

Lane Early Learning Alliance

3171 Gateway Loop
Springfield, OR 97477
tel 541.741.6000
fax 541.726.4150

earlylearningalliance.org

Mission: Working together to prepare children for success in school and life.

Vision: A community in which all Lane County families, organizations, and neighborhoods are unified in an effort to ensure that all children are safe, healthy, cherished and are ready to succeed in school.



Lane Early Learning Alliance Governance Consortium

August 10, 2018

3:00-5:00pm

Early Childhood CARES (1500 W. 12th Ave, Eugene, OR 97402)

NOTES

Present:

Gustavo Balderas, Eugene 4J School District
Marian Blankenship, Pacific Source Health Plans
Todd Hamilton, Creswell School District
Sue Norton, Lane Community College
John Radich, Department of Human Services
Annie Soto, Head Start of Lane County
Leslie Finlay, Relief Nursery
George Russell, Community Leader
Judy Newman, Early Childhood CARES
Karen Gaffney, Lane County
John Lively, Oregon State Representative

Absent:

John Stapleton, PIVOT Architecture
Debi Farr, Trillium Community Health Plan
Noreen J. Dunnells, United Way of Lane County

Tina Gutierrez-Schmich, Bethel School District
Chris Parra, Bethel School District
Darcy Phillips, Cornerstone Community Housing
Tony Scurto, Lane Education Service District
Lise Schellman, Pearl Buck Center
Liz Schneider, Parent Representative

Staff:

Bess Day, United Way of Lane County
Holly Mar-Conte, United Way of Lane County
Clarissa Parker, United Way of Lane County
Ann Salminen, United Way of Lane County

Guests:

Denise Swanson, Early Learning Division and
Bobbie Weber, Early Learning Council

Public: No members of the public present

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:07 PM

II. Welcome and Introductions

Bess Day welcomed the group and introduced guests from the Early Learning Division and Early Learning Council to lead the hub governance engagement session.

III. Hub Governance Engagement Session,

Denise Swanson from the Early Learning Division and Bobbie Weber from the Early Learning Council, joined this meeting to learn more about the regional successes, barriers and opportunities that the Council may be able to support in an effort to better serve Oregon's young children and families to learn and thrive. The Council will consider all information received when drafting strategies and activities for their 2019-2024 Strategic Plan.

Strengths of our community that help families to thrive:

- Strong relationships with post-secondary services.
- A lot of providers that serve children and families that all work together to collaborate.
- A lengthy period of collaboration in the early childhood field and the community.
- Local researchers that we can partner with to implement evidence based programs (KITS, early childhood PBIS, FIND program).
- A strong volunteer base.
- We are one county with one Head Start, one CCO, one EIECSC

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- The number of non-profits that work together so well in this community and the lack of competitiveness.
- A strong philanthropic community.
- Governmental agencies (counties, cities) that work well together and are in tune with the issues and want to be engaged in finding solutions.
- The ELA has provided services (FRC, Preschool Promise, KITS). in rural areas that may not have been able to initiate those programs on their own.
- United Way is a real community strength. The strategic goals around families and kids.

Barriers that keeps families from thriving:

- Limited funds to start initiatives but not enough to enhance and make all-encompassing resource
- Affordable housing in rural and urban communities.
- Insufficient resources for mental and behavioral health needs of children
- Affordable and accessible quality childcare
- Systems for subsidies are difficult to access – more oversight prevents providing care
- Childcare regulations do not promote people of color having access to childcare
- Silos of funding streams – very difficult to be flexible given rules and regulations
- Medical model is not preventative – people fail before we help them. Same with early childhood – model is waiting for children to fail. No adequate residential treatment for parents, which affects the whole family.
- Living wage jobs and support for people to get training and education
- Generational poverty and education gaps more prevalent in Lane County than other communities
- Transportation in rural areas or for families with multiple children
- State level standardization limits flexibility for each county.
- Loss of local parent help line
- Proliferation of childcare rules.

If resources were not a barrier, what role do you envision the hub would play in recruiting more children into high quality early care and supporting and building the work force?

