

## Early Childhood Hub of Lane County

3171 Gateway Loop  
Springfield, OR 97477  
tel 541.741.6000  
fax 541.726.4150

earlychildhoodlane.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.



### Early Childhood Hub of Lane County Governance Consortium

May 12, 2023  
3:00 - 4:30pm  
Virtual Meeting

#### NOTES

##### Present:

Adrian Pollut, Parent Representative  
Sheila Wegener, Department of Human Services  
Debi Farr, Trillium Community Health Plan  
Sol Granados, Parent Representative  
Holly Mar-Conte, Childcare Sector Strategist  
Judy Newman, Early Childhood CARES  
Noreen Dunnells, United Way of Lane County  
Todd Hamilton, Springfield Public Schools  
Mycena Bell, Head Start of Lane County

##### UWLC/Hub Staff:

Michelle Sheng-Palmisano, Co-Dir Early Learning  
Kris Coomes, Co-Dir Early Learning, *meeting facilitator*  
Jaycob Nolte, Impact Program Coordinator  
Adriana Medina, Bilingual Family Engagement Coordinator  
Emilyn Bell, Resource Development Coordinator

##### Absent:

Kellie DeVore, PacificSource Health Plan  
Tony Scurto, Lane Education Service District  
John Lively, Oregon State Representative  
Jacob Fox, Homes For Good  
Leslie Finlay, Relief Nursery  
John Stapleton, PIVOT Architecture  
Lane Tompkins, McKenzie School District  
Charleen Strauch, Head Start of Lane County  
Cheryl Henderson, Lane Community College  
Kraig Sproles, Bethel School District  
Melissa Ibarra, Eugene 4J School District  
Tina Gutierrez-Schmich, Bethel School District  
Brian K Johnson, Lane County Public Health

#### I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:12 PM.

#### II. Welcome and Introductions

#### III. Public Comment

#### IV. Consent Agenda

Approval of the April 14, 2023 meeting notes.

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

**Motion:** **Judy Newman** motioned to approve the consent agenda.

**Support:** **Adrian Pollut** seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda.

**Ayes:** Sheila Wegener, Sol Granados, Debi Farr, Holly Mar-Conte **Nays:** None; **Abstentions:** None

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### V. Family Leadership Council Report

- Parent representative Adrian Pollut and Sol Granados shared a report about the Family Leadership Council Meeting
- They wrapped up the luncheon about the legislator luncheon and
  - Biggest negative feedback is more lead time and having more time to chat together at the beginning and more mixture of Spanish and English speakers at different tables
  - The parents had a lot to share and the Latino community and would like to share more
    - After the meeting we were speaking about what we heard and were wondering why the multicultural center got shut down
    - Judy also got to attend the legislative luncheon and thought the parents were so prepared and so diligent and touched on such important issues
- Second half was about Hate Crimes and Bias in Eugene

### VI. Regional Systems Assessment (RSA)

- We met about this last month and identified barriers on what are affecting Early Childhood Care and education and did not have enough time to review and compare what the Family Leadership Council stated as their main barriers
- From these discussions, we also heard that GC members did not feel ready to prioritize a specific issue area and so wanted to ground members in the work to show a path forward.
- Document shared about what the FLC and GC both thought were priority issues
  - Attached to the notes

#### Group Discussion:

- Does anything stand out from the document shared?
- In November we worked with the Center of Prevention of Abuse and Neglect to conduct focus groups to talk with families about barriers to care and what they wanted and we also conducted a survey with about 700 entries
  - We are currently finalizing this report that was sent back to us and when we receive the finalized report we will be sending out an overlay of information with both our barriers and what came out of the focus groups and survey
  - This information will be sent out before the meeting in June for a better grounding in this information so that at that June meeting we can determine our main focus
- We need to acknowledge that some things are not in our scope of work or control and those we can put up to the state/county but the work at the hub can focus on more specific aspects of this project!

### VII. Raise Up Oregon: Housing Sector

- For the new Raise Up Oregon program our Hub was tasked with looking at the housing sector and our work on how the housing sector affects young children and we have
- Judy Newman conducted interviews with people in the community with a Housing focus including:
  - Jacob Fox, Executive Director of Homes for Good – Serves 5000 people with affordable housing. Completed a report on focus groups done with people on affordable housing wait lists done by Homes for good
  - Darcey Phillips – Executive Director of Cornerstone Housing and Michelle Cady – Chief Operating Officer Serves 350-400 people with affordable housing in 12

