support family's needs, not just for Preschool Promise. We're really excited about that new opportunity.

Molly has been proactively sharing ideas and suggestions with the ELD for what Coordinated Enrollment could and should look like. Molly is reaching out to current PP providers asking for their input on what they think would be most helpful. She will be sharing this information with PP providers and other Hub directors across the state as well as the ELD. We're hoping that by sharing this information from experts across our region to the state we can inform and shape what Coordinated Enrollment looks like, so that it is more meaningful to children and families and to the Preschool Promise programs that are delivering the services.

### **Preschool Promise RFA Update**

René: With the passing of the Student Success Act, our region was poised to receive between 75-150 additional Preschool Promise enrollment opportunities beyond the 217 current have. With the impact of COVID-19, we do not know if there will be expansion this year, but we have been informed that current levels of service will not change. The Hub will not be contracting directly with PP providers any more, instead focusing on the Coordinated Enrollment piece. The ELD will contract directly with the PP programs. The applications for PP were recently reviewed by a small committee; I participated on the committee. All of the applications were reviewed and scored, then aligned with each region's sector plan in a ranking exercise. Then Early Learning System Director, Miriam Calderon, will make final contract determinations for the PP programs that will be rolling out in the fall. We're hoping to hear soon how this process will move forward.

Molly has set up an interest form on our website for families to say "Yes, I'm interested in learning more about PP." and indicating whether or not they are currently in a PP program.

Molly: As of 6/12, 130 families have filled out the form. 60% new families, 40% returning for a 2nd year of PP. I have reached out to providers to get their returning student information so everyone is captured. I know that with Head Start, the process will be more collaborative. We're doing as much as we can do, but we are in an information void. At least we'll have a clear picture of what is happening for returning families.

René: It also gives anxious families something to do, to know that they have reached out, that their request has been recorded, that there is someone on the other end of that request acknowledging that as soon as we have more information that we will reach out to them for next steps. Hopefully that will reduce some of the anxiety that families are experiencing right now.

Molly: I agree. So for all families and new families, they receive a letter with the timeline so they know what the next steps are. Everyone is reassured that the fact that there has been no application release. That we are waiting for more information.

Eileen: Mary, I don't know if you have any other feedback that you've been hearing about from the provider stand point, the uncertainty of bringing staff back and when, how the delay is affecting programs.

Mary: We hear from providers. Any provider that applied for PP is extremely anxious to find out because of lot of their plans for next year depend on if they are awarded the PP contract. So that's a matter of anxiety for some of them and urgency. 87 providers did apply for the emergency childcare grant, providers that were open for emergency care during these past few months. Phase 2 of the Emergency Child Care grant will be starting up next week. Providers who were not able to apply in Phase 1 are able to apply.

### **Committee Updates**

René: This is the list of the committees that we will be updating. There are lots of other work groups that are doing great work. These are the newly sanctioned sub committees of Southern Oregon Early Learning Hub. In future meetings you could be hearing some other updates from some other great work that's happening as well, but today we will be focusing on these.

*Executive Committee* René: The EC has gone through some restructuring. Back in January, the last time Heidi McGowen facilitated a meeting for us, we had identified that we have two cochairs, a secretary and a treasurer, but we don't have a job function for the secretary and the treasurer. We have Vicki as our Administrative Assistant who takes the minutes for the meeting and sets all of the meetings up for us. We have SOESD's business office that provides all of the financials. So that traditional officer structure didn't really make sense. Soon after that, Susan Zotolla, who was functioning as the Secretary, termed off of the council and we did not back fill that position. At our last EC meeting, Lisa O'Connor, who is acting as treasurer, discussed that she would like to refocus her energy in other areas. She was more than willing to join some other committees and step away from this.

We've gone through a year and a half of a lot of restructuring of the GC and it's been really helpful to have the leadership of these folks around the table. We are coming to the end of a lot of that back work that was really focused on infrastructure. It really feels like a good, natural timing for folks to move off of it. That leaves Eileen and Geoff as co-chairs. In reviewing our roster of memberships we realized that Eileen's term actually ended in April. My question to her was asking if she would stay a little longer until we close this chapter and that would give us some time to recruit for another new co-chair. Eileen agreed to stay through the July meeting. That will give us some time to recruit for another co-chair. That co-chair would start in the September meeting because we don't meet in August.

We also discussed in that January meeting with Heidi that we would like to have co-chairs serve in all of our sub-committees so that there is more partner leadership to move the work forward.

*Agency Advisory  
Council*

René: This is our largest cross sector partnership group. It has done some important work as we've been living through the change that has been happening of the ELD. It was through this work that we realized that we needed the Educational Equity Committee, specifically on issues for families of color. This group has been working for several months now. We're gaining traction and learning a lot.

