



SOELS Governance Council

March 16, 2021

2:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Join Zoom Meeting

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Meeting ID: 948 6812 4175

Attendees: Brittain Zimmerman, Katherine Clayton, Geoffrey Lowry, Kimberlee Whitney, Stacy Inman, Laura McKeane, Sam Watson, Eileen Micke-Johnson, Mary Wolf, Jessica Durrant, Martha Ibarra

Absent: Adrienne Auxier, Lisa O'Connor, Jeanne Grazioli, Scott Beveridge, Crystal Rowbotham

Hub Staff: René Brandon, Teresa Slater, Vicki Risner

Agenda

Call to Order at 2:33

Welcome and Greetings

Additions or changes to the Agenda - none

Approval of minutes from 2-16-2021

Motion to approve minutes: Sam Watson

2nd Motion: Kim Whitney

Motion Passed

Legislation related to Early Learning

René shared Eames Consulting Bill Summary by Priority dated 3/5/21. There will be another one this coming Friday. She will start sending them out to council members as we receive them every two weeks. This document ranks all of the early learning bills that are currently in legislation. They are clustered into ranking from 1 to 5 with the 1's being the ones hubs want to follow closely. The Bill # is a hyper link directly to the bill referenced.

The two that are directly connected to hub work are:

HB 2053 Relating to early learning programs; declaring an emergency. Modifies community plans requirements for Preschool Promise Program.

This is modifying the community plan requirement for the Preschool Promise program. This is work directly linked to the early learning hub system coordinating that community plan. We were notified that it has moved into a work session so it's sitting with the early childhood committee as part of their work session.

HB 2054 Relating to the Early Learning Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation Program. Modifies recipients of, and uses for, grants provided under Early Learning Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation Program.

Addressing changes to the Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation Program affectionately known as KPI. It has been referred to the early childhood committee and their work session has been scheduled.

Those are the two that most directly impact the work of the hub. You may find some others in there that you may personally want to follow because of whatever association you might have with your work.

Bilingual Staff Recruitment

René has posted for the bilingual position but hasn't received any applications to date. Not surprising right now between COVID and considering that folks who have that bilingual capacity and skill set we're looking for are in pretty high demand. It's not outside the realm of possibilities to hire someone outside the area who would work remotely. We are hoping to transition back into in person services so it would be much preferred to have this support be in person, but we'll see how that goes. We are feeling an eagerness to get this filled. September is when the next year for Preschool Promise begins. Ideally recruitment would be starting next month. We would love to have that person on board and trained by that point. Until then it will be all hands-on deck for the hub team and a lot of other work gets slowed down during that rush cycle when all of the applications are coming in.

Laura: Is that a full-time position? René: It can be flexible for the right person, we can make accommodations. Ideally it would be full time, but we could augment some of those duties with onboarding another person that isn't necessarily bilingual but can pick up some of that workload. It's really the engagement with families that we need a bilingual person in place for. So even if you know a good candidate who isn't looking for full-time, we would still love to talk with them. If someone isn't sure if this would be a good match for them, I would love to have a conversation and just talk with them about it and describe what the work actually is doing. They could talk with Molly McLaughlin who holds the bulk of the work to really give that person a sense of what they could be committing to. I will ask Chelsea to send out the position description and posting announcement again to everyone so that you can continue to share.

Jessica: Have you worked with Charlie Bauer from SOESD? He might know of a bilingual person interested in the job. Charlie has been contacted.

Sam: Can we make a SOELS Facebook post so we can share it out from there? (It has been done)

Hub Contract Update

René shared *SOELS Funding Streams 2021-2023* excel sheet. These are our budget estimates. This is something that I put together each biennium so that we can see how funds are changing from biennium to biennium. We'll go through this by funding stream. This is what we're anticipating coming our way based on what we know so far. The legislators are still in session. We don't expect to see final numbers until late June. If there aren't any significant changes to legislation, this is what we expect to happen.

