



Early Care and Education Workforce Committee

February 4, 2021

10:30 am-12:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

<https://soesd.zoom.us/j/92650623888>

Meeting ID: 926 5062 3888

Attendees: Lisa Farlin, Reneé Breznay, Alyssa, Britt Zimmerman, Katrina McGrath, Bridey Mendoza-Moore, Eileen Micke-Johnson, Darcy Larson, Peter Buckley, Henry Oliva, Devon Finley, Geoffrey Lowry, Greg Thweatt, Katherine Tovar, Valerie Lovelace, Jim Fong, Stacy Inman

Hub Staff: Chelsea Reinhart, Vicki Risner

Agenda

Welcome & Introductions – Mary Wolf/Katherine Tovar, Co-Chairs

Lisa Farlin – Southern Oregon Head Start, 0-5 Director

Renee Breznay – licensor in the Medford office.

Alyssa (did not record last name) - a new licensing specialist

Britt Zimmerman - Director of education at Kid Time Children's Museum and Ivy School

Katrina McGrath – with Childcare Resource Network (CCRN)

Bridey Mendoza-Moore - Department chair, Early Childhood Elementary Dept at RCC

Eileen Micke-Johnson – with the ECE Dept. at RCC

Darcy Larson - Coordinator for Jackson county EI/ECSC, ages three to five

Peter Buckley - Southern Oregon Success

Henry Oliva – ELD - regional licensing manager with the office of childcare.

Chelsea Reinhart - Early Learning Hub

Devon Finley – CCRN

Vicki Risner – Early Learning Hub

Geoffrey Lowry - Oregon Child Development Coalition

Greg Thweatt - Rogue Workforce Partnership

Jim Fong – Rogue Workforce Partnership

Katherine Tovar – Director, Blossom Hills Early Learning Center

Valerie Lovelace - City Councilor in Grants

Stacy Inman - Jackson County Early Intervention

Next Steps for Recruitment Campaign

Review Draft Recruitment Flyer – CCRN staff

Devon presented a rough draft from a meeting the previous week.

(See *Our Community Needs Dedicated...flyer*).

Concern:

- That this is a complicated field with so many different jobs, entry paths and ways people can play a role, going to be difficult to fit within a simple flyer.
- Flyers could overwhelm people with too much information or lack of explanation of acronyms which are unknown to them as well as varied.

General Flyer about the ECE Field:

Create a flyer with ECE Field categories where people could click on a box to pursue more details for each category. Example:

- EI/ECSE
- Home Visitors
- Family Child Care Provider
- Child Care Centers (private and non-profit)

Salary Flyer specific to ECE positions:

There was discussion of using position categories such as the ones below instead:

- Lead teachers
 - There are different types of lead teachers and pay range varies greatly.
 - EI/ECSE required more education and experience and is paid more.
- Aides
- Food Service
- Misc. staff (receptionists, office, bus drivers, etc.)

Suggestions:

- Include both hourly and annual wages
- Call out preschool vs infant toddler programs since wages often differ based on the age of the children served.

Bridey stated that the focus of this first flyer, this marketing strategy needs to shift from “come here” or “you might be interested”, but more “here’s the exact steps you can take to get to get to each of these places that you might want to go” and get those folks started right now.

There was extensive conversation regarding the immediate needs for lead teachers vs entry-level positions for almost all providers.

Recruiting Lead Teachers

Barriers due to COVID:

- Large number of Lead Teachers did not come back due to their own child care needs.
- Lead Teachers are required under current COVID guidelines to walk children into class, to allow for other teacher breaks, any time a person is alone with a child. Aides are not technically allowed to work in these capacities under current emergency guidelines.
- Many programs could open more classrooms with qualified Lead Teachers if they returned to the workforce.
- There are currently no provisions in licensing to bring up staff quickly to lead teacher status.

Suggestions:

- Is there a possibility of using incentives to have these teachers return once the K-12 system is back to full days of onsite learning?
- Is there a possibility of using funding to help pay for child care for these teachers if they come back now?

Barriers due to ECE System:

- An overwhelming number of applicants for Lead Teacher positions are not qualified, but interested in working in the field.
- Discussion around how they can get the experience needed to be a lead teacher.