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- counties. Cornerstone has done surveys and focus groups around these issues with clients.
- Bethany Carledge – Deputy Director of St Vincet DePaul Society of Lane County and Ilana Jakubowski – Former First Place Kids Program Director, serves 1200-1600 people in affordable housing
  - John Stapleton – Partner in PIVOT Architecture – Involved in designing and getting funding for early learning centers including partnering with affordable housing folks
  - We were given a summary of information already collected by the Early Learning Council and Judy took this information to these individuals to confirm, deny, and expand it:
    - We've heard that families with birth to five:
      - Have trouble finding affordable housing that meets their family's needs (i.e. no pet friendly Options); Have trouble finding affordable housing that is located near services to support your family, like affordable child care
        - a. The issue that was raised about trouble finding affordable housing was that we have a 2% vacancy rate and there just aren't enough houses
        - b. This confirmed that it wasn't about finding housing that fit a family's needs but about finding housing at all
        - c. When looking at barriers they all found the biggest issue being a person with some kind of problem in their rental history or some minor criminal history and those people's applications can often times get immediately denied when in reality there is an appeal process that people can use and most of the times these issues get resolved if the person reaches out but often times they give up and don't make it that far
        - d. Also very little control on where they put affordable housing because finding land that you can build affordable housing on is very tight, they cannot be picky but still try to find areas located near transportation routes
        - e. Need to focus on supportive housing as a continuum and employ more systems navigators to help individuals and families with applications
      - Face Challenges in rental assistance requirements that review only gross income and do not consider other bills or expenses like utilities, food, or child care;
        - a. For this most agencies did not find this an issue except that there are very tight caps on income and it is usually a you either meet the requirements or you don't
        - b. It creates a disincentive for people to take work or to better their own life because once you pass that threshold there is nothing more you can do
        - c. Losing your housing stipend is huge
        - d. Strong push by these agencies for us to examine a tiered system of income instead of a hard line and to provide support to create a gradual sense of independence
        - e. They saw child care in some agencies coming into account but not as big an issue as the hard line for income
      - Face discrimination in finding housing for having too many children, not being married, their race and language;

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- a. They didn't see this really being an issue in their agencies however when you get to section 8 to be able to rent houses there is definite discrimination set by many renters
  - b. Private landlords are not held by all of the same rules that public landlords are and it creates a power dynamic
  - c. A glide-path or a tiered system may be able to help this as well
- And that transportation is expensive, difficult to access, or doesn't go where you need it to.
  - a. Very true and an issue that they all see, there isn't a very robust public transit system in Lane County in general even in the most urban areas
  - b. There are some pilot programs with LTD with more individualized transportation with smaller vans that might be a more flexible solution
  - c. If it is hard in the city it is beyond hard in rural areas; the only real solution in rural areas is focusing on economic development so families can stay there and make a livable wage to be able to stay in their communities and not have to move
- Some of the actions that the government is planning to do around these housing related issues to support families with young children are:
  - Provide expanded housing and food supports to families on the Oregon Health Plan (Medicaid):
    - a. No agency really had a comment as they were unaware of this development
    - b. Could be a very helpful development
  - Expand home visiting services such as nurses who come and check-in on new parents to make sure they have everything they need to be successful
    - a. Everyone thought this was great but thought that this was just one small service that we really need to bring into homes and these housing communities
    - b. There was discussion that by bringing this and other support services it really reduces barriers and helps all families
    - c. One example is that Saint Vincent has vans that get traded throughout their complexes to help transport people to appointments or have a group trip to the grocery store
  - Expand child care supply that is built into low-income housing complexes
    - a. Everyone thinks this is super important especially in more rural communities and also needs to have before and after school as well as irregular hours
    - b. Talked about the bill allowing people to develop childcare in their rental properties which could expand this but thought property managers may create extra barriers so to pay attention to that
  - Expand system navigators who can help families access housing and other supports families need to be happy and healthy
    - a. Actions that our early learning system to take is to expand this workforce
    - b. Both Housing systems navigators and general ones
    - c. Incorporate more housing retention strategies including an emergency fund pools for rent and rapid rehousing and providing on site Substance Use Counseling and other services

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- Incentivize developers in rural areas to build facilities with social support services all held in the location
- Overall this was a very enlightening conversation with all parties involved

### Group Discussion

- Most of the CCOs have community health navigators and they will meet people where they are. They would arrange to meet their clients at a fast food restaurant and would show up because they were getting a meal out of it and also learn more about needs that they might have regarding their mental and physical health, housing, or other resources

### VIII. Updates & Announcements

- Funding Requests to the Hub Process
  - We had talked about this process beginning around this time of year, that hub staff would have a budget from the early learning division and we would know what we need in our reserves
  - We know that there are interested parties and we are currently delaying this as we still do not have our budget from the state and do not fully know what it may look like
  - We will update everyone when we have more information
- Relevant and Related Early Childhood Legislation
  - Had a legislative meeting with representative Julie Fahey and got to talk about different things we want to prioritize
  - We are currently on day 10 of the Senate Republican walk-out
  - Early Learning Strategies are looking at facilities and training
  - We were under the impression that the budget for early intervention and early special education was going to have some case load roll up and be like it was this year with some increased Cost of Living funds, but when we received the numbers yesterday it showed that there was a \$23 million cut which is about an 8% cut
    - We are still looking into where those numbers came from and what we can do about it because a cut would be very devastating
    - We hope that it was some kind of oversight and will keep this group updated
  - Everything about funding is on hold until the May 17<sup>th</sup> economic forecast
- Childcare Sector Strategist and Quality Care Connection Update
  - Held a speaker series event this week and featured someone
    - Additional speakers will have topics like tax incentives for employers that provide childcare benefits to their employees and other spotlights around the state who have successfully employed childcare strategies
- United Way is Hosting a Literacy Event on Wednesday, June 7 at 5:30pm at the Washburne Café. We'll learn about some of the challenges preventing kids from reading proficiently, and meet some of the amazing literacy programs supporting Springfield students, including SMART Reading, Springfield Public Library, Imagination Library, BookFest, and more.
  - Register at <https://www.unitedwaylane.org/events-calendar/learn-united-literacy-springfield>
- In Lane County Preschool Promise had a 89% enrollment rate which is the highest of the 5 counties and will begin starting enrollment for the next school year soon.

### IX. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:25pm.

**NEXT MEETING: Friday, June 9, 2023, 3:00 – 4:30 PM**