I put the highlights for this current 21-23 biennium in yellow across every funding stream. The first column, Hub Coordination, you'll see that \$929,943 is the funding that supports our staffing and our infrastructure needs. At the bottom it shows the difference between the last biennium award and

what we're anticipating. We are getting a bump of \$129,231 in our hub coordination funds. This is good news.

The second column, KPI, shows that KPI is taking a 18% hit. KPI was on the chopping block last biennium and we weren't sure that it was going to survive and it did. We were grateful and surprised, so we're not complaining when it's being reduced by 18%. That's completely manageable for us. What we're doing to address the cut is to use the increase in hub coordination funds to be able to pay for the hub staff that is currently coming out of KPI funds. We will be able to free up those KPI funds to go back out into the community.

School Readiness is the next fund. That fund is completely going away and is our biggest hit. The \$1.4 million cut to the early learning hub system is primarily being taken out of the school readiness fund. There won't be any hubs across the state that will be receiving this fund. The good news about that is that what we can use KPI for is essentially the same that we could use School Readiness for. The types of investments that we can make are not going to be impacted. The current programming that we have supported in previous bienniums with a School Readiness Fund is also not going to be as greatly impacted because of other factors.

We have been supporting our EI/ECSE but with the passing of the Student Success Act, EI/ECSE is actually going to be in a much better financial place. So, the idea that School Readiness funding not being part of it isn't going to be devastating to that program. We have also used that fund to pay for programming for The Family Connection, our parenting education hub. They have also had an uptick in funding due to the Student Success Act, therefore we're anticipating that they should be in a good place this next biennium as well.

It really leaves our Listo Family Literacy program as the one School Readiness investment that we've had throughout the years that we'll have to look at and evaluate what our investment can be with them going forward if we're choosing to do that and what funding stream we might use in order to continue to stabilize them. Their model has been impacted due to COVID. They had moved from serving close to 100 families to serving 30 over this last year. But they are serving those 30 more intensely with the support they're able to offer them. That will be some of the work of this committee going forward once we have our final numbers for the biennium.

The next two funds are Healthy, Stable, Attached Families and Family Support. The scope of work for those two funds are pretty much the same. The only difference is that Family Support is a federal fund and there are some restrictions around that in terms of making sure we're not supplanting other services when we invest with a local partner. If you look at the yellow cells, I divided it evenly between the two funds just as a holding place because we really don't know what those investment numbers are yet. We are anticipating that adding those two together will give us the total number going forward unless there are other changes to our overall funding.

The next one is Early Care in Education (ECE) Sector Planning. We received funding for this biennium for phase one of the ECE sector plan. Many of you were involved in our regional stewardship committee and all of the data analysis and priority population determination work that we did. We anticipate that the yellow box will not remain blank. When phase two is introduced there could be funding that accompanies that scope of work. We're not positive about that, but that's how they've operated this last biennium so we anticipate that could be the case in this biennium. So, although it looks like there is a \$52,000 reduction, we just don't have any information on what that is going to look like yet.

The Preschool Promise Coordinated Enrollment is also new for this biennium. We received the \$200,000 just for the second year of the biennium that we're in now. We will be receiving \$400,000 for the new biennium for the two-year investment. That will be used for Molly McLaughlin's salary and for our Spanish speaking Coordinated Enrollment specialist that we're looking for, as well as other coordinated enrollment needs such as translating documents, hiring interpreters until we can get a bilingual person in place, outreach activities.

The last one is our MIECHV fund, which is our maternal infant, early childhood home visiting fund. It is the only one that is not an ELD fund, but it is from the Oregon Health Authority. We convene a home visiting network to support our home visitors across the region. We bring in training, survey them to find out what their highest needs are and then create those opportunities to support their needs. Chelsea also participates in leadership efforts with the nurse family partnership, Early Head Start and Healthy Families. Those are the other three programs that receive MIECHV funding. The hub works with that leadership to coordinate MISCHV efforts across the region as well.