- CCRRs have had greatly reduced budgets. Need more resources for professional development
- Living wage and having high-quality education for preschool (high quality should be paid well).
- Hard to invest in CTE for early childcare providers when we know they may not make a living wage once they enter the workforce.
- More funds for Preschool Promise or subsidy to parents to find quality programs – not just a grant, but embed in state funding as free preschool for all children.
- Continuum of need – system does not match with family work hours or needs
- Affordable childcare and improved facilities for infant/childcare
- Cost analysis to determine the cost to stay at home vs pay a caregiver
- Concentrate in rural areas – childcare dessert

What is the role of the hub to set this up?

- Hub is a convener to set the vision for the county and present the plan and identify as many stakeholders as possible.
- Funding to try out best practices
- Collecting data and feed data back about what's working and what's needed
- Head Start and Early Head Start are not hub programs but still need to be part of the conversation, needs to be identified at state level

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- Being strategic about implementing ideas. Are our ideas really going to produce results? Where should we focus our limited resources?
- We have the right people to make the case about why it's important – benchmarks in education are connected, we need to message that and communicate that
- Streamlined application process across all types of early childhood programs – single app for all services, accessible via phone and all apps, translated into multiple languages and culturally appropriate
- More involvement with employers to raise awareness on childcare for their employees
- Engagement in the private sector to get them invested in our work as a whole
- Keep equity at the center of the conversation – serve families that are traditionally underserved or are left out of the conversation
- What does research show people are wanting from their workplace that we could tap into about building strong communities, specifically around early learning.
- Raising awareness with businesses about the need their employees have for Preschool Promise and other childcare services.
- The hub does not have to do everything, there are other experts in the field. This group is conveners, not service delivery.

Role of the hub for supporting and developing the workforce:

- We are having a hard time attracting K-12 teachers right now because the pay is not there, the pay for EL staff
- Time is also a barrier to have availability for training, often times trainings are on weekends and evenings
- Concerted public relations effort on changing the culture of how we view and appreciate preschool teachers
- Higher wage for providers and subsidies for families to afford them
- How much parents think childcare should be is not aligned with how much a quality childcare program is.

20 Multiple Cross Sector Themes Emerged from the Early Learning Council.

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| - Cultural responsiveness and equity | - Work force | - State/community connections |
| - Access to ECE | - Trauma Informed Care | - Geographic-specific needs |
| - Affordability of ECE | - Inclusion | - Community context |
| - Supply and Quality of ECE settings | - Supporting Families | - Connecting with businesses |
| - Standards/Regulations Alignment | - Family-centered systems | - The role of the Early Learning Council |
| - Child Development Outcomes | - Use of data | |
| | - Financing and Leveraging Resources | |
| | - Building a systems approach | |

What themes resonated and what was missing?

- What do we mean by family-centered approach? Have some type of baseline for what people could do? What are the parent support services in the community?
- Inclusion of families with special needs and trauma informed environments.

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- Pairing of one around outcomes and use of data. For our work state wide if we are going to drive to results it is important for us to have a sense of where we are now, where we're heading and what's our process, what's working and what doesn't.
- Workforce development, cultural responsiveness
- One that is missing is kids that are in poverty
- Consistency and longevity of programs, we start and we stop programs. We don't have continuity between programs
- Continuity of applications for families – spending too much time filling them out, discouraging them from applying for programs and resources.

Next Steps

Collecting input through September, can send your ideas to Bess Day or council members. Then drafting a report.

IV. Public Comment

No members of the public were present

V. Consent Agenda

Action requested: Motion to approve, accept or ratify items listed on consent agenda as submitted.

Motion: Gus Balderas motioned to approve the consent agenda.

Support: Todd Hamilton seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda.

Ayes: Gustavo Balderas, Marian Blankenship, Todd Hamilton, Sue Norton, John Radich, Annie Soto, Leslie Finlay, George Russell, Judy Newman, and Karen Gaffney

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

June Meeting Minutes
July and August Written Report

VI. Imagination Library

Imagination Library provides free books to families with children ages 0 – 5. We have the opportunity to expand access to this program across Lane County.