We hosted Rogue Challenge partner presentation on the collaboration that includes a closed loop referral system. As more partners join, data will be collected to identify how well the early learning system is able to meet the needs of families.

In September, will resume the strategic planning efforts that were happening over several months prior to the pandemic. This work is aligned with The Early Learning Council's 5 year Strategic Plan: Raise Up Oregon.

*Educational Equity*

René: Our Equity Committee supported local partners in applying for ELD's Equity Fund to increase the capacity of culturally specific organizations to address parent child interactions, parenting education, and kindergarten readiness. We wanted to make sure that they had enough support navigating the application process, gathering any data that they needed, and any letters of support that would show how they are integrated into region.

Currently, we are focused identifying the region's capacity to assist families in navigating services in their home language when it's not English. For example, during this COVID-19 pandemic, families whose first language is not English were not able to easily find information as things were changing so quickly. We are finding out where the community health workers reside, in which agencies, and what languages capacity they have. Several partners are helping to identify how to get the information so we can get a document to better assist with communications.

Future meetings will be to identify how best to support early learning and kindergarten programs in mitigating practices that have encouraged racism and/or marginalized families of color.

Mary: The ESD is offering an Equity and Diversity Conference that might be good to share with all the members and they can share it more widely.

Lisa: Children's First for Oregon has a pretty group of folks that they count on who offer Equity training across the state. They might even pay for it.

*Early Care & Education  
Workforce*

René: We originally convened to identify how to recruit more professionals into the

workforce in response to the passing of the Student Success Act and more funding into early learning. With COVID-19 and the impact to that funding, the shift is to address how to retain and stabilize the current early learning workforce.

Workforce and economic development partners have reached out with interest about child care and its impact on the other sectors. We are releasing PSA to media, a graphic for partners to share on webpages, and participating on committee with City of Medford to award funds to early learning programs for scholarships for families.

Providers received a letter from ELD, soliciting input from childcare programs to see what reopening can and should look like. The reality is that we are going to need child care if we are going to get the economy and community back up and working.

Susan: In Josephine County there is what's called the Collaborative Economic Development Council. It's a partnership between the City of Grants Pass, Josephine County, the chamber, and several other representatives. They addressed what they felt was the perceived lack of emergency child care. I knew that René, Mary and Eileen were the perfect group to educate the larger group. We shared where emergency childcare was available, introduced them to 211 system for child care referrals, René modified a great one-page informational flyer that is now hosted on their website which is updated frequently. This has allowed partners to share information on their social media platforms that is the same, linking back to the same source document.

René: We had a couple of the members from the Collaborative Economic Development Council who were interested in participating but had scheduling conflicts. Gene Merrill had Joshua Shannon as a representative for his program attend. We're hopeful more will be able to attend our next Workforce meeting.

Eileen: There was a representative from the City of Medford which was great. Which leads to another opportunity for collaboration which is nice.

René: The graphic which Susan was describing, we'll push out to everyone in this group. It's something that can be used by any organization, to put on their website, stating to call 211 for childcare, with links to additional information. It's an opportunity to engage employers who might not really know what the status of childcare is right now. They might have misinformation so it's important for them to be looped in and share resources.

We are working on releasing a PSA to be given out to media, emphasizing that child care has not returned to normal. We also have an opportunity with the City of Medford, who has about \$50,000 for childcare scholarships and have reached out to us for assistance in granting those scholarships. There are about 5 of us who will be joining them in how to roll out this scholarship opportunity.



Mary's team is working with the director of Blossom Hills to bring back the Director's Group with this topic as one of the first topics to bring these folks together.

*Child & Family  
Wellbeing*

René: The goals of this committee are to raise awareness in the community of the importance of focusing not just on child outcomes but on two generational family support, and to increase partner and family access to resources and supports when they are needed.

Families are experiencing more need than ever, due to job losses, fewer child care opportunities, stresses of distance learning, and being required to stay home. A few of the activities include AllCare's Strengthening Families Initiative is focused on the HOPE model, and will include podcasts and other media platforms to reach families and the partners serving them; Rogue Challenge partners are sharing a screener for families to identify the needs they would like assistance with. Approximately 70% of families stated they wanted activities to do with their children while staying at home. The hub used funds to build infant/toddler and preschool to age 8 kits for families requesting them.

*Adjournment*

René: We've given out some information about committees. If you have an interest in knowing more about a committee, or if you have any suggestions for something that a committee might want to take on as a priority, we would really love your feedback.

Eileen: Thank you to everyone for being here today. We'll see you in July.

*Next Meeting:*

July 21, 2020  
Location: Zoom Call  
2:00-4:00 pm