All totaled, what we had last biennium and what we're anticipating receiving this next biennium, still does show a deficit of \$281,809. That's not knowing if we're going to get our ECE Sector planning money. It's probably going to be somewhere around \$230,000 that we're looking at. I'm not at all concerned or worried about any impact in our investments. There are some hubs that have said that if their funding is reduced their partners will stop coming to the table. That has never been our experience here in Southern Oregon and is a great testament to the partnership in Southern Oregon. Money is always great and it definitely helps to get more families the services they need. But there's so much of the collaboration and the system alignment that is about partnership and discussion, figuring out what's not working and how we can work better together to streamline services. Although we would love to not see any reductions it's not a situation where our team has any concerns at all about the type and quality of work that's happening within our early learning system.

This is what we know right now. Eames Consulting is continuing to ask the legislature for current service levels for early learning hubs, meaning that \$1.4 million cut would not be implemented.

René shared *EL Hub 21-23 SOW Draft document*. This is the statement of work that's going to go into every hub contract. This document started out as 22 pages. We had the opportunity to go through this with our Governance Council Co-Chairs and with Scott Beveridge with SOESD as our backbone agency representative along with other hubs bringing their Governance Councils and backbone agencies to review and make recommendations to ELD. There were some untenable timelines that were put in the first iteration, about twice as many deliverables in a two-year period. There wasn't anything that was in the previous version that wasn't valuable, but it was more that the timeline wasn't working. We asked that the deliverables should have a reasonable due date on them. It should be considering how quickly the ELD can provide the templates to the hub in order for the hubs to begin the work on time and be able to deliver that work product by the due date. Now the due dates are reasonable and I don't see anything in this body of work that causes me concern.

I've highlighted two colors throughout the document. Yellow to highlight the things I think are the most critical for you to know. Green if there is something that we're going to want to talk about or that we haven't started yet. These will require us to have a conversation once this contract is in place.

The first section is about capacity. It's noting that all the hubs have to have at least three full time (FT) to do this work and to be able to deliver the work product. That's not a problem for us. We've been a staff of five now for several years and hope to be a staff of six soon.

Governance Council and Stakeholder Engagement. It calls out that every hub will need to have a Governance Council, a parent leadership council and a regional stewardship committee. We have two of the three. They'll talk more about the parent leadership council in the next section so just pause with that one right now. Note that the green section says that the Governance Council needs to meet a minimum of every quarter. We were meeting every other month and then we had a body of work to do to address public meeting law and conflict of interest. The ELD asked us to be meeting monthly while we went through that process until it was complete. That process is complete. We can talk about the desired frequency for the meetings going forward. I want to make sure that you're getting what you need. We can discuss that at a future meeting, maybe in June as we're looking at the new biennium to map out what that would look like.

The next box down notes that governance structure has members that include families who are identified in our region's priority population. We have a representative from the department of human services, from child care resource and referral and from the five sectors that are required. By statute, that includes our K12 system, early childhood services, business community, health services, as well as human and social services. We have all of those except private sector business. That has been a challenge that we've had since the beginning and it's something that we need to start talking about at the April or May meeting to start identifying how we want to go about recruiting for private sector business in a way that the person or people coming to the meeting feel it's a good use of their time and that they know what their role is.

The green section says representation of the five sectors must represent the agency's entire coverage area. If there is more than one county in an agency's coverage area, agency must demonstrate equitable representation from each sector in all counties. In the beginning we had a council of 25 people. It was one of the largest councils in the early learning hub system. With the support of ELD, last biennium we intentionally reduced our governance council. We have done so much collaborative work over the past several years that we felt that one representative was speaking on behalf of all of the children, families and that priority population, and not for their specific county or their specific agency. I will be going to go back to the ELD and have a conversation with them about the previous conversation and action that we took, with their support, just to make sure that it isn't something that we need to build back up. If we need to do that we will. I highlighted it in green because it's an area we need to explore more.

Eileen: Because counties in this region work so closely together, so many of our agencies cover both counties, that seemed to be a reasonable thing for us to do. To have a manageable council size.

René: It goes on to say that families who represent the region's priority populations, direct service providers, local leaders and required sector partners need to be represented in all of the hub system's work. We have done a lot of work to ensure that is indeed the case.