- Started by Dolly Parton in 1995 to foster a love of reading with preschool children and their families. Kids enroll when born and get a free book per month until age 5. Free for anyone regardless of income.
- 18,000 eligible kids in Lane County between 0-5. Eugene Public Library Foundation coordinates for Eugene city limits for around 3600 kids. Lane Electric sponsors 18 kids in Lowell. Springfield is working on a new non-profit that would bring this program to their community. Crow-Applegate-Lorane is exploring providing this in their community.
- We have a potential partner to support access for funding. ELA is asked to provide \$12,500 from our hub coordination budget, UWLC would provide \$12,500 and there would be a \$25,000 match. That would give us an additional 500 kids for two years mostly in rural areas.

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- Program is patchy right now, can't broadly distribute info because it's only in certain areas. How do we widely distribute and make sure we can make it available for multiple areas? Our funding would go to fill in the gaps in communities that do not get this. Hub Coordination Budget would fund this. Have cushion carrying over from last year to fund it.

Group Discussion and Questions:

- How are the books redistributed in a systematic way to community organizations like WIC or First Place Family?
- Make sure we are reaching the kids we really want to reach. These kids have to be motivated to sign up. What can we do to help kids sign up for this and who can we partner with?
- What are the outcomes for this, beyond the distribution of the books?
- Monica Walton from Eugene Public Library Foundation has said in order to expand the program to receive additional grants they need funding for gathering data to help show the outcomes. Can a question be asked at kinder entry?
- UWLC would fund this year and next year. In Noreen's experience implementing this in Minnesota, this is pretty easy for people to support and people get it.
- How is there more strategic outreach to get families to sign up that are the most in need? Those are usually harder to reach and have a more difficult time signing up. Who do we reach to help them sign up or sign up for them? At food banks, families accessing TANF, doing this in person to walk them through the application.
- This has the potential to widen the disparity – especially for highly mobile families. Can we shift the model to have the books available at places where families receive consistent services or have books sent to an agency so families can pick their book up there?
- It would be interesting to know who is already getting books in our community and know it is getting to the families most in need.
- Streamline communication with families when distributing books
- Starting point is to get the data from Eugene Public Library Foundation to provide some outcomes
- Evaluation study in the works, has not been published. More outputs than outcomes.
- Barrier is that 9 books in English and only 3 in Spanish
- Is there an even greater disparity in reaching rural families than in urban areas
- Handing books to kids in never a bad idea
- Easy entry point to get engagement with businesses

VII. Campaign for Grade Level Reading (CGLR)

The annual conference for CGLR was held in July in Philadelphia. Bess Day (UWLC), Michelle Sheng-Palmisano (UWLC), Katherine Pears (OSLC), and Lizzie Gray (Connected Lane County) attended on behalf of Lane County.

- John Lively received awarded to the Grade Level Reading Council of Champions for his work with early literacy/education. United Way of Lane County was awarded a Pacesetter Award.
- Focused now on taking the work we do in the community to brand it and reach more partners to be on the same page. In Philadelphia they have the Read by 4th Campaign Initiative with 130 partners city wide aligning work towards improving attendance, School Readiness and Summer Reading in children and having them reading at grade level by 4th grade. Their campaign involves

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community members on every block up to the Mayor of Philadelphia and the Governor of Pennsylvania.

- With 52% of kids in Lane County not reading at grade level we can use the framework developed by the Campaign for Grade Level Reading to align work, create a grade level reading campaign and convene, and coordinating systems work. This can bring us a way to brand the initiative and bring our continuum of work from prenatal to elementary under this umbrella with an easy way to communicate to a broad group of people.
- In another community children in the year before starting kindergarten were wearing shirts that have their high school graduation year on them. Perhaps we could start even with newborns and have onesies with the year they graduate.
- There are many materials from CGLR and a network of communities across the country. The them across network is stealing shamelessly and sharing seamlessly.
- Make sure we have substance and don't focus a lot of time on the branding. What is the call to action from seeing the branding? Doesn't remove the barriers of learning how to read. Easy to get lost in the momentum of the branding and the marketing. Not easy to tell people what we're doing and what *they* should do about it.

VIII. Other Updates/Announcements

- Have a hired a new Equity & Engagement Manager, Ramon Concepcion and a new RSVP Manager, Debra Weinman.
- Oregon Pediatric Improvement Partnership presentation on August 28th at UWLC.
- At next meeting on September 14th we will be reviewing our memorandum of understanding with members.

IX. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:00