Suggestions:

- Britt shared that she got many of her Lead Teachers as practicum teachers who were working on getting their experience.
- Is there a way to fast track existing assistant teachers into Lead Teachers positions?
 - Henry stated that it's a graduated process. Assistants or aides can build themselves up with time and experience. It's on a case by case basis because not all programs are the same.

Barriers due to Region:

- Difficult to recruit from beyond the valley due to severe housing shortage.

Recruiting Entry-level Aides I & II

Barriers:

- Someone stressed the importance of including the need to complete the central background registry so people know up front what the requirement is.

Suggestions:

- All providers stated that they would welcome intern aides in their programs as previously outlined in past meetings.
- There are steps many programs can take that would allow potential teachers the ability to work up into lead teacher positions within one year with additional education, training and experience.
- Jim stated that they could help with some of the paid part of an internship. They have job training subsidies and will help employers.
- Jim also stated that they have job training dollars and paid internship dollars right now that they are willing to put towards this goal. They can also provide incentives, especially if they were laid off or on long-term unemployment. In these instances, they can provide incentives for: child care, housing supports, laptops to access training, etc.
- Eileen stressed that this is the long-term solution which is necessary now as well. Getting interested people, training them up so this doesn't continue to happen in the future.
- Everyone agreed that having a lot of Aides is positive, especially if they are provided as paid internships. Current COVID restrictions to limit the number allowed in a classroom, but it prepares the workforce to be ready once restrictions are lifted.

Next Steps:

- Chelsea, Katherine and Bridey all offered that it's helpful to have both (immediate and future needs) flyers, to be able to bring it all together. But for the purpose of this meeting suggested focusing on the need for the workforce. Start with something to attract lead teachers. Then take the time to build the other flyer so that as a community, everyone can see all the opportunities within the early learning field and address the post COVID needs that have been previously identified.
- Greg stated that he's creating a child care provider, youth development page on Real Careers and wants to include occupations. He can help with wage ranges from the employment department. Also, that he'll have a mockup of the participant flyer based on the healthcare careers and will work with Devon on this too.
- Geoff said that if we send him the chart, he would fill in his numbers from OCDC.
- Chelsea: We need that marketing flyer and maybe for right now we'll keep moving on that and how we market what positions are available. The other need is getting

more people into the field, identifying who can support them and help walk them through this process. We went through one of the career flow charts for the health care sector. We wanted to go through that to get feedback on “Is this a good model for helping entry level and beyond.” (Shared Greg’s *Caregivers – Staff flowchart*)

- Discussion included inserting video links into the website that would expand on information for each career area. (Greg said that this is possible).
- Importance of noting that it’s a physical job, on their feet, must be flexible.
- Need for a background check.
- Cover the unique settings for some programs such as faith-based, Spanish language, etc.

Meeting came to an end due to time constraints.

Update on CMHS Paid Internships in early learning programs – Jen Perry

(Time ran out before this presentation. Jen sent recap to be included.)

The ECE Internship Project has officially lifted off! In early January we began recruitment at Central Medford high school in both the mainstream classrooms and special ed transition classes. Our team developed a form for interested students to complete. We are currently engaging 7 students in the process and 5 provider agencies.

We have held two student orientations where we shared specifics about the opportunity, answered questions, and distributed employment paperwork. All 7 youth have completed employment paperwork. We then work individually with the student and school counselor to determine schedule availability and placement readiness. When the stars have aligned we connect the youth with a provider and schedule an interview. To date one youth has been interviewed and hired - he will start February 10th. At least one additional youth is scheduled to interview this Friday with the remaining interviews in the coming weeks (as youth complete their "readiness" requirements). Supports have included interview preparation, helping youth open a bank account, order employment documents, work through social security questions, and determine transportation options. Our team is also working with the group of 7 to help those over 18 complete their background registry and assist all youth in completing their PSU child development classes. These will be completed over the next several months along with food handler certification and CPR certification.

So far everything has moved smoothly though I'd love to see it move a bit quicker! There is quite a bit of work happening individually with students to make sure they have what they need and are prepared properly to be successful - but I think that's what sets this project apart from others - the individual support to manage through the steps and critically think through barriers as they come up.

I'm working to solidify our learning objectives working with two of the partners to help ensure they are both attainable and appropriate for the career path. We will also be doing another "PR Push" to recruit another handful of interested students with the goal of employing a minimum of 10 over the project.

Next Meeting: March 4, 2021