



**SOELS Governance Council**

**July 19, 2022**

2:30-4:30 p.m.

Zoom Meeting ID 948 6812 4175

**Attendees:** Adrienne Auxier, Brittain Zimmerman, Carrie Prechtel, Cynthia Anderson, Eileen Micke-Johnson, Jessica Durrant, Kimberlee Whitney, Sam Watson, Scott Beveridge.

**Absent:** Crystal Rowbotham, Geoffrey Lowry, Katherine Clayton, Mary Hough, and Stacy Inman.

**Hub Staff:** René Brandon, Teresa Slater, Vicki Risner

**Agenda**

**Call to Order 2:34 p.m.**

**Welcome and Greetings**

**Additions or changes to the Agenda**

None

**Hub Staffing Update**

René: Claudia Leonard has been with us for a couple of months. She is bilingual/bicultural. She has been absolutely amazing with her great questions and input. We have a second person in the queue to onboard who has great experience with home visiting and early learning. Her presentation skills are wonderful. We hope to have her to introduce to you soon.

**Approval of minutes from 5-17-2022**

Motion to approve minutes: Jessica Durrant

2<sup>nd</sup> Motion: Kimberlee Whitney

Approved

**Preschool Promise & Coordinated Enrollment Update**

There is a Preschool Promise Expansion RFA opportunity that closes on Thursday encouraging child care programs across the region to apply to become a Preschool Promise site. There is a potential to have up to 320 additional Preschool Promise slots across our region, which almost doubles our current enrollment opportunities.

In preparation for the expansion, we convened our Regional Stewardship Committee a few months ago to look at the geography across our region, the estimated child population under kindergarten age in each town, as well as the number of slots for child care that were available. From that data we made recommendations. Areas like Selma must travel some distance to access

preschool. In larger towns, there is more demand than there is slots available. Overall, the demand exceeds the supply.

René was part of the last expansion review process with ELD. Unfortunately, because of the timeline, ELD didn't ask for partners, Hubs or CCRN's to participate in the process this time. Last time, they announced those expansions in January and February. With this expansion, they announced the applications at the end of June with it closing this month. It's a less than optimal timeline, and it will be tough to get those new contracts in place by January with the state's ongoing procurement backlog.

Cynthia: In support of the expansion RFA, CCRN, SBDC, RCC, and the Hub provided 2 information sessions, in both English and Spanish, where we shared information with interested providers and assured them that we were there to assist them through the process. Staff has continued with ongoing support in smaller groups. Programs are already struggling with staffing issues. There are brand new providers who are interested, just worried about getting everything ready in time. We are encouraging people to put their hats in, but we have no idea as to who has applied or will apply.

Eileen: It was great that the sessions could be pulled together so quickly. They only had 4 weeks to respond to the RFA. Scrambling to make that happen was a bit of a whirlwind but they showed up and asked good questions.

#### **Preschool Promise Expansion Challenges:**

René presented a slide (attached with minutes) showing the challenges with current Preschool Promise slots going into the 2022-23 year. We are losing 80 slots compared to last year. During the pandemic it was very difficult to get all programs fully enrolled. It took to the end of the year. It's July and we only have 18 slots available across the region. So, the demand it back, which is great news. However, programs are continuing to experience workforce recruitment and retention challenges, making expansion for the region questionable.

Britt: As a preschool promise provider, with lots of slots and an RFA, the really big problem we are having is that the rest of us can't compete with the wages Head Start offers (\$30/hr.). ELD Increasing the per child allotment still doesn't come close to the wages of Head Start.

René: PSP compensates \$13,650 per student. What Britt is saying that that isn't enough to offer competing wages and benefits. Additionally, Head Start had a PSP contract for 54 slots. They told ELD that they are not renewing their PSP contract, because even at \$30/hr., they are not finding qualified teachers. We don't know what that ripple effect will have yet.

#### **Regional Assessment Discussion**

At the last GC meeting, we introduced the Regional Assessment work the early learning hubs are doing this year. This will be an agenda item at least through April/June of 2023. The Early Learning Division has tasked every hub region to look at the *Raise Up Oregon (RUO) Strategic Plan, Goal #1, Objective #2: Families have access to high-quality affordable early care and education that meets their needs.* We are going to unpack this with our regional partners, identifying what we already know and what questions we need to find answers to, in order to meet this objective. The Early Learning Division has contracted with a consultant firm that has put together some really good tools on how to do this.

René shared ELD Regional Assessment Workbook. What BENEFITS does the Hub most want out of the regional assessment process? What RESOURCES are available to help the Hub carry out the regional assessment? Discussion about our ability to meet those goals as ranked by Low, Medium and High.

Step 1 – Decide what to learn tab: Identified RUO Objectives as 2 and 3: Families have access to high-quality (culturally responsive, inclusive, developmentally appropriate) affordable early care and education that meets their needs. The early care and education workforce is diverse, culturally responsive, high quality and well compensated.

Carrie: I see many objectives on this list that go along with things that we are working with as well as Southern Oregon Success. The Community Health Assessment for CHIP will be happening in January.

René: We want to coordinate surveys to be thoughtful for families to get their meaningful input without over asking them.

### **CCO Social-Emotional Health Efforts**

Carrie/Sam: Shared their PowerPoint on Social Emotional Health. Slides attached with meeting minutes. This is a state wide CCO effort, along with partners and communities to support the social emotional health of children from birth to age 5. The goal is for families to have equitable access to services that are a best match for their needs and goals. This coordinated effort will involve reviewing data, creating an asset map of services and capacity, listening to community partners, and creating an action plan for 2023.

Goals:

- Create a community-driven action plan
- Build long-term collaboration and collective impact
- Enhance and integrate services and supports
- Use child-level data to guide and inform efforts
- Prioritize services for those most impacted.

Call to Action: Participate in planning for community engagement. Complete and share the easy online survey to map services in our community. Insights on how to meet parents and caregivers where they are. Promote and attend engagement meetings this fall. Preview the action plan draft. We want to get this done in our first year of this 3-year process. We are sending out surveys in the next couple weeks. It's important to get those back, their feedback is critical.

Eileen: Send a letter to our senators, Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden, to encourage our increase funding for child care that is stuck in the legislation. Programs can't find staff. Staff can't come to work because they don't have child care as well. I will check for a template that people can use.

### **Family Survey Results & Next Steps**

Over the spring term, we had 4 OHSU nursing students work with us. A survey was created and distributed broadly to families in our region.

René shared Family Survey – Summary 2022. We are reviewing the results with stakeholders and challenging our partners to look at the bullet points listed to see where and how they can participate and support their needs.

- Join Connect Oregon/Unite Us
- Promote Help Me Grow to families
- Become/Promote or provide a space for Kaleidoscope Play and Learn groups.
- Host a weekly support group for the community
- Promote parenting education opportunities from The Family Connection
- Promote Head Start, Preschool Promise and Employment Related Day Care Subsidy (ERCD)
- Are your services accessible in languages other than English?
- Is your staff bilingual. Duolingo is free and effective. Teams can do this together.
- Do you know which other organizations your families access?
- Ask families to give honest feedback about what's working and not working for them at your organization. Make those changes.
- Use SOELS's Protective Factors Toolkit.
- Conduct a Protective Factors assessment for your organization and identify strategies to implement.
- Messages to families that the entire region is focused on improving supports for families.

Discussion was had about providing compensation for families to participate in these surveys.

**We will be sending out a short survey about in-person or virtual meetings.**

**Motion to Adjourn**

Vote taken, approved  
Adjourned at 4:23 p.m.

**Next Meeting: September 20, 2022**

2:30-4:30 p.m.