The next box talks about the parent leadership council. I'm happy to see the due date for having this in place isn't until January 2023. It was acknowledging that as important as important as the family voice is, that regular representation at the council level can be challenging and it takes time to build up. I don't anticipate that we will be waiting until January 2023. We're already having a discussion now about what that might look like. We have been trying, without great success once COVID interrupted that process, to have a least one parent representative on each of our committees. Then we would like to bring those parents all together to form that parent leadership council. We think that they would be exposed to the direct work and then they could receive that support from each other. We're looking at that as a possible model to try. More will come on that and it will obviously

be brought back as an agenda item for discussion and planning once we know a little more. We anticipate that the ELD will give us more guidance on what the requirements are. There are a couple of hubs that have a robust parent advisory council. We would like to learn from them and how they are keeping families at the table. It's a big ask to get families to give up spending time with their own families to talk about system work that may or may not feel meaningful to them in that moment. More to come on that as well.

The next section is highlighting public meeting law. We have a draft bylaw revision that needs to get approval from ELD. It was fine tuned in the first part of this biennium. Scott Beveridge needed to run it by the ESD's legal council just to make sure that there wasn't anything in it that was contrary to ESD's policies since they're the backbone agency of the hub. I need to circle back around with Scott to get that feedback. It also states that governance council representatives must have a signed conflict of interest statement on file annually. We shared that out in May or June. We still have a few that we haven't received back so Vicki will go through her list and send out a reminder email to anyone who hasn't returned it. If you would just read it over, sign it and get it back to us we'll have it on file and then we'll be in compliance.

The next green part is new language: Utilizing ELD provided toolkit, provide the necessary financial, logistics and professional learning supports and conditions to ensure that governance and parent council members, especially families experiencing targeted inequities, can fully engage in committee work. It sounds like the ELD is going to be providing training opportunities to governance council members. We're already asking for quite a large commitment with everyone showing up to this meeting, especially considering that the majority of you are also connected to committees. We could look at reducing the number of governance council meetings to allow for these training times without adding new time demands. I don't want to burden the council with more time than you're able to give. I think we can figure out how to be accommodating and flexible with that. This is language that they haven't unpacked anymore than what you see there in green so we're waiting for more information from them about that.

We will convene and facilitate the regional stewardship council. Many of you were a part of phase one when we did the ECE sector planning and identified the priority populations for our region. If COVID had not interrupted, phase two would have happened by now. We did bring that committee back a couple of times during our coordinated enrollment planning as we were strategizing with the committee on how to reach more families and rural communities, more families who have children experiencing disability, and those families whose home language is Spanish. Those are our three ECE Sector Plan priority populations for the region. We want to ensure they have access to and were understanding how to apply for Preschool Promise. Once phase two is shared with us, we will reach back out to that regional stewardship group. Depending on what the deliverables are, we might reach out to additional partners as well who might have expertise that would help inform the work.

The next section is Collaborative Community Planning. The first box is new regional system assessments. We'll be charged with completing a system assessment for the region, using a template that ELD is going to provide. The due date for that will be July 1, 2022. We have not received any guidance around that at all.

The next box is sector planning that I just referred to when describing the regional stewardship group. It will be convened at least annually when they release their new tool kit and templates will have a new body of work. They've already identified that there will be a due date of October 1, 2022.

The next box is Create Regional EL System Strategic Plan. We are already moving ahead with that. We are using Raise Up Oregon to engage our Agency Advisory Council in identifying what work should be carrying forward in our region and identifying which early learning committee will be responsible to make sure those deliverables happen. We are still in the very preliminary stages of prioritizing the Raise Up Oregon plan and what that means for Southern Oregon. The actual strategic plan itself won't be due until February 2023. I anticipate that we will have hours together within the next six months or so, at least the draft for this council to review and approve.

The next section is the annual work plan. This is essentially the work plan for how hub staff and committees are going to get the work done. ELD is creating a new template. The first one will be due by January 2022. The new statement of work calls out how the early learning hub system is interfacing with the child care resource and referral agency which, in our region, is Child Care Resource Network. Many of you are part of our early care and education workforce committee. That would be the committee that is driving the majority of the pieces outlined here. Working with stakeholders, early care and education partners, and local CCRN folks to identify children in the target population within coverage area, promote professional learning opportunities, and reduce expulsions and suspensions.

For early learning programs receiving state dollars there's going to be a requirement that they agree to an expulsion policy which is essentially unless there is permission from ELD, a child will not be let go from a program. Steps will be taken to provide support to the program, provide support to the child, and to the family. Oregon is looking at successes that different states had and will be pulling a work group together to identify how Oregon wants to move forward.

Jessica: That falls in alignment with K5. That change was made several years ago where suspensions and expulsions for elementary is now very rare. This's a tiny window which is basically physical harm to others. That will fall in alignment with K5 nicely.

René: I'm happy to see Oregon is not rushing forward with a policy without having supports in place for it to be successful for everybody. If any of you are interested in that type of work I'm sure there will be opportunity for you to weigh in and participate as well. It's our ECE Workforce subcommittee that is holding the majority of this system level work as we're moving forward together.

The next section is focusing on continuous quality improvement. This has always been a rub for the early learning hub system, figuring out how to measure what the hubs are doing; what is different in a community because the early learning hub system is doing good work. This is talking about utilizing our regional assessment plan, our ECE sector plan, and strategic plan to identify and develop regional child and family level outcomes and indicators of successful implementation. This will be the third iteration of how we measure hubs. The first was the metrics which were not something that hubs had control of or access to. We were not able to pull all of those metrics together and show anything. It was so different across every region that there was no way to tell the hub story. The ELD shifted to hub roles and indicators which were more around bodies of work, but still didn't connect to child or family outcomes. I am curious how it might look different now that we have Raise Up Oregon which is tied to specific goals and outcomes. As we are doing our regional alignment with that plan and identifying which data points we think would be the best ones to use to tell the Southern Oregon story, there will be more to come on this.

The next section is Use Short-cycle Feedback Loops, including qualitative and quantitative data analysis, along with feedback from community and family engagement as part of a continuous evaluation process. Every other year ELD sends out a massive survey to all of our sector partners, hundreds of people, asking: How do you work with your hub? How does your hub impact the families that you serve? Give examples of how you're engaged? These surveys give us a sense of how the hub is perceived out in the community. Do the stakeholders see themselves as part of the hub system or do they see the hub system as five people that work for the early learning hub rather than as part of this broader system? Do they see the system improvements? Every time this survey goes out we learn a lot about how the community sees the hub and themselves in relation to this early learning work.

Stakeholder Communications is the next section. I think everybody on this call is on Chelsea's large email distribution list that calls out so many of the activities that are not just happening within the early learning hub system but many other related services and opportunities as well. It's very easy to see we're engaged in quite a few committees; some that we convene and quite a few committees that we just participate on as a community partner.

The last section is budget and financing. The annual budget is due January 1, 2022. Each biennium, we go through the investments made for this last biennium and determine which ones we think are gaining momentum and hitting the mark, where we think we would want to continue to invest in them, identifying those that may be needing our fund for a bit, but have found other funding to blend and braid, and those that maybe no longer need our support. We then review the hub priorities investment document with you. We go funding stream by funding stream and tell you what we were funding and what we recommend to continue funding. We have discussion and then vote to adopt that final version that informs this big budget process so that ELD understands what we're funding and what that looks like in our region. Since we don't meet in August, it will be July and September when we are unpacking all of those investments depending on when we actually get our final budget from ELD. Hopefully by July.

Those are the highlights for the scope of work and a review of the budget. This is everything we know right now. We won't be seeing our contract for quite a while, but this will be the meat of it.

Hopefully you feel up to speed on what we're going to be expected to do. An idea of what our money situation looks like going forward. There will be lots of refining conversations once all of those pieces are in place.

Addition to the Agenda: Preschool data from Williams

Jessica: Since Teresa had to jump off, I can do this next month. Let's put it on next month's agenda.

Motion to adjourn: Eileen Micke-Johnson

2nd Motion: Jessica Durrant

Motion Passed

Adjournment 3:30 pm

Next Meeting April 20, 2021

2:30-4:30 